

## SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATION.

"Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."—Psalm, lxxviii. 31.

Africa is on many accounts a noted portion of our globe. It is the most extensive peninsula:—being nearly 5000 miles in extent north and south, and little less east and west. It contains about 12,000,000 square miles, and its population is variously estimated at from 60,000,000 to 101,000,000, mostly sunken in the lowest depths of barbarism. It is styled in scripture the "Land of Ham," doubtless because, at the time it was thus designated, his descendants were its principal if not its only inhabitants. It has been, and is still, distinguished for cruelty and oppression. Many persons in Christendom, who are theoretically disciples of Him whose teaching everywhere breathes benignity and love, seem to suppose themselves licensed to perpetrate the most unheard-of cruelties, almost peculiar to the African Slave Trade, because of the curse pronounced upon Canaan, the son of Ham. Which runs thus, "Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren." But upon no principles of fair interpretation can this be made to approve of, much less justify, involuntary servitude. It undoubtedly had reference to times long since passed—the period of Israel's national prosperity. It is a scriptural and historic fact that most of the seven nations of Canaan were descendants of Ham. Those of them who obstinately refused to give up the possession which God himself had long before ceded to Abraham his friend, and to his posterity, were destroyed; while others, like the Gibeonites, became voluntary servants, or literally "hewers of wood and drawers of water." In that way it has been fulfilled; and the example given shows how it might have been fulfilled voluntarily.

There are however as great varieties among the nations inhabiting this quarter of the world as any other of the same extent. In addition to the descendants of Ham it is inhabited by descendants of the Romans, Phoenicians, Vandals, or Arabs, Abyssinians, Egyptians, Moors, &c.: all distinct races.

Egypt has been considered not only a land of fertility, power, and wonders, but of science. It was there where the famous Alexandrian library was burnt.

This is the land of Carthage, for a long time the successful rival of Rome; probably of Troy,—though she has received such an entire overthrow that it is, and may remain, a subject of doubt whether she was situated on the coast of Africa or Asia.

It is supposed that one of the disciples of Philip the evangelist successfully introduced the Gospel into Abyssinia, where a diluted form of Christianity still remains. The African churches were remarkable for their adherence to the simplicity of the Gospel. While other churches sought for their Bishops, the imposition of the hands of the Bishop of Rome, or some other popular prelate; the presbyters of Alexandria refused all foreign interference, and for two hundred years, in the early ages of the Christian Church, were governed by Bishops consecrated by the imposition of their own hands.

This is the country of St. Augustine, one of the most eminent of the early Christian Ministers for his erudition, piety, and industry. His praise is in all the Churches. The country of Tertulan, the most voluminous writer of his age, and one of the most noble defenders of "the faith once delivered to the saints."

Notwithstanding these and other instances, a very lamentable extensive prejudice exists against the African race. "They are inferior in their natural capacity," it is affirmed. Suppose it be admitted? What then? Must they be for ever tantalized with it; neglected, oppressed, and enslaved? Should they not rather excite our commiseration. But that they are naturally inferior may be fairly doubted. "Hath not God of one blood made all the nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth?" "Have not all one Father, even God?" Their apparent inferiority is unquestionably the result of circumstances—not of the peculiar conformation of the head, as the Phrenologist, with his materializing theory, would have us to believe. A late writer remarks, "The low state of the arts in Africa, and the barbarism that so generally prevails in it, have been variously accounted for; and perhaps we are yet without the means of coming to any satisfactory conclusion in regard to either matter. But it would seem that the first, or the low state of the arts, is mainly attributed to the climate, which supercedes the use of many articles indispensable in regions more to the north and south. Manufacturing industry is principally devoted, in European and Asiatic countries, to the production of articles of clothing; but where clothes are an encumbrance, and

most of the people are satisfied if they have a piece of coarse common cotton stuff to wrap round their middle, it would be absurd and contradictory to expect that this great department of manufacturing industry, and its many dependant and subsidiary arts, should make any progress. The agriculture, too, of the greater part of Africa is exceedingly unfavourable to the development of a spirit of enterprise and invention. The seasons differ but little from each other; and in those tracts not condemned to perpetual sterility, that is, in the tracts watered by the periodical rains or by the overflowing of the rivers, the rudest husbandry is sufficient, the heat of the sun operating on the moisture of the soil being all but enough to produce the most luxuriant crops. The houses, too, in tropical climates, may be constructed at comparatively little expense; and, except for the cooking of victuals, fires would be a nuisance. It is idle, therefore, to wonder at the backward state of industry in Africa. It would be as reasonable to expect to find a manufactory of freezing machines at the North Cape, as to expect to find extensive clothing factories in Nigritia."

The same writer elsewhere remarks that "many of the Negro nations have made considerable progress in the necessary and useful arts; a progress which, it may be safely affirmed, greatly surpasses that made by any native nation of America."

Africa is classic ground. What is more thrilling than reminiscences of the temple of Jupiter once situated on an Oasis of the desert? Of Carthage, the seat of the Trojan war? Of Egypt, the garden of the world, and the field where Jehovah not only gave frequent and demonstrative evidences of his superior power over her gods and demigods, but of the superiority of his servants over them? There he showed his wonders in the land of Ham.

But what adds greatly to the interest of all the foregoing considerations, is, that this is particularly the field of unfulfilled prophecy. Not only is it embraced in those general scriptural declarations and promises which relate to the conversion of the whole world; as, thou shalt give the heathen to thy Son for his inheritance, &c., but definitely. It is understood that, Psalm lxxviii, 31, refers to the future conversion of these nations; "Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God. Sing unto God ye kingdoms of the earth, O! sing praises unto the Lord!" The term Ethiopia is compounded of *blackness* and *heat*, and therefore may be considered as not only applicable to that part of Africa lying directly south of Egypt, but other parts to which blackness and heat are predicable.

Finally, Isaiah xiv, 14, is a strongly figurative description of the future conversion of Africa. Thus saith the Lord, "The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over unto thee, and they shall be thine; they shall come after thee; in chains they shall come over, and they shall fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no other God."

Shall then Christian nations cease their efforts to suppress the Slave Trade, not from the principle of sympathy only; but because they are objects of God's peculiar care.

Shall the friends and patrons of the Missionary cause yield for a moment to discouragement because all has not been accomplished which they in their ardour could desire: or has not been accomplished in the same way or time they had expected? Nay, let them rather cast into the treasury of the Lord, and prove him now herewith, and see if he will not pour you out a blessing which there shall not be room enough to receive.

Shall we who have the honour of being the messengers of the Churches, and who are now in the field of strife, consider the battle ours, and not the Lord's; and because we have been foiled in a few instances in our contests with the powers of darkness, perhaps as a reproof for our unfaithfulness, or a trial to faith, yield the point and ingloriously flee, exclaiming, "I pray thee have we excused." No: in the name of God let us lift up our banners and cry, "Victory or death?"

VALUE OF REGULAR EMPLOYMENT.—With the exception of one extraordinary man, I have never known an individual, least of all, a man of genius, healthy and happy without a profession; i. e. some regular employment, which does not depend on the will of the moment, and which can be carried on so far mechanically, that an average quantum only of health, spirits, and intellectual exertion are requisite to its faithful discharge. Three hours of leisure, unannoyed by any alien anxiety, and looked forward to with delight as a change and recreation, will suffice to realise in literature a larger product of what is truly genial, than weeks of compulsion.—Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*.