

MISCELLANEOUS.

A MOTHER'S PRAYER.

WHAT hallowed associations crowd around the heart at the mention of these words. Years may pass away—mountains, rivers, and oceans may intervene between us and the spot where first we heard a mother's prayers—yet they cannot be obliterated from the tablet of memory. Sickness, sorrow and neglect may be suffered, and even the heart may seemingly become callous to all good impressions, yet at the sound of a mother's—a praying mother's name, a chord is touched which thrills through the soul, and rarely fails to awaken better feelings. Does danger threaten? We hope, and perhaps fondly anticipate, that a mother's prayers, which have been offered in our behalf, may be answered.

Never did I see this more forcibly illustrated than in the case of a weather-beaten sailor, who resided in one of our own coast towns. I had the narrative from the lips of the mother.

In making his homeward passage, as he doubled the "stormy Cape," a dreadful storm arose. The mother had heard of his arrival "outside the Cape," and was awaiting with the anxiety a mother alone can know, to see her son. But now the storm had arisen, and as she expected, when the ship was in the most dangerous place. Fearing that each blast, as it swept the raging deep, might howl the requiem of her son, with faith strong in God, she commenced praying for his safety. At this moment, news came that the vessel was lost!

The father, an unconverted man, had till this time preserved a sullen silence—but now he wept aloud. The mother observed, "It is in the hands of Him that does all things well;" and again, in a subdued and softened spirit, bowed, and commended her son and her partner, in an audible voice, broken only by the burstings of a full heart, to God.

Darkness had now spread her mantle abroad, and they retired, but not to rest, and anxiously waited for the morning, hoping at least that some relic of their lost one might be found.

The morning came. The winds were hushed, and the ocean lay comparatively calm, as though its fury had subsided since its victim was no more. At this moment, the little gate in front of their dwelling turned on its hinges. The door opened, and their son, their lost, their loved son, stood before them! The vessel had been driven into one of the many harbours on the coast, and he was safe. The father rushed to meet him. His mother, already hanging on his neck, earnestly exclaimed, "My child, how came you here?"

"Mother," said he, while the tears coursed down his sunburnt face, "I knew you'd pray me home!"

What a spectacle!—a wild reckless youth acknowledged the efficacy of prayer! It seems that he was aware of his perilous situation, and that he laboured with this thought: "My mother prays—Christian's prayers are answered, and I may be saved." This reflection, when almost exhausted with fatigue, and ready to give up in despair, gave him fresh courage, and with renewed effort he laboured, till the harbour was gained.

Christian mother, go thou and do likewise. Pray over that son who is likely to be wrecked on the stream of life, and his prospects blasted for ever. He may be saved.

THE FAMILY.

A CONTRAST.

If there are any joys on earth, which harmonize with those of heaven, they are the joys of the Christian family. When the snow flakes fall fast in the wintry evening, and the moaning winds struggle at the windows, what is so delightful as to see the happy little ones sporting around a cheerful fire. Look at that little creature in her night dress, frolicking and laughing, as though she had never known, and never would know a care. Now she rolls upon the carpet, and now she climbs a chair, and now she pursues her older sister round the room, while her little heart is overflowing full of happiness. Who does not covet the pleasurable emotions with which the parents look upon this lovely scene?

But let us look at this man, who makes his home but a boarding house, where he may eat and sleep. His wife is merely his housekeeper. His children are necessary evils, to be kept out of the way as much as possible. Today he is at the howling-alley. Tomorrow he is at the billiard-room. And the next day he is till midnight at the whist party. He is a jovial companion, and greets his associates with an air of careless mirth, as though he knew no sorrow. But, in truth, he is a poor pitiable victim of disquietude and depression. His jokes are forced—his smile is unnatural—it is even by constraint that he retains the semblance of good nature. See him at home—how petulant and irascible! The least annoyance to his mind is like the spark to the powder. His children, while they flee from his frown, imbibe his spirit. See him as he rises in the morning, gloomy and cross. The poor creature hardly knows the meaning of the word enjoyment. This is a man of pleasure. He will not obey God's law, because it will disturb his happiness! Wretched man! He is the victim of his own sins. He is serving Satan here, and Satan rewards him, as he does all his disciples, with the painfully forced semblance of joy, but with an harassed spirit and prospective destruction. Lord Chesterfield was such a man. He spent his whole life in the vain pursuit of pleasure, and yet happiness continually eluded his search. Listen to his candid confession:—

"I have seen the round of business and pleasure, and have done with all. I have enjoyed all the pleasures of the world, and consequently know their futility, and do not regret their loss. I praise them at their real value, which, in truth, is very low; whereas, those who have not experienced, always overrate them. They only see the gay outside, and are dazzled with the glare. But I have been behind the scenes. When I reflect upon what I have seen, what I have heard, and what I have done, I cannot persuade myself that all the frivolous bustle of the world had any reality. Shall I tell you that I bear this melancholy situation with the meritorious resignation and consistency which most men boast? No, sir! I really cannot help it. I bear it, because I must bear it, whether I will or no. I think of nothing but killing time the best way I can."

What a comment is this confession upon what is generally called worldly pleasure. The dying scene of such a man is a fearful commentary upon his misspent life. He lies upon his dying bed, annoying all around him by his irritability. The retrospect of the past affords him no pleasure, and the future is filled with fearful forebodings. And there he lies, brooding in sullen silence upon his present pains, with no consolation in respect to the future. He dies, and is forgotten. But, oh! this is not the end of his history. Judgment is before him, and eternal retribution succeeds. The imagination shrinks from following him into those regions.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

As it was found in an ancient manuscript sent by Publius Lentulus, President of Judea, to the Senate of Rome.

"THERE lives at this time in Judea, a man of singular character, whose name is Jesus Christ. The barbarians esteem him as their prophet; but his followers adore him as the immediate offspring of the immortal God. He is endowed with such unparalleled virtue as to call back the dead from their graves, and to heal every kind of disease with a word or a touch. His person is tall, and elegantly shaped; his aspect amiable and reverent; his hair flows in those beautiful shades which no united colours can match, falling in graceful curls below his ears, agreeably couching on his shoulders, and parting on the crown of his head; his dress the sect of Nazarites; his forehead is smooth and large; his cheeks without either spot save that of lovely red; his nose and mouth are formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard is thick, and suitable to the hair of his head, reaching a little below his chin, and parting in the middle like a fork; his eyes are clear, bright, and serene. He rebukes with mildness—and invokes with the most tender and persuasive language—his whole address, whether in word or deed, being elegantly grave, and strictly characteristic of so exalted a being. No man has seen him laugh, but the whole world beholds him weep

frequently: and so persuasive are his tears, that the whole multitude cannot withhold their tears from joining in sympathy with him. He is moderate, and temperate, and wise; in short, whatever the phenomenon may turn out in the end, he seems at present to be a man of excellent beauty, and divine perfection every way surpassing man."

AFFECTING ANECDOTE.

An affecting spectacle of insanity, followed by a melancholy result, was witnessed a short time ago, at a Lunatic Hospital at Saumar:—

"A lady and gentleman went to visit the establishment, accompanied by their child, a little girl of five or six years old. As they passed one of the cells, the wretched inmate, an interesting young woman of twenty-five, who had irrecoverably lost her reason, through the desertion of a seducer, and the death of her illegitimate offspring, suddenly made a spring at the little girl, who had approached within her reach. In the height of her delirium, the poor creature fancied the stranger's child her own lost darling, and devouring it with kisses, bore it in triumph to the further end of her cell. Entreaties and menaces having proved equally ineffectual to induce her to restore the child to its terrified mother, the director of the establishment was sent for, and at his suggestion, the maniac was allowed to retain peaceable possession of her prize, under the impression, that, exhausted with her own frantic violence, she would fall asleep, when the child might be liberated from her grasp, without the difficulty of the employment of harsh measures. The calculation was not erroneous; in a few minutes the poor sufferer's eyes closed in slumber, and one of the keepers, watching his opportunity, snatched the child from her arms, and restored it to its mother. The shriek of delight uttered by the latter, on recovering her treasure, waked the poor maniac, who, perceiving the child gone, actually howled with despair, and, in a paroxysm of ungovernable frenzy, fell to the ground—to rise no more! Death had released her from her sufferings.—*Gallicant.*"

VELOCITY AND MAGNITUDE OF WAVES.

THE velocity of waves has relation to their magnitude. Some large waves proceed at the rate of from thirty to forty miles an hour. It is a vulgar belief that the water itself advances with the speed of the wave; but, in fact, the form only advances, while the substance, except a little spray above, remains rising and falling in the same place, according to the laws of the pendulum. A wave of water, in this respect, is exactly imitated by the waves running along a stretched rope when one end of it is shaken; or by the mimic waves of theatres, which are generally the undulations of long pieces of carpet moved by attendants. But when a wave reaches a shallow bank or beach, the water becomes really progressive, because then, as it cannot sink directly downwards, it falls over and forwards, seeking its level.

So awful is the spectacle of a storm at sea, that it is generally viewed through a medium which biases the judgment; and lofty as waves really are, imagination makes them loftier still. No wave rises more than ten feet above the ordinary level, which, with the ten feet that its surface afterwards sinks below this, give twenty feet for the whole height, from the bottom of any water valley to the summit. This proposition is easily proved by trying the height upon a ship's mast, at which the horizon is always in sight over the tops of the waves; allowance being made for accidental inclinations of the vessel, and for her sinking in the water to much below her water-line at the instant when she reaches the bottom of the hollow between the two waves. The spray of the sea, driven along by the violence of the wind, is, of course, much higher than the summit of the liquid waves; and a wave coming against an obstacle, may dash to almost any height above it. At the Eddystone Lighthouse, when a surge reaches it, which has been growing into a storm all across the Atlantic, it dashes even over the lantern at the summit.

"To send an uneducated child into the world," says Parley, "is little better than to turn out a mad dog or a wild beast into the street."