

THE DYING PRODIGAL,

The Almighty has promised special blessings to obedient children, but He has said of the disobedient and wicked, "Be sure your sin will find you out," and that "the way of transgressors is hard." Let all unruly boys take warning from the following case:

Some years ago a kind and pious gentleman was distributing tracts on a Sunday morning in one of the most wicked and miserable courts in London, when a woman begged of him to go and see a young man who was dying. She directed him up a broken and dirty staircase to a wretched-looking room, almost destitute of furniture, but in which on an old bedstead lay the wreck of what had once been a fine young man. The visitor conversed kindly with him, and found to his surprise that he was the son of a rich gentleman, who resided near London; that he had been intended for an important situation in life, and had received a most costly education, but that, having got amongst bad companions, he had been led into habits of intemperance and gambling, falling from one vice to another, until at length he had run away from his father's house and given himself up to every kind of wickedness. His bad practices had now ruined his health, and he was dying in the very prime of life. He went on to state that during his sickness he had remembered the early instruction of his parents; in earnest prayer, and with a contrite heart, he had sought the forgiveness of his sins; and he could now humbly say that his supplications had not been in vain. He added, "I believe that I have received God's forgiveness; *Oh, that I could receive my father's forgiveness before I die!*"

The gentleman, deeply moved by the narrative, expressed his willingness to endeavour to effect a reconciliation. He at once rode off to the father's mansion. When the father was asked if he had a son by the name of —, he looked angry, and said, "He has broken my heart, do not mention his name to me again." A few more words changed the scene. When the father was told that his prodigal son was on his death-bed, and imploring his injured parent's forgiveness, he burst into tears, and, hastily pulling the bell, rushed into the passage, and, with an earnestness which showed the emotion of his heart, cried out, "The coach! the coach! bring the coach!" In a few minutes the father and visitor were being rapidly driven through the streets of London, and at length arrived at the abode of the penitent child.

The visitor went up the staircase first; the young man smiled, held out his trembling hand as a token of welcome; and then, hearing another footstep, his attention was fixed upon the grey hairs of his father. With all his remaining strength he raised himself up in his bed, and in the most affecting and heart-rending accents implored his father's forgiveness. The father, like the one named in the Redeemer's parable, "ran and fell upon his son's neck and kissed him." The young man put his arms round the neck of his father. The father was expressing, as well as his tears would allow, how readily he forgave his prodigal son, when in a moment he felt the grasp of his child to slacken, and found that he only held his corpse. The "golden bowl" was broken, the young man was DEAD.

MISCELLANEOUS.

OPEN AIR PREACHING.—The Clergy of the Established Church in Liverpool have made arrangements for maintaining open air preaching in that city. The Rev. R. W. Wolsley was attacked by a mob of Irish Catholics, while conducting one of these services; but the police interfered to protect him. The Presbyterians in the North of Ireland have adopted this mode of propagating the Gospel. The Synod of Belfast has recommended to all its ministers to preach in the open air to all who will listen to them.

"between Zipporah and Miriam, which occasioned some hot words; and one peevish reflection introduced another till Moses and Aaron came to be interested."

Matthew Henry might have less of a poetical spirit than Mr. Gilfillan, though we are not sure of that; be that as it may, he had no less reverence for the character of Moses, knowledge of Scripture, insight into human nature, and acquaintance with its workings even in saints and inspired men. To him it did not seem at all unlikely, that the great Prophet and the first High-priest of the Jewish economy, brothers though they were, might be drawn into a serious quarrel through some petty piques and peevish words between their female relations. Behold, he would have said, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! Moses, he thinks, was as likely to listen to the tongue of his wife, and Aaron to that of his sister, as either of them to muse on the caves and rocks of Horeb.

This poetizing upon the Bible in the hands of young and inexperienced men is likely to produce a great deal of idle and unprofitable work in holding up to view poetic creations instead of the creation of God, and presenting under the names of the saints and prophets, whom God created and sanctified and inspired, a class of fictitious personages, who own no Father in Heaven or on earth but the poetizer himself.

There are a great many better things in Mr. Gilfillan's Book; but there is also a good deal of this, which, if it do little harm, will certainly do no good, and would have been much better away. We fear, however, it will lead the fashion for a time, and that many a sober audience will have to listen to a great deal of queer stuff as the supposed poetry of the Bible. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having His seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are His;" and "Let every one, that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity."

THE CORNER FOR YOUTH.

THE BOY THAT TOLD A LIE.

The mother looked pale, and her face was sad,
She seemed to have nothing to make her glad,
She silently sat with a tear in her eye,
For her dear little boy had told a lie.

He was a pleasant affectionate child,
His ways were winning, his temper was mild,
There was a joy and a love in his soft blue eye,
But, O! this sweet boy had told a lie.

He sat by the window alone within,
And he felt that his soul was stained with sin,
And his mother could hear him sob and cry,
Because he had told her that wicked lie.

Then he came and knelt by his mother's side,
And asked for a kiss, which she denied,
And he told her with many a penitent sigh,
That he never would tell her another lie.

Then she took his small hands between her own,
And bade him before her gently kneel down,
And kissed his cheek, while he looked on High,
And prayed to be pardoned for telling a lie.

OPEN COMMUNION.—A correspondent of the *Christian Observer* relates the particulars of a visit to a chapel of the Rev. Baptist Noel in London. After preaching the communion of the Lord's Supper was administered. "We thought we should leave," says the writer; "but Broth. R. inquired whether we had not better remain, if only to look upon a scene so dear to any true Christian, especially Christian clergymen, as we were, in a foreign land. We did so, and were invited to a seat in the body of the church. It was soon plain that we had been put in the midst of the communicants. What to do we knew not. Presbyterian ministers without a "token" in the midst of a foreign Baptist Church! As persons generally do, when in close quarters, we began to look about as to the next step, and on inquiry of a gentleman next to us, a member of the church, we were told, that, as we were strangers unexpectedly there, we might send our cards on the plate to the Pastor, who would furnish us with "tokens." We then told him the whole truth, that we were clergymen of another denomination, strangers and foreigners from America. "Ah, Sir, we are happy to see you: we hold no close communion sentiments; and just put your cards on the token plate; that will be sufficient. The service was truly solemn and strengthening, and, I need not say, unusual to me. I never before had joined in this precious ordinance with my Baptist Brethren; and it appeared as if I could sympathise with them in an increased degree, and view them as brethren in a new light. But still I had some misgivings as to the real extent and value of this variation from the course pursued by our American Baptist brethren. After service we spent a short season with Mr. Noel. We expressed to him the satisfaction we had enjoyed so fully in being permitted to unite thus with brethren; but we thought it strange, being Presbyterians. "Why, Sir, our Baptist brethren in America must be very bigoted." "But," I replied, "is this open sentiment general with you; how is it throughout England?" "Why, sir, it is getting to be general, if it is not so already. It is so in all our large towns. Perhaps there are some places in the country, where they are a little independent and high-minded; but we welcome all who love the Saviour."

The Rev. Mr. Grant, of the Established Church of Nairn, having occasion to go from home on the next two Sabbaths, requested his brethren of the United Presbyterian and Independent Churches to officiate for him in the parish-church. The Rev. Mr. Bisset, of the U. P. Church, we understand, is to preach in the parish-church on Sabbath first, and the Rev. Mr. Howie, of the Independents, on the following Sabbath.—*Edinburgh Evening Courant.*

NEW TESTAMENT IN THE TONGUESE LANGUAGE.—The Missionaries in the Friendly Island District have availed themselves of the opportunity, afforded by the return of the "John Wesley" to England, to send home a copy of the New Testament in the Tonga, accompanied by an application to the Committee to endeavour to obtain the assistance of the British and Foreign Bible Society in printing a large and revised edition. The translation has occupied the careful and prayerful attention of the Missionaries twenty years. Some parts have been in print since 1833, and have passed through several editions, having undergone revision by those who had a competent knowledge of the language. Four thousand copies of the present edition were printed in 1845 at the Society's press on the Mission, which have all been sold, and are in the hands of the people. Acutely painful are the feelings of the Missionaries, when the natives come to purchase the New Testament, and cannot be supplied with a single copy. The number of people, for whose benefit the proposed new edition is designed, is perhaps not less than twenty-six thousand, of whom not less than six thousand can now read the Word of God. Greatly is it to be desired, that they may be speedily furnished with a large supply of the Blessed Book, of which so many of them are so eager to become possessed.