

POETRY.

"IT IS GOOD TO BE HERE."

The following touching lines, were written by *Herbert Knowles*, at the age, if we mistake not, of fourteen. The scene is a grave-yard: the time, the evening twilight.—*Ex. paper.*

Met hinks it is good to be here:
If thou wilt, let us build—but for whom?
Nor Elias nor Moses appear,
But the shadows of eve that encompass the gloom,
The abode of the dead and the place of the tomb.

Shall we build to ambition? Ah! no!
Affrighted he shrinketh away;
For see! they would pin him below,
To a small narrow cave, and begirt with cold clay,
To the meanest of reptiles a peer and a prey.

To Beauty? Ah! no; she forgets
The charms that she wielded before:
Nor knows the foul worm as he frets
The skin which, but yesterday, fools could adore,
For the smoothness it held, or the tint which it wore.

Shall we build to the purple of pride,
The trappings which dizen the proud?
Alas! they are all laid aside,
And heres neither dress nor adoration allowed,
But the long winding sheet and the fringe of the shroud.

To Riches? Alas! 'tis in vain,
Who hid in their turn have been hid;
The treasures are squandered again;
And here in the grave are all metals forbid,
But the tinsel that shone on the dark coffin lid.

To the pleasures which mirth can afford,
The revel, the laugh, and the jeer?
Ah! here is a plentiful board,
But the guests are all mute as their pitiful cheer,
And none but the worm is a reveller here.

Shall we build to affection and love?
Ah! no; they have withered and died,
Or fled with the spirit above—
Friends, brothers and sisters are laid side by side,
Yet none have saluted, and none have replied.

Unto Sorrow? The dead cannot grieve,
Not a sob, nor a sigh, meets mine ear,
Which compassion itself could relieve;
Ah! sweetly they slumber, nor hope, love or fear;
Peace, peace is the watchward, the only one here.

Unto Death, to whom monarchs must bow!
Ah! no; for his empire is known,
And here there are trophies enow;
Beneath the cold dead, and around the dark stone,
Are the signs of a sceptre that none may disown.

The first tabernacle to HOPE we will build,
And look for the sleepers around us to rise;
The second to FAITH, which insures it fulfilled,
And the third to the LAMB of the great sacrifice.
Who bequeathed them us both when he rose to the skies.

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

ADDRESS ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

Intended for Merchants, Owners, Captains, Masters, Seamen, and others connected with the Shipping interest of Great Britain.

Allow a few friends, who desire to promote the due Observance of the Lord's Day, to address you on the subject. We are aware of the important concerns in which you are engaged, and commend you, when you appear anxious to seize every lawful opportunity for carrying on your business: the Bible itself commends you. "Not slothful in business," is one motto for the Christian merchant and mariner; but "serving the Lord" is another and equally important. And when we carry the business of the week into the Sabbath, we carry it where God forbids;—we incur His displeasure, and can have no divine blessing on the labours of the other six days. May not this be the secret cause why some of you, who strive and toil, early and late, heaping up riches, not knowing who shall gather them, are constantly meeting with disappointments and losses, and so often find embarrassment, where you anticipated nothing but success?—A secret something hampers the machine and makes it drag on heavily. May it not be this,—that, though diligent and conscientious in matters of business, yet you are neglecting God on his holy day?

If you neglect the Sabbath, you lose that rest and

refreshment of body and mind which are necessary to enable you to follow your pursuits with spirit through the week. You lose that domestic comfort which real Christians enjoy in meeting their family for religious instruction and Christian converse on the Lord's day. You lose that retirement for private prayer, the study of Scripture, and self-examination, so exceedingly necessary amidst the cares and temptations of life. But the worst losses are to follow. You lose the golden opportunities of Public Worship. Great things are transacted between God and his people in public worship. Prayer and praise ascend to his throne—the word of life is read and preached, the Holy Spirit works—sinners are humbled and convinced—the glorious truth is declared, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts xvi. 31. And thus God is glorified amongst us. But where, meanwhile, are you? You are out of the way, and therefore you lose those blessings, for the loss of which no worldly gains can compensate.

And what, if to all these losses is to be added the loss of the soul? If the Sabbath be neglected and abused, a plain command of God is broken; sin is committed; and we know that the wages of sin is death. If the Sabbath be neglected, we are quite sure that Prayer, and the Scriptures, and the Sacraments, and the other appointed means of grace, are neglected likewise. If the Sabbath be neglected, Christ, the Lord of the Sabbath, is neglected also; and without Him there is no salvation for any of us sinners. Now pause, and remember our Lord's solemn question,—"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

You who are Owners of vessels may do much to promote a holy reverence for the Sabbath amongst seamen. You may manifest to them your own respect for the command of God, by insisting that on the Lord's Day no vessel of yours shall commence her voyage; no part of her cargo shall be moved; no work shall be done on board; no passengers received; no unnecessary labour required from the seamen. So long as the vessel remains in port, you may secure facilities for all connected with her to attend the public worship of God. You may also exhort the commander and seamen even when at sea to respect the Sabbath.

You who are seamen should remember that affecting portion of God's Word which teaches us very plainly, that He who rules the winds and the waves is well acquainted with the seaman's toil. "They who go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters: these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves thereof. They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths; their soul is melted, because of trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still.—Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" Psalm cvii. 23-31.

Where is the seaman that has not witnessed the truth of the above passage of Scripture? You have seen his wonders in the deep, and he has preserved you amidst many a danger. Does not gratitude, therefore, require you to love and obey him, in return for his wonderful goodness and loving-kindness to you? Have you not peculiar reasons why you should delight in keeping his holy commandments? If you neglect the Sabbath you are without excuse; for there is no class of men who have better opportunities of keeping it holy. You are generally far away from the busy scenes of life, and the temptations of the world. You have much time for reading and reflecting on the Word of God; and you can assemble together for public worship. If you take proper care, you can serve in ships where there is no obscene language, drunkenness, or quarrelling, permitted: but where the Lord's Day is kept holy, and the captain is as the father of a family, and the crew as obedient children; all parties exerting themselves in acts of brotherly love and kindness, and joining at proper seasons in the service of their great Lord and Master. You can avoid the ships and company of the irreligious and profane; remembering that "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." Isa. lvii. 20.

You who are officers of ships, occupy a station of awful responsibility. Your good or evil example must make a deep impression upon the seamen under your command. We would, therefore, affectionately remind you, that the interests of all committed to your charge will be greatly promoted, both as relates to this world and the next, if you "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The orderly conduct and

cheerful labour of the ship's company; the neatness and cleanliness of the vessel; the easy and quiet government of all on board; esteem and regard for the officers; a conscientious attention to the interests of the owners; mutual affection and good will; all these and many other blessings are sure to follow, whenever the officers and mariners determine to keep the commandments of God, "and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable." Isa. lviii. 13. Divine service can always be performed in the cabin, or some other convenient place. No work should be done except what is necessary for the present management of the vessel. Officers and men should cease from their labours, and devote that day to the service of their Creator, Preserver and Redeemer. The Bible will then be frequently in the men's hands, and its blessed pages will supply many occasions for giving useful advice and improving conversation. The voice of thanksgiving may be heard and the hymn of praise may ascend from many a hardy crew. Then will the ship become an ark on which the blessing of God will constantly rest, as it floats upon the troubled waters. And within those wooden walls many a tossed and weary sinner may be brought to a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and acknowledge him as the only anchor of his hopes; and when, amidst the wreck of navies, others are sinking in the quickness of despair, he will cling closer and closer to Jesus as the Rock of his salvation.

The Word of God has declared that "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Let British seamen, then, perform their part. They have often carried forth the missionary, and thus have been humble instruments in the hands of God for conveying the glad tidings of salvation, to the most distant parts of the earth: and, oh! may they be no longer, in any instance, ignorant of Jesus Christ! My dear brethren, consider your high calling; and while you are conveying the knowledge of your Redeemer to distant realms, beware least you yourselves be cast away through unbelief. Let not your bad example cause any to despise or neglect the commandments of God; but do all in your power, by a holy life, to extend the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the earth, wherever the winds shall carry you. When on shore, in England, consider it a blessing to be able to spend the Lord's Day in the service of God, and in his house of prayer. When you arrive in a foreign port, remember the Lord of the Sabbath still, whom the winds and the sea obey: and whilst you "turn away your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on God's holy day (Isa. lviii. 13.) you will be showing forth a sign in the face of all men, that you indeed count yourselves to belong to the Church of Christ: and that you are indeed subjects of that Britain where God is still feared, and loved, and worshipped. May all the blessings, both temporal and eternal, connected with a holy keeping of the Lord's Day, rest upon you, in our earnest prayer!

INTERESTING EXTRACTS.

CHOICE OF COMPANIONS.

1. Of all the snares to which the Christian is exposed, perhaps the most fatal, the most ruinous, are those which spring from *improper companions*. These are often Satan's grand and most successful instruments for entangling and finally destroying some who bid fair for heaven.

To have no intercourse with those who are strangers to religion, is, in the present state of things, impracticable; "for then must you needs go out of the world." And so to seclude ourselves from the world as to neglect opportunities of doing good to the bodies or the souls of those who may be perishing in sin around us, would be conduct opposed to both the precepts and example of the holy Jesus. Yet, with equal plainness and solemn authority, the God of the Bible forbids his children selecting their bosom friends and intimate companions from among those who are strangers to his grace.

2. The word of God expressly forbids associating with evil companions. "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." "My son, walk thou not in the way with them; refrain thy foot from their path." "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

As the Most High thus forbids intimate friendship between his children and the followers of the world, his word abounds with weighty motives for obedience to those commands. It describes those as blessed who avoid irreligious associates. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Separation from the evil is also described as necessary, if we wish to