

# The Bazaar.

THEY RECEIVED THE WORD WITH ALL READINESS OF MIND, AND SEARCHED THE SCRIPTURES DAILY, WHETHER THOSE THINGS WERE SO.—ACTS XVII. 11.

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## THE TALENT.

*Imitated from the Persian.*  
Thou that in life's crowded city  
Art arrived, thou know'st not how,  
By what path, or on what errand—  
List and learn thine errand now.

From the palace to the city,  
On the business of the King  
Thou wert sent at early morning  
To return at evening.

Dresser waken, loiterer hasten;  
What thy task is, understand:  
Thou art here to purchase substance,  
And the price is in thine hand.

Has the tumult of the market  
All thy sense confused and drown'd?  
Do its glistening wares entice thee,  
Or its shouts and cries confound?

Oh! beware lest thy Lord's business  
Be forgotten, while thy gaze  
Is on every show and pageant  
Which the giddy square displays.

Barter not his gold for pebbles,  
Do not trade in vanities;  
Pearls there are of price, and jewels,  
For the purchase of the wise.

And know this: at thy returning  
Thou wilt surely find thy King  
With an open book before Him,  
Waiting to make reckoning.

Then large honours will the faithful  
Earnest service of one day  
Reap of Him, but one day's folly  
Largest penalties will pay.

Rev. R. C. French.

[The Persian Poet, it seems, stops at this. The Bazaar, in his search whether these things are so, has to add that "faithful earnest service" in the eye of God is one but that which is rendered from love and gratitude towards the Saviour. Where such motives prevail, the love of folly is stayed and its former course forgiven; but for faults by the loving, grateful, earnest Christian is overtaken, the heavy penalty has been paid by Him who gave himself to die for sinners.]

## MEDITATION FOR LENT.

*From Bishop Hall's Contemplations.*

O blessed Saviour, how glorious was it for thee, how happy for us, that thou wert tempted! Had not Satan tempted thee, how shouldst thou have overcome? Without blows, there can be no victory, no triumph. How had thy power been manifested, if no adversary had tried thee? The first Adam was tempted and vanquished; the second Adam, to repay and repair that foil, doth vanquish in being tempted. Now have we not a Saviour and High-priest, that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but such a one, as was in all things tempted in like sort, yet without sin. How boldly therefore may we go unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and find grace to help in time of need! Yea, this duel was for us. Now, we see by this conflict of our almighty Champion, what manner of adversary we have; how he fights, how he is resisted, how overcome. Now, our very temptation affords us comfort, in that we see, the Geiser we are unto God, the more obnoxious we are to this trial; neither can we be discouraged by the heinousness of those evils whereunto we are moved; since we see the Son of God solicited to infidelity, covetousness, idolatry. How glorious therefore was it for thee, O Saviour, how happy for us that thou wert tempted!

Where then wast thou tempted, O blessed Jesus? or whither wentest thou, to meet with our great adversary? I do not see thee led into the marketplace, or any other part of the city, or thy home-stand of Nazareth, but unto the vast wilderness, the habitation of beasts; a place that carrieth in it both horror and opportunity. Why wouldst thou thus retire thyself from men but, as confident champions are wont to give advantage of ground or weapon to their antagonist, that the glory of thy victory may be the greater; so wouldst thou, O Saviour, in this conflict with our common enemy, yield him his own terms for circumstances, that thine honour and his foil may be the more. Solitariness is no small help to the speed of a temptation: "We to him that is alone; for if he fall, there is not a second to lift him up." Those, that out of an affection of holiness seek for solitude in rocks and caves of the deserts, do no other than run into the mouth of the danger of temptation, while they think to avoid it. It was enough for thee, to whose divine power the gates of hell were weakness, thus to challenge the prince of darkness. Our care must be always to eschew all occasions of spiritual danger; and, what we may, to get us out of the reach of temptations.

But O the depth of the wisdom of God! How earnest thou, O Saviour, to be thus tempted? That Spirit, whereby thou wast conceived as man, and which was one with thee and the Father as God, led thee into the wilderness, to be tempted by Satan. While thou laughest us to pray to thy Father, "Lead us not into temptation," thou meantest to instruct us, that if the same spirit lead us not into this perilous way, we go not into it. We have still the same conduct. Let the path be what it will, how can we miscarry in the hand of a Father? Now may we say to Satan, as thou didst unto Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power over me, except it were given thee from above."

The Spirit led thee; it did not drive thee: here was a sweet invitation; no compulsion of violence. So absolutely conformable was thy will to thy Deity, as if both thy natures had but one volition. In this first draught of thy bitter portion, thy soul said; in a real subjection; "Not my will, but thy will be done." We imitate thee, O Saviour, though we cannot reach to thee. All things are led by thy Spirit: O, teach us to forget that we have will of our own.

To be continued.

## GOD'S WORKMANSHIP.

*From Sermon preached by the Rev. Hugh McNeill, D. D., before the Pastoral Aid Society, on the 30th of May, on Ephes. II, 10. 1847.*

The diversified imagery made use of in Scripture to describe the action of the Word, explains the

various modes of this new creation: fire, hammer, sword, rain, dew, seed. The image of seed gently scattered, and afterwards softly watered by the dews and rains from heaven, conveys the idea, and illustrates the special modification of the work, in the manner which it pleases God most frequently to adopt. It is gradual: "first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." But it is not on that account the less from God. Vegetation is his work in its gently progressive steps, as truly as the lightning in its startling flash. The vegetation of grace may, and in a cold world like this it must needs, meet with checks and hindrances; nay, it may even seem to be dead in a dreary winter season; but the germ of indestructible life is in it, the seed is incorruptible, it will grow again and flourish. What is written by the Prophet concerning the entail of mercy—sovereign, unchangeable mercy—which rests upon, and secures, the final recovery of the Jewish nation, may with undiminished truth be applied to every new-born plant "of the Lord's right hand planting." "As a tall tree," he says, "and as an oak whose substance is in them when they have cast their leaves, so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof."

Yes, this vegetation, however checked, however hindered, upon the whole advances. The new creation of God is to "good works." God has "ordained" that it shall be so. He has prepared those works for new creatures to "walk in." He hath chosen them in Christ Jesus, that they shall be holy; and the new character is as certain as the new creation is real. The Holy Spirit does not forsake the work of his own hands. The Christian is not left to trade with a blessing given him, and to make the most of it, or lose it, according to circumstances. That blessing which is given to him is a living blessing that dwells in him. The Holy Spirit walks in him and dwells in him, as it is written, "I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The Holy Spirit prays in him "with groanings that cannot be uttered." The Holy Spirit makes intercession in him according to the will of God. He has received not an impulse only, but an abiding and sustaining life. His movement is not from a passing excitement of feeling. It is not like the arrow flying quick from the impelling string, but presently abating its speed, and falling inert by its own weight, as if it had never been impelled; no, but rather like the eagle's flight, originating in an inward life, and gathering strength as it rises more and more, and soars higher and higher towards the source of life, and light, and joy.

God never forsakes the work of his own hands. The Christian makes progress. The Christian finds that God is working in him, and that he is working together with God. His earnest prayer for himself—his "heart's desire and prayer before God"—is, that he may be just in his dealings, diligent in his calling, subdued in his temper, calm in his demeanour, and in every respect "zealous of good works." Nay, he rises higher still. He asks for "the mind that was in Christ," that he may feel the weight of the sins of the world around him; that he may enter into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings; that he may suffer with him; in order that he may afterwards reign with him. He asks to be impressed with the feeling of the dishonour that is done to God in the world—the dishonour done to his truth; the disregard to his holy authority. He asks to be made to feel this, so that he shall be a man of sorrow in this respect, albeit that he is full of joy in God—to realize the apparent contradictions of the Christian's life, "as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing." He asks to have that mind, then, that enters into the fellowship of Christ's sufferings; "being made conformable unto his death." And, my brethren, he succeeds. Yes, he succeeds; not, indeed, to please himself—not so as to satisfy himself: he condemns himself, and prays as a sinner for mercy all the days of his life. But he succeeds so as to be a benefit, in his measure and place, to his country, a comfort to his friends, and a blessing to his family. He not only escapes from the corruptions which are in the world through lust, but also he becomes valiant for the truth. He is light. He is salt. A social and domestic missionary. The word of God, which has been the quickening medium of his new creation, becomes the guiding companion of his new life; and his assurance of its truth is such as to render him impenetrable by the assaults of the emissaries of infidelity, who go about like their master seeking whom they can destroy.

It is a glorious work to be engaged for God, and with God, in carrying on this new creation, and proclaiming his truth amongst men; that "whosoever believeth shall be saved." It is, then, with reference to this—it is in this point of view—that we so ardently desire the multiplication of the labours which your Society are associated to spread throughout the country,—that we wish for more pastors to tell this truth, to go amongst the population in its lowest and most degraded, because hitherto most neglected parts; for our work is just as hopeful there as it is amongst the most polished and most educated. The work is as hopeful in the lowest dens of profligacy as it is in the ball-room—aye, more hopeful. It is more hopeful among the lowest and most degraded of the people—more hopeful, because the harlots go into the kingdom of heaven before the Pharisees. We have no confidence in the flesh—no confidence in anything that man can do upon his fellow man to change his character, in any of his powers, his intellect, his conscience, his imagination, his feelings: all is gone; we have no confidence in fallen human nature.

We have no confidence in secular instruction, which is so loudly lauded in these our days, even for the real improvement of society in this world, and much less for the salvation of men's souls. A nation of scholars might still be a nation of knaves; more expert, indeed, and more polished than a nation of savage knaves, but not on that account at all the less dangerous. The simplest proof of this is not of a pleasant character; it is an appeal to facts. We may not mention names; but it requires but small credence in this branch of learning to be painfully convinced that scholarship and morality do not go hand in hand.

We have no confidence in religious instruction—in the letter of it, in the outward ordinances of it, in the moral sanction of it, or in any thing that man can bring to bear upon his fellow man. A nation of

baptized Bible-readers might be a nation of hypocrites, intent upon covetousness, and "for a pretence make long prayers." There was such a nation, wearing passages of Scripture for frontlets, and "devouring widows' houses." We use means, indeed, with all energy and earnestness, and as means we value both secular and scriptural instruction; but for success in the end, whether in formation of present character, or the attainment of eternal salvation, our confidence is in the promised agency, the abiding and triumphant agency of God the Holy Ghost. At every step, we seek, and teach others to seek, this gracious power, without which nothing is strong, nothing is holy. I fear that, because this is not kept before the public mind, there is a great deal of waste labour going on, a great deal of toil that comes to nothing, a great deal of expectation from what man can do; and so long as expectation is placed there, disappointment must follow, for God will not share his glory with another. He will make it appear in the case of every single Christian, that it is his work. He will not share the glory of this work with either schoolmaster or pastor. He will not share the glory of this work even with a parent, and he will manage the conversion of children so that the parents may not be able to say "We did it." God will do it, and he will make it plain that he did it, and no one else. But in the use of means, in bringing his Word—his own appointed instrumentality—to bear upon the minds of the people, we are engaged in one of the most glorious enterprises that it is possible for human beings to undertake.

It is in the multiplication of this work that you are associated, and that we earnestly entreat you to advance more and more. For consider how this work is carried on, how these means are used by the pastors you employ, and whom you assist. We begin with people from the very outset, in their infancy, at their baptism, to use means, not doubting, but earnestly believing, that God favourably alloweth our charitable work in bringing children to his holy baptism. We join in earnest supplication and prayer to him that he would even then begin with them; that he would plant the seed of eternal life in their hearts, break them off from Adam and graft them into Jesus Christ; that he would grant them forgiveness of their sins by spiritual regeneration. Then, confiding in the promise that whatsoever we ask, believing, we shall receive, we proceed in all the dutifulness of faith to render thanks to God for having heard our prayers: we bless and praise his holy name for giving what we ask. We asked and cried to him, "Open the door unto us who knock. Give thine Holy Spirit to this infant?" and then we thank God for having heard us, and for having given his Holy Spirit unto the infant. And then, following up this prayer with the best means we can, we charge the parents and Church parents of that child to see that, on the first opening of its intelligence, it shall hear sermons, and be taught the Commandments of God and the Creeds of the Christian Church.

To aid this we proceed and gather the little ones into our infant schools, where the word of God, on which the promise is made, is brought into immediate contact with the first dawning of their intellect and feelings, and their very first powers are associated with the histories of Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham; of Joseph, David, and the prophets; of Christ, Paul, Peter, James, and John. From thence we bring them to our other schools, where still the word of the Lord is kept constantly, and as far as we can control the process, tenderly and affectionately before their advancing minds.

And when they leave the schools altogether—a painful separation—for generally a large portion escape our notice—they are employed by persons who have no regard for their souls, and who avail themselves of the slightest excuse to keep them away even from the lingering remnant of Scriptural culture, the Sunday-school—but still we strive as far as lies within us to keep our eye upon them and follow them. And here it is that the numbers baffle the power of the pastor; and here it is that another of your agencies comes in as a most opportune auxiliary. No one who has not felt a pastor's anxiety; no one who has not known something of a pastor's responsibility, of his longing desires for the souls of his people, and his hopeless-ness of feeling when he finds that he cannot possibly keep them within reach of the ministrations of his Church—I say, no one who has not felt something of this kind, of a pastor's hopes and fears, can know what it is for such an overburdened servant of Christ to have a wise, competent, diligent, and disciplined Scripture-reader.

I would earnestly entreat you, the managers of this great institution—and growing greater, I trust—to keep your eyes steadily on this part of your work, and give us Scripture-readers for our large towns in various parts of the country. There are branches of the work which cannot be done without them. I speak from experience. I know it. There are parts of the work in the present state of our towns which cannot be done without lay-agency. But I must not enter into that topic now. I shall possibly, if God spare me, say something of it to-morrow at the meeting. But I must now draw to a conclusion; entreating you, my brethren, to persevere in the work that you have undertaken, until all the unwieldy parishes in the kingdom shall be divided, if not in name, yet in substance, by a subdivision of labour, by means of the multiplication of labourers; and that every pastor may become practical under the hopeful feeling that his charge is now practicable. Oh! despair is deadening; when a man has plainly and obviously lost the race, he runs no more. But in hope there is life, there is energy, there is victory. Inspire hope into the pastor, then. The hands hang down, the ear is listless, and the step is heavy under a demand for a thousand visits in the week; but reduce the demand to a hundred, and see how the languor of listlessness gives way, and is followed by the elasticity, the spring of hope. Render the charges practicable, and you make the men who have them practical men.

Go on, then, in this glorious work, my friends. It is indeed a blessed one. You are workers together with God in putting this great instrumentality into operation—his Word, whereby he new creates his chosen in his dear Son. Come, by all the value which you set upon your country with its encumbering associations and unrivalled privileges;

by all the desire you entertain to promote the good, the best happiness of your fellow-creatures, the peace, the order, the tranquillity of families in this world—oh! how wondrously rescued from ruin by the new creation in Christ of a hitherto careless father, husband, or son—by all the value you set upon scenes of domestic happiness procured through this blessed means; by all the value you set upon the still higher interests of immortal souls in the world to come; by all the value you set on the experience you have had of the mercy, the infinite mercy, of God our Father, who so loved us that "he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life;" by all the value you set upon the kind condescension, the self-exhausting liberality of Jesus Christ; "who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that through his poverty we might be rich;" by all the value you set upon the grace, the patience, the tender forbearing love of God the Holy Ghost, who knocks for entrance to the heart—oh, go on in this work, you who have engaged in it; and join, all who have not hitherto, join, co-operate, be partakers of our joy, and now give of your substance for it. Give largely of your substance for it. Look you in his name who created you, and must create you anew if ever you are to be saved. To what better purpose can you turn your money? For what nobler object can you make a sacrifice? Whatever your circumstances may be, superfluities you have. There is scarcely an individual in this vast assembly who is not blessed with more than his wants demand of him—with superfluities. Make an effort of self-denial, and show to the managers of this Society, at this anniversary, that you are determined that, by the mercy and goodness of God upon you, you will strengthen their hands that they may send forth more pastors and more Christian readers. We want hundreds more, before we can reach the population. As yet there are men who are burdened with eight, nine, ten thousand souls for one man to look after, and that man paid from £100. to £200. a year, unable to pay any one to help him. Oh, what a statement to make in the face of Christian, rich, prosperous, commercial England! And where should it be made? and where with more hope of response, than in the heart of such a city as this? But alas, instead of our merchant princes, who could support pastors in all the parishes of the kingdom, joining Societies of this kind, they for the most part turn away, and leave their places to be occupied by the middling and lower classes of society, whom God has blessed, and amongst whom God has new created so many to the glory of his name. Well, we must not be disheartened by this. It is as it was. Not many rich men, not many noble, not many powerful in this world, were called at first; and still so it is at last. But God has chosen the comparatively weak things of the world and the things that are not—so lightly esteemed are they—to bring to nought the things that are, that no flesh may glory in his presence. If the great, the noble, the rich, with their thousands and tens of thousands, joined in this work, there would be presently gratulation that the work had been done by them. There would be many to suppose that all that is wanting to do the work is money. Nay, if we had all the riches of England at our disposal—if we had a pastor in every house, and a Scripture-reader in every garret—we could not command the new creation of a single soul. Give me your self-denial, along with secret prayer to God that when the pastor, paid by your money, speaks from the Scriptures, the Holy Ghost will speak to the heart of the hearer. Give me your sovereign with a prayer and I value it more than a thousand without a prayer. It is a small thing with God to work "with many or with few;" and this is a work with which no stranger can intermeddle. It is God's work. Avail yourself of the privilege of joining in it. Overcome the selfishness of the world. Overcome the secret hankering after some personal gratifications which hinders you from giving what first suggests itself to your mind. If you have had a noble, generous intention at any time within the last half-hour, in God's name do not quench it, or allow it to be checked by the rising recollection of some personal indulgence to be foregone; but give the money, and deny yourselves, and God will bless you in your deed.

## THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER.

THOMAS MURRAY was born near Belfast, and wrought as a farm-labourer from his boyhood. At the age of forty-two, he came to reside in the cabin where I found him, which he had not left for above a day for forty years. His dwelling was half a mile from any other; and the intercourse which he and the members of his family held with any others was infrequent and short, except at times when mutual aid was given and required in the harvest seasons. His farm consisted of forty Irish acres—a power of acres, he called them; for he regarded himself, and was esteemed so by others, a large landholder, although half was mountain land, and more productive of heather than anything else.

Still here he obtained a subsistence for himself and family, until "auburn locks" gave place to "reverend grey." Seventy-five years had passed over him, and left their traces in many a furrow on his bronzed brow; and yet, although so near the close of his career, he was "without God in the world." No thoughts of a future and eternity appear to have stirred the depths, or even to have ruffled the surface of his mind. He seemed to be "set alone him." At the age of seventy-five, he was laid aside from his accustomed duties by an affliction which confined him to the house; and he who had always led an active life, and to whom the healthful breezes of the mountain were as necessary as food, felt the irksomeness of his detention at home; and having nothing wherewith to while away the tedious of the logging hours, he became exceedingly irritable and impatient. The tidings of his sickness were communicated to the inmates of the next cabin, in which dwelt a little girl, who was a scholar in the Sunday school at Strade. For her attention in the class, she had received a reward from her minister, one of the publications of the Tract Society. When she heard that old Murray was ill and fretful, because he knew not how to spend his time, she thought that the absence of books might be one cause of the time passing heavi-

ly; and under the promptings of a kind and benevolent heart, she resolved to go over to the old man's cabin, and offer the loan of her treasure for him to read. Murray, more with the design of gratifying the child, and glad to have something that might help to relieve the weary days of sickness, accepted her book, and promised to peruse it. He did so. As he read, he became conscious of unusual emotion. It was neither old age nor feebleness from his affliction, that made his hand tremble so, as he turned over the pages; neither was it a natural dimness that at times hid the words from him. Tears were welling up from his heart, deep convictions were struggling in his soul; and like Felix, he trembled as he read of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come. That was a memorable day to him. Mightily did the Spirit of God strive with him; the neglects, the transgressions of a long life were brought home to his conscience; the terror of the law flashed upon his guilty spirit, and everlasting ruin seemed inevitable. He wept and read, and prayed; he prayed and read, and wept again. He regarded his sickness with alarm—it might be unto death, and he felt unprepared; and the prayer of his trembling heart was "Oh spare me, that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more." Eagerly now did he thirst for instruction, and again and again was the book perused which had at first awakened him. It was intended more for direction than conviction; yet as it had produced the latter, so also did it give the former. Light broke in upon the old man's soul, and a Bible was now prized that had before been disregarded. The child, when she heard that Murray had recovered his health, called for her book. He had learned very lightly to value it, and was therefore unwilling to part with it. Misunderstanding his refusal, she repaired with tears in her eyes to her minister, and told him her tale. He quickly discerning how matters stood, cheered her with the promise of another volume, and immediately repaired to the mountain cabin. It proved as he had anticipated. Thomas Murray had become a new man, and was bending over the pages of the precious volume the child had lent him. Mr. B. took it up; it was "The Anxious Inquirer;" that had found its way into the old man's hand, and its truths had penetrated his heart. From that day he grew in divine knowledge, with a rapidity as delightful and as satisfactory as it was surprising. When I saw him, he spoke as one who had caught glimpses of "the land that is very far off," and "of the King in his beauty." Our intercourse was refreshing to my soul; and I parted from him with a reverence for his piety as well as for his grey hairs.

A few weeks ago, I received from his pastor the intelligence of his death. His last illness was short, and his departure sudden. The day prior to his death he visited his neighbors, and gave each member of the family a tract, with a suitable admonition. "He sent for me in the evening," says Mr. B., "and in my presence requested his family with his dying words to turn from that refuge of lies, (Grecy were Arians,) and come to the Lord Jesus Christ; and early in the morning he breathed his last. Such was the death of poor old Thomas?" "At evening time it shall be light." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"—*Report of the Religious Tract Society.*

## THE RAGGED SCHOOL.

*From a report made by the Incumbent of an English Parish Church to the Pastoral Aid Society, 1847.*

The most pleasing feature in our year's operations is the opening of a Ragged school. In my last communication I mentioned that a survey, which I caused to be made of my district, showed that no less than 1120 children, able to attend school, were receiving no instruction at all; and also that to meet the evil, in some degree, we had begun a school of this description. It has now been in operation for five months. At first 70 boys attended; the number has increased to 140. The scene of confusion, at the commencement, seemed to threaten a speedy dissolution, from the apparent impossibility of introducing anything like subordination. The teachers, however, persevered, and in the course of a few evenings some degree of order was established. The teachers are about thirty-five or forty in number; they divide themselves into three companies, each company attending one evening in the week. The labour of instruction being onerous, I could not expect an attendance from them more frequent, though some lend their assistance occasionally on other evenings. I found it necessary, therefore, to place the management of the school in the hands of one person, who could be present every time it was opened. No one was more fit than the lay-assistant, (supported by your Society,) who is, in all respects, well qualified for the situation. One beneficial result of his connection with the school was very soon discovered; for in one of the streets, in which his visits were sometimes looked upon with suspicion and received with coldness, a kindly feeling began to be manifested towards him.

"The children are, for the most part, tattered and squalid; a large number are without shoes and stockings; and so little defence does their coring present against the cold, that it is surprising to me how they have passed through the keen severity of the winter. Want is depicted in the countenances of many. Some, whose appearance indicated a better condition in life than we contemplated in opening the school, were objected to receive. But on inquiring into their circumstances, we found that their parents were unable to pay for their education, and they were admitted."

"We have, as may be readily conjectured, in this assembly some difficult and riotous spirits, who are so dexterous in the art of annoying, and in attempts to throw the school into confusion, that they often defy our efforts to detect the offenders. When we discover them we place them in a separate class. On a visit to the school one evening, I took a few of them in hand, and questioned them with regard to their mode of living. They informed me that they were in the habit of rambling about the docks; got a little money, when they could, by carrying parcels, or luggage; committed petty thefts when an opportunity offered; and now and then robbed a countryman of his dinner. I was told too that they resorted to the markets, and