

POETRY.

THE LIGHT OF NATURE.

"It is a happy world after all. The air, the truth the water, teem with delightful existence."—[Paley's Natural Theology.]

I LOOKED ON THE MORN—on the balmy Morn,
When the sunbeams danced on the waving corn,
And the East was tinged with a golden hue,
And the meadows glittering with pearls of dew,
And the birds that peopled each shrub and tree,
Were warbling their tuneful melody:
And I said, can it be that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease?
Oh! thinkest not thou that they clearly prove
His endless mercy and boundless love?

'T WAS NOON—and the freshness of morn was gone
Yet strong and brilliant the sunbeams shone.
And a flood of glory around them streamed,
And the air with delighted fragrance teemed;
All cloudless and pure was the azure sky.
And nature was vocal with strains of joy!
And I said, can it be that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease?
Are they not blessings designed to prove
A FATHER'S mercy—a FATHER'S LOVE?

'T WAS NIGHT—and I looked on the spangled sky,
And the thousands of Worlds that were rolling by;
The moonbeams slept on the silver deep,
And the hum of voices was hushed in sleep.
Not a sound was heard save the night wind's sigh,
That whispered of peace and harmony.
And I said, can it be that the Author of these
Is a God of vengeance that none can appease?
I will not, I cannot, believe it true,
While all these things are before my view.
Ah! thinkest thou not that they clearly prove
A FATHER'S mercy—a FATHER'S LOVE?

INTERESTING EXTRACTS.

THE CRIMINALITY OF LOT'S CHOICE.

BY THE REV. JOHN PURVIS, MINISTER OF JEDBURGH.

"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where," &c.—GEN. xiii. 10-13.
[Concluded from No. 33.]

In this page of sacred history, God has left inscribed in large and indelible characters, the guilt and infatuation, and ultimate ruin of every mere worldly choice, of every choice in which the world is the only element in the calculation, and in which the interests of the soul and eternity are either left entirely out of the account, or subordinated, or, it may be completely sacrificed to the interests of a present, perishing life. And yet it is greatly to be feared, that the principle which actuated the choice of Lot, is the very, and the only principle on which thousands, and ten of thousands, are daily acting, down to this present hour. It is greatly to be feared, that notwithstanding the lesson that has been read them, the infatuated and guilty part of Lot is acted over again every day, and by all classes of men, from the very lowest to the highest. It is done so by those servants who, in looking out for a place, never think of any thing but where they will get the highest wages, the easiest work, the best fare; who never inquire whether it be a situation in which their morals will be safe, their religious instruction attended to, their spiritual welfare consulted and advanced, the time of the Sabbath religiously secured to them, and every facility granted for their attendance on the means of grace; and who, for the merest pittance of additional wages, rush into places and families, where the conversations and examples that prevail, render them little better than another Sodom, the atmosphere of which is pregnant with death to all who approach it. The same part is acted over again, in substance, by many parents, who, in the training of their children, have no other end in view than how they may best accomplish them, for making a conspicuous figure on the theatre of this present world; who, with this view, send them to masters who will teach them every thing, but how a guilty sinner may be saved; who will store them, with all knowledge but that which it most behoves a fallen creature to acquire—the knowledge of Christ Jesus, and him crucified; or place them in seminaries which, in a fearful majority of cases, prove the grave of modesty, and virtue, and undefiled religion, and the nursery of vanity, frivolity, pride, and every sin; and who, in the settlement of their children for life, never almost take any thing into consideration, but where they will best succeed in acquiring a competency, or in accumulating wealth, and who think they have done well for them, in putting them in a way to gain the meat that perisheth, even though it be by sending them to a country, or setting them up in a place, where their souls are left to famish for want of that meat which endureth to everlasting life. The same

part is acted over again, as might be expected indeed, from this miserable training to which they have been doomed, by a great majority of those who are entering upon the active business of life, who, in choosing a profession, or a place where to exercise it, never once consider the religious advantages, or disadvantages, which it presents, think of nothing but its relations and bearings on a present world; are actuated in all their elections, and in all their movements, by the hope of mere temporal good, and who, in order to realize this hope, will venture to prosecute their worldly calling, in scenes and circumstances where the preservation of virtuous, still more religious, principle is next to a moral impossibility; where deprived, perhaps, of a Gospel ministry, and surrounded by every species of wickedness, their souls can hardly fail to perish, and their eternal welfare to be undone. In short, the principle that actuated the choice of Lot, is acted upon by thousands in conducting the common and every day business of life, where worldly gain is prosecuted with an ardour and engrossment of mind, to which every thing is made to bend, and by which every precious spiritual interest is remorselessly sacrificed; where men are determined to be rich at all hazards, and at all costs; where, if a worldly advantage can be secured, and wealth amassed, and honours acquired, though at the expense of every thing like spirituality of mind and progress in holiness, and to the deep and lasting injury of the soul, it is done without compunction, and without scruple; where even the deadly and the soul-destroying pestilence of Sodom will be encountered, and the vast calamity of a ruined spirit and an undone eternity be hazarded, so be they can only reap the fruits of the well watered and fertile plain. Oh it is lamentable, to see such multitudes of rational immortal creatures acting a part like this,—a part pregnant with all the guilt and folly, and with still more dismal and dreadful consequences, than what were involved in the choice of Lot! No doubt men may prosecute their worldly business, and consult their worldly advantage, in so far as this involves no sacrifice of religious principle, and infers no loss to the precious soul; and when a well watered and fertile plain can be found, without a spiritual Sodom in its bosom, it would be folly not to choose it. But surely it is obvious as day, that if man has a soul as well as a body to care for, if he has to make provision for a long eternity as well as for the little inch of time, the first consideration with every rational human being is, not, where shall my perishing body thrive, but where shall my immortal never-dying soul; not, how shall I best promote the interests of a passing hour or day, but how shall I best secure the vast and imperishable interests of that eternity on which I must so soon and may so suddenly, be called to enter? And I know not, if to the eye of a superior Being, that clearly sees time and eternity, in close connexion, the insignificance of the one, in contrast with the magnitude of the other, the littleness of every thing here with the vastness of every thing hereafter, if to such there be a sight upon earth more pregnant with guilt and folly, than that which may be so lamentably often seen,—immortal creatures, in all their plans and projects, thinking, and planning, and labouring for nothing, but the comfort of the life that now is, leaving altogether unprovided for the life that is to come; or if it may be deliberately and recklessly sacrificing that coming life, with all its imperishable interests, on the altar of worldly prosperity, at the shrine of Mammon. Individuals who are acting such a part, are chargeable with all the guilt, and with all the infatuation which characterised the choice of Lot; and though their conduct may not involve them in the same disastrous consequences in a present life, yet they should remember, that while temporal judgments are more alarming, just because they are obvious to the eye of sense, they are, in reality, nothing at all,—light even as a feather, when compared with those eternal retributions which guilt and folly, if unpunished and uncorrected in a present life, never fail to draw after them in a world to come. It is not the calamities which such guilt and folly will sometimes be visited with in a present life, but the endless penalties with which, if passed with impunity in this world they will be the more certainly visited in the next, that are to be dreaded by a never-dying creature; and it is all the more awful, to have none of sin's certain retributions endured in a present world, and to have all reserved entire to that world which is to come,—the place of final reckoning, the place of full and never-finished woe. Pointing, then, to the smoking plain, when overwhelmed by the judgments of heaven, or to the only remaining fragment which survived the universal ruin, the miserable desolate old man, with his two incestuous daughters, cowering in the cave on Mount Zoar, as if half-afraid lest the whole judgment of heaven was not yet discharged, or pointing to a scene, in comparison with which Sodom, even in desolation, was a perfect paradise, and where the guilt and ruin of such conduct as I have been referring to, are written in characters of everlasting

fire, in the agonies of an undying and, therefore, infinite misery, we would say to servants, and to parents, to the young who are entering on the world, and to those who are now immersed in its cares, to all, in fact, see here the consequences of a mere worldly choice,—a choice in which religion has no part,—a choice in which no regard is had to the poor perishing soul,—a choice in which the increase of flocks, the prosperity of farms, the acquisition of this world's wealth, are more considered, and are held of higher moment, than the everlasting welfare of the spirit, whose property it is to live for ever.

PROFANE SWEARING.

BY THE REV. DR HUMPHREY.

"Because of swearing, the land mourneth."—Jer.

This, I am sorry to say, is emphatically true at the west. I heard but very little profane language on this side of the Alleghanies. One of our passengers, indeed, swaggered and swore outrageously. He was a great boaster, a great politician, a great sloven, and a great coward. He wore his hat on one side, was out at one elbow, and had a beard which had once been black—but the crop had stood over and gone to seed. Nobody, I am sure, thought so well of him as his grandiloquent self, and when he left us, it was a deliverance fervently to be acknowledged, by every decent passenger. When we had got over the mountains, profane expressions began to be more frequently dropped in free conversation, and sometimes by decent looking men. In descending the Ohio, I soon found that several of the passengers were grievously addicted to the vulgar, and wicked habit of letting off their oaths on all occasions, let who would be present, and without in fact seeming to suspect that any body would be pained by hearing them. Many and many a conversation, during the journey, was I obliged to break off abruptly, in consequence of some profane exclamation, which made me shudder. The further we went, the more common and shameless did the habit of taking God's name in vain become. Indeed, I had no conception before, that such a state of things existed anywhere in the land. As an American, as a citizen of this enlightened Christian country, I blush to say, that I had never heard anything like it on the other side of the Atlantic. It is rare that your ears are pained in this way, in the public conveyances of England, rarer still in Scotland, and even in Ireland, so far as I had opportunity to judge, there is nothing which approaches our own "bad pre-eminence." It is not the whiskey saturated salmander of the great Western steamboats, nor the boozy ostlers and stage drivers only, that constantly pollute the air with their pestiferous breath—but you will meet with multitudes of intelligent and respectable looking men, who can hardly open their lips without an oath. It is a dreadful annoyance I will not say to the Christian traveller, but to any traveller, who has a decent respect for the third commandment.

But while I make these complaints, in the name of religion, morality, and even common civility, let me not be understood to represent, that the majority of those whom you meet with at the hotels and in the public conveyances, are addicted to the use of profane language. This is not the case. Many are as much pained by what they hear, as you are yourself; and others who are not at all shocked, but rather amused, with good-natured profanity, have too much conscience or self-respect, or regard to the feelings of others, to indulge in it themselves. "But it is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation, that the name of God is so dreadfully 'blasphemed' by any class of men in any section of our country. Can God hear it, and his anger not be kindled? Can he hear it, and not 'bend his bow, and make his arrow ready upon the string?' Will not his 'soul be avenged on such a nation as this?' What Christian father must not shudder, at the thought of bringing up his children in such a state of society? and what can change it? We must look to the Bible, to the faithful preaching of the Gospel, to the Sabbath school, and above all, to the Spirit of God, to bring about the desired reformation.

THE CHARACTER OF A TRUE FRIEND.

Concerning the man you call your friend—tell me, will he weep with you in the hour of distress? Will he faithfully reprove you to your face, for actions for which others are ridiculing or censuring you behind your back? Will he dare to stand forth in your defence, when detraction is secretly aiming its deadly weapons at your reputation? Will he acknowledge you with the same cordiality, and behave to you with the same friendly attention, in the company of your superiors in rank or fortune, as when the claims of pride or vanity do not interfere with those of friendship? If misfortune and losses should oblige you to retire into a walk of life, in which you cannot appear with the same distinction, or entertain your friends with the same liberality as formerly, will he still