

CHRISTIAN MIRROR.

DEVOTED TO THE INTERESTS OF RELIGION AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

"MANY SHALL RUN TO AND FRO, AND KNOWLEDGE SHALL BE INCREASED."—DANIEL xii. 4.

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GENERAL LITERATURE.

THE HEBREW FOUNDLING.

At the gloomiest period in the history of the Hebrew people, one of the daughters of Levi gave birth to an infant of extraordinary beauty. The mother's instinctive pleasure in gazing upon her babe was at once repressed, and agonising emotions succeeded to momentary delight, when she remembered that the last edict of the Egyptian oppressor had enjoined that every Israelitish male child should be thrown into the Nile. What could be done? The decree was peremptory: death would probably be the penalty of disobedience. "But," said she to her dejected husband, "the God of Abraham still lives; he is the protector of our race, though for a season he hides himself. Our duty to him requires that we should endeavour to preserve the life of this dear little one. Let us trust in God, and conceal, if possible, this lovely gift of his mysterious providence." The faith of the mother excited the dormant courage of the father; they agreed to make the effort, however perilous to themselves; and morning by morning, and evening by evening, poured forth supplications before the invisible King of kings, invoking the interposition of his almighty arm on behalf of their beloved babe.

At the expiration of three months from this time, however, they perceived that longer concealment was impossible. The search for Hebrew infants was becoming increasingly rigid, and the reports which daily reached the mother's ear filled her with terror.

"We cannot hide him any longer," said she, "nor are there any means by which we can provide for his safety; yet my hand shall not be upon him, nor yours, Amram, nor will we deliver him to the ruthless officers of Pharaoh: we will confide in the providence of the God of Israel. I cherish a hope that he in whom our fathers trusted will be our deliverer. Was not Isaac, our ancestor, bound and laid upon the altar, just ready to be slain for a burnt offering, when the angel of Jehovah intervened? and have we not been taught to remember this, and say, 'In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen?' Was not the son of the bond-woman just ready to perish in the wilderness of Beersheba, when the God of Abraham pitied him and sent his angel? This ark of bulrushes I have prepared; to-morrow morning, ere the sun be up, I will place this dear little one in the flags by the water side; and may the God that gave him be his protector!"

Very early in the morning the wakeful mother looked on the countenance of her babe, which seemed more comely than ever. Once more he must partake of the nutriment which creative goodness had provided for him; but as she allowed him to linger at the breast, the tears rolled down her cheeks while she thought of the morrow.

"Miriam," said she, "come with me; be quick, or the sun will discover us; come with me to the river, and you shall watch our treasure.—The God of heaven will look down from above; and you, Miriam, stand where none can observe you; but watch carefully,

and when any thing befalls the child, be it good or evil, come and tell me quickly: I will tarry in my chamber and pray."

The first rays of day were gilding the eastern horizon when the daughter of Pharaoh with her attendants came down to bathe. How simple, yet how impressive, is the brief description of the facts which Moses himself has given under the guidance of the Spirit of inspiration! "The daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it. And when she had opened it, she saw the child; and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, 'This is one of the Hebrews' children.' Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, 'Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?' And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, 'Go.' And the maid went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, 'Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give thee thy wages.' And the woman took the child, and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, 'Because I drew him out of the water.'" Ex. ii. 5—10.

What a wonderful exhibition does this history give of the power and wisdom of the Supreme Ruler! We know what his purposes were: subsequent events rendered them manifest; but how surprising the means by which they were effected! He intended to honour the faith of the poor, oppressed Israelitish parents; to preserve from impending destruction their promising child; to prepare for the work of delivering his people from bondage and conducting them to Canaan; and to render him an eminent example of genuine piety, on whose career all subsequent generations might look back with pleasure and advantage. But how astonishing the agency by which these designs were achieved! How forcibly are we taught that God can raise up friends where we should be least inclined to look for them, and regulate the emotions of hearts which are least sensible of his control, and least disposed to subvert his plans!—Little did the daughter of Pharaoh think that such important results would ensue from her movements that morning. A thousand incidents might have prevented her visit to that spot at that critical moment. It was contingent on her caprice whether she should order the babe to be thrown into the stream, or give way to the emotions of tenderness. All was uncertain to man; all was fixed and determinate to God.

To be continued.

JOY AND GRIEF.—It is notorious to philosophers, that joy and grief can hasten and delay time. Locke is of opinion, that a man in great misery may so far lose his measure, as to think a minute an hour; or in joy, an hour a minute.

FRANKEFER, in his optical experiments, made a machine in which he could draw 32,900 lines in an inch breadth.

THE CONTRAST.

A STORY FOR YOUTH.

It was a cold morning. Snow was on the ground, and many sleighs were gliding rapidly over its crusted surface. A dashing equipage was driven to the centre of a commercial square and its thickly-cloaked occupant stepped upon the pavement. A poor woman with a shivering child stood before him.

"Good sir, my child is starving—give me a shilling to buy bread."

He looked sternly upon her, and her upturned eyes dropped at the fierce look, while she involuntarily pressed her infant closer to her breast.

"Woman! go to the Alms-house; I have nothing for you.

The denial, and the harshness of the tone in which the words were spoken, sunk deep into her heart, disquieting her more than the repulsive expression of his features. She sighed, and said to her child, "God take compassion on thee, for the heart of this man does not feel for thee!" and her sobs and wailing expressed the bitterness of the mother's sorrow. He passed on.

The horses were champing on the bright bits, and throwing up their sleek and arching necks, as if delighted with the clanging sounds of the bells so profusely strung around them. A boy of ten or eleven years of age was gazing with the eagerness of juvenile curiosity, wonder, and delight, upon the splendid vehicle, and the noble horses. Although on his way to school, he had turned aside for a few moments, and in his open and pleased face was written the expectation of the joy which he would experience, when at some future day he might sit behind such animals, and be whirled along the smooth road.

While his eyes were thus occupied, and his feelings were thus swelling up like the waters in an overflowing spring, his ears heard the low and piteous request of the indigent petitioner; and the coarseness and brutality of the rich man to whom it was addressed, checked the current of his joyous emotions. Scarcely were the words uttered before he was hurrying off, and ere the moanings of the woman had ceased, he was running back from a shop, distant but a few yards.

"Here, poor woman, take this bread, and feed your child."

The sobbings were exchanged for a scream of surprised delight; the bread was quickly seized, and a portion of it given to the child, who, almost famished, and stiffened with cold, could with difficulty receive the proffered sustenance. The boy stood until the child commenced to eat, and the mother, whose attention and persuasive accents had been employed in various methods to impart warmth, and to induce it to eat, looked up, while a gleam of satisfaction at the result of her experiments, and of thankfulness for the timely relief, broke over her anxious and saddened countenance. "God bless you, little sir, (said she) and if you have a mother, may she be long preserved to you!"