

him fly ever. Be not conformed to the world, for its fashion passeth away; the sound of the viol, the laugh of the gay, and the voice of the beautiful, are soon to be silenced in the grave; generations of such are dead and forgotten, the present are following in their footsteps to the tomb, and soon a new and different scene will be ushered in, where those alone will shine, who have "done justly, loved mercy, and walked humbly with their God."—*Philadelphia Presbyterian.*

#### THE PRESS—ITS POWER AND INFLUENCE.

We have talked of the press until it has become a threadbare topic; and yet, with all our talk, we have really no practical estimate of its importance. Time was when men's thoughts could be communicated only by being spoken; and some conjectured that even the works of Homer were originally committed only to the memories of men, and that generations passed before they were written on any material substance. You may sit in your closet now, and, without opening your lips, speak to those who dwell nearest the poles. You may multiply yourself in a single week into ten thousand agents either for good or evil. You may scarcely ever look into the world, and yet even thrones and principalities may feel the influence of your thoughts.

The simplest view of a subject is often the most impressive. Estimate, then, the power of the press, by the acknowledged influence of any great mind that has spoken through it. Do you see that man, in the eccentricity of his genius, prostrate upon the floor—labouring to recall one of the noblest efforts in the annals of intellect? It is Robert Hall, busy with his sermon on modern infidelity. His friends have asked him to publish it, and he will not decline; but as yet it has no existence except in his own mind; and though he loathes the labour of writing, he is turning his hand at intervals to the work. Wonder of the age as he was for modesty as well as for genius, he dreamed not of the influence which that sermon was destined to exert; but when it came forth the whole world recognized it as the masterpiece of a master-mind: it put itself into communion with the greatest intellects of the age; it threw around Christianity a new wall of fire; and infidelity, as she bent over its pages, resolved that silence was prudence. Turn now your eye to yonder villa on the shores of the Mediterranean, and see another mighty mind pouring out upon paper its principal thoughts, to be, ere long, in the printer's hand. It is Byron—the Heaven favoured, and yet foul-minded Byron—in the act of producing one of his licentious poems. Peradventure he is dreaming of nothing but his own fame; but he is really opening a new fountain of death upon the world; he is making provision to perpetuate his existence as the enemy of his race; he is rendering the splendours of his genius subservient to the wild and desperate purposes of his heart.—Both Hall and Byron are stars that must always shine; but in the beams of one there is life—in the beams of the other there is death.—*Dr. Sprague.*

From the Philadelphia Christian World.

#### THE POETRY OF THE BIBLE.

ONE of the most interesting specimens of the poetry of the holy book, is found in the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan. Hear its low dirge-like tones: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places; how are the mighty fallen? Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph. Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield

of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil. From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty."

"Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, who clothed you in scarlet, with other delights; who put on ornaments of gold upon your apparel. How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle? O Jonathan, thou wast slain in thine high places! I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women. How are the mighty fallen, and the weapons of war perished?"

Nothing in the whole range of elegiac literature can be compared to this most beautiful lament. Let us take an example or two of his species of composition, and compare them with that just read. We will present first the ode of Collins, on the memory of those who fell in the rebellion of 1745.

"How sleep the brave, who sink to rest  
With all their country's wishes blest!  
When spring, with dowy fingers cold,  
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,  
She there shall dress a sweeter sod,  
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

"By fairy hands their knell is rung,  
By forms unseen their dirge is sung.  
Their honour comes, a pilgrim gray,  
To bless the turf that wraps their clay,  
And Freedom shall a while repair,  
To dwell, a weeping hermit there."

We find in Collins' dirge, the purest and most perfect poetry, and all that excite admiration and elicit praise, but it cannot be placed beside David's lament. That energy of thought—that expressiveness of imagery—that strength of diction—that graceful boldness—that tenderness of feeling—that compressing of powerful emotion into few words, always the characteristic of intense passion, which appear in the lament, cannot be found in the dirge. Time has numbered many centuries since the poet of Israel breathed this sublime requiem over the departed Saul and Jonathan; but yet, it retains a solemn sweetness, to which nature easily responds. Its sentiments are engraved on tombstones; its words are sacred to the memory of the holy and the illustrious dead. As oft as we wander among the quiet graves of those who have fallen by our side—as oft as their glorified forms gather over us in twilight hours—we fail not to address each one of them in these touching words, "very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of woman!"

One more illustration of the poetry of the Bible may be given. It is the 137th Psalm. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For they that had carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us, required of us mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of the songs of Zion.' How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy."

Lord Byron has changed this Psalm into verse, but it is by no means equal to the original.

The patriotism of the Jew was a most elevated sentiment. It was associated with his religion, as well as his country. All the miracle that had signalized his national history—the memory of ancestral worth—the fondly-cherished hope of the Messiah, dearer than any memory, and brighter than any other hope—the exclusiveness of his national character—all conspired to awaken patriotic feelings. Imagine then his sufferings, when, a down-trodden exile, he hung his harp upon the willows of Babylon, and hushed his song in the profound silence of a burdened bosom!

If such be the poetic claims of this volume, it must be obvious that its literary merits are above all estimation. Did all literary men conform their writings to this divine model, how healthful an influence would be exerted! The time will come when this will be the case. Already some of the greatest works of human genius have been

imbued with its spirit: Milton's immortal poem "Paradise Lost"—Dr. Young's "Night Thoughts"—various pieces by Cowper—Polloc's "Course of Time," and other poems, have sprung from the Bible.

Let us not, however, in our contemplation of its literary excellence, forget that the great object of the inspired volume is to make us wise unto salvation. To teach us the path to heaven, and to lead us thither, is its chief end. For this its prophets fore-told events—its poets sung—its historians wrote. For this Jesus Christ, the Son of God, suffered and died. For this we live. Our destiny is Eternity! Shall we not then prize this blessed volume—so rich in its promises, so holy in its principles, so perfect in its revelations? Shall we not press it to our bosoms, as we walk to the grave?

#### HELPING MISSIONS.

SOMETHING may be done for this cause by each of the Missionaries of the Board. We believe it important, that every church should be taught and trained to something for the cause of Jesus Christ. The missionary is essential to the vitality of a church—no church can be in a prosperous state without it. If they can do but little, that little should be done; and in doing what they can, they will be strengthened to do more. Every church, that receives aid, we may believe, should do something for this cause. We trust all our missionaries will bear this in remembrance, and do what they can.

Females may render important aid to this cause. They can do much for any cause in which they embark; and it is our firm conviction, that, in aiding the cause of Domestic Missions, Christian females are acting eminently in their appropriate sphere. The want of religious privileges in our new and destitute settlements is felt most deeply and most keenly by females, and especially by mothers. We could relate numerous incidents of touching and thrilling interests in proof of this. How peculiarly appropriate, then, to our Christian females is the work of sending the Gospel, with all its holy influences and rich consolations, to their desolate sisters in the wilderness. Benevolent females, give us your aid in this good work!

We will only add—that the Children in our numerous Sabbath Schools may also, and appropriately, lend their aid to this cause. Our children cannot too early be taught the "divine art" of doing good; and to feel and act for the temporal and spiritual benefit of the thousands of little children in their own country who are growing up in ignorance and vice, will be of essential benefit, both to those who give and to those who receive.

The way seems fully open, and every thing in the providence of God invites to the most energetic prosecution of this great work. What is now needed is large resources, and in order to secure these a deeper and more general interest in the work with our Pastors and Churches. Let it be taken hold of, with a holy and devoted energy, by all our Pastors, and by every Church; and with God's blessing, which will not be withheld, the work will go forward, God will be honoured, his Church will be extended, our country will be blessed, and many, ready to perish, will be made to rejoice in the salvation which is in Christ Jesus.—*Report of Board of Missions, U. S.*

#### THE DARNEL, THE TARE OF SCRIPTURE.

THIS is the darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), a rather large grass furnished with broad leaves, a stout stem, and growing as high as wheat, among which it is generally to be found. Instances have been known where the seeds of this plant, which possess peculiarly noxious properties, have accidentally been mixed with wheat, and both being nearly of the same size, it is almost impossible to separate one from the other by the ordinary process of sifting; consequently, whenever this has happened the result has been very serious. Persons who have partaken of bread made from this pernicious mixture, have suffered effects similar to those produced by other active poisons. I have been more especially induced to mention this baneful plant, because it is supposed to be the Tare of Scripture, with the account of which in the parable its character closely agrees. It is evident that the plant there alluded to is possessed of noxious qualities, or it would not