

schools, that the people might not again relapse into ignorance. The education supplied by these institutions was at once scriptural in its principles, and liberal in its extent. The property of deserted or suppressed monasteries was very frequently applied to this useful purpose.

### Jephthah's Vow.

Having some years since examined the subject of Jephthah's vow, and arrived at the conclusion that there is preponderance of argument in favour of the translation given in the English version; I have been induced to re-examine the question, in consequence of a very able paper inserted in the May number, the object of which is to show that Jephthah did not offer his daughter as a burnt offering, but devoted her to the Lord in a state of perpetual virginity. This fresh investigation has confirmed my previous conclusion, and, avoiding as much as possible a controversial style, I would state the grounds upon which that conclusion rests.

It is important to remark at the outset, that the fact must be determined by the language employed in narrating it, and by the tenor of the context, not by any feelings of our own respecting the nature of the deed.

The question is one of history, not of morals: Jephthah is recorded to have vowed a certain thing on condition of a successful issue to his undertaking, and we are told that he did "according to his vow which he had vowed." The point to be decided is, what did he vow? This is plainly no question of morality, or wisdom, but simply one of fact, and we must not allow feeling to interfere until the fact has been established from the record.

I. The 31st verse of the xi. chap. of Judges contains the clause upon

the rendering of which the whole question turns. "Then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering."

Without stopping to discuss the change of "and" into "or" proposed by some critics, which has been satisfactorily set aside, I proceed at once to justify the translation, "I will offer it or him up as a burnt offering," in preference to the rendering adopted by Dr. Randolph and Bishop Louth, "I will offer to him, *i. e.* the Lord, a burnt offering."

In the 2 Kings, iii. 27, a passage occurs precisely similar to the one in question; the words are the same in the Hebrew, and the construction is identical. The English version of this passage is, "Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall."

But there are many passages in which "offer to him," &c. occurs. What is the Hebrew construction in these cases? Invariably, as far as I can discover, a reposition is used. Two instances of this construction will suffice: they might be multiplied tenfold if it were required. Ps. lxxvi. 15, "I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings." And Amos v. 22, "Though ye offer me burnt offerings." Verse 25 affords another case in point, but I do not cite it, because the verb in the Hebrew is different. In these examples the preposition  $\text{ל}$  is used before the pronoun, which is equal to our English preposition "to" or "unto."

By placing the four passages immediately under one another, even the reader who has no knowledge of the Hebrew language may perceive some degree of force in the comparison. To one who can read the original it will be still more convincing.