

Poetry.

ETERNAL JUSTICE.

BY CHARLES MACKAY.

The man is thought a knave or fool,
Or bigot, plotting crime,
Who for the advancement of his kind,
Is wiser than his time.
For him the hemlock shall distil;
For him the axe be bared;
For him the gibbet shall be built;
For him the stake prepared;
Him shall the scorn and laugh of men
Pursue with deadly aim;
And malice, envy, spite, and lies,
Shall desecrate his name.
But truth shall conquer at the last,
For round and round we run,
And ever the right comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.

Peace to thy soul, old Socrates,
Cheerily to and fro,
Trust to the impulse of thy soul
And let the poison flow,
They may shatter to earth the lamp of clay
That holds a light divine,
But they cannot quench the fire of thought
By any such deadly wine;
They cannot blot thy spoken words
From the memory of man,
By all the poison ever was brewed
Since time its course began.
To-day abhorred; to-morrow adored,
So round and round we run,
And ever the truth comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.

Plod in thy cave, grey Anchorite;
Be wiser than thy peers;
Augment the range of human power,
And trust to coming years.
They call thee wizard, and monk accursed,
And load thee with dispraise:
Thou wert born five hundred years too soon
For the comfort of thy days;
But not too soon for human kind;
Time hath reward in store;
And the demons of our sires become
The saints that we adore.
The blind can see, the slave is lord;
So round and round we run;
And ever the wrong is proved to be wrong,
And ever is justice done.

Keep, Galileo, to thy thought,
And nerve thy soul to bear;
They may gloat o'er the senseless words they
wring
From the pangs of thy despair;
They may veil their eyes, but they cannot hide
The sun's meridian glow;
And the heel of a priest may tread thee down,
And a tyrant work thee woe;
But never a truth has been destroyed;
They may curse it and call it crime;
Pervert and betray, or slander and slay
Its teachers for a time.
But the sunshine eye shall light the sky,
As round and round we run;
And truth shall ever come uppermost,
And justice shall be done.

And live there now such men as these—
With thoughts like the great of old?
Many have died in their misery,
And left their thought untold;
And many live, and are ranked as mad,
And are placed in the cold world's ban,
For sending their bright far-seeing souls
Three centuries in the van.
They toil in penury and grief,
Unknown, if not maligned;
Forlorn, forlorn, bearing the scorn
Of the meanest of mankind.
But yet the world goes round and round,
And the genial seasons run,
And ever the truth comes uppermost,
And ever is justice done.

CHARACTER.—Men are to be estimated, as Johnson says, by the mass of character. A block of tin may have a grain of silver, but still it is tin; and a block of silver may have an alloy of tin, but still it is silver. The mass of Elijah's character was excellence; yet he was not without the alloy. The mass of Jehu's character was base; yet he had a portion of zeal which was directed by God to great ends. Bad men are made the same use of as scaffolds; they are employed as means to erect a building, and then are taken down and destroyed.—Cecil.

LETTERS FROM THE HON. JOHN Q. ADAMS TO HIS SON, ON THE BIBLE AND ITS TEACHINGS.

LETTER VI.

I promised you, in my last letter, to state the particulars in which I deemed the Christian dispensation to be an improvement or perfection of the law delivered at Sinai, considered as including a system of morality; but before I come to this point, it is proper to remark upon the character of the books of the Old Testament, subsequent to those of Moses. Some are historical, some prophetic, and some poetical; and two may be considered as peculiarly of the moral class—one being an affecting dissertation upon the vanity of human life, and another a collection of moral sentences under the name of Proverbs. I have already observed that the great immovable and eternal foundation of the superiority of Scripture morals to all other morality, was the idea of God, disclosed in them and only in them; the unity of God, His omnipotence, His righteousness, His mercy, and the infinity of His attributes, are marked in every line of the Old Testament in characters which nothing less than blindness can fail to discern, and nothing less than fraud can misrepresent.

This conception of God serving as a basis for the piety of His worshippers was of course incomparably more rational and more profound than it was possible that sentiment could be which adored devils for deities, or even that of philosophers like Socrates, Plato and Cicero, who, with purer and more exalted ideas of the Divine nature than the rabble of the poets, still considered the existence of any God at all as a question upon which they could form no decided opinion. You have seen that even Cicero believed the only solid foundation of all human virtue to be piety; and it was impossible that a piety so far transcending that of all other nations should not contain in its consequences a system of moral virtue equally transcendent. The first of the ten commandments was, that the Jewish people should never admit the idea of any other God. The object of the second, third and fourth, was merely to impress with greater force the obligation of the first and to obviate the tendencies and temptations which might arise to its being neglected or disregarded.—Throughout the whole law the same injunctions are continually renewed; all the rites and ceremonies were adapted to root deeper into the hearts and souls of the chosen people that the Lord Jehovah was to be forever the sole and exclusive object of love. Reverence and adoration, unbounded as His own nature, was the principle; the very letter of the law, and the whole Bible, is but a commentary upon it, and corollary from it.

The law was given not merely in the form of a commandment from God, but in that of a covenant or compact between the Supreme Creator and the Jewish people; it was sanctioned by the blessing and the curse pronounced on Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal, in the presence of the whole Jewish people and strangers, and by the solemn acceptance of the whole people responding amen to every one of the curses denounced for violation on their part of the covenant.—From that day until the birth of Christ (a period of about 1,500 years) the historical books of the Old Testament are no more than a simple record of the fulfilment of the covenant, in all its blessings and curses, exactly adapted to the fulfilment or transgression of its duties by the people. The nation was first governed by Joshua, under the express appointment of God; then by a succession of judges, and afterward by a double line of kings, until conquered and carried into captivity by the kings of Assyria and Babylon; seventy years afterward restored to their country, their temple and their laws; and again conquered by the Romans, and ruled by their tributary kings and pro-consuls. Yet, through all their vicissitudes of fortune, they never complied with the duties to which they had bound themselves by the covenant without being loaded with the blessing promised on Mount Gerizim, and never departed from them without being afflicted with some of the curses denounced upon Mount Ebal.

The prophetic books are themselves historical—for prophecy, in the strictest sense, is no more than history related before the event; but the Jewish prophets (of whom there was a succession almost constant from the time of Joshua to that of Christ) were messengers, specially commissioned of God, to warn the people of their duty, to foretell the punishments which awaited their transgressions, and finally to keep alive by uninterrupted prediction the expectation of the Messiah, "the seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of the earth should be blessed." With this conception of the Divine nature, so infinitely surpassing that of any other nation—with this system of moral virtue, so indissolubly blending, as by the eternal constitution of things must be blended, piety—with this uninterrupted series of signs and wonders, prophets and seers; miraculous interpositions of the omnipotent Creator to preserve and vindicate the truth, it is lamentable, but to those who know the nature of man, it is

not surprising to find the Jewish history little else than a narrative of idolatries and corruption of the Israelites and their monarchs; that the very people who had heard the voice God from Mount Sinai, within forty days compel Aaron to make a golden calf, and worship that as the "God who brought them out of the land of Egypt;" that the very Solomon, the wisest of mankind, to whom God had twice revealed himself in visions—the sublime dedicator of the temple, the witness, in the presence of the whole people, of the fire from Heaven which consumed the offerings from the altar, and of the glory of the Lord that filled the house—that he, in his old age, beguiled by fair idolatresses, should have fallen from the worship of the ever-blessed Jehovah to that of Ashtaroth and Milcom, &c., the abomination of all the petty tribes of Judea—that of Baal, and Dagon, &c.; that the sun, moon and planets, and all the hosts of Heaven—the mountains and plains, every high place, and every grove should have swarmed with idols, to corrupt the hearts and debase the minds of a people so highly favored of Heaven—the elect of the Almighty, may be among the mysteries of Divine providence, which it is not given to mortality to explain, but as inadmissible only to those who presume to demand why it has pleased the Supreme Arbiter of events to create such a being as man.

Observe, however, that amid the atrocious crimes which that nation so often polluted themselves with—through all their servitudes, dismemberments, captivities and transmigrations—the Divine light which had been imparted exclusively to them was never extinguished; the law delivered from Sinai was preserved in all its purity; the histories which attested its violations, and its accomplishments were recorded and never lost. The writings of the prophets, of David and Solomon, were all inspired with the same idea of the Godhead, and the same intertwining of religion and morality, and the same anticipations of the Divine "Immanuel, the God with us;" these survived all the changes of government and of constitutions which befel the people: "the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night;"—the law and the prophets, eternal in their nature—went before them unsullied and unimpaired through all the ruins of rebellion and revolution, of conquest and dispersion, of war, pestilence and famine. The Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian empires, Tyre and Sidon, Carthage and all the other nations of antiquity, rose and fell in their religious institutions at the same time as in their law and government; it was the practice of the Romans when they besieged a city to invoke its gods to come over to them; they considered the gods as Summer friends, ready to desert their votaries in the hour of calamity, or as traitors, ready to sell themselves for a bribe; they had no higher estimate of their own than of the stranger deities, whom, as Gibbon's id—"they were always ready to admit to the freedom of the city."

All the gods of the heathen have perished with their makers; for where on the face of the globe could now be found the being who believed in any one of them? So much more deep and strong was the hold which the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, took upon the imaginations and reason of mankind, that I might almost invert the question, and say, where is the human being found believing in any God at all and not believing in Him. The moral character of the Old Testament, then, is that piety to God is the foundation of all virtue, and that virtue is inseparable from it; but that piety without the practice of virtue is itself a crime and the aggravation of all iniquity. All the virtues which are here recognized by the heathen are inculcated not only with more authority but with more energy of argument and more eloquent persuasion in the Bible than in all the writings of the ancient moralists.

In one of the apocryphal books, (Wisdom of Solomon,) the cardinal virtues are expressly named: "If any man love righteousness, her labors are virtue, for she teacheth temperance and prudence and justice and fortitude;" which are such things as men can have nothing more profitable in this life. The book of Job, whether considered as history or as an allegorical parable, was written to teach the lessons of patience in afflictions, of resignation under Divine chastisement, of undoubted confidence in the justice and goodness of God under every temptation or provocation to depart from it. The morality of the apocryphal books is generally the same as that of the inspired writers, except that in some of them there is more stress laid upon the minor objects of the law, and less formal ordinances of police, and less continual recurrence to "the weightier matters."

The book of Ecclesiasticus, however, contains more Grecian than all the sayings of the seven Grecian sages. It was upon this foundation that the more perfect system of Christian morality was to be raised.—But I must defer the consideration to my next letter. In the meantime, as I have urged that the Scriptural idea of God is the foundation of all perfect virtue, and that it is totally different from the idea of God conceived by any ancient nation, I should recommend it to you, in pursuing the

Scriptures hereafter to mediate often upon the expressions by which they mark the character of the Deity, and to reflect upon the duties to Him and to your fellow-mortals which follow by inevitable deductions from them. That you may have an exact idea of the opinions of ancient heathen philosophers concerning God, or rather the gods, study Cicero's dialogues and read the Abbé Olivet's remarks on the theology of the Grecian philosophers, annexed to his translations.

From your affectionate father,
JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO MAINTAIN LIBERTY AND ORDER.

(From a sermon recently preached by Rev. M. Coquerel in the Temple of St. Marie.)

"Your first debt towards your country is to labor for the alliance of liberty and order.—Liberty, at the present day, will defend herself, do not doubt it; she has strength, public sentiment, numbers; the torrent is with her, it is order which needs to be defended, and in fact in defending her you will aid the cause of liberty, because without public order, liberty is only a snare, a falsehood, which soon ceases to deceive any one.

"All disorder is tyranny; any disorder takes something from the independence of every citizen; any disorder puts obstacles in my way, and it is exercising tyranny over me to put an unlawful obstacle across my path. Disorder, under whatever pretext it may be committed, whatever passion give rise to it, whatever varying changes of temptation it displays in turn, is only another name for anarchy, it is only anarchy as its source, waiting to grow large, and the most ancient, the most terrible lesson of history, in every country and in every age, is that anarchy becomes the worst of despotism; it is a despotism which has nothing in its favor, nothing; neither that heavy and monotonous peace which absolute power can at least maintain, nor that material prosperity which prevents a nation from waking up, nor that dazzling glory of war which often causes so many tears that we forget to weep for absent liberty. And while it kills liberty, social disorder kills labor; the utensils which serve as arms for disorder are injured too deeply and too suddenly to be used again for the arts of industry. In the tumult, nothing is done, laborers have no heart to work, distracted as they are by other sounds beside those of the workshop; some do nothing, because they are engaged in the tumult, others because they are looking on to watch it; distrust intercepts and stops order, the unfruitful activity of disorder causes hunger and thirst to increase, and the daily bread being cut off, poverty arrives with long strides, introduces itself everywhere, goes from house to house, descends from story, to story, and society is dissolved in the immense disorder, as an edifice from which the cement is withdrawn, crumbles to the ground.

"Christians, be all of you the defenders of order, each one in the place where God has marked out for him, each in the circle where his influence prevails, each by the means at his disposal. With a sense of this great duty, rally around the existing government, according to the precept of the gospel. "The powers that be, are ordained of God." Give force to authority, inculcate respect for the laws, march in the ranks of the citizen guard, pay without delay the amount of your taxes, and in every thing act as vigilant and courageous guardians of public order. Fathers of families, heads of manufactories, masters and workmen, do not doubt it, this is your duty as citizens and as Christians, your duty towards society and your country, your duty to yourselves, to your wives, your children, to God. Let no one be drawn away, let no one desert his post, and seek in the past motives for betraying the present. Have you regrets, they must be restrained; anxieties, they must be concealed; ambition, you must put it off. You have time to be ambitious, put it off till to-morrow, and begin by working for what is much more pressing. This is certainly not the gratification of your personal ambition; it is the public peace. The voice of your claims will be better heard when other sounds are silenced, and order, which is your first duty, is also your first interest. There is, you see, no pretext remaining which can justify you in your flyng from the defence of public peace. Kings abdicate when they see the hour is come; citizens can never abdicate, because the country is always here. Obey then your master who commands us to "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's;" and since Cæsar is at the present day the whole nation, in serving that you will serve yourselves, and you will seek the peace of the city where God has established you."

THE BEAUTIFUL.—To love the beautiful in all things, to surround ourselves, as far as our means permit, with all its evidences, not only elevates the thoughts and harmonizes the mind, but is a sort of homage we owe to the gifts of God and the labors of man. The beautiful is the priest of the benevolent.—Bulwer.