

MERCY AND JUSTICE

Dr Duff, in referring to the baptism of a Mohammedan, says, "A few days before his baptism, I asked him what was the vital point in which he found Mohammedanism most deficient, and which he felt christianity supplied. His prompt reply was, 'Mohammedanism is full of the *mercy* of God. While I had no real consciousness of inward guilt as a breaker of God's law, this satisfied me; but when I felt myself to be guilty before God, and a transgressor of his law, I felt it was not with God's mercy, but with God's *justice* I had to do. How to meet the claims of God's justice, Mohammedanism has made no provision, but this is the very thing which I have found fully accomplished by the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross; and therefore Christianity is the only religion for me, a guilty sinner.'"

How clearly did this converted Mohammedan perceive the true peculiarity of the gospel—Christ, by his death, making the provision for the satisfying of divine justice, and for its union with mercy in the sinner's salvation. It is a gospel only for those who realize the enormity of their guilt, and their own inability to remove the load. To the ignorant and insensible sinner it is but "a sounding brass and a tinkling symbol."

PHILOSOPHY OF RAIN.

To understand the philosophy of this beautiful and often sublime phenomenon, so often witnessed since the creation of the world, and essential to the very existence of plants and animals, a few facts derived from observation and a long train of experiments must be remembered:

1. Were the atmosphere everywhere at all times, at a uniform temperature, we should never have rain, or hail, or snow. The water absorbed by it in evaporation from the sea and earth's surface would descend in an imperceptible vapor, or cease to be absorbed by the air when it was once fully saturated.

2. The absorbing power of the atmosphere, and consequently its capability to retain humidity is proportionably greater in warm than in cold air.

3. The air near the surface of the earth is warmer than it is in the region of the clouds. The higher we ascend from the earth the colder do we find the atmosphere. Hence the perpetual snow on very high mountains in the hottest climate. Now when from continued evaporation, the air is highly saturated with vapor, though it be invisible and the sky cloudless, if its temperature is suddenly reduced by cold currents, descending from above, or rushing from a higher to a lower latitude, its capacity to retain moisture is diminished, clouds are formed, and the result is rain. Air condenses as it cools and like a sponge filled with water and compressed, pours out the water which its diminished capacity cannot hold. How singular, yet how simple, the philosophy of rain! What but Omniscience could have devised such an admirable arrangement for watering the earth?—*Scientific Journal*.

THE FIRE AND THE WORM.

A CONVERTED Indian was asked how he knew that he had experienced a change of heart. He gave no answer. He was asked if he saw the power. "No."

"Did you hear it?" "No."

"Did you feel it?" "Yes."

"Well, then, cannot you describe your feelings?"

He paused a moment, and then, kneeling upon the sand, made a small circle of chips and dried leaves. He then got a little worm, and placed it inside the ring, and with a spark from his pipe lighted his pile. The poor worm, when it began to feel the heat, crept first to one point, then to another, and at last, after many ineffectual attempts to get out, finding that the flames completely surrounded it, crawled to the centre, as if in despair, and coiled itself up, awaiting the result. When it began to feel the heat too sensibly, the Indian took it in his fingers and placed it without the ring in safety.

"Now," said he, "I will explain my meaning. I was like that poor worm; the fires of hell were burning around me—they began to scorch me—I ran every way—I drank fire-water—I tried hunting, everything; but could not get out. At last I threw myself down and tried to pray, and then God stretched forth his hand, and lifting me forth, gave me rest. Now," said he, "I cannot explain it any better. I cannot tell you how it was done, but I felt a change, and I know it was so."