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שמע ישראל

THE

SPIRIT OF JUDAISM.

M. B. Levy,
[illegible] St.
San Francisco, Cal.

BY GRACE AGUILAR.

"Thou makest us a reproach to our neighbours, a scorn and derision to them that are round us,—yet have we not forgotten thee."—PSALM xliv.

"Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that ye may KNOW and BELIEVE me. This people have I formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise."—ISAIAH xliii. 10. 21.

EDITED BY ISAAC LEESER.

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THIRD EDITION.

M. B. LEVY

PHILADELPHIA:
PUBLISHED AT 1227 WALNUT STREET.
5624.

67949

TO HER

WHOSE PRECEPTS AND EXAMPLE

ORIGINALLY INSPIRED THE SENTIMENTS CONTAINED

IN THE FOLLOWING PAGES,

THE TENDER GUARDIAN OF MY INFANCY,

THE SOLE INSTRUCTRESS OF MY YOUTH,

THE FAITHFUL FRIEND OF RIPER YEARS:

TO

MY BELOVED MOTHER,

This Volume

IS MOST GRATEFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED.

SHEMANG YISRAEL.

HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD, THE LORD IS ONE. AND THOU SHALT LOVE THE LORD THY GOD WITH ALL THY HEART, AND WITH ALL THY SOUL, AND WITH ALL THY MIGHT. AND THESE WORDS WHICH I COMMAND THEE THIS DAY, SHALL BE UPON THY HEART: AND THOU SHALT TEACH THEM DILIGENTLY UNTO THY CHILDREN, AND SHALT SPEAK OF THEM WHEN THOU SITTEST IN THY HOUSE, AND WHEN THOU WALKEST BY THE WAY, AND WHEN THOU LIEST DOWN, AND WHEN THOU RISEST UP. AND THOU SHALT BIND THEM FOR A SIGN UPON THY HAND, AND THEY SHALL BE AS FRONTLETS BETWEEN THY EYES. AND THOU SHALT WRITE THEM UPON THE DOOR-POSTS OF THY HOUSE, AND ON THY GATES.

DEUTERONOMY vi. 4–9.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

EDITOR'S PREFACE.

It is with a high degree of gratification that I am enabled to introduce to our religious public a new labourer in the elucidation of our time-honoured faith, in the person of Miss Aguilar, the author of the present publication. This, however, is not her first work; as about four years since she committed to the press a translation of the "Israel Defended," by Don Isaac Orobio, the brave and undaunted champion of the Mosaic religion. In addition to this, Miss Aguilar has written several fugitive poetical and prose pieces, few only of which have reached me.

My first published sermons having attracted the kind attention of Miss A., she requested me to undertake the editorial supervision of her MS. work on the "Spirit" of our religion. I shall readily be believed when asserting, that I felt truly happy that such a demand had been made upon me; and I accordingly offered my services to do as I was desired. Somewhat more than two years ago, Miss A. having finished her work sent it out to America through a private channel; but from some cause unknown it never reached me. She had accordingly to undertake the laborious task of re-writing it from her original sketches, and she completed it anew about this time last year. Last May I at length received this long-expected book, and had it not been for many unforeseen interruptions, its publication would not have been delayed till this time. The work is now, however, safely afloat on the ocean of public opinion; and I assure my friends that they cannot afford me a greater pleasure than to receive kindly and favourably the offering on the shrine of our religion so beautifully offered by our distant sister, distant only in body, because, though residing in another hemisphere, her spirit is linked to ours by the ties of national consanguinity and the bonds of one belief in the same kind and omnipotent God, whose are the sea and the dry land.

It would not become me to speak of the merits of this work, as it might be supposed that I were but offering the usual and fulsome adulation, which it is only too much the fashion to bestow on an author. Yet I may say without hesitation, that our females will find in it many passages peculiarly calculated to win and arrest their attention by their elegant imagery and truly delicate portraiture. Few

indeed, whether male or female, but must rise refreshed and invigorated by a new feeling of religious hopefulness called forth by the pious aspirations which are scattered throughout these pages, and be the more strongly impressed with the beatifying principles of our religion; seeing, as they must do, that the argument so strongly brought home to the judgment of all is not furnished by a man PAID to *preach* our doctrines, but by a woman whose own experience has taught her the blessedness and life springing from the living fountain of the code and law of Moses. This voluntary testimony is worth much more than a highly elaborate treatise by one deeply learned in the law; and despite of occasional errors, which are for the most part animadverted upon in the notes appended to the text. I have no doubt but that it will aid greatly in diffusing a true spirit of religion, and assist our fellow-believers to lean in their joys and afflictions with confiding trust upon the Holy One of Jacob, their Rock and Redeemer.

I rejoice greatly, that a gifted daughter of Israel has at length appeared, who does not disdain to stand forth as the champion of her ancient creed, and who, forsaking for a while the field of secular literature, where both fame and profit await the successful aspirant, links her fate with those ardent few who hesitate not to avow their abiding hope in the law of their Hebrew forefathers, and who seek for no better reward, than to see their own religion followed and its adherents honoured, not for the possession of wealth and power, but for the possession of a piety and a devotedness to their God, which can proceed solely from hopes whose birth is in heaven and whose ending is only in eternity.

My editorial labours were restricted, by the express direction of the author, to correcting the text where I might discover obscurities, and appending notes where they were required. I have fulfilled both parts of the pleasant task assigned me with honest fidelity, and with all the accuracy I could command. Of course perfect freedom from faults I do not claim either for my friend or myself; and any slight inaccuracies which may be discovered here and there will, I trust, be viewed with the usual indulgence which I have hitherto received. For all the notes bearing my initials I am alone responsible; since, owing to the distance between us, the author had no opportunity of seeing them before they appeared in print.

The chief points of difference between Miss Aguilar and myself are her seeming aversion to the *tradition*, and her idea that the teaching of mere formal religion opens the door to the admission of Christianity. The reader will easily perceive from my notes to various passages, that I believe the traditions of our fathers of vital importance in elucidating the words of Scripture and regulating our course

of action. And I insist, in concert with all who have duly weighed the subject, that, without claiming infallibility for the sayings and decisions of our Rabbins, they are nevertheless entitled to be listened to with profound respect and to be obeyed as holy ancestral customs, unless indeed they flatly contradict the text of Scripture and the legitimate common-sense deductions therefrom. It is too evident for denial by the most prejudiced, that a discretionary power was conferred by the law of Moses upon the various chief tribunals for the time-being (see Deut. xvii. 10); and their decisions, together with the oral traditions delivered by Moses himself to the elders, always constituted our customs, and are what we term the oral law, or tradition. That many things may have crept in in process of time, neither warranted by the strict letter of the law nor necessary for any useful purpose, I will neither deny nor affirm, for this is not the place to do so; but this much may be asserted without fear of contradiction, that without traditional authority there could be no Jewish conformity; since others use the Bible as well as we do, and still their conduct is so totally different from ours. Now what constitutes this difference, but our mode of interpretation? And whence is this derived, but from tradition? I regret that the small space I am necessarily limited to in this preface prevents me from enlarging on the subject; but I may say once for all, that Jews are not safe unless they abide by the doctrines which have been handed down as derived from and based upon the Bible; and though *all* may not be able to get a comprehensive knowledge of the minutiæ of the laws, it is scarcely to be doubted, that there will be always educated men whose business it is to devote their whole attention to their religion and to be at all hours ready to show the people the way they should go, and to distinguish between the clean and the unclean no less than between the morally right and wrong.

In regard to the approach to Christianity by the formalist, I must remark that there seems to be no connection between the two, any more than the apostasy to paganism or the Islam where either of these prevails. The Jew embraces Christianity, if at all, by his desire for some tangible advantages which his change is supposed to bring, or from a mere ignorance of the principles of his own belief. It is, therefore, not because a person is a formalist, only because he is ignorant of his duties and their intent: and accordingly those who have received no religious education are more likely to swerve than they who have been instructed though faultily; for if these last fall, it is not from ignorance, but from wickedness. Besides, in free countries, such as America and France, Jews do not embrace Christianity so much as become indifferent, and only coalesce through marriage or

entire neglect of all religion with the multitude around them, simply because they do not *care*, not because they do not *believe*. Indifference therefore is a far greater enemy to us than conversion; and upon the former Miss A. has said but little, whilst she has expressed more fears of the latter than I believe warranted by the facts.

However, my acquaintance with late events in Europe is not sufficiently extensive to hazard an opinion on either side; and I hope fervently that the Guardian of Israel who has so long preserved us from annihilation may farther bless and protect us, and give effectiveness to the earnest labours of His servants to spread a knowledge of His law among His chosen people.

In conclusion I will merely state, that late events, which some weak in faith have thought fraught with danger to our national unity, will surely prove in the end of the utmost benefit. Inquiry will be called forth; men of godliness will hasten forward to teach and proclaim aloud the word of God; the spirituality of our faith, as has been done in the present work, will be duly exemplified; love for our observances will be greatly increased; and labourers of both sexes will not be wanting to work with undismayed courage for the promotion of the kingdom of Heaven in truth, faithfulness and humility. With these few and brief observations I surrender the work of my friend to the approbation of our religious community, little doubting but that she may meet with sufficient success to cause her never to regret the hours she has devoted to a task of all others the most pleasing, of having guided many to righteousness, and caused the drooping spirit to revive in renewed strength and hope in the Author of all the blessings that are ours here and in the life everlasting.

ISAAC LEESER.

PHILADELPHIA, { Tebeth 21, 5602. / January 3, 1842.

NOTE.—The present edition has been stereotyped; and the editor hopes that the work may be rendered more useful yet on its renewed mission. Some poems of Miss A. have been added as an Appendix.

May, 5624.

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PREFACE.

Exposing a work, which has long been the darling object of an author's cares, the treasured subject of his secret thoughts, the companion of private hours, to the eye of a censorious world, must ever be attended with many varied and conflicting feelings, more particularly if that treasured subject be theology. The scrutiny, the criticism lavished on thoughts of a light and evanescent nature, may be heard with a smile; the condemnation or approval of peculiar sentiments and feelings, may be attended with a degree of pain, which, however, can at length become indifference; but when it is those deepest, dearest, most precious feelings of the heart included in that one word, Religion,—indifference can never blunt the pain, or ease the trembling doubt which ever attend their exposure to a world.

The earnest desire to do good can alone nerve the spirit to face pain, scorn, contumely—even the charge of hypocrisy:—yet even this motive may be turned and twisted by the scorner; and the breathings of a spirit painfully sensible of its own unworthiness, fully conscious how vain are its struggles to walk on steadily in the path it has laid down as that which the word of God points out—often sinking in grief and deep despondency, at the immense distance which severs it from the goal it pants and longs to seek —these very breathings may be regarded as mere declamatorial eloquence, as doctrines well fitted for the distant crowd, but unfelt by those who can so glibly and smoothly give them vent in words.

Even to this wrong the author of a theological work must invariably submit, and nerve his mind to hear his most sacred feelings canvassed alike by the sceptic and the scorner, the bigoted and the irreligious—even by those whose approval he may most earnestly desire.

To the Hebrew theologist these trials and difficulties are increased; for besides the enemies of his own faith (which a clear and candid statement of religious facts seldom fails to create), he has to encounter both open and covered attacks of the religions around him;—he must prepare defence for all that he has promulgated concerning his peculiar belief;—he must not be surprised to find all that he has brought forward simply to demonstrate the difference between his creed and that of others treated as attacks challenging reply;—he must strengthen himself to mark unmoved his most charitable and benevolent feelings trampled upon, or totally disregarded;—he may see all that he fondly hoped would aid the cause of love to God and charity to man turned into weapons of bitterness and strife—the good he hoped to see, changed into evil; and often and often he may long to recall the words that he has written, but in vain.

The author of the following work is well aware of all this; and yet so powerful within her is the hope that it may be permitted to find some response in the gentle minds of her own sex, to awaken one lethargic spirit to a consciousness of its own powers, its own duties, to lift up one heart in increased devotion to its Creator, and benevolence to its fellow-creatures: that still she sends it forth, trusting it to Him whose blessing can alone render it, in His own good time, of service to His people.

To the mothers and daughters in Israel its pages are more particularly addressed; for to them is more especially entrusted the regeneration of Israel. A preface is scarcely the place to speak of the important influence of women: yet to them, and them only, are the earliest years of *man* committed; from their lips must the first ideas on all subjects be received; and on them yet more particularly devolves the task of infusing that all-important but too often neglected branch of education, religion. By them, perhaps, this endeavour to lighten their labours may be welcomed in the same kindly spirit in which it is written. The religion which it breathes may be deemed too heart-springing, too feminine, too clinging, to find its reply amid the sons of her people: yet those very sentiments, if insensibly instilled by the Hebrew mother in

her religious exhortations to her children, may fall with greater influence than did they proceed more from the head than from the heart. She need not fear that they will degenerate into slavery, that her sons will receive the scornful appellation of saints when they enter the world. The man will retain, revere, and bless the religion of his infancy, and bear it with him as a shield of defence and robe of glory. His bolder heart, his hardier frame, while it strengthens and retains its early impressions, will deprive them of all which might be considered too feminine and dependent. While to her daughters the piety of the heart and the affections will at once give strength for the trials of life, hallow domestic and social duty, purify their simplest pleasures, and, fitting them in their turn to lead their offspring in the same blessed path, render them worthy helpmates of regenerated Israel.

When therefore the author looks to her own sex for the support and countenance of her labours—when it is to them that they are principally addressed:—she ventures to hope that from all undue presumption her efforts may be absolved. Her aim is to *aid, not* to dictate; to *point* to the Fountain of Life, not presumptuously to *lead;* to awaken the spirit to its healing influence, to rouse it to a sense of its own deep responsibilities, *not* to censure and judge.

The hours of reflection, which attended alike the composition and the writing of this volume, awakened her too strongly and keenly to a sense of her own weakness and utter incapacity of herself to keep the law of her God as her heart desires ever to permit her pronouncing a harsh judgment on her fellow-creatures; and if there are passages which seem to belie this assertion, she can only declare they are as completely contrary to her sentiments as to her intention.

One other incentive has urged her to the publication of her work —the hope that it may assist the followers of other creeds in obtaining a truer and kinder estimate of the Jewish religion than, from the scarcity of theological writings amongst the Hebrews, they now possess. It is not from argumentative works that the true spirit of a religion can be discovered; and yet with the exception of one or two, these are the only kind found in a Jewish

library. Could Christians once properly understand the pure spirit of the Mosaic faith, the real intent of all its ceremonies, the immortal hopes, the universal benevolence it breathes, the strength it infuses, the comfort it bestows: they would perhaps see how perfectly unnecessary it is, either for the Hebrew's happiness in heaven or his spiritual welfare upon earth, to make him a convert to their faith. And if their desire and efforts towards conversion yet continue unabated, the youthful Hebrew would at least be preserved from the danger arising from the urging of the above-mentioned plea. The hopes of heaven and comfort on earth can have no weight with those who discover both in the religion of their fathers; and converters must adopt some other argument. But it is the author's earnest hope, that a fair and candid perusal of these pages will remove many of the prejudices concerning the Hebrew nation, by drawing aside the blinding veil in which ignorance had enveloped her, and touch some hearts which are not entirely closed against conviction and benevolence, with love and veneration for that people so long the standing witness alike of the truth of God and of His word.

It may be, that her hopes are too presumptuous, her wishes too ambitious ever to be realized; but it is in the power of the universal Father to bless the lowliest efforts of His servants; and if He will, even this unpretending volume may be permitted to bring forth good. Trusting in *His* blessing, not in the merits of her work, the author sends it forth.

G. A.

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THE SPIRIT OF JUDAISM.

CHAPTER I.

THE AVOWAL OF UNITY CONSIDERED AS IT REGARDS THE JEWISH NATION.

THERE is one portion of the Jewish form of prayer, which every member of that nation is desired to repeat twice, sometimes three times, in every day. It is the first taught to our children; either in Hebrew or in English, the words of the SHEMANG are the first ideas of prayer which the infant mind receives, long before any meaning can be attached to them: and it is right that it should be so; for so much of vital importance is contained in this brief portion of our ritual, that we cannot impress it too early on the heart of an Israelite. But do we follow up this good beginning? do we seize the first moment of awakening intellect to inculcate the meaning attached to words we have been so eager should be remembered? Do we of maturer years reflect sufficiently on the verses we repeat,—or do we not all feel conscious at one period of our lives, that they slip from our lips, so heedlessly, so lifelessly, that we are scarcely conscious, when we begin and when we end them? The thoughts wander, the heart is deadened; we feel this when our necessities have formed prayers for themselves, when we

supplicate for things we desire, relief we need: we know then, the Shemang is the certain part of our devotions, when Fancy, as if in mockery, waves her wand, and we vainly struggle to command our thoughts. And why is this? because the words have been impressed, and not the sense; because there seems no actual prayer contained therein; nothing to vivify the heart, occupy the mind, or rouse the sluggish affections from their sleep.

Repeating it, as we have done from childhood, this effect is perhaps natural. It contains no actual prayer; but prayer is a word which may be taken in a wider sense than its literal meaning. For prayer is the language of the heart,—needing no measured voice, no spoken tone; thus Hannah's wish was heard and answered, though not a sound had passed her lips. It is the hour of communion between man and his Maker,—the hour granted to fallen man to lift him above this world, to bring his great Creator, his merciful Father, a while from His lofty throne above the heavens, even to his side, listening in mercy to his anguished cry, healing the open wound, bidding the floods of woe subside, and leaving His blessed Spirit on the soul to encourage and to soothe.

And this hour of solemn communing, comprised in the word prayer, may be passed either in supplication for that which we most need; in confession and repentance for mortal sin; in praise and thanksgiving for untiring, unchanging mercies; in the study of God's Holy Word; searching for and applying the sacred truths contained therein, till we may know in some degree that which we believe, and the moral, social, and domestic duties stand forth clear and spotless even as they came from Him.

It is this which is comprised in the Shemang. It is not the creature supplicating the Creator—it is a brief

emphatic summary of all those laws which God Himself inspired Moses to impart; and if we once consider it thus, our thoughts will have no need to wander in the repetition of this prayer; for the affections and the intellect will alike be fully stored.

Taken as a whole, as the contents of about one-quarter of a page in our daily prayer books, we cannot perhaps be so struck with the impressive solemnity of these verses, as when we regard them, as in reality they are, six verses in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy. To feel their full force, we shall do well to turn to the sacred writings and examine each verse alone.

"Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God, the Lord is ONE." Such is the literal translation of the Hebrew

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל ה׳ אֱלֹהֵינוּ ה׳ אֶחָד

but it is quite impossible to give the full force of the Hebrew by any English words. Yet even the common translation is such, that we cannot peruse it with any degree of attention, without finding its solemnity appeal to our hearts. It is the avowal of belief, belief in the unparalleled, unchanging, incomprehensible unity of God, the repetition and acknowledgment of which marks us as His chosen people,—His redeemed, His beloved, His first-born,—separates us from every other nation, every other religion of the world. How, then, can we utter these sacred words in the light and careless way we are but too apt to do? Can the mere avowal of a belief in Unity be acceptable to our God, when we neither know, nor care, what that belief includes? sometimes perhaps mechanically repeated, even at the very time we are hovering between Judaism and Christianity, knowing little of the one, and tempted by interest to embrace the other? Oh, surely this should not be; surely a few

words attempting to explain the full sense, by the analysis of each word, will not be wholly unacceptable to the Jewish nation; and be the means, perhaps, by giving their thoughts full scope, to prevent that evil which in the repetition of this prayer is only too general.

The Hebrew word rendered LORD in the English of this sentence, is in the original that awful and ineffable NAME, which no true Israelite will utter. It is the name peculiar to the Divine Essence, signifying He who WAS, IS, and ever WILL BE—יְהוָה comprehending, according to most commentators, the preter, present, and future tenses of the verb הָיָה to exist or be. We are told, first, that this Divine Essence—this ever-existing Being, is our God, and then, that this Divine Essence is One. אֶחָד the original word will allow no second meaning, no complicated signification, it is simply and solely ONE —from יָחַד to unite, to be united, or to make unite. How important then is the truth this verse includes—supplying us with a shield of defence, which no open attack, no guarded insinuation, can have power to penetrate.

This word, signifying the Ever-Existent, has very often been turned against us, by those who, from a kindly but mistaken zeal, would convince us that our belief is wrong, and that we are blindly following the path of error. They assure us, the ineffable Name is typical of the Godhead in which they believe, that its three* syllables

* If our opponents were truly acquainted with the Hebrew punctuation, they would hardly have started this argument, which I find stated here for the first time; since the *Sheva* on the first letter forms no syllable by itself, according to Hebrew analogy: hence my friend's reply was scarcely necessary, were it not to silence the mystifiers who always seek for some hidden meaning in the words and phrases of Scripture.—I. L.

denote the Trinity, its plurality in unity, that even as Elohim, it should convince us that their faith, that which the founder of their system taught, was contained as fully in the Old as in the New Testament. It is this argument which but too often shakes the unenlightened Israelite. Mystified by the types and shadows of which his opponent so eloquently speaks, he feels as if he could bring forward no argument in reply; and yet that very prayer, which slips from his lips every night and morning, furnishes him with one, so unanswerably strong, that I doubt whether the most enlightened of our adversaries could continue the debate.

It tells us that God—however plural the word by which He is called in Hebrew may be in its termination, is One,—that the Divine Essence, He who was, is, and ever will be, is One,—solely, simply One, without any division of parts; for that One is formed from the uniting, the compressing of the Essence, if I may so speak without profanation; and therefore we cannot embrace the creed of the Nazarene,* which not only inculcates division in the immaterial essence, but that the Father was in heaven and the Son upon earth at one and the same time.

It signifies little that such unity is inconceivable alike in its sublimity, in its power, in its combination of justice and mercy. It is enough for us to know that not alone did our Father so reveal Himself, in the impressive words with which He answered Moses—אֶהְיֶה

* Let me here remark, that in the above observation, as in any other of a like nature which may occur throughout this little work, no unkind or attacking reflection is intended on any other creed; writing solely for my own nation and in all charity to every other, when I am compelled to write as above, it is only to elucidate my subject; and pain indeed it would be to me to find it taken in another light.

אֶהְיֶה אֲשֶׁר I AM THAT I AM—or, literally, I will be that I will be; but that also in the repetition of His laws He inspired that faithful servant with wisdom to proclaim His unity, in terms so powerful and clear, that it would almost seem, as if His all-penetrating eye, marking the war of argument which would assail His people, provided them in these simple words with an armour of proof, no weapon can assail. Innumerable proofs might be brought forward in defence of this argument—innumerable texts quoted to give it force and life; but it is not our purpose so to do; it is simply to impress on the heart of the Israelite the awful responsibility he takes upon himself every time he repeats this first verse of the Shemang. If he know not, if he care not, to mark the distinction between his faith and that of the nations around him—let him pause ere he repeat this solemn prayer; but oh, let him not hurl down the anger of his Maker, by renewing every day his covenant with his God, when he neither knows what that covenant is, nor cares what it includes.

It is right to learn this prayer in our earliest childhood; it would be wrong to wait till we could understand its importance to attain the words; but if their sense has been neglected, let us seek it ourselves,—we must not remain Hebrews only because our fathers were. The faith we receive merely as an inheritance, will not enable us to defend it from insidious attack or open warfare, will not satisfy the cravings of our nature, will not give us a rock whereon to cling in hope and such deep love, that we could be strengthened even to die for it, if it were needed; nor can it be pleasing unto Him, who, declaring himself a God of Truth and Love, will so be worshipped. Our hearts must breathe from our lips in this avowal of our faith—we need not utter

it aloud, God alone may hear us;—yet should we so dwell on this important subject, that if called upon, we might proclaim aloud our faith in the presence of angry thousands, fearlessly acknowledge our belief in the unity of God—ay, dare even scorn, and proudly and steadily tread the sainted paths which our fathers trod.

Nor is this the mere burst of an enthusiasm, the mere glowing of an imaginative spirit, as some colder souls may believe it. Let us but examine perseveringly and calmly the truths our fathers received as divine; let us but be convinced at length, that though our search has been often unsatisfactory, often painfully arduous, that as they believed, so too may we:—and none will say I have exaggerated the glowing of the heart, the holy comfort, which will pervade the believer in the repetition of this solemn prayer. Nor will it be in our closets only, we shall feel all that we have gained; we shall go forth, no longer striving to conceal our religon through *shame* (for it can only be such a base emotion prompting us to conceal it in free and happy England*); —but strengthened, sanctified, by its blessed spirit, we shall feel the soul elevated within us, and cling to our Father and our God in the deep devotedness of true believers, and filled with the warmest love and charity to our fellow-creatures. This would be the visible and palpable fruit of an earnest search after truth. And let us now pause a moment to consider the duties towards God and towards man, which this avowal of and firm belief in the unity of God devolves upon us. The repetition of it is renewing the covenant between our soul and her Creator

* The same may be said with equal force of every country where, as in the United States, the Israelite may worship his God unawed by the malign influence of persecution.—I. L.

twice in every day;—it marks us as individually His own —separates us from every other nation, every other religion in the world—recalls to our own hearts that we are each a member of His chosen people—one of that nation, who infinitely more than any other experienced His unbounded love, His infinite long suffering, never-failing, never-changing mercy,—a love, a mercy, not *proclaimed* alone, but manifested alike in the history of Abraham, of Jacob, of Joseph, Moses, David; yet more forcibly to our ancestors in their redemption from the bitter cruelties of Egypt—in the long suffering evinced during the long years of anarchy, rebellion, even idolatry, which marked the age of monarchy in Zion,—again in our return from Babylon, in the compassion which sent promises, warnings, threatenings, ere His last awful judgment fell. Ay, from the first hour He promised unto Abraham, that as the stars, so should his seed be, that from the loins of that faithful servant should spring a race peculiarly His own, until the present day: the history of Israel proclaims our God as Love! We felt indeed His justice, awfully retributive justice; yet love was so intimately mingled with it, so completely robing justice with its mantle of light, that even now, scattered as we are, emblems of His wrath, of our own sins:—we may yet veil our eyes in that blessed mantle of love, and, flinging ourselves on His mercy, cling to, pray to, adore Him still. "For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh to them as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for?" (Deut. iv. 7.) Our greatness is indeed gone from us, if we apply that term to worldly things; but not the blessed privilege of belonging to the nation who have God so nigh unto them. Of that no man can rob us; His face is indeed veiled from us a while, on account of our sins; but His love

enfolds us still—He is close beside us, though we have forfeited the glory of His presence.

But the history of Israel records not our Father's love alone; would, would it did! The belief in unity marks us indeed as members of a highly favoured nation; but alas, it marks not that alone. It tells us we belong to a people more fearfully iniquitous than any other in the history of a world;—even as God's mercy, His loving kindness, were more closely, more intimately woven round us than elsewhere:—so if we sinned, did we sin more awfully, fall far lower, than nations to whom less privileges had been vouchsafed. In vain we would shake off this stigma—we are *not* indeed "despised and rejected of men" for the reason alleged by our opponents, because we rejected and crucified their messiah; but for sins, terrific in their magnitude, against our ever-loving, long-suffering Father. Who can read the history of Israel, yet say we have not sinned? Did we not forget alike the miracles wrought for us in Egypt, the destruction of our foes, ay, and turn and murmur against our God at the first trouble that assailed us in the wilderness? Look upon us in the Holy Land, acknowledged, blessed, guarded, as the chosen of the Lord; yet from the book of Judges to our final dispersion, of what do we read, but crime, and misery, and forsaking of the Lord? Stiff-necked and flinty-hearted, neither promises nor threatenings, neither justice nor mercy, had effect on us. Even when, to give time for amendment and repentance, our Father protected us in the land of our first captivity, and permitted us not only to return at the end of threescore and ten years, but held forth the promise of a saviour, through whom He would redeem the world IF we gave up our sinful ways and sought the law of Moses, to bid it resume its pristine holiness amongst us:—even these

offers we rejected; and as we persevered in iniquity, or rather sunk deeper and deeper into sin, the Messiah came not; we were in no state to receive him; and the measure of God's wrath so long withheld, His justice peremptorily commanded should be hurled unflinchingly upon us. Why were we exposed to such awful horrors at the siege and destruction of Jerusalem? Why have we been persecuted, and expelled from almost every land where our weary feet found rest? Why are we even now scattered in every corner of the earth, without a temple, or abiding resting-place?—Because we have sinned; according to the mercy that we scorned, so great hath been, will be, our chastisement.

There are some, who raise a barrier between the past and present race of Israel; who feel not how closely we are united to our deluded ancestors; who would smile, perhaps, at the enthusiasm which compels me to use the first, instead of the third person plural, in speaking of Israel in long, long ages past. They may acknowledge that the Israelites of the Bible were in truth a very stiff-necked, foolish people;—but the incorporating ourselves of the present day with them, and endeavouring by our individual conduct to prove our repentance and amendment of sins we have never committed, would be the height of folly and romance.

If the Jews of modern times are indeed thus wholly severed from the Jews of the Bible; if we have nothing to do with their iniquities, and need not prove that we are anxious to appease the wrath of God; if indeed we are such a completely severed race—what then are we? Not His beloved, His chosen;—for those terms can only apply to the seed of Abraham, the ancient followers of Moses. If the sins of our ancestors are of no consequence to us, the promises vouchsafed to them can avail

us nothing; we can have no stay, no rock, no shelter. The holy word of God is not for us, we have cast up a wall before it. But no! no—this awful state of things can never be; for our God hath spoken, and His word is truth. There may be some who think thus; but it is because the Spirit of God hath not yet been granted them—they have not *reflected* on their faith.

But there are others who may ask: "Allowing we thus feel our nationality, granting that we are fully sensible of the mercies lavished on our ancestors, the awful iniquities they have committed: in what can this consciousness avail us? what peculiar duties devolve on us, as members of this severed people? We cannot individually turn aside the phial of God's anger." No, we cannot turn it all aside; no efforts of our own, however great and magnanimous they may be, can work out our redemption. His mercy, omnific even as His creating word, is all sufficient; but the *trust* in *that* mercy is not of itself enough to obtain salvation. Our Father rejects those who do good, trusting in their own righteousness to save them, looking to their own works to purchase redemption; but He equally rejects those, who supinely sit, contented to trust in His word, and think nothing depends upon themselves. As works without faith are unacceptable, so equally is faith without works. The man eager and anxious to perform all the charities of life, doing good wherever his path lies, quietly zealous to do honour by his conduct to the religion he professes and believes in, meek in prosperity, as submissive in sorrow, yet feeling how trifling, how worthless in the sight of God are his noblest actions, his purest thoughts —how little they would avail him, did not infinite love and mercy perfect and purify them—leaning on that love—lowly in his exalted virtue—penitent for those

secret or presumptuous sins, from which no mortal is exempt:—that man is a worthy servant of the Lord.

The duties devolving on us by the acknowledgment of unity, though solemnly important, are comparatively few; and it is to know them, which renders the retrospect of our history of so much consequence.

That history tells us we are a chosen and severed people—to be holy unto the Lord—to show forth His glory unto the nations; yes, even now; for are we not universally allowed to be a standing miracle, a living witness of the Lord, and of His word? Do not the enlightened and earnest members of the Protestant church all acknowledge, their final redemption will be in some way connected with the restoration of Israel? Do not the truly religious of all sects look upon us with feelings near akin to admiration and awe, ay, and even love?* and shall we, who belong to this holy people, be ashamed of the faith we profess—shall we seek to hide, and to deny it? Will not the love so graciously vouchsafed us, appeal to our inmost hearts, and call upon us, in very truth, to love Him, who hath so loved us? Can we be lukewarm in His cause, careless in prayer, silent in praise? On us, more than other nations, devolves the duty of devotion—of prayer for grace to walk in His paths—thanksgiving for the privilege of belonging to a people so supremely blessed; of proving by our whole

* I am well aware this assertion will startle those Hebrews who, prejudiced themselves, think others equally prejudiced; but it is nevertheless perfectly and simply true, as it has been my good fortune to prove in more than one instance. Others will say they do but profess to throw us off our guard, and soften the path for the insertion of their misbelief; but many instances in my life could prove the contrary. The feelings I have had good reason to entertain towards the Christian, are amongst the many blessings which I trace from the hand of my God.

conduct, whether social or domestic, moral or religious, that we receive His holy word as true, and believe in His gracious promises—and that we deem the promise of a Messiah and redemption so clear and certain, that we would do all in our power, by the circumcision of our hearts and removal of our evil propensities, to draw it nearer. Our scattered and humiliated condition can oppose no barrier to the performance of these sacred duties. We are not *rejected*, though for a while suffering God's displeasure. His holy Spirit, the light of His countenance, are indeed for a time withdrawn; but not for ever. Every page almost of the sacred Scriptures teems with the conviction, that it depends on us in a measure to hasten or retard the coming of the Son of David. How dare we look to that glorious day, when our hearts are still of stone, when we make no effort to break from the trammels of sin, when we depart from the Law of Life, or show lukewarmness in its reception? Far more dangerous is the trial of prosperity than that of adversity; the one sends us far from our God, the other binds us closer and closer unto Him. Surely, then, there are duties which the acknowledgment of the Hebrew faith renders peculiarly our own; duties between ourselves and our God. How can we then look upon the repetition of that belief twice every day as a thing of small importance? Can we do so thoughtlessly, carelessly, when that simple act may come up as a witness against us before the Lord, even as a vow and non-performance?

Our duty to our fellow-men, which the retrospect of our history inculcates, is simply charity; charity in its widest sense, perhaps in its most difficult performance; charity to the peculiar tenets of others. If in our faith, that, springing from the lips of the Lord, is hallowed by His blessing, marked by miracles the most stupendous,

like which no others have ever been or will ever be performed,—if in this faith, abuses, iniquities, idle fables, spiritless and uninspired customs, have been permitted not alone to enter, but to continue and increase: is it marvel such should be the case with others, which owe not their origin to the sacred Fount that poured forth ours? It is often with pride, contempt, even hatred, we look down on, or speak of creeds and their followers; though of the mysteries of the one and the private character of the others, we are profoundly ignorant. And of what have we to boast? If our religion be indeed divine, if its simple purity, its exquisite holiness, its beautiful economy of justice and love, set it at a distance as a thing apart: it should indeed fill our breasts with gratitude to the God who gave it, but not with pride and scorn for our fellows. It may be that a veil is thrown over their belief; nay, we know that it is so, from the blessed words which promised, that when our Messiah cometh, not only "will death be swallowed up for ever," but "then will the covering cast over all people be destroyed, the veil spread over all nations be utterly removed" (Isaiah xxv. 7, 8); and till that time should we not do all in our power, to prove indeed the comfort, the spirituality, the holiness, which our blessed faith includes, by kindly acts of social charity and faithful friendship towards those believing differently from us, instead of shunning them as a wilfully blinded, determinedly mistaken race? It is of God that they are not yet permitted to walk in the path of light vouchsafed to us. It is His will, that it should be now a time "nor day nor night" (Zech. xiv. 7); and yet does the presumptuous and haughty Hebrew, imitating the Pharisees* of old, dare to

* I fear that my friend has adopted without sufficient care the opinions which our opponents entertain of these people; they may

say, their prayers are less acceptable than his? The offerings of the meek and lowly, the earnest in the performance of their Maker's will, in their duty to their fellow-men, these are acceptable and of sweet savour unto Him, who judgeth not as man judgeth, whatever may be the creed which dictates them. It is the spirit which He regardeth, demanding obedience according to the light His wisdom hath bestowed. If more light, more holiness, have been given us, more will be required from us; and the self-satisfied Hebrew may perhaps have cause to envy the meek and lowly Christian or Moslem, he has in his heart despised.

That in former times the Christian should have been regarded with loathing, and hate, and terror, can astonish none acquainted with the history of persecution; but now, that in all civilized lands we are protected, cherished, nay, often honoured and beloved, why should this feeling continue to rankle in the Israelitish bosom? Treated with charity and kindness, why should we not encourage the same soothing emotions? It is alleged that it is dangerous to associate intimately with those of other creeds, that it is as dangerous to our faith as the open warfare of old. They are mistaken who thus think; were the Jewish religion studied as it ought to be by its professors of every age and sex; were the BIBLE, *not tradition*,* its foundation and defence; were its spirit

have been over-strict in their observances; but honest they were, and I do not think that they ever inculcated illiberality towards others; on the contrary, they taught, that the Lord does not withhold the reward due to any creature, be it who he may.—I. L.

* Again I fear that Miss Aguilar has imbibed too strong a prejudice against tradition. It is mainly our general acquiescence in the received mode of interpretation which forms the characteristic distinction between us and others; for how else can we at all maintain any opposition against the views advanced by the other believers in the Bible? It is useless to say, that the Scriptures speak for themselves; they as-

felt, pervading the inmost heart, giving strength and hope, and faith and comfort: we should stand forth firm as the ocean rock, which neither tempest nor the slow, still, constant dripping of the waters can bend or shake. We should do more; thus prepared, thus convinced of truth, we should find that every argument others might employ, every book we might be persuaded to peruse, would but strengthen conviction in the faith of Israel; charity to them indeed would increase; for the more we studied of their belief, the more we should feel the veil cast upon them is indeed of God.* Never has the He-

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suredly do so to the person who has received instruction; but it requires no argument to prove that difference of education makes people take different views of the sacred Text; or else all readers of the Bible would entertain the same doctrines and pursue one course of conduct. Is this the case? Certainly the Scriptures should constitute the daily exercise of every Israelite; but the interpretations, dogmas, and opinions of our ancients should not be neglected; ay, tradition is the firm support of the Unity of God. Say, if you will, that Rabbins have occasionally promulgated things of no value; yet would this constitute no argument against the good they have left us. They teach nothing opposed to the most elevated piety; faith, hope, and charity are doctrines of theirs no less than of the Nazarene code, and it remains to be proved, that a strict conformity to form, ceremony, or outward religion in general is in the least injurious to moral perfectibility. I do not believe that my friend meant to cast blame upon our ancient religious teachers; but that she only used the above expression in a general, indefinite manner, without weighing the whole force her words might receive. I am no advocate for any abuses introduced under Rabbinical rule; but I am far more opposed to the notion of certain moderns who would reject all for a few blemishes incident more to the *times* in which our teachers lived and taught, than to any absolute defects in their systems. No one would pull down his house, because a few stones were discoloured, when a slight labour might remedy the defect. So let us be cautious, how we reject tradition, because of the few incongruities it may occasionally present.—I. L.

* This and the succeeding paragraph is not a mere fanciful hypothesis of the author alone; it owes its foundation alike to constant observation and personal experience.

brew, glorying in, and openly professing the belief of his fathers, not merely attending to form, but proving the spirit which guides and aids him, failed to gather round him the respect and admiration of every Christian whose respect is something worth. It is those who by mean and petty manœuvres seek to hide their faith, who are ashamed of it themselves, who draw down the contempt and pity of all they would deceive, and this not on themselves alone, but unfortunately on the whole nation.

Why should we so condemn the custom of seeking converts? If but to too many the Jewish religion is allowed to bring no comfort, no devotion, no spirit, and it is from those misguided ones, the whole religion is regarded: why should we be so angry with the wish to lead us where these blessings are supposed to be found? If there be aught to condemn, it is the lukewarmness and ignorance of those of our own people, who declare there is no comfort, no spirit in their faith. Oh, "if," as an elegant writer observes, "men of all creeds would seek not points of difference but points of agreement, how much of the strife and bitterness that deform God's earth would disappear; mutual ignorance it is, that but too often produces mutual alienation."* And in this case, *i.e.* by the common fellowship of Jew and Christian, the truth of this observation would indeed be made evident. The points of difference between us, impassable, all-important as they are, are yet few, and need never be brought forward; while the points of agreement are many, so many that our conversation might ever be of our mutual Father who is in heaven, of His glorious works, and attributes, and love—though that in which we differ never mingled

* Preface to Miss Goldsmid's translation of twelve of Dr. Salomon's Sermons.

with it. And it is this, this universal charity, this self-humiliation, which is the duty, the retrospect of our history commands.

CHAPTER II.

DEFINITION OF THE WORD HEART—LOVE OF GOD CONSIDERED AS IT REGARDS THE AFFECTIONS.

"AND thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" are the impressive words which follow the proclamation of unity in the Holy Scriptures,—"Blessed be the name of the glory of His kingdom," which we find between these two verses in our prayer books, being the usual ejaculation of thanksgiving used by the ancient fathers of our race, whenever they have had occasion to utter the holy name of God.

It is Moses who is speaking; Moses who, addressing his fellow-countrymen, would, in the brief eloquent words above quoted, instruct them in what manner they must *love* their God; and it would be well perhaps, ere we endeavour to explain the respective meaning of his thrice emphatic terms, to pause an instant on the character of that man, greater than any other in the annals of the Bible.*

On Moses the spirit of God rested, not only inspiring him as a lawgiver, guiding him as a leader, but signalizing him as a prophet, greater than any who came after him, unlike any inspired spirit that went before him. To

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* And not those of the world?—I. L.

the prophets who succeeded him God spoke in dreams and visions, to Moses He deigned to commune face to face; He disclosed His glory, He passed before him, proclaiming those attributes which from age to age have been the support, the stay, the consolation of individuals and of worlds;—He singled him out, not only to prophesy regarding the future, but to *threaten* and to *do;* to hold, as it were, in his mortal hand, the judgments of the Lord—to be to the Egyptians the rod of vengeance—to the Israelites the minister of love.

Through this faithful servant God deigned to give not only religious but moral laws. Each law that he delivered, e ch command that he enforced, came from the inspiration of the Lord. Moses was, if we may use the expression without profanation, the mouth of God. He did but speak words which were put into his mouth, he did but issue laws which God had framed.

Yet there are some who deny this; who believe the laws thus given merely the invention of Moses, a man, who, presuming on the ignorance and superstition of the rescued nation, framed a number of laws to keep them distinct, and imposed them upon the people as the laws of a Supreme Being. But then it follows, that those who thus believe, if indeed there really be such, must deny all faith in the Bible; they must refuse all credence in the redemption from Egypt, in the miraculous agency of a superintending Power. They must regard the Bible as human, not divine; and in so doing they know not, they cannot know, the host of evils they congregate around them. They forswear the sanctity of the ten commandments; they annihilate morality; for if the Bible is the work of finite man, on what do we base our morality? Not on individual conscience, for conscience is an *effect,* not a *cause;* they darken the light gleaming

on us from the Fount of mercy—and, deserting the fountain of living waters, call upon themselves the curse denounced against those who "hewed them cisterns, broken cisterns that will hold no water."

Yet some will urge that it does not follow, because they profess to believe that many of the laws of Moses were of man and not of God, they reject the whole of the inspired writings. I know not how they can draw a line; but granting that they do so, would any man, who from the mouth of God received some laws, dare himself to frame others in God's name? Would that man, who by the mere word of his mouth, to all human seeming, sent ten plagues on Egypt, and by these miracles knew himself a chosen instrument of God; who beheld the burning bush, who received the ten commandments in the midst of thunders and lightnings, which were beheld afar off by the assembled people; the man before whom the glory of the Lord passed by—would he be so presumptuous as at once to disobey the third commandment, and, by framing new laws in the name of the Lord, take the sacred name of God in vain? The character of Moses, as displayed in the sacred writings, is completely contrary to this supposition. If blame could be attached to him, it was more for diffidence than presumption. We know that even when in direct communion with his Maker, when assured by the Lord Himself of sufficient strength for the accomplishment of his important task, he still hesitated, still painfully felt how little capable he was of himself for the mission proposed. "Oh my Lord, I am not eloquent," was his pleading cry—"neither heretofore, nor since Thou hast spoken to thy servant, but I am slow of speech and of a slow tongue." Nay, he permitted this painful sense of inferiority to obtain

too much ascendency; for even when the word of the Lord had passed, that He would be with the mouth of His servant, and teach him what to say, Moses still entreated the Lord to choose some other, to send by some other hand. And was it likely the character of this man would become so changed, that in a few years he would so shake off the guiding yoke of God, as himself to make laws, and in his own strength impose them on his countrymen? We have proof there was no such miraculous change.

"Wherefore criest thou unto me?" saith the Lord, in Exodus xiv. 15;—and what would these words reveal? That even when in the very act of cheering the people of Israel, by the promise that they should see the salvation of the Lord, that God Himself would fight for them, —that even comforted as his spirit must have been by the miracles already wrought in their favour;—still, still, his heart must have been wrestling in secret prayer, still that consciousness of his own weakness, his own incapacity, must have been at work within, or the Lord would not thus have addressed him: "Wherefore criest thou unto me?" He heard that anguished cry for help, for guidance, though by man it was unheard.

Again, as a farther proof that the inward character of this great and good man underwent no change, we find him earnestly beseeching the Lord: "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." This is in Exodus xxxiii. When Moses had experienced innumerable proofs of God's all-guiding hand; after he had received from Him the ten commandments, and the minor laws given at the same time; after manna had fallen, and water had gushed from the stony rock at his prayer; after repeated manifestations that, despite his internal consciousness of

inferiority and humility, he was still the chosen friend and well-beloved servant of his God;—notwithstanding all this, he is yet so fully sensible that of himself he is nothing, that he would forswear the privilege of carrying his people up to the Promised Land, if the presence of the Lord went not with him, to give him strength and aid. Is this, then, the man whose mind was sufficiently gigantic, not alone to frame the code of laws transmitted to us in the Bible, but whose mental strength and energy enabled him to impose them as divine upon the people? Even allowing that there was policy in giving to others all the stations of eminence and pomp, and retaining none for himself or his sons: it appears to me quite impossible to read the character of Moses with any degree of attention without feeling convinced that it was *infused* strength, *inspired eloquence*, which made him what he was; that of himself he was timid, yielding, even weak, with every hope and wish centred in the welfare of his persecuted brethren, without sufficient strength to benefit them either by his arm or counsels. We hear nothing of Moses before he was called and commissioned by God, except indeed the indignant act which avenged the smiting of an Israelite on the Egyptian, and his endeavour to keep peace between his brethren. And this was not the dawnings of a Lycurgus, or a Draco, a Cromwell, or a Napoleon; it was simply the impulse of an excited youth, whose thoughts were indeed engaged on the miseries around him, but who dreamed not of himself as their redeemer and deliverer. We know this from his ingenuous reply when first called: "What am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" This was not the reply of one who felt the incipient stirrings of ambition, who beheld

himself in fancy already a lawgiver and a leader.* It was one fully and painfully conscious of his own nothingness, and distrusting his own capabilities to serve the Lord as his heart dictated. Self-distrust is not an element of ambition, or of a mind able of itself to do all that Moses did; yet we see it the strongest ingredient in his character; and drawing conclusions from that circumstance alone, we *must* believe God framed *every law* mentioned in the Mosaic books, or *none*.

We allude not to the Oral Law, nor would we enter into the wild labyrinth of pros and cons, with which this question is now agitating the whole Jewish nation. Our aim is simply to explain the words of the BIBLE, to prove those words are *not* the words of finite man, but the inspiration of a merciful Father, whose omniscience, aware of the wide barrier which sin would raise between His people and Himself, permitted and inspired His chosen servants to compile a volume which would be the ladder between earth and heaven; the uniting link between the immortal spirit, and its immortal resting-place; the message of love from a pitying Father to His repentant and believing children. This is the Bible, the whole Bible, not the Mosaic books alone. In them we find our guide to the religion and morality most pleasing unto God. If that religion, that morality were the work of man, why should it have thus outlasted every other in the world? Egypt, Greece, Rome, boasted each of their lawgivers, their archives, their glories;—yet all have passed away, and not a trace remains, save those stupendous monu-

* It must not be forgotten that Moses was already EIGHTY years old when he received his commission to deliver his fellow-Israelites from bondage, and that he was at the same time a fugitive from justice by his offence against the laws of Egypt.—I. L.

ments of antiquity which tell us, "such things have been." Is it so with the law of Moses, with the people he was the instrument of redeeming? Scattered they are indeed, all over the known world; but that very dispersion is the unanswerable proof of the truth and inspiration of the Bible;—for the law, in its essentials, is as it was vouchsafed; and prophecy in this dispersion is strikingly and mournfully fulfilled.

There is no ground for the assertion, that the awful solemnity and holy pomp which characterized the bestowal of the ten commandments, marked the giving of all the other laws. It signifies little whether Moses received them literally from the mouth of the Lord, or felt within his soul the infused eloquence and wisdom, which impelled and enabled him to proclaim them to his countrymen. Every page of the Bible breathes the voice of God; as His law we may endeavour to explain it, so that, by the aid of lowly prayer, it may fall with weight on the heart of each individual, to strike home to one of the many chords which the human heart contains. The law of a man, a finite mortal, whose every thought is bounded, lost in infinity, can only be looked on word for word as it is written; it can have no power to soothe or to console. A man may err, God cannot; a man may change, nay, the wind is not more variable than his capricious spirit; God, whose name is TRUTH, knows not change, is immutably infallible, and His law is like Himself, changeless and eternal—so uniting morality with religion, that one cannot be perfect in the heart which knows not the other. And yet, only too many raise a rude barrier between them, and say religion is too serious, too holy a thing, to be mixed up with the thoughts, and desires, and pleasures, and occupations of this world, and so far off do they enshrine her, with so thick a wall

do they enclose her, that no glimmering of her golden light can shine upon their daily work, and not one ray will she bestow on those who seek her but at stated intervals, "few and far between." No glowing warmth can attend such devotion. O when will these errors cease to be? when will men break down this darkened barrier, and so love their God with heart, and soul, and might, that religion shall desert her lofty and inaccessible retreat, and mingle in the world? When this thing shall be, then indeed may we hope that blessed day is drawing near, when we "shall not say, Know ye the Lord, for they shall all know ME, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord, and I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more."

Yet, it may be urged, there was no religion that demanded more pomp and ceremonial than the Jewish, that the great holiness surrounding it is the reason of its distance from us: still the same faithful servant, who in the name of the Lord clothed the public ritual with such imposing grandeur, also said, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might;"—a command over and over again repeated, and one utterly impossible to be obeyed, if we keep religion at the distance but too many deem necessary. These three terms, heart, and soul, and might, are not repetitions of the same meaning, used to *enforce* the command. Regarding carefully their respective significations, we shall perceive they are used, more clearly to define the love which God demands, and the proofs which that love includes.

What does the word heart signify when used in this sense, either towards God or man? "The Scripture," says Cocceius, "attributes to the heart thoughts, reasonings, understanding, will, judgment, designs, affections,

love, hatred, fear, joy, sorrow, anger; because when these things are in a man a motion is perceived about the heart."* We are to understand by this quaint yet expressive sentence, that the word heart is used in Scripture, when either of the above attributes is implied; and indeed, if we carefully consider the sacred writings, we shall find that it is so. Moses makes use of it, in the mandate we are regarding, as the seat of the affections, the deepest, strongest, dearest shrine of love, including zeal, memory, thought, imagination, reverence, all that would exalt, purify, endear the feeling and its object. And who is there that knows not the full meaning of the term, to love with all his heart, when that term is applied to human beings, mortals like himself? Do we not look upon their smallest action with delight, with admiration, believe them gifted with rare excellence, with extraordinary virtue, so dwell upon the perfections of those we thus love, that we feel we ourselves sink into nothing before them? Would we not do any thing to preserve their affection? Nay, we lose not these ardent feelings, even when for a time the beloved countenance is darkened towards us. Are there indeed those, who know not what it is, thus to love? Surely not amongst the young, the warm-hearted, be they the loving bride, the youthful mother, the faithful friend. Nay, even the sterner sex are capable of such emotion; they love not, indeed, with the deep clinging devotedness of woman, whose very helplessness calls for such strong feeling; but there are some, even amongst them, who might not think we have sketched love too strongly. And if such can be excited towards a fellow-being,—O shall we deny it to our God?

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* Hebrew Lexicon, by John Parkhurst, M.A. Article לב heart.

Surely we, even more than the Nazarene, have cause to feel,—"We love Him because He first loved us." Who loves us, who tends us, who bears with our iniquities, and chides us, in such long-suffering compassion, as God does? In the words of Moses, "What nation hath God so near to us as we have?" Will not our whole history proclaim His deep, unchanging, and unfailing love? Will not the written evidence of Moses, nay even of those before him—Abraham, Joseph, and of David, Isaiah, Malachi, all unite in proving that God is love? Nay, has He not Himself proclaimed it in those blessed words with which He describes Himself to Moses, when He passed by before him—"The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin"? This is the God the Nazarenes emphatically call love; this is their God and OUR God, for it is from us—from us alone—from the revelation He vouchsafed to US, that they have learned in part to know Him; and oh shall *we* fail in rendering Him that tribute they are so anxious to bestow? Shall we by our lukewarmness tacitly allow, there is truth in what they allege, that they have more cause to love Him than *we have?* No, oh no! let us not hesitate any more; let us give Him that which He demands, our whole heart—enshrine Him there—not lavish on mortals, however deserving, all those affections He has granted us. Let us prove by our whole lives, we love Him, because indeed He first loved us, ay, and carried us, and bore with us from the days of old.

But how can we do this? Will not this love create familiarity in our intercourse with Him who is indeed holiest amidst the holy? Surely not; in seeking to do our respective duties wherever we are placed for love of

Him, because we hope it will be pleasing unto Him; in using our talents as His gifts, using them in Him, that is, employing them for those ends which will procure us His blessing; in thinking of and blessing Him for the joys and comforts of mutual affection, loving our fellow-creatures *in* Him:—is this likely to breed undue familiarity? Will this deprive Him of His holiness? Those who have experienced the unspeakable consolation of this intimate communion would tell us, the effect is quite contrary to that, which those who know Him not thus suppose. A precious ray of that unutterable holiness indeed descends on them; but His holiness is increased according to the measure of their love.

It is not indeed *natural* to man in his present imperfect state thus to love his God. The most pious, the most ardent followers of His law, find it difficult to give Him their whole heart. It demands long years of watching, of struggling, and of prayer. Disappointment and discouragement appall us on every side; for the more* we strive to know and love the Lord, the more fearfully our own imperfections, our own secret sins, stand before us—the more clearly do we find even of those actions we hoped were good, the *motives* are but too often impure. Who are they whom we find strong in their own strength, and smiling to scorn those who acknowledge and deplore their liability to temptation and to sin? Who? but those who know not, love not, think not of

* "The more exalted," say our wise men, "a man is above his fellow, the greater will be his inclination to sin." Again, "The more man increases in righteousness, the stronger becomes his propensity to evil, and unless the Lord gave him His aid, he alone could not escape the power of sin." In this manner did our predecessors endeavour to inculcate humility in the pious even, and to check the presumption which we not rarely feel when we attain, or fancy we attain, any degree of excellence.—I. L.

their God. While those who seek Him, weak in seeming, shrinking and lowly, fearing temptation, turning in trembling eagerness to prayer for strength and aid—strong only in their trust in Him—are in truth the servants whom He loves, and whose hearts are turning towards Him. But shall these difficulties deter us? Shall we turn from the blessed goal, from the gates of heaven, because the path is dark and rugged? "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong;" and while the consciousness of difficulty must convince us of innate sin—that our natural desires since the fall of man are the evil, not the good—that our best affections, our most fervent prayers, are imperfect without the purifying grace of God—consequently that our salvation cannot be achieved by our own righteousness, but through the infinite and redeeming compassion* of the Eternal, whose love is our ransom: we must also feel how much depends on perseverance, and watching, and prayer, to prove we desire and long for the mercy of our God to be vouchsafed us, to prove we indeed long and try to love Him with a whole and perfect heart.

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* Without divine mercy no man could be saved; because every man is sinful at one period or the other, either by committing the wrong or omitting deeds of righteousness which are in his power to accomplish. Nevertheless no one can be saved, who merely relies upon divine mercy and prayer; for the faith which should induce us to look to the Supreme for assistance and duly to appreciate our own nothingness in His sight, should likewise impel us to obey the precepts of Scripture, these being the emanations of the God of love. And so says the prophet (Ezek. xx. 11, 12): "And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgment, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover, also, I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them." We therefore say, that without active religion there can be no salvation for Israel; for the words are "which if a man do, he shall even live in them."—I. L.

But how are we to teach our hearts to love Him? By dwelling upon His infinite perfections; by lingering on the pages of His blessed word, till by prayer and faith we can realize the Bible as a message of love and mercy; not merely addressed to a nation, but to each of us individually and apart. It is impossible to peruse the Psalms and Prophets with any degree of trust and attention, without feeling conscious of this truth, without being enabled to apply every prayer and promise to our own individual wants and tempers. There it is we first learn to know Him as love; and when once we have realized this truth, when once we can feel and believe the love He bears us individually is deeper, dearer, than the dearest borne to us on earth,—that no change, no caprice can dim that long-suffering love—that not even our own transgressions can shake it, if we trust in Him; that His eye is ever on us, His arm around us, His ear open to our faintest sigh; that He feels every pang we feel; that He knows every secret throb and silent tear, which man may never know;—if we dwell on these blessed truths, surely it will be easy to love Him. It is difficult to love Him with all our heart, if we only look upon it as a command laid on us, which we *must* obey; but it is easy, if we think how we are loved by Him.

The human heart is attracted by virtue in man, goodness, charity—not the mere charity of relieving the afflicted—but charity towards the failings and follies of our neighbours, the charity "that covereth transgression," kindness, holiness, purity, truth, forgiveness of injury, magnanimity; these are the qualities that call for admiration, and love, and reverence, and seldom call for it in vain; these are the qualities on which the mind so loves to dwell, that the young and enthusiastic but too often frame an imaginary idol, and so weave it in their

affections, that their path is lonely through life, for they seek what they find not in man. Seldom* does a mortal unite all these glorious attributes, and it is sad when the dreams of the young enthusiast are chilled and blunted. But if these qualities attract so much love, even in the small measure in which man possesses them: will they not demand yet stronger feeling towards Him, holiest among the holy, who unites them all, whose divine attributes in their infinity are too glorious for human imagination to conceive? Is He not ever merciful and ever loving? Is He not ever "ready to forgive"? Ay, day by day, and hour by hour, loving where He is not loved? Showing mercy unto thousands that seek Him not? Holy, pure, and true, till thought is lost in the infinity of His perfections? Does not His goodness as far exceed that of man, as the sands on the sea-shore, a single grain? as the glorious sun excels the feeble light by which the peasant cheers his dwelling? If we love these attributes in man, shall we disregard them in our God? Shall the soaring mind sink back dispirited and chilled, because these glorious qualities are found not, as fancy painted them, in man,—when He the holiest, the Lord of truth and love, calleth loudly for the heart that longs to rest on virtue? O let not the youthful spirit seek perfection upon earth: let him indeed love those where holiness and virtue dwell, for there are many such; but let him turn to his God alone for the perfection of all that is beautiful, all that is glorious, all that is pure, and true, and holy—all that can attract the mind and fill it.

If the simplest action of those we love best on earth calls for our praise and admiration, will not these emo-

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* Or never?

tions be yet more warmly excited when we look on the magnificent works of God? Can the created vie with the Creator? Yet the works of man often justly call for reverence and love; and shall the works of God do less? True, we cannot see Him and live; but all around us are traces of His hand! Who has not felt the warm glow of the wakening heart, kindling into love and rapture, as we gaze on the varied fields of nature? Does He not speak in the roaring cataract, the thundering waves, in the howling tempest, the devastating blast? Trace we not His hand in the rosy glow, the touching stillness of early dawn, in the brilliant clouds, the refreshing breeze of sunset, the myriads of stars, the silvery moon sailing in the dark-blue heavens? Do we not hear Him in the still, yet emphatic eloquence of night, ay, in the ripple of the brook, in the song of the bird, in the meek beauty of a glistening flower? Are not these the works of His hands, renewed around us day by day, as emblems of His changeless, His untiring love? And can we pass them by, with hearts unmoved, affections dormant? Even to those pent up midst city-walls there are traces of His hand. Can we look on the millions of beings passing to and fro, the form and face of each so wonderfully distinct, so indefinably varied, that one can never be taken for another—with minds respectively stored, according to the station they hold in life, the duties they must fulfil, each possessing one or more talents peculiar to himself, characters so varied, that man seeks in vain for perfect similarity in taste, perfect sympathy on earth? Can we pause to reflect on these things, and yet feel no expansion of the heart and its affections towards Him of whom these are the actions? Can we not trace Him in the city as in the field? and shall our whole lives pass by, and find us still unconscious of His love, unanswering to

His voice? O we have enough to call for reverence, to wake us into love, if we would but think a while on Him, whose meanest attribute, whose simplest work would yet be all-sufficient to make us give Him "all our heart."

But how are we to know we love Him? Shall we be conscious when our hearts are indeed becoming His? Will obedience to that oft-repeated command to love, and serve, and fear Him, bring with it its own reward? Assuredly it will. We have but to seek to love the Lord, and tenfold will be that love returned to us. It will be less pain to give up our dearest wishes, hopes, even affections, if called upon to do so (and who in this world is not?), if we have so loved our God in joy, that we can realize this affliction comes from Him, and must be sent in love,—ay, and *will end* in love, though our mortal eye can trace it not. We love Him not, if we find ourselves in secret questioning the goodness or the wisdom of His decrees; murmuring at the conflict; trembling and doubting ere we obey. We love Him not, if we hesitate between inclination and duty, when our desires clash, as they but too often do, with the obedience His law demands.* We love Him not, if we feel not that love stronger, more consolingly powerful, when afflictions and sorrows darken the lot that has been joyous. The calm and tranquil temper, the grateful consciousness of a happy lot, which characterize some minds in seasons of uninterrupted prosperity, are too often supposed to be ardent love, and unchanging faith in God; but if,

* And how is such faithlessness visited even in God's own elect on earth, elect because of their superior righteousness! For when Moses and Aaron failed in their duty, they were told that they should not reach the promised land. "Because ye believed me not (put faith or trust in me) to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel." (Num. xx. 12.)—I. L.

when the water-floods swell around us, when the tempest gathers and our lives grow dark—if then this calm tranquillity, this grateful consciousness, depart, we have not loved our God—it has been but the peaceful temperament of our hearts, because all around was peace. Affliction is the touchstone by which we can discover if our love be true. If, even while nature is weak and shrinks fearfully and mournfully from her trial, we still cling to our God, still feel He loves even while He chastiseth, nay that that very chastisement is a proof of His love—for "whom the Lord loveth He correcteth;" cling to Him as the loving and pitying Friend who alone can aid us; lift up to Him the sinking heart, even while the lips can form no prayer; trust in His deep changeless love, to supply that which we may have lost, or to strengthen, bless, console us, on our rugged way; cling to Him the closer, the more He smiteth: then, then indeed have we loved, do we love our gracious God, and tenfold are we blessed. We feel not the deadly sharpness of His arrows, if we run up to Him and clasp His robe. The shaft in its strength can only reach those at a distance who scorn the shadow of His wings. The whirlwind cannot blight us in its fury, if we seek shelter beneath the shadow of the Rock. Not that those who love their God are more exempt than their fellows from the trials and sorrows of this life, nor that they feel them less; we are not forbid to weep, to feel, to mourn. Those who know not such emotions, who bear the severest shocks unmoved, are not rendered so by religion; they are cold, of a calm and stoic nature, which nor joy nor sorrow moves. Religion is strongest, loveliest, in those hearts ever susceptible to emotion, whether of pleasure or pain: the love of their God glows warmest in such bosoms; and it is to them it affords its richest consolation; not lessening the pang

of sorrow, but leading them to Him who sympathises in their every sorrow, who is afflicted in their affliction, who loves them, and chastises but to bless, even their Saviour and their God, the Holy One of Israel. This is the reward of those who seek to love their God with all their heart. In all we do we shall remember Him, without whose aid we can do nothing. In every pleasure we shall remember Him, who gave us health and strength, and the power of enjoying. In joy, in grief, in every change of life, in every little circumstance which may *seem* the offspring of chance, we shall think of Him in whose government there *is no* chance. Enshrined in our hearts, the deepest, dearest, strongest seat of love, every reasoning faculty, thought, imagination, zeal, memory,—all will find employment in the contemplation of His infinite perfections, His untiring, never ending providence. Memory will have full scope; for where is the life, however brief, or sunny, or dark, that on retrospection will not reflect innumerable proofs of His inexhaustible goodness? We may safely assert there is *none.* Oh let us but accustom ourselves to look up to, to cling to our God as our *own* Friend, and Father, and Saviour, like whose unfathomable love we shall find none on earth, who is to each one as He is to all, whose heart and ear are open to the lowest, the poorest, the youngest, the oldest of His creatures; who gathereth each tear, and numbereth each sigh; who daily and hourly foldeth His arm around us and calleth us individually His own: can we think upon Him thus, and yet refuse the heart's pure love, the only meed He asketh?

CHAPTER III.

DEFINITION OF THE WORD SOUL—LOVE OF GOD CONSIDERED AS IT REGARDS THE INTELLECTUAL AND VITAL PRINCIPLE OF MAN.

נֶפֶשׁ—universally rendered in English soul, we find by its various applications in the Bible to signify breath, life, mind, the essence or spirit of life and its desires. It is clear, therefore, that HEART and SOUL are not used in this divine command, merely to strengthen the emphasis of the idea by repetition, but to convey a somewhat different meaning; viz., to bid His people to devote alike intellectual and vital principles in His service.

If we seek to give Him, as He desires, our whole heart, it follows, that we shall, as a matter almost of necessity, obey the second member of the sentence.

We cannot know Him, to love Him, as the preceding chapter describes, without employing our intellect, the whole energy of our minds, in the study of His law, not alone of the Pentateuch, but of our religion generally, of all which will assist us in becoming firm and consistent followers of the faith we profess, and enable us to mingle among those of another creed without fearing to imbibe it. To do this, the Bible must be our constant study. Nor will that be of itself sufficient. The Bible is the reflection of that fountain of light dwelling with God on high, and prayer alone will give us the emanating ray, which will illumine the darkness, in which to

natural man that blessed book is plunged. Faith* indeed is the golden key to unlock its stores, for without faith its pages are in truth "sealed;"—and prayer will strengthen that faith, and teach us through that book to know the Lord, ourselves, and our duties.

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* If in the outset of life we commence the reading of the Word in the spirit of self-sufficiency, and in order to doubt, because our *reason* does not suffice to comprehend all the works and words of God: it is evident that we cannot receive any benefit from a perusal of the sacred text; its language speaks discouragingly of human reason, it teaches to place little reliance on human help or power. What then does the doubter or the presumptuous find therein to love or admire? He is told to mortify the flesh in obedience to the will of One whom he does not fear; to forego the dictates of his own reason in deference to a Wisdom he does not recognise, although he may be convinced, as every reasoning being must be, that there is a creative Power far, far superior in power and wisdom to anything which humanity can reach even in imagination. If, therefore, the recognition of divine power does not go the whole length of subduing our reliance upon self, but little or no benefit can result from a perusal of Scripture, especially if at every miracle we find recorded, or at every passage gainsaying our usual views, we stop and say, "I do not believe this;" or "This cannot be true, because I do not understand things so as they are here recorded." But how different a result must arise when we in lowliness of trust in Divine Wisdom, or, in other words, in the simplicity of a childlike faith and trust, open the pages of the Bible for instruction and light! O then each word is received as an emanation of the Supreme Wisdom, as the recorded will of the highest Power! Doubts vanish, because, whilst endeavouring to mistrust our own wisdom, we are willing to be guided by the Author of our soul and being, and because even human, worldly wisdom will gradually stand astonished more and more every day at the profound springs of truth and holiness which bubble forth, so to say, from every rock which apparently lies as a hinderance in the way of the humble inquirer. Prayer for light, or the humiliation in spirit of the creature before the Creator, of the child before the Father, will tend to complete what faith has commenced; and subdued alike in mind and will, the soul-stricken believer will walk humbly before the Lord, seeking and obtaining light from His revealed word, and scattering blessings of peace and truth around him among all who may be drawn towards their God by the example of purity which the

The Bible is the foundation of religion. In it we find the history of the past, the present, and the future; laws to guide us; threatenings, awfully fulfilled; promises to soothe, console, and bless us. Those who deny its divine truths are neither Jew nor Christian; for the acknowledgment of its divinity is equally binding to the one as to the other. But the great evil under which the Hebrew nation is still suffering, is not so much the *denial* as the *neglect* of this precious word. We are in general perfectly satisfied with reading the Parassas and Haftorahs marked out as our Sabbath portions. The other* parts of the Bible rest utterly unknown. Brought out on the Sabbath for the brief space of half an hour, the portions are read, and hastily dismissed as a completed task, bringing with it no pleasure and little profit. Even this is but too often neglected, and we adhere to the forms and ceremonies of our ancestors, scarcely knowing wherefore; and we permit our Bibles to rest undisturbed on their shelves, not even seeking them, to know the meaning of what we do. Others again, earnest in the cause, yet mistaken in the means, search and believe the writings of the Rabbis, take as divine truths all they have suggested, and neglect the Bible† as not to be compared with such learned dissertations.

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life of the truly righteous must present in all vicissitudes, be they light or darkness, joy or sorrow.—I. L.

* The above remarks are rather too sweeping, at least for the Israelites of America; still there is a great deal of truth and force in them; and happy indeed would it be were our people better acquainted with their religion.—I. L.

† Again I must remark that Miss A. has relied too much upon the calumniators of the Jewish character as authority. If there are any who place the Rabbis above the Bible, they are unknown to me; far different a thing it is to take their views as explanatory of and *above* the holy Text. The first is the general view of our nation, the latter a doctrine utterly abhorrent to every reasoning mind.—I. L.

And why should this be? Why should the Bible be so shunned by that people to whom it was so peculiarly intrusted? Surely they cannot bring forward the too-often quoted and unfounded assertion, that the English translation is imperfect and not fitted to be placed in the hands of Hebrew youth; that it would confuse and rather lead them to embrace the Nazarene, than strengthen their adherence to the Jewish creed. The evidence of learned men of either faith, convinces us of the fallacy of this reasoning. It is not the actual words* of the Bible, but the view in which they are taken, which gives weapons to our opponents. There is scarcely a word mistranslated, and the Hebrew of obscure passages is generally placed in the margins, underlined by a literal translation. The heads of the chapters are the only portions likely to mislead; but they are perfectly harmless to those unto whom the Jewish religion has been *taught*, and whose youth has not been suffered to imbibe religion as they could.

Mournfully they err, who thus preserve the English Bible from the hands and hearts of their children.† It is this great error which prevents the spirit of piety from taking possession of the heart, and binds us to cold and lifeless forms; it is this which is the real cause of so many

* In some instances there are certainly mistranslations in the English version; but not enough to jeopard our religion.—I. L.

† I must remark here, that in America we are not chargeable with this erroneous procedure: the English Bible, on the contrary, is almost universally found in every house. Still it would be rendering a service to the cause of truth and religion, if a revised translation, edited by a society of learned and pious Israelites, without any of the headings Miss A. alludes to, could be issued; for then no one even in England could hesitate to make it a household book for his children.—I. L. Since this book was issued, two versions of the Scriptures have been made by Jewish writers; wherefore all objections urged against the use of the old translation are inapplicable to them.

Israelites having embraced Christianity.* If, as it only too often happens, young minds are first led to think on religion at all by the example of pious Christian friends, and are engaged to read, or rather study the Bible for the first time, under their direction, and come to them for enlightenment on passages or chapters that may seem obscure: must it not follow as a natural consequence, that the ideas they thus imbibe must favour the Christian and not the Hebrew creed? How can they produce arguments against arguments, if they have never been taught to read the Bible according to the belief of their fathers? Why do we only too often hear, even amongst professing Hebrews, that the morality of the New Testament infinitely surpasses in beauty and charity that of the Old? Why? because they see the effects of the one on the lives and characters of its believers, and they see it not in the other; because they adopt as the doctrines of Christianity the beautiful moral sentences and proverbs they chance to hear, wholly unconscious that these very sentences which so much attract their admiration have all, without exception, their original foundation in the pages of the Old Testament, either in the Law, the Psalms, or the Prophets; nay, that the whole system of morality preached by the founder of Christianity is that in which WE were instructed by God Himself, either in

* I believe Miss A. overrates the number who have left our church; certainly few have left it from conviction, which fact is easily susceptible of positive proof; at all events, the number of conversions in America is very small, and these consist for the greater part of those who have been contaminated by a too close intercourse with Christians, to the neglect of their own people, without sufficient knowledge of their own faith to withstand the arguments or flattery of those differing from us. Names of instances of this kind could be mentioned, if there were any necessity for it; but my word may be taken for the truth of what I allege.—I. L.

direct communion with Moses, or through His chosen servants, the prophets! Its only change is from the lofty language of inspiration which the chosen of the Lord alone could be supposed to understand, to the brief and simple phrases* better suited to the comprehension of the heathen to whom it was addressed. The Christian divines themselves acknowledge this; and shall we, descended as we are from a race whom God so peculiarly blessed—shall we by our whole lives deny it? and declare the Christian ethics are the best, when we know nothing, seek to know nothing, of our own?

We are told in Deuteronomy, chap. xvii., that in case the Israelites should elect a king, he was to write a copy of the law himself, that he might read therein all the days of his life, and learn to fear the Lord his God, and keep all the words of this law and do them. The importance of studying this law we also find insisted upon, alike by David, Solomon, and all the prophets, almost always followed by the promise of blessings unto all who are thus employed. Over and over again we find in the Psalms verses to this effect: "Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord;"—"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul—the testimony of the Lord is sure, making the simple wise—the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart—the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." And if its study was of such importance in the time of David, when the Lord still manifested Himself to His people, when they were still under His immediate guidance: how much

* And even this was in accordance with the opinions of the Rabbis of that age: witness the many moral sentences scattered in the Talmud and kindred works, some without any doubt antecedent to Christianity. For proof, if any were needed, see the Proverbs of the Fathers, one of the Books of the Mishnah.—I. L.

more important must it be now, when the prophecy of Amos is in literal and actual fulfilment, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor of thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." (Amos viii. 11.)

Now, when surrounded by nations who know the Lord and serve Him, though not as we do, we are daily in danger of being lured to desert our faith, or of being called upon to arise and defend our belief, not against the sword of slaughter, but against that kindly though mistaken zeal which would endeavour to convince and to convert, by the means of that very book we have wilfully neglected.* We stand defenceless, for our own weapons are turned against ourselves. Now, more than ever, should our children be taught their religion from the Bible, and led to regard that blessed book as the fountain of living waters for all who thirst; not only as it regards mere *points of doctrine*, but as the only book which will teach them to know and love their God.

Do we require fresh incentive to the task? are not the words of the Lord in Jeremiah all-sufficient? "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might—let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he knoweth and understandeth ME, that I am the Lord, which exerciseth loving-kindness, and judgment, and righteousness in the earth, that in these I de-

* If my friend's picture of the ignorance of our blessed religion among her countrymen and women is not highly overdrawn, which, much to my regret, I cannot believe to have been done, how fearful a responsibility does rest upon them, if they do not arise in their might and counteract by a thorough system of religious education the evil so eloquently exposed in the text!—I. L.

light, saith the Lord." (Jer. ix. 23, 24.) Will natural religion teach us this? will the aspect of affairs as they appear to mortal eyes in this world,—the constant triumph of the wicked, the sufferings of the righteous, the misery of thousands, the prosperity of those that know not the Lord—will these things teach us to know Him as He is? Will even the meditation of Him through His glorious works enable us to "understand Him"? No, we can only learn to know Him in the word that He has given us; and even there that blessing will not suddenly be granted us.

It is no light task we undertake when, in lowly faith and earnest prayer, we commence the study of the Bible. The wisdom of philosophy, its acute perception, powerful reasoning, the deep research, the toiled-for knowledge of the student, will not avail us here. We must come, lowly-minded and simple-hearted, even as little children, who read and *believe*. Much we know there is, which in our present imperfect state we cannot hope fully to understand; if all were open to our eye and mind, there would be no exercise of faith; and we know that "faith is accounted righteousness." But much that at a first reading may seem obscure, becomes clearer every time we read. No one can say he has read the Bible, who has perused its pages once. The evidence of those who have made that book their companion through threescore and ten years,* who have perused and reperused it, and each time found something new, some new consoling promise, which they had observed

* And in this spirit spoke the Lord to Joshua: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." (Josh. i. 8.)—I. L.

not in former readings, is an unanswerable proof of its inexhaustible fulness. It is not one perusal which will open to us the fountain of living waters contained in the Bible—nay, the first, the second, and to some minds, perhaps, even the third reading will end in discouragement and sadness. We may have found little to reward our toil, little to afford us strength or consolation, or to convince us it is a message of mercy addressed to us, not as a nation alone, but individually. We must persevere, we must read on and on, still in trusting faith and prayer; and the answer will be given; the blessing of the Lord will be upon us, "converting the soul, making the simple wise, rejoicing the heart, and enlightening the eyes," even as He hath promised. No one has ever thus read the word of his God, who will refuse his evidence as to its holiness and beauty;—Hebrew and Christian will alike unite in proclaiming it DIVINE.

There is no contradiction in asserting that the constant employment of our intellectual faculties in the study of God's Word, is obeying His command to love with all our soul, and yet declaring the wisdom of the philosopher or the knowledge of the student will avail us little in the acquirement of its inspired truths. It would seem as if the one contradicted the other; as if to come as little children, and yet to use our intellect, were things incompatible one with the other; but yet in this case they are united. Humility and true wisdom are ever found hand in hand. Those that really know the most, that have studied deepest, are ever those who think least of themselves; for the more they know the more they feel how little capable is their finite wisdom to understand the things around them, the workings of infinity. The Bible cannot be dearer to the philosopher,

the poet, or the student, than it is to the poor unlettered peasants, who perhaps can read no other book. Their simple faith should read a lesson to the proud in heart, the mighty in knowledge, who pass it by as unworthy of their regard. Their simplicity, and lowly-mindedness, is a proof that it needs not philosophy to comprehend the Bible. Yet those whose aspiring minds grasp eagerly all that can exercise the intellect, will find enough to satisfy that restless craving—much, very much, to gratify their ardent desire for research, their unceasing longing for acquirement.

The history of ancient nations, their curious notions of religion, their remarkable traditions, all bearing a marked resemblance to the striking points of early revelation; researches in the history of the Eastern nations, whose manners and customs of the present day bear the strongest affinity to the manners, customs, and peculiarities mentioned in the Bible, many of which indeed are almost unintelligible without reference to these explanatory volumes; the history of prophecy awfully fulfilled, found in the evidence of every traveller to the East—Moäb, Edom, Babylon, Egypt, Pathros, Ethiopia, Ammon, the Land of Promise herself, all, by their present desolation, literally and fearfully fulfilling the threatenings of the Lord:—these are works which, while they give full scope to the intellectual faculties, add new and glorious beauties to the Bible; these will shed a new and yet lovelier light upon its pages. In such researches the philosopher and the student will find ample subject for the exercise of their powers; and the poet, the enthusiast —will their flight be checked, if they pause a while to linger on such pages? No, their wings will soar higher and higher still; for the fount of inspiration hath shed its light and life upon their path.

Though to read and comprehend the Word of God be the first great desire of our hearts, and our intellect should there be continually exercised: it does not follow, that to love the Lord with all our soul comprises that exercise alone.

As His loving-kindness decked this beautiful earth with an inexhaustible variety of the loveliest flowers, to afford pleasure and recreation unto man in the midst of graver duties, bidding them spring up on every side, even in wastes where it would seem the foot of man has never trod—decking alike the lonely wild and the cultivated ground, the secret stream and the watered nook, the peasant's cot and the monarch's park—ever fresh and ever lovely, ever raising their meek heads towards the sky, as in adoration of Him that tendeth them, or bending down their graceful clusters, as too lowly to meet His smile; shedding on His winds their luscious breath, as thus to speak their silent praise—even as His love gave unto earth these lovely things: so hath He stored the mind of man with fair and precious gifts, not to take the place of graver food, but to give joy and recreation to his fellows, to shed new joyance on his home, to give new energy to love in those around him, and lift up his own heart in increased and grateful adoration to his God.

These are the hallowed uses of talent and accomplishment, in those circles where they are cultivated as resources of pleasure, not of maintenance.

Our minds are stored with a variety of beauteous flowers, which it is God's pleasure we should value and improve. He hath not given them to wither and to die; but to be brought from their hidden cells, and by assiduous cultivation be reared and cherished, till they are worthy to be employed in His service, by the pleasure

they afford to our fellow-creatures, and the sources of gratitude they open in ourselves. The earth needs culture to bring forth her loveliest flowers, even though the seeds are God's own gift; and so it is with the mind of man. The Lord hath planted it with precious seeds; He watereth and tendeth them unceasingly; yet we must use our own persevering efforts to bring them into perfect flowers; and that these efforts after knowledge and wisdom are acceptable to Him who alone can crown them with success, we have Solomon's prayer and God's gracious answer as unquestionable proofs.

Wisdom does not mean the knowledge of the Lord ALONE, although "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and there is scarcely any study, which, if pursued in a faithful spirit, will not lead us in the end nearer Him. Sacred history informs us that Solomon's wisdom consisted also in the knowledge of man, in such perfect discrimination, that justice was always as exact as it was impartial; in jurisprudence, in every branch of information necessary for the civil, military, and religious government of a great kingdom, and in that lively fancy and ready apprehension which enabled him to give instant and satisfactory answers to all the difficult questions, on every subject, put to him by the Queen of Sheba. No one will deny that Solomon's wisdom was inspired of the Lord, granted to him in answer to his prayer. "Ask what I shall give thee," were the gracious words of the Lord. The mind must have been truly great, which under this temptation, this perfect freedom to ask what he pleased, preferred "an understanding heart," above all earthly glory, wealth, or power. True, it is not now as then; the Lord does not thus manifest Himself to His people; nor may we hope such a direct and speedy answer to our prayers; but when we read "that this speech

pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing, and He said unto him, Because thou hast not asked for thyself long life, nor riches, nor the life of thy enemies, but hast asked understanding to discern judgment, behold I have done according to thy words, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart:" we know that the prayer for wisdom *is* pleasing to our Father, and that our efforts to obtain it *will* be blessed.

It may be urged, Solomon was peculiarly situated; he was the son of the man after God's own heart, the head of that peculiar people whom God had proclaimed his first born; that the duties devolving on him demanded extraordinary wisdom; and, therefore, his example can be of little consequence to individuals.

We are wrong to think thus. We are all and each of us members of this people, individually as much under His care and love, as those selected servants, whose lives and thoughts are written in the Bible, to give us encouragement, and hope, and life, now that we may no longer commune face to face with God. We have not, indeed, the mighty charge of a great kingdom; but we have each some duties to fulfil, some talent entrusted to us, for which, at the awful hour of judgment, we must all account. God has not entrusted us with precious seed to lie useless and neglected, till it is blighted and destroyed. There is not a station in life, however lowly or unseen, the duties of which will not become lighter and clearer from reflection and prayer; not a talent, however small, which will not add to our own happiness and that of our fellow-creatures, by cultivation and improvement, even if this scene of action be confined to our own domestic hearth. As the mind becomes enlarged and its ideas matured, its views of God and man are purified and exalted; it flings aside those grosser particles of

sense and worldliness which surround it when withering in neglect, and rising higher and higher in the pure ether of infinity (for such is wisdom), creates a happiness for itself of which neither sorrow nor care can deprive it; and this is the answer to our prayer for our Father's blessing on His gifts; this is the proof that even in this fallen and imperfect state He hears and answers us.

In the present state of society, however, it is not so much the neglect as the *abuse* of these glorious gifts, against which those who seek to love their God with all their soul, must be carefully guarded. The cultivation of mere accomplishment and improvement of natural talent have of late fallen into deserved disrepute, from their complete absorption of time, to the exclusion of all graver thought and severer study. It is not devoting six hours to music, as many to painting, and all that are left to the translation of all the fashionable modern languages, not for the sake of their valuable literature, but simply to skim over their new works, and fill the mouth with words, the mind with ideas of but too often doubtful import;—it is not these things which will draw the soul nearer to her God, or prove that knowledge is power, or wisdom happiness. Their effect is, but too often, to fill the heart with pride, with a desire to surpass, to triumph, with a distaste for all pleasures and amusements save those which grant opportunities for admiration and display. Love for talent in itself, desire for wisdom because of its own intrinsic beauty, or knowledge for the vast stores it unlocks—these are emotions unknown to those whose education has been conducted as above. Their acquirements bring not joy; for, unless they have a field worthy of their display, listeners they deem worthy to be captivated, excitement sufficient to draw them forth, their boasted accomplishments lie unused and wasted,

and their lives drag heavily and unprofitably along. Neglect were almost better than such abuse; but there is a middle course.*

The cultivation of such gifts, the superiority which their acquirement appears to bestow, certainly expose us to some degree of temptation; but we should not shun them on that account; our duty while on earth is, not so much to fly from temptation, as to resist it—to seek the praise of God above that of man; and this we do if accomplishment and talent be cherished and fostered as His gifts, and love and gratitude to Him accompany the sources of happiness they open to our grasp. If His blessing be sought upon their improvement, His guidance as to their best uses, they are not likely to puff up the heart with selfishness and pride; but, by the constant and grateful communion they open with our God, they lead us to cling yet closer to His love, to love Him more and more, and be ready to resign them at His call.

The flowers of the earth, beautiful in their lowliness, heart-speaking in their silent evidences of God's universal love as they are, yet supply us not with food for the support of life; that land were a houseless desert, which possessed but them. And so it is with the mind devoted to accomplishment alone. Music, painting, poetry, indiscriminately as they are scattered now over our domestic hearths, will not give us that bread of life and that sustenance, for which at one period or another of our mortal career the soul will surely seek. In the hour of

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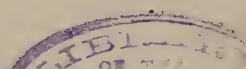
* Of course these observations have no reference to those children of genius, whose peculiar gifts point out a path for themselves. They cannot give too much time and study to the perfection of the art or science to which they lean. God has manifested Himself in them, has Himself pointed out their path, which it is alike erroneous and unhappy to disregard.

lonely sickness, of pining sorrow, of worldly misfortune, will these things satisfy the spirit, if our youth and energy have been devoted to them alone? Will they not rather take wings and fly, and leave the dreary void behind? Oh! without the heavenly manna, the corn which angels eat, THESE are but withering flowers, but reeds, which pierce when leant upon. That heart, that home alone is truly blessed, which seeks to unite the two, the bread of life with the flowers of love; cherishing the one, to strengthen, to support, to purify the other, to give fresh charms, fresh loveliness, to the ties of earth; to give new zest to that love which is commenced on earth to end in heaven.

If we regard the intellect thus (and surely we are permitted so to do), will it not heighten the love we bear our God, and enable us to obey His emphatic command, to love Him with the whole soul, even looking on it as the vital, as well as the intellectual principle of man? As the vital, we know the love we bear Him must continue constant and unchanging; and nothing is more likely to assist us in this, than that continued reference to Him, which the earnest and religious use of our intellect engenders. The one brings forth the other. We cannot love the Lord, without thinking how best to serve Him, without associating Him in His every gift. Nor can we so employ our minds without increase of devotedness and love.

In the affection we bear a fellow-creature, we frequently find this emotion wavering in its force, not entirely deserting us, but increasing and decreasing in warmth; at one time filling our hearts with intense delight, at others, with lingering sadness, according to the caprice of those we love, or from the variable current of life in our own veins.



In the love we bear to God, we must guard a ainst these feelings, or we shall find ourselves at one time buoyed up by a species of religious fanaticism, leading us into all kinds of extravagance; at others, bowed down even to the earth under a sense of despondency and wretchedness almost overwhelming.

We must check these enthusiastic fits of devotion, to which youth and happiness are liable, and rouse unceasingly the flagging spirit, where there is an unwillingness to pray; till at length we are enabled to preserve a more even frame of mind, which, tempering our earthly emotions, will naturally heighten by its calm, constant influence, the fervour of its devotion in its stated hours.

To obtain this happy frame of mind to any extent is a blessing, which in our present spiritless and fallen state is almost impossible. Perseverance will do much; but even the best and holiest have to mourn their "iniquity in holy things," the imperfection of their prayers, the painful mutability of their heart, even when they most desire to fix it on their God. There are, indeed, moments when the spirit of devotion seems kindling within us, when appropriate petitions flow, as it were, spontaneously from our lips, when we feel as if for the love of our God we could make any and every sacrifice, and follow on unshrinkingly in the path He hath laid down for us, whatever trials it may include; then, then is the time to tremble, to dash down these vain and idle dreams; for they are but illusions which fill our heart with pride that we can pray so earnestly, praise so eloquently, and resign ourselves so implicitly to our Father's will—illusions that have no foundation, but which, if encouraged, will lead us into sin; for we are then ready to look down on all who appear less gifted in prayer, and to arrogate to ourselves a much greater portion of God's

favour than we either possess or deserve. Then are the times to "remember the days of darkness," for they shall be many; to pray that these excited feelings may be sobered down to that lowly and tempered spirit, far more acceptable to our Father; or we shall find that, even as our taste is palled by a succession of sweet food, and we loathe it if we take no other, so will our thoughts revolt and turn in sadness from what has too long and too excitingly occupied them. Satiety and aversion frequently follow close upon too highly excited feelings; and carefully should we guard against these emotions in our communion with our God. Enthusiasm is natural to early youth, particularly when first awaked to the call of religion, and if that enthusiasm be placed under a gentle restraint, its rays will long enlighten and revive our affections; whereas, if we give vent at once to its full light, we shall find it, for a short time, dazzle, if it do not blind, and then sink in utter darkness and despondingloom.

But, dangerous as is enthusiasm in religion, we encounter it less often than that heavy sluggish feeling which only too often creeps over us, and renders our prayers a task so painful we would gladly turn from them; for we feel as if we could *not* pray. Here then, instead of *checking*, we must *persevere*. It is a mistaken notion to believe that in our present weak, wavering, and sleepy state of mind, it is better *not* to address our God; that such imperfect petitions can only be sin in His sight. If once the sacred duty of prayer be neglected, on the spur of such thought, its difficulties will increase, day by day, till at length it will be well-nigh impossible to overcome them. If we cease to pray till affections become warm, and a devout state of mind return, we may be sure that time will *never* come. Perse-

verance alone will conquer in time this wretched feeling. A determination still to seek, and trust in the grace of God to supply the deficiencies of our own hearts, which we earnestly, penitently implore, will bring comfort in His own good time. It is to try our faith, our merciful Father sometimes deprives our prayers of all comfort, as if He heard them not, and puts a chain upon our hearts and lips till they can frame no words;—to try our faith, to convince us that of ourselves we are nothing; that without His grace, we cannot even pray with fervour; that, however moral and outward religious duties may be performed, however guarded we may seem to have been from presumptuous sin, yet when we prostrate ourselves before His throne, it is as if a sudden blight had fallen upon us; thoughts the most incongruous, fancies the most unconnected, rise and mingle themselves irresistibly with our prayers; and when we rise up, it is as if we had not prayed, and we stand humble and abased before Him, conscious that we have sinned.*

* Without sharing altogether the ideas of Miss A. on enthusiasm and indifference expressed above, I must admit that from personal experience her observations are generally true. There are, indeed, moments when prayer proceeds from an exuberance of devotion, and we are, so to say, elevated above the world and its trials. Still, if I might be permitted to hazard an opinion, I should say, that these feelings of an entire surrender to God of our whole selves should not be called misguided enthusiasm, but should be encouraged, if possible, as the guiding stars of our lives, without being allowed to lapse into the sinful pride of piety mentioned in the text, which, whilst it ostensibly claims the merit of religious devotion, is only another cloak for the love of dominion and disregard of the rights of our fellow-men; but to be a deep-seated conviction of our entire dependence on the Lord for all that we are, and all that we have, which emotion will then enable us to be at all times ready to sacrifice every thing to our Maker's will, nay, even to surrender our life rather than to renounce His service; as our wise men say on the very passage of Scripture under consideration; "What is meant by 'with all thy soul'? even if He takes thy soul." And so

But if at such moments we are conscious of, and deplore such wanderings in devotion; if we still cling to Him, and feel, "Yea, though He hide His face from me, though He deprive me of all comfort in prayer, yet still, still will I put my whole trust in Him, still fold to my heart the blessed truth that faith in Him is accounted righteousness:" then indeed may we feel assured, that our imperfect petitions are as acceptable, perhaps more so, as when from some outward or inward cause our petitions

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did the great Akiba, who, whilst expiring under the slow and almost unheard-of tortures of the persecutor, dwelt with holy enthusiasm on the acknowledgment of the Unity of God, till his pure spirit took its flight. In short, enthusiastic feelings of devotion, if they proceed from humility, are holy feelings; but certainly care should be taken that they never take the shape of an inflamed zeal, which is the parent of the hatred of others differing from us in opinion, of uncharitable censoriousness and self-elevation. On the other hand, an indifference or carelessness in prayer is unfortunately much more frequent than the opposite extreme; cares and avocations of life dwell too strongly in the mind to be laid aside even in our communing with God; and were we only to pray when our soul is altogether free from extraneous thoughts, it would be but seldom indeed that the offering of prayer could be sacrificed upon the altar of the heart. It is, therefore, an admirable institution, that we have set forms of prayer, or petitions for almost everything we need, and fixed times to address these to our God. For if we take up our prayer book for the sake of worship, unless it be altogether from mere outward show, which is to be hoped not to be often the case, we at once render homage to our Maker; and if but one idea is uttered in sincerity and devoutness of conviction, then is this one idea an acceptable sacrifice to Him who hears all our cries. And who knows, but that, if even we commence to pray, without being properly prepared, we shall, as we proceed, become fired with a becoming ardour, and pour forth our spirit in real sincerity before the Lord? And are not the words of the Psalms and of our own prayers eminently calculated to impress the mind and to arouse and enchain the attention?—Much more might be urged; but the limits of a note forbid greater enlarging, and enough has been said to arouse the thinking Israelite to reflect yet more deeply on this important subject. —I. L.

flow readily and lightly from our lips. But if, on the contrary, the disinclination to pray is indulged in, and we cease to address, because we find no comfort, no manifest reply, because the sacred exercise is never perfectly performed: we voluntarily deprive ourselves of grace, and sinking deeper and deeper into error, at length forget there is a God. The perfection* of prayer has never yet been attained on earth; but the soul which restrains the first wildness of enthusiasm, and ceases not in its LOVE for God to urge and rouse its affections, when they flag and turn darkly and sorrowing from a duty which in this life of trial is frequently made distasteful,—that soul is framing for herself a calm, holy, and blissful temper, which the frowns of the world cannot shake, nor sorrows from a Father's hands for any length of time disturb.

To love the Lord with all our soul, we must not pour on earthly idols the essence of our affections; and in the devoted love we bear husband or wife, children or parents, or friends, forget Him whose gifts they are. God is love, and from Him the intense delights, the changeless blessings of earthly affections spring; yet our frail nature is but too often apt to forget the Creator in the creature. The earthly beings demand and receive the whole. We see them, hear them, years of intimacy increase the depth of our feelings; when they are absent there is a blank alike in our hearts and our hearths; and when our Father said, "It is not good for

* This assertion appears somewhat too sweeping; for surely there must have been perfection in prayer when Abraham prayed for sinful Sodom; when Moses asked for pardon upon a rebellious people, and when he prayed for a shepherd over the Lord's flock; when Elijah stood alone on Carmel, the sole remaining prophet of truth, when all around was error.—I. L.

man to be alone," He knew that this would be so, ay, intended and blessed it. He meant His creatures to love one another; but he meant not that He should be forgotten in that love, that His service should be removed so far, His holiness be deemed too great for *domestic altars*. "I the Lord God am a jealous God," He saith again and again, and unless our dearest and purest earthly love is traced to, and enjoyed *in Him*, we love Him not as He commandeth, and our fond affections may prove "the whips to scourge us." Oh none that has once felt the blessing of purifying earthly affection by the love we bear its beneficent Giver, tracing up to Him the delights it engenders, worshipping Him, hand in hand with a beloved one—leading his children to His footstool, and teaching them to feel the same deep love, and trace their young affections to the same immortal source: none that has once experienced this, will say that such willing sacrifice of the heart to God tends to decrease the force of earthly affection; he will acknowledge it is inexpressibly heightened, purified, exalted, rendered immortal; for such love ends not with death. Was it not this love which Abraham bore to Isaac? Hannah to Samuel? enabling the one to offer up his beloved in death, the other to part with him that he might "serve the Lord"? Nay, was it not this which bade Ruth cling to Naomi, and incited her to follow, tend, and love with a purity, a devotedness few instances have equalled? And shall we say such spiritual love is a mere illusion—a beautiful fable impossible to be realized? Alas! it is not easy thus to devote heart and soul to our God; frequently will our hearts rebel and our lips murmur; often shall we despair, and still more often despond, and feel it vain to bid the breath of life, the heavenly essence breathed into us by our merciful Creator, triumph

over the corruption of the earthly vessel which contains it, and soar in thought rejoicing to its natural home; constantly we shall fall back, but still—oh let us persevere, and pray, and trust; pray alike for ourselves, and for each other—for till we "love the Lord," oh how may we hope for the delivery of Israel, the restoration of Jerusalem!

CHAPTER IV.

DEFINITION OF THE WORD MIGHT—LOVE OF GOD CONSIDERED AS IT REGARDS OUR DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL DUTIES.

THE two preceding chapters having treated the love we should bear to God, at so much length, it would seem as if little were left for farther consideration. We shall find, however, as we proceed, there is still something more intended in this divine command, or Moses would have framed it differently. As yet we have only considered the love of God as it concerns our own heart, as a duty confined in its operations to ourselves individually. The word מאד *might*, as it is here used, appears to extend farther, and teaches us to serve the Lord in a somewhat wider sphere.

Had Moses used this word מאד as an adverb (very or greatly) as we find it in many parts of the sacred writings: we might look upon it only as very greatly increasing the force of the preceding words, and render it thus, "and thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, to *an exceeding great degree*," מאד as a particle signifying exceedingly, intensely. Nor should we lose sight of these significations,

even while we regard it as the noun expressing great strength, ability, power, in which sense it is evident from the pronoun ךָ being attached to it, that Moses used מְאֹדֶךָ thy might. We only find it so used twice in the whole Bible, indeed we may say only once, for the second time (2 Kings xxiii. 25) it is but a repetition of the words of Moses, "And like unto him (King Josiah) was there no king before him that turned to the Lord with *all his heart*, and *with all his soul*, and *with all his might*, according to the law of Moses." There can, therefore, be no doubt as to the deep solemnity, the forcible appeal contained in the brief command we are considering; the fact that the Hebrew expression בְּכָל־ מְאֹדֶךָ "with all thy might" is never once used, but in the imperative mandate to "love the Lord," is quite sufficient proof of its holiness, to authorize our regarding it as distinct from "heart" and "soul," and to endeavour to explain its meaning as will best assist our efforts, not only to *love* but to "serve the Lord."

It is in this light I look upon it principally: we cannot love the Lord without the exceeding great desire to *serve* Him to the very best of our ability, to use our utmost influence in His cause, and make obedience to His will as light, and dear, and precious to our fellow-creatures, as we find it ourselves. We *cannot* truly love Him if we do not feel this, if universal love and charity (the terms are synonymous) towards all around us, be they of our own or of the stranger creed, do not fill our hearts to overflowing, and we long to make manifest to those who know Him not the blessedness of His restraining yoke.

There are many who will take fright at these words, as tending to destroy liberty of conscience, and seeking to enslave the multitude, and yoke them to the opinions

of the weak-minded visionary, who believes that only to himself is the enlightening grace of God vouchsafed. A little patience will convince them that they have started at shadows. That is not religion, that is not love of God or of man, which, confining itself within its own narrow sanctuary, condemns the whole human race to perdition, save the few, the very few who can be forced to think the same. Alas! for the children of Adam, if such were the awful sentence of our God! Where too is His long-suffering love, His tender ever-acting mercies, if such were the economy of His heavenly kingdom, and all were deemed culprits, and sentenced to everlasting misery, save those who loved and worshipped Him *alike*? If such were His judgment, should one of us be saved? Should even one have a demand upon His favour? Where, even amongst those earnestly and sincerely united in essentials, are there *two* who think precisely the same on minutiæ? And shall we, sinful and finite mortals as we are, dare to say the aspirations of one pious heart are more acceptable than those o another, because they come nearer ourselves? Did not from this belief spring the awful miseries attendant on the times of persecution, not only as endured by our own nation, but inflicted by Christian upon Christian, as the repeated massacres of the Vaudois and of the Huguenots on the fatal 24th of August, 1572, would give only too terrific evidence? This is but the mockery of religion,—but profanation; for not thus would our merciful Father that we should evince the fervour of our love, the zealous ardour we should show in His service. Even as the beams of His sun shed heat, and light, and joy on all alike, so may we believe His gracious eye looks down on the truly pious of every creed: demanding an extent of service according to the measure of light He has vouchsafed, and accepting,

ay, and answering the lowly prayers of all who seek Him in love and truth, in whatever faith they may be offered. And while we shun the errors of belief, which is easily accomplished by a clear comprehension of our own, instead of scorning, as too many do, and believing every act and appearance of piety in others counterfeit, because their creed is mistaken, and yet more, because *we* feel it not: we might learn many a lesson of lowly wisdom and simple piety, and feel our hearts swell in increased love to our universal Father and to His creatures.

It is not compelling others to think as we do, which is comprised in the duty to use our utmost influence in the holy cause of God. It is to make manifest the superior blessings of religion over mere worldly pleasures, to prove that those, who earnestly seek to fix their affections upon their God, are provided with a never-failing, never-changing source of joy, in which "a stranger intermeddleth not," that they need fear neither the pangs of absence, nor the hour of death; for their God is with them, wherever a harsh duty may lead; He is ever present, ever near them, and death is but a dark passage which will end in eternal light, and lead them to His throne. To use our influence in His service, is to make *manifest* these things; to prove that, be our lot trial or joy, these thoughts are ever shedding their mild radiance on our hearts, strengthening them in trial, tempering them in joy, and guiding and inciting the simplest action of domestic life.

In some respects the power of proving the beauty and comfort of a religious life is to the Hebrew painfully contracted. It is not now as in those joyous times when "the field, the vineyard, and the altar" alone occupied the sons and daughters of Israel, when their every thought was connected with their universal Father; for it was

His law they obeyed. The first fruits of the vineyard and the field were laid aside, not as tributes to an earthly king, but as an accepted offering even to the King of kings. If we were asked why we were so careful "to leave the gleanings of the harvest, and the olive, and the grape, for the poor and the stranger;" or wherefore "we rose up before the hoary head, and honoured the face of the old man;" or why "we were so watchful to prevent unrighteousness in judgment, weight, or measure:" the Hebrews would reply, Because our Father in heaven so commanded; and thus the simplest action of courtesy was blessed and hallowed by its connection with the Lord, its obedience to His will. Such intimate communion was forfeited by the sins of our fathers; nor is it now even as it was in the dark ages of persecution, when the Hebrew clung with yet greater firmness, more endearing fondness, to the faith for which he suffered. The determination in secret to adhere unchangeably to the Law of Moses, incited many to live a holier life, and ponder frequently on Him, in whose service their very lives were risked. When occupying posts of high trust and favour in the Spanish court, their lineage unknown, their race unsuspected, though they could scarcely keep the forms, the SPIRIT glowed more warmly within. In those times, when torture and death were ever hovering round them, was a son of Israel ever tempted to become a Christian? Did we then hear of conversions, of abandonment of that belief which we received from the Eternal? Nay, was it not then that many turned from abodes of luxury and ease, deserting the cherished hoards of years, exposing themselves to every imaginable misery by becoming wanderers on the face of the earth, rather than accede to the conditions of their persecutors, and desert their faith? Was it not then that the sons of Israel

in deed and thought obeyed the command of their Lord, and in very truth loved Him with all their heart, and soul, and might? Would we do this now?

Through the infinite mercy of an infinitely merciful God, the inexpressible horrors of persecution are over: not alone are we granted toleration, and permitted to dwell in safety, and undisturbed to continue the practice of our religion, but by the truly sincere and pious Christian the consistent Hebrew is ever esteemed, honoured, even loved; and how do we repay our Father in heaven? Has that faith so beloved in adversity become less beautiful, less glorious, less lovable in prosperity, that we turn from it to embrace another? "Is the hand of our Father become shortened that it cannot save?" that we live as if we needed His blessing, His saving mercies no more? "Is His ear heavy that it cannot hear," that we cease to call upon Him, save with careless lips and wandering hearts? Reposing in security, we hear not or heed not the imperious call breathing in His law; or, engaged in the heartless repetition of *antiquated* form, forget the *antiquated* spirit, without which it is a void. We neglect to instruct our children in the religion of their fathers, to enforce the necessity and the comfort of constant communion with their God; it is enough if they fail not to do as we do; and is it strange then that those whose hearts thirst and hunger after divine love, divine instruction, should at length fly to that fold where they believe there are shepherds to guide and to console? Or that some ambitious spirits, imagining the spiritless forms, to which *alone* their attention has been directed, are so many chains which confine them to one spot, one employ, and permit no enlarging of the mind, no ascendency in worldly honours, that they, too, should turn from their fathers' God, and become either forswearers of religion

altogether, or embrace the first creed which promises distinction or increase of worldly gain? If the love and duty they owe their Father in heaven has never been impressed upon their infant minds; if their childish reverence and adoration have never been excited by the love He bears to them: is it a marvel worldly interest and earthly ambition should fill their hearts to the exclusion of those better and holier thoughts which, as the chosen people, should be peculiarly their own?

It is this melancholy state of things which renders the Hebrew's powers of exalting his religion, in the minds of men, so painfully contracted. Yet his influence should be exercised not only to exalt his faith in the views of his more worldly-minded brethren alone, but in the sight of the whole Christian world. He is peculiarly situated; comparatively speaking, he stands alone amidst a vast multitude; on his conduct, his constancy, depends whether scorn or admiration shall be excited towards the religion which stands forth embodied in himself. According as his life is actuated by its principles, so will it be deemed divine or otherwise; and at the present time, when to prove the superiority of the Christian religion is the avowed or secret determination of all its earnest members, endeavouring *thus* to obtain converts, has not the Hebrew a double incentive to make manifest the spiritual beauty, the unfailing comfort of his own? This would be a far weightier proof of the divinity and sacred nature of our faith than the most convincing argument with regard to actual points of doctrine. This would be evincing our love to our universal Father, and our desire to exalt His glory, much more to the improving of our own hearts, and to the enlarging of charity towards our fellows, than the endeavour, too often made in scorn and hate, to found the truth of our own belief on the falsity

and degradation of the Christian.* Religious argument never fails to breed dissension and abuse. Though our faith be not shaken, there are the remains of a raging storm within which it is long ere we can calm. If we have loved the person with whom we have argued, the painful emotions are yet stronger, and the confidence even of affection is a while disturbed. If he have been indifferent to us, that indifference is too often turned to contempt and dislike, and we quit the field, conscious of having done no good to ourselves or to our adversary, and we turn with a ruffled and angry heart from all who dare to differ from us. And is this the way to serve the Lord, to prove the beauty of the faith we adore? "Have we not all one Father? Hath not one God

* Miss Aguilar has in the above failed to convey her thoughts as clearly as they might have been. She surely does not mean that all the Jews do not enforce a holiness of life, and that they base the truth of their belief upon the falsity of the Christian. I should regret, greatly regret, if this were the prevailing error among our English friends. But in America and Germany, where I am somewhat acquainted, we neither are so careless of spiritual religion, nor intolerant towards those holding adverse opinions. I will not say, that sufficient attention is paid to the truths of faith and charity; because the scattered state of our people presents obstacles to the accession of a sufficient number of spiritual guides among us; but I have still to learn that we are as a mass less awake to the love and goodness of God than are our gentile neighbours. And as regards toleration in spirit, it needs no argument from me to prove that gentiles have a greater disrelish, to use no harsher word, towards us than we have to them. We may pardon the ignorant for their over-zealous contempt of Israel: but the learned can have no excuse for their wilful disregard of the fact that our religion is based upon a morality as pure as theirs can possibly be. Again, I say, that I would deeply deplore if a similar state prevails among our own people in England; and it is to be hoped that Miss Aguilar and others engaged in similar pious labours may with Heaven's blessing succeed in bringing about an improved state of feelings and conduct.—I. L.

created us? Why do we deal treacherously, every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?"

To love the Lord, to serve Him, the Hebrew should prove by his whole life that he is indeed one of a peculiar people, whose faith is "holy unto the Lord." Is he accused of having no faith, let him prove he has more need of faith, and feels it yet more deeply, than the Nazarene; that, as he looks upon the present condition of his brethren, he has faith, or he must disbelieve the past and doubt the future. Is he told his is a stern, cold, spiritless religion, that can only look to a rigid and exacting Judge, in whom mercy is lost in justice: let him bring forward his Bible to prove that a God of love was revealed to the Israelites, many centuries before the birth of him the Christians call their messiah. Is he referred to the beautiful morality of the New Testament to prove the divinity of its author: let him again turn to his Bible to prove from what fountain that morality originally came. And this influence can be used without one word of reference to points of doctrine. Let the Hebrew's every action be guided by the love he bears his God; let him adhere to every form as bringing him closer to his God, by manifesting the obedience of a loving child, not of a terrified slave; let him find so much delight and comfort in his religion that retirement and poverty are preferable to riches and distinction, if these are only to be purchased by its relinquishment; let him *respect* his religion himself, and he will never fail to find it respected by others. Let the Hebrew attend more closely to these things, make more evident his love to his God, his reverence to His ordinances, the comfort he derives from this communion: and we would hear no more of at-

tempted conversions, no more of wonderful converts;* and this indeed would be seeking to serve the Lord, to love Him with all our might.

But it is not to the Nazarene world alone we should make manifest the comfort and beauty of our Father's faith. Many who are hesitating and lukewarm might be led to think more seriously on this all-important topic, were the example of its professors such as might win the heart and attract the affection. The humblest member of a domestic circle might thus forward the sacred cause of God. His sphere of action is possibly contracted; but home is the spot where the influence of true piety is most strongly felt, where the blossoms of that lovely plant shed the rarest fragrance, and bring forth the sweetest fruit. What is so likely to check the impatient reply, the unavoidable irritation, the peevish temper, as religion? What will teach us to bear and forbear, to forgive the unkind look, the hasty word, to give up our dearest wishes at the call of duty, save that blessed spirit which springs from the love of God? Secret and constant communion with Him can alone bring the duties of submission, patience, charity, forgiveness, gentleness, to any perfection; and these virtues, like the silent stars, are more needed in the holy shade of home, than in the broad sunshine of society. There, fear of the world's contumely, of earthly disgrace, is often sufficient to keep us

* This and a few other similar expressions, used before by my friend, I believe to allude to an unfortunate case of the conversion of the daughter of a highly honoured family, under the plea that she had never been properly impressed with the spirituality of religion, till she heard it propounded in an Episcopal church. I believe, however, the case to be a solitary one almost, at all events very rare; the name of the convert is withheld because of motives of delicacy for her pious mother, and because it could add no strength to these remarks.—I. L.

on our guard. It is easy to govern ourselves for a time, to behave with studied courtesy, to speak with polished ease; the rules of society are enough for this; but to practise such virtues at home, requires a higher and holier motive. Even the duty we owe our parents, or the love we feel towards those with whom we continually associate, is not of itself sufficient. If we look into the Bible, we shall find lessons for home, as well as for our conduct in the world.

In submission to the prejudices of the aged, humility to our superiors, charity* towards the failings of our equals, patience with our inferiors, forgiveness (that cheerful forgiveness which forgets as well as pardons) of provocations which are unavoidable even in the fondest intimacy; in that control which puts some check on the irritation and ill-temper occasioned by those numberless petty provocations from which no domestic circle is free; in the cherishing of that holy gentleness which never fails to render us beloved:—if in these virtues the in-

* "Rabbi Meir said: Every one who engages in the study of the law from a pure motive, will attain many things; and not alone this, but he is worthy to enjoy all the world; he is thereby called friend, beloved, a lover of God, a lover of mankind, rejoicing God, rejoicing man, and he is clothed with meekness and fear of the Lord, and is enabled to become pious, righteous, upright and faithful, is removed from sin, and brought near to a meritorious course of life,—and he will become like a stream that grows stronger as it progresses in its course, and a river whose waters never dry up; and he will be modestly retiring, long-suffering, willingly forgiving insults offered him, and be raised and exalted above all creatures." This is in part the beautiful idea which one of our ancient sages conveyed of an enlightened piety. Are we willing to follow this guide in our own intercourse with God and man? Is our public *exhibition* of character, where the eyes of the world are upon us, the same as when we are alone in the bosom of our family, or even solitary in our closet, with no eye to see save that of God, with no ear to listen to our words, unless it be the Providence above, whose ken is ever on us?—I. L.

fluence of piety be silently at work, much will be done for the cause of God. Others may be led to examine into the secret cause of this heavenly peace and blessedness, which perhaps they envy; and if they trace it to the ever-working influence of an earnest love for their Father in heaven and a desire to serve Him, they too may wish to follow in His paths, and deem that yoke indeed light and glad which can produce such happy effects. Precept is too often doubted; we look on professors of religion with a jealous eye; and if they fail, the effect of their most eloquent appeal is lost entirely. But very different is the effect of discovering religion to be the secret source in each and all of those gentle and lovable qualities which in the first instance attracted us. At first we admire and revere at a distance, then, as we draw near and love, comes the question, why cannot we too "go and do likewise"?

In this manner the humblest member of society may serve the Lord, and benefit his fellow-creatures, may make evident by example, far more forcibly than by mere precept, the beauty and solidity of his internal piety; and if there should be an opportunity to manifest the benevolence and philanthropy with which his heart is filled, his words may fall with a powerful weight; for they will be traced from the same source as his actions, and the blessing of leading one soul to the Fount of Life may at length be his.

There can be no true religion without benevolence, without the ever-active desire for others to taste the comforts and blessings we enjoy, not alone corporeally, but spiritually. This is one unfailing proof of the heart's regeneration, of its springing up from the cords and chains which have attached it to sin, and faintly reflecting the "divine image in which man was made,"—faintly indeed,

yet truly, as we trace the glorious image of the sun in the quivering dew-drop which melts before his beams. In those that love, that serve, that perseveringly seek to resemble their Father in heaven in universal charity, forbearance, beneficence, and love, benevolence is very strongly marked; it is the virtue which assimilates us most with His divine image; the virtue which should be the peculiar characteristic, the loveliest inheritance of His chosen heritage; for more repeatedly, if possible, more powerfully than any other, is it inculcated in the Book of Life.

Why are we instructed so particularly in the slaughter of those animals granted us for food? but that they should be killed in the quickest and easiest manner? Why forbidden to yoke the ass and the ox together? because that which the ox could bear would injure and hurt the ass. Why so expressly threatened with awful retribution, if we forbore to assist the overburdened ass of one we hated? Why ordered to let the parent bird go free: if benevolence even towards the brute creation were not to be the first and dearest moral virtue of the Israelites? What code of laws, save those of a perfect, holy, and glorious God, would so care for the very lowest of His creatures, would enter so minutely into instructions for moral duties, that if obeyed as they were intended to be, would even now mark the Hebrew as in truth the follower of a divine law, and exalt his religion far above every other? Where, save in the law of Moses, do we find benevolence so emphatically, so continually enforced, in the care, alike of the brute creation, and of all ranks and conditions of men, the aged, the blind, the deaf, the poor, and the stranger, perfect in their equity and love, as the nature of Him who framed them; yet so suited to the heart and temper of imperfect man, so home-speaking in their uni-

versal appropriateness, that never could the Hebrew excuse himself from obedience by the plea, those laws were framed for angels and not for men, or at least for better men, than he is?

Those who are so desirous to exalt the code of Jesus above that in which their fathers believed and trusted, and who declare the simple sentence, "Do unto others as ye would be done by," is worth all the Mosaic precepts, would do well to refer to Leviticus xix. 18, where in the divine precept, "Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour* as thyself," they may chance to find the origin not only of the above-quoted sentence, but of many others in the gospel, whose excellence is indeed undeniable, seeing that they proceed from the same pure fountain; but as the Israelites possess the original unadulterated spring, they have no need to quit the belief of their fathers to discover it.

In one respect benevolence is still a beautiful characteristic of the Hebrew nation, and that is the open ear, and the open heart to the cry of poverty and sorrow, not confined to the distress of brethren alone, but a case of Christian distress is as promptly and generously relieved. In a small village near the metropolis,† many Nazarene families learned to call down blessings on a Jewish benefactress, and to feel that true charity was not confined to the Christian heart alone; many poor children, clothed, fed, instructed by her goodness, might have been seen

* So likewise, speaking of a slave who has escaped from his master to seek the protection of the Hebrew laws, the Bible says (Deut. xxiii. 16): "He shall dwell with thee—in that place which he shall choose—thou shalt not oppress him." In Lev. xix. 34, we are commanded to love the stranger as ourselves, because we had been strangers.—I. L.

† London.

gambolling on the lawn of a Hebrew dwelling, rejoicing in the sunshine of that ever-active benevolence, which, as some suppose, can be found in the Christian alone. And when it pleased God to remove the wealth which had permitted her to do these things, the bitterest drop in her cup of peculiarly aggravated sorrow was the thought, that the poor little Jewish and Christian children could no longer bless her name. Time, which has softened other trials, and reconciled her truly noble yet lowly heart to individual privations which would have bowed less faithful spirits repining to the dust, has had no effect in this. Still is the tear called forth, the kindly spirit wrung even to anguish, when distress comes near her door, and she has no longer power to relieve it. How blessed then the thought, that her earnest wish is known to the Searcher of hearts, and that in His sight the starting tear and quivering sigh are dear, perchance dearer than many gifts of gold.*

Nor is this a solitary instance of Hebrew charity. Yet while we admire and revere the relief the rich and powerful, ay, and not these alone, are ever ready to bestow: the truly pious Israelite may often in secret wish, the spirit of piety, the earnest desire to love and obey the God of beneficence, which was the secret source of that benevolence exemplified above, were more intimately mingled with it. We do not love the Lord with all our might, and seek to serve Him and exalt His glory: if charity merely proceeds from the kindliness of our own tempers, or tenderness of our own hearts, or a yet stronger motive in the more opulent and more ambitious

* I regret that the author has not mentioned the name of this noble daughter of Israel; as surely the memory of one so worthy ought to be blessed. Was it her own mother?—I. L.

ranks, from a secret, yet no less ardent desire, by a display of liberality to obtain honour and consideration in the Christian world.

Liberality is not benevolence, any more than the act of giving money is true charity. Benevolence is truly a religious principle, it begins and ends in religion; it lifts up the heart to God, at the same moment it expands it towards man. It seeks to expend its love and adoration for Him, in the service of His creatures; and therefore it is, that charity cannot be perfect unless it seeks the amelioration of the moral and religious condition of the poor, as well as the relief of their more crying and immediate wants.

The desire to improve our needy brethren, spiritually as well as temporally, can only proceed from the firm conviction within ourselves of the *necessity*, as well as the blessing, of serving the Lord. Our power in this respect is painfully limited, compared with the nations around us. Yet, were the *desire* more strongly felt, something might in time be done, and the Hebrews throw off the dark shackles of blinded superstition and of prejudices founded on a deplorable state of ignorance, which is to be feared is only too often found amongst them now. The poor, even as children, need instruction in their religion; it will not come untaught, nor can its mild consoling lustre beam from the trammels of tradition,* which must increase in incomprehensible obscurity with

* I am not permitted to alter the text so as to destroy the meaning; or else I should certainly have altered this sentence; for without claiming for tradition all that some assert for it, there is doubtlessly found laid down therein nearly the whole of *our own* manner of interpretation and mode of life. How else are we to read Scripture, unless it be in accordance with the views of our predecessors? What else forms the distinction between us and Christians?—I. L.

each new generation. The clear conception of our heavenly Father will not come of itself; it can only reach the mind through that word in which Infinity was revealed, according to the comprehension of finite man.

The human mind needs enlargement and improvement for the reception of the simple, yet sublime truths of religion, even for the consoling belief in a God of love. For this purpose even the best-directed charity, if it consist only in alms or similar relief, will not avail. There are difficulties, barriers around the Jewish poor, almost unknown to other nations. Confined to one quarter of large cities, often to trades of the meanest and lowest kind, without the power of seeking employment in other parts of the country, even if their inclinations so prompted, their minds must become narrowed, prejudiced, and puffed up with a sort of pride, or self-consequence, which sets at defiance every benevolent intention, and frustrates all attempts for their spiritual and temporal improvement. A superficial knowledge of the Hebrew tongue, just sufficient to repeat their prayers and blessings at stated hours, conscious they are doing a necessary duty, but utterly unconscious of the nature of Him they thus address; well versed in traditional lore, but wholly ignorant of the spirit of the Bible, of the peculiar duties which as members of God's chosen people devolve on them: these are the abuses which those who "love the Lord" and have His service at heart should most earnestly seek to remedy and attend to, particularly in those establishments which the benevolent have founded for the education of the rising generation.

A strictly moral education is not sufficient for the real improvement of the Hebrew poor. They need religion, simple, heartfelt, yet ever-guiding religion; and this can

only be obtained by teaching them their *English** Bibles; by seeking books to assist them in their comprehension; by employing those of their own class, in whose advancing youth a good discrimination may trace abilities for the task, to select portions out of standard religious works, which will give weight to the words of Divine love, by rendering them more adapted to the minds of their younger companions; and if there be not sufficient of these good books by Hebrew writers, there are many, very many excellent aids to the spirit of religion found in books written indeed for Christians, which to separate from the actual belief might form a pleasing and laudable employment for the benevolent Hebrew, whose limited means prevent any more active participation in the charitable acts of his richer and more influential brethren. Why should we be startled at selecting portions from Christian authors? The morality they inculcate, the spirit they breathe, come from the fount in which we both believe,—the Old Testament. *They may* believe that Jesus first preached the doctrine of love and saving mercy; but we know it was ours many centuries before, ours by right of primogeniture and of that redeeming love which, delivering us from cruelty and bondage, marked us as the first-born of the Lord.

Knowing this, imprinting it from the very first on the yielding heart of the child, bidding him look to the word of God, to the law of Moses, as the mainspring, not only of the religion in which he believes, but of every other which acknowledges a God of salvation and mercy, de-

* Being as we are inheritors of the Hebrew language no less than the Scriptures, it is evidently our duty to make ourselves, if possible, familiar with the original, so as to enable us to judge with some knowledge of the correctness or otherwise of the translation which is offered to us as a transcript of the word of God.—I. L.

spite the difference of creeds; as the fountain of life and light, typical of that which flows in the presence of the Lord for evermore, and from which springs that universal spirit of religion which, utterly distinct from creed, or form, or service, dwells in every pious heart: there can be no danger in selecting and appropriating portions of those Christian writers earnest in their cause. The Hebrew thus employed would find benefit to himself arising from benevolence towards others; nor need he fear his mite is too lowly to be acceptable to the Giver of all good. We do not think enough on the good we may do our needy brethren by leading them to read and understand the word of God, by supplying them with aids for the proper acquirement of that knowledge, and inciting them to rise superior to the superstitions of tradition and prejudice which have shackled* them so long, and to look to their Bibles alone† for support and comfort in affliction, for the guidance and direction in every social, domestic, moral, and religious duty, for the removal of every lingering terror, contained in the anticipation of death and judgment; in a word, for their instruction how to live, and for their hopes of immortality.

Till this is done, till the poor are *taught* religion as

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* It is not tradition which has shackled the Jewish mind, but the cruelty exercised by Christians, pagans, and Mahometans towards our bodies and spirits both. Prejudice against others is the result of oppression; remove this, look upon us as equals, and the evil will speedily be removed from our minds also. For kindness will beget kindness, as cruelty begot hatred.—I. L.

† The word *alone* strikes me as not quite proper; for if we reject all information in this great inquiry except what we can draw from our own experience, we must evidently be but indifferent judges of Scripture. No, we must of necessity "ask our fathers who shall tell us, and our elders who are to inform us."—I. L.

well as morality, and reading, writing, and other necessaries towards gaining an honest livelihood: the benevolent Hebrew can never hope to behold the regeneration of his indigent brethren; he can never hope to behold them occupying a respectable and respected situation in the world, as long as petty meanness, cringing servility, or presuming insolence, marks their intercourse with the Christian; he can never hope to see his religion loved and respected in them, till they have learned to love and respect it themselves. To do this, even simply to desire this, charity must be intimately mingled with the love of God. To serve Him, to exalt His glory in the eyes and hearts of men, to make the ignorant and the destitute share His blessings and promises, to impart to them His love, and strengthen them for their lives of trial by the conviction they are all and each, individually, objects of His tender care: this is the charity springing from, and ending in Him, and this should be the incentive of every Hebrew heart. If, while we interest ourselves in the poor, we think not of Him who hath said the poor and the stranger must be cared for, can we hope our good works will be accepted? Is it not rather to be feared some secret motive, some unconscious selfishness may lurk within, and, filling up our hearts, entirely prevent the entrance of the image of God, and rob our actions of that sweet savour which would otherwise ascend to heaven, and be accepted as the burnt-offerings of old?

"Cast thy bread upon the waters, thou shalt find it after many days;" this is sufficient proof that we are *not* to "withhold the good that it is in the power of our hand to do," because of the doubtful merit of those we would relieve. As the running waters bear from our view the bread we have cast upon them, so too may the good we have wished to do been hidden from our sight; but as a

renewed current or a change of wind may bring back to us what we have cast upon the stream, and looked upon for many days as lost, so will the blessing of the Lord return into our own bosoms the good which we may have failed to bestow on others. The fruit of benevolence may not be found on earth, the blighting wind of ingratitude, the nipping frost of deceit, may have outwardly destroyed the goodly tree; but within our own bosoms it shall bloom, nourished, cherished by the blessing of the Lord, and we shall find its fruit in heaven. But this comfort can only be realised by those who are benevolent, simply because they seek to follow the path of their Father in heaven, who desire to do good to others, because the ever-active love they bear their God urges them to serve their fellow-creatures, and bids them share the blessings so lavishly bestowed on them. Charity proceeding from any other motive is far more likely to end in pain and vexation of spirit; for if the love of God hath not been associated with the *endeavour* to do good, the thought that His love saw and blessed the deed cannot console us in its failure.

Let a child be accustomed to set aside a portion of his pocket-money, be the pittance ever so small, and only perhaps sufficient to scatter it in halfpence amongst the miserable objects who appeal to him in his daily walks. Let one half-hour be reserved for our little girls from the more showy and fatiguing avocations of the daily schoolroom, for the simple purpose of working for the poor and desolate of their own age; and if the love of their beneficent Creator be associated in both the reservation of their mite and the employment of their hands, we lay the foundation of that true benevolence in the infant mind which is in itself an offering unto God. We bring them closer to their Father in heaven; for by comparing

their lot with those they seek to relieve, their young hearts are filled with gratitude and love to their God, with a desire to honour Him by having mercy on His poor; and we prepare them for an increase of benevolence and good deeds with increase of years and means. Above all, let us not chill the warm expanding heart of childhood, by caution against the fraud which so often lurks in the garb of misery; better let the willing copper be given ten times in vain, than let pass by one true case of suffering. It is time to caution when there is more to give; but not in that beautiful spring of life, when all seems as true and guileless as the young heart itself. The sums squandered on expensive toys, expensive dresses, are not regarded, nor is the selfishness they engender in any way considered; yet how many good feelings and kindly charities might be engrafted, if part of these sums were laid aside for the inculcation of benevolence, even granting that the undiscerning charity of children should be more than once abused. Let them sometimes be encouraged to give up a desired pleasure or favourite toy for the superior gratification of relieving a fellow-creature, and proving that they *desire* to love their God; and we need not fear but that as their character matures, benevolence will form no inconsiderable part. If we need farther incentive, farther proof, we have but to search the pages of Holy Writ to feel that in relieving the poor we glorify the Lord; or the blessings on the benevolent would not be so continually, so emphatically promised; and we shall scarcely fail to remember that however guarded may be our lives, however closely we may adhere to the precepts of the Lord, however we may feel assured we do love Him with all our heart and soul and might, that love is *not* perfect or acceptable in His sight unless "we have mercy on the poor."

CHAPTER V.

BRIEF REVIEW OF THE COMMANDMENTS AND THE SOCIAL DUTIES THEREIN COMPRISED.

MANY Hebrews may perhaps object to the lengthened consideration of the second verse of the SHEMANG, which the three preceding chapters contain; that it is following the false lights of the Nazarene, and spiritualising and mystifying a simple truth; that the command to love the Lord with all our heart, and soul, and might, simply means to pray to Him and praise Him, and obey His laws as far as lies in our power—that is to say, as far as we conveniently can, without interfering with our more pressing calls of interest and ambition; that it is folly to suppose that such a short sentence, such a simple command can mean any thing more than a mere religious injunction, or that it interferes in any way with the moral duties. Alas! that such should be the calm and rational belief of any who bear the name of Israel! that any member of that nation to whom God revealed His glory, that nation He selected as His own, to be His witnesses, His peculiar treasure—that any one should seek so perseveringly to divide our duties to God from those to man, that even amongst the strictly moral, the truly honourable, who bear the Jewish name, the belief should exist that the service of God is distinct, too holy, too sacred, to be our guide in the world, that His word only refers to our duty to Him, not to our fellow-creatures. Surely

those who thus believe* can either never have studied, or have never implored the divine blessing on the study of the Book of Life. "For this commandment which I command thee is not hidden from thee, nor is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? Neither is it beyond sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

And is it not still as near us? is it not in our power still to do it? Yet so sad is the natural corruption of the human heart, that perhaps were it more difficult to be attained, were there some great thing we were desired to do in devotion to the Lord, we should be eager and ready to prove our obedience; whereas the simple command to associate His love, His glory in all we do, to make religion the mainspring of life, is looked upon as the mere dream of a visionary,† who would turn and twist the words of Scripture to the furtherance and support of his own imaginings.

How then (surely the question is allowable), would

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* I trust that the number of Israelites who understand their religion so erroneously is small indeed; that there are some is no doubt true; but there are many more, equally erring and sinful, who fancy that charity, benevolence, and mere morality are sufficient for them. Both these classes are only halfway religious; our duty is only fulfilled when piety and philanthropy are intimately united in us.—I. L.

† As an illustration of the truth of this assertion, the reader is referred to the exercise of faith demanded by Elisha, the prophet, of the leper Naaman (2 Kings v. 1–15), where the servants of the latter said to him: "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it, how much rather then when he saith unto thee, Wash and be clean?"—I. L.

these strict moralists explain the meaning and extent of the command which has detained us so long? Can they bring forth sufficient evidence from the Book of Life to prove that Moses meant *less* to be included in his words than we allow? Would not his *minute* command for the right regulation and religious government of individual, social, and domestic life, rather embrace our side of the question, and give some shadow of truth to the suggestion, that in his book of repetition,* being unable again to enter into the minutiæ already so emphatically enforced, he threw them together in this brief sentence, fully conscious that were that solemn injunction to love the Lord obeyed to its full extent, *all* would be therein comprised?

But it may be urged, Did we so govern ourselves, so control our affections, we should be perfect beings, and that it is impossible to be on earth. Yet on this are we to found an exemption or reprieve, for seeking after righteousness? Are we to sit down calmly and contentedly in the natural corruption of our hearts, because we cannot hope to realize perfection?

It is this tacit agreement with unrighteousness, this unconsciousness and carelessness of what God's law imperatively includes, which renders us so satisfied with ourselves, so startled when we hear or read, that our best actions need God's infinite mercy to purify and render them acceptable. It is this which makes us vehemently protest against having committed sin, or having done anything that can be displeasing unto our Father in heaven. It is enough to do all we can, and He will not expect more.

They are right, He will *not* expect more *if* we do *all*

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* Deuteronomy.

we can; but it is not enough to do all we can for the furtherance of our own interests; not enough to refrain from injuring man, to adhere strictly to *moral* duty; for will these acts acquit us in His sight for forgetting Him? for not thinking of His command to love and serve Him? to do all things for the sake of remembering and glorifying Him? Oh! if these things were sought; if we pondered sufficiently on ourselves, and on our Maker, or the love He bears us, and the little return we make—on the continued wanderings of our heart in prayer, in meditation on all holy things—how we shrink back from His service, and give Him not the love of children but the fear of slaves, forgetting that He demandeth LOVE and not servile obedience: we should feel at once our own sinful nature and our Father's inexhaustible goodness; we should be more ready to hear, more willing to receive all that would aid us in seeking after righteousness, and render easier the commands of the Lord, and the comprehension of His word.

There are those who, trusting entirely in their own strength, and judging others from their own feelings, laugh to scorn, as unnatural or hypocritical, any exalted feeling, extraordinary goodness, or perfect disinterestedness. They know not the strength that lowly religion gives; they would deem it but an overstrained saintly notion which urged that those, who seek their God and love Him in prosperity, are sometimes endowed under extreme adversity with a strength which may and will appear unnatural to those who know not, believe not, that God cares for each and all.

Those who are in reality nearest perfection, are farthest from it in their own minds; the more advance they make in goodness, the more clearly shines forth the perfect holiness of God in their own blemishes. They

judge not of themselves by their fellow-creatures, they seek not to compare their faults or virtues with those of men; but they look at their deeds through the light of their God; they regard their acts and omissions as they are in His sight, and trust not to them for salvation. But to those who know Him not, who think not of Him, but as One far off, who knows not, heeds not, the daily thoughts of individuals, it is enough to compare themselves with other men, and if they covet not, rob not, injure not—if they are widely different from those unhappy beings under the punishment of the laws, why, that is all-sufficient, they are free from all thought of sin.

But if those nearest perfection in the opinion of their fellow-men, are farthest from it in their own: what good either to themselves or others can accrue from it? What good? Let the true believer himself reply, and he would tell us, the blessing vouchsafed him can only be felt, it is too deep, too heart-springing for words. The humble endeavour, the fervent prayer, to follow in the path of light, have been mercifully blessed to him, it has been no power of his own; and he has found comfort in the conviction, that his prayers and efforts, however lowly, are acceptable. He hath but sown the goodly seed in the firm faith of reaping the fruit above; and he would tell us also, that the seed cannot be sown, nor can the plant flourish, without toil and perseverance. Disappointment and trial will attend its growth; we shall feel at times as if its budding blossoms were all destroyed, blighted, never to bloom again; but perseverance and prayer will tend and nourish it to health again; and on the bed of death its clustering flowers will encompass us with their sweet fragrance, and give fair promise of the fruit which waits for us on high. And then, is it not

worth while to toil on despite of pain, and persevere regardless of disappointment?

It is never *too late* to tread the path of salvation; but the earlier its commencement, the smoother is its road. It is the blessed union of piety and morality which the law of Moses teaches, which alone can enable the true believer to glorify the name of his God, by exalting his religion in the estimation of the world, and proving that the Hebrew faith is as full of hope and peace, and comfort of salvation, and of spiritual joy, as is the Christian.

The notion that the third verse of the Shemang, "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart," refers also to the preceding chapter, is also liable to the censure of the rigid moralist, who looks no farther than the actual words of the prayer book, and condemns all enlarged and spiritualizing views of religion. Yet it appears almost impossible to read the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, without observing how completely connected it is with the fifth, knowing also that, as Moses originally wrote, there was no division of chapter or verse.* In the fifth, our great lawgiver enlarges on the covenant which our God made with us on Horeb, repeating the ten commandments, as he there received them, emphatically concluding with the words: "And these words the Lord spoke unto all your assembly, in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice, and HE ADDED NO MORE." Then he describes the fear of the

* This is true to a certain extent: the modern division of chapters is not discoverable in the original Hebrew text; nevertheless, the division in sections is undoubtedly the work of Moses as much as the writing of the Pentateuch itself proceeds from him; and the Shemang forms incontestably a section by itself, whatever reference it may have to what precedes or follows.—I. L.

people, the great awe that fell upon them, and that which they said; their acceptance in the sight of the Lord; His yearning affection towards them, and His choosing Moses to receive His law, lest the sight of His glory should terrify the people. Thus we perceive the fifth chapter is a lengthened detail of "words," which the sixth in a few brief eloquent verses exhorts us to obey. The one is in strict connection with the other; and thus in all probability Ezra and Nehemiah thought, when they compiled for their captive brethren the prayers, which were to supply the place of the daily burnt offerings, which in Babylon* they were unable to sacrifice.

The first compilation of prayers originated in the Babylonish captivity. The sacrifices had ceased, the Jewish nationality was becoming lost in the sinful intermixture of the Hebrew with the heathen; and their children, according to Nehemiah, spoke neither in the language of Ashdod nor of Jerusalem. Ezra beheld and trembled lest the knowledge of the sacred language should become at length so completely lost, that they would be unable to address their God therein. He saw that a regular form of prayer was becoming more necessary than it had ever been before; and, instituting an academy, known by the name of the Great Assembly, and honoured by the names of Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, he compiled,

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* There is a slight inaccuracy in the above; no doubt exists that the chief parts of our prayers owe their present general arrangement to Ezra and the great Synod; yet they were not alone for those who remained behind, but for the inhabitants of Palestine also, who could participate in the temple service. Farther, though we have no direct account of its being so other than the example of Daniel, who prayed three times every day, there can be but little doubt that a form of prayer comprising benedictions, the Shemang, and petitions like the Amidah, were in use before the Babylonian captivity.—I. L.

with their assistance, the prayers we now repeat. They formed morning, afternoon, and evening service, to be repeated in lieu of the daily sacrifices which they were then prevented from offering as in Jerusalem.*

It is therefore evident, those portions of the Bible were selected which were best adapted to supply those ceremonies now denied them. To repeat the whole law of Moses every day was impossible; and yet, scattered as they were amidst idolatrous nations, it was more than likely it would at length be completely forgotten. The only remedy was to bring together those portions which would briefly, yet solemnly, remind them of their duty to their God and to each other; Ezra perceiving by the context that such was the intention of Moses.

Such was the origin of the Shemang: it is the only part of our prayers† which neither addresses the Eternal, nor relates to His glorious attributes. Each division speaks directly to the people: enforcing commands brief indeed, but yet which, if obeyed, would comprise obedience to the whole law of Moses.

דברים translated words, we find by a reference to every verse where it is used, always relates to commandments or statutes; and therefore to regard it in the

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* See the preface to the Rev. D. A. De Sola's elegant edition of our prayers, the translation and type of which are worthy their exalted subject.

† Without endeavouring to gainsay any part of what is advanced above, I will merely remark that, according to the views generally prevailing among us, the Shemang is looked upon as the daily acknowledgment and acceptance of the yoke of the heavenly kingdom: by it we are to be reminded to whom, and why we pray; it is to impress us at rising up and lying down with the conviction that we are the children of a beneficent and all-powerful God, to whose service we ought to devote the life He has given, the soul He has breathed in us, and the blessings which He bestows.—I. L.

third verse of the Shemang, as referring to the commandments preceding it, not alone in the sixth, but in the fifth chapter, cannot surely be charged with either spiritualising or mystifying the sense in which Moses used them. We cannot be wandering very far, if in making them bear upon the ten commandments, as a charge to let *them* be upon our hearts, we endeavour to discover what individual, religious, or social duties the decalogue includes.

The duties of the first and second have been already detailed, in the chapters relating to the first and second verses of the שמע. In proclaiming and believing in the unity of God, in seeking to know the various duties that belief includes, we prove our obedience to that first commandment, which so solemnly declares, I am the Lord thy God, &c. We cannot love with all our heart, and soul, and might, if we make unto ourselves any graven image, or believe in any other god; consequently, obedience to the second verse of the Shemang comprises obedience to the second commandment. And the third—do we amongst refined and polished society—amongst the moral and honourable world—do we disobey this third commandment? Surely that too may be dismissed unnoticed!—Yet we disobey it when carelessly and irreverently we use the sacred name of God; when, with profane and heedless lips, we attach that ineffable name as a common interjection to our most unguarded conversation, as an interjection attached to every sudden emotion, be it of surprise or grief, or more sinful still, of anger; often, too often is it used, when passion takes off the guard of courtesy from our lips, when our hearts swell with every feeling that is inimical to the reverence due to the pronunciation of that name. We disobey it, when thoughts the most incongruous, and vain, mingle with

our prayers, and we resist them not; for our lips mutter that sacred name, we call upon it, proclaim our trust in it, yet know not what we say. Is not this taking the name of God in vain, and are we not only too often liable thus to do—perhaps unconsciously, thoughtlessly, scarcely aware of the solemnity of the word we speak? Yet the same great Being who in thunder spoke, "Thou shalt not kill, and thou shalt not steal," also said, "Thou shalt not take my name in vain," and the disobedience of the one is in His sight as great as the disobedience of the other.

He did more to mark its holiness—He knew that a breach of the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth commandments, exposed the malefactor to the severity of human law, but the third might be disobeyed with impunity, at least with regard to man it exposed not the transgressor to corporeal punishment; and therefore, He says, "For the Lord will not hold him guiltless who taketh His name in vain." The *Lord* will not hold him guiltless; and shall we think less of the Lord's anger, the Lord's chastisement, than that of man, because it is deferred, because prosperity and joy attend us—and days, and weeks, and years pass on, and the taking that name in vain is apparently as totally disregarded by our Father in heaven, as it is by man? Shall we still continue to disobey, and believe that the words "the Lord will not hold him guiltless" mean nothing, can concern us but little, and only threaten vengeance upon those poor creatures who swear falsely?

If it only related to this last means of disobeying, there would have been no need to specify so clearly that it would expose us to the anger of the Lord; for the man that swears falsely is guilty in the sight of his fellows, even as he that kills or steals, and if guilty in the sight

of man is trebly so in the sight of God; but man attaches no sin to the profane use of that name if confined to private individuals, and therefore it is our Father Himself threatens vengeance. The refusing to revere, and love, and honour that glorious name rests between man and his Maker, and unhappy is he who believes there is no sin attached to using it thus in vain, because chastisement is deferred, and this life is free from retribution.

It is easy to avoid this disobedience, particularly in the rising generation. Let the infant mind be impressed with the solemn nature of religion, with true and clinging love to his God, who is alike Father, Saviour, and Friend. Let Him be taught to read Him in His works, to gaze with awe and reverence on the fair things around him; to fill the young heart with ideas of those glorious attributes which belong to his Father in heaven; and we need not fear the third commandment will be disobeyed. He will love and reverence too deeply for that awful name to be profaned. That name will bring with it too many deep emotions, too much intense devotion, to be uttered even carelessly; and he would shrink from using it as an interjection, even as he would from more palpable disobedience. That which is held dearest can never be mentioned lightly, and therefore it is that vital religion is somewhat doubtful in those on whose lips that ineffable name so often rests. They can scarcely love Him with all their heart, and soul, and might, if thus irreverently or thoughtlessly they forget the last member of the third commandment, and take His holy name in vain.

The fourth commandment is indeed a solemn injunction: it is to keep that day *holy* which is a covenant between our heavenly Father and His first-born, the children of Israel, for EVER; a day set apart, a day

sanctified not alone by words, but by miracles, a day peculiarly *ours*, coeval with creation, continuing through ages, ending in eternity; for such is the signification of the word עוֹלָם which, in the emphatic sentence, "And the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout their generations as a *perpetual* covenant; it is a sign between me and the children of Israel for EVER," is translated perpetual, and for ever. Intrusted as it is to *us*, since we *alone* amidst all nations and all religions adhere to this solemn covenant, thus standing forth indeed as the Lord's witnesses, as still the guardians and followers of the most holy law, a law immutable as Himself: it should be our pride, and boast, and joy, indeed to keep that day holy, indeed to devote it principally to Him who gave it, and sanctify its rest and joy by teaching that all should tend to and end in Him.

It was not the fourth commandment that first instructed us in the deep holiness of the seventh day. We find the first reference to it is after the six days of creation. "And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and God *blessed* the seventh day and *sanctified* it, because that in it He had rested from all His work." Here we perceive its origin. God did not rest because *He* needed rest; but He knew the creatures He had formed would require it; that it would be to them a blessing and a joy, and therefore He set apart that day, in which He rejoiced in the completion of His great work, and rested to behold it. We do not hear of it again till the sixteenth chapter of Exodus; but that it must have been always observed and remembered and kept holy by all the children of Abraham, is very evident from the circumstances which this sixteenth chapter relates.

The cruel bondage in Egypt had in all probability obliterated the remembrance of this solemn day. It was not possible that, suffering as they were in the land of Mitzraim, they could in any way adhere to it. Yet so great was its sanctity, so blessed was that day in the sight of the Lord, He waited not to issue His commandment concerning it, but at once marked it as a day set apart by a miracle which proved alike His power and His love. The manna, that angels' food, which was sent down direct from heaven to nourish and revive His people, which if preserved on the weekdays became putrid and unclean, as if thus to chide the misbelieving race for doubting God's providence for the morrow, yet not only fell in double quantities on the Friday, but remained perfectly clean and wholesome on the Sabbath, for on that holy day there fell none. It was the Lord's Sabbath, He, the glorious, omniscient, omnipotent, and eternal God—He rested on that day—and commanded His people to rest also; He sent sufficient provision for the two days, and they were to gather it, and bake, and seethe it on the sixth day, that on the seventh there should be no need to kindle a fire or to do servile work in their dwellings. They were to rest and to rejoice; not in the pleasures of this earth, not in the indulgence of sense and appetite; but to rest and rejoice in the contemplation of their Father and their God, and set apart that one day in seven to forget the toils and labour, sorrows or cares of the past week, to rise up from the chains in which sensual pleasures may have held them, and rejoice on that day in remembering the Lord and seeking to realise those spiritual joys and blessings which await the true believer in the world beyond the tomb.

Already sanctified by a miracle, yet the Sabbath of

the Lord must be still more emphatically set apart; and in the midst of thunder and lightnings, when the earth quaked, and the clarion from heaven sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, the same awful Voice that forbade idolatry, and murder, and adultery, and theft, also said, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." From the master to his slave, even to the stranger, whatever might be his faith, to the ox and ass, all were to rest, all were to hallow and to bless that day.

Four times, in addition to the two already mentioned, do we find the Sabbath day emphatically enjoined, not only in connection with others, but spoken of and enforced *alone*. What can be more emphatic than the 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, and 19th verses of the xxxi. chapter of Exodus, where we also see what is omitted in the commandment, namely, the awful chastisement which awaits the breaker of the Sabbath? "Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death; whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people;" and thus not only temporal but *eternal* death is threatened, that, if the cords of love are not sufficiently strong to bind us in holiness unto this solemn day, the chains of fear shall urge us to obedience. And not only do we read the threat of punishment, but its fulfilment, in the death of the Israelite found gathering sticks on the Sabbath day. It was not so much the *act*—it was the sin of *disobedience;* and therefore those little things some are apt to imagine can be no harm, can be no desecration of the Sabbath, *are* sinful in the sight of God, for they are *disobedience* or unbelief in the truth and sanctity of His word.

And again was the holiness of the Sabbath day proclaimed, when the Lord passed before Moses and revealed His glory and His attributes. In that awful hour, when

the Eternal stood in a cloud, in communion with His faithful servant, when the reflection of His radiance, thickly veiled as it was, fell upon Moses till his face so shone no man could look upon it: even then was the holiness of the Sabbath enforced. And Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, we find repeating and enjoining it again and yet again. With the sole exception of the commandment prohibiting idolatry, we find the fourth repeated and enforced more often than any other which the decalogue contains. If the Sabbath be disregarded, the feasts and fasts our holy law enjoins must also fall; for they are described and given as days of holy convocations, as *Sabbaths* of rest and rejoicing in all our dwellings; and if we refuse to keep the Sabbath, the first and holiest of all, how may we hope adherence to the other festivals can be accepted?

In Nehemiah we find the desecration of the Sabbath severely and justly censured as one of the most fearful effects of the captivity; and the vow to sanctify it by refusing to buy and sell or do any business on that day, was one of the very first proofs of repentance which the elders of the people demanded. In Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the three greatest and most important prophets, we not only find how the anger of the Lord had been excited by the disobedience of the fourth commandment, but to lead us once again to Him, to turn us from our iniquities, His never-failing mercy, His unutterable love, held forth gracious promises of salvation, of blessings as unnumbered as undeserved, if we would but "turn from doing our own pleasure on His holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable, and shall honour Him, not by doing our own ways, finding our own pleasure, speaking our own words," and glorify Him by hallowing His Sabbath.

How much then does the Sabbath include! Not only is it an everlasting covenant between Israel and their God,—not only is it a witness to other nations of the truth and beauty of the word of God; but on *our* observance of it as that word of God commands, on *our* remembering it in very truth to bless and keep it holy, depends in a measure the redemption of our scattered and sorrowing race, at the coming of that blessed shepherd who, inspired and summoned by the Lord, "shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

And when we think on this; when we see how much depends upon our own efforts, our own prayers; when serious contemplation, aided and quickened by the spirit of the Lord, has enabled us to realise the deep solemnity, the awful sanctity of this glorious day: shall we think it enough merely to *abstain* from doing what we have been taught is wrong? enough merely to read our morning prayers and weekly portions, and with the books put aside all thoughts of our Father and His works? enough to tell our children they must not work, nor write, nor cut, nor ride, and yet leave them to amuse themselves as they like best, without one thought of Him whose day it is? enough to contrive to attend some Friday night assembly, without *riding* or being *driven there?* Shall we think it enough to pass the Sabbath hours at a race, or public breakfast, or afternoon concert, if we can contrive to do so without using our cattle? enough to pass the day in doing our own pleasure? Oh surely not! surely, if meditation and prayer have done their work, we shall feel these things are *not* enough to remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. And yet it need not be a day of gloom. True religion, the faith of Moses

and David, knows not sadness—the Sabbath may be a day of rejoicing, and yet holy unto the Lord. If we have little time during the six days of labour, then is it well for us to think of Him, to realise His presence and His love, to talk of Him to our children, to exalt Him in His works, His attributes, His word, to speak of Him in our homes, till our domestic hearths become His temple; to recall His providence, His blessings of the days just past (for is there one day in which He cares not for us?) to look within ourselves and deplore that which we have left undone, and praise Him for all that we have done; to read books which will lead our thoughts to rest on Him—not sermons alone, whose very name sometimes terrifies the young, but tales, that, through the pleasant medium of well-selected fiction, would lead the youthful spirit to contemplate His God, and adore His never-ceasing love, and trace His providence in the events he reads—for what are tales of domestic life but relations "of the thing that hath been, or that which shall be"? to assemble around us all the beloved members of our domestic circle, whom the week-days may have seen toiling on their separate ways,—and feel that various as may be the dispositions, the tempers, sympathies, virtues, and faults, there is yet one golden link that binds them together, one faith, one God, one universal love for Him and acknowledgment of His unceasing care. We all know these things cannot be on the days of labour, not at least to the extent for which the awakened spirit yearns. How blessed then the Sabbath day which is thus employed! Begun and concluded in prayer, evening, morning, and evening again; every beloved member of each household hearth, from the aged man to the lisping infant, meeting in solemn prayer, in addressing Him, or communing with His

word; and the intervening hours employed in all that would enable us to realise His presence and His love—this is remembering the Sabbath day to keep it holy; this will be regarding it as it was intended, a type, though a faint one, of that rejoicing rest* and those unfading pleasures which are at the right hand of God for ever more.

Beautiful, most beautiful is the injunction contained in the fifth commandment, touching even in its brevity, heart-speaking in its simple eloquence, proving simply, yet forcibly, that nature by herself was not sufficient for the young to honour their parents; for had it been, this command would have been omitted.† Why is it that the decalogue speaks not, commands not, aught relative to the duties of *parents* to their children? Because there the yearnings of nature are sufficient, there natural affection is enough; for so deep, so intense, exhaustless, is a mother's love, that its figure is frequently used to demonstrate the love borne to us by our Father in heaven; *His love alone* exceeds it. "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on

* So also says the prayer: "May He who is most merciful, cause us to inherit the world which is entirely good, and the rest in the life everlasting." Indeed, according to the opinions of our doctors, the Sabbath is an emblem of the repose and felicity of the righteous in paradise; and its noiseless observance has been borrowed by the Nazarenes for their weekly rest.—I. L.

† Without dissenting entirely from this view (and as editor I am not called upon to state in every passage whether I agree with the author or not), I will merely remark that, even granting that nature alone demanded in its full extent obedience to the paternal will, the sanction of the will of God would not be superfluous; since His sanction would add holiness to the effect of natural feelings, and thus He would bless us for obedience, provided it proceeded from pure motives, although by it we were but gratifying the finer feelings of our own disposition. —I. L.

the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, but I will not forget thee."

The Eternal knew the nature of His creatures. There was no need to bid a mother cherish her child; but the wild exuberance of youthful spirits, the desire to fling aside all appearance of parental yoke, the liability to forget in manhood the love, the cares, lavished on helpless infancy, even setting aside selfish interest or false pride, all these needed the precept to honour our parents. Nor sorrow, nor poverty, nor even the absence of all attractive qualities, will shake, nay, perhaps, they will rather increase a mother's love. It matters not that marriage or other circumstances remove her children from her hearth; they cannot remove them from her heart. Seas may roll between, and long years pass; still, still, it matters not; stronger than death, maternal affection lingers to the end; and though age and its attendant evils may diminish bodily strength or mental resources, yet if sickness, or sorrow, or shame, be the portion of her beloved ones, is she not the first to fly to them still? But lovely as is the perfection of filial love, its nature is not thus constant, thus devoted; if it were, we should not meet with children whose better education or more prosperous ways have raised them to a higher rank than that in which they were born, often fearing to confess their lineage; we should never hear of neglect or unkindness on the part of the child, of ingratitude, forgetfulness of duty, till, silently, and the cause unsuspected, the parent's heart bleeds and breaks. These things have been, though their occurrence may be rare; but they have been; even the Book of Life will provide us with examples, proofs, that there was a cause for the fifth commandment, or it would not have been given. If the love of a child for his parent were as perfect as his parent's love for him,

there would have been no more need to give directions for the conduct of the one, than for that of the other;* and therefore it is wrong to dismiss it disregarded as a command all must obey, if they would not be hated and contemned as monsters of nature. It is not always obeyed, even when gross or palpable disobedience to its beautiful ordinance is most carefully avoided.

Continued blessings of whatever nature very often render us insensible, if not quite unconscious of their existence; and therefore it is, that we frequently find the deep anguish inflicted by the death of a parent painfully aggravated by the thought, the full value of the blessing was never known till it was lost; and instances of neglect, unkindness, disobedience, rise up to appall us, and we wonder they could have appeared so small, as to blind us to their recurrence. Death in connection with a beloved object is an awful subject of contemplation; yet would it be better sometimes to dwell upon it thus, and permit its recollection, sorrowing as it is, sometimes to check the ebullition of ill temper or ill will, sometimes to rouse the indolent and calm the impatient, than allow it to come upon us unawares, and bear from our detaining grasp a blessing which, when with us, we knew not sufficiently to value—which we loved not, obeyed not, revered not as, when past away seemingly for ever, we feel we ought to have done.

It may be, that the constant intimacy, the uninterrupted intercourse, and the regular employments of home,

* There are, nevertheless, directions for the conduct of parents towards children to be met with; one, pre-eminent, is the duty of imparting religious instruction, or in other words, fitting them to become servants of the Lord, and this precept is contained in the very words of the Shemang, "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children;" another relates to the exercise of equal justice to all the children of a man, for which see Deut. xxi. 17.—I. L.

deaden us to the sense of all we owe our parents. It may be, that we receive their tender cares, their unceasing love as things of course, which are too common to be felt, too necessary not to be missed; and the unselfish devotedness, the patient assiduity, bestowed on helpless infancy, on all its little griefs, and sufferings, and tempers—the time, labour, fortune, often health expended on opening youth, to store the mind with seeds of intellect and wisdom, to bestow every pleasure, sympathise in every grief: these things are not always recalled at a time when they might urge on to more active, more endearing obedience to the fifth commandment. Gratitude, affection, respect, obedience, all are included in the word honour. Yet not one of these beautiful attributes of youth will come of its own accord. That is not love, which consists in passive companionship. It is an ever-active principle, urging on to those little attentions, to the silent desire to alleviate care, to give pleasure, to obey a wish even before it is expressed, to save from, or insist on sharing fatigue, to those numberless little offices of kindness which love feeds upon even as it excites. Gratitude is not a mere name; it is the deep sense of all we owe our parents, of all they have done, are still doing for us, heightened and hallowed by filial love. Respect surely will not fail us, if we meditate on their age, their experience, those qualities in individual character, which have excited our love long before we could define them. Obedience is seemingly the most difficult of all the duties enumerated; yet, why should it be so? We cannot truly love, if we can hesitate one moment to give up our own wishes for the gratification of theirs, to abstain from a desired pleasure, because their experience knows its folly and its hollowness, and their love would shield us from its excitement and its pain. We cannot be truly grateful if we feel no desire, by the

sacrifice of our own wishes, when obedience demands it, to return, as far as in our power, all that they have done for us.

And yet to honour our parents needs no extraordinary effort, no public display; obedience to the fifth commandment is best proved around our domestic hearths, and in little things. The influence of real affection, of that true unselfish love which parental care demands, is silent and invisible, and only felt, and only known by the peace and joy it throws around. Childhood may implicitly *obey*, and by a thousand little winning arts, endeavour to show its love; but youth it is which can best evince it. When the powers of thought, and intellect, and observation have shaken off the sluggish sleep, which chained them in childhood, when the affections begin to feel their depth, and warmth, and solid education and graceful accomplishments have heightened the playful vivacity of childhood, by the addition of more lasting charms: then it is youth can best prove its love. Perhaps the health and vigour of our parents are then beginning to decline, whilst youth with buoyant heart and bounding steps ascends the hill of life, by a path which knows but sweets and flowers, which fancy decks with such bright and glistening hues, when hope is smiling and beauty points upwards to the radiant summit, where glory, honour, fame, stand ready to enfold him with their lucid rays; perchance the tender guardians of his infancy are beginning to descend that path which, rough and craggy, offers no allurement and ends but in eternity, whose golden promises are sometimes but faintly traced through the blackening shades that gather round the dream of death.

Then it is, we should indeed honour our parents, and by untiring attention, watchful thought, prompt obedi-

ence, and willing submission, evince our gratitude and love.

The principal comforts and joys of home depend on youth. Care may have graven its deep furrows on the brows which in our childhood have been gay; disease may have fretted the tempers which in former years have been serene and joyous: then it is the grateful task of youth, by innocent gaiety and invisible efforts, to drive away care and bring forth smiles, to soothe the pains of disease and restore peace and comfort. Nor are these duties difficult to be performed. It is but to *desire* to obey the fifth commandment, to think how best to evince our love and gratitude to the beloved guardians of our infancy, and we shall not fail. Often are the duties of domestic life neglected from mere thoughtlessness, from the received opinion that it matters not how we behave at home, so we conduct ourselves with propriety abroad. Yet were half the labour now expended to please the world, to obtain the hollow applause of strangers, given to increase the joys and comforts of our homes, to obtain the praise and rivet the love of the nearest and dearest to us on earth: how changed would be many a domestic scene. Those accomplishments, those graces of the mind so often regarded as by far too precious to be employed for the benefit and recreation of a domestic circle, to whom do we owe their attainment and their cultivation but, under our God, to our parents? and to them their first fruits are due. Oh! if the young daughters of Israel, for on them even more than on their brothers depends the comfort of home, would reflect on these truths, trifling, unimportant as they may seem: how beautifully would they show forth the glory of the God of Israel through the perfection of His law, and draw down upon their own heads the blessed reward promised to the

observers of the fifth commandment, "that their days should be long in the land which the Lord their God giveth them!" The land of promise may be no longer theirs; but if they need the promise of a reward, let them not fear, but *believe*, and they will find it in heaven.

And are there yet other commandments which can bear upon those social and domestic duties peculiar to individuals of refined habits and cultivated minds? Even the ninth and tenth may be unconsciously and thoughtlessly disobeyed, unless the spirit of piety have purified that grosser part of our frame, have released the soul from those heavy chains of corruption and sin which surround and stifle that glorious image of God in which He made man.

Covetousness or envy is not only a vice in itself, but it is always the commencement of grosser crimes: and therefore the Lord in His infinite wisdom and mercy warned us against this root of evil. We ENVY *persons*, we COVET *things;* yet their meaning is so similar, their effects so very much the same, they may well be regarded together. In persons of a lower grade, of irregular passions, of unrestrained tempers, and uneducated minds, the disobedience of the tenth commandment leads to the committal of all the crimes which the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth prohibit and include. In more refined society it tempts to those numerous petty acts of provocation, rivalry, slander, and scandal, which at once lower and debase the transgressor in his own eyes and those of his fellow-men, and expose him to the wrath of his God, not the less certain because as yet deferred and unseen.

"We are in the first place, guilty of bearing false witness, when we say things to the disparagement of another which we know to be untruths; this is most

properly styled calumny. Next to this is the raising or spreading scandalous and injurious reports without sufficient evidence, or upon slight and doubtful grounds. Next come those loose imperfect accounts, picked up by officious tale-bearers, who are so eager to get and propagate a new story that they are easily deceived, and must of necessity lose or pervert many material circumstances. Another branch of the vice here prohibited is detraction; for we are most evidently guilty of bearing a false testimony against our neighbour, when we derogate from his general worth or endeavour to lessen the particular merit of his good actions; and lastly we must individually involve ourselves in the same guilt, when we aggravate another's faults."

And whence do calumny, scandal, detraction, originally rise? Most frequently from an unacknowledged dislike of others that, if traced to its source, might be principally discovered arising from the poisoned springs of envy, that we covet their superior station in the world, their wealth, their capabilities of doing what they please; or we envy the superior grace and beauty of person, the expansive intellect, the exalted virtue, the estimation in which they are held by their fellow-men. Why do the highest moral characters, the most consistently religious, find so many enemies, so many detractors in this world? Why has it become almost a proverb that the lowly followers of God's law, the sincerely good, so seldom meet with the love of the majority in the world? Why are their smallest actions observed and cavilled at, their words and manner turned, if possible, into weapons of scandal and detraction? Why? because envy is unsuspectedly and silently at work; because, unknown to the detractors themselves, envy is the secret cause of their undefined, perhaps unacknowledged dislike, or that they

unconsciously covet some advantage which they may possess.

Guardedly should the human heart be watched, that forgetfulness of the tenth commandment find not entrance through its many openings, its many avenues, to sin. The evil which its disobedience includes cannot be summed up, cannot be encouraged by the thought that "so far it shall go and no farther." Once entertained, and the barriers of a naturally good disposition and unstained morality fall at once before it, and it rushes on, ending but in eternal anguish. Truth, a strict, unfaltering adherence to truth, will guard from a breach of the ninth commandment. Truth, not consisting in the non-utterance of, or non-acting on a deliberate falsehood; but truth, that beautiful attribute of morality and piety, which originally sprung from and ends in love and reverence for Him whose most glorious, most consoling attribute is that He is a God of TRUTH! But to obey His other commandments needs more than the mere adherence to truth! Truth will not bear upon them. It must be the constant realization of His presence within us, the constant thought of Him who gave these laws and commanded their obedience for ever, the constant watchfulness over, and examination of the human heart. And therefore was it that Moses said "and these words which I command thee this day shall be in thy heart," and that Ezra selected that portion of his books which would remind us of ALL the laws of God in a few brief but emphatic words; that in the morning we should be reminded of our duties; in the evening their repetition should lead us to look within our hearts, and examine impartially the tale they tell. By doing this, the sacred laws become more indelibly fixed within us, and by looking on them as guides and rules, not for social commu-

nities *alone* but for *individuals*, the remembrance of Him who gave them will more often occupy the mind and heart, and the union of religion and morality be at length attained. Love will incite to and welcome obedience as the desired proof of its depth and truth.

CHAPTER VI.

HINTS ON THE RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OF THE HEBREW YOUTH.

THE seventh verse of the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy, and the fourth of the *Shemang*, contains so much important matter in a few words, that each member of the sentence demands to be considered separately. In the preceding verses, we have been desired to reflect on and lay up the words of the Lord in our own hearts; in this, to teach them to our children. "And thou shalt teach them diligently to thy children," *i.e.* the love of God and all that is therein comprised.

To instruct young children in the dull routine of daily lessons, to force the wandering mind to attention, the unwilling spirit to subjection, to bear with natural disinclination to irksome tasks, all this, as a modern writer very justly observes, is far more attractive in theory than in practice. It is a drudgery for which even some mothers themselves have not sufficient patience; but very different is the instruction commanded in the verse we are regarding. To speak of God, to teach the child His will, to instil His love into the infant heart, should never be looked on as a daily task, nor associated with all the

dreaded paraphernalia of books and lessons. The Bible alone should be the guide to, and assistance in, this precious employment. There are moments when children are peculiarly alive to emotions of devotion. The Hebrew mother who desires her offspring to say their prayers morning and evening, to abstain from writing, working, or cutting on the Sabbath, to adhere to particular forms and observe particular days as she does, has yet not wholly fulfilled her solemn duty. This will not be enough to make the Hebrew child love his God or his religion: not enough to restrain him in manhood from becoming a Christian,* if it favour his interest or ambition so to do.

Far more depends on Hebrew parents than on Christian; the latter have their places of public worship wherever they may dwell, their ministers whose whole lives are devoted to the service of their God, to the moral and religious welfare of their fellow-creatures. In their earliest years, Christian children attend once a week the house of God. They join in prayers which, if not wholly understood, are yet sufficient to impress some feelings different from the impressions of the six days of labour. They hear the Bible explained, they see it regarded as indeed the Book of Life; and, though they may not understand why, some portions attract their ear, which in after-years, are recalled with peculiar pleasure. The intervening days may weaken the impression, perhaps it is entirely forgotten; but their next

* Or restrain him from neglecting, from motives of unbelief, the dictates of his religion. This alternative is more to be dreaded than the one in the text; at all events if we take America and France as a criterion. In fact, we may say, without fear of contradiction, that conversions are rare indeed where the Jews possess liberty of conscience.—I. L.

Sabbath they go again, and the feeling is rendered stronger. They see a large concourse around them engaged in the same solemn service, praying in a language familiar to them, and this would be of itself enough to chain a child's attention. They feel it as a privilege thus to seek their God; and this feeling follows the child to youth, to manhood, and almost involuntarily religion is imbibed. Even those deprived of religious parents have yet advantages peculiar to themselves, in the fact that the faith they profess is the faith of their country and of all around them.

The Hebrew child has not these advantages. Debarred from the public exercise* of devotion on his

* My friend draws, indeed, a melancholy picture of religious debasement, and if this is universally the case in England, the men and women of Israel inhabiting that land ought to arrest almost every charity sooner than let such an ignominious state exist any longer for want of pecuniary means to obtain labourers in the field of regeneration. What? no religious instruction? no books? no expounding of the Text? no spiritual guides? no men of whom people could inquire the way of life? All the defects Miss A. enumerates can be legally remedied, and we have yet to learn that there are not means and men at hand to effect this. The only thing my friend complains of, which admits of no alteration, is the public worship in the Hebrew language. (Miss Aguilar agrees mainly with the view here expressed, in the sequel, which see.) But why should that language of ancient Israel not be also the language of modern Jews? why not establish schools in every town and village where the children may learn to read the Bible, not from a translation made by Christian prelates, and authorised to be read in churches by a Christian king, and which is no doubt erroneous in many passages on which our opponents rely for the establishment of their doctrines, but in the original language in which it was first announced; so that they may be able to form a correct, unbiassed judgment of the word of their God. If this course were adopted to any extent, the child of eight years old would know understandingly the major part of his prayers, and before he arrives at the age when he could pray with devotion, all the words of his lips in his address to the Lord of life, would flow from an understanding heart and a willing spirit. It is ignorance alone that disfigures our worship; and, in the

Sabbath day; never hearing public prayers in a language he can understand;—having no public minister on whom

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name of Heaven, let it be removed; at all events let the effort not be wanting to remove it. As regards a public expounding of Scripture, it is no new thing among us; for in olden times the law was publicly taught, even from the days of Moses downward. (See Deut. xxxi. 12, 13.) It is no argument to say that sermons are a custom of gentiles; for if these have adopted our modes, it would be folly in the extreme to banish them from among us. A jealousy of innovations is highly proper, for we too "might fear the Greeks (gentiles) even if they bear presents" (*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes*); but we must take care that this jealousy is not carried too far. In America, however, children of all ages, say from three years and upwards, of both sexes, are attendants in Synagogue; occasionally, at least, the Law is expounded; efforts have been made to publish books solely for the education of the young, and there are also persons in every town almost, of whom questions can be asked with regard to the deeds we should do. Moreover, for the last three or four years schools have been commenced in different towns where religious instruction is dispensed gratis to all who may come on the first day of the week; and efforts are now making to extend the system by forming day-schools, where every Israelitish child may obtain a general education, coupled with a knowledge of his religion. Let us hope that this effort may not be fruitless, and that the results may not disappoint the projectors. But to our friends in England let us address the admonition not to be indifferent to the blessed results of education witnessed in Germany and elsewhere. They are charitable to profusion; strangers from all parts of the world claim, not unheeded, their assistance; the cry of anguish is not heard unmoved by the princely merchants of Israel domiciled in Britain; and can they be blind to their own defects? can they refuse to aid themselves, their children, their friends, out of the pit of religious ignorance which is said to exist among them? All that is required is an effort, undertaken not in the spirit of fault-finding and hasty reform, but in an humble striving to magnify the Lord. I will not mention any one by name; but there are those whom God has greatly blessed; fugitives, some from the bondage of the Czar, former residents of oppressed Germany, and others again in whose veins flows the blood of many a martyr from the persecution of the Inquisition. Surely they all feel their duty; let them feel it more deeply, and not rest till they have restored the Law among their brethren, and glorified the Lord by their faith and deeds.—I. L.

he can call for that instruction he may not have received at home; never hearing the law expounded, or the Bible in any way explained: to his mother alone the Hebrew child must look, on his mother alone depend for the spirit of religion, the inculcation of that faith which must follow him through life.

Few in number, scattered amongst the nations without a land to claim as our own, a king to cherish and protect us, we are daily thrown amongst those believing in and following another creed. "And ye shall be left few in number, whereas ye were even as the stars in heaven for multitude, because *thou wouldst not obey* the voice of the Lord thy God; and the Lord shall scatter thee among all people from one end of the world even unto another." (Deuteronomy xxviii. 62, 64.) Such was the awful doom pronounced by the great prophet whose words we are considering. We knew the word of the Lord was never known to fail, and yet we disobeyed. Our own wickedness called down on ourselves the vengeance, so long, through an infinity of love, deferred; and therefore these facts cannot be brought forward to excuse negligence in the instruction of our children. Our Father knows every difficulty and every circumstance that combine to render the Hebrew mother's task more arduous, more responsible than the Christian. He expects not more than weak humanity can perform; but He will not accept the plea of disadvantages, of difficulties, as acquitting us of a parent's duty.

Were love and gratitude to Him banished from every other human heart, surely they would swell in a young mother's breast, as she gazes upon the little creature undeniably His gift, and feels the full gushing tide of rapture ever attendant on maternal love. Surely in such a moment there must be whisperings of devotion, lead-

ing the soul in gratitude to the beneficent Giver of her babe, or swelling it with prayer to guide that precious charge aright. It may be, that doubts of her own capability of executing a task, as solemnly important as inexpressibly sweet, may naturally arise; but these doubts, instead of leading her to give up the task in despair, should lead her to the footstool of her God in prayer; and her petition, even as that of Hannah was, will be granted.

That truly pious Jewess not only devoted her child to God, but so devoted him, that but once in the year she could behold him; and at first he was her only child—the little being for whom morning and evening she had implored the Lord, implored Him in tears, in fasting, in bitterness of soul. Her prayer was heard; and how fervent must have been her gratitude, how great the love *she* bore her God, how implicit her reliance on His love for her, that she stilled the yearnings of a mother's tenderness, and as soon as the boy was weaned, brought him up to the high priest and left him there. And was not her pious faithfulness rewarded? Three other sons and two daughters did she bear; and her eldest, the joy, the hope of her heart, became the favoured prophet of the Lord.

To part thus from her child is not now demanded of the Hebrew mother; nor can there now be such a blessed consummation of such a self-conquering struggle. Yet the example of Hannah should be treasured up by all the daughters of her race, whom the same beneficent God has blessed with children. It must be remembered that in the present state of Israel the word of God cannot and must not be taken literally as it regards the immediate answers to prayers, or punishment of sin. The lapse of years, the difference of position, must not be for-

gotten. All the pious actions there described, cannot now be performed, nor dare we expect the same direct manifestation of our Father in reward: yet this is no cause of, nor excuse for, the neglect of the Bible. Vouchsafed in love and mercy as an unfailing guide, it at least teaches what is pleasing in the sight of our God, by the blessings that directly follow or are promised. We learn too that "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy;" that, "As the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy towards them that fear Him;" and therefore if the examples set before us in His book are followed according to our ability, aided and strengthened by constant prayer, it is certain we too shall be blessed, if not in this world, in that "where they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, *Know* the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (Jer. xxxi. 34.)

We cannot devote our sons to the service of the Lord as Hannah, nor, even if we could, would we all be required to do so; but we may teach them to know and to fear Him, and to guide their every action by their love for Him. We may teach them by their conduct to display His glory, the honour of Jerusalem, the comfort of the Hebrew faith. Even scattered as we are amongst the stranger, we can do this; and this is devoting them unto their God. The same reward may not be ours, as was bestowed on Hannah; yet we shall be blessed. The Lord will forsake us not; and as we behold our children grow around us in true piety, and consequently in the exercise of every virtue: will not every Hebrew mother

feel that the word of the Lord is true and she is blessed indeed?

To do this, to obtain this desirable end, religion must not be learnt from a book, nor be regarded as a severe restraint. A mother, whose heart is in her work, will find many opportunities, which, properly improved, will lead her little charge to God. Our prayers are long, and not applicable to childish wants and feelings; but a mother may find a sweet employment in throwing together some well-selected passages, either from our ritual or the Book of Life, to form short but impressive prayers for both morning and evening. A mother's lips should teach them to her child, and not leave the first impressions of religion to be received from a Christian nurse. Were the associations of a mother connected with the act of praying, associations of such long continuance that the child knew not when they were implanted: the piety of maturer years would not be so likely to waver.

There is a peculiar sweetness in the remembrance of a mother. When a young man has raised himself by his own virtues and talents in the world, when he feels himself esteemed and beloved by his fellow-men: he will still think of his mother, if it have been from her lips the first lessons of virtue were imbibed; and if religion were as zealously and carefully implanted, would not her memory have equal influence in guarding him from temptation, strengthening him to walk on in the paths she loved? It may be that continual occupation, perhaps arduous labour, or severe thought and study, have withdrawn his attention a while from his God; or that the paths of pleasure, encircling him with their delusive rays, conceal from his eyes the light of eternity. Some sudden association recalls his mother to his mind; the days of his early infancy, his happy boyhood, rise

before him, and with it the remembrance of duties he has neglected, the hours of prayer that have passed by unheeded. He hears again the sweet and gentle voice which first spoke to him of God; he sees again those happy hours when, seated at her feet, he rested his little hands upon her lap, and repeated with her the words of prayer, or listened with tearful eyes, and swelling heart, to the tales of sacred love her gentle accents told. Few hearts could remain cold and unmoved in the midst of such recollections; he is more likely to prostrate himself before the God *that* mother worshipped, and pray again even as in childhood. And will the Hebrew mother neglect this solemn yet blessed duty? Will she refrain from thus associating herself in the heart of her child, when, far more than the Nazarene, the sons of Israel require it? Will she not teach the *religion* of the heart unto her children, instead of merely inculcating peculiar forms, and desiring them to observe peculiar rites? Will she not teach them to fly to the footstool of their God for guidance, instruction, strength, and grace to resist temptation—blessing on all they undertake—comfort in affliction—moderation in prosperity:—will she not teach them this, instead of so banishing religion from the early education, that her sons in manhood stand and act as if all depended on themselves, on good and evil fortune—acknowledging indeed a God, yet living as if of Him they had no need? her daughters, either wholly occupied with the affairs of this world, living as if there were no eternity, and consequently trembling at the very name of death?—or, needing comfort, strength, hope, and finding them not in the religion of their fathers, are tempted to seek them where they fancy that no spiritless form restrains the soul, and consolation is more easily attained?

It is not merely hearing of God in the stated hours of devotion, which will remedy this evil. When a child is more than usually happy, rendered so perhaps by some indulgence or reward: the kindness of earthly friends should be made a secondary cause, the blessing and love of his Father in heaven, the *first.* The mind of a child when thus excited would not easily forget the impressions then engrafted; his very affections, judiciously directed, would draw him nearer to God, for it is His love which hath given him the friends it gives him so much joy to love. Joyous emotions are natural to childhood, and then is the time to instil both gratitude and love. In times of disappointment or in sorrow—why should not the little heart be soothed and caressed into submission by associating even this trial with a God of love? Petty as the sorrows of childhood may seem to those of riper years: yet we do wrong to smile them to scorn; they are as severe to the little sufferer as the graver sorrows are to maturer years. If discontent darken the brow or create ill temper: instead of angry reproof, the attention of the child might be gently drawn to the multitude of poor helpless children, who know not the very name of many blessings lavished around him; and he might be asked how he can pray to his Father in heaven for a continuance of His love and kindness, when he thus indulges in fretfulness and discontent? If superior talent, superior beauty, be the portion of a child: the young heart may be taught they are the gifts of his God, and demand yet more thanksgiving, humility, and prayer to Him, than is required of those less gifted; for if more hath been mercifully granted him, more will be required; and that pride and self-conceit will turn those rich gifts into a curse instead of blessing.

Were such the education of early childhood, increase

of piety might be hoped and looked for in manhood. But these lessons must come from a mother, and can only be impressed in the earliest years; it will be too late to wait till the character is formed. On a mother depends greatly the formation of character; and therefore she would be wrong to fancy she has time enough before her. Religion should grow with our growth, increase with our years, and thus become so completely part of our being, that the child would find it difficult to recall when he first heard of God, when he first was taught that love of God must be the mainspring of his life. If in childhood his joys and sorrows have been made sources of communion between him and his heavenly Father: instinctively he will in manhood bless his God in prosperity, and fly to Him for comfort in affliction. If in childhood he has been taught to pray for aid, in the tasks and temptations of the day, so too in the weightier affairs of manhood will he seek the guidance of the Lord. If he have been corrected when a child, because he had offended his heavenly, yet more than his earthly Father, and led to pray for grace in the removal of his faults: in after-years he will guard against error and sin, not for fear of the judgment of the world, but of that of a higher Judge. He will walk on, feeling his own lowliness, his own dependence on his God; yet in the sight of his fellows, virtue and honour will encircle him with their robes of light; for inward, yet ever-working piety, will be the shield, against which the arrows of guilt and temptation will be blunted—and the mainspring from which his every action will revolve with heightened and unfailing lustre.

To the mothers of every faith and every class these hints may be equally applicable; but to Jewish mothers more particularly. We have but to study the Book of

Life and every history of our nation: and we shall not fail to perceive that the religion Moses taught was intended to unite the thought of God with our every action. If a Christian writer finds sufficient foundation for the assertion that "there can be no half measures in devotion; religion must be *all* or nothing:" how much more powerfully should *we* feel it, we—who are a peculiar people, the first-born of the Lord, thus called by the Eternal Himself, and therefore absolutely *set apart*, to exalt by our conduct His glory amidst the nations? It is urged, perhaps, our situation is not now what it was; that it does not depend on us alone "to magnify the Lord;" that we are but as a handful amidst the nations that now worship Him: yet this fact in no way decreases our responsibility. It is rather increased; for it is easy to divide the worship of the one true God from idolatry, —many civil as well as religious customs did this; but now, mingling intimately with the nations that worship God, though not as we do, living under the same civil jurisdiction, acknowledging the same sovereign, unless the adherence to the laws of Moses be even more exact, it is more than likely our nationality would be entirely lost, as well as all pride, all glory in the Hebrew faith.

To prevent this great evil should be the Hebrew mother's aim. The youngest child may be taught that he is a member of a distinct and peculiar nation. The great mercies and unchanging love of the Lord will, if well related, find very early an answering chord in the youthful heart. The wonderful providence, the stupendous miracles, the innumerable instances of our Father's long suffering and loving kindness, which our eventful history records, might be related as interesting tales in those many leisure hours that the child looks up so clingingly

and fondly to his mother for amusement. Vividly and interestingly might these narratives be opened to the young and eager mind, till almost insensibly he feels it a privilege, even at this long lapse of years, to belong to a nation so peculiarly blessed, so singularly the object of God's gracious providence; and that false shame, now, alas, but too familiar to the Hebrew, would never flush the cheek, or lead the tongue to falsehood. Never would manhood descend to mean subterfuge, or weak evasion to conceal his faith. If the path of ambition be confined, he will not wish to enlarge it at the price of his religion. It will be his pride to prove to the nations the *spirit* of his faith, that even in our captive and degraded state, we are still the peculiar treasure of the Lord. He will not throw off the bondage of our forms, he will not condemn their dictates; for he will trace their minutest regulations to the same merciful Father, whose love supports, whose arm sustains him. He will not deem their restrictions hardships, but hail them with delight as proofs of the obedience and willing service his love urges him to pay unto his God. He will feel to his heart's core, that weak, corrupted as he is of himself, it is by *obedience* alone, implicit, unquestioning, untiring obedience, he can manifest that in very truth he seeks to love his God; and therefore whatever he may fancy, of this he is certain, that if he *disobey*, it is but spurious affection that he feels—he *cannot* love the Lord.

Much will the Hebrew mother have accomplished, if she thus teach her children to love, obey, and glory in the faith of the *one* and *only* God. Yet this will not be quite enough; she must do more. She must relate the fearful apostasy of Israel. Even as she sketched his glory, must she depict his sins, ingratitude, rebellion, such as no other people knew. She must show forth the

retributive wrath of the Lord, and all the wretchedness we drew down upon ourselves. As her children increase in years and understanding, she might study with them the writings of the prophets, particularly marking those passages relative to her subject; and by interesting references, both to past and present history, prove how literally and how completely these awful threatenings have been fulfilled. It would be a pleasing task to intelligent parents to select passages from many standard works on the prophecies, and fit them for the comprehension of their children. The Christians seize with avidity the fulfilment of prophecies, particularly those relating to Edom, Egypt, Moab, Ammon, Palestine itself, as proofs and evidence of the truth of *their* religion. How easy would it be to select portions from these very books for the instruction of our children; for the fulfilment of these prophecies only proves the *truth* and eternal nature of our law, of the whole Book of Life, according to *our* belief.

By laying this foundation in childhood, carefully guarding against the very smallest approach to bitterness or scorn towards any other creed, we instil their religion with their growth; conversion cannot take place when released from the parental yoke; for the very weapons which the Nazarene would use against them, have become in their hands weapons of defence. Proofs of the truth of Christianity are to the young Hebrew proofs of the truth of Judaism. Conversion cannot take place on either side; but mutual esteem and charity will take the place of such desire; for if both religions appear to have the same foundation, it is evident God alone in His own good time can remove the veil which each believes flung over the other.

There is yet another most important reason for im-

pressing carefully and deeply the awful sins of Israel on the youthful Hebrew. He sees the present degraded and wandering state of his nation; he perceives our condition is widely different from that of other kingdoms; he is ready to feel and acknowledge we are cast off from the favour of the Lord, that His countenance is for ever darkened towards us; and if he have not been instructed in the cause of this, if he have not studied long and deeply the history of his nation and read there—in our continued rebellions, apostasy, transgressions as varied as they are innumerable, disobedience to every given law—the *real* and *only* origin of our dispersions and fearful sufferings: he is quite prepared to embrace the creed of the Christian, and believe with him, that all our miseries originate in our rejection of their messiah; that the Eternal has cast us off because, according to the creed and charge of the Christian, we crucified His son.*

* Without the least intention of weakening the force of the evil depicted as arising from the want of a Jewish education, exhibited in the text, I cannot help remarking that the non-adoption of our system by no means opens the way for the embracing of Christianity. It is possible that there are some, for argument's sake I will say many, who are so struck by the pretended fulfilment of the gospel prediction with regard to our dispersion, as to admit the truth of the dogmas embraced in the New Testament. But to a philosophical mind, or one well versed in Scripture, such a result must seem very singular. For, what is Christianity as understood by nine out of every ten of its followers? nothing but an absolute belief in a plurality in the Godhead, and a faith in a forgiveness of sin through the intervention of a mediator, and this a being descended from an incarnation of the divine principle in the body of a man. We will not discuss either of these points whether they be possible in the nature of things or not; but merely confine ourselves to their contradiction of Scripture. Let us but view the idea, "The Lord is one," and what does it say? but that in the Deity there is no division. "The Lord is long-suffering, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin;" this too is a Bible doctrine; where is here a mention of a mediator? Lastly, it says: "I the Lord change not;" but is an incarna-

From this supposed connection of cause and effect, more converts have been obtained than from any other. And

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tion *not* a change? Now even assume that the Israelite on being questioned cannot account satisfactorily for the dispersion of his people: it is almost impossible that he will admit its being owing to the refusal of his forefathers to give credit in the mission of one who assumed to be a part of the Deity, a mediator between God and man, an incarnation of an essence which admits of no change.—Miss Aguilar no doubt knows of instances where a conversion was the result of reasoning based upon such insufficient grounds; but if it were not that some worldly advantage, real or imaginary, were connected in their mind's eye with a casting off of ancestral opinions: few Jews indeed could be found to do so from absolute conviction. I do not mean to say that a conviction is impossible; for the human mind is at times strangely constituted; perverted judgment, according to the views of many at least, is not so rare as to excite astonishment; but this much we may assert without fear of offending our Christian friends, or of asserting an untruth, that *legitimate* convictions, or where the converts can give a reasonable account of the reasons which sway them for the abandonment of Judaism, are very rare indeed; or else we should not hear so frequently of recantations, or returnings to the fold of Israel.—I say again we need not fear conversions as much as hypocrisy or indifference. Many may pretend to a change of religion for the sake of a tangible advantage, such as office, high standing, or an advantageous matrimonial connection; but we have yet to learn that persons acquainted with Scripture, who have enjoyed the benefits of a Jewish education in ever so moderate a degree, could by any possibility be induced to adopt the doctrine of a trinity with the accessory belief in a mediator. We do not deny nor gainsay that Christians of late have had a plentiful harvest of apostates; but they were apostates in very deed, apostates—deniers of their God for worldly gain. Solitary exceptions may perhaps be adduced; but they will be found to proceed from the individual's having been always under Christian tuition or exposed through ignorance to some unfortunate influence of friends, who took advantage of moments of weakness to urge their views with a success which they themselves could hardly have expected at another time.—So well are European governments, anxious as they are from political purposes to consolidate their empire over the minds of all their subjects no less than their bodies, convinced of the uselessness of mere preaching, that they attach political advantages, in some shape or other, as bribes or bounties for conversions; no doubt under the persuasion, that though the parents

why is this? simply because the true reason of our rejection has not been taught; because the history of the past has never been brought forward to explain the present and instruct us for the future. Then carefully indeed should the sad story of Israel's apostasy be taught her youthful followers; carefully and tenderly guarded against, yet prepared to receive the connection drawn by the Nazarene between our present state and the rejection of their messiah, and to answer it by the many evidences presented in only too many pages of the Jewish history of its fallacy.

The youthful mind, already touched by the relation of the inexhaustible love and great forbearance of the Eternal, will feel, as this history of iniquity and retributive justice is presented to his view, overwhelmed with the magnitude of sin, the awful nature of the Lord's power and justice. Then is the favourable moment to open to his heart and eye those glorious promises relating to our final redemption and return unto His favour.

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will make bad Christians, the children will be like those of other Christians, that is, believers in the popular system from the ignorance of the principles and hopes of the Jewish faith. Hence it is that, though we hear much of conversions to Christianity in Prussia, Poland, and England, such events are extremely rare in France, Holland, and America, and unheard of in the Ottoman countries. In the Catholic countries of Spain and her former colonies, the Jew hides his religion; under governments where he is free to act as he pleases, he cares for no belief if he values not his own. Let the experiment be made of treating Jews and converts alike, and but few of the latter will ever be obtained. Interest is a powerful stimulus, but conscientious conviction a thing of slow growth, too slow indeed to convert a Jew into anything else. The same is also the case with the reverse; Christians by education are not apt to see error in their creed; our views to the contrary notwithstanding. Hence Miss A. speaks wisely in urging mutual charity and forbearance whilst enforcing steadfastness in the path we have been pursuing from the time of Moses to our own days.—I. L.

We might quote innumerable passages to elucidate our meaning, but it is far better to refer to the fountain-head at once; and vain would be the attempt to transcribe even a quarter of those beautiful verses which Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Micah, and Malachi, and indeed all the prophets, contain, those we have mentioned abounding in them, perhaps, the most.* Past and present ages display the literal fulfilment of every threatening; and wherefore then should Israel doubt the future? While therefore the young and bounding heart *deplores*, it may not, cannot despair; for yet more powerfully, more appealingly, do these passages enable it to cling and rejoice, and trust in a God of truth and love!

The Eternal hath said—Not for our sakes, but for *His*, even His own sake, will He do this great thing;—but while this extraordinary mercy is impressed on the young heart, we must not forget to instil how much depends upon ourselves. A reference to the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus would be a great assistance to this instruction. There we read the blessing and the curse; and history shows the fulfilment of both. And in the last seven verses we find that, unbounded and unfailing as is the mercy of the Lord, He will *not* renew His covenant with us, *unless* we confess our iniquities and the iniquities of our fathers, acknowledge that our present captivity and dispersion *are* the punishment of our sins, and humble our uncircumcised hearts, till we indeed find renewed favour in His sight. If these prophetic verses be impressed on the heart, and memory, and understanding of the child: he will each year become more and more sensible of his responsibility alike to his God, his nation,

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* See the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah to the end of his sublime prophecies.

and the world. To his God—he will evince and *feel* his consciousness of complete unworthiness,—his desire to bring down the blessing and avert the curse,—his yearning towards that promised land, and that blessed state of things, when *all* shall *know* and *love* the one sole God. To his nation—he will remember that, in our present scattered dwellings, the conduct of *individuals* is often the criterion by which the whole nation is judged; and therefore the Hebrew must live not for *himself* alone, but as the representative of a belied and hated body, whom his conduct will either depress or exalt. To the world—instead of seeking to deny his lineage, which the finger of God upon our brows will ever prevent, he will seek to be known, to be recognised as a Hebrew, not by his countenance and peculiar form alone, but by the superiority of his social and domestic character, emanating from a spirit of religion which can only be divine.

Even if the religious instruction hinted above should sometimes fail to bring forth such blessed fruit: the Hebrew mother will yet have done her duty; and not on her head will fall the carelessness, disobedience, or apostasy, of her children. She will stand absolved in the sight of her God; for He will have seen her struggles to lead her offspring in the right way; and if earth brings no reward, she will find it at His right hand for evermore. Oh! let but the Hebrew mother persevere, and far more likely is it that she will find a sweet foretaste of heaven upon earth in the conduct of her children, than that her efforts will all be blighted. She has instructed them thus in *obedience* to the word of God, to His commands found repeatedly in the Pentateuch, and nowhere more impressively than in the last six verses of the chapter which contains the Shemang. The words "and ye shall teach them to your children," are

but a *repetition*, a *remembrance*, of commandments continually given before; and therefore the most *literal* Hebrew cannot accuse us of taking too enlarged a view, or of spiritualising its meaning. We cannot read the Book of Life without perceiving how intimately the spirit of religion was to mingle with other instructions, how completely it was to be the *first*, the most precious of all studies; and if *instruction* in piety was so necessary in the time of Moses, how much more necessary is it *now*, when, unless learnt from a parent's lips, it can never be learnt at all! And oh! will any mother expose her children, her beloved, to the miseries attendant on living without their God? Can she think on the immortal spirits, whose eternal blessedness or everlasting death is, for the first years of their lives, in her keeping, and yet not tremble? Will she not rather prostrate herself in daily humiliation, daily prayer, to the God of love for blessing on her arduous yet blissful task? for aid, for strength, to guide and assist her through her path, however rugged it may seem? Can she think on the storms, the temptations that will assail her son on every side when he enters the world, and yet make no effort to provide him with an armour of proof, and a shield of defence? Can she reflect on the sorrows that must encircle the lovely girl at her side ere this life is past, and yet leave unopened the well of comfort, provided for the afflicted by our God Himself? Oh! can she leave her to seek it herself when sorrows come, and risk her seeking it in a stranger fold? Can she think a moment, that death is ever ready to snatch some beloved away, yet shun the theme as if it were enrobed in gloom? Can she think on this fearful parting, yet breathe no word of immortality? of that glorious world, where the loved that meet shall *never* part again? of that blest sojourn, where

those first called away await the arrival of each one beloved? of that bright mansion near our Father's throne? till those gone hence are looked on as departed, not as dead?

Man needs religion to *strengthen* and to humble; woman, to comfort and uphold; man, to keep him firm, despite of temptation or of scorn; woman, to fill her yearning heart with love; man, to moderate his pride, to keep him humble in prosperity, and firm as the ocean-rock, when the waves of misfortune beat around him; woman, to teach her her own dignity, her mission in prosperity, her anchor of refuge, of hope, of faith, in sorrow.

It may be, that *in this world*, man may contrive to live, ay, and be happy, without religion, till the hour of death awakens him to a consciousness of a God and another world; but alas for that woman who knows it not! There are trials peculiar to her heart, not the less intense in their anguish, because in many cases they are unrevealed, too often unsuspected, and therefore never open to the consolation and sympathy of her fellows; then, oh! what must be her agony if she know not Him whose love surpasseth the dearest, most precious upon earth! if she know not Him whose arms are open to receive her sinking frame, whose love demands her confidence, who will soothe and bless, if yet a while He will not heal—even as she poureth forth her sorrows on His breast! How may she go forth on her lonely and unblest path—*alone*—to meet the trials, petty and great, the cares, temptations, peculiar to her lot: if she feel she have *no* Friend, if she know not the comfort, the blessing of a Father and a Saviour's eye, of an Arm of love around her? How may she enter on the sacred duties of a wife and mother, if she know not God? and

oh how dare she *love*, if she looks to this world only to perfect and retain it? how may she give her heart, her happiness to the keeping of a mere mortal, whom one little hour may lay in the dust? Surely, surely, reflection on this life, as it is, should urge a mother to teach religion to her children, even if she did not look on it in the light of obedience to her God. Adherence to *instituted forms* will not be sufficient of itself to make religion a vital principle, or open to the youthful heart its ever-springing fount of comfort and of love; but if the spirit of piety contained in that brief command to love the Lord with heart, and soul, and might, be inculcated in the minds of our children: we *obey* every one of the precepts comprised in the Shemang; and in raising the affections of our children to their gracious and beneficent God, we cannot fail to strengthen our own.

Ere we proceed to the remainder of this verse, may we be permitted to hint on the importance of making the Hebrew language familiar to every Hebrew child? It cannot be considered a dead language; for the nation to which it originally belonged continues to exist, and will exist for ever. It is not indeed spoken as it would have been, had we remained in our own land; yet it might still continue the link uniting the sons of Israel wherever they may be. The sojourners in England, France, Austria, Spain, might be enabled to converse or to commune with each other in their own native tongue, though of the language of their respective homes each might be ignorant.

But this end cannot be attained, if the Hebrew child is merely taught to read and translate his prayers, as was formerly the case, and his aptitude in the language judged according to his proficiency in following the service of the Synagogue. Why should Hebrew be the

only language which is never learnt grammatically? Why should it not be taught the infant Hebrew even as the language of the land in which he is a sojourner? Hebrew is scarcely more difficult or complicated than English; but the latter is attained so gradually, we are so prepared for its grammar when we arrive at it, that we are never aware of the difficulties its acquirement presents to a foreigner; and in the same manner the difficulties of Hebrew would vanish, were the child equally prepared to encounter them; and the gradual acquirement of familiar words and sentences in this ancient language would do this far better than charging the memory with portions of prayer, which only succeed in divesting the sacred words from all holiness, and cause the prayer-book to be regarded as a hated task, instead of being welcomed as the blessed means of communion between man and his Maker. Never may we hope for the perfect attainment of this ancient and glorious language, till the present system has given place to one more calculated to engage a child's fancy; till the prayer-book is not the first which we place in an infant's hands; till other than words so sacred as prayer are the first we teach our children to repeat. Our aim indeed should be to enable them to address their Creator in the language of their ancestors, to read His word pure and unaltered, even as it came from heaven; but by placing it too early before them, we frustrate our own desires.

We would think it strange if, as soon as a child had acquired his letters in French or Italian, the Henriade or Dante should be placed before him, and he should be desired to learn passages by rote with merely the assistance of a subjoined translation. We would not hesitate to dismiss a master who thus taught; for we should know the impossibility of his pupils obtaining either a

familiar or grammatical idea of the language. How then can we expect to succeed in imparting Hebrew, if this same plan be followed? for the poetry of Dante and Voltaire is not more difficult than the sublime strains of the Hebrew poets. What are the Psalms which form our prayers but poetry, the most inspired, most difficult poetry? and we might as well expect that charging the memory with them will teach our children Hebrew, as the making them repeat Milton, as soon as they had learnt their English letters, would teach them their native tongue. Gradually and pleasantly we should pave the way, that difficulties may be encountered and overcome *singly;* that, when they do approach the sacred volumes, it may be to *understand* and to enjoy them, to find new pleasures, new truths, in every page; and not to fling them aside with distaste and loathing, as soon as the chains of the school-room are broken, and the young aspirants are set free.

Liable as we are to religious arguments with the Nazarene, it is absolutely necessary that Hebrew should be part of the education we bestow on our children. The English Bibles are translated by the Christian divines, and though the text is generally correct, the heads of the chapters are very likely to mislead. There are also some passages which, mysteriously written in English, may appear capable of a double meaning; and it is more than likely the young Israelites would refer to the head of the chapter for the explanation of the text, and thus become confused, and either waver, or throw aside the sacred volume, as tending rather to destroy than to give peace. A perfect knowledge of Hebrew would banish this evil without interfering with the solid comfort found in the perusal of English Bibles. It would confirm them in their faith; for it is a known fact that,

when an Israelite is thoroughly acquainted with Hebrew, he understands it much more fully and perfectly than an English divine. He will understand the peculiar structure of the language, not only to discover its real meaning, but also to trace how the Nazarene has been enabled to turn the same passages to favour his own belief. He will be enabled to produce argument for argument, and guard against those errors in the translation of the Bible which have been permitted to remain as favouring the Christian creed. Many words in English allow of a double meaning, and very many also in Hebrew; therefore we cannot wonder the Christian translators should adopt those renderings bearing most upon the religion in which they believe.

Instead of condemning them for this, and being positive they are wrong and we are right, simply because for many generations we have been so taught: how much better would it be to refer to the Hebrew Bible, to find our belief and comfort there, and be prepared to answer every argument founded on some particular transaction, by a reference to the passage in its original language, and explain the sense as we regard it?

Then indeed might the chosen children of God be enabled to cope with those English divines, who have made the word of God the study of a life. How few amongst us now can do so! How many shrink from all argument, and tacitly allow the truth of the mistaken doctrines pressed upon them; because they feel they can bring forward nothing to support their faith; and others even depart from the strict line of truth, because there are so few amongst the Jewish nation to whom they can refer.

Yet it is sometimes thought, that religious knowledge should be the business of priests or ministers, not of the laymen of a nation. The observation is just, regarding

other nations; but not to the first-born of the Lord—that one people so peculiarly set apart that it was to be a "nation of priests;" even the king himself was to "write a copy of the Law in a book, to be with him that he might read therein all the days of his life, and learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep *all* the words of this law and these statutes to do them." (Deut. xvii. 18, 19.)

If these were the commands of the Lord in our own land, and when His spirit still dwelt amongst us: how much more requisite must it be now to attend to the preservation of our Law in its original purity; how requisite that every child of Israel, male or female, should perfectly understand the language of our ancestors, that in which the awful yet invisible Voice delivered His dictates to Moses, that we may indeed feel, Hebrew is bound to Hebrew by a link neither oceans of water nor spreading wastes of land can sever! It matters not, that it is the opposite ends of the world in which they are domesticated. The sacred language is the silver link which, uniting them to each other, separates them from other nations, and makes them feel that they are indeed the witnesses of the Lord. And while they read in rejoicing faith the Book of Life in the language in which it was given, or in humble adoration prostrate themselves before God's throne: must not a glowing of the whole soul attend the addressing of the Eternal, in the same language in which His awful voice addressed His favoured servants?

Thousands of years have passed away—yet that language and that nation still exist; can they, oh can they, then, doubt its truth? Surely they must feel their religion comes indeed from their God; that they *are* mem-

bers of a people, to whom such extraordinary mercies have been vouchsafed, and that they are the FIRST-BORN, the chosen of the Lord!

CHAPTER VII.

THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION REGARDED AS PERVADING AND GUIDING OUR CONVERSATION, PROFANE READING, ADMIRATION OF THE WORKS OF NATURE, ETC.

THERE is such a marked distinction in the two Hebrew verbs used in the fourth verse of the SHEMANG, that it would be barely possible to give them their proper weight, were they considered together. וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם rendered in general "and thou shalt teach them diligently," &c., is in the original a remarkably forcible expression, signifying to repeat over and over again—to inculcate with diligence and constant care. It is not enough to *talk* of the commandments to our children: we must repeat them again and again, till the law and love of their God are in very truth impressed on their yielding mind, "that they may hear and learn to fear the Lord their God as long as they live." (Deut. xxxi. 13.) How to seek this desirable end and obey this emphatic command, we have already considered. The second member of the sentence remains to be regarded.

We find the root of וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָּם "and thou shalt speak of them" to be דָּבַר to utter one's sentiments aloud, to speak or to converse together: and we are told in this command to speak or converse of them, "When thou sittest in thy house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." It is not therefore

enough only to teach the word of our God unto our children; it is not enough even to make it the object of individual and secret study; not enough even to love Him: if that love dwell in individual hearts alone, and is never made the subject of sweet communion around domestic hearths, or to those friends we love the best.

The two ordinances which close the Shemang are generally observed. There are few who, educated as sons of Israel with some little care, but will don the peculiar dress for the hours of prayer denoted in these precepts; few Hebrews whose residences are not adorned by the little scroll of the Law upon "the door-posts and upon their gates." And why then, in steadily adhering to one command, should they not be equally consistent in seeking to obey the other? Both proceed from the same Divine Author; one is of equal importance with the other; nay, it may be that in our present sad and captive state, to *love* the Lord, and speak of Him, His attributes, His gracious providence, is even more necessary than the mere forms which the next verses inculcate.

Yet when do we speak of these things? When, even amidst a domestic circle, does conversation turn upon those topics which would enable us to obey this command? When is religious conversation ever introduced except to fortify ourselves in our own opinions, to exalt our own glory,—not the glory of our God,—to cry down the belief of others, to condemn as saints and hypocrites all whose opinions are somewhat stricter than our own, all whose notions of piety are too exalted, too spiritual for the worldly to comprehend? When is the word of God brought forward, except to argue on points of doctrine, in themselves of little moment compared to the spirit which should pervade them? Better, far better should religion never be spoken of than become the sub-

ject of wrangling and violence; for very few are the tempers which can argue calmly. To condemn, to scorn, nay, even to hate, is but too often the effect of religious argument; and the whisperings of piety are lost, they are too faint, too spiritual, to breathe amid such stormy scenes; and charity, universal benevolence, and love, the touchstone by which true holiness is tried and proved, how may they exist in argument where contempt is in general so thinly veiled? The Christian boasts of his charity; but far more should it be the watchword of the Jew. The handmaid of piety she is indeed, and with the sincere and lowly professor of either creed she is ever found; but to the nominal religionist* she is a word unknown.

To be convinced of the truth of his religion, so as to be ever ready to defend it when called upon, is the bounden duty of every Hebrew; but to converse of the Law means not to enter unchallenged on the trackless field of religious argument. We have been previously commanded to love the Lord; to let His words be upon our hearts; to teach them to our children; and then to give such thoughts vent in the sweet communion of home. Were mental meditations never spoken, human nature is such that they would either fade and die, or, finding a contrary extreme, become so intense and continual, that the mind would at length revolt from their contemplation, harassed and exhausted.

Conversation strengthens thought; and yet prevents

* If this is universally admitted, how small a number of truly religious can then be found among the Christians! The idea of charity is not by them extended to the Jews, and the truly orthodox do not admit that one who believes not in an atonement through a divine personage can be a child of salvation.—We have our faults, faults too glaring to be concealed; but our neighbours have equally many to answer for.—I. L.

the mind from wearying. Individual sentiments are imparted, and others are received in return. New ideas are thus given, and they at once refresh the mind, and prepare new matter for reflection.

We are not to attend to the very letter* of the Law and speak of God at the times specified; but simply that our thoughts and love for Him are to be warmed, revived, and strengthened by means of conversation one with another; not on His word alone, but on His works, His providence, His love.

Nor is this conversation intended to take the place of real consoling piety. It must spring from an overflowing heart, not consist in eloquent words, which have no resting save on air. It is to *relieve* the overcharged heart, not puff it up with pride. When well-selected words flow glibly from eager lips, and an ardent eloquence appears to bear all its hearers along with it: the spirit is ready to condemn others, as far its inferiors in religious fervour, simply because they cannot speak so well; and yet, while the lips may speak so piously and well, the heart may remain stubborn and unmoved.

That religion is often only too questionable, which can speak its sentiment, can converse eloquently on such holy things to strangers, or in every mixed society in which it may be thrown. That which we hold dearer than life itself, the thoughts, reflections, feelings of a truly pious heart which have been cherished so long and so closely, that they can be scarcely traced to their source, are painfully difficult to clothe in words, except

* According to my view it should in a measure be literal. Our customs also conform to this idea; for the reading of the Shemang, or the subjecting of ourselves in words to the heavenly rule, is a duty performed thrice every day, at rising, when the sun sets, and when we intrust our spirit to God before we lie down to sleep.—I. L.

to those beloved ones to whom the heart is ever open. They shrink from the pain of misconception; they are felt as too pure, too holy, too ethereal to be exposed to the rude breath of a world; and so closely are they entwined round the fibres of the heart, that the eye of affection alone may see, the ear of love alone receive them. Nor would the command we are considering unclasp with a rude hand these precious links which bind man unto his Maker. It refers but to the communing at home, the intercourse with our domestic circle, with our dearest, most intimate companions.

Precious is that friendship whose supporting link is a mutual love of God. The pure happiness of affection, the consolations of sympathy and confidence, are His gifts, and if felt as such, there will naturally arise some moments when the surcharged heart *must* speak of its God. Then indeed might its conversation be devoid of that argumentative spirit which would condemn. Innocently, gratefully, how continually might we speak of Him; how many new ideas might be imparted; how many passing reflections strengthened and improved. Were the word of our God, and works relating to and pleasantly elucidating it, amongst the mutual studies of intimate minds: how calmly and blessedly might the spiritual views of each be exalted, the affections of each increased in stability and worth! How consolingly would they feel the words of the inspired minstrel: "To him. that *ordereth his conversation* aright, will I show the salvation of God." But is it so? is the love of God indeed the uniting link of friendship? Is not such conversation only too often, alas! banished as entirely from the intercourse of friends as from strangers? It is a peculiar pleasure to some to read the same books, to compare notes on mutual studies, to find the opinions of

those they love agree with their own; and oh! how much that pleasure is enhanced when the same affection is borne towards that sacred book, in which simple pathos, eloquent narration, descriptive beauty, inspired poetry—all—all, are combined to mark it as a thing apart, a book like which there is no other! What inexhaustible food for reflection does it contain! What mutual comfort, mutual hope does it bestow!

There are few words more abused than that of friendship. Connections of pleasure, of frivolity, of interest, deserve not the name. Intended to be the union of immortal spirits whose affections die not even when earthly love is over, what can be so likely to purify and cement that love as a mutual reverence for and belief in a God of love, and in the sacred nature of His word? Friendship is the only earthly tie which can exist in purity and warmth, even if the actual creeds should differ. If the same spirit of religion, the same deep reverence for the word of God, the same strivings after righteousness, and desire to do His will in all things however contrary to our own, the same trust in His deep love and redeeming mercy actuate the heart: it matters not that in actual belief we may not think alike. Often, very often does it happen that a sincere and heartfelt follower of one creed finds a deeper, dearer answer to his secret feelings of piety and love in the heart of one equally devoted to his own peculiar religion, than is ever granted to him among his own; and there may be many opportunities for that pleasant communing which friends so love, on the word, and works, and love, and providence of a mutual Father: and yet there need not be one syllable of argument to disturb their harmony or to diminish the affection of either.

It is not so with the ties of love. Unhappy is that

union which cannot join heart and hand in the religious education of their children; which sees the father pursuing one path and the mother another; which causes every infant treasure to be hailed with a sigh instead of a smile, and generally ends in bitterness and strife, and causes that the offspring of such unions know not revelation, follow not the belief of either parent, knowing perhaps there *is* a God, but not His attributes. Oh! such a union is indeed an awful curse, bringing with it neither the happiness of earth nor the hope of heaven. How may those, who have thus thoughtlessly taken upon them the marriage vow, or wilfully dared the evils attendant upon it, answer at the footstool of an offended God, for the immortal spirits committed to their charge? No, the same spirit—the same form—the same private and the same public worship, must be the links of love, or it will prove but perishable joy.

The friendship of David and Jonathan is an exquisite trait of nature and character in the eventful life of the minstrel king. There is a devotedness, an unselfishness in the affection of Jonathan, that must excite the warmest feelings of the heart towards him. He knew that David was destined to be the instrument of the Lord in removing his father and himself from the throne; that David's preservation and success preceded the downfall of Saul's house; and yet he loved him still, ay, risked his own life and his favour with his father, to warn and save the friend he loved. What can more emphatically describe the strong affection of the young prince, suddenly excited as it was, than the simple words of Holy Writ, "When he (David) had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan *was knit* with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved David as his own soul"? No jealousy, no petty meanness clouded the exalted nature of

this love; Jonathan was himself a warrior of no mean repute, beloved by all his father's subjects; how few thus situated would have so directly and so earnestly loved the unknown shepherd-boy, whose extraordinary deed of valour so suddenly eclipsed his own, and who bade fair to more than rival him in the affections of the people, and was destined by the Lord even to supplant him on the throne? Little as we know of him, there are few characters more intrinsically beautiful than that of Jonathan; and well did David know how to appreciate his virtues and love in return. Surely Solomon thought of this immortal friendship, when he wrote: "A friend loveth at all times;" "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" "Faithful are the wounds of a friend;" "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend forsake not;" "As iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend," meaning that as iron by close friction sharpeneth iron, so the mutual conversation of friends sharpeneth or improveth their intellectual faculties, by bestowing on each the ideas of the other. And in what is improvement so desirable as in the love and knowledge of our God? When the spirit of piety is the supporting link of human ties, death loses half his terrors; for then we feel and know that love is not confined to this world alone. Death, though it may divide us a while, will prove, in the end, the commencement of eternal love. The same hopes, the same spiritual desires, the same holy spirit which pervaded our intercourse in this nether world, will obtain perfection in the next; and love, purer, brighter, unchilled by doubt, unchecked by those petty trials and alloys, which harass even the purest friendship here—love, immutable and blessed, will await our souls on high.

But may we hope, that such will be the termination

of connections made for earthly pleasures? for frivolous amusements? for improvement only of the mind and talents, in which there mingles not one thought of Him who gave them, and who demands to be remembered and loved? Yet, all and each of these is dignified by the term friendship. Alas! they are but perishable flowers, sweet for the time, but whose fading blossoms are only wreathed for earth. And should not this awful consideration deter us from forming connections, either in love or friendship, with those who know not, seek not to know God, though fascinating may be their outward attractions, their intrinsic virtues? The more we love below, the more dreadful must be the thought of death, if we may not hope to meet hereafter. And if the love of God exist not in our dearest and most intimate connections: how is that verse of the Shemang to be obeyed, which commands us not only to teach His words to our children, but to speak of them continually to one another?

And yet it is easy to do this. The works of the Lord are in truth inexhaustible; His providence is daily shown around us, to ourselves, our friends, in events continually recurring. And when we see not His hand in all things, it is because we will *not* see it. How many love to speak of chance, and fortune, and fate; and yet reject with scorn the belief, that nothing can occur below without the permission of the Eternal, who, without interfering with the free-will of His creatures, makes all things tend to His wise though secret government above. To explain this apparent contradiction is not in the power of man; it is a belief which can only be felt; yet blessed in very truth are those to whom it is vouchsafed. Those who believe it not, can scarcely love their God, can scarcely dare address Him; for if the affairs of

earth are wholly divided from the economy of Heaven, if all events depend on man, and not on God: we cannot feel that we are each and all individual objects of His care; we cannot be soothed in sorrow by the thought, it is a Father's will, and His will is love. The fatalist, and he who denies the ever-active providence of God, are alike fettered by invisible yet not the less painful chains; and to neither* of these can the hopes and ordinances of religion refer.

There is scarcely any profane history which, if read attentively, will not afford matter for instruction, thought, and subsequent conversation on the wonderful providence of the Lord. Here events can be traced from their very embryo to their final completion, either in success or overthrow. The airy trifles, so often the hinges on which great events turn, the almost invisible seeds of mighty revolutions, stand revealed on the pages of history, and if properly considered often serve as keys to the continual incongruities passing around us. "The history of human affairs," an intelligent author observes, "is but the history of Divine Providence;"† and the remark is perfectly correct. Did the spirit of piety pervade, as was intended, the intellect, those very works

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* To the thinking mind, it is a matter of astonishment how any one can deny an overruling Providence. If any thing could grow by chance, if any event could occur without plan or arrangement, then indeed the unbeliever might find support for his doubt. But is there anything without an origin? Besides, do his doubts remove him from the operation of the chance, luck or fortune he speaks of? Surely there is hope, and life, and consolation in the belief, in the acknowledgment that there is a Being, high and holy, who knows all our deeds, measures all our steps, and grants us that success only which is best for our ultimate happiness.—I. L.

† Bigland. His Letters on Ancient and Modern History clearly and forcibly illustrate the truth of his remark.

read for profane instruction would assist to promote obedience to the command we are regarding.

Nor is it only history that may do this. There are tales, simple, domestic, highly moral tales, which, though as a whole fictitious, are in the main point but narrations of what, could we but lift up the veil of the world, is continually passing around us. "Truth is strange, stranger than fiction;" and were this fact more considered, the very tales read for recreation and enjoyment might be made of service in the promotion of piety. There are many who deem the perusal of such works but mere waste of time and intellect, creating evils even worse, in filling the mind with romance and folly. Nay, so far is this mistaken prejudice extended, that all books but those of instruction either in history, geography, arts, or sciences, are excluded from the child's library. The infant mind is crammed, its intellect exhausted, while the moral training and the guidance of the *feelings* are left to their own discretion, instead of permitting them to expand, in admiration of the good and detestation of the bad, whose actions and feelings are recorded in tales* relative to children of their own age.

It is the same with youth. Formerly, indeed, light works were not fitted either to attract the eye or engage the heart; and there are very many now, too many alas! far more likely to produce evil than good. Yet while England may boast the names of Edgeworth, Hemans, Hall, Mitford, Ellis, Sinclair, Ferrier, Opie, and Howitt,

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* Miss Aguilar is right in the main regarding the usefulness of tales properly told. But in permitting such works to be placed in the hands of children, especially in our novel, romance, and story-writing age, great care must absolutely be exercised in the selection, so that no distorted or extravagant view of life be early implanted in the youthful mind.—I. L.

amongst her female literati, and Scott, and James, and Fay, to swell the brilliant list, the young can never be in want of recreation at once as improving to the heart, as delightful to the fancy; and if the mind has been properly trained, the spirit of piety indelibly infused, even the perusal of such works will strengthen and improve it.

Few will believe this: a fanciful hypothesis it will in all probability be deemed; yet it is nevertheless true, as a reference to those whose minds have not been *cultivated* alone, but *regulated*, and are ever under the guiding influence of a spirit not of earth, would prove. To them it is not the romance and sentiment which are alone devoured and treasured up and thought upon, to the forgetfulness of all the rest. The same tale perused by the pupils of diverse schools, would be productive of completely opposite effects. They who have been taught to drown all feeling, to conceal every emotion, to contemn as romance and folly every exalted sentiment, will be the very minds to which such food will bring evil instead of good; for they will seek in the pages of fiction the indulgence of all those whisperings of romance and high-flown sentiment which has become the stronger, from its being ever kept restrained and concealed. They condemn as vapid and dry, or as saintly sermons, all that would speak of morality and piety; they seek for no moral, laugh at the notion of good being derived from such works, and as a necessary consequence derive none; and their mind, becoming palled from such a continued succession of sweets and excitement, at length rejects all other food.

Very different is the effect of such pleasant recreation on minds which, educated in the school of piety, and of feelings, regulated not *contemned*, are ever accustomed

to seek for the good, to cull flowers where others may see but weeds. They deem it no sin to trace the operations of an ever-acting Providence, even in the events recorded as fictitious tales. They know that the cause of seeming incongruity and mystery in human affairs only originates in our being unable to trace them from their commencement to their completion, from the number of years they take in their fulfilment; while those more striking events, which chiefly form the basis of tales, generally pass unnoticed in real life, from the multiplicity and confusion ever attendant on human affairs. In a well-narrated tale, these obstructions to the tracing of providence are removed. Sorrows, proceeding from ill-regulated or irreligious minds, are traced to their source. Virtue and vice stand more strongly drawn before us, than they ever can be in life. Our own faults or weaknesses frequently strike the mind, by their reflection on the pages which we read. Humility is frequently strengthened by the contrast the well-guided heart discovers between itself and those whose actions excite our admiration and love; for it does not drown the still small voice by the common excuse for evil, that perfection is only found in books; it knows that often, unsuspected and unseen, yet more exalted virtue dwells on earth than ever fiction can portray; and when it dwells on faults and passion falling before temptation, led astray by pleasure and success, it is often led to look within itself, and silently and voicelessly send up the prayer for grace and strength, not to stumble through the like means.

And thus, can it be considered impious and profane to render recreative reading subservient to the cause of piety? to the immortal interests of the soul? will it not rather lead the youthful student to look yet more

diligently within his own heart, and prepare his mind to recognise in a measure the ever-acting Providence which guides and governs the actions alike of individuals and those of the whole universe around him?

There are others again who, continually eulogizing Nature, yet never seem to cast a thought, or speak a word of God. Rapturous are the exclamations about the beauty of the works of *Nature;* of the delights attendant on gathering wild flowers, in preference to those of the garden, because planted by the hand of *Nature;* on walking forth amidst an uncultured country, to watch Nature in her changeful dress, and woo her undisturbed. And refreshing and delicious in very truth are such feelings, infinitely preferable to the pleasures of the world. Yet might they be exalted into sentiments more glorious, more rejoicing still. The mind thus capable of admiring Nature for herself, is peculiarly fitted to adore and love her God. Nature is not in herself a deity. She is the frame, not the FRAMER, the created, not the Creator,—

> "Nature is but the name for an *effect*
> Whose *cause* is God;"

and while we gaze with rapture on her varied scenes, on her glorious beauties, may we not literally and figuratively obey the mandate that bade us speak of our Father, "When thou walkest by the way"? Was it not at His nod this world of loveliness arose from a dark, impenetrable chaos? And well may nature be deemed His temple,—the sanctuary—in which we can worship with the greatest fervour; for on all sides we behold but the work of His hands, from the tiniest flower smiling at our feet, to the towering mountain which raises its rugged sides on high till its head is veiled in overhanging clouds; from the silvery rill, that ripples softly and

refreshingly between the green and flowery banks, to the vast and boundless ocean whose depth we cannot fathom, nor its tumbling waves enchain. These are indeed scenes which compel us to think of the Eternal, to behold Him in His works; and if our companion be one bound to us by the magic ties of sympathy and love, or the parent from whose lips we have first learnt to know Nature as she is, or the child to whom we would reveal her mysteries and lead up to her Creator: to each, to all, might we relieve the swelling heart, and speak of Him on whose glorious works we gaze. Delightful as are the emotions with which we look on Nature for herself, they are tame, and cold, and lifeless to those which elevate and purify the soul when it looks

"Through Nature up to Nature's God."

The age of miracles is considered over. Those extraordinary manifestations of Divine providence towards the children of Israel are indeed past; for the first-born of the Lord is yet an exile, till penitence and amendment shall appease the anger of his merciful Father, and He our God may indulge those yearnings of love and tender pity towards His son of which His book assures us. "But that the sun has shone unremittingly from the day that God created him, is not a less stupendous exertion of power than that the Hand, which fixed him in the heavens and marked out his progress through them, should once say by his servant, 'Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon;' that he has gone on his uninterrupted career, and rejoicing as a giant to run his course for six thousand years, is a far more astonishing exhibition of omnipotence than that he should have been once suspended by the Hand that first set him in motion."*

* Hannah More's Spirit of Prayer, chap. iii. p. 28.

And thus, that the boundless ocean which surrounds us should continue as unchanged in motion as when the hand of the Lord "gathered the waters in one place and the dry land appeared," is even yet more wonderful than the dividing of the Red Sea or the passage of the Jordan. But these things, even as the blessings of individual lives, are unperceived and unacknowledged, because they are constant. They continually surround us, and we therefore see not their magnitude. Day giveth place to day, and night to night; the tides of ocean ebb and flow; the planets float along the sky; the stars remain suspended in their orbits; but we notice not these things, or if we do, it is but to observe "they are the laws of Nature," and to laugh at the idea of deeming such common things miraculous.

Yet, what is the precise definition of a miracle? "An effect above human or natural power, performed in attestation of some truth." Can human power create a sun? or bid the waves roll on in their unchanging course? Can human power create darkness? or command night to descend or day to appear before their appointed time? and what term we natural power? are the planets, the skies, the winds, the works of Nature? No! whether we regard Nature as the compass of natural existence, the regular course of things, or the state and operations of the material world: Nature is not the cause, but the effect; she is herself a miracle. And if we are asked, in attestation of what truth that miracle has been performed? we answer: of the most sublime, the most important, most glorious truth, the existence of an omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, and eternal Being—the unanswerable proof that THERE IS A GOD! We have then even in things inanimate enough matter for contemplation, enough sometimes to converse on, as

"we are walking by the way." Nor shall we fail to find a glorious example of this holy duty even in the Book of Life.

It was thus David meditated on the Lord; he did not only address Him in prayer for himself—he magnified His nature by the relation of His works. Who can peruse his rich treasury of psalms, without feeling how completely this exalted monarch associated the Eternal in all His works, and praised Him, not only for individual mercies, but for the blessings shared by the whole world? How truly sublime is the exclamation in which he breaks forth: "Oh Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the whole earth is filled with thy riches." And again in what a beautiful spirit of humility does he follow up the verse: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained: what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" How continually do we find him acknowledging the providence of God, alike in nature as in man; how repeatedly dwelling on the tale of Israel's redemption, of mercies shown to the nation, returning thanks and praise, as if such gracious care had been displayed to him alone. Deeply did the prophet king feel the truth of the inspired strain with which a later* psalmist concluded the cvii. Psalm, "Whoso is wise and will observe these things (the wonderful providence of the Eternal), even they shall under-

* It is unknown to me from what authority Miss A. would maintain, that the last verse of this Psalm is by a later writer. This species of criticism which refers parts of Scripture, though standing together, to different hands, is not approved of by Israelites in general. Perhaps Miss A. means that the whole Psalm is by a person who lived after David; if so, this would be a hypothesis more consonant with our views than the former.—I. L.

stand the loving kindness of the Lord." How great a reward for the simple act of using the senses and faculties which a merciful Father had bestowed, in the contemplation of His great works! To feel the full force of the sentence, it would be well to consider the nature of the promised reward.

"To understand the loving kindness of the Lord" needs no spiritualising, or rather the charge of spiritualising, to explain; it simply means to behold the decrees of the Lord in their correct light; to disperse the darkness generally clouding the affairs of men, by the golden rays of faith; to behold mercy and love where others can only see chastisement and misery; to trace all things to an almighty Hand of love, where others sink into despondency, reproaching *themselves* for not doing better in the world, and envying those who are more successful. In a word, it signifies the attaining, as far as is possible in this imperfect state, that which is promised when the captivity is at an end. "Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you; and ye shall seek me, and FIND me, when ye search for me with all your heart." (Jerem. xxix. 12, 13.) "And it shall come to pass, that before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will *hear*." (Isa. lxv. 24.) And can there be a clearer, more precious reward? and shall we cast it wilfully aside? Oh! even now we shall be heard; God will be found if we seek Him with all our hearts; even now a foretaste of that rich blessing may be ours. We may understand the loving kindness of the Lord, if we will only obey the precepts of the Shemang, and hallow the forms which were instituted to keep us distinct from other nations, by the spirit of piety springing from the Lord. Form *alone* will not bring down upon us this desirable blessing.

Could David when wandering a miserable fugitive from the enmity of Saul attend to the ceremonials* of his faith? and yet he was a favoured servant of the Lord; he was in very truth an Israelite, and the *spirit* of the Hebrew religion filled his heart. He loved the Lord, and the Lord loved him; not for lifeless adherence to instituted forms, but because his heart was full of piety. And can we find an example more worthy of imitation than the son of Jesse?

Yet the faith that Moses taught is accused of possessing no comfort, of breathing no holy spirit, that it is neither a consoling nor a spiritual religion. Shame on those Israelites who permit this reproach to gain ground without once endeavouring to prove by *deeds*, its falsity! Too often is it even permitted to appear as the truth by the stern and rigid observance of rites and ceremonies, as if religion consisted in them alone. There are some who would deem it a sin to omit the repetition of the Shemang twice every day: yet are utterly unconscious of all the precepts it enforces, except the last, and they go on their way rejoicing, without one thought of natural unworthiness, which needs far more than the mere observance of form to be washed away; obeying, secure in supposed righteousness, the laws of their religion which divide them from others, yet mingling in the world without one thought of God; condemning with fierce invective all those who think differently from themselves,

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* Probably he could, to a great extent, at all events. Nevertheless, he complains of not being able to participate in all the duties, as we may judge from his address to Saul: "But if they be the children of men, cursed be they before the Lord; for they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of the Lord, saying, Go, serve other gods." (1 Sam. xxvi. 19.) Did David then think ceremonies essential or not?—I. L.

casing up their hearts in the icy bondage of form, without permitting one gleam of comfort, one spark of holy fire to enter therein, which, drawing them nearer to their universal Father, would render them more charitable to their fellow-creatures.*

Yet such men, when they come to die, have found no comfort. And can we then wonder at the reproach cast upon the Jewish faith? Is it strange the Christian should believe his religion the right, and look down with scorn or pity on such followers of Israel? Is it strange that, when they see the Hebrew religion of the present day so different from that which David practised, and Moses and the prophets taught, they should believe the one a type of their saviour, the other, as more regarding themselves than us? Oh that Israel would awake from their lethargy, and *prove* there is a holy spirit in the Hebrew faith. David was a Jew: and if his religion were not spiritual, whence did he derive comfort in his life of trial? Every prophet was a Jew: and how comes it, if the Christian religion alone possess holy fire, that the prophetic spirit should so entirely have ceased? If there be no hope, no comfort, no faith in immortality in the religion of Israel: what supported the Hebrew martyrs in the hour of torture and death, and enabled them to die as rejoicingly upon the stake, as those Christian sufferers who have so often been held up as the witnesses of the hope and comfort of their faith? No; it is not the faith of Moses which is at fault, it is the morbid state of many who bear its name! The Eternal in mercy

* There are in all probability some few such bigots amongst us; but our forms are not to be charged with their wrong-doing; nor are Rabbins responsible therefore, because their doctrines enforce the religion of the heart; they teach: "As we bless God for the good, so ought we to bless Him in evil." Is this an icy, unfeeling worship?—I. L.

has permitted peace to descend upon us. He tried us in the ordeal of persecution, and He saw our love and faith were strong; we clung yet closer and closer unto Him, and the spirit was purified, even as the difficulty of adhering to form increased. And then He would try us in the far more dangerous ordeal of prosperity and peace. And oh! are we not found wanting? are we not torn by inward dissension, because with the nations we are at peace? are not party spirit and all its attendant evils filling up those hearts, which would seek only the glory of God, the amendment of their own ways and of those committed to their especial charge? While this state exists, can we ever hope for the advent of God's Anointed, the accomplishment of those glorious promises, which await the repentant? No; while with the sickening anguish of hope deferred, we behold years roll on, and there seemeth no end to our captivity: instead of failing in trust, did we look into our hearts and behold their iniquity, wonder would be at an end; or if we did wonder, it would be at that infinite, that inexhaustible mercy which yet keeps us alive, yet guards, preserves, and blesses us, despite of that sinful ingratitude, that complete departure from the spirit of Judaism which, were it not for that promised mercy, would of necessity condemn us to annihilation.

There is yet another way of obeying the command contained in the second member of the verse we are considering—one that can meet with no objection, even from those who, advocates for the very letter of the law, may believe we have enlarged on it, more than was Moses's intention, and that we have erred in dividing the verse. It is strange that while so many rites and forms have been added to the pure worship of Moses, and permitted to become part of the religion without question or reproof,

notwithstanding the precise command of the Lord, "Ye shall not *add* unto my law, nor diminish therefrom," the endeavours to define and enlarge the spiritual* views of the Hebrews are generally subjected to condemnation and scorn, as hypocrisy or saintly novelties, for which we have no foundation. Alas, that it should be so! that the wrath of the Lord has flung such a dark obscuring veil over the minds of men, blinding them to the deeply spiritual nature of their faith. But, if to think and speak of the Lord at all times be to some minds incompatible with the holiness which would set Him at a distance, save in the hours of devotion: why should not this command

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* I must confess that it is something new to me to learn, that such could be the state of any part of the Jewish community. Spiritualising in the Christian sense of the word, that is, adapting the words of Scripture to events so as to make them agree, though the ostensible meaning is nowise the same, is confessedly abhorrent to us; but the spiritualising of Miss Aguilar, or the seeking of a higher meaning in connection with Scripture and ceremony, is by no means very rare; on the contrary, the excess of it has led to the establishment of the Cabalah, which consists in detecting the mysteries of the law in every word and every act. A remarkable explanation of this kind is given of verse 17, Psalm cxv.: "'The dead shall not praise the Lord,' what is meant by the dead? the wicked—who are dead (in spirit) even whilst living." It strikes me, that my friend has met, in her intercourse with society, with persons who had not been properly educated in the duties of the law of Jacob; and that she gives too much credence, without sufficient investigation, to the invectives of Christian writers. The ignorant amongst us may attach more importance to form than spirit; but this is not the fault of our ancient teachers, such as Maimonides, Bechayé, Happenini, and a host of others, nor of the moderns, such as Mendelssohn, Wesseli, Hirsch, and others whom it is needless to enumerate. I do not by saying this wish to exonerate us from fault; but I am for one not willing to assume more than comes to our share.—Besides, the death-bed of Israelites is full of hope and faith; and many instances could be enumerated, within my brief experience, of hopeful joy of the righteous, and of confiding repentance of those who sought the Lord in the sincerity of conversion and the lowliness of a contrite heart.—I. L.

find its obedience in the morning and evening public worship of a family? Why is family devotion so completely banished from the Jewish nation? Except on the Sabbath, and sometimes on other festivals, when do we see a Hebrew family assembled to pray? When do we see the father of a family read aloud the prayers, and take pride in reading and explaining the Bible to his children? He may sometimes tell them the meaning of peculiar forms; but is the Bible made applicable to their daily lives! is its solemn nature, its ever-active comfort, impressed on the yielding heart? We have very few opportunities* of joining public service; and therefore are we doubly called upon to make the temple of the Lord within our own domestic hearths. It would elevate their religion in the minds of our children; it would strengthen devout affection in our own; we would be imparting the purest, most precious knowledge to those dearest to us; and they would feel that employment indeed sacred and delightful in which they felt that their parents shared and sympathized.

Why then should the Hebrew nation wilfully deprive herself of what may be termed the public devotion of a family? Why should she break asunder the link that, were it carefully cherished, would bind the cords of domestic affection yet closer together? The youthful members of a little domestic congregation would look back with warm emotion, in after-years, to that period when, with their brothers and sisters, they thronged around their parents to listen to the word of God, and made known to him their common wants together. The companions of earliest infancy, who have grown with them from childhood into youth, may be scattered far

* This must be the fault of individuals, not of our system.—I. L.

and wide from their common home; but the remembrance of that holy hour of prayer will be a precious link in the hearts of each. Their religion will be associated with all those who were dearest to them, and time will not lessen that charm,—while in such associations religion herself will attain a more elevated nature. Early impressions generally follow us through life; and while the infant mind is filled with such a variety of ideas and correspondent knowledge, why should religion be the only thing left to find its way to the heart unaided and untaught? Why should there be no sweet associations attached to religion alone: when so many and varied are the flowers with which the path of literature is decked, so many sweets from knowledge culled to tempt the child along? And family devotion, strengthening and hallowing the lessons of piety continually received from a mother's lips, is more than likely to produce this wished-for end.

Blessed in truth are those parents who join heart to heart and hand to hand in the religious education of their children. Even when the pressing cares of business may interfere with the father's attendance to the public devotion of his family, the mother's task is blessed; for she feels, though absent, his spirit recognises the hallowed hour as the evening and morning come round, and communes with them still; and when he is permitted to return to lift up his voice in prayer and thanksgiving, how blessed to him and all those dear ones round him is that sweet hour of reunion—sweet and holy even as a shadowy type of family reunion in that world where the woe of parting is unknown!

But when this may not be; when the spirit of piety finds its home only in the mother's heart; when the all-absorbing love of interest or of ambition bids the father

forget the *immortal* spirits of his children, and renders him careless of all instruction, save that which, tending to earthly aggrandizement, will raise them in the estimation of the world; when the claims of Jerusalem are forgotten, and he looks upon himself *only* as a son of that land in which he is in reality but a "stranger and sojourner, even as his fathers were," for it is not his own: even when such things are—yet let not the mothers in Israel be disheartened; for they may still call their children around them, and obey the *spirit* of the prayer they repeat so often. They may watch with a jealous eye the dawnings of piety in their children, and pray *for* and *with* them; and it may be theirs the glorious task, to raise up a new and better race to support the falling temple of the Lord.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SPIRIT AND THE FORMS OF JUDAISM CONSIDERED SEPARATELY AND TOGETHER.

THE concluding verses of the Shemang bring us to a subject on which, in the preceding chapters, we may have often been accused of touching too lightly:—the peculiar forms and ceremonies of our religion. The frontlets and bracelets alluded to in these verses were ornaments peculiar to the Eastern dress; and the very fact of the children of Israel being commanded to associate the word of God with their very ornaments, to bind them upon their hands and between their eyes, and to go a little farther, to make a fringe and place on it a thread of blue, "that they might remember the commandments of

the Lord, and do them; that man might not seek those things which his heart and eyes incline after, and in the pursuit of which he may be led astray:" all these directions, trifling as they may seem, are but unanswerable proofs of the close and intimate communion which man was to hold with his Maker; proofs, how entirely and completely religion, the *spirit* of religion, the whisperings of the Eternal, was to be associated with the actions of man—to follow him through life, to be bound upon his heart—not to be kept at that immense distance which is by some deemed the only way to retain holiness, for the alleged reason that such frequent communings only lessen the trembling awe in which we should approach our God. It is not as a Judge we are to behold and approach Him; but as an ever-watchful, ever-loving Father, an ever-faithful, ever-sympathising Friend, to whom we may pour forth every sorrow, every joy, our cares, our hopes, our wishes; for He alone can know the extent of their influence upon our hearts,—He alone can comfort or can aid. To think continually on all the precepts contained in the preceding verses of the Shemang, was in all probability the origin of this command, to bind them on our hands and eyes, and place them on the doorposts and gates of our dwellings. Gradually and beautifully each verse is linked into the other. The binding the word of the Lord on our hands and eyes is connected with the precept, "these words which I command thee this day, shall be upon *thy heart*," referring to ourselves individually; the other, when obeyed, aids us imperceptibly in thinking or speaking of the Lord at all times; for surely His word cannot be seen upon our gates in walking out, or coming in, without a thought of Him who, "unless *He* build the house, they

labour in vain that build it, unless *He* keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

It is not the mere obedience to the letter of the law, the mere adoption of the ancient dress in the hour of prayer, which will render our prayers acceptable. Their purpose is to aid the mind in withdrawing itself from its mere worldly occupations, to tempt the Hebrew youth to seek and know more of the law, a portion of which he bears upon his brow and hand; to employ his mind, or intellect, of which the brow may be a significant figure, in the study of that precious word; his hands—in those things acceptable to his Father in heaven. "A clean hand and a pure heart," the frequent repetition of those words in the Holy Scripture is sufficiently convincing of the peculiar meaning attached to this rite; and by studying the will of the Eternal, the Israelite learns how to obey it so as to have a beneficial effect on his spirit.

Such must ever be the intent of religious ceremonies. They are given to *aid* and *strengthen* the spirit of piety, resting within this spirit, yet NOT to take its place. The Eternal saw the heart of man, and knew that, when Adam sinned, the inclinations and desires of his children would be for the evil, not for the good; and, therefore that, if religion were left to the promptings of natural man, she would speedily fly from this fallen world, and resume her native seat above. THAT MAN therefore who, despite the wickedness and heathenism darkly reigning round him, lifted up his affections and his intellects to his God; devoted his whole soul unto His bidding; believing, without question, the word of the Eternal, even to the resigning of his only and darling child,—that man was peculiarly the object of God's love and care; for it was human righteousness shining forth clear and unmoved, as a bright star amidst surrounding darkness, dispersing

'neath its rays the clouds of natural sin and corruption which in Abraham's heart, even as in his fellows, had originally birth; and it was his own pure, simple, trusting righteousness, which excited the attention, and called down the blessing of the Lord. And for *this* faithful servant's sake, His love and mercy resolved on giving his descendants a law of light, and life, and joy, to aid them in knowing and serving Him, in governing the evil of their own hearts, so that the better principle, being the stronger, might bring forth good; to teach them the God that framed and loved them; to give them, once more, tests of their obedience and their love; to leave them no longer to their own imaginings, but to set before them the hopes of immortality, veiled, perhaps, and shrouded, yet still gleaming through the religion which came to them through Moses, softly and silently, even as the invisible soul breathes through the every action, word, and thought of man; we see it not, know not its nature, yet do we doubt that it is there? and even thus is its immortality the spirit, life, breath, and glory of the Mosaic faith.

For the sake of Abraham was the law bestowed upon his seed, displaying throughout its whole extent the compassionate tenderness, the ever-fostering affection of its glorious Framer.

The spirit of piety, that yearning desire after holy things, and clinging love to God, are still, even as in the time of Abraham, direct gifts from the Father of all; His grace* acts still imperceptibly upon natural man, though unperceived by our outward senses;—but the dictates of the law, the acts of obedience therein commanded, the

* "Whoever comes to purify himself will be aided from heaven."—*Talmud.*

revelation of the Lord and of His glorious attributes, the numerous aids to becoming worthy servants in His sight, and conquering evil propensities by the clear explanation of right and wrong which, through Moses, He has so mercifully set down:—all these are now common to us all; and therefore man's natural depravity and unenlightened ignorance can *never* be brought forward as excuses for sin and disobedience. The principle of good within us was naturally as powerful as that of evil, the example of our first father occasioned the fearful prevalence of the latter; but the principle of good is not even now extinguished; and, aided by the *strength* and *grace* of God which we have called down by *prayer*, it is yet enabled to conquer the evil, and walk on in the way of the Lord. It will *not* indeed obtain for us salvation;* but it will be pleasing unto our Father, and incline His heart mercifully and favourably towards us.

This is one of the great distinctions between the Hebrew and Christian creeds. The God of the Christians does need a saviour and mediator; but the God of the Hebrew needs it not. They look on our beautiful law as one of fire and blood; that even when God gave it He knew it was impossible for man to keep it; that man's depravity would entirely prevent his obedience; that all under the law are subject to misery and curses, are chained down to a heavy, lifeless weight, to redeem them from which our Father, at the same time the law was framed and given, resolved on the holocaust (sacrifice)

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* Miss A. probably means that no acts of man *deserve* salvation, inasmuch as no one is righteous on earth who does good without sinning; nevertheless there is merit in every deed done in honour and the name of the Lord, and the multitude of true acts of piety will open for us the way to the tree of life, and make us partakers of the joys at the right hand of our Everlasting Father.—I. L.

of one who knew not sin, to take away the sins of men, to remove the curse of the law, and institute a law of love instead of the law of fire, and the awful dispensation revealed in the Old Testament.

According to this belief, the law was framed to be destroyed; given to be removed; sent as a curse instead of a blessing; and the descendants of Abraham, instead of being peculiarly blessed above all nations, according to the solemn word of the Lord, must have been marked out from the very first as the objects of His wrath. But the God of the Hebrew is a God of TRUTH, whose words fail not, nor change, in whom there is not a shadow of turning; and therefore is it that we reject this doctrine. When so repeatedly we read words to this import, "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips," we dare not depart from that covenant; for we know that it is to last to eternity. We cannot recognise our God in the Being who would impose a law upon His people, simply and solely to destroy them; who would mock us by unmeaning ordinances; who would desire obedience when He knew the nature of man could NOT bestow it; who would fetter instead of freeing, fetter with infinitely more oppressive and cruel bondage than the chains of Egypt from which He had freed us; who with such deep solemnity, such majestic power, yet with such beneficence and tender love, would frame a law, and proclaim it eternal, yet at the same moment fix the period of its continuance and look to its annihilation. We cannot recognise the God of truth and love in one that would act thus. There is *not one* portion of that law which, when it was given, man could *not* obey; not one command, one ordinance, to which man could not implicitly adhere;—and that man fell from it was not the fault of the law or the ordinance of the

Eternal. The law, as we have before said, was given to teach man his duties, to assist him in conquering natural depravity, and permitting the principle of good, also placed within him, to obtain ascendency. He had thus the free will to choose his own path, to seek the favour of his God, or to reject it; and that he chose the latter *was not* because he had not the *power* to choose the former, or that he *could not* obey the law; but because, like Cain, he loved the evil more than the good, and resisted the still small voice which the love of our God has placed within every breast, resisted its entreaty to fly from temptation, and implore the infused strength of the Lord, till its soft, yet piercing whisper was drowned in the roar of transgression and debauch.

Still, therefore, do we hail with delight, and wear with rejoicing the mild and gentle yoke of a law in which infinite love and mercy shine pre-eminent; still do we gladly acknowledge ourselves under the law; nor will we shake it off even now, that we are prevented from adhering to many of its ordinances. We know, and we are blessed in the belief, that our merciful Father knows the nature of His creatures far better than we know ourselves; and that if we cleave to His law, as far as it is in our power, during our captivity; if we earnestly *seek* after righteousness, and endeavour with heart, and soul, and might, to cherish the spirit of piety, to love the Lord: His infinite love, and long-suffering compassion will fill up the deficiency.* We have no need to look

* The Scriptures say: "Cursed be he that observeth not the words of this law to do them" (Deut. xxvii. 26), which would imply blessing upon the faithful servant according to his means.—I cannot avoid observing, that in this very verse is a gross mistranslation in the English Bible, for the word *all* is inserted in italic letters before "words," so as to make it read "all the words," and this false interpretation has been made the basis of invective against us, because no one can keep

to a suffering* saviour; our God is too just, too full of love for all His creatures, to demand the sacrifice of one for the sins of many, even were that one a god and not man. To know that we sin, to acknowledge our transgressions and the transgressions of our fathers, and look to, and trust in our Father's love and mercy, who, for His own sake, hath sworn to blot out as a thick cloud our sins—we have His holy word as guarantee that this is enough; we therefore look to Him alone; and in His righteousness, if we seek it with all our heart, we are made righteous.

If we thus acknowledge the beneficent purpose of the law, how completely appropriate is it to our need! how evidently is it the work of an all-wise, all-merciful Father, who had but the good and everlasting welfare of His children in view, when He ordained it, and selected Moses to make it known. We cannot but feel an earnest desire to obey its every dictate, to adhere to it as strictly, as closely as ever our scattered and fallen state will permit; and not strictly and closely alone, but freely, unconditionally, lovingly, giving the heart, not the servile obedience of slaves. And this is still in our power to do, though to very many of our rites and ceremonies we cannot adhere in our dispersed and captive state.

When men are drawn together to attend to peculiar rites, and keep holy particular days: their thoughts naturally revert from their individual concerns, to the combination of interest which draws them thus together.

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all the law. For a more extensive view of this question I must refer the reader to my second Series of Discourses, Lecture ix. pp. 98–109.—I. L.

* There is not the most distant reference to such a being in the whole law; and we contend that, if such a belief were necessary for salvation, it would have been revealed in direct terms, and not been left to mere inference from a *single* sentence in the book of Isaiah.—I. L.

They are forced for the time to leave their temporal affairs, even though the thought should still cling more earnestly to these than to their spiritual welfare; they feel conscious of some obligation binding them to a Higher Power, and by degrees they attain some portion of holiness. To others, again, public observance of forms gives the opportunity to ponder on their God, which they might otherwise seek for in vain. And to other and yet more exalted minds it strengthens and supports the inward piety, it gives them that which they so earnestly desire, opportunities of proving their *love* by a willing and perfect obedience. Religious ceremonies also attract the attention of children, and sometimes lead them to ask and search for that which, through neglect or irreligion on the part of parents, they might never know. Many condemn form entirely; but if the rites and ceremonies of religion were not intended to bring forth good, the God of goodness would not have ordained them. *Subordinate* to the spirit they were to be indeed; to *assist* the worship of the heart, but not to take its place. Ordained to preserve us wholly distinct from other nations, many of the minor laws, relating only to the customs of the nations under God's wrath, cannot of course now be observed; but they are not to be pronounced trifling and unimportant on that account; nor, because we cannot attend to *them*, are we to disregard others; for these are the words of the Eternal: "Ye shall not walk in the manners of the nations which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them; but I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, that floweth with milk and honey; I am the Lord your God which separateth you from other people; and ye shall be holy unto me, for I

the Lord am holy, and have severed you from all other people, that you should be MINE."

We need go no farther than these beautiful verses, to perceive the origin and necessity of our peculiar ceremonies. We were to abstain from some to sever us from wickedness, and adhere to others to mark us as the holy of the Lord. Instead, then, of seeking to find excuses for their non-performance, should we not rather glory in the minutest observance which would stamp us as so peculiarly the Lord's own, and deem it a glorious privilege to be thus marked out, not only in feature and in faith, but in our civil and religious code, as the chosen of God? Had we been thus selected by an earthly sovereign, who would not have gloried in the distinction? and shall the Hebrew think less of the favour of his God?

True, the heathen nations, against whose evil example we were warned, no longer surround us; but we live in the midst of others with whom we are still more likely to become assimilated, if we relax, in the very smallest degree, from our adherence to the law of Moses. With regard to this blessed law, the Bible is the only unerring guide; nor should the *end* and *intent* of its statutes ever be forgotten. The spirit of love, so beautifully breathing through the preceding verses of the Shemang, must hallow the observance of the two last, or obedience will be of little avail. If, when the Hebrew arrays himself in the Tephillin, he thinks on all that is comprised in the brief passages he has bound on his brow and hand, and earnestly and faithfully he seeks for strength to obey their dictates throughout the day, and he asks for grace that his hands work not evil, his feet turn not astray, his thoughts cleave not to transgression: the command of Moses is indeed obeyed, not only in form, but in *spirit.* If the scroll of the law, fastened to the door-post of his

house, remind the son of Israel of a preceding command, "to speak and think of his God when he sitteth in his house or walketh by the way;" if it evince to the strangers around that he is not one of them, however intimately he may mingle in social intercourse; that he glories in standing thus apart as the chosen of God: the form has done its duty, it springs from, and yet assists the spirit resting within.

Thus should every Hebrew rite be considered, and reason, not superstition, be traced as its foundation. The *Mind*, from whom every law in the Pentateuch originated, far exceeds in wisdom those which that celestial Mind has framed;—and therefore, in love, He threw a veil over that overpowering light of wisdom; and, choosing from among the seed of Abraham the best and meekest of His favoured servants, He delivered through his means laws which, though proceeding from the most profound wisdom, were yet couched in words suited to the weak comprehension of His creatures.

Not one of these laws has a mysterious, or admits of a double meaning. All who seek to know the Jewish ethics, will find them in the word of God; for it is to the ordinances of Scripture *alone* we refer. There may be some observances which superstition and bigotry have introduced, some which tarnish and choke up the law of love which came direct from Heaven; but to them we allude not. The Bible and reason are the only guides to which the child of Israel can look in security. The laws for which we can find no foundation in the one, and which will not stand the test of the other, need no farther proof; they are not the dictates of the law, they are wanderings from the true and only law, the inventions of man, and not the words of God. The Bible gives us a cause, a reason for every statute it enjoins. It would

have been sufficient had man been desired to obey simply because God willed it; but the Eternal would not thus blind His children; He would not the obedience of ignorance and fear; and therefore He condescended to inform us *wherefore* each law was given, that we might obey more willingly, and give the homage of the intellect as well as the sacrifice of the will.

It is therefore evident that those observances which not only confine the soaring spirit, but frequently occasion ordinances of far more weight to be neglected, and for which no reason can be assigned save the ideas of our ancient fathers, cannot be compared in weight and consequence to the piety of the heart, which but too often they supersede. To explain the words of Moses and adapt them to the comprehension of all classes amongst their brethren was, in all probability, the sole intent of the Hebrew elders, an intent equally judicious and praiseworthy; but they would have shrunk back in sorrow and alarm could they have known, that in future ages *their* words would take the place of the word of God; that they would be made the means of superstition creeping in amongst us, of bigotry raising her dark and lowering standard, till together they had well nigh expelled the pure spirit originally pervading the religion of Moses; that the very rites and ceremonies, instituted to keep up a lively remembrance of the Lord, should be the very means of bidding us forget Him, as if religion consisted only in outward form.

When we think on the many inconsistencies discoverable in the mere formalist; the contradictions which his strict yet lifeless adherence to mere ceremonial things and neglect of the spirit generally comprise; when we know that they who depart from the faith of their fathers

are ever* those reared in the severest obedience to mere forms: we have quite sufficient evidence that such are

* This is certainly a sweeping clause, though there is a great deal of truth in it; an education which merely looks to the enforcement of blind obedience, and is not sedulous to impress reasons for outward aids to religion upon the mind, cannot, from its very nature, shield an Israelite from the temptations which surround him when he is no longer in fear of paternal or magisterial rule. His observance of religion hitherto was based on fear, not knowledge; and fear being removed, he falls an easy prey to the whisperings of interest, gain, or worldly enjoyment. Hence my friend has doubtlessly seen many examples among the converts of the Society for Evangelizing the Jews of men who were reared in the strictest observance of forms who, despite of a fund of knowledge of religious lore, such as it is, had not their soul imbued with the spirit of the heavenly light. But are they Christians? By no means; they are converts from convenience or interest, and many doubtlessly would gladly embrace again the faith of their ancestors, did not pride or fear of starvation withhold them. Let it be observed, that Christians are unfortunately too much inclined to extend the helping hand to such pretended converts, believing them sincere in their profession of a change of sentiment. And when these converts have therefore once tasted the bounty for their apostasy, the door is closed against their return whilst the necessity for this bounty exists, or whilst they are, as is generally the case, disinclined to labour for their own support.

The cause of these conversions does not lie in the *forms*, but in the absence of *spiritual* education. Could all the teachers and guides of our suffering people be only induced to teach the why and wherefore when propounding the observance of the duties: these would be executed from love of our faith, not from fear of parental authority. And thus armed with knowledge of what is demanded of Israelites, and imbued with a firm reliance on Providence, our young men and our maidens might be exposed to the siren notes of proselyte-hunters without falling into the snare laid for their feet.

As regards the reasons for abiding by ancestral custom, it is *not*, as has been at times asserted, without cause; our wise men found the people in danger of being overwhelmed by the flood of gentile opinions, owing to a compulsory intercourse with the nations in their captivity; and they therefore prescribed rules as a fence for the law, to preserve its spirit from the assaults of outward danger. Without going the whole length of claiming permanency for all these ordinances of the elders, we may assert that it would be unwise and unsafe, even if it

not the consequences of obedience to the *law of Moses*, that they proceed not from the spirit of religion, which the forms were given to aid and strengthen, that they come of weak, capricious, changeful man, not from the immutable and eternal God. And their universal obedience generally proceeds from the Hebrew following in the steps of his fathers, without knowing the why and the wherefore. Nor is it extraordinary that, when the *spirit* is not inculcated, succeeding generations should either become yet more severely bigoted and darkly superstitious, or, disgusted with a religion which brings no comfort, no support, throw it off entirely, embrace another, or live as if they had no God. And is not this an awful consideration? Can it be one moment imagined, the God of love will accept the religion of petty ceremonies in lieu of the *heart* which He so continually demands? Will He, who hath desired the love of the heart, and soul, and might, be content with the mere offering of outward form? What are the words of His righteous servant David, when monarch of Israel, and it was in his power to attend to all and every rite enjoined by Moses? "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it; thou delightest not in burnt-offering; the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, oh God! thou wilt not despise."

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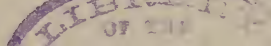
were legal, to pull down the bulwark thus erected, with rude and unskilful hands. Such a reform would be destruction, not improvement. Better far is it to leave the gradual change to time, upon the good old principle of the ancient Hillel: "Let Israel alone; for if they are not prophets, they are the sons of prophets!" Indeed we are not quite so blind as the Christians assert we are; we have our faults and know them too; all we ask is, let us alone, leave us to regulate and improve our condition; and it would be wonderful if, with Heaven's blessing, some good fruit will not be produced under the hands of labourers who have never been wanting when the exigencies of the times demanded their aid.—I. L.



Two most important facts are contained in these beautiful verses. In the first place, the Hebrew who thinks, feels, and acts as if his salvation depended upon form alone, as if his acceptance with his God depended entirely and solely on lifeless rites in which the *spirit* has no part, tacitly allows the truth of all that the Nazarene would urge with regard to the necessity of a mediator. If it were the mere *formula* of priests and sacrifices,* *wholly distinct* from the religion of the heart, which made atonement for him, and procured him salvation and acceptance: the Nazarene has some room for his idea that, unless we acknowledge and feel the necessity of an everlasting high priest, and the grand atonement of a bleeding saviour, we must be utterly cast off and abandoned, we can have no hope, no refuge; and that unless we cling to and acknowledge him whom they allege to have been made an atonement for the sins of man, we must die in sin and be doomed everlastingly.

It is impossible for the mere formalist to bring substantial argument against this specious plea; and therefore is it that, when converts are made, or rather when departures take place from the faith of Israel (for those cannot be termed converts who know nothing of the religion they leave), they can always be traced to the offspring of those who inculcate the *form,* to the entire neglect of the true and pure spirit which our God demands.

It is otherwise with those who look on the above quoted words of David, according to their real meaning; who can trace in them, not alone the religion of the minstrel

* Let it be remembered, that this is not the idea entertained by our elders, but only by those whose ignorance of our tenets makes them look upon outward aids as the essentials of religion. "The Merciful demands the heart" is the Talmudic doctrine.—I. L.

king, but the real intent of the sacrifices enjoined by Moses,—that they were to be secondary to the *sacrifices* of the heart and *will;* that of themselves they were even as nothing. If it were in the power of the priest to make atonement for sin, to wash away the guilt of the transgressor in the blood of sacrifices: we should have a long account of David's formal acts of penance, of his seeking instantly the priest, of all the goats and sheep he brought up for sacrifices; instead of which we have the most exquisite description of Nathan's appeal, of the instant confession and remorse of the king, and of the touching events which followed—his forgiveness, yet his chastisement in the death of his beloved and innocent child. No doubt he strictly attended to those rites and sacrifices which Moses has instituted in case of sin; but we clearly perceive how completely secondary they were, by the absence of all allusion to them, and by the emphatic and touching simplicity of the exclamation in which he shows the insufficiency of all sacrifice for sin, save that of the heart. We are sometimes apt to marvel, that even the best characters of the Bible are not exempt from sin; yet that very fact is a farther proof of our Father's infinite love and condescension. If the character of David had been wholly good, we should not have seen so clearly the perfect equity and love displayed in God's dealings with His creatures. It palpably and ocularly proves all that the prophets of later years sought so perseveringly to inculcate—that to repent humbly, sincerely, earnestly, to give the sacrifice of a broken and contrite heart, to turn from the error of former ways, and seek after righteousness with heart and soul; firmly, yet with a lowly spirit, trusting in the fulness of God's love and tender mercy to fill up the deficiency, and in His truth and righteousness to make us righteous, to bow submissively

and resignedly to whatever trials He may inflict,—that this is all-sufficient, He needs neither "the flesh of bulls, nor the blood of goats," He requires obedience, and no other atonement nor sacrifice; for the merit of these consisted in *obedience*, and simply as a test of that obedience they were instituted; consequently, the plea of the Nazarene is of no avail. We have no need of a dying saviour; our God is all-sufficient, more than sufficient for our need. And if we give Him that sacrifice, which we can still give; if we obey every statute, which in our present captive and wandering state we *can* obey: our worship is as acceptable in His sight as it was in Jerusalem; for it needed the same mercy to purify and perfect it then as it does now.

Yet while we feel and acknowledge the insufficiency of form alone, the sons of Israel must beware of the contrary extreme, that is failing in the most important article of their faith, a willing and perfect *obedience*, by deeming spirit-worship all-sufficient. If they adhere not to the rites of their forefathers, they cannot take unto themselves the gracious promises made to the children of Israel; for their religion degenerates into that, which is termed, natural theology; in a word, they are Deists, not Hebrews, and they deprive themselves alike of faith, hope, and comfort.

The origin of this far-spreading evil consists in the fatal desire to draw a line between the past and present Jerusalem, and the countries in which we are scattered. In some things, indeed, we may be compelled to do so; but certainly not in all. There are many, very many laws, which, if the Hebrew would still manifest himself as the first-born of the Lord, he can still implicitly obey.

Obedience to the fifth and sixth verses of the Shemang

has fallen into disrepute, because it is supposed pharisaical and only assumed to attract attention. But, when not thus abused, the very act of robing ourselves in an appointed dress must in a degree prepare the mind to address its Creator: the Hebrew has withdrawn from the world; he is for the while divided from his fellow-men; his thoughts are turned to another and holier object; he does not rush unprepared and unthinkingly in the awful Presence; and he may then hope, his prayers are purer, more imbued with a divine spirit, then had he turned direct from the world unto his God. But this dress was never intended to be assumed, except in the sacred privacy of the closet, or in the stated hours of family devotion.

In the observance of these minute forms publicity should be most carefully avoided. It is enough, if to the world he demonstrate the peculiar holiness of his religion by the superiority of his moral conduct. The son of Israel, who has been in early years awakened to the *spirit* of Judaism, will gladly observe the minutest form, which will assist his devotions, and chain his wandering thoughts; and though the act of attaching the scroll of the law to the door-posts of his house may not be in any way connected with the strengthening of the spirit: he will yet gladly avail himself of this command, to prove, he fears not the scorn of the world's attacking perhaps this public manifestation of his religion; he rather overcomes it as a *trial* and proof of willing obedience, and glories in thus keeping himself distinct from the nations, and holy unto his God.

Writing for professed Hebrews, it is scarcely necessary to touch on the laws regarding food; yet these are those which are generally seized upon by nominal religionists, and declared to relate solely to those Eastern nations

where, even to this day, their disobedience is attended with disease and suffering. We have no proof in the word of God that they are, as some declare, simply and solely the advice of Moses, a man, to keep his followers in health; on the contrary, we have the evidence of the whole Pentateuch, ay, and the prohibitions of the prophets, to convince us that the same infinite Mercy framed these, comparatively trivial as they are, as every other which His book contains. Moses could NOT speak for himself *alone;* he had no power to make mere human laws; the inspiration with which he was gifted would have wholly and instantly departed from him, had he dared to frame a single law which was not of the Lord. To preserve health, to keep us distinct and holy, to be a trial of obedience,—for these things they were originally given; and that we are no longer in the country where they were bestowed is of little consequence. The one reason may be now perhaps as nothing, the food in other countries than the East may be sweet and wholesome; but the others still exist in equal, perhaps in double force.

The act of eating may be deemed very trifling and unimportant; but when indulged in at the expense of *obedience,* it surely must become of weight; for what first occasioned the influence of evil? what tempted Eve to disobey? Was it not in part the gratification of her appetite? for "when the woman saw that the tree was *good for food*" she put forth her hand, took of the fruit thereof, and thereby disobeyed.* The word of the Lord

* This argument, originally written in 1837, has lately become peculiarly dear from its association with a young friend and relative from whose lips the same idea proceeded in support of the same argument last summer, and is here recorded simply to evince that the Hebrew, even as the Christian religion, finds its beatified resting in minds of fourteen

has gone forth, and it is not in our power to alter it. Who dare affirm that the very food chosen in this captive and degraded state, is *not* a trial of fidelity and obedience? That which the Eternal hath spoken will never be recalled. It may be that ignorant, short-sighted man may not know the *reason* of many ordinances, contained in the Bible; but that lowly, child-like faith which should be the portion of every child of Israel, rests satisfied in the conviction that the God of wisdom has some wise, though perhaps secret, end in all that He ordaineth: and consequently the Hebrew's duty is to *obey*, without question, implicitly and continually. If we once depart from the strict line of obedience, we know not when or where we may stop. It is much easier to resist temptation, to keep our feet from *entering* the path of disobedience, than to stop the headlong course of evil when once the path is entered.

This fact is demonstrated alike in the Pentateuch, the books that follow, and in the Prophets. The Hebrew is either commanded to obey, or is shown the evils of disobedience. What occasioned the fall of man? Disobedience. What turned Lot's wife into a pillar of salt? Disobedience. What caused all the cruel wars that desolated Judea after the Israelites had obtained possession? Their disobedience in not exterminating the nations whose wickedness the Lord abhorred. Why did

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years. There is peculiar holiness in piety which has shone through long months of suffering; especially when we remember that it was after months of peculiarly aggravated suffering he once emphatically said: "Were I told that eating that which is forbidden would restore me to health some months sooner than were I to refrain from doing so, I would not, I could not take it." Alas, perhaps, ere this little book comes forth to the world that blessed spirit may be lost to earth, for even now it hovers on the confines of eternity.—Since writing the above, that spirit has indeed departed.

the Eternal depart from Saul? Because in sparing Agag and appropriating unto himself the richest spoils of the Amalekites, he disobeyed. And the Lord had said unto His people, concerning the nations around them, "Ye shall not go in unto them, neither shall they come in unto you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods." Yet Solomon, the son of David, Solomon, to whom God had granted wisdom, riches, power, even Solomon, disobeyed this command; and not only did his glory depart from him, but from that one act of disobedience we may trace all the after-miseries of the Jews. Had the kingdom of Israel remained united, and the twelve tribes been acknowledging but one sovereign, it might have defied the power of the destroyer. Had Solomon's heart remained true unto his God: his son would have been blessed for his sake, even as *he* had been for David's; and thus the kingdoms of Israel and Judah might have gone on progressing in glory, in the knowledge of the Lord, till it had attained the height of prosperity and blessedness promised by Moses to those who OBEY the word of God. Instead of which, the transgressions of Solomon were awfully visited on his son who followed in his evil ways. The greater part of the kingdom was rent from him; and, from that time, civil wars and their attendant miseries desolated Judea, and prepared the way for foreign conquerors.

Many other examples of disobedience and its evil consequences might be drawn from the sacred Book; but to do so, would exceed our limits. It may be, that at the present time disobedience would not draw down such *manifest* chastisement; but it is equally recorded above, equally subject to the wrath of our Father, whose favour and whose blessing we wilfully cast aside.

The emphatic verse, "Behold I set before you this

day a blessing and a curse, a blessing if ye *obey* the commandments of the Lord, &c., and a curse, if ye will *not* obey the word of the Lord your God," remains in equal force now as when it was given; addressed to the people of Israel, it must remain valid and immutable, till that people shall cease from the earth. It is not confined either to place or time. Hundreds, ay, thousands of years have passed away; yet the nation of Israel still exists, though every other flourishing, when those words were spoken, has crumbled into dust. We to this day remain emblems of the power, the mercy, the justice, the wrath of the Almighty; and that verse applies as forcibly to us now, as it did to our fathers.

Obedience depends neither on country, time, nor situation; it is required whether we are free citizens of Jerusalem, or wanderers and captives in the stranger's land; whether all things are smiling around us, or dark clouds obscure us beneath their shades; whether coeval with Moses, the present time, or a thousand years hence. And would we still be the first-born of the Lord: we must adhere without hesitation or inquiry to the law of Moses —the pure, the beautiful, and consistent law, of which the whole Bible is the glorious record.

Obedience extends over every rank and station. We cannot now bring burnt-offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord; but verses similar to this should be engraved on every youthful heart: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in *obeying* the voice of the Lord? Behold to *obey* is better than sacrifice, to *hearken*, than the fat of rams; for rebellion (or disobedience) is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry."

It is impossible to peruse the holy Scriptures without the conviction striking home to every Hebrew mind, that

we may worship and love the Lord our God, as fervently, as steadily, as acceptably to Him in our captive state as in Jerusalem. And should we not sometimes ponder on these things, and endeavour by individual conduct to uphold the glory of the nation, and assist by example our wavering brethren? The efforts of one, or two, or five, or ten, will be, alas! of little avail, save for their own souls. The love of the sons of Israel for their faith should be such as would urge them to regard her welfare, her interest, her glory, even as their own. If even the Christian regards us as a "living miracle, as the living echo of Heaven's holy tones from generation to generation:" in what other light can we look upon ourselves? Can we doubt that our existence is to be for ever? "Thus saith the Lord who giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night, who divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar: *If* these ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, *then* the seed of Israel shall also cease to be a nation before me for ever. If the heavens above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth be searched out beneath, I will also cast off the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jeremiah xxxi. 35–37.) "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that ye may know and believe me, and understand, that I am He, before whom there was no god formed, neither shall there be after me; I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no saviour. This people I have formed for myself, they shall show forth my praise." (Isaiah xliii. 10, 11, 21.) And shall we refrain from doing so? Are we so insensible to such blessed privileges, as blindly to throw them off? And although almost every page of the holy volume teems with proofs, that Israel and Judah *are* the chosen of the Lord, the people whom He hath framed for Him-

self, and whose religion will at length extend over the whole world: there are yet some, who wake not from their lethargy, who wilfully permit the Christians to believe we are indeed forsaken, indeed deprived of all spirit, grace, and blessing, and that *theirs* is the religion which alone can promise redemption, hope, and comfort. But how different would be the tenor of their thoughts concerning us: did they behold the glory of the Lord reflected in the social and domestic conduct of every child of Israel!

Every Hebrew should look upon his faith as a temple extending over every land, to prove the immutability, the eternity of God, the unity of His purposes, the truth of the past, the present, and the future: and regard himself as one of the pillars which support it from falling to the ground, and add, however insignificant in itself, to the strength, the durability, and the beauty of the whole.

That we do not think enough of these things proceeds from that spirit of independence, which would prompt every man to worship after his own fancy. Religion has no more powerful foe than independence. It is contrary to every law of nature. Who is it dare proclaim himself a being independent alike of God and man? Who dare say we are not dependent beings? Yet it is of little use acknowledging a God, One who frames, upholds, and guides: if man turn aside from His everlasting statutes to walk in his own ways, his, who himself is but the being of a day.

Obedience was from the first the great trial of man; and if we worship God after our own fashion, we rob both prayers and actions of their sweetest savour. Whether Hebrew, Christian, or Mahomedan, he only is sincerely and earnestly religious who strictly adheres to the sta-

tutes contained in the Book which each creed looks upon as sacred. And it should be the pride of every Hebrew to obey the laws of Moses implicitly, so unfailingly as to give unanswerable evidence to all around that his religion is indeed divine.

It may be that obedience is more difficult now, that all worldly distinctions are confined to members of another* creed, than were we in our own country, and had a king, princes, magistrates, and situations of dignity and honour amongst ourselves. But the Hebrew has still honour to support and glory to exalt; the honour of his faith, the glory of his God; he is still one of a great fabric which will *never* fall, however he may desert it. The mighty arm of the Lord upholds it; and were there but ten Israelites remaining, then from them would spring the messiah, the son of David, "to wipe away the tears from all faces," to teach us the worship of holiness and truth: then would from them the earth be regenerated.

Yet, let it not be imagined that, if it be the arm of the Lord which supports the undying fabric of His faith, it matters not how His people fall from it: since, whether they remain faithful, or for the sake of worldliness desert it, cannot effect a change in the decrees of the Eternal. No, indeed, nothing they can do can destroy the Law;—but according to our work so shall be our recompense. Let them, therefore, stand firm, and show forth the glory of their God by adding to the beauty of the temple He has framed; and His blessing will descend like dew upon

* It must not be lost sight of, that this book was written by a resident of England, where the Jews had then not yet been admitted to an enjoyment of equal rights; the case is different in America and some states in Europe; though there are everywhere obstacles in our way which render worldly preferment almost incompatible with a due observance of our religion.—I. L.

their souls, nourishing while it refresheth, consoling while it purifieth. But those that fall away will find their emblem in the fallen pillars of a ruined shrine; like them, for a while, they may be admired in their fallen state, as converts are in the church they have adopted; but then, crumbling into dust, despised, neglected, scattered like chaff before the wind, they will be doing dishonour to the fabric from which they have fallen, and will add nothing to their own beauty or utility. Even thus are those who, either impelled by worldly motives, or because they know nothing of their faith, dishonour and degrade the religion of their ancestors, whilst they add nothing to the glory of that which they have adopted. Oh! how great, how inconceivable is that love which, even to such sinners, holds forth both promises and pardon.

In vain we look for charity in those who have left the Jewish nation.* Delighted with themselves, or perhaps angry with others for not following their example (for whenever such persons come in contact with those who remain steadily firm, conscience raises her voice somewhat louder than they approve of, and the anger she excites against themselves they permit to find vent on others), they seldom lose an opportunity to bring others over to their side, or endeavour to prove their zeal for their newly-embraced creed by the scorn and contempt which they invariably evince towards the religion of their forefathers. How different is their conduct from that

* In this, as in every other rule, there are, happily, exceptions, as it has been peculiarly the author's happy fate to encounter. The author ought, perhaps, of all persons, to have avoided this subject—having ever received distinguished kindness from some few who are unhappily so situated; but in writing a theological work, it is the author's painful duty to write *generally*, not as individuals have experienced.

of the sincere and lowly, though mistaken follower of Christianity; how differently does he regard the Hebrew from those who, born Israelites themselves, may still have relations, even parents, who yet adhere to the law of God. But in vain they thus endeavour to conceal their descent; the mark of God is on their brows, and wherever they may be, they cannot shake it off.*

There are others, again, who take unto themselves the supposed glory of being converts, and whom many Christians triumphantly hail as such, who can really boast of

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* In the midst of all his wanderings, and despite of the effects of climates and physical changes, the Hebrew has preserved his peculiarity of features and cast of countenance. Going over to the army of our opponents marks us, therefore, but as traitors to the noble cause surrendered to us as its natural defenders; and to deny our origin is contradicting the evidence which our own countenance presents. "For unto me the children of Israel are servants; they are my servants, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (Lev. xxv. 55.) These are the words of the law; and no one upon whom the badge of the divine service has been thrown can divest himself of it. The apostate may think that his new associates love and respect him; but he mistakes the truth: the intelligent Nazarene will suspect his sincerity, justly believing that he would not have quitted our communion were ours the conquering and triumphant, and Christianity the suffering cause. His face will mark him as the deserter from his God; and his great-grandchildren will still bear the evidence that they have sprung from the despised race of Israel. These are not idle words! they are the words of truth and common sense! How much nobler a course do they pursue who endeavour to bring honour upon their ancient lineage, who add renown to the blessed name of their ancestors, who magnify the glory of the law which they have received from their Maker! And indeed how happy would we be as a united people, if we all would contribute our aid to improve the condition of our brothers in faith, and act so, that all might acknowledge that our hopes of better things are well founded; and that the words of the Lord in our mouths are indeed truths, truths as unchanging, undying, as is the Creator Himself, who proclaimed them as His will and law.—I. L.

no such privilege; placed by their parents at Christian schools, at a time when impressions are most readily imbibed, they cannot do otherwise than embrace the doctrine which they hear continually explained, the only one indeed in which they are instructed. How then, in after-life, can they take any credit to themselves, or deem themselves converts? The real meaning of which word appears to me, simply, *examining, studying, reflecting* on both religions, and the choosing that to which their heart and judgment respond; instead of which the Christian religion is the only one which they have known. They have not been taught the love and veneration for their ancient faith, which could strengthen them in its observance, and enable them to give up all worldly distinctions, rather than desert it. Oh! why will not Jewish parents instruct their children in the Jewish faith, or send them to Jewish schools, and shrink in horror from the sinful act of placing them where, imbibing a new belief, they will on their return to the parental roof too often break with a rude hand that holy link which of all others should most closely entwine the hearts of parents and children, the common worship of their common Father, the ONE religion of the ONE and Holy God?*

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* I have really nothing to add to the impressive remarks of my friend, farther than that it appears unaccountable how a Jewish father and a Hebrew mother can surrender their children to the entire guidance of a Christian boarding-school. Religious indifference must have gone far indeed, where such a betrayal of the trust which God confided to them in their children takes place. Do they really believe that, whether regarded as members of the human family at large or as Israelites, they have thus discharged the solemn duty incumbent on them to fit them, their charges, for the kingdom of Heaven? Do they themselves believe in the faith of Moses? Do they believe in ONE, unchanging, everlasting, immortal God? Do they believe that He will punish those who

In these brief remarks on the great importance of steadily adhering to *form* (for in the adhering or non-

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forswear His kingdom? We have yet to learn that there are professing Jews who believe otherwise! And yet they can sacrifice their children to an erroneous system, erroneous as we needs must deem it, simply because they are too indolent to retain them under the paternal roof, and to superintend in their own persons the education of those who ought to be prized above every thing. And oh! how can a man who deserves in the least to be blessed with a son, or a mother whose bosom throbs at all with emotion at beholding her own daughter—how can such think any employment more pleasure-bringing than assembling round them daily their own offspring, and to see their intellect expanding day by day and hour by hour, under their own guidance, at least under their own superintendence! I say not, that the parents should be the teachers; for as the world is now constituted, especially in large commercial communities, the fathers are too much occupied with business to have sufficient leisure, even if the capacity be not wanting. But surely in the evening hours they ought to rejoice to see their family circle unbroken around them, and to be assured that the instruction imparted during the day has not weakened the attachment felt towards the ancient belief of Israel. But the mothers in the house of Jacob, particularly those of the wealthier class, and of them my friend I believe speaks more especially—surely they cannot be so much the slaves of pleasure and indolence, as to wish their sons and daughters removed from their dwelling, so that they may grow up without experiencing a mother's love, and caring in return little for maternal authority. But unfortunately there are such—fathers, who desire not to see their sons around them in the hours of leisure; mothers, who divest themselves of their daughters' presence that they may not be disturbed in their amusement or be troubled with maternal cares! But are these Israelites? are they not the cause of their children's apostasy?—Yet when old age creeps over them, when they see their own flesh and blood worship at unholy shrines, calling upon gods whom our forefathers feared not: how will they curse the hour when their negligence or pride (that *their* children might be like those of the gentiles around them) counselled them to banish them, as it were, to a moral desert, where unbelief or false belief had necessarily to supply the knowledge of our blissful belief!—One excuse they may perhaps offer, the want of good schools of our own. But even this is no extenuation. If schools are wanting, establish them, place at their head men and women who fear the Lord and tremble at His word; and as sure as the sun shines for a light by day,

adhering we expose ourselves to the blessing or the curse so emphatically promised by Moses), our review of the two last verses of the Shemang is concluded; and we have now but to notice the beautiful union, observable in the six verses, forming this daily prayer. Each is distinct, and forms a complete study of itself; yet each is so connected with the other, that the whole forms a more complete and summary rule of life, than can be found in any other part of the Bible.

It is scarcely possible for the reflecting mind to remain insensible to the precise and beautiful arrangement of every sentence, almost of every word.

Proclaiming the unity of our God, we are daily reminded of our nationality, and all the weighty reflections and responsibilities which that nationality includes. Then desired to love the Lord with heart, and soul, and might. It is morally impossible to obey this command, unless the spirit of religion pervade our every action. Affections, intellect, springing from the pure fount of light and love, must pour back their treasures—as the sparkling waters of the fountain fall back into the same spring from which they rose; social, domestic, individual conduct, benevolence, charity, even human virtue, are included in obedience to the second verse. In the third, the ten commandments are recalled to rest on our hearts, that we may remember them to do them. In the fourth, the duties of religious instruction, of strengthening our

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Israelites will be able to give instruction, and fit out the children intrusted to their care with all the light of science and refinement which they can obtain under gentile guidance. Yet even if this were not so, better far would it be that we be shut out from modern civilization, than that one of us should be thereby prevented from bearing his testimony to the existence and rule of the One true and only God and Saviour.—I. L.

inward thoughts on this momentous subject by conversation, and of encouraging the spirit of piety to pervade even those amusements which we may deem profane, all are strongly inculcated. And lastly, lest the spirit thus enforced should fade away and die in our wavering hearts, adherence and obedience to instituted form are positively commanded. We cannot fail to perceive by the arrangement of this brief, yet perfect portion of our law, how closely and firmly the spirit is *united* with the form; and that, would we be Israelites indeed, not merely such in name, the command, implied in the *arrangement* as well as *precept*, MUST be obeyed. The *heart* must be wholly given to the Lord; yet still the instituted form *must* be obeyed, as strictly and steadily as our scattered state will permit. As both are here indivisibly connected: so it is evident, the religion of no Hebrew is perfect, unless the form be hallowed by the spirit, the SPIRIT quickened by the FORM.

When this is done, when we behold the union of religion and morality as the God of heaven intended; when all that is here comprised is indeed obeyed; when we behold Hebrew parents bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord, and according to the law of Moses,—the Bible read, studied, alike in English as in our own language, and *believed* by every Israelite, male or female; when the Sabbath-day is hallowed, the love of interest and money giving place to the pure love of God; worldly ambition set at naught when it can only be gratified at the expense of Judaism; when the Jewish nation glories in her captive state as a proof that she *is* the chosen of the Lord, and hails the fulfilment of these awful threatenings as convincing evidence that the glorious promises will be with equal truth fulfilled; when such things are: then indeed may we hope that the period of our redemp-

tion is drawing nigh, our release from captivity at hand, the advent of our Messiah approaching,—when every remaining prophecy shall be gloriously, blessedly, fully, accomplished, "When the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy; when they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

POEMS.

BY GRACE AGUILAR.

*** The following thirty-two poetical effusions were communicated for "The Occident," vols. I. to V., except the first, transmitted before this magazine was started, and the second, which was copied from "The Voice of Jacob." They are given unchanged, as first printed; and it is hoped they will impart in others that feeling of devotion which prompted the author to indite them.

Philadelphia, Nissan 5624.

POEMS.

ODE ON CHARITY.

RECITED BY ONE OF THE BOYS OF THE SCHOOL שערי תקוה GATES OF HOPE, LONDON, ON TUESDAY, THE 14TH OF APRIL, 1840 (5600).

Oh thou that sittest shrined far, far above,
Thou fleet-wing'd spirit of omniscient love!
Urging thy flight o'er ocean and o'er land,
Leaving sweet tokens of a Father's hand,
Breathing of love from which no woe may hide,
'Neath whose soft spell e'en sorrow's tear is dried,
Unseen and voiceless, yet the angel guest,
In every land that holds some gentle breast,—
Thrice-blessed Charity! to thee we raise
The simple ode of thankfulness and praise,
And blessing thee, in gratitude make known
The generous friends who heard thy pleading tone,
And o'er our lowly lot such joys entwined
As soothe the heart and purify the mind.
Blessings on those who to our youth would give
Means as the sons of Israel to live,
To aid us on our dark and rugged way,
And grant us knowledge as our prop and stay.
How may we speak the thankfulness we owe,
The blessings lavish'd on a lot so low!
Save to upraise for them the fervent prayer,
Whose peace and fulness they would bid us share,
And bid return unto their own kind hearts
The blessings which their love to poverty imparts!

THE CHAMBER OF THE DYING.

'Tis holy, when the morning peeps
Softly through shadowy night,
When Nature gems of beauty weeps,
And the bright world so gently sleeps,
Hush'd in its pomp and might.

'Tis holy, in that hour of eve,
When twilight's robe is spread,
When thought may solemn visions weave,
And care and pain and sorrow leave,
Till all but peace hath fled.

'Tis holy, when the glistening rays
Of many a silent star
Gleam on that sad and yearning gaze,
That up to heaven its prayer would raise,
And send its dream afar.

'Tis holy, when the choral song,
Fills with deep tones the air,
When, awed and hush'd, the gathering throng,
Still, in the spirit's depth prolong
The mighty voice of prayer.

'Tis holy, when loud thunders roar,
And lightning flashes round,
When ocean breaks upon the shore,
And heavy clouds the heavens rush o'er,
And winds send forth deep sound.

But holier e'en than these the shrine,
Where low the loved is lying,
Where glimmerings of a love divine,
Through pain and sorrow softly shine,
The Chamber of the Dying.

There:—God is there. He calls His own,
In voice so gently mild,
A few brief hours, and to His throne,
Where saints and angels dwell alone,
He calls His favour'd child.

'Tis on an angel that we gaze,
A resident of heaven,
Shrouded a while, in misty haze,
As morning veils her glowing rays,
Ere night afar is driven.

'Tis holy!—holy thus to rest
Beside a spirit flying,
Though anguish fills the watchers' breast,
Yet e'en to them,—'tis holiest,
The Chamber of the Dying!

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

I.

"The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joy."—PROVERBS.

YES; better far our God should read,
And God alone, our inmost soul,
That He alone can see it bleed
'Neath its dark veil of stern control;
'Tis best that man can never know
One half the spirit's joy or woe.

For did earth give us all we seek,
A perfect sympathy and love,—
Did man console in accents meek,—
Oh, should we ever look above?
Contented to the earth we'd cling,
And clip the spirit's soaring wing!

We ne'er would lift the tear-dimm'd eye,
Nor bend in prayer the sinking knee;
Man would receive each swelling sigh,
And soon, too soon, our idol be!
Oh, blessed He who doth ordain
A love no earthly doubt can stain!

To feel this world our resting-place,
The fainting soul is all too prone,
Seldom the ways of Heav'n we trace,
While earth's bright dreams are all our own:—
While man may give us hope and love,
Oh, who will lift the heart above?

But when the heart is clouded o'er
With shades no earthly eye can reach,
When e'en though love might peace restore,
We cannot give our sorrows speech—
When all within is dark and drear,
And none may mark the spirit's tear:

Oh, it is then we first shall learn
The blessedness of lowly prayer,
Then upwards shall the spirit yearn,
And feel one pitying Friend is there;
Then the deep fulness of His love
Our lonely moments still shall prove.

No earthly forms the void can fill,
Which thirsts to drink th' immortal spring;
No earthly balm the heart can still,
Which droops to clasp his Saviour's wing;*
Then blessed be that lonely hour
Which first proclaims a Father's pow'r.

Come, then, and seek the Fount of love,
Whose living waters all may share;
The Friend who sits enshrined above
Will all our sorrows soothe and bear;
Come but to Him, and He will give
Us fitting grace for heav'n to live.

Nor think we harshly of our kind,
That none may read our joy or woe,
That dearest friends on earth, we find,
The hearts deep caverns ne'er may know;

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* Psalm xci. 4; Isaiah xli. 26, lx. 16, lxiii. 8.

The purest love our souls retain
Can guess not, soothe not, all its pain.

'Tis but to whisper, that below
Imperfect e'en affection is;
That fondest friends may never know
The fulness of a love like His,
Who reads the spirit's veil'd recess,
Which scarce defines its own distress.

And should we droop beneath the pain
We have to feel, that none can see
Our secret selves: then God will deign
To hear each throb of agony,
And trace unto its source the tear
Which falls, when none to mark are near.

My God! Bid Thou the heart be still,
And calmly in Thy mercy lie;
Its aching void let Thy love fill,
And raise to Thee the tearful eye;
Oh, ne'er be earthly links our own,
If they must fill the heart alone.

No! be Thine image ever there,
That bless'd our lonely hours may be;
No griefs *alone* 'tis ours to bear,
For all are known and shared by Thee!
Then let us bless the Love Supreme
That bends o'er earth its radiant gleam.

Yet grant us still those loving ties
Which long this earth with joy have blest;
But let us seek beyond the skies
The love on which our souls may rest:
Oh, quick descend! and with Thy pow'r
Bless, Lord, the spirit's lonely hour.

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

II.

WRITTEN ON THE CLOSE OF A PECULIARLY BLESSED DAY OF REST.

Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of rest. *It is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.*"—LEVIT. xxiii. 2.

I BLESS thee, Father, for the grace
Thou me this day hast given
Strengthening my soul to seek thy face,
And list the theme of heaven.

I bless thee, that each workday care
Thy love hath lull'd to rest,
And every thought whose wing was prayer
Thine answering word hath bless'd.

I bless thee, Father! those dark fears,
That linger'd round my heart,
That call'd for murmurs, doubts, and fears,
Thy mercy bade depart.

Oh, Thou alone couldst send them hence
On this bless'd day of peace,
And with thy spirit's pure incense
Bid workday turmoils cease.

The withering pangs of anxious care
Were through the week mine own,
Eased only in the hour of prayer,
But never from me flown.

Darkly around me closed the night,
Though trusting still in Thee;
And heavily I hail'd the light,
Fraught with few joys for me.

How came it, then, my Sabbath day
Is with such bliss replete,—
That visions bright around me play,
Whose smiles my spirit greet?

Oh, 'tis as some reviving dew
  Were o'er each sorrow stealing,
Folding in heaven's own azure hue
  Each dark and weary feeling,

As if no sorrow could molest
  My soaring soul again,
Nor find a momentary rest
  For aught of earthly pain.

A Sabbath to my inmost heart,
  Thy day, my God, hath been,
Thy loving kindness to impart,
  E'en to a child of sin,

A verdant spot, a cooling spring,
  On earth's unkindly breast,
Where all who childlike spirits bring
  Shall healing find, and rest.

My God! my Father! 'tis from Thee
  These blessed hours have come;
I hail them type of joys for me,
  That wait me in THY HOME!

Come, then! if, Lord, 'tis thy decree,
  My workday thoughts of care,
The day of rest is still for me,
  Thy presence then to share.

And naught shall banish from my heart
  Its memories lingering yet,
Their twilight soothing to impart,
  E'en when their sun hath set.

Oh, never let its fleece be dry,
  Thine own day mid the seven,
And wing with prayer, my God, each sigh
  That yearns for Thee and heaven!

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

III.

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

And is there peace and rest in heaven,
And wilt *Thou* never leave me, Lord?
Though this fair earth has never given,
To yearning hearts, one answering word?

And is't with Thee our souls shall find
The craving void of suffering fill'd,—
The throbbing pulse, the care-worn mind,
The anguish'd heart be hush'd and still'd?

Oh, breathe thy promise, Lord of Peace!
My spirit yearns and craves for Thee,
I pray not sorrow's pang to cease,
Let me but feel Thou art with me!

Let me but clasp again the Love
Thou didst vouchsafe erewhile to me,
When first my soul look'd up above,
And pined and thirsted, Lord, for Thee!

Oh leave me not, forsake me not,
Unto my own rebellious will,
Whate'er of trial cloud my lot,
Let me but love Thee, trust Thee still!

Keep me but constant in my trust,
Father! oh grant it fail not now,
Lest, sinking prostrate in the dust,
Despair and doubt should cloud my brow.

Again, again the waves of Life
Are o'er me rushing in their might,
Whose troubled currents' storm and strife,
Hurl my weak spirit back to night.

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I deem'd the gleam of heav'n, that stole,
When prostrate on my couch I lay,
Had left sweet peace upon my soul,
To strengthen't for a darker day.

But it has pass'd, and left no sign;
The struggle, duty to fulfil,
Has robb'd me of the bliss divine,
Which smiled, when weariness chain'd me still.

Oh, if no comfort be mine own,
Father, still fix my hope on Thee!
Till I may feel thy love alone,
And break my chains, and set me free.

'Tis but to try my faltering faith,
Thou dost a while thy presence veil;
Yet though thy worm be tried to death,
My trust, my hope, shall never fail.

Back, back unto the waves of Life,
My shrinking soul, still firmly on!
What if the path with storm be rife?
The crown of faith may yet be won!

In His own time, my yearning cry
Shall pierce His radiant courts of love,
And faith shall change to prayer each sigh
That wings its quivering flight above.

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

IV.

PARTING FROM FRIENDS.

"I, even I, am He that comforteth you!"

Oh! 'tis such bitter pang to part
From friends whom God has given,—
The silver links around the heart
Seem all so rudely riven;
Yet He who gave them bids them go,
And He will heal each hidden woe,
And soothe the burning teardrop's flow,
E'en from His throne in heaven.

And will He, sceptic-spirit, say,
Look down on friendship's hours?
Will He cast down from heaven one ray
To gild such earthly flowers?
He will, for He can read all hearts;
He knows the bliss that love imparts,
The source whence sorrow's sad tear starts,
When loneliness is ours.

He framed the heart, and feels each throb
Of suffering and woe;
He hears the mourner's stifled sob,
Though tears may never flow.
He knew that man could ne'er sustain.
Alone, the load of guilt and pain,
When sin assumed her baleful reign
To darken all below.

Nor was it then, love's sweetest flowers
Unto this earth were given;
They smiled on Eden's sinless bowers,
Ere thence frail man was driven:
And if e'en there man might not be
From every care and sorrow free,
Without affliction's sympathy,
There *must* be love in Heaven!

And e'en the "Monarch Minstrel" felt
The bliss that friendship gave;
When round him darkening dangers dwelt,
A friend was there to save;
Their souls were knit—their hearts were twined—
One spirit theirs—one will—one mind;
Oh! say, was love like theirs design'd
To perish in the grave?

Then, oh! e'en in that sorrowing hour
When friends on earth must part,
Alone to tread where dark clouds lower,
And bursting feels each heart:
Oh! let us seek our God in prayer;
Though *man* may scorn such love to share,
Our *God* will all our burden bear,
And His deep love impart;

And teach us, though a while we sever,
Still we shall meet again—
If not on earth—with Him for ever!
Where there is no more pain.
Then let us struggle on, and pray
For strength to tread our lonely way,
And on our God the weak heart stay,
That seeks its loved in vain.

And prayer will fly through time and space
That friends in life divide,
Till through earth's desert drear, we trace
Those golden portals wide,
That ope on realms of fadeless joy,
Which parting hours can ne'er alloy,
Nor that pure blissful love destroy
Which hath on God relied.

1839.

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

V.

"For I am the Lord, I change not."

Oh, are there friends who, when they part,
As fondly meet again?
Does absence never bring the heart
A deep and lasting pain?
How may frail human nature speak
Of changeless soul-felt joy,
And in a cloud-wrapt future seek
A bliss without alloy!

One yearning heart may beat so true
That time has pass'd it by,
And left o'er life no sombre hue
To whisper age more nigh.
Alas for such—their lonely lot
Hath little joy below;
The roseate flowers that Hope has wrought
Will lose their sunny glow.

It may not be the heart is changed,
But all is changed around,
And sever'd paths have oft estranged
Friends long in kindness bound;—
But oh! tis sad to yearn, to pine
For love once fondly given,
And but pale buds of memory twine,
Frail as the links now riven;

To feel the glowing thoughts that rise
Are laid in prisons lone,
And never read in beaming eyes
Their answer to our own;—
To dream of interest ling'ring still
In friends we claim no more,
Till voiceless tears the soul that fill
E'en Memory blotteth o'er.

Oh upward—upward wing the soul,
Till its lone caverns deep
With love that needs not cold control,
With joys that need not weep—
Up to that Home where love may rest
Unfailing to the end,
Where in each bright and angel guest
We hail a changeless friend.
1841.

SABBATH THOUGHTS.

VI.

WRITTEN DURING ILLNESS.

Oh, do not think because I weep,
And smiles a while are flown,
And thoughts of darkness o'er me creep,
My God hath left me lone;

That His deep love is vain to hush
This wildly yearning heart;
That to the dreams which o'er me rush,
He cannot peace impart;

That 'tis but vain, religious balm,
Which joy my soul had stored,
And fruitless all, the hope, the calm,
Found in His precious word.

Oh, no! Oh, no! Mine eyelids swell
With quickly quivering tears,
And thoughts, in sluggish darkness, dwell
'Neath earth's depressing fears;

And all of joy, of hope, of peace,
Seems banish'd hence a while,
For He who bids all sorrow cease,
Hath veil'd His gracious smile;

And turn'd away that loving eye
Which beam'd on me in pain,
And left me helplessly to lie,
As if my trust were vain.

No! no! 'tis only for a little while,
He turns away His face,
And once again His cheering smile,
My yearning soul shall trace;

And 'tis His love which lays me low,
And bows my soul to dust,
And bids the tear of anguish flow,
To mark if still I trust:

If still, though comfortless, I turn,
And pine, and long for Him,
And loving mercy still discern,
Though mortal sight be dim,—

And oh, I know, I feel it love,
And lay me at His feet,
Knowing that if I look above,
E'en sorrow's self is sweet.

The tempest shadows darkly lower,
To fold me in their night,
But, oh! in His appointed hour
His love will bring forth light.

And I will wait for Him, and rest,
Without one murmuring plaint,
Though sighs escape my labouring breast,
And my lonely spirit faint.

Heed not my crying, Lord! 'tis well,
Or Thou wouldst let me free,
Better in chains with Thee to dwell
Than free, apart from Thee!

Thou mark'st me Thine; these hours of pain
That bid me lonely lie,

And bind me with a heavy chain,
Still, still proclaim Thee nigh!

They call me for a while from earth,
And all her pleasant dreams,
And if they check the voice of mirth,
And joy's too dazzling gleams:

Oh, 'tis to hold commune with Thee,
To feel I am Thine own,
Thy "still small voice" would silent be,
In festal halls alone.

Let me but feel this, Father, oh!
E'en though a while I weep;
Let not o'er faith's rejoicing glow,
The stagnant darkness creep.

Be with me still! though comfortless,
Let not my *trust* depart,
Oh, be Thy spirit nigh to bless
This lone and aching heart!

Grant me but faith, my God! to rest
Unmurm'ring in Thy will,
Then, then, though peace forsake my breast,
I am in safety still!

AN HOUR OF PEACE.

Oh, wake me not from this sweet dream
Now o'er my spirit stealing,
Of heaven's deep calm a shadowy gleam
This care-worn heart is feeling.

This is not suffering, though my frame
Be weak and pain-struck lying;
While life's sad cares no thought can claim,
There is no need for sighing.

This—this is peace! disturb it not,
To heaven that dream has won me,
Oh let me lie, the world forgot—
God's eye alone upon me!

'Tis thoughts of heaven, of God, of death,
That now are round me clinging,
That o'er my soul one balmy breath
Of purest joys are flinging.

Oh break them not, too few, too fleet,
Like gleams of light departing,
Sent with such perfect calm replete,
To soothe earth's restless smarting.

And oh! when death is near at hand,
May such bless'd thoughts be given;
My throbbing heart be softly fann'd
By breezes sent from heaven!

No need e'en then of sigh or groan,
If those I love surround me,
My mother's kiss to soothe my moan,
My father's arm around me!

And one loved friend my hand to hold,
And whisper tales of heaven,
And one in memory long enfold,
When life's last link is riven.

And oh! if music may descend,
To hail the soul that's flying,
Let it with love's soft accents blend,
To soothe me e'en in dying.

No need for tears, an hour like this
Forbids all sounds of wailing,
It whispereth of immortal bliss,
Whose joy is never failing.

These are the visions sweet, that twine
Their lustrous rays around me,

When pain and weakness oft are mine,
And to my couch have bound me.

Oh, think not then, this tearful eye,
Thus heavy is with sorrow;
Nor seek to soothe me as I lie,
And promise health to-morrow;

Nor wake me from these blessed dreams—
The cares of life oppress me,
I would lie still in heaven's own gleams,
And feel—my God doth bless me!

SONG OF THE SPANISH JEWS

DURING THEIR "GOLDEN AGE."

"It was in Spain that the golden age of the Jews shone with the brightest and most enduring splendour.

"In emulation of their Moslemite brethren, they began to cultivate their long disused and neglected poetry: the harp of Judah was heard to sound again, though with something of a foreign tone."—*Milman's History of the Jews.*

Oh, dark is the spirit that loves not the land
Whose breezes his brow have in infancy fann'd,
That feels not his bosom responsively thrill
To the voice of her forest, the gush of her rill;

Who hails not the flowers that bloom on his way,
As blessings there scatter'd his love to repay;
Who loves not to wander o'er mountain and vale,
Where echoes the voice of the loud rushing gale;

Who treads not with awe where his ancestors lie,
As their spirits around him are hovering nigh;
Who seeks not to cherish the flowers that bloom
Amid the fresh herbs that o'ershadow their tomb.

Oh, cold is such spirit: and yet colder still
The heart that for Spain does not gratefully thrill,

The land which the foot of the weary has pressed,
Where the exile and wanderer found blessing and rest.

On the face of the earth our doom was to roam,
To meet not a brother, to find not a home;
But Spain has the exile and homeless received,
And we feel not of country so darkly bereaved.

Home of the exiles! oh ne'er will we leave thee;
As mother to orphan, fair land, we now greet thee.
Sweet peace and rejoicing may dwell in thy bowers,
For even as Judah, fair land! thou art ours.

Oh, dearest and brightest! the homeless do bless thee,
From ages to ages they yearn to possess thee,
In life and in death they cling to thy breast,
And seek not and wish not a lovelier rest.

A VISION OF JERUSALEM,

WHILE LISTENING TO A BEAUTIFUL ORGAN IN ONE OF THE GENTILE SHRINES.

I saw thee, oh my fatherland, my beautiful, my own!
As if thy God had raised thee from the dust where thou art strewn,
His glory cast around thee, and thy children bound to Him,
In links so brightly woven, no sin their light could dim.

Methought the cymbals' sacred sound came softly on my ear,
The timbrel, and the psaltery, and the harp's full notes were near;
And thousand voices chaunted, His glory to upraise,
More heavenly and thrillingly than e'en in David's days.

Methought the sons of Levi were in holy garments there,
Th' anointed one upon his throne, in holiness so fair,
That all who gazed on him might feel the promise be fulfill'd,
And sin, and all her baleful train, now he had come, were still'd.

And thousands of my people throng'd the pure and holy fane,
The curse removed from every brow, ne'er more to come again;

Th' Almighty hand from each, from all, had ta'en the scorching brand,
And Israel, forgiven, knelt within our own bright land!

My country! oh my country! was my soul enrapt in thee
One passing moment, that mine eyes might all thy glory see?
What magic power upheld me there?—alas! alas! it past,
And darkness o'er my aspiring soul the heavy present cast.

I stood ALONE 'mid thronging crowds who fill'd that stranger shrine,
For there were none who kept the faith I hold so dearly mine:
An exile felt I, in that house, from Israel's native sod,—
An exile yearning for my *home*,—yet loved still by my God.

No exile from His love! No, no; though captive I may be,
And I must weep whene'er I think, my fatherland, on thee!
Jerusalem! my beautiful! my own! I feel thee still,
Though for our sins thy sainted sod the Moslem strangers fill.

Oh! that thy children all would feel what our sins have done,
And by our every action prove such guilt the exiles shun,
Until they seek their God in prayer, oh! will He turn to them,
And raise thee once again in life, my own Jerusalem!

"If they their own iniquity in humbleness confess,
And all their fathers' trespasses,—nor seek to make them less;*
If they my judgments say are right, and penitently own
They reap the chastisement of sin, whose seeds long years have sown:†

"Then will I all my vows recall, and from them take my hand,
My covenant remember, and have mercy on their land."‡
So spake the Lord in boundless love to Israel His son;§
But can we, dare we say, these things we *do*, or we *have* done?

Alas, my country! thou must yet deserted rest and lone,
Thy glory, loveliness, and life, a Father's gifts, are flown!
Oh that my prayers could raise thee radiant from the sod,
And turn from Judah's exiled sons their God's avenging rod!

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* Levit. xxvi. 40. † Ib. 41. ‡ Ib. 42, 45.
§ Exod. iv. 22, 23.

And like an oak thou standest, of leaves and branches shorn;*
And we are like the wither'd leaves by autumn tempests torn
From parent stems, and scatter'd wide o'er hill, and vale, and sea,
And known as Judah's ingrate race wherever we may be.

Oh! blessed was that vision'd light that flash'd before mine eye;
But, oh, the quick awakening check'd my soul's ecstatic sigh!
Yet still, still wilt thou rise again, my beautiful, my home,
Our God will bring thy children back, ne'er, ne'er again to roam!

ANGELS.

WRITTEN WHILE WATCHING, AT PAST MIDNIGHT, ALONE BY THE BEDSIDE OF A BELOVED FRIEND.

I CANNOT see ye, beauteous forms, nor mark your brooding wings,
But oh! a deeper quivering sense around my spirit clings,
To whisper ye are near me still,—ye shroud me closer now,
Printing the kiss of sleep and peace on yon pale sufferer's brow.

Spirits of light! and love! and joy! still let me feel ye near!
To share and bless my lonely watch, and dry each lingering tear,
To murmur Faith and Hope unto this faint and drooping heart,
And bid the pangs of fell disease from yon loved one depart.

Meek messengers of Heaven,† in pitying mercy sent,
Whose balmy pinions float around, with blessings redolent,
Linger beside the couch of pain; unloose that prisoning chain;
And give, oh give my mother back to life and health again.

I know that ye are near me; yes! I feel your brooding wing,
It shrouds me, in this silent hour, till sorrow hides her sting;
It fans my brow, it fills my soul with hope's sweet accents mild,
For ye have come from heaven to save a mother to her child.

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* Isaiah i. 29, 30; vi. 13.

† The Hebrew word מלאך translated angel, signifies literally *messenger*, applied to whatever is sent by God to execute His will, from לאך Arabic, to send or employ.

'Tis silence, and 'tis midnight, yet my spirit feels not lone,
It lieth wrapt in fantasies which have no earthly tone,
It holdeth commune full of faith, angelic forms! with ye;
Oh let that commune to my soul a well of gladness be.

Nearer, yet nearer! numberless! ye throng the formless space,
I feel, I feel ye press around, a pure and sinless race;
Ye people night with glowing forms, make silence one sweet sound,
Whose thrilling tones pierce in and in, the spirit's depths profound.

The sins of earth mine eyelids veil, and dim my longing ear;
But still, oh still my Father's love permits your hovering near.
I know, I know ye come from Him, ye link this earth with heaven,*
And earth's dark hours of grief and care to your fond charge are given.

In every balmy sleep that seals yon sufferer's aching eyes,
In every smile that on her lip in cradled slumber lies,
In every soothing thought that comes to check the watcher's tear,
Angels of Heaven! spirit, forms! I know that ye are near;
Oh linger round me! still, oh still, my silent watch to share,
And upward! upward on your wings my fainting spirit bear.

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

I.

NIGHT.

NIGHT! solemn Night, what mighty spell is thine,
That with such thrilling accents to the soul
Thou whisperest thy tale of things divine.
Till, springing upward from this earth's control,
The soaring spirit feels a while set free,
Yet clings in fond devotion, Night! to thee.

What deep calm bear'st thou in thy shadowy zone,
In the rich purple of thy midnight sky,

* "And Jacob dreamed, and behold a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven, and the angels of God ascended and descended upon it."

Till the full heart thrills 'neath the solemn tone,
Of moaning breezes as they pass and die!—
Hast thou not eloquence all, all thine own,
That sunshine hears not, day hath never known?

Night! lovely Night! I stood in forests dense,
The wild savannas of the mighty West,
Where the red Indian rears his reedy fence,
And 'neath far-spreading cedars sinks to rest,
Lull'd into slumber by the rushing sound
Which far Niag'ra sends on echoes round.

I traced the shadow of the giant trees,
Moveless in solemn grandeur, 'gainst the sky,
Or bending slowly to the fragrant breeze
In graceful greeting as it pass'd them by;
A young moon smiled in faint and timid light:
All was so calm—I bless'd thee, lovely Night!

I stood where holy Jumna's crystal stream
Gush'd softly midst the Brahmin's sacred bowers,
Where its blue waters in the moonlight gleam,
Deck'd with rich shrubs and nature's loveliest flowers,
Where the bright diamond glimmers from the mine,
And the rich gold decks many a silent shrine;

Where, 'mid the ruins of a dreamy past,
Affection's fane its glittering dome uprears,
Whose marble terraces dim lustre cast
O'er that rich gorgeousness,—and told of tears;
And flowers flung far their scent and glistening light;—
Where was the loved? *Thou* wert not changed, oh Night!

All heavily and slow my camel paced
Where Afric's desert stretch'd her trackless sand,
Where never glistening green the eye hath traced,
Nor gushing founts the wavy palm hath fann'd;—
All, all was drear and desolate around,
But Night's deep calm e'en there my spirit bound.

Joyously, joyously o'er the blue deep,
The light bark seeketh a lovelier strand;

The white waves dash where rich corals sleep,
And glittering gems deck the yellow sand:
Joyously, joyously the day sped by,
And smiled o'er the galley the sunset sky.

And thou, oh soft Night! thy shadows fell,
Lulling e'en Ocean to sleep on thy breast,
Till the waves gush'd by with a whispering swell,
As fearing to wake the deep Ocean's rest;
And thy stars gleam'd forth with such quivering light:
Still! still—*thou* wert changeless, oh lovely Night!

And thou wert beauteous in the Grecian Isles,
Where fragrant myrtle and dark olives twine,
Where o'er rich Dorian fanes bright sunlight smiles,
And ruby roses wreathe the purple vine,
And dreamy visions with sweet music came,
Till life seem'd changed: thou only wert the same.

Night, solemn Night! faint shadows of the past
Were round me! Rome, with her rich memories,
Embodying forms, the spell of fancy cast,
Till voices murmur'd in each passing breeze;
And, awed and silenced, sadness o'er me stole,
Calming a while th' aspirings of my soul.

How changed fair Italy! how desolate
The paradise of nature, bearing yet
Such sweet sad echoes of a happier fate,
Such lingering glory, though her sun hath set;
Oh, what dark changes might that earth unfold—
Yet thou didst shrine her, Night! e'en as thou didst of old.

I stood once more in England's lordly bowers,
And life in youth and loveliness were round;
No shade of darkness dash'd the joyous hours,
Nor grief's sad echo the full chords had found;
And glittering lamps of every varied shade
A second sunshine of those halls had made.

And music's thrilling notes came on the air,
Waking sweet memories in the wanderer's heart,

And smiles for faithful love were round me there,
Like soft reviving waters, to impart
Coolness to my parch'd soul. E'en here, oh Night!
Thou lookedst down still, so mildly, beautifully bright.

The scene was changed around me; dark and dense
The breath of midnight, as it slowly past,
And twined my brow; watching with woe intense,
I knelt where Death his darkening shadow cast,
The child of care and sorrow, yet a soul
All too ethereal for this world's control.

The room was close and small, and not a sound
Of nature's music stole upon my ear;
The giant city slept mid hush profound,
And not a tree, a shrub, a flower, was near,
To breathe its fragrance on the heated mind,
Or wake sweet melodies i' th' passing wind.

The very storm that heavily rush'd past
Was voiceless all, as if the massive walls
Of human prisons chain'd the mighty blast;
And not a breath of freedom softly falls
On the pent spirit, bidding it awake
And to the inspiring winds high answer make.

I look'd forth from the casement, open wide,
I sought to woo the silent winds a while,
But not a sound or sight in love replied,
My lonely watch in kindness to beguile;
Walls raised on walls in dark and dusky gloom,
So close and still,—that city seem'd a tomb.

Upward in sadness turn'd my straining eye
Scarce seeking aught to break the witchy fell
That had enchanted me. Oh how that dark sky,
Those starry orbs, flung down their soothing spell,
In such low whispers the fond tale to tell,
The beauteous visions I had loved so well!

Night! holy Night! oh be to me unfurl'd
What of deep mystery bearest thou on thy wing!

The silent wing that o'er a weary world
Such healing balm all voicelessly doth fling;
Speak to me! answer me! thou hast a tone,
Full, thrilling, mighty—all, oh, all thine own.

There came a voice in answer to that cry,
Which my soul heard in that lone, mournful hour,
In low yet solemn accents, to reply,
And breathe the mystery of her thrilling power:—
"I do but shadow forth the deep, deep Love,
Omniscient, changeless, which waits thee above.

"I do but whisper faintly, and from afar,
Low tales of things divine, and softly send
Glimmerings of love undying in each star,
Which there hath smiled since chaos was at end;
I tell thee of an Eye whose lightning glance
Embraceth all of earth and heaven's expanse;

"Of Him who knoweth not shadow of a change,
From age to age enduring still the same,
Whose love and truth no mortal can estrange,
Whose might, earth, ocean, sky, aloud proclaim;—
I bid thee look on high,—and feel my breast
Yearning to fold thee, type of His own rest.

"Day is for earth, its pleasures and its care,
Its toil and sadness till life's dream is seal'd;
Upward each fainting soul 'tis mine to bear,
Till things and hopes immortal stand reveal'd;—
This, this is mine! Earth unto day is given,
But Night hath holier task—her theme is heaven."

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

II.

OCEAN.

Ocean! how I love to gaze
When a sunbeam o'er thee plays,
Sporting on thy bosom bold,
Tinging thy broad breast with gold.
Art thou not a wondrous thing,
Full of deep imagining?
Treasures rich thy caverns fill,
Treasures all immortal still.

Ocean! how I love to hear
Rippling wavelets soft and clear,
When the moonbeams glisten pale
'Neath their spangled gauzy veil,
Breaking on the silver'd shore,
Flowing on for evermore;
Beauty doth thy gemm'd waves fill,
Every change is beauty still.

Ocean! how I dread to mark
Waves beneath the storm grow dark,
Lashing like a furious thing,
Flapping hoarse thy snow-white wing,
Making lithe thy winding-sheet
For the choicest of the fleet;
Gallant hearts thy dark depths fill,
Yet I love thee, Ocean! still.

Ocean! be it calm or storm,
Still I trace one viewless FORM;
See Him in the smiling waves
When the moon her bosom laves;
See Him in the joyous light,
When the morn shines blue and bright;
Hear Him when rude winds rush by,
And the tempest hovers nigh—

He who, when those depths He scann'd,
Held the ocean in His hand—
Bade them roll forth at His will,
And His might their vastness fill—
Much I love to gaze on thee,
For thou speak'st of God, thou Sea!

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

III.

HYMN TO SUMMER.

Summer! beauteous Summer, thou art come in all thy mirth,
And sunshine and rich beauty walk in glee along the earth!
A thousand buds impatient lay, awaiting but thy nod,
Now upward springing hail thy smile, and mark where thou hast trod,—
And bid all gloom and sorrow from their jewell'd homes depart,
To whisper forth in music—Oh how beautiful thou art!

Summer! gorgeous Summer! there are breezes floating by,
That thrillingly and lovingly to thy sweet smiles reply;
Till the full soul flings off its dull and darkly prisoning void,
Yearning to gaze once more on thee, and joy as it hath joy'd
To feel thy glowing sunshine send its radiance on my heart,
And whisper, e'en mid pain and care, how beautiful thou art!

My spirit lists the tinkling streams, which gushing steal along,
Lending sweet music to the free and feather'd minstrels' song;
I see them, like bright silvery threads, peep emerald banks between,
Giving new radiance to the flower, new verdure to the green;
They come upon my sleeping dreams in fairy tones of glee,
And fill my waking hours with love, oh such deep love, for thee!

Summer! lovely Summer! thou dost such peace impart,
My spirit yearns to feel thy smile sink deep into my heart;
To revel in thy sunshine, to bask beneath thy sky,
And watch the graceful shadows on thy meadow-lawns flit by,
To pluck the buds whose jewell'd cups reflect the moonbeams pale,
And fancy every passing breeze breathes forth their fairy tale.

To fling me on thy velvet sward, and watch each twinkling star
Come forth in silent love to deck the azure depths afar;
To worship in thy forests when the night-wind saileth by,
And dream that angel messengers have left their homes on high,
To hover o'er the starlit earth, and dry her every tear,
When thou, sweet Summer? comest on, e'en human hearts to cheer.

That every flower is a shrine where spirits love to rest,
And thence send Hope upon their scent unto the weary breast;
That every tree hath whisperings peculiarly its own,
And each a guardian spirit hath to breathe its own deep tone;
And every stream, and flower, and leaf, and passing wind hath voice,
All angel-tongued and silver-toned, to cry aloud—Rejoice!

Where are these dreams? sweet Summer, thou hast come with all
thy train
Of sunshine and of beauty! shall I seek thy spell in vain?
No, no! though bound in heavy chains of weakness and of care,
And hid from me sweet Nature's smile, which made all things so fair,
And pale and faded are the hopes that linger round my heart!
Still, Summer! lovely Summer! thou canst sweet dreams impart.

And there are spirits near me, breathing silvery chimes of love,
Lifting my soul from thy bright worlds, to brighter worlds above;
And every flower that faintly shines, and sinks in fading light,
Hath yet a tale of joyousness no earthly woes can blight;
Sweet Summer! lovely Summer! though chains a while I wear,
Thy loving voice this comfort breathes—Our God is every where!

England—when confined to my room
in the splendid summer of 1842.

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

IV.

AUTUMN LEAVES.

Autumn leaves! how beautiful
Your fading glories are;
O'er hill and dell, o'er wood and fell,
Ye shed rich light afar.

Of every gorgeous hue and shade,
Brown, ruddy, green, and gold,
Each change, more brilliantly array'd,
New glowing rays unfold.

With smiles of trusting love, ye gild
The pathway to the tomb,
Till Nature, e'en in death, seems fill'd
With loveliness and bloom.

Ye deck with beauty e'en decay,
And meet with chasten'd mirth
The winds that bear ye far away
To moulder on the earth.

Oh beautiful! most beautiful,
The lesson that ye speak,
So richly clad, in beauty glad,
To whisper to the meek,

"Fear not! the Hand which robes the tree
In glory ere it fade,
Hath dearer mercy, man, for thee,
E'en in death's gloomy shade.

"His love will bless for thee with light
The valley of decay,
And fill thy soul with thoughts as bright
As Autumn's glorious ray.

"'Tis beauty all around, above,
To shout, with thrilling voice,
'God loveth all with such dear love,
He bids e'en death rejoice.'"

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

V.

AUTUMN WINDS.

The most casual observer of nature must, we think, have noticed the peculiar tones of melancholy wailing borne on the wings of the wind at the commencement or middle of autumn—not the wild terrific gusts of threatening winter, but a low sobbing wail, not loud enough to disturb or alarm, but just sufficient to impress its melancholy on the most thoughtless heart. Its wail having been one evening universally noticed, the following poem was the consequence.

Sad is thy voice, oh! moaning wind;
Whence comes thy wailing tone?
Mournest the wreck thy pinions find—
Leaves brown, and bare, and strewn?
That forest boughs are dark and drear,
That loveliest shrubs are bow'd and sear,
And mother Earth a robe must wear
Of bliss o'erthrown?

Weep'st thou the buds whose glistening bloom
Hath pass'd away from earth?
That Nature is but one wide tomb
O'er loveliness and mirth?
Mourn'st thou sweet Summer's early flight—
That storm hath rush'd from mount and height,
To whelm the flowers whose sunny light
Smiled o'er his birth?

Weepest thou the laughing sunshine gone,
The softly gleaming sky?
Night's glistening dews, the starry zone,
And the sweet scents floating by?

Oh! check thy moaning; but a while
Is hid sweet Nature's glowing smile:
'Twill wake again, and Earth beguile
Of tear and sigh!

The moaning blast rush'd by, but, as it pass'd,
Methought a low sweet voice the answer cast:—

"I mourn not for the glory
A brief while pass'd away;
That lovely things and beautiful
Are tainted with decay.

"I mourn not for the flowers
Whose lovely smiles are dead;
That summer's sunlit hours,
All phantom-like, are fled.

"But there are lovelier blossoms,
Now shrined in love and mirth,
In whose rich smiles and silver laugh
No dream of woe hath birth.

"I see—I see them passing;
I mark the shrouding pall;
The loving and the blessing—
Like leaves I see them fall!

"I weep the broken-hearted—
The spirits left to moan—
The bounding hope—the trusting love—
The springy joyance flown.

"I weep the young hopes blighted,
That may not bloom again;
The stars that love hath lighted,
Quench'd 'neath pale sorrow's rain.

"I mourn the heavy anguish
That winter's cold touch brings;
The fireless hearth—the scanty board—
The pangs that hunger wrings.

"The famish'd babe and mother—
The strong man chafed to sin.
Oh! help'd ye one another,
Such woes had never been!"

And so the mournful wind went murmuring along,
And thrilling truths were breathing in its sad and solemn song!

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

VI.

THE EVERGREEN.

The evergreen! mid nature's bloom,
Why art thou sad and lone?
We leave thee as a thing of gloom,
That hath no gleesome tone.

Thou art so changeless that we deem
No poesy dwells in thee,
No vision'd love, no shadowy dream,
Shrined in thy leaves may be.

We heed thee not when spring's sweet voice
Comes laughing on the breeze,
When new-born flow'rets wait our glance,
And light hath touch'd the trees.

We see thee not when summer's smile
Hath pierced earth's quivering heart,—
Bidding her buds, that slept a while,
To bloom in thousands start.

Mid autumn's glory still thou art,
And still we pass thee by,
To garner in our wayward heart
The beauty that must die.

In winter's storms,—ah, there alone,
When all is bleak and bare,
We love to list thy changeless tone,
To feel—our friend is there.

And still thou smilest—man's neglect,
Rude storm, and blighting blast,
Thine upward growth have never check'd,
Nor laid thee with the past.

Thou'rt ever present,—ever nigh,
In meek endurance still.
Oh, ingrate man, to pass thee by,
Till life grows changed and chill!

Emblem of God's omnific love,
His never-changing care!
Fair shrub, His faithfulness to prove,
Thou'rt scatter'd every where.

Constant in every varied scene
Of Nature's joy and grief,
For this I bless thee, evergreen!
And love thy fadeless leaf,

And feel how much of poesy lies
In thy still changeless shrine;
Unto the heart thy voice replies,
With whisperings divine!

COMMUNINGS WITH NATURE.

VII.

ADDRESS TO THE OCEAN.*

Sound on, thou mighty Deep, sound on, thou Sea!
Lash thy blue waves to snowy-crested foam,
Wake into music glorious and free,
Proclaim thee bulwark of our island home.

Sound on! thou hast a voice of freedom! Sound!
My soul hath thrilling echoes to thy voice,
And throbs and bounds, as if on thee were found
A home where life, all-chainless, might rejoice!

Thou beautiful! thou glorious! all unstain'd
With earth's sad curse, thou rollest on thy way;
Might! majesty! music! all retain'd
Through whelming ages, tinged not by decay.

Thou hast no dream of shadow or of change,
No murmuring voice of wailing or of woe;
Free on thy glorious path, uncheck'd to range,
And do His will, who rules thy billowy flow.

I dream not of thy gemm'd and treasured caves,
The slumbering riches on thy breast that lie,
Or treacherous smiles that beam from sunny waves,
When death-fraught storms are darkly hovering nigh.

Thou speakest not of these: I do but gaze
In childish marvel on thy billowy sea,
And list the breeze with thy bright waves that plays,
And feel thee still, the beautiful! the free!

Then, oh sound on! my soul drinks in each tone
Of gushing waters, as a voice of love,
Whose melody in infancy was known,
Lifting my spirit on those depths above.

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* This was the last piece received by the editor: before it was printed, she was at rest.

Yes, 'tis of God thou speakest, ay, of Him
Who held thy rolling billows in His hand,
Before whose voice thy wildest war-sounds dim,
And 'neath whose eye thy whelming depths are spann'd.

Fit altar for His praise, thou mighty deep!
Oh, my full soul doth faint and quivering lie,
Whelm'd 'neath the thoughts which o'er it rushing sweep,
Ere they burst forth in words of ecstasy!

Hail! hail! once more I come to thee, thine own,
Thine own true, loving child, with bounding heart,
And fancy free—and memory's deep tone,
And hope's sweet dream, that hath in care no part.

I deem'd them flown; but, oh they did but sleep
'Neath the full grasp of inward care and pain;
Thy voice the spell hath broken, and they sweep
O'er my full soul rejoicingly again!

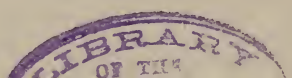
Let thy rich voice sound on! roll on thy waves
Mid storm and sunshine, still the blue, the free!
Life is upspringing from my soul's deep caves,
To hail, to bless thee, oh thou glorious sea!

FUNERAL HYMN.

The subject of this poem was a young and extraordinarily-gifted friend, called hence to glory at a very early age, whose precocious intellect, virtue, and piety, indeed marked him as one of those whose early removal is one of the most unanswerable proofs of that "better land," where all that was so promising on earth shall be made perfect.

Weep not for him! though the grave hath closed o'er him,
E'er life had o'erclouded his beautiful bloom,
The bright world above shall in glory restore him,
To joy that will end not in sorrow and gloom.

Weep not for him! though his pure, gentle spirit
For ever is lost to a cold, checker'd world;



'Tis summon'd in mercy that bliss to inherit,
Which waiteth till death his dark wing hath unfurl'd.

Weep not for him! though a young mind possessing,
Such glorious gifts might not linger below,
Made perfect in heaven, ere earth was repressing
Their beauty and strength 'neath her mantle of woe.

Weep not for him! though the bright seed was springing
To flowers, sweet flowers, of virtue and love,
That fragrance afar from his bosom were flinging,
Rich incense of prayer to his Father above.

He hath but return'd to his own native heaven,
The fountain of love whence in beauty he came;
And perfection and glory to his bright gifts are given,
More lovely and pure than earth's pale wreath of fame.

Weep not for him! though from us hath departed
A spirit Truth circled with rays all her own,
Whose meekness and beauty so long have imparted
But joyance and freshness and fondness alone.

Weep not for him! oh none may deplore him;
This world is not fitted for spirits like his;
The frail, fading joys our love could fling o'er him
Had satisfied never *his* yearnings for bliss.

Weep not for him! thus taken ere sorrow
One shadow had flung o'er his young spirit's joy;
He hath gone to a world where there dawns not a morrow,
The bliss of the present to chill or destroy.

THE HEBREW'S APPEAL.

ON OCCASION OF THE LATE FEARFUL UKASE PROMULGATED BY THE EMPEROR OF RUSSIA.

AWAKE! arise! ye friends of Israel's race.
The wail of thousands lingers on the air,
By heavy pinions borne, through realms of space,
Till Israel, shudd'ring, Israel's woe must bear;
The voice of suffering echoes to the skies,
And oh, not yet one pitying heart replies.

List to the groan from manly bosoms rent,
The wilder sob from weaker spirits wrung,
The deeper woe that hath in voice no vent,
Yet round the heart her deathy robe has flung;
And childish tears flow thick and fast like rain,
From eyes that never wept, and ne'er shall weep again.

Vain, vain the mother's piteous shriek of woe,
Her dying infants clinging to her breast;
And age infirm, and youth, whose high hearts glow;
Vain, vain their cry for mercy on the oppress'd.
The Ukase has gone forth—a word, a breath,
And thousands are cast out to exile and death.

Ay, death! for such is exile—fearful doom,
From homes expell'd—yet still to Poland chain'd;
Till want and famine mind and life consume,
And sorrow's poison'd chalice, all is drain'd.
Oh God, that this should be! that one frail man
Hath power to crush a nation 'neath his ban.

Will none arise! with outstretch'd hand to save?
No prayer for pity and for aid awake?
Will SHE who gave to Liberty the slave,
For God's own people not one effort make?
Will SHE not rise once more, in mercy clad,
And heal the bleeding heart, and Sorrow's sons make glad?

Will England sleep when Justice bids her wake,
And send her voice all-thrillingly afar?
Will England sleep, when her rebuke might shake
With shame and terror e'en the tyrant Czar,
And 'neath the magic of her mild appeal
Move Russia's frozen soul for Israel to feel?

Oh England! thou hast call'd us to thy breast,
And done to orphans all a mother's part,
And given them peace and liberty and rest,
And healing pour'd into the homeless heart;
Then, oh! once more let Israel mercy claim,
And suffering thousands bless our England's honour'd name.

And let *one* prayer from Hebrew hearths ascend
To Israel's God, that He may deign reply,
And yet again His chosen race defend,
And "have respect" once more "unto their cry,"
And e'en from depths of darkness and despair
Give freedom to His own, and "all their burden bear."

For shall we sink, though dark our way and drear,
And Hope hath found in misery a tomb?
Though man be silent, Mercy hath no tear,
And Love and Joy are wither'd 'neath the gloom?
No! God is nigh to hear us while we crave,
And He will "bare His holy arm, to shield us and to save."

3d January, 1844.

"I NEVER LOVED A FLOWER."

STANZAS WRITTEN IN A MOMENT OF EXTREME HILARITY.

I NEVER loved a flower,
And cherish'd it with pride,
But it wither'd in its home of love,
And bow'd its head and died.

I never loved a star,
And dream'd it gave reply
To my spirit's deep imaginings,
But it faded from on high.

I never loved a friend,
But parting's fiat came,
And sympathies were sever'd, that
Ne'er seem'd again the same.

I never felt deep gladness,
But a silent shadow stole,
E'en 'mid the laughing flowers that twined
A moment o'er my soul.

Then, oh! be still, my spirit,
Hush thy full joyance now,
Bid hence the rays that light mine eye
And sparkle on my brow!

Back to thy calmness come,
Break from the glittering chain
So strangely o'er my full heart thrown,
Back to thy home again!

Deck not this earth so brightly;
Joy hath not here his rest;
His whisper hath too sweet a tone
For aught of mortal breast.

Oh come back to thy stillness,
And dwell there with thy God;

His blessed paths of quietness
Securely thou hast trod.

And though no dazzling flowers
May there breathe tales of glee,
And mirth's light laugh no echo finds:
In safety thou wilt be.

Our Father's smile will lead thee,
His love will go before—
Return! return, my spirit—Oh
Come to thy God once more.

DIALOGUE STANZAS.

COMPOSED FOR, AND REPEATED BY, TWO DEAR LITTLE ANIMATED GIRLS, AT A FAMILY CELEBRATION OF THE FESTIVAL OF PURIM.

"Come forth, sweet sister! leave your book, we have no task to-day,
The flowers, and birds, and sunny sky, invite us forth to play;
Oh! think what joys, what happy hours, this long'd-for day we share,
And let us hunt for spring's sweet flowers, to wreathe our mother's hair.
Come, we have days enough to read, sweet sister, come with me,
Away with such grave looks and thoughts! to-day is but for glee."

"A little while, and I will come,—I only want to know
What pass'd upon this very day—a long time ago;
Our mother told us a sad tale—that thousands were to die,
E'en little children, sister dear—as young as you or I.
And all because a cruel foe swore vengeance on our race,
That from the noble Mordecai no homage could he trace."

"But we were saved, sweet sister; death was averted then,
Our mother told us Esther came, and there was joy again;
She was so lovely, and so good, the king could naught deny,
And so she sent fleet messengers, that Israel should not die.
There! I have told you all the tale,—you need not read it now;
Come, dearest! to our birds and flowers—and clear that thoughtful brow."

"Sweet sister! let me think a while, and then I'll merry be.
Should we not think a grateful thought e'en in our sunny glee?
It was not *only* Esther's words—but Israel's God was there,
The king of Persia's heart to turn—His chosen ones to spare.
And we should bless Him, sister dear, that He protects us still,
And such kind friends bestows on us, to guard us from all ill."

"Yes, yes, sweet sister, you are right, not only is to-day
For idle mirth, and noisy games, and merry thoughtless play.
We'll love our mother more and more, and all our dear kind friends,
And grateful be that hours of dread, no more our Father sends;
That we may sport amid the flowers as happy as a bee,
And cruel foes can never come, to mar our childish glee."

"See, see! I'm ready, sister dear—I've put the book away;
Come while the sun so brightly shines, we'll weave our garland gay.
What joy!—what joy! this happy day shall see us all together,
E'en those dear friends, whom time and space so long from us did sever;
Oh! many, many happy years, still spare us to each other.
Sweet sister, come! I'm ready now—the garland for our mother."

1845.

MEMORY AND HOPE.

"The Future is more present than the Past,
For one look *back*, a thousand *on* I cast,
And Hope doth even Memory outlast."

Is't so with thee? Thou'rt happy, gentle friend;
Such blissful visions floating o'er thy way,
That Hope and Phantasy do sweetly blend,
To bless the present with a future day.

That Hope, for thee, is sweeter e'en than those
Fond lingering memories of a joyous past;
And as Life's rippling streamlet with thee flows,
No shrouding mists its silvery waves o'ercast.

Not so with me—I may not forward glance,
I dare not list those brightly glistening dreams,
That oft would people Fancy's wide expanse
With fair and lovely, but how fleeting gleams!

'Tis all too sweet, the voice of Hope, for me,
Too fresh the garlands that her smile would weave,
Too wild and thrilling, her full notes of glee,
That erst had woo'd my spirit to believe.

I listen'd then, and dared the pain she left;
But now my spirit shrinks within its cell,
And rather rests, of her sweet joys bereft,
Than find her false, whom I have loved so well.

Oh, no, I may not hope! and then my gaze
Turns in fond love on visions of the past,
Where Memory's sportive sunbeam glistening plays,
With rainbow hues, that cannot be o'ercast.

Oh, 'tis at times such sweet sad joys to call
Back to my soul the gladness that hath fled,
Whose rosy radiance o'er all things would fall,
In laughing light, from its own fountain shed;

To wander o'er again, with smile and jest,
Or deeper thought, where'er my fancy will'd,
With gentle friends whose love my spirit bless'd,
Hearts whom I deem'd not could be changed or chill'd.

E'en to the fantasies that woo'd me then,
Sweet Mem'ry wakes from their long dreamless night,
And calls back to my inmost soul again,
Joys that flash'd up in ever-sparkling light.

And one by one they rise, until a wreath
Of phantom flowers doth with sweet fancy twine,
More pure, more lovely thus, as Memory seeth,
Than e'en when their full cloudless bloom was mine.

I know them, phantoms, fading all away
Too soon, too sadly, for a lasting joy.

But still they give no promise, while they stay,
No sparkling rays the future may destroy.

And better then, than Hope's too thrilling voice,
Wooing my soul with such soft siren tone,
I dare not clasp her visions and rejoice;
For oh! they do but glisten! and are flown.

Bid me LOOK UP, NOT FORWARD; then, oh! then,
My yearning soul its weary wings may rest,
And lovely visions form and smile again,
And *Hope* her dwelling make within my breast.

And one sweet dream she weaves which owns no past,
But as Earth's future dimm'd, the lovelier smiled
Hope—that a Father's arm is round me cast!
A Father's blessing will protect His child!

1841.

THE WANDERERS.

Gen. xxi. 14–20.

WITH sadden'd heart and tearful eye the mother went her way,
The patriarch's mandate had gone forth, and Hagar must not stay.
Oh! who can tell the emotions deep that press'd on Abra'am's heart,
As thus, obedient to his God, from Ishmael call'd to part!

But God had spoken, and he knew His word was changeless truth;
He could not doubt His blessing would protect the friendless youth;
He bade him go, nor would he heed the anguish of his soul;
He turn'd aside,—a father's woe in silence to control.

Now hand in hand they wend their way, o'er hill and vale and wild;
The mother's heart was full of grief, but smiled in glee her child;
Fearless and free, he felt restraint would never gall him now—
And hail'd with joy the freshening breeze that fann'd his fair young brow.

His mother's heart was desolate, and tears swell'd in her eye;
Scarce to his artless words of love her quivering lips reply.

She only saw the *future* as a lone and dreary wild:
The *present* stood before the lad in joyance undefiled.

She knew, alas! his boyish strength too soon would droop and fade;
And who was in that lonely scene, to give them food and aid?
With trembling gaze she oft would mark the flushing of his cheek,
And list in terror, lest he should 'gin falteringly to speak!

Fatigue she felt not for herself, nor heeded care nor pain—
But nearer, nearer to her breast her boy at times she'd strain;
Beersheba's wilderness they see before them dark and wide;
Oh, who across its scorching sands their wandering steps will guide?

The flush departed from the cheek which she so oft has kiss'd;
To his glad tones of childish glee no longer may she list;
A pallor as of death is spread o'er those sweet features now—
She sees him droop before the blast that fann'd his aching brow.

"Oh, mother, lay me down," he cried, "I know not what I feel,
But something cold and rushing seems through all my limbs to steal;
Oh kiss me, mother dear, and then, ah! lay me down to sleep—
Nay, do not look upon me thus—kiss me, and do not weep!"

Scarce could her feeble arms support her child, and lay him where
Some clustering shrubs might shield him from the heavy, scorching air;
His drooping eyelids closed; his breath came painfully and slow—
She bent her head on his a while in wild yet speechless woe.

Then from his side she hurried, as impell'd she knew not why,
Save that she could not linger there—she could not see him die—
She lifted up her voice and wept—and o'er the lonely wild
"Let me not see his death!" was borne, "my Ishmael, my child!"

And silence came upon her then, her stricken soul to calm;
And suddenly and strange there fell a soft and soothing balm;
And then a voice came stealing, on the still and fragrant air—
A still small voice that would be heard, though solitude was there.

"What aileth thee, oh Hagar?" thus it spoke: "fear not, for God hath heard
The lad's voice where he is,—and thou, trust in thy Maker's word!

OF CALIFORNIA

Awake! arise! lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand—
I will of him a nation make, before Me he shall stand."

It ceased, that voice; and silence now, as strangely soft and still,
The boundless desert once again with eloquence would fill;
And strength return'd to Hagar's frame, for God hath oped her eyes—
And lo! amid the arid sands a well of water lies!

Quick to her boy, with beating heart, the anxious mother flies,
And to his lips, and hands, and brow, the cooling draught applies.
He wakes! he breathes! the flush of life is mantling on his cheek—
He smiles! he speaks! oh those quick tears his mother's joy shall speak!

She held him to her throbbing breast, she gazed upon his face—
The beaming features, one by one, in silent love to trace.
She bade him kneel to bless the Hand that saved him in the wild—
But oh! few words her lips could speak, save these—"My child, my child!"

1838.

AN INFANT'S SMILE.

Smile on, sweet babe! would I could know
Whence came that soft and beaming glow,
On thy sweet features thrown;
What joyous thought that smile has wreathed,
What inward voice of gladness breathed,
To make that look thine own.

We held not forth a glittering toy,
Nor woo'd thee with light song to joy,
Nor danced thee high in air;
But gently in the cradle laid,
Thine own sweet thought that smile had stay'd,
And fixed its impress there.

Whence came it? though thy mother bends
Caressing as thy wants she tends,
Thou dost not know her voice;

A stranger's arm might softly hold thee,
A stranger's breast in love enfold thee,
And yet thou wouldst rejoice.

Thou hast no dream of Love's strong pow'r,
The ecstatic joy, yet anxious hour
Thine infancy doth claim;
Thou hast no memories of the *past*,
No thought the *present* to o'ercast,
Nor dream of *future* fame.

Oh what seest thou? what fairy dream
Doth o'er thine infant spirit gleam?
By darker souls unknown?
Hear'st thou sweet voices lingering nigh?
Canst thou through space and ether fly?
Make lovelier worlds thine own?

And in thine innocence, art entwined
With purer beings of soul and mind?
That fly, when thou wilt know
This earth's o'erclouded tale of life,
Of sorrow, and of sin and strife,
And Love's deep rosy glow?—

Thou art immortal! God hath placed
The breath of life in thee, and traced
His image, babe, on thine!
Oh doth a rainbow-colour'd thought,
By ministering spirits wrought,
Before thy fancy shine?

How mayst thou answer? Loveliest,
Thou wilt forget what thoughts had rest
On each forgotten hour;
Thou wilt look back, in vain,—no dream
Of what thou *wert* will faintly gleam,
Through more awakened pow'r.

Vainly wouldst thou the past recall,
What did thine infancy befall,
Its joyance and its care;

For we have smiled perchance like thee,
In vanish'd hours of infant glee,
Yet only know—we *were*.

Smile! while we clasp thee, gentle one,
Whom such sweet prayers are whisper'd on,
Smile in thy baby glee!
One lovely thought that smile expresseth,
Babe as thou art, a FATHER blesseth,
A GOD hath love for thee!

1842.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION TO GENIUS.

Suggested by D'Israeli's most interesting and peculiarly-pleasing work, "The Literary Character illustrated by the Lives of Men of Genius."

OH, what will soothe th' emotions deep
That o'er the soul of Genius sweep,
And ever-waking vigils keep,
By night and day?
What will to them a balm impart,
Or hush to rest the throbbing heart,
Till all its keenest pangs depart?
Pale Genius, say!

What may restrain the burning fire,
The eager hope—the wild desire—
The wish for fame—the quick-roused ire,
That mark his way;
The dearest hopes in mortal breast,
That oft less-gifted souls have blest,
That in his bosom find no rest,
Yet torturing stay?

Oh, what will soothe the hope so vain,
What these o'erwhelming pangs restrain,
And fill the void that will remain,
Through dreary hours?

What will control the wish for praise,
The spirit from its sadness raise,
And fix the poet's ardent gaze
On fadeless flow'rs?

Will fame do this—the brightest fame
That mortal man may hope to claim,
Undimm'd by e'en a speck of shame,
Remorse to call?
No! dazzling though, it will not fill
The void within, nor hope to still
The spirit's ever-bounding thrill,
And rise and fall!

Or is it love—will love not check
The poet's sure, yet hidden wreck,
And with unnumber'd blessings deck
His onward way?
Oh, may we hope that earthly love,
The pangs of Genius will remove,
Or love like *his* intensely prove,
And be his stay?

No! no! or love, or fame, or joy,
That earth can give, too soon alloy,
All seem but as a fading toy,
To smile and fly;
Alas! for Genius—if below,
He seeks to soothe his inward woe,
Or deems this world will e'er bestow
An answering sigh.

Oh, there is but one Spring alone,
Whose living waters soothe each moan,
And bid the deepening pangs be flown,
Or give them peace!
Religion! 'tis thy sainted shrine
Will give to Genius bliss divine,
And joys around his brow entwine,
That ne'er shall cease.

Oh, what but thou can lull to rest
The throbbings of a bleeding breast,
And still the soul too oft oppress'd
By its own force,
Can break the dull and heavy chain,
That soaring pinions would restrain,
Yet scarce their prisoner can retain,
Or curb his course?

And oh, for that peculiar sense,
Shrinking and deep, and wild, intense,
The poet's doom—till flies he hence,
His fetters riven,
What voice, save thine, can peace bestow,
Can calm the never-spoken woe,
And rouse the spirit's warmest glow,
By tales of heaven?

And if he pine for love to fill
His weary bosom's throb and thrill,
To calm his own impassion'd will,
And bliss impart;
Oh, thou canst lead him to the Spring
Whose love unending spreads his wing,
And gives relief to all who bring
A childlike heart.

Thou blessed spirit! to this world
In mercy sent, when sin unfurl'd
The blacken'd flag, and madly hurl'd
Defiance down;
Oh, what were man without thy pow'r?
Changing with every passing hour,
Drooping, when tempests darkly low'r,
'Neath misery's frown.

Spirit of peace, to every heart
Thine own sweet influence to impart,
But e'en more precious, when thou art
To Genius given;

When thou unto his soul art nigh,
His every thought to purify,
And at thy feet his crown doth lie,
To shine in Heaven.

1839.

THE WIDOW.

"Let thy widows trust in ME."

I SAW her gaze upon the child
That play'd around her knee,
And on the sleeping babe that smiled
In its young dreams of glee;—

The mother's glance was fix'd on them,
Her only treasure now,
Buds twining round a wither'd stem,
A bent and fading bough!

Her cheek hath lost the beauteous rose
Which erst had glisten'd there,
And if at times its shadow glows,
'Tis only call'd by—Prayer.

The eye that laugh'd in sportiveness,
The lip, bright smiles that wreathed,
The clustering ringlets' jetty tress,—
The voice that music breathed,—

All—all are past;—yet holier light
Gleams on that sadden'd brow,
A star hath pierced through sorrow's night,
That never shone as now.

Her life had been a troubled sea
Of sorrow and of care,
E'en in those years when youth and glee
Life's joyance ought to share.

But care and sorrow pass'd away,
When love twined roseate flowers,
To shed a fragrance o'er her way,
And promise happier hours.

A while rich blessings o'er her head
All lavishly were thrown;
Too bright—too brief—they smiled and fled,
And earth again was lone!

The brighter Life hath beam'd before,
The darker shade he flings,
When Love may shed his light no more
On Home's familiar things.

Alone! alone! oh, how that word
Falls on the quivering heart
Whose depths no more by love are stirr'd,
Whose tears unheeded start.

Alone! alone! with none to bless,
And none to bless again;
Oh who shall soothe such loneliness,
And still its voiceless pain?

None? is there none? look on that brow
And read thine answer there!
Pale—pale—but oh! how placid now
The spirit's calm to share.

She droops not, sinks not, for *above*
Her heart hath found its rest;
She clasps her Father's robe of love,
And clings unto His breast.

Her youngest-born hath woke to smile,
And lisp her cherish'd name;
And Ellen leaves her play a while,
The same fond kiss to claim.

Her mother's tears had ofttimes dew'd
Her soft and rosy cheek—

And in her lightest, merriest mood,
Her bright eyes feeling speak,

As if she felt a silent woe
Breathed in her mother's face,
Some holy thought—she might not know,
Spoke in her fond embrace.

Oh pause not—faint not on thy way,
Mother! thou art not lone;
Thy soul hath One on whom to stay.
He claims thee as His own!

He who hath bade the widow trust
In Him, when life is dim,
And leave—when dust returns to dust—
The fatherless to Him,—

Art thou not His? thy fatherless
His own especial care?
Oh, droop not 'neath thy loneliness,
He will thy burden bear!

He hath but call'd thy loved above,
To bind Him to thy heart,
To guide thee where the souls that love
Shall never, never part!

1840.

THE ROCKS OF ELIM.

Suggested by a perusal of Lord Lindsey's "Letters on the Holy Land," &c. vol. i. pp. 260–1.

The sun was sinking slowly in the west,
Yet filling that fair scene with golden light,
Which, soft and mellow'd, heat intense suppress'd,
Yet gilded rock and wave with radiance bright;
And o'er the lovely azure of the sky,
Clouds, gold and crimson, gorgeously swept by.

But all breathed peace and stillness; not a sound
Broke the full silence lingering around,
Save the low murmur of the rippling wave,
As pensively it came, the shores to lave.
No sea-bird clave the soft yet breezy air;
No note of life from the huge mountains there;
In smooth repose, the fair and glistening plain
Stretch'd forth from mount to sea, bearing no stain
Of man's disturbing step,—but rock and sea,
And mount and wood, in deep repose lay free,
Burden'd with mighty memories—that came,
E'en in the thrilling stillness, to proclaim
The God of might and love—and breathe the theme
Of His great deeds—till a bright sunny gleam
Of truth inspired, would sudden light impart!
E'en to that thing unknown—an atheist heart!
A voice was cradled in that soft blue sky,
Whispering that the same God of love was nigh,
Who in that heaven had set His shadowy cloud,
And fiery pillar, His beloved to shroud;
Darkness to Mitzraim's host—but radiant light
To them He saved from slavery's starless night.
A voice had those blue waters, now so still—
Whose rippling wavelets heart and ear could fill
With melodies of heaven. That glorious sea!
In its full swelling tide—the glad, the free!
Rushing in thunder to the quivering shore,
Or still'd, and hush'd to peace, its wild rage o'er,
Unchain'd—unsilenced—scorning man's vain call,
Obeying but His will, who measured all
The waters in the hollow of His hand,
And number'd every grain of the far-spreading sand.
He spake! at once their watery depths upheaving,
As walls on either side—and dry land leaving
Till all had pass'd—the first son of the Lord,
And witness of His truth;—again that word—
Back rush'd the mighty waters with a roar,
Which spake their strange restraining yoke was o'er,
And wave on wave came thundering down the steep,
Raised by their upheaved floods, and madly sweep
Th' Egyptian hosts before them—man and horse
Whelm'd 'neath the torrent's wildly rushing course:

Oh! was it but the phantom of the past,
Or did once more the silver clarion's blast
Sound in mine ears, and mount and rock and plain
'Neath these full notes are quivering again?
The Jewish hosts are marshalling the ground
From mount to sea—their lines encamping round,
And priests and warriors, women, children, all—
And stalwart youths, in ranks respective fall,
Their tall spears gleaming in the sunset light,
Till rock and ridge, with sudden radiance bright,
Fling back the song of praise, of glory loud,
That wakes in chorus from the holy crowd.
From north to south it bursts—from east to west
Alternate pealing, echoing e'er suppress'd.
The rushing waves their mighty pæan lend,
And deeper tones the towering mountains send—
"Sing, sing ye to the Lord of Hosts, for He
On Mitzraim's hosts hath triumph'd gloriously,
The horse and his rider in the seas o'erthrown,
The depths have cover'd them, they sank as stone!
Sing, sing ye to the Lord!" Then soft again
From gentler voices woke th' inspired strain,
And harp and timbrel swell'd the lingering chord
Of the rich anthem—"Sing ye to the Lord!"
The very breeze upon his wild flight stay'd,
And whispering responses softly made,
And on his pinions bore the strain along,
Till earth and ocean quiver'd 'neath the song,
And shook before the deep thanksgiving pour'd,
When the full chorus peal'd, "Sing, sing ye to the Lord!"

The vision past! Hush'd was the glorious sound,
The rocks in stillness, solemnly profound,
Hung deepening shadows on the sandy plain,
And all was hush'd and desolate again.
Spirit of truth! Thou didst my soul enfold,
And wrapt it in thy robe,—till scenes of old
Embodied came, to thrill my yearning heart,
And deeper love and thanksgiving impart!
Oh! let the scorner and the sceptic seek
Where Nature's self-inspired love can speak,

Where rock and ocean, mount and moaning blast,
Proclaim aloud the story of the past.
Hither, oh hither, let the doubting come,
And e'en Thy meanest works, oh God! shall strike the scoffer dumb!

1840.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

A SKETCH.

It was a place of graves, and still and lone,
As all of life's strange history were flown,
And nothing left but the cold stones that lay
Thick-crested o'er with emblems of decay—
High wavy grass, where never flowers had rest,
And the dull clinging moss that lay caress'd
E'en by the pale cold marble. There was one,
A mother's last low resting; and her child
Stood gazing round bewilder'd. There was none
Like that her soul had pictured, undefiled
By Time's too withering hand. She sought a stone,
Pure in its spotless marble—standing lone,
With its brief record of a loved one gone,
And all untouch'd by shadow of decay;
For, oh! that full heart, but yesterday
It felt, since they had laid her there, alas!
Through bloomless weeds, and melancholy grass,
They led her where a lowly grave reposed,
Whose marble shrine thick clustering weeds enclosed,
There! there she lay! her tomb by Time's cold hand
Touch'd as all others, in that grave-girt sand,
When scarcely seem'd it that a week had pass'd
Since those fond eyes had look'd and smiled their last;
Since that loved voice its last low whisper said,
And breathed its blessing on that mourner's head.
Were these but memories now? and could it be
Long months had pass'd into eternity?
Yea, Time hath flung his mantle o'er the graves,
And when the long grass in dark masses waves,

Low wailing accents fill the breezy blast:
"The loved, the mourn'd, the cherish'd, all are past."

Shrine of the PAST! that solitude—around,
Beneath, that word of woe hath impress found—
Impress and echo; but on that lone heart
The PAST was PRESENT, sweeter joys t' impart
In shadow than in being. From the cup
Of mem'ry, life in such sweet hues gleam'd up,
And brought forth bliss which had been with such pow'r,
How might she deem them phantoms of the hour,
To shine a while and pass? Too soon she felt
They were but shadows, in her heart that dwelt
And mingled with her being. Oh! the woe
Of such awakening! Fled the sunny glow,
The cherish'd dream, the PAST once more was PAST.
And the dim PRESENT all its misery cast
One little moment; then, by Mercy sent,
The FUTURE to the present radiance lent,
And o'er that mourning spirit softly stole
Sweet visions of the freed, the heaven-born soul,
Awaiting hers in those fair realms of love,
Which smiled in beauty, life's last home, above.
The PAST, the PRESENT, merged in Faith's fond thought,
Which such bright glimpses of the FUTURE brought,
And soften'd that deep woe;—and she hath bow'd,
Believing and adoring, while the cloud
Folding that spirit, melted into tears,
Which grief assuaging, e'en its pang endears;—
She knew her heart must wear a while its chain,
But earth in Faith's effulgence smiled again.

1842.

THE JEWISH YEAR.

I.

SABBATH BERESHITH.

He spake; th' Almighty spake, and Earth and Heaven
Started from chaos, ne'er again to sleep;
Earth yet was void—no beauteous form was given,
And darkness lay upon the mighty deep.

He spake: Let there be light! and there was light;
E'en as He spake, the rushing torrent came,
And darkness fled before th' effulgence bright;
The sun and moon were not—'twas Heaven's own flame.

Again He spake; and then a wide expanse
Stretch'd forth between the waters; azure sky,
Soft, lovely, meet to bless the admiring glance
That *was* to gaze, though yet it was not nigh.

And yet again that Voice, and yet again,
Six times it spake; and earth, in richness clad,
Teem'd with new life, that knew nor death nor pain,
But in the presence of its God was glad.

And fruits, and herbs, and flowers, and grass, had sprung
In perfect beauty from the swelling sod;
And sun, and moon, and stars, in glory hung,
Resplendent, voiceless, eloquent of God.

And earth, air, water, fill'd with joyous life;
Each element well fitted to sustain
Its given burden, which no darkling strife
Might dash with sin, or with dull sorrow's chain.

And man, majestic, glorious man, was there;
The Voice creating raised him from the sod,
And breathed into his frame the vital air,
Which mark'd him dearest, most beloved of God.

And at His nod this was! Let it! 'twas done;
Creation started from unbroken sleep;
And chaos past, and darkness, gloom was gone,
And earth was sever'd from the soundless deep.

And still that God is ours; still, still His pow'r,
Mighty to do, and mightier yet to save,
Is ever hovering o'er life's darkest hour,
To shield, revive, sustain the souls He gave.

Oh! pause not, faint not, ye who seek Him not,
Him deeming all too mighty to look down;
That the small woes and joys which mark our lot
Are all too trifling for His smile or frown.

Hear ye His voice, appealing from His word
Unto the faint, the weary, and the worn:
"In righteousness I call thee," saith the Lord,
"And I will pitying bless the souls that mourn;

"And darkness shall be turn'd for them to light,
And straight the crooked things my love shall make,
Increasing strength to them that have no might,
The lone heart cheering for my great name's sake."

And shall we doubt that word, mistrust His power?
E'en though our paths seem dark, and chaos wild
Enwrap the soul in misery's lonely hour,
Where never light hath shone, no flow'ret smiled?

He, who brought forth this glorious world from space,
Will, at one word, bid sorrow's waves be still;
Bid glistening flowers the shapeless depths efface,
And rushing light chaotic darkness fill.

And as He placed His image on the earth,
T' adorn, and bless, and sweetly speak of Him,
So in each heart His image will have birth,
And breathe of joys that never may grow dim.

Father! oh lift to Thee each sorrowing heart,
Strengthen the faint and weary to adore;

Thy blissful balm in thy deep love impart,
And to fond hope the spiritless restore.

Oh! let th' effulgence of thy awful MIGHT
Be lost in the still whisper of thy LOVE;
Let Mercy veil thy too resplendent light,
And Pity lift each yearning soul above.

THE JEWISH YEAR.

II.

SABBATH NOAH.

"FOUND grace before the Lord!" Oh blest
Was Noah in His sight,
Blest that the love within his breast
Was pure to meet the light,
Blest that in him the good was found,
And smiled amid the dearth around.

Faithful amidst the biting scorn,
The jeers of wretched men;
Faithful of threatening wrath to warn
Again and yet again;
Trusting in simple faith the word
That mark'd him cherish'd of the Lord.

Long years 'twas his to work and wait,
The strange command obey,
Nor doubted, though the threaten'd fate
Long-suffering would delay;
He walk'd with God, he sought to fill
His soul with prayer, and do His will.

And when the rushing torrents came,
With Death's deep, blackest woe,
And vainly on the Eternal's Name
The dying call'd below:

Secure he rode the mountain wave,
And clasp'd the Arm outstretch'd to save.

He had not waver'd in his trust,
Nor wander'd from the way;
The storm that laid proud hearts in dust
Did on him harmless play.
A Father's arm upheld the ark
And kept secure the fragile bark.

And we, like him, may watch and pray
Against affliction's hour,
Upon a Father's love to stay,
When tempests round us lower.
And, like him, trust in faith, and still,
Though mockers jeer, adore His will.

Though never more the depths o'erflow
The world, so bright and fair,
Oh! many a dark and lonely woe
The human heart must bear.
And sorrow is a fearful thing,
Without an ark on which to cling.

An ark of refuge still is ours,
And still that Voice of love
Which Noah warn'd of darker hours,
Yet whispers from above,
And breathes a spirit in His word,
E'en as the voice His servant heard.

The mountains may from earth depart,
The hills be hence removed,
But never from our Father's heart
Shall pass His well-beloved,
His kindness shall not change or cease,
Nor fail the covenant of His peace.

A little moment He may seem
His first-born to forsake,
The glory of His holy beam
From us a brief while take,

But, in His mercy, yet once more
Will He His own to joy restore:

In little wrath, a while conceal
From us His darken'd face;
But soon, oh soon! will love reveal
From His pure dwelling-place;
With everlasting love restore
His presence to His own once more.

Thus, thus He speaks, our fathers' God,
Our Saviour and our King;
And shall we, grovelling in the sod,
Forbear to clasp His wing?
And doubt repiningly His word,
And shrink in woe from hope deferr'd?

Oh no! oh no! the fainting heart
May cling in faith to Him,
And He will light and peace impart,
Though earthly light grow dim;
His word is changeless, as the love
That beams around, below, above,

Changeless in wrath; and shall it be
Less faithful to fulfil,
When that effulgent love we see,
The spirit's waves to still?
Our faith, our heart, as Noah give,
And, e'en mid storms, our souls shall live.

We may not doubt, we may not pause,
Believe, and work, and pray;
E'en though there seem no threatening cause,
Love will not brook delay.
God of the chosen tribe, the lost, the opprest,
Oh! let Thy spirit in our hearts find rest.*

* The author probably intended to write a series of poems, one for every Sabbath of the year; but her premature death prevented the accomplishment of the plan, if it was entertained.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
Ode to Charity	203
The Chamber of the Dying	204
Sabbath Thoughts	205
" "	208
" "	210
" "	212
" "	214
" "	215
An Hour of Peace	217
The Song of the Spanish Jews	219
A Vision of Jerusalem	220
Angels	222
Communings with Nature:—	
No. 1. Night	223
No. 2. Ocean	228
No. 3. Hymn to Summer	229
No. 4. Autumn Leaves	231
No. 5. Autumn Winds	232
No. 6. The Evergreen	234
No. 7. Address to the Ocean	236
Funeral Hymn	237
The Hebrew's Appeal	239
I Never Loved a Flower	241
Dialogue Stanzas	242
Memory and Hope	243
The Wanderers	245
An Infant's Smile	247
The Importance of Religion to Genius	249
The Widow	252
The Rocks of Elim	254
Past, Present, and Future	257
The Jewish Year:—	
No. 1. Sabbath Bereshith	259
No. 2. Sabbath Noah	261

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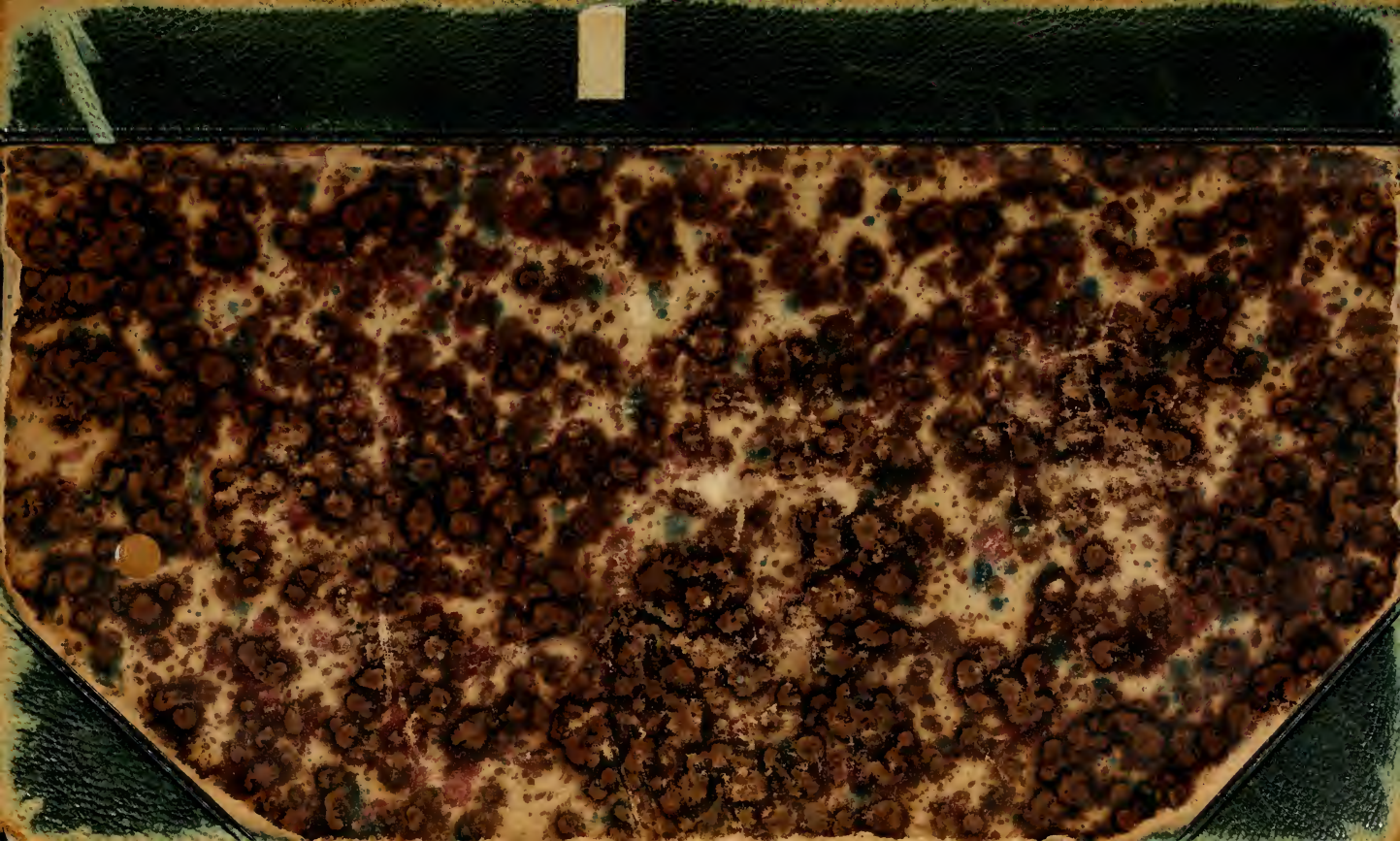
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