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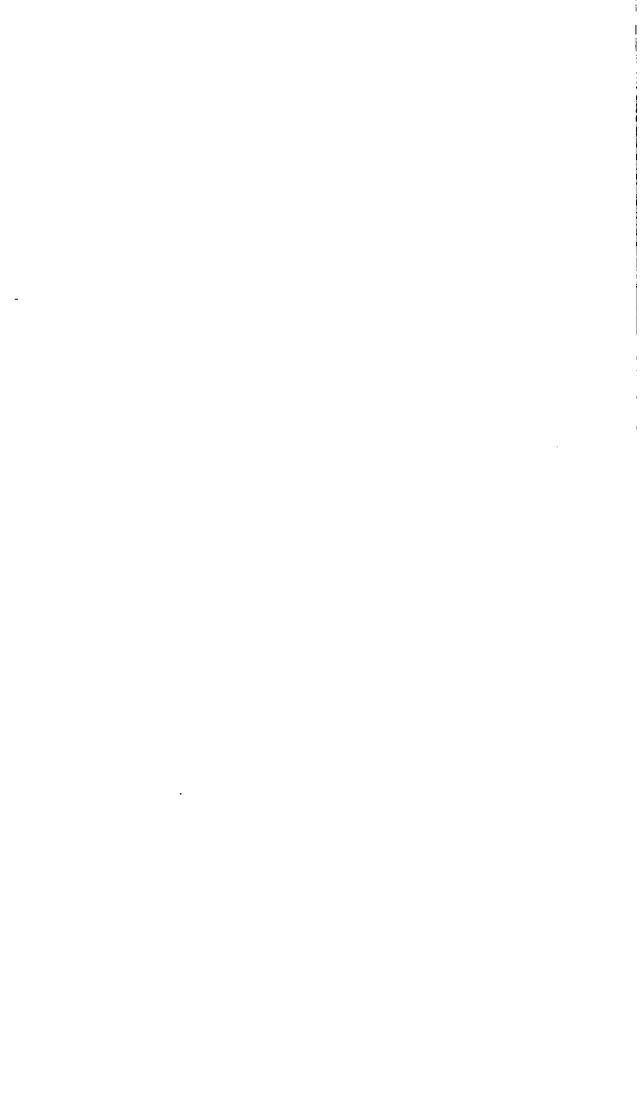




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THE

MUSEUM.



By Charlotte Elizabeth.

NEW YORK:

Published by John S. Taylor
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GLIMPSES OF THE PAST,

2401

OR

THE MUSEUM.

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

"All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall
bless thee."—PSALM cxlv. 10.

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THE MUSEUM.

CHAPTER I.

“WHAT a treat we shall have!” said Edward, rubbing his hands, when he had brushed his hat and laid it on the table beside him. “I really don’t know what I shall do, with so many nice things to admire. We must run here and there, as the butterflies fidget among the flowers; just alight for a minute on one and then away to another.”

“Ah!” replied Jane, “that might be pleasant enough to a butterfly; but we had better be bees, and bring home something profitable to lay up. Knowledge is a valuable thing; and I would rather get well acquainted with one interesting object, than just look at fifty, and learn nothing.”

“You are right, sister,” said Edward: “and, as Mamma will be with us, the fault must be our own if we gain no instruction

from what we see in the Museum. I will change my plan, and keep close to her, that I may hear what answers you get to your questions; for I know you will ask plenty."

"To be sure, brother. What would be the use of having such parents to instruct us, if we did not listen to their teaching?"

Mrs. Cleveland now entered; and, finding the children quite ready, they all set out together to visit a very good Museum of natural curiosities, and rare things brought from other countries. Having entered a very large room, they looked round; and both Edward and his sister felt a little confused at first, seeing so many new and strange objects on all sides, not knowing where to begin admiring them. There were cases all round the room, with glass fronts, filled with stuffed animals and birds,—bottles containing reptiles, preserved in spirits,—and other curiosities that quite puzzled the young people. Tables were also set out, covered with glass frames; and on these were arranged a number of beautiful shells, corals, stones, and different kinds of ore. Beyond this was another room; and the children would have liked to pass on to it

at once, but their Mamma advised them first to walk round and examine what was already before them.

“ All these things, my dear, belong to natural history ; and here you may see specimens of a very small part of the wonderful works of God in creation.”

“ Oh, those beautiful birds !” cried Jane ; “ what shapes and colors they have ! and how very, very small some of them are !—hardly as big as large butterflies.”

“ Those are humming-birds,” remarked her brother, “ and very pretty creatures too ; but these are better worth looking at. See, here are noble birds,—owls, falcons, and eagles.”

“ Owls are stupid creatures,” said Jane.

Mrs. Cleveland replied, “ It is customary to call them so ; and a bad name once given to any one is not easily got rid of. This ought to make us careful how we take up a reproach against our neighbor. But as to the owl, I confess he seems to me the reverse of stupid. The moon is made to shine, and the owl to live by night : both are seen to great disadvantage under the brightness of day. We will say nothing against the owl,

until we have had opportunity of observing him at the fit time, and in his proper employment. In the mean while, let us admire the beauty of his plumage, which, though far from gay, is marked with great delicacy and exactness; and consider how well this horny beak, and these powerful talons, are adapted for his purposes as a bird of prey."

"Oh, if beaks and talons are to be admired," said Edward, "just come and look at this eagle."

Jane looked, and turned away, saying, "I cannot bear the sight of the cruel creature, with that innocent white hare, bleeding, in his claws."

"Yet," observed her brother, "if the innocent hare was skinned and roasted, we should have no objection to eat a slice from it."

"Edward is certainly right," said Mrs. Cleveland. "Man does from choice, what the eagle does from necessity; and will even be so wantonly cruel as to hunt the poor hare for his diversion, when, if the herds, and flocks, and poultry, could not satisfy his palate, he might at least put it to an easier death. We must not quarrel with those of

the animal race, who, like ourselves, feed upon flesh, and like us, make use of superior strength or cunning to provide themselves with it. Let us do justice to the eagle, as the noblest in appearance among the feathered race, and interesting from being so frequently brought under our notice in the word of God. Can Edward furnish us with an instance of this ?”

Edward immediately repeated, from the fortieth chapter of Isaiah, “ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall ; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run, and not be weary ; and they shall walk and not faint.”

“ Observe the solid strength of that bird’s pinions,” said Mrs. Cleveland, “ and you may partly judge of the force of the comparison : yet, unless you saw him rising from his native rocks, soaring upwards through the rough wind, and seeming to despise the storm that howls around him, you can form but a poor idea of the exquisite fitness of God’s work to illustrate his word.”

"I can repeat something also," said Jane, who seemed to have forgiven the noble bird the slaughter of his prey. She went on to quote from that sublime chapter, the thirty-second of Deuteronomy—"As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings; so the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him."

"We often find," said Mrs. Cleveland, "the same simile used to denote the dealings of our God towards his church, and the privileges bestowed on that church through faith in him. Thus with the eagle, in these two passages which my children have repeated.

The quotation from Isaiah serves to remind us that the believer does indeed partake in all the fullness of Christ: for, whatever He was, whatever he did, whatever he suffered in the flesh, all was for our sakes, that we might stand complete in him. But how peculiarly beautiful is the
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“The eagle, my dears, when her young ones are fully fledged for flight, cannot give them their first lessons as we see the smaller birds do to their little progeny, teaching them to hop from twig to twig, and by short flights to gain the ground. The eagle’s nest is generally in the cleft of some lofty rock, often perpendicular; so that, on leaving it, nothing appears to break the descent,—no friendly tree extending its branches,—no hedge or sloping bank,—but a vast depth beneath, terminating in a foundation of hard rock; or, not unfrequently, in the sea, whose boisterous waves dash against it. This is a sad prospect for the young eagles, on first trying their tender pinions, and quitting the shelter of a warm nest. They are loth to make the attempt; and the parent bird proceeds as you find it described in that passage. First she ‘stirreth up her nest:’ she rouses the young ones, and obliges them to climb to the verge of their dwellings, where they stand trembling at the wide expanse before them, until the mother, by a push, sends them tumbling from the height; when they are of course obliged

to expand their wings, and to do their best in the way of flying."

"The poor little dears!" exclaimed the children, "their wings must soon fail them, and down they would drop."

"No: for the watchful mother 'fluttereth over her young,' and, with a powerful effort of her strong pinions, sweeps down below them. She then 'spreadeth abroad her wings,' so as to catch them thereon,—'taketh them' as upon a safe resting place, with only a little fluttering on their part to keep them steady,—'she beareth them on her wings,' sailing through the air, among the rocks, over the billows, until they get accustomed to these objects, and emboldened to shift for themselves."

"Oh, how wonderful!" said Jane, "and how beautiful!"

"And how exactly it answers to the text of Scripture!" added her brother.

"Yes, my children; it is both wonderful and beautiful, and becomes more so, the more deeply we consider it. For the Lord doubtless thus formed, and endowed the eagle with so peculiar an instinct, to be a type of His

own dealings with his family ; and the eagle is one among his many witnesses, his countless messengers to heedless man. Consider a little the fitness of the comparison. When the child of God, raised from the death of trespasses and sins, and born anew of the Spirit, looks out upon that world through which lies his passage to eternal happiness, he sees little before him but dangers, enemies, and difficulties of various sorts. He must no longer remain in the dark and narrow cell of his natural state, but go forth to do the work of his heavenly Father, and press onward to the kingdom ; and this he has no strength nor courage to attempt, until God, in his good providence sets him forward on the way, with the cheering promise, ' I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' Then, the same power which had called him into a new and better existence, watches over him carefully : and when his heart fails through fear, and his flesh through weariness, he finds the Lord a very present help, able and willing to bear the burden which faith casts upon Him. Thus the believer gains confidence from finding every prayer answered, and every want sup-

plied ; he no longer fears the enemies that surround him, for he knows the Lord to be his helper ; he shrinks from nothing to which duty calls him, because faith tells him he can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him ;* and thus he attains by degrees to the blessed state mentioned in Edward's quotation,—where, continually waiting on the Lord, he becomes like that powerful bird in its full growth, and mounts upward towards heaven. We will now take leave of the eagle, thankful that our view of him has not been unprofitable."

"Let me look a minute longer, Mamma," said Edward. "See, his head is turned upward, and his eye seems to be measuring the distance through which he has to ascend—a very great way, no doubt, from that spot to his lofty eyry,—his nest in the top of a rock. It is not for himself, surely, that he has seized that prey, but for his mate and hungry little ones, who wait for a supply of their wants. Oh ! it still reminds me of the Lord Jesus, who when, he ascended up on high, † leading

* Phil. iv. 13.

† Psalm lxxviii. 18.

captivity captive, did so that he might bestow gifts on men, even the rebellious. Is it not so, Mamma?"

"Indeed, my dear boy, you have drawn an apt comparison: and if every object here prove as interesting as the eagle, we shall not soon get through the survey."

Jane proceeded to gaze upon a collection of birds, the colors of whose plumage were most brilliant. "Now see if this does not put all painting to shame. Could any artist in the world shade like this? Stand where I will, there is some new and beautiful tint to admire; and they melt so, one into another, that nobody can say where this ends, or where that begins. And then their shapes—how elegant and graceful! and some with long, long feathers, sweeping down in such a beautiful curve! I could stand here all day, Mamma, to look at them."

"I believe you could, my dear; for certainly there is enough to admire in the plumage alone: but when we come to examine the difference that distinguishes each part of the species from the one next to it,—when we mark the very slight, yet decisive, varie-

ties of form and color, even within the very narrow space of this single shelf,—we may well be lost in wondering contemplation, and wish that time were ours to examine every portion of God's amazing works. But, alas! my children, sin has entered into this glorious creation, casting a veil over our minds; so that we cannot comprehend either the Author or his work aright; and bringing a curse upon the earth, and filling us so full of all corruption, that the little span of our shortened lives is barely sufficient to acquaint us with what we need to know of our own state before God, and to seek the salvation of those within our reach. Adam, when holy and happy, was set to dress the garden of Eden, and to keep it; and no doubt it was a book to him, wherein to read the glory, and the beauty, and the goodness of him whose hand made all these things, of which we can but now and then take a hasty and imperfect glance. We go mourning over a ruined world, and waiting for 'new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.' ”*

* 1 Peter iii. 13.

Jane sighed, as she left the beautiful birds ; and next stopped before a row of those glass bottles which have been mentioned.

“What an odd fancy,” said Edward, “to pickle snakes, and worms, and frogs ! and, after all, they are very ugly to look upon.”

“I cannot agree with you,” replied his mother. “This pickling, as you call it, is the only mode of preserving such specimens, as the birds are preserved by stuffing : but surely there is much beauty in the skin of a snake, the graceful form of a lizard, the speckled coat of a frog, and the small but regular markings on a caterpillar. Look nearer, and you must admit it.”

“I never can fancy them,” said Jane. “The prettiest snake or worm in the world is always ugly in my eyes.”

“Indeed,” remarked her mother, “there seems to be a sort of natural aversion against those creatures in most minds. The threat, ‘I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed,’* though addressed to the great adversary of mankind,

* Gen. iii. 15.

and pointing especially to Jesus Christ as the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head, still seems to receive an additional fulfilment in the shrinking sensation with which we usually behold the serpent tribe. Happy would it be for us if sin, in any shape, was equally unwelcome!"

"Then as to the worms," added Edward, "I rather think that our dislike to them is owing to the expectation of their one day eating us."

"It may be so, my dear: the destruction of our bodies is a subject that we seldom like to dwell upon; and when the creature which is destined to prey upon us after death bears the form chosen by Satan wherein to bring death into the world, no wonder if we feel uneasiness in looking upon it."

Jane had passed on to a table, and was looking through the glass cover at some curious specimens of the insect tribe, which she called on her brother to admire, exclaiming, "Only see, Edward, what a variety of flies; from that magnificent creature of a butterfly, down to this very, very little gnat, with its gossamer wings, hardly to be discovered on

the paper ; and how richly some of them are colored ! Here is loveliness indeed, and nothing to frighten or disgust any body—who would look at worms, with these elegant creatures just beside them ?”

“ And yet,” said her mother, “ it would be difficult to point out one among these elegant creatures which has not existed in the form of a worm ; and the ugliest of the pickled caterpillars, from which you turned away, would, if not cut short in its little span of life, have become, probably, a splendid butterfly. We are blind judges indeed ! A person, fancying that he could improve and beautify the visible creation, would perhaps begin by destroying what, if left to fulfil its appointed course, will most richly adorn the earth. And here let us take a lesson, also, to ‘ judge nothing before the time,’* but patiently await the unfolding of those wise decrees which we cannot comprehend until the work is finished. The most disagreeable, the most mischievous and evil characters,—such as we would wish removed far out of our neighborhood,—may

* 1 Cor. iv. 5.

yet, by the power of divine grace, be so changed as to become blessings to all around them. This should encourage us to do our utmost towards bringing them within the hearing of what may do good to their souls. Here, I see, are some specimens also of the crysalis, or the worm in its passage to a new state of existence. Now, Jane, supposing that the principle of life was not extinct in these creatures, if you laid one of them by, you would soon behold the dark and shapeless shell burst asunder, and a lively winged insect break forth. Such a change, but far greater and more lovely, takes place when the sinner is enabled to 'put off the old man,'*—the evil and rebellious nature,—and to 'put on the new man' of faith, and humility, and zeal, and love. No more crawling then in search of earthly enjoyments, buried in the miry ways of an unholy world; but a new life of activity, and power to rise above what enchained us before, and to rejoice in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. My dear children, let us not leave this part of the interest-

* Col. iii. 9, 10.

ing scene around us, without solemnly asking ourselves whether we are groveling with the worm, cleaving to the dust, and minding earthly things ; or whether, with the butterfly, we are accustomed to soar aloft,—our ways weaned from the world, and our conversation in heaven.”

The children paid great attention to their dear Mamma’s remarks, and went on in silence for a little while, looking in as they passed the cases where various things belonging to the insect race were deposited. At length they arrived at another department, and saw a most tasteful collection of shells, and other submarine productions, arranged before them.

“ Now Jane will be happy,” observed her brother.

And Jane looked happy indeed ; for she particularly delighted in shells, and was not ignorant of their history and classification. Some were of enormous size—others scarcely larger than the head of a pin ; but, from the least to the greatest, all were beautiful in the eyes of one who could attentively consider their form and colors, and their great fitness for the uses to which they were designed.

“What a pity,” remarked Edward, “that such neat and pretty houses should have lost all their tenants !”

“Their late tenants,” said his mother, smiling, “would have found the warm atmosphere, which agrees so well with you, a very uncomfortable element to live in. Their abode was at the base of those rocks on whose summit our noble friend the eagle pitched his eyry, and perhaps furnished a feast to the gull and the cormorant, whose inanimate bodies are perched yonder, never more to spread wing over the bounding billows in quest of such prey. But what is my little Jane thinking of all this while ?”

“Indeed, Mamma, I hardly know what is uppermost in my thoughts ; but certainly the billows of which you speak, and the living sea-gulls and cormorants, and the shore scattered with shells and weeds, were all in my mind. I do love the sea, Mamma ; I never can tire of it ; and I delight in every thing that brings it to my recollection. Oh ! what pleasant hours we passed, brother, on the bright hard sands, watching the waves which rolled to our feet, and then ran back again, as if afraid of us !”

Mrs. Cleveland repeated the sublime words from Job—"When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling-band for it, and brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, and said, hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed."*

"And then," rejoined Edward, "to stand and watch, on a very rough day, when a big wave came rolling towards the shore, like a mountain of water, so that you must fancy the whole coast would be overflowed; but no sooner did it reach the appointed place, than it rose up, as if in anger to be so stopped, curled its great foaming head, dashed down with the noise of thunder upon the beach, and rolled away back to its own deep home."

"Ah!" said Jane, "and well I remember, at such a time, when you could hardly be heard for the noise of the waters, how I was struck by your repeating that grand verse in Jeremiah, so suitable to the scene—"Fear ye not me? saith the Lord: will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea by a perpetual de-

* Job. xxxviii. 9—11.

cree, that it cannot pass it ; and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet can they not prevail ; though they roar, yet can they not pass over it.* O, Mamma, what would all the glories of this wonderful creation be worth to us, if we had not the Bible, the precious, beautiful Bible, to explain and improve them !”

“ And yet,” remarked Edward, “ I have heard people pitied for being so fond of their Bibles, and called melancholy enthusiasts for taking them out to read.”

“ And I, brother, actually heard one miserable man deny that there was any truth in what the Bible tells us concerning the creation—doubting whether God made it at all ; and he stood on the sea-side, too !”

“ Yes,” observed Mrs. Cleveland, pointing to a very fine specimen of delicate sea-weed, spread out on card-paper—“ yes ; and perhaps, while he uttered his blasphemous folly, the wave cast at his feet such a piece of the Divine workmanship as that, to prove that even in the depths of the dark ocean God had engraven as it were his name, by calling so

* Jer. v. 22.

beautiful a vegetable into being there. ‘O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts.’* Our little island, my dears, is girt around by the sea, which the Lord has blessed to be our defence against many foes. May we render to Him the praise so justly due, and in which the very waves that we talk of are represented as joining us. ‘Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein; let the floods clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord.’ †

“There is no poetry like that,” observed Edward.

“And is there any painting like this, brother?” asked Jane, pointing to a shell most exquisitely marked in brilliant colors.

“No, indeed, I think not, sister, unless it be found in a flower-garden.”

“Ah, that is true; but then, Edward, it

* Psalm civ. 24, 25.

† Psalm xviii. 7—9.

is by the same hand and the same pencil, and none other can do like Him."

After admiring some rich pieces of branching coral, and being told by their Mamma that on such a substance, the work of a very small insect, great rocks and tracts of land are founded, they passed on to where the minerals were arranged. Here were gems, both in the natural state and highly polished: also many ores, marbles, and spars. These were very interesting, as displaying the wonderful variety and abundance of earth's riches; and that wonder was greatly increased, on calculating that the utmost art and enterprise of man had never penetrated much lower than the thirty-thousandth part of the earth's diameter; while every step of their progress downward disclosed new wonders, new beauties, new treasures. While looking upon the different specimens, they paused a little while over each, to consider its various properties, the dangers to be braved, and the difficulties to be overcome, before it could even be submitted to the long and toilsome operations of those who were to prepare it for use.

“Sin,” observed Mrs. Cleveland, “has placed a barrier between us and those things which were originally formed for our use ; and the sentence pronounced upon guilty man, ‘In the sweat of thy face, shalt thou eat bread,* is fulfilled not only in regard to the labor by which alone the earth can be cultivated, the harvest gathered in, and our food prepared, but also in every other respect. By the fall of man, climates were made unhealthy and severe, so that shelter became needful, and our bodies must be clad accordingly. See what art and effort are necessary, before an article of clothing can be prepared for our use, or a house built for us to dwell in ! It is true that man in a savage state, does not take this trouble ; but nothing that we call decency, much less comfort, can be enjoyed without it. We are truly strangers, as well as pilgrims here : all around us is matter of wonder and perplexity. Our faculties, darkened by sin, are unable to comprehend the works of God ; and we pass over the earth’s surface, just borrowing for a while the use of that little which

* Gen. iii. 19.

we can grasp, and go out of this life nearly as ignorant as when we entered it. Some men devote their whole thought, and time, and labor to studying one or another part of creation ; but too generally such persons neglect the more important study of themselves, and of God's will, as revealed to us in the gospel. They write books, perhaps, upon the courses of the stars, or the formation of rocks, or the arrangement of minerals ; they number up, and class, and describe the different species of animals, of birds, fishes, insects ; they travel to distant lands, in quest of new varieties among the flowery and vegetable tribes : but, alas ! what avail all the knowledge thus gleaned, and the admiration won from their more ignorant fellow-creatures, if they continue dead in trespasses and sins, and prove unprofitable servants unto God ! It is a very beautiful and instructive study, to trace the hand of the great Creator in all that he has formed ; but Satan is constantly on the watch to ensnare us by means of those things that we most incline to ; and we may destroy our souls by laying up treasures for ourselves, not

only in money and goods, but in art and science, and worldly wisdom ; while, being not rich towards God, we suffer the inner man to perish for lack of knowledge."

"And yet, Mamma," said Edward, "I often hear such men spoken of as those whom we ought most to admire, and to imitate, because they spent their whole lives in study."

"Do you not know, my dear, that it is written, 'That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God?'"* You must judge no man uncharitably ; but when you hear of a person devoting his whole life to the pursuit of any thing which has not the glory of God in view, never take that man for your pattern. On the other hand, how beautiful is true science, when sanctified by pure and practical Christianity ! Of this I can mention an instance, in our countryman, the Hon. Robert Boyle. He excelled greatly in many branches of human learning, particularly in chemistry, where he made such discoveries as have rendered him famous ; but, instead of delighting in the

* Luke xvi. 15.

admiration and applause of his fellow-men, this truly wise and learned philosopher would go daily to his Bible; with all the meekness and teachableness of a little child. He was a follower of Christ, and faithfully served him: among other things, it was his great anxiety to give that blessed Bible to the poor Irish-speaking natives of the country, in their own language, which they so dearly love. For this he prayed and labored,—sparing neither time, pains, nor money, to promote the work of mercy.”

“What a sweet character!” said Jane.

“I hope I shall be the better for hearing about this good Mr. Boyle,” remarked her brother; “for I was beginning to think it must be safer to remain a dunce, if knowledge be so dangerous?”

“No, Edward,” replied his Mamma, “ignorance is no security against sin. Whatever station you are in, and whatever may be your employment,—whether engaged in the deepest studies, or following a plow,—you will find the same enemies always at work—a busy tempter laying snares in your path, and an evil heart always disposing you to fall into

those snares. Never fancy that such dangers are confined to any particular rank or employment; although, indeed, the poor and unlearned cottager has fewer temptations around him than the man of wealth and learning, yet within him he has the same hindrances to the service of God. And besides, the man who has studied most carefully the works of creation, will be the best able to exalt the Creator's glory, if grace be given him to use his talents aright. Consider that most of these things, that are furnishing us with so many pleasant and profitable reflections, would be but a heap of unintelligible objects to us, only for the labors of learned men, who have examined into their properties, and communicated to us by their books what we should have had neither time, nor skill, nor opportunity to discover for ourselves. You might, for instance, have looked long enough at that dark lump of ore, with its few specks and streaks of dingy yellow, before you could have known, or I either, that it contains the precious metal, gold,—the innumerable grains of which, thinly scattered, are collected, and purified, and beaten out, until it be-

comes of costly value, and one of the greatest blessings or greatest curses that man can possess, according as he devotes it to the service of his God, or the gratification of his selfish appetites. Then again, that black and dirty-looking substance you would easily have pronounced to be coal, because you see it every day ; but without the help of books, we, who live far from the mines, could not understand by what extraordinary skill and labor it is brought from the depths of the earth, and prepared for our use. Those spars are very bright to the eye ; but how much is the pleasure increased, and the thoughts led up to the Almighty Architect of this globe, when we can talk of the vast and magnificent caverns, whose walls and roofs are one mighty mass of such materials ; and where men stand as grasshoppers, in size, beneath the lofty vaulted roofs, while the light of their torches is reflected from tens of thousands of polished surfaces on every side, producing the most brilliant colors, and making the palace of the mightiest monarch appear as a child's toy in comparison with its splendor ; while the report of a pistol, if discharged within the ca-

vern, is repeated perhaps a hundred times, like the sound of many cannon. These are a small, a very small part of those works of God of which man catches now and then a very imperfect glimpse; and they ought to humble our little pride, and to lift our hearts in grateful adoration to Him, who, amidst all the wonders of his vast creation, yet deigns to think on us, and to watch over our path, and to order the events of every day and hour according to his infinite wisdom, and loving-kindness, and tender mercies in Christ Jesus."

They now proceeded to the last part of of this collection, which consisted of some very curious forms in stones, resembling, as Edward remarked, serpents, and shells, and other things belonging to the animal kingdom; set in frames of stone.

"It is more than a resemblance," said his mother. "That which you are now observing is actually the shell of a fish from the sea, and was found, probably, many miles from the coast, and many hundred yards above the level of the highest tides, having been left there, with thousands more, by the waves."

"Nay, but, Mamma, surely how that is impossible."

“It is certainly true, my dear. How could such vast numbers of things that belong only to the depths of the sea,—shells, and coral, and bones of fishes,—be conveyed to the tops of mountains, and down into the clefts and chasms of rocks, and scattered thick and deep upon the surface of the earth, except by means of the water leaving them there? Can you account for that?”

“No, Mamma; but it is just as hard to account for the water being on the heights of mountains, as to say how the shells and fish-bones could get there with them. Besides, how did they find their way into the middle of these stones, and become so hard themselves?”

“Stone grows, though not after the manner of rooted vegetables; and it hardens, as well as enlarges, by time: these two circumstances prove what a very long while the substances of which we speak have been bedded in stone; and if you think a little, you will probably be able to account for what seems so strange.”

“Oh! now I have it,” cried Jane—“the flood must have carried them up over the

mountain tops ; for you know it is written, that ‘ all the fountains of the great deep were broken up ;’* and also that ‘ the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth ; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered.’ ”†

“ Yes,” rejoined her brother ; “ and that being more than four thousand years ago, there would be plenty of time for the hardening of these things, and the growth of the stone about them. Is it not so, Mamma ?”

“ It is, my dear,” answered Mrs. Cleveland ; “ and there is no possible way of accounting for what you now see, but by believing that the earth has been so completely overflowed with billows, as to destroy for a time all distinction between land and sea : and if we could examine the dark abyss of ocean, we should doubtless find that God has not left himself without witness there also, but has lodged in its caves and gulfs many a wreck of that world over which his wrath sent the wild waves, to sweep away a guilty race of unbelieving rebels.”

* Gen. vii. 11. † Gen. vii. 19.

“ I never look upon a specimen of these ‘ organic remains,’ as they are called, without feeling my mind interested and affected most powerfully. Our Lord told the unbelieving Pharisees, who wanted to silence the hosannas of His little followers, ‘ I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.’* Earth *must*, and earth SHALL acknowledge the presence of her Creator, and bear testimony to the eternal truth of his written word. Men were mostly silent, but young children cried aloud, rejoicing in the coming of the promised Messiah, when, in the majesty of his voluntary humiliation, Zion beheld her meek and lowly King riding upon an ass’s colt. And since it was His will, recorded by the prophet, that Zion should then rejoice,† He would have put speech into the very stones of the street, rather than that his word should fail. Even so, were there not found one voice to proclaim among men at this day the truth of God’s revelation, these stones would bear a testimony. They are found in every part of the

* Luke xix. 40. † Zech. ix. 9.

world, and in such places as make it utterly impossible that any art or contrivance of man should have lodged them there. In vain do we try to account for what we cannot deny; and no infidel ever did, or ever can give a satisfactory explanation of it. But turn to the blessed Bible, and even the few words quoted by Jane at once clear up the difficulty. Again, the sight of these objects fills me with an awful sense of God's hatred against sin, and the certainty of his taking vengeance on them that obey not the gospel.* Long and patiently did the Lord wait, and many a warning he gave by the lips of Noah; but men scoffed at the message, and set at nought the threatenings of Him who will not be mocked. The day of grace which they despised, at length passed away; and, oh, what a scene followed! The windows of heaven were opened, and torrents poured down from above—the fountains beneath were broken up, and waters gushed, and rose, and rolled onward to the tops of the hills. I can fancy, as I look on these simple but striking monuments of that day of wrath—I can fancy

* 2 Thess. i. 8.

some terrified mother, who had never taught her children to glorify God in the hour of peace and safety, at length overtaken by his judgment, vainly trying to save them from destruction—climbing from height to height, dragging her wretched offspring after her, and perhaps obliged to abandon some in the fond hope of saving the rest. I can imagine her at last on the highest summit of a neighboring hill, sinking down among her helpless family, while the waters from above beat on their heads, and the waters from beneath rose higher and higher, and the word of warning which she had despised, while Noah preached of coming wrath, sounded in her ear, as a bitter reproach, till the waves reached her resting-place, and drowned alike the voice of conscience; and the screams of despair.”

“What a sad, sad thought, Mamma!” said Jane, with tears in her eyes; “but may we not hope that some souls found mercy in that terrible time?”

“Surely, my dear, we may confidently believe that many, many thousands of helpless little children, who had never ‘sinned after

the similitude of Adam's transgression,* by wilfully offending the Lord, but who suffered the penalty of bodily death, because born of Adam's sinful race, were received into glory—carried there in a chariot of water, as Eliah was in a chariot of fire. As to the people who were of age to know good and evil, and so had willingly offended, we cannot say, because the Bible does not tell us, whether any souls were saved. But this we know, that, as the babe of a day could never enter heaven except through the atoning blood of Christ, so the oldest and most hardened sinner, who in true penitence and faith calls upon that Savior, finds him able to save to the uttermost. We have much told us in Scripture concerning the great wickedness of that generation, who refused to be forgiven when God spake to them by Noah; but not one word is there said of any individual having turned to the Lord when their calamity was upon them. Let this sink deep into our hearts, as a caution not to trifle with the means of grace now granted to us; for it is possible to harden our

* Rom. v. 14.

own hearts, until we provoke the Lord to exclude us from his rest. He willeth not the death of a sinner, we know; but if a man will not turn, He hath made ready the weapons of destruction. You know it is written, 'He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.*' We are daily reprov'd by the Bible, by our faithful teachers, by the Lord's voice within us, and his providences around us; and while the very ground on which we walk bears such proofs of the terrible judgments that he executeth, let us not delay to seek grace that we may be numbered among his children, and safe hidden in the ark of Christ's church, when the storm of wrath is let loose upon a guilty world."

Having now looked over all that was contained in the first room, the little party left it, proceeding to the next, which surprised Jane and Edward a good deal on entering it. There were a great many dresses, such as they never had seen,—some formed of coarse matting,—others of fine cloth, curiously orna-

* Prov. xxix. 1.

mented with beads ; and some were made of the most bright and lovely feathers, laid one over another like scales of a fish, completely covering the whole garment. " These," said Mrs. Cleveland, " are the various ways in which men have contrived to clothe themselves, where our arts are unknown. Here you see how the coarse fibres of trees, and the pliant rushes and grasses are woven, without any attempt at ornament. Again, we have dresses of cloth, the thread of which has been prepared with great care, from more delicate fibres, and other vegetable substances, with ornaments of shell and bead, strung together both tastefully and with great strength : these last belonged chiefly to the Indians of North America. Those garments of gay feathers, which Jane appears so much pleased with, are from the Sandwich Islands, and give rise to a feeling of great thankfulness while I view them, recollecting how signally the Lord has made himself known to the inhabitants of those distant isles, causing his great name to be acknowledged and glorified where nothing was before practised but the grossest idolatry, and most terrible cruelty, wickedness, and crime of every sort."

“ Was it not among those islands, Mamma, that the people threw their idols into the sea ? ”

“ Yes, Jane. When the Missionaries reached those islands, the first word of intelligence that reached their vessel was, that the Pagan King of Owhyhee, unbidden and uninstructed, had in a day cast off all the false gods of his people, and by a single stroke of boldness overthrown a superstition which, for ages, had held a degraded race in the bondage of fear. This is a fact without a parallel in the history of the world, and can only be accounted for by the immediate agency of that Almighty Being who holds the hearts of all men in his hands, and turneth them to fulfil the counsel of his own will. The way being thus cleared, the islanders gladly submitted themselves to the spiritual direction of those pious Missionaries who, by going among them, had hazarded their lives, and who now hailed in them a guardian band of brothers, willing to shed their blood in defence of these faithful teachers. But let us go a step farther, and examine what has caught Edward’s eye.”

“ Indeed, Mamma,” said Edward, “ I was

wondering what could make the people put such silly toys, and ridiculous masks, and ugly nonsensical things, among objects so interesting as those dresses and weapons."

"Then what will you think when I tell you that the contemptible, the frightful things which have disgusted you, are called gods by the poor heathen, and are actually worshipped as such?"

"That is surely impossible, Mamma—why they are like nothing upon earth."

"No, they are most hideous; and yet it is no less true than awfully shocking, that before every one of those unmeaning shapes some wretched child of Adam has fallen down, and cried to it, 'Deliver me, for thou art my god!' These are really and indeed what the heathen pray to; and to these they offer sacrifices, often slaying their prisoners before them, and even their own people as an acceptable offering to appease the wrath, and gain the favor of these senseless idols!"

The children looked at each other, as if at a loss to comprehend how it could be so. There was something at once so horrid and so foolish in the very form of these things,

that they wondered how any person could ever invent them, or bear to look at them : but to worship them !—that seemed altogether beyond belief. Their Mamma observed their silent amazement, and went on to instruct them from what they beheld,—secretly praying the Lord to bless her words to their souls' profit. “ I need not tell you my dear children, that nothing degrades the mind of man like sin : we find it often called in the Bible by the name of folly, and what foolishness is so great as that which prefers evil to good, bitter to sweet, death to life, the curse to the blessing ? This is the choice of every one who commits sin ; and the farther man departs from God the more he loses himself. Satan loves to mock those who yield themselves servants to him, and to make them lay aside their very reason. We have already spoken of those who, professing to be wise in this world's matters, become fools in what is of far greater importance, by wasting their time, money, opportunities, and all other talents, upon studies that cannot profit their souls. Such are like travelers, who, having only a short day before them, and the cer-

tainty of being torn to pieces by wild beasts if they do not reach a safe shelter before nightfall, should be seen sitting down by the road side to count the leaves on the trees, or to number the pebbles under their feet, while the only refuge was still far distant, and the roar of savage beasts already heard around them. Such is the blind folly of those who are taken in the snare of false wisdom; and if we look beyond these, how sad a scene do we behold among the slaves to sin! Some will wantonly destroy their own reason by drunkenness, and appear in a state more degraded than that of the natural brute beasts, defying the Scripture, which says that drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven. Others will utter curses and blasphemous language, as if to proclaim to all the world that their tongues are 'set on fire of hell.*' Some will prefer thieving to honest gain, knowing at the same time that God has expressly said, 'Thou shalt not steal,' and knowing also that the laws of man will condemn them to the gibbet if detected. Others will give place to

* James iii. 6.

the devil continually, by telling untruths, not only when they think to serve themselves by it, but for the sake of any idle and silly boast, as if they were daily striving to secure their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, where all liars are to be cast.* In every one of these cases, and many more which I have not named, we see the excessive foolishness of sin ; and this may help us to account for the wretched delusion of the heathen, in making these unmeaning things as objects of worship, under the direction of Satan, whose captives they are."

"But, Mamma," said Jane, "how *can* they form such a notion of Him who made the world? Only fancy a heathen man going out on a beautiful star-light night, seeing all the heavens declaring the glory of God, and the firmament shewing his handy-work, † observing every star in its own place, all moving on, none out of its course ; and the moon changing so regularly——oh ! Mamma, he *could not* believe that this frightful image made them !"

* Rev. xxi. 8.

† Psalm xix. 1.

A gentleman, who was standing near, heard Jane's remark ; for she spoke rather loudly, through earnestness, not being able to bear the thought of such dishonor being put on the Creator of heaven and earth by his creatures. The gentleman looked at her with much kindness, and said, "It is not easy to understand how such folly can exist in the human mind ; but indeed, my young friend, your Mamma has told you truth ; for I have myself seen the poor heathen worshipping and sacrificing before such forms as these."

"What, with your own eyes, Sir?" asked Edward, drawing nearer to the stranger.

"Yes, frequently : I went among them, not exactly as a Missionary, but with the hope of doing some good to their souls ; and have seen enough to make me confess how awfully the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not."*

"I never heard of any thing so mad as this," observed Edward.

"No?" rejoined his new acquaintance, taking out a pocket Bible—"I can show you

* 2 Cor. iv. 4.

as great an instance, if not greater, of human folly and wickedness in the very same way. Tell me, what were God's dealings with the people of Israel, when Moses was raised up to be a deliverer?"

Both the children looked delighted at being questioned thus, and Edward replied, "Why, Sir, the Lord wrought many great wonders, sending terrible plagues on the Egyptians, until they let the Israelites go free, after holding them in bondage many years."

"Did not the Israelites make their way out by force of arms, being a great body of people?"

"Oh, no : for the Egyptians were a mighty nation, with horses and chariots, and great armies ; and the Israelites, though there were six hundred thousand men, were poor helpless slaves, with their women and children, and flocks, and herds ; so that, when Pharaoh and his host pursued them, they never thought of defending themselves, but were in great terror."

"Who led them?"

"Moses led them ; but he would not have known where to go himself, only for the

goodness of God in sending a pillar of a cloud before them all the day, and a pillar of fire by night, and they followed it."

"How did they escape from the Egyptian king?"

"By the greatest miracle, Sir: God divided the sea in two parts, and brought them through as on dry land; but when Pharaoh and his army tried to follow them, the waters closed again, and they were all drowned."

"Right, my dear boy: and how was this great multitude fed on the journey?"

"By miracle too, Sir: for the Lord rained manna out of heaven upon the earth, every day except the Sabbath,—sending twice the quantity on the day before, that the Sabbath might be kept holy. He also caused water to flow from a hard rock, and it followed them through the desert, and they all drank of it."

"And what happened when they came to Mount Sinai?"

"Then, Sir, they received the Law. God came down, and the mountain burned with fire and smoke, and there were such thunderings and lightnings, and voices, that the people were ready to die with terror. God spake

to them out of the midst of the fire, but it was too terrible for them to bear; so, because they could not endure it, Moses went up the mount, to receive God's commandments, written upon two tables of stone."

"You have answered very satisfactorily," said the gentleman, and we will go on with the story. Moses being on the mountain, the people remained under the care of Aaron; and becoming tired of waiting, they desired Aaron to make them gods to go before them. Finding them determined upon it, he took their golden ear-rings,—melted them in a furnace into one lump,—then shaped the gold with a graving tool 'into the likeness of a calf which eateth hay,' and presented it to the people, who exclaimed, 'These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt!'"* After this, can we wonder at the heathen who never heard of God? These Israelites not only had the starry heavens, and all the glorious works of creation about them, but that creation had been made to serve them by the miraculous power of

* Exod. xxxii. 4.

God, in a way never heard or thought of before. They had seen all the plagues sent on Egypt, and escaped them; the sea had opened to give them a passage; meat had been showered upon their camp; they had breakfasted that very morning upon bread which fell from the sky, and quenched their thirst with water from the stony rock; the cloudy pillar stood over them, and the mount where God had so lately spoken out of the fire yet smoked before them; and they took a molten image—the image of a senseless brute—made of the trinkets that had dangled from their own ears,—and paid honor to it, calling it the gods that had led them out of Egypt! It is true that the worship which they paid was addressed to Jehovah; but the calf was honored as the symbol of the Divine Being, and the act was one of gross idolatry.”

“After this, we ought not to wonder at any thing,” observed Jane.

“Yes, sister,” said Edward, “we must wonder at God’s patience in not destroying such a world,—full of wicked creatures as we are.”

“Most true,” said his mother; “and we

are greatly obliged to you, Sir, for bringing forward this striking instance of what we need to be daily reminded of—the corruption of our hearts, and the very great power of that evil one from whom we pray to be delivered. Having been among the heathen, you will perhaps kindly give us some farther explanation of what we are now looking at.”

“Most willingly, Madam: I should not have intruded on your notice, but for the observations which I heard from you. Happy would it be for youthful visiters, if in every place of this kind the Bible were taken for a guide, and the glory of God promoted among his wonderful works!

“These ugly forms, which the heathen worship, are not intended generally to represent the Creator of the world, but a great number of unknown beings, of whom the most are supposed to be very cruel and malignant; and they are honored by the poor ignorant creatures, to prevent their injuring them in their persons or goods. It has struck me as very remarkable, that fear and hatred, not love and gratitude, prompt the religious services of the savage: he knows

nothing of a God of mercy, but tries to appease the vengeance of the idol to which he bows down, by cruel sacrifices, sometimes of his fellow-men, sometimes of his offspring, and even of his own life. This shows that the law written upon his heart convicts him of sin; and, seeing no mediator between him and the unknown Deity, he devises means to make atonement, and goes on to sin and to sacrifice to the end of his days."

"How can any person think so hardly of God," said Jane, "when every thing that he has made is so beautiful, and, as David says, 'His tender mercies are over all his works?'"*

"The reason, my dear, is that the heart of man is evil; 'The carnal mind is enmity against God,'† and refuses to acknowledge him in the gifts of his bounty. 'He left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness;‡ but man does not see God in these mercies: he takes them all as his due, without inquiring from whence they come, and is

* Psalm cxlv. 9. † Rom. viii. 7. ‡ Acts xiv. 17.

unthankful. It is when the clear sky is overcast, and the storm rends his habitation,—when the drought destroys his crops, or the flood sweeps away his flocks,—when disaster crosses his path, or pestilence enters his dwelling-place, that he confesses an invisible Power, and offers what he can to appease one whose anger he fears, because he cannot escape from it, but whose loving-kindness never won an accent of praise from his lips. There is something in the mind of man,—a voice that cannot be silenced,—telling him that he is immortal, and that he must give an account of himself to one far above his reach and out of his sight. Satan takes advantages of such thoughts, and fills the mind with gloomy, frightful images, which the wretched sinner tries to describe by such horrid representations as you see; and then worships the work of his own hands, made after the evil imaginations of his own heart. I have met with some who owned that all the good which they received was the gift of a loving and merciful Spirit, to whom they would not pay any honor, because there was no fear of his hurting them; but they also confessed the

existence of the devil, as the author of all mischief and cruelty, and him they adored, building temples to him, and giving him constant service, in order that he might not be provoked to injure them. Some of those figures are intended to represent the father of lies, and prince of darkness ; and are held sacred by his miserable bond-slaves."

"I will not look at them any longer," said Edward ; "it is too horrid to think of."

"I would, however, wish you to think of it whenever you kneel down to pray," observed Mrs. Cleveland, "that you may beseech the Lord to destroy these works of the devil ; and also when you open your Bible, that you may be more thankful for that most precious gift. Neither forget it, when you have opportunity to help in any way the cause of Missions among the poor sinful heathen, who know not that God sent his own Son into the world, to work that deliverance from the wrath to come, which all their sacrifices and vain efforts can never accomplish. We are too ready to turn away from the sufferings of others, either in body or soul, to spare our own feelings, instead of considering

whether, by some means, we cannot assist to relieve them."

"I fully agree with you, Madam," answered the stranger, "and the sight of these idols, in this place, is in some measure an encouragement; for several of them have been given up willingly to those who taught their owners the way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ; and some of those people obtained copies of the Scriptures in their own tongues, in place of these degrading objects, which had long been the supposed protectors of their dwellings."

Edward said in a low voice to his sister, "What a mercy it is, Jane, that we were not born heathen children!"

"I was thinking of that too, brother; and also that I am too much like the heathen now; for I do not pray to God nor praise him half so heartily when all is comfortable about me, as when I am afraid of sickness or any misfortune. And then how willingly the poor savages gave up their idols, when they heard of Jesus Christ! but I am not so willing to give up many things that I know God does not approve of, though I hear of the Lord Jesus every day, and call him my Savior."

“That is like me,” observed her brother ; “so let us both pray a great deal more, to be made obedient and loving children of our heavenly Father.”

They now advanced to the next collection, the gentleman still accompanying them ; and this consisted of various weapons, bows and arrows, spears, hatchets, knives, and shields with curious belts of skin and metal.

“Here,” said their new friend, “are more tokens of Satan’s triumph over man. In every state we find him willing to destroy his fellow ; and while the savage of the wood contrives so to prepare and fix a piece of flint into its rude handle, as to draw the life-blood whenever it is thrown,—or tips a pointed reed with vegetable poison, until it carries instant death through the skin,—we may behold the civilized race of mankind, even those calling themselves Christians, proud of their superior skill in the art of destroying, busily engaged in preparing engines by which to sweep whole ranks into eternity, and send a host of fellow-sinners headlong to the judgment-seat. The poor savage thinks himself happy in dispatching his single foe ; but armies must meet,

and thousands must perish, when Satan stirs up 'wars and fightings' among nations who profess to serve the same God, through the same Savior. Surely we have cause to send up, with every breath, the prayer which must be granted before these abominations will cease—'Thy kingdom come; thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven!'"

Mrs. Cleaveland remarked, "How awful, yet how just, is the character given of the natural man—'hateful and hating one another!'"*

"Yes," replied the stranger, "love to God is the only possible bond of union between man and his fellow; and how soon hatred and murder follow on rebellion, we see in the history of Cain. He was the first infant born into the world, and he brought with him the sinful nature of his guilty parents, who had lost the image of God from their souls, and forfeited his blessing. Cain's heart never was changed; he continued to bear the carnal mind, and seeing in Abel the grace of God working a renewal of the divine image, he

* Titus iii. 3.

hated his brother; and slew him. No doubt they would both have hated each other, if both had been left in their sinful state; but, as Abel was approved of God, through the faith by which 'he offered unto God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain,'* we see the fruits of the Spirit in him; for it does not appear that he gave his brother a harsh word, or resisted the cruel hand lifted up to kill him. O, my dear young friends, pray to have your hearts filled with the love of God, and then you will be kind and tender-hearted to one another for Christ's sake. You cannot really love God until you know his love to you, in not sparing his own Son, but delivering him up for us all: then, seeing the curse removed, and God's anger turned away, and hearing his gracious invitation, you can draw near with joy and confidence, saying, with the apostle, 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.† 'We love him, because He first loved us.' 'And this commandment have we from him, that he which loveth God, loves his brother also.'"

* Heb. xi. 4.

† 1 John iv. 10, 20, 21.

By this time the party had finished their survey of the second room, but another yet remained, which, their new friend informed them, contained some very curious antiquities, or things of great age, brought from other lands. "I wish that I could accompany you," continued this kind gentleman, "for I have been among those Eastern lands from which many of them were brought; but an engagement to visit a sick friend now obliges me to leave you."

"Oh, Sir," said Edward, "if you are coming here again, I would ask my Mamma to put off seeing the rest of the collection until you can accompany us; for I would rather wait, and see them when we can have them explained by one who has been in the countries from which they came."

"So would I, indeed," added Jane.

"And I," said Mrs. Cleveland, "would gladly second the proposal, did I not fear that we encroach upon time too valuable to be bestowed upon inquisitive children."

"I wish that all children were equally inquisitive upon subjects so instructive!" remarked the gentleman; "but if my services

can be of any use to my young friends, and their Mamma has no objection, I will with great pleasure meet them here at eleven o'clock to-morrow, and assist to explore the treasures in the next room."

Mrs. Cleveland cordially thanked him; and the children extended their hands for a parting shake, with looks of gratitude and joy. The stranger took out a card, saying that perhaps they might wish to know the name of their intended guide, and with a friendly smile departed.

CHAPTER II.

RETURNING home, Jane and Edward discoursed very pleasantly on what they had seen,—the latter observing that he was not willing to pay the Museum another visit until Mr. Peele could join the party, as he had favored them with such nice explanations of what they saw.

“Indeed he is a very well-informed and entertaining person,” replied his mother; “but I should not have encouraged you to get acquainted with a stranger in a public place, had it not been clearly seen that he was one who sought to glorify God in his words and works. We will try to persuade your Papa to accompany us in the morning; for I rather think that he will be then at leisure.”

This promise greatly rejoiced the children, who watched from the window with more than ordinary anxiety, until they saw their dear Papa approaching the house; and they jumped with delight, when running to meet

him at the door; while the two little ones, of whom the elder could hardly speak plain, and the younger was just able to run alone, joined in their hearty welcome—each seizing a leg of their dear father, and shouting to the utmost pitch of their little voices.

“How now, ladies and gentlemen?” said Mr. Cleveland. “What grand affair has put you all in motion, to block up my road to the dinner table?”

“Oh, we have had such a delightful morning!” cried Jane—“such a beautiful collection!”

“Such a nice gentleman to explain it!” exclaimed Edward.

“Me got a new ball!” shouted little Thomas; and the baby bawled out, “Pa!—Pa!—Pa!” to fill up the chorus.

“Well, I am glad to see you so happy; and when I am less hungry, we will have the history of all your discoveries.”

As soon as the cloth was removed, Mr. Cleveland called upon Edward and Jane to tell him what they had seen; and listened with much pleasure to their account. When

mentioning the stranger, Edward pulled out his card, and shewed it to his Papa.

“Peele”—said Mr. Cleveland—“Montague Peele—you have indeed been favored, if he was your companion. I knew him some years since, and esteemed him very highly indeed; much for his talent, more for the zeal with which he always used it in his Master’s service. I really wish I had been of your party.”

Mrs. Cleveland told her husband of his kind promise to meet them on the morrow, at which he expressed much pleasure, and readily consented to accompany them,—adding, “We must bring him home to dinner, and make him feel that he is among old friends. I cannot tell you what I owe to this Montague Peele, in whose company I once made a voyage; and found cause to be thankful for it every day of my life since.”

“Has he traveled much?” asked Mrs. Cleveland.

“A great deal: at first only for pleasure and information, as a worldly man of taste and learning: but when he felt in his own soul the power of the gospel of Christ, he

resumed his travels with a far higher and nobler object in view than that of collecting curiosities from among distant nations. He took out boxes full of Bibles in various languages, and visited, I believe, many interesting countries, particularly those mentioned in Scripture; and no doubt the seed of God's word, plentifully scattered among them, will be found at the great day to have brought forth fruit an hundred-fold. I assure you that he is very highly respected, as a traveler and man of science, by many who do not understand the true beauty of his character; so that he is sought after and welcomed wherever he goes: but I have been told that his bold and faithful way of reproving sin, and his determined separation from an ungodly world, have offended many; while some have been awakened by it to a sense of their own godless condition, and led to seek and to find the precious gift of salvation."

"I should not have been so free with him," said Edward, "if I had known that he was a person of so much consequence."

"And pray what do you mean by consequence?"

“Why, Papa, from what you say, I suppose he is much thought of among people of rank and learning; so that he is used to be treated with great respect, I suppose.”

“Did you treat him with any disrespect?” asked Mr. Cleveland.

“Oh, no, no, Papa,” said Jane, eagerly, “Edward behaved very nicely indeed; but he means that we could not have expected a person like Mr. Peele to take such notice of two young ignorant children.”

“Now, in my opinion, Jane, you might have judged from my account that Mr. Peele was just the sort of man to take delight in encouraging the young, and instructing the ignorant. I would have you remember the command to ‘honor all men,’* and always pay to superior rank the respect which is due to it; but beware of paying too much attention to these distinctions, because it may lead you on the one hand to shrink from seeking useful information from those above you, and on the other to despise or overlook those whom you call your inferiors. Mind, I am

* 1 Pet. ii. 17.

speaking of Christians in both cases : as for those who are not religious, the less you have to do with them the better, except in the way of instructing those who are willing to let you speak to them of Christ."

"I should have liked," said Jane, "to have peeped into the other room; but Edward persuaded me to wait till we could have the profit with the pleasure."

"And he was right," replied her Papa. "We are in general very anxious to lay hold of whatever is agreeable so soon as it comes within our reach, when by a little patience and self-denial we might gain much more than we could lose. Edward perhaps remembers the lesson which he got from the gooseberry tree, nearly two years since."

"Indeed I do, Papa," said Edward, "and I should be sorry to forget it. As the tree was my own, I thought I might do what I liked with the fruit; and though you warned me not to eat any until it should be ripe, and promised us a little feast if we kept it till then, I could not prevail on myself to let it alone, but ate nearly all the gooseberries when they were not half softened. I suffered

pain enough after it to make me recollect it as long as I live; and when the day came, and Jane and my cousins brought their dishes of fruit to your table, and had what they liked of yours, how foolish I looked with my two or three gooseberries, and not half the allowance which the others got from you, because I brought so little!"

"There are few events of our lives," said Mrs. Cleveland, "that may not be made very useful to us, if we endeavor to draw instruction from them. Even the most painful are often the most profitable: for we may learn by them to watch and avoid what will be likely to bring sorrow upon us. Self-indulgence is a bad habit, and contrary to what the Lord Jesus commands, when he says, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.'"^{*}

"But, Mamma, should we always be doing just the contrary to what we like best?" Jane asked.

"If we be renewed in the spirit of our minds, my dear, it will be our delight to do

* Luke ix. 23.

the will of God ; the ways of wisdom will then be found ways of pleasantness, and we shall have grace given to choose them rather than the ways of sin, after the pattern of our blessed Master, who could say, ' My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me.'* But the carnal mind,—the nature that we are born with,—is enmity against God ; and so much of that nature as remains unchanged in us, will be always struggling to get the better of the new heart, and persuading us to spare ourselves, and to please ourselves rather than God. Against this we must strive ; and this is what the Scripture calls crucifying the old man."

"I understand something of it," said Edward : "for on a cold morning, and indeed many times when it is not cold, I often wish to lie longer in my comfortable little bed, although I know that, by doing so, I shall not have time to pray as I ought. If I indulge myself, I must rob God of his worship, and every thing seems to go wrong with me all the day ; but if I deny myself, and get up,

* John iv. 34.

and pray to the Lord, and study the Bible, there is no saying what a difference it makes. Is that like what you mean, Mamma?"

"It is, my dear boy; and I am very glad that you are able so far to see and to watch against a great snare, which has ruined many a soul. God ought to have the first-fruits of all that he gives you, Edward—the first of your thoughts, and the first of your actions,—the morning of each day, and the morning of your life. This is the sure way to bring a blessing on what remains."

"And, moreover," added Mr. Cleveland, "we know by experience, that what we do not give to God, Satan will take for himself. The heart which is not lifted to the Lord at early day, will presently be filled with idle and mischievous imaginations, or pierced with sorrows against which it has no defence; while a careful and early seeking for the blessing of God defends the soul from sin, and cheers it under grief. It has been very well remarked by a pious man, that if a sack be filled with wheat, there will be no room to put in chaff: so, if the heart be full of God and holiness, the devil will find little

opportunity to introduce his crafty devices."

"And now let me hear what you have to say of the different things which you have seen this morning. I mean, what you have gathered of useful information and valuable instruction."

Jane and Edward looked much delighted at this proposal; for a great part of their enjoyment in every thing was the repeating of it all to their dear parents, whose instructive remarks they always tried to remember.

Jane began—"The first thing, Papa, that struck me, was the wonderful way that they manage to preserve the animals and birds in, making them look so like life, that it quite deceived me at first."

"It is very curious," replied her father, "and very useful to those who study closely what is called natural history. I could do it pretty well, when a young lad; but having seen one of my friends brought very near the grave by the practice, I took rather a dislike to it, and left it off for something more useful, and less dangerous."

"What danger can there be in stuffing a

dead creature?" asked Edward. "I can suppose there may be danger enough in hunting a wild beast, or even in shooting birds; but when they are dead, what harm can they do you?"

"More harm than when alive, in most cases; for as soon as the carcass begins to corrupt, skinning it becomes a very unsafe operation. You know, I suppose, that what you have seen were merely the skins, with the hair or feathers on; this must be very carefully separated from the body, in doing which a sharp knife is used. Now, if there be the least degree of putrefaction in the animal, and the person cuts but the tip of his finger with the knife, or even scratches it, there is danger of sudden death, very often to be avoided in no other way than by having the hand or arm taken quite off."

"Oh how terrible!" cried both the children.

"Yes, this body of ours is so truly a body of death, that it catches in a moment the taint of actual corruption from another, and dies of it. You know, many disorders are contagious, or catching, as it is called. Some are taken by breathing the same air with a diseased per-

son,—others by eating or drinking from the same vessel,—others by merely touching the clothes of one who has been sitting by the sick. The small scars above your elbows show that you were inoculated, or vaccinated, to give you a light disorder, by way of preventing one much more severe; and, you remember, the same thing was done for little Mary a few months ago, by just pricking the skin of her arm with a lancet that had been put into the arm of another baby, and it gave her the complaint immediately."

"It only made her arm look red and festered for a little while," said Jane.

"True; but had the lancet been first applied to a person with the small-pox, instead of the cow-pox, Mary would have been covered from head to foot with dreadful sores, and become such an object as you could hardly have borne to see; and if it had just pierced the putrid body of any animal, our little Mary would most probably have died."

The children looked at their young sister, who lay in a soft and smiling sleep on her Mamma's lap: while Mrs. Cleveland gently kissed the rosy face, silently putting up a

prayer and thanksgiving to Him who had preserved, and blessed her babe with health.

Mr. Cleveland went on. "How liable our bodies are to catch any taint from others, I have explained to you; and our minds are, if possible, still more ready to take the far worse infection of sin. God has mercifully cautioned us to watch against this danger, by pronouncing that man blessed who will not stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful.* Again, He says, 'My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not;† and, 'Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men; avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.‡' Now, if such advice were given us, respecting a place where we should be sure to catch a fever or other dangerous bodily disease, we should thank the person who cautioned us, and follow his good counsel: but, alas! how few attend to these solemn warnings in what is infinitely of more consequence than the health or life of the body! We are not half so much afraid of sin as of sickness: we do not fully believe that one sin is enough to

* Psalm i. 1. † Prov. i. 10. ‡ Prov. iv. 14, 15.

shut a soul out of heaven ; and that to continue sinning because we know that Jesus died to save us, and lives to plead for us, is the greatest insult that we can offer to God. My dear children, remember how a scratch from a tainted knife often brings death into the most healthful body, and turns it presently to corruption ; remember also that a sinful action committed, a sinful word spoken, or even a sinful thought indulged in, may in like manner bring such disease into the soul as shall end in eternal death ? God has wonderfully ordered all his works, so as to give us lessons every day and hour, if we will but learn to read them rightly ; and this is certainly a most instructive one. May it be so to us all !”

“ Thank you, dear Papa,” said Jane. “ Now, when I see a stuffed bird or animal, I hope it will remind me to watch against sin.”

“ And me too,” said Edward, “ though I never thought to find such a lesson among them.”

“ Did your friend who was hurt lose his arm, Papa ?”

“No ; it was mercifully spared. He had a great wish to stuff a very fine specimen of the hawk species, though the person who brought it to him owned that it had been killed too long to be a safe subject. My friend had great confidence in his own skill, and went very nicely to work ; but, notwithstanding his care, the knife slipped and cut his finger. He suffered dreadful pain for two months ; and all the bad matter gathered into a very large abscess under his arm, where it broke, after much torture ; and by that means his life and limb were saved.”

“I shall be content to look at stuffed creatures, without trying my hand at preparing them,” said Edward.

“You will do wisely in that,” answered his father. “We ought not to run into any needless peril, particularly in gratifying our own idle fancies ; neither ought any danger to check us, when we are clearly following the word, and doing the will of God. You know it was one of Satan’s wiles, to draw our Lord into endangering himself presumptuously ; and he was defeated by the Savior with that word, ‘It is written, thou shalt not

tempt the Lord thy God :”* but when the blessed Jesus was encouraging his followers to endure persecution for the truth’s sake, he said, ‘ He that findeth his life shall lose it ; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.’† Always bear this in mind, that we are not our own, but are bought with a price ;‡ and that thought will, by God’s grace, both keep you out of needless dangers, and support you through every peril that you are called to meet for Christ’s sake.”

“ Thank you, Papa,” said Edward—“ I hope I shall not forget that good rule. The Bible never seemed so beautiful to me as to-day, when dear Mamma was constantly showing us how it helped to explain all that we saw, and made every thing ten times more interesting : and I must tell you, Papa, that I was as much pleased with the stones as Jane with the birds. I could have stopped all day to look at them.”

“ Were there any precious stones ?”

“ Oh, yes, Papa ; there were most lovely gems, such as rubies, redder than any thing

* Matt. iv. 7. † Matt. x. 39. ‡ 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20.

I could fancy ; and emeralds of such a deep rich green, that it would do good to inflamed eyes to look on the cool color ; and there were many more which I forget : but the most precious stones to me were the stones that prove my precious Bible to be true, Papa."

"He means the organic remains," said Mrs. Cleveland.

"Oh, then I understand you," observed Edward's Papa, "and most heartily agree in your estimate of a precious stone. My dear boy, God's word is the key and the index to all his works ; it throws light upon them too, and such a light as increases their beauty tenfold. I am glad that you saw the interesting proofs of the deluge : but how sad that man should need a proof, where God has spoken, and declared that so it was ! Did Mr. Peele explain them to you ?"

"No," replied Mrs. Cleveland, smiling, "I was the show-woman, and was in great request until this favorite Mr. Peele came forward, after we left that room, and I was glad to become a listener in turn."

"Oh, Mamma," said Edward, "don't think

that we liked any one's teaching better than yours. We would not have left you for twenty Mr. Peeles, only that he had seen what none of us had, and could describe it to us."

"It was quite right, my love; and I was nearly as much in need of information in that room as you were."

"Did you see any curious shells among the 'precious stones,' Edward?" asked his father.

"Some very curious, Papa; and so perfect, that I could have easily opened them with my knife, only they were under a glass, and out of my reach."

"You would have broken all the knives in the town first, Edward," observed his Papa, smiling. Every one of those substances is itself petrified, or turned to stone; and if you broke one with a hammer you would find nothing but the outside form to distinguish it—all the rest is hard, solid, and like any other stone."

"But what became of the fish, Papa?"

"It died, of course, and corrupted; and the shell being filled with some soft substance, that found entrance through the openings

and pores, all hardened together. It is wonderful how the most delicate have been preserved, with every line and every mark as distinct as when the sea left them there, at least four thousand years ago. I have often picked them up in my walks, and felt their value as I am glad to see that you do, both as wonders among God's works, and witnesses to his word."

"Do they lie deep in the earth, Papa?"

"So deep, that no mine has gone beyond where some kinds are to be found. The earth, as far as man's art has reached, is formed of different beds, or rows, called strata, consisting of every sort of clay, stone, and mineral. Remains are to be met with among them all, and sometimes the skeletons, horns, and teeth of animals unknown to us; some of such immense size, and so extraordinary a shape, that all the learned are puzzled to find out names for them."

"I know what I would like to be," said Edward.

"A miner, perhaps!"

"Something of that sort, Papa."

"You would find a vast and wonderful

store of most interesting objects buried deep beneath the surface of the earth ; but I doubt whether you would like to remain long in those dark damp places, shut out from the cheerful light of day, and far removed from the beauties of our upper world—the green grass, the shady trees, the fragrant and beautiful flowers, and the glories of the firmament. Neither sun, moon, nor stars, shine into those deep dungeons, but glaring torches, or pale lamps, give what light there is ; while the clang of hammer, axe, and mattock, take place of singing birds, and the cheerful voices of friends.”

“I wonder how any body can be a real working miner,” said Jane ; “and yet I am told there are hundreds and thousands down among the coal and other pits. What a wretched life they must lead !”

“I think so too,” replied her father ; “but we must not quarrel with their choice. If men were not found willing to go down into these dismal depths, we should be at a great loss for firing ; and must pay an extravagant price for the most common metals, buying them all from other nations, who compel

their slaves, and criminals, and other captives, to work in mines, while our free people go readily for reasonable wages."

"It is a wonder how coals were found out to be so useful," remarked Edward.

"Say, rather," replied his father, "how wonderful the mercy of God in laying up, in such vast storehouses, these treasures for the use of man. So long as the world was thinly peopled, the wood upon its surface must have supplied plenty of firing, as at this day most of the uncultivated parts of the globe bear immense forests. But as men multiply on any land, they consume the wood for building and other works, as well as for fuel, and clear the ground for corn and other vegetables; and then they must be utterly at a loss, only for the good Providence of God discovering to them, that, by digging deep into the earth, they may find such supplies as cannot be exhausted.

"After all," said Jane, "a poor miner is not so much to be pitied, as he has such opportunities of observing all this, and being made wise by it."

"We are not made wise by our opportuni-

ties, Jane," said her Mamma, "but by the grace that enables us to improve them."

"True," observed Mr. Cleveland; "and the poor miner is sadly shut out from the appointed means of seeking that grace. While others are being instructed by good books, or the discourse of pious friends, the miner is far, far beyond the reach of either, exposed to hourly peril of a dreadful death, and to all the snares of Satan, assisted by his own wicked heart, and companions as evil. Sunday being his only season of day-light and freedom, it is too often passed in riot and revellings, and utter neglect of God. Can you suppose that men of this character find any other profit in their employment, than the daily wages which they earn by venturing into the bowels of the earth?"

"And does nobody care for their souls, Papa?"

"Yes, many excellent ministers have taken a very great interest about them, and have descended into the mines, to preach the gospel of salvation even there; but when I am enjoying the comforts of a good coal fire, I do wish that the poor fellows who dug that

useful mineral from the pit were more frequently thought of among religious people, and greater efforts were made to instruct them. Only see what a deal of brass, iron, lead, tin, we are constantly using; and all this, like the coal, must be brought by miners to the surface of the earth, before it can be made at all serviceable to us."

"All this is very new to me," said Edward; "and though I may never go down into a mine myself, if ever I am able, I will be a friend to the poor miners."

"Very right," said his father; "and now I will tell you a history that may help to keep in your memory what you have just resolved on."

"Some years ago, I was on a visit to a friend who lived very near a large colliery, or cluster of coal mines, where a great number of workmen were constantly employed. They had been very much neglected, having no church within a reasonable distance, and except when some pious man came among them, they scarcely heard the name of the Lord otherwise than in the blasphemies which were too frequently uttered by themselves.

My friend had been a very short time in that neighborhood ; and, feeling for their miserable condition, he had taken the greatest pains since his arrival to do them good : but he was often treated very rudely ; for their way of life, and absence from all that can soften the character of man, must, as you may suppose, make them very rough in their manners. My friend, however, was one who knew how to make allowance, and would not be discouraged by the ill-behavior of a few from seeking the salvation of all.

“ One morning he received a parcel from a distant town, and told me that it contained some Bibles which he had sent for, as two or three of the miners had expressed a willingness to subscribe for the word of God ; and that he hoped that the good effect would be seen, and that the Holy Spirit would cause the truth to take root and to flourish among them. He added, “ There is one poor fellow, who is so anxious for his book, that I must take it to him at once ; for he wants to read it at his resting hours. Will you come with me, and visit what I can truly call regions of darkness, and of the shadow of death ? ”

“ I had never been into a mine, and wished to see one ; and I hope that a better feeling than curiosity led me to agree so readily to his proposal : he put a few Bibles into a small bag, and we set forth on our journey. Now, I see, you are all attention and eagerness to hear the rest ; and I promise you my story is worth listening to.

“ Dressed in our most ordinary clothes, we proceeded to the colliery where Tom Willis was at work ; and having reached the shaft, or opening, my friend desired the men to let us down,—which they did, by making us, in turn, seat ourselves in a large basket, lowering it by ropes to the bottom. My friend went first : and, wondering at the length of rope that they continued to unwind, I asked how far it was to the bottom. ‘ A good leap, Master,’ answered one, with rather a mischievous grin,—‘ about three hundred feet or so.’

“ I had observed the sort of look with which these men had regarded the bag so carefully carried by my friend ; and as the form of the books could be easily seen, I could not doubt that their ill-will was excited by them. So

sad is the enmity of the carnal mind against God, so unwelcome the message of love, and peace, and reconciliation !

“Committing myself to the care of the Lord, I got into the basket as soon as it was drawn up : and very giddy I felt while swinging from side to side, and losing rapidly the cheerful light of day. It certainly appeared a long journey ; but I found myself on my feet at last, and on solid ground, and taking the arm of my friend, we went on by the light of a lantern, which was carried by the guide : and after walking down a very slanting place, we got to the top of another, but much shallower shaft, and on reaching the bottom had but a little way to walk before we came to the party among whom Tom Willis was at work. There might be six or seven employed in breaking the masses of coal from the sides of the pit, and the noise was terrible ; so indeed was the appearance of the place, illuminated by candles stuck here and there in lanterns or lamps, and throwing a feeble light on the coarse black faces of the men close by them, while the farther part of the cavern was lost in total darkness.

“ We had chosen the time when the men would leave off to get their noon-tide meal ; and the clang of their iron implements soon ceased : they trimmed their lamps, got their baskets of provisions, and sat down, each by his own heap of coal, to refresh themselves. My friend saluted them, and was civilly answered by all ; and Willis expressed great delight on seeing him, and hearing what he had brought. Nothing, he said, could be more welcome ; for he found the word of God so precious, whenever he could get to hear it above ground, that he longed to possess it down in the pit, to read it at resting times, and to think on it when at work.

“ ‘ Do you then think much of what you hear, or read of that book ? ’ said I.

“ ‘ Indeed, Sir, ’ he answered, ‘ I’ve been used to think of very different things ; but since I saw my own state made out so plainly in the Bible, I can’t but think the whole book concerns me ; and therefore I cannot tire of it.’

“ ‘ And do you pray over it ? ’ said my friend.

“ ‘ It’s poor praying, Sir, in the midst of such a clatter as we are obliged to keep up ;

but I do lift my heart to God, through Christ, as well as I can : and at night, when above ground, I think I can say that I don't neglect to pray.'

"He took the Bible most thankfully ; and my friend, showing the rest, asked if any man wished to secure one. Most of them gave a civil answer, declining it ; but one, in a very surly way, said he did not pass all his days in that black hole of a place to earn a little money, and then lay it out upon books.

" ' Upon Bibles, you mean,' said one of his companions ; ' for you've an odd sixpence any day, when a song-book or jest-book comes across you.'

" ' And what then ?' said the surly miner ; ' if it please myself, who's to contradict me ?' and other things he uttered, to the same purpose, showing his contempt for God's word, his defiance of God's laws, and his determination to live in sin. We tried to reason with him, but it was to no purpose : some of the rest, however, appeared to listen attentively ; and on a remark being made that their lives were exposed to more dangers than most men's, one of these said to the stubborn sin-

ner, ' You may mark that, Dick ; for you are always taking your candle out in the damp, and will be blown up some day or other.'

" ' I'll trust my luck for that,' answered the bold transgressor—' I'll lay a wager on it that I live the longest of ye all.'

" The conversation ended by Willis's saying to him, ' Believe me, Dick Jones, you will be forced yet to give up trusting in luck, and glad to throw yourself on the mercy of the Savior whom you despise.' We added a few words on the power and love of that Savior, to whom every knee shall bow, either in willing duty, or in helpless despair, and left the mine, rejoicing to have carried thither the word of life, and praying that we might not have spoken altogether in vain to the poor thoughtless creatures there. Of Tom Willis we agreed in thinking most favorably, as of one who had indeed found rest in Christ, and who was bearing a faithful testimony among his ungodly companions.

" But how shall I tell you what followed ! That very evening, while I was sitting conversing with my friend, admiring the beautiful appearance of the sky at sunset, and pray-

ing that the Sun of Righteousness might arise to shine upon those who were shut out from the golden beams of day, a terrible noise was suddenly heard, followed by shouts, and cries, and the running of people from all quarters to the spot whence the sound had proceeded. I asked my friend what it could be; and never shall I forget his pale and solemn countenance, as he faintly answered, 'An explosion of fire-damp,' "

"What is fire-damp, Papa?" asked Edward, who had got close to his father's knee, in anxious interest.

"It is a vapor which often gathers in the coal pits, and is so inflammable, that it will go off like gun-powder, when touched by fire; and many a life is lost by it, through the carelessness of the men, who expose their candles to this combustible air.

"The noise, which was like the firing of great cannon, came from the very place that we had visited in the morning; and on hurrying thither, we found the people gathered about that same shaft. Alas! it was upon the very party whom we had so lately warned that the awful visitation had fallen; taking

Willis with his Bible, Jones with his jest-book, and their companions just as the hour found them—all, all were dead. I saw the mangled remains, when they had been dug out, and I saw the long, sad train of weeping followers, widows, and orphans, childless parents, and mourning sisters—which attended them to their common grave on the next Sunday. My friend wept too; but there was joy in his tears, when he looked on the coffin of Tom Willis; and reflected that his last day had been marked by a faithful confession of Christ, as his only Savior.”

“ Was he not glad, Papa, that he took the Bible down ?”

“ Glad beyond all that you can fancy : he thanked the Lord for pressing on his mind in the morning the importance of that text, — ‘ Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. ’ ”*

“ And I will tell you another text, Papa, that might have gladdened him ; ‘ In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not

* Eccles. ix. 10.

whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall be both alike good.*— Perhaps, Papa, what you and your friend said to the other poor men, was the means of bringing them to look to Christ, before they were taken away.”

“ I hope so, my dear: and my friend afterwards wrote, to assure me that the event had been blessed to many of their companions.— Among the rest, the man who let us down the shaft seemed much affected by it; and there was a great demand for the Bibles afterwards. But I must now go to my books, or I shall not have leisure to accompany you to-morrow. Pray over what you have seen and heard this day, my dear children; for prayer is like the skill by which the bee stores up in a hive, the sweets that she has been gathering from among the works of God—making a continual feast of it, for the dreary season.”

The children followed their dear father's good counsel; and on the next morning they were very early at their tasks, resolved not

* Eccles. xi. 6.

to make their parent's kindness an excuse for idleness. The hours passed swiftly, which would have seemed very slow, had they been doing nothing. I often think, that when people are looking forward to any particular time, and wishing it to arrive, they seem to forget that the moments which pass before it come, are just as important as any other part of their lives, and as much to be accounted for. I see them fidgetting, and looking at the clock, or from the window, and taking up some idle book to lay it down again. This is a great evil, which should be guarded against, and care taken always to find some useful employment to the last. Or, if so it can be managed, we might go and pray that the expected event may be blessed to our own profit, and that of all concerned in it. No Christian will enter into any thing, on which he cannot ask God's blessing.

CHAPTER III.

THE time came; and Jane and Edward again found themselves on the way to the museum of curiosities, with the additional pleasure of having their Papa of the party.— They talked away very merrily, and asked if he would not like to see the first rooms before they went on to the others: but he kindly told them that he would not detain them there. So they passed quickly through, and looked round the apartment, where they had met Mr. Peele: he was not there, but followed them almost immediately.

Jane and her brother hastened to meet him, and he began to say, "My dear young friends, I hope I have not kept you waiting," when seeing their father, he suddenly went forward, and took his hand most cordially, exclaiming, "Cleveland! how rejoiced I am to meet you again."

"And I, dear Peele, am more rejoiced; since I find my children already under obliga-

tions to one who knew not that they belonged to his old friend. I thank you most heartily for your kindness to them."

Some more conversation passed, and then they proceeded to the farther room, where a great many strange things seemed to be collected. Mr. Peele remarked, "Here are antiquities of Chaldea, Egypt, Greece and Rome, of Herculaneum, and a few other very remarkable places. The great difficulty here is not to stay too long, or to say too much, for the subjects are most interesting; "and our best guide," taking out his little Bible, "will assist us through all."

"Where shall we begin?" asked Edward.

"As we find them," answered his friend. "Here are some few relics from Greece, but not of the highest order, according to the general taste. Those two or three busts, and small figures were the work of the most celebrated artists that the world ever saw: men who lived long before the Christian era, and who have returned to dust these many hundred years, yet are at this day admired in their works, and as the world calls it, immortalized by them."

“Why, are not all people immortal?”—asked Jane.

“Yes, but men’s names perish with them, or soon after, unless they do some great thing to keep them in remembrance; and, you see, the sculptors who chiselled out these beautiful forms, are talked of, as much at the end of two thousand years, as if they had died last week. Is not that a very great matter?”

“Not to them, I should think, Sir,” answered Edward: “for if they be in heaven, they do not care what people talk about in this poor world: and if they be in torment, what comfort can they have in the praises of men, while the wrath of God is upon them?”

“Then you do not think it any honor at all to have done great things upon earth?” said Mr. Cleveland.

“Yes, Papa, I do, when it is none for the glory of God. I think it a great honor to Noah to have built the ark, because he did it in faith and obedience. It was a great thing too for the Mother of Moses to make that little ark of bulrushes, because she shewed her trust in God. And Solomon raising such a noble temple for the worship of the Lord,—and” —

Jane went on, as her brother paused, "And the people who unroofed the house, to let down the man sick of the palsy, at Jesus' feet! I would rather have had a hand in that work, Papa, than have cut all the stone in the world into figures."

"My dear children, you judge rightly: and now, I will tell you, that most of the sculptures which the world prizes so highly, were made for the very same purpose as the ugly idols in the next room, to be venerated as gods, and sacrificed to, and trusted in."

"What a shame," said Edward, "that such clever people should know no better than the poor savages!"

Mr. Peele went on: "The Greeks were, as you have heard, the wisest and most accomplished people in the world. St. Paul says, 'The Greeks seek after wisdom,' and he presently adds, that the preaching of the cross was 'to the Greeks foolishness.' The same apostle tells us, that 'the world by wisdom knew not God,'* and you will find that the learned pride of Grecian sages was as great a

* 1 Cor. xxi. 22, 23.

snare to them as the gross ignorance of the savage is to him. These images, Edward, which are so highly prized among us, are the very things that the early Christians refused to worship. They were required to burn incense on their altars, and because they would not do so, they were put to the most cruel deaths that could be invented. It was of these idols that the apostle wrote, when he said, 'The things that the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, not to God.*' Not that the Greeks and Romans really intended to do so; but they made to themselves gods, by paying adoration to the very works of the devil. For instance, one of their false deities was called the god of wine, represented as being always drunk, and presiding over drunkards. Another was the god of thieves, another the king of the infernal regions, that is, of hell: and to all these, and many more such, they built temples, and paid the highest honors. This, certainly, was serving Satan instead of God."

"Poor, miserable Grecians!" cried Jane.

* 1 Cor. x. 29.

“Yet there are pleasant things related concerning some of them,” continued Mr. Peele, “for you know that Paul made a journey among them, and formed churches in various places, and wrote epistles to them. Greece was once the mistress of the known world, and was represented in the image of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, by a body of brass. It gave way before the rising empire of Rome; and afterwards was, for many centuries, a mere province of Turkey; in our day it has risen again with some independence; but its great glory and power have for ever passed away. These are some of the poor remains of its ancient pride.”

“And lessons to other lands,” remarked Mr. Cleveland, “to shew the nothingness of all that has not God for its strength.”

“Here,” said Mr. Peele, “are some things from the ruins of Herculaneum.”

“Where is that, Sir?” asked Edward.”

“Very deep under ground,”

“How can that be?”

“It was a city in Italy, and by the sudden bursting of a volcano, it was in one moment buried in the earth. Look, here is a

bit of lava, which flows in a liquid state, blazing as it runs down the sides of the volcanic mountain, and afterwards cools and hardens, as you see. Villages are sometimes destroyed by these fiery streams suddenly breaking out ; and the appearance of the mountain at such a time is most awful. Herculaneum and Pompeii were thus destroyed, or rather buried so deep, that all trace of them was lost : but the ruins have been dug into, and the houses entered, and every thing that has been found, shows how their destruction came upon them in an instant. It is sad, to see the altars on which the foolish people had been sacrificing to their senseless idols, and the idols themselves all broken and mutilated, which never could deliver, nor hear, nor see their stupid worshipers. Here are a pair of scales, hanging with the weight in one, while the hand which was putting into the other the goods to be weighed, was struck with instant death. There is something, to me, very affecting in these simple articles of domestic use, because they bring before the mind the family party of parents, and children, friends and servants, and shew how dreadful are the

judgments of the Lord, when once His hand is stretched forth to smite a people. Consider, my dear children, that as the burning lava burst upon the inhabitants of these cities, overwhelming them in instant ruin, so, in a day and hour most unexpected, will the Lord be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* And, though you may not live to see that day with your mortal eyes, yet He may come upon you as suddenly, by some unforeseen visitation, and take you away to judgement without a moment's time to cry for mercy!"

The party all looked very serious; and some time passed before any thing more was said. They went a little further, and Mr. Peele stopped short before a very fine medallion, cut in bronze, and bearing round the edge a Latin inscription, "This," said he, "is the first that we will examine of those objects which are brought here as relics of the once mighty mistress of the earth,

* 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

imperial Rome. This is the head of Cæsar Augustus."

Jane and Edward both pressed forward, eager to look at it: their father asked them what made it so much more interesting to them, than the beautiful heads of Greece.—
"Oh, Papa! how can you ask that!" exclaimed Jane. "What happened in the days of Augustus Cæsar, Papa?" said Edward,—
"Oh, there never, since the world began, was a sovereign so honored as Augustus Cæsar!"

"Was he more honored than King Solomon?" asked Mr. Peele.

"Oh yes, he was indeed, as a king. In the dominions of Augustus Cæsar, there was a poor stable, where some of his subjects took shelter; and, Sir, a greater than Solomon was there among them."

"You speak most truly, my dear, dear boy," replied his kind friend; and may the Lord enable you always thus to judge between worldly greatness, and true glory!—
Yes, Augustus Cæsar was indeed honored above all monarchs, in that the King of kings deigned to be born into the world under his government: but, alas, it availed him no-

thing as a man, since he knew not the Savior, whom the shepherds worshiped in the stable of Bethlehem."

"The Romans," said Jane, "were very proud and cruel; were they not, Sir?"

"Man, in his fallen state, is naturally both cruel and proud, my dear; but, he has not always opportunities of showing *how* proud and cruel he can be. The Romans were possessed of great might, as a nation; their armies were victorious every where, and what they got by force, they often kept by oppression."

"Some of the Romans were converted, though," said Edward.

"Yes, a great many. See how St. Paul addressed them in his beautiful epistle; and, remember what a blessing came to Cornelius; and, what a friend the persecuted apostle found in Claudius Lysias, who saved him from the lying-in-wait of the wicked Jews, after rescuing him from their violence.*— Young people are often taught to think very highly of the Roman character, but, though

* Acts xxiii.

among men, its rough honesty may be looked on as more respectable than the degraded weakness of the Grecians, who lived in luxury, and were full of deceit, yet, I confess, I never could be an admirer of tyranny, cruelty and self-murder, which are among the great deeds of Roman heroism, with which we are called upon to be so much charmed."

"I am glad that the Bible has been my first book," said Edward; "for, now I think, that I shall not be so apt to take example by men who never knew God. I suppose any of those great heroes whom they talk so much about, if he had been in Pontius Pilate's place, would have done just the same."

"I fear so," said Mr. Cleveland, "for Rome was the place, where, during many years of cruel persecution, the followers of our Lord were continually brought to be murdered, for the amusement of the people, because they would not deny their crucified Master, or do homage to the disgusting idols of the land. They were burnt, beheaded, scourged to death, torn by wild beasts, and made to suffer every thing that cruelty and malice could contrive. Paul was a prisoner

there, you know, but as God sent him to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants, their power was restrained, so that they did not touch his life : but, innocent and holy as he was, they put a chain upon him,* and compelled him to bear that fetter, as a mark of disgrace. Do you remember what he says of Onesiphorus ?”

Edward repeated, “The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.”†

“Here are several fine medals,” said Mr. Peele, “which were struck in honor of Roman emperors, and great captains, and which remain very perfect to this day; but I think we are all agreed, that the hospitable and pious Greek, Onesiphorus, and the devout Roman soldier, Cornelius, have obtained a far higher distinction, by being mentioned in the word of God, among the despised followers of the Lamb. They are now kings and priests unto Him in his heavenly kingdom, and may we be with them there throughout eternity !”

* Acts xxviii. 20.

† 2 Tim. i. 16.

“But now, we have a more ancient period of history to enter upon: behold here, Edward, a brick, brought from the ruin of the mighty Babylon, ‘the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency,”* which was the terror of the whole earth!”

“There is a great deal about Babylon in the Scriptures,” said Jane: “I think Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, were always writing of it.”

“It was a very great city, I know,” said Edward: “for I have read about it in some of my books; and the account of its walls was quite surprising.”

“The walls,” Mr. Peele answered, “were of amazing size, and strength, and extent:—they were three hundred feet high, and eighty-seven feet in breadth; and measured in circuit from forty-eight to fifty miles. The city was guarded by one hundred gates of brass, immensely large and strong; while the Euphrates flowed beside the walls, deep and impassable. Near it was an artificial lake, thirty miles across, in every part; the temple of

* Isaiah xlii. 19.

Belus the idol of the Chaldeans, measured half a mile round, and was a furlong in height : and, in every respect the grandeur of great Babylon was unequalled throughout the world. Now, Edward, take my Bible, and read the prophecy which was written when the glory of Babylon was at its height, and a hundred and sixty years before it began to fall into the least decay."

Edward read from the places pointed out by his friend, the following passages. "Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their folds there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces."* "I

* Isaiah xiii. 19—22.

will cut off from Babylon the name and remnant, and son and nephew, saith the Lord.— I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction.* It “shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert.— Because of the wrath of the Lord, it shall not be inhabited; it shall be wholly desolate; every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished.” “Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest.” “How is the hammer of the whole earth cut asunder and broken! how is Babylon become a desolation among the nations?” “The wild beasts of the desert, with the wild beasts of the islands, shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein.”— “Cast her up as heaps and destroy her utterly—let nothing of her be left.”† “Thou shalt be desolate for ever. And the land shall tremble and sorrow, for every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon, to make the land of Babylon a desolation, without an inhabitant.” “The sea is come up

* Isaiah xiv. 22, 23. † Jer. i. 12, 13, 16, 23, 26, 39.

upon Babylon, she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. A land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth the son of man pass thereby.”*

“Now, let us consider,” said Mr. Peele, “that the great city of Babylon stood in the vale of Shinar, a very wide, level plain, one of the most rich and fruitful places in the world, watered by a noble river, and having a lovely climate. We may suppose, that the buildings, vast as they were, might have been overthrown by war, and time; and that the power of the empire might be broken, and pass into other hands, as that of the Persians, Greeks, and Romans, had done: but even though it had been so, yet the fine country remaining would have been cultivated, and some dwelling-places formed out of the immense ruins: for you see how strong the bricks and other materials must have been.—But such a thing could have never entered the head of any man, as to suppose that a place like that, should become so totally desolate, as not to shelter a human being—not to allow

* Jer. li. 26; 29, 42, 43.

a tent to be pitched, nor a spot of land to be cultivated, but to defy all that man might attempt to do, and remain to the end of the world in such a state, as to astonish all that pass by. Shall I tell you how all this is fulfilled ?”

“ Oh, pray do, Sir,” cried both the children ; “ we shall like so very much to hear it.”

“ Well, I will tell you nothing, but what has been declared by people who have traveled to see it, some of whom I know ; and have read the books of others. It is very remarkable, that some of those who have described the present state of Babylon, did not believe, or care about, the truth of the Bible.

“ Now, to begin : the prophecy says, that Babylon shall never be dwelt in ; but wild beasts, and owls, and dragons, that is, serpents, shall cry in the desolate houses, by which, it would appear, that the houses should in some way remain. We know not how Babylon was last visited, in order to bring it to its present condition ; but I will describe its appearance to you. There are long lines of what seem to be hills or mounds, in every part, looking as like natural hills as possible,

but formed of earth, rubbish, broken tiles, and stone ; these are the houses, palaces and temples of that great city ; and no doubt, they have been burnt at some time, as the black, and baked appearance, plainly shews."

"People should dig into them," said Edward ; "and then they might find some curious things, the same as at Herculaneum."

"Aye, but you forget the prophecy about the serpents, and other things. The walls of Babylon still remained, though in a very broken condition, about fifteen hundred years ago : and one of the Persian kings had them repaired, that wild beasts might be enclosed there, for the monarchs of the country to hunt, when they pleased, just as our great people keep foxes, and deer, to be turned out and hunted. The wild beasts soon made themselves at home in the ruined buildings, scratching their way through the rubbish ; and then they became very numerous. At length, the great walls all fell by degrees, but the beasts had lived so long there, that they did not give it up ; and to this day the place is full of dens, at the mouths of which lie great heaps of bones, shewing what the lions,

tigers, jackalls, and other savage creatures, have been preying on. Should you like to dig into these, Edward?"

"No, indeed, Sir, I should not wish to go near them. What next shall we examine in the prophecy?"

"If you please, Sir," said Jane, "explain to us, how it can be both a dry land, and pools of water. That looks like contradiction."

"You know, my dear," replied Mr. Peele, "that I told you the great river Euphrates runs by the place. On the farthest side there are still high banks, confining the river; but on the side next the city, all the bank is broken down, and the river has quite overflowed, and come up over the plain, and made much of it a marsh, besides filling many cavities with water, in pools, where the bittern and the cormorant, and other birds that frequent the water side, are seen in great numbers. This explains what is meant by the multitude of waves coming up, for the Euphrates looks like a sea there, overspreading the plain. I have already told you what a burnt appearance the great mounds of rubbish exhibit: nothing

can be more dry than the other parts of Babylon ; and when you consider that the walls were nearly fifty miles round, you will see that both parts of the prophecy may be, and are, wonderfully fulfilled in the same spot—the ruin of ancient Babylon. Did you observe the expression, ‘ cast her up as heaps ? ’ When a city is destroyed, it is generally by casting down every thing, and the ground is soon cleared ; but here, we find, the destruction of Babylon is seen in casting up heaps of ruins and rubbish ; and it is by this very thing that we are able to point out where once it stood. The Temple of Belus is an immense heap of two hundred and thirty-five feet high ; and some have lately ventured upon it, during the bright hours of day, when the wild beasts do not shew themselves, and from its height have looked around on all the desolate country. It is from these heaps that the bricks, of which you see one, are brought ; and when I look upon it, I think of haughty Nebuchadnezzar in his pride admiring the magnificent palace of which this very brick might possibly have formed a part, and saying, ‘ Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house

of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?"* God visited the monarch with present humiliation: and now how is his city, Babel, 'the hammer of the whole earth,' broken!"

"Why is it called a hammer, Sir?" said Jane.

"We are told in the fourteenth chapter of Isaiah, that the Babylonian power 'smote the people in wrath, with a continual stroke.' It is one of the beautiful and impressive emblems of the most beautiful of all books, the Bible."

"Was the tower of Babel built at Babylon?" Edward asked.

"It is generally supposed to have been so," replied Mr. Peele. "One of the ancient historians, Herodotus, mentions that the Temple of Belus, of which we were speaking, consisted of eight towers, placed one above another, the lowest of them being a furlong in height. It is certain that the ruins of the city of Babylon stand on the plain of Shinar, which is mentioned in Scripture as the place where that foolish and wicked attempt was

* Dan. iv. 30.

made;* and we therefore behold in these days the awful monument of an offence committed above four thousand years ago. The word Babel signifies confusion, and the place was so called from the confusion that the Lord brought upon them by making them speak in different tongues, so that a man could no longer understand his neighbor. The character of confusion remains at this day; for a more confused heap of ruins it is not possible to imagine, than those of Babylon: and its history, from first to last, seems to be a commentary upon those impressive words, 'Be not high-minded, but fear.' †

"I begin to think that broken brick the most interesting thing that we have yet seen," said Edward.

Mrs. Cleveland remarked that every thing appeared the more interesting according to its connection with the Bible; and that it was wonderful how those persons who did not study the Scriptures could take pleasure in looking upon such objects. Mr. Cleveland said that the great difficulty of bringing

* Gen. xi.

† Rom. xi. 20.

away any thing from such a place as the ruins of Babylon, might give it a sort of value in the eyes of idle persons ; but that it was not possible they should feel the delight of those who, by the Lord's mercy, were taught to trace his hand in every fragment of those mighty ruins.

“ We will now go on,” said Mr. Peele ; “ and here are some broken pieces of marble, which once belonged to immense statues : here also are some most curious specimens of the ancient way of writing, called hieroglyphics, or the representation of ideas by means of figures, instead of words. My dear children, these things came from a place not less famous than Babylon—from Egypt.”

“ Oh, let me look !” cried Jane—“ I should so like to see any thing from Egypt ; that is, any thing very old, as old as the things from Babylon.”

“ These may be much older,” said Mr. Cleveland ; “ for some of them were taken from the Pyramids, those wonderful buildings which are supposed by many to have been part of the work given to the poor oppressed people of Israel to perform.”

“Ay,” rejoined Mr. Peele, “the very marble on which I lean may have been moistened with the tears of those afflicted Israelites, whose task-masters laid heavy burdens on them: ‘and the children of Israel sighed, by reason of their bondage, and they cried; and their cry came up to God by reason of the bondage.’”*

Edward went on—“And then, when God had called to Moses out of the burning bush, He said, ‘I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry, by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows.’”†

“And with what a mighty hand, and stretched-out arm, He wrought their deliverance!” said Mr. Cleveland. “What do you learn from the recollection of these things, Edward?”

“I think, Papa, that I learn to hope in the Lord; and to feel sure that he sees me when in trouble, and can deliver me; and also that he sees me when in sin, and will punish me. He thinks of me, when I am not thinking of him.”

* Exod. ii. 23.

† Exod. iv. 7.

“That is true,” said Mr. Peele, “and we see it in the history of the Israelites : for it does not appear that they cried to God, whom, indeed they did not know aright, until he revealed himself to them by Moses. They cried and groaned through their suffering, but did not apply for help to the God of their fathers. Their sin in making the calf, to worship, proves that they had learnt the idolatrous ways of the Egyptians, who held that animal sacred. But God dealt not with them after their sins ; he remembered his covenant with Abraham, and had mercy on them. ‘O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men.’ ”*

“Egypt is not destroyed like Babylon, is it, Sir ?” said Jane.

“No ; but its glory has passed away, as was predicted by the prophets of the Lord ; and it has been for a long while merely a province of the Turkish Empire. No people were so learned as the Egyptians ; they were great astronomers, and had many arts among

* Psalm cvii. 8.

them ; and there is nothing in the world to be compared, among the works of men, with those Pyramids, which are even now quite perfect and uninjured, standing like great mountains, and to be seen from a distance of many miles. No kingdom upon earth is so ancient as that of Egypt—no nation, perhaps, had so many rich and populous cities, such power, and wealth, and influence. Such was its state when the prophecies were written, the fulfilment of which we will consider as we have done that of Babylon.”

“ Mr. Peele then showed them in the Bible these passages : “They shall be a base kingdom. . It shall be the basest of kingdoms. Neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations : for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.”* “The pride of her power shall come down.” “And they shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.” “I will make the land of Egypt desolate, and the country shall be desolate of

* Ezek. xxix. 14, 15.

that whereof it was full." "I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked. I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken it." "And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."* "The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."†

"Let us now see," said Mr. Peele, "how the prophecy has been fulfilled; and here I can speak boldly, having myself traveled over a part of that most celebrated, yet now most wretched kingdom. It was declared that Egypt should become the basest of kingdoms, her cities desolate and waste. I can assure you, that of all the grand palaces, temples, and splendid buildings, I saw only ruined fragments; while the present habitations of the people are cottages with walls of mud. For the last two thousand and nearly two hundred years, the country has been subject to foreign powers,—first to the Persians, then to the Romans, next the Saracens, the Mamelukes, and lastly the Turks. But the most wonderful thing of all is to see in what manner it has

* Ezek. xxx. 6, 7, 12, 13.

† Zech. x. 11.

been 'sold into the hand of the wicked,' 'laid waste by the hand of strangers,' and never ruled by a prince of its own. For many centuries, and until within a few years, the Beys or chiefs, whom the Turks deputed to rule over Egypt, were chosen from among the Mamelukes, who were slaves to the Turks: these were never succeeded by their sons, but by other slaves, again selected for that purpose; and, as bribes were given to the Turks to procure the appointment, Egypt was 'sold into the hand of the wicked' continually. Again, as the ruler must make up the money by cruelly oppressing his subjects, and robbing them, you see how it has been 'laid waste by the hand of strangers' still."

"I never heard of such a thing as that," said Edward."

"Nor any one else," replied his father. "Such a way of governing a country was never thought of elsewhere; and therefore Egypt, being thus governed, is certainly 'the basest of all kingdoms.'"

"Ah, Papa," said Jane, "if you were to tell all this to the poor miserable people who do not believe the Bible, it would convince them at once of its being true."

“My dear child, the most particular accounts that we have of these very things, concerning Egypt, were written by two men who were of that unhappy sort of people, and would not take the Bible as God’s word. The state of Egypt is a miracle, but no miracle will convince the despiser of the Bible. You know it is written, ‘If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead.’”*

Jane said, “Somebody told me the Gipsies were from Egypt.”

“Perhaps so,” said Mr. Peele; “for there is another prophecy,—‘I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them throughout the countries.’† In this they resemble the Jews; for the people called Gipsies are met with in almost every land: but only mark how the character follows them of being ‘base,’ that is, low and despised. The Jews are often possessed of very great wealth, and held in some respect; they are merchants and tradesmen in most lands; and, by concealing their religion, they sometimes

* Luke xvi. 31.

† Ezek. xxx. 26.

get into places of power. In many cities of Europe, you may find Jews living in elegant houses, with carriages and servants at command; but the wretched Gipsies are every where the same; and wander about in gangs, carrying their children on their backs, or in baskets strung across a donkey. Their houses are of wood, and put upon wheels, looking exactly like the caravans in which wild beasts are taken about for a show. They never remain long in one place, but live for a while on some open common, or in a grove, robbing all the farmers and others around them—cooking their food, over a fire of sticks on the ground, in a kettle hung from the point where three stakes meet, the other end of the stakes being driven into the earth. They are dirty, ragged, and most impudent,—pretending to tell fortunes, and so cheating poor ignorant people who believe in such sinful folly, both out of their money, and into a great offence against God. When a gang of Gipsies encamps, as they call it, in any place, all the houses round are better guarded than before—the cattle watched, the fowls locked up at night, and every thing done to avoid being robbed by

these basest among the people. Some kind Christians have taken great compassion on them, and have given them tracts, and read the Scriptures to them; and, as they certainly bear the mark of God's severe judgment, and appear to be another living proof of the truth of prophecy, I wish all would do the same. A poor wicked Gipsey, being once brought to believe in Jesus Christ, causes as much joy among the angels of God, and will be as welcome to heaven, and as happy there, as any other converted sinner can be."

After this, the party went a little farther, and Mr. Peele pointed out to them a very curious sword, with some characters engraven on it which they could not read. There was with it a pistol also, and some articles of house furniture, with others that seemed to be intended for household use, particularly a curious bowl, made of the shell of a large nut. Edward observed that they ought to have been in the other room, where the dresses and weapons of different nations were arranged; but Mr. Peele said that they deserved to have a place among the most valuable antiquities, as things well fitted to lead the mind to the

wonders of God's word. "These," he said, "belonged to a people whose history and character are not one bit less astonishing than those of the Jews or the Egyptians—I mean, the Arab tribes, who have kept for three thousand years the same condition among men which the Lord decreed to them in the days of Abraham."

He then again took his Bible, and showed Edward the prophecy concerning Ishmael, as spoken to his mother Hagar, so short, yet so remarkable. "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." "And he (Ishmael) will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."*

"Here," said Mr. Peele, "we have four things plainly declared. First, the race of Ishmael was to be extremely numerous—not to be counted; secondly, they were to live a wild or unsettled life; thirdly, they were to be at war with all other people; and, fourth-

* Gen. xvi. 10, 12.

ly, they were to remain—not to be driven away or brought into subjection, as all the nations around them have been, but to dwell in the presence of the others—before their faces—independent and distinct. If I can prove to you that all these things have been fulfilled exactly, and that the present state of the children of Ishmael is altogether what I have described, will you not own that the proper place for these curiosities is with those of Babylon and Egypt?”

“Yes, indeed, Sir,” answered the children: “pray tell us all about the descendants of Ishmael.”

Mr. Peele answered, “The Arabians or Arabs are the posterity of Ishmael; and on the whole earth there is not found a people so wild, so given to fighting and plundering, or so unconquered. In former days, they overran and subdued more countries than even the great Empire of Rome ever possessed, and made themselves masters of a large part of Europe, as well as of Asia and Africa; and from this you may judge whether they must not have been as numerous as the prophecy describes. Next, they al-

ways continued to be a wild people ; and even when they had conquered great and polished nations, and might have been expected to settle and to become like them, the Arab race could not change. Wild, fierce, restless, they still went on—plundering, and then departing to seek new conquests. At this day they overspread a very large territory, which has always been their own, and from whence none of the great conquerors, either Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, or Roman, could ever drive them, nor bring them into bondage. They live in the desert now, and dwell in tents—moving from place to place,—all their habits and character being as wild as you can imagine any thing to be. They subsist on simple food, and drink goat's milk ; and that rare and beautiful breed of horses, of which you may have seen some, called Arabian, with flowing manes, long tails, and full of spirit, are reared by them. The wild Arab makes his horse the companion of his family, gives him of his own food, and lets him sleep in his tent : these are the Arabs of the desert. The other race is called the Bedouin Arabs, who are chiefly

mèrchants, and considered very thievish too ; they travel in immense bodies, pitch their tents in some fertile spot near a large city, and often cause a famine, by consuming 'so much of the corn and provisions. Many of them have their houses in the most steep and rugged rocks, where they hollow out chambers, and secure the approach so that there is no fear of any invader. Now tell me, may not these people be really and truly called wild men ?”

“ Wild indeed !” said Edward. “ Pray go on, Sir ; for I like to hear about the Arabs, even better than of the rest—it is so strange.”

“ We are naturally fond of hearing strange and wonderful things,” said Mr. Peele. “ How comes it then that so few care to listen, when the greatest wonder that ever did or could take place is spoken of ? Why do people give so little heed when we tell them that the Lord, the Creator of the world, left the throne of glory in heaven to become a mortal babe—to be born in a stable, and to die on a cross, that they should not perish everlastingly ? Oh what power the devil has over our wicked hearts, that any strange history can move us more than this miracle of Almighty love !

“ We will now go on, my dear children, to the third point concerning the Ishmaelites— ‘ His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him.’ This has always been the case with the Arabians : as I told you, they made vast conquests, going against other nations ; but we never read in history of their forming an alliance with any. Plunder being their business, they know no difference of friend or foe, but set upon all alike ; and when they meet with any travellers whose appearance makes them suppose that they are persons of consequence, the Arabs take them prisoners, carry them off to their camp, and then send to demand a ransom for them—often asking large sums of money. When parties pass the great deserts, going from one place to another, they are obliged to join, forming very numerous companies, called caravans—guarded by a body of armed men, and having their property carried on camels, over which they keep a most anxious watch. But, in spite of all their care, the daring Arabs will often come galloping on, mounted on their powerful, fleet horses—brandishing such scymetars, or long curved

swords, as that before you,—their belts stuck with pistols ; and with the speed and fury of a tempest they fall upon the caravan, killing the guards, overpowering all resistance, and taking away with them the richly-laden camels, as also such of the travelers as they expect to have ransomed at a high price. This, you will allow, is having their hand against every man ; and you may be sure that every man's hand is against such a race of unmerciful plunderers, whom it is every body's interest to root out from the earth : yet, as I told you, none have ever been able to conquer them, even to this day ; and what do you suppose is their protection ?”

“I dare say,” said Edward, “it is their fleet horses, and sharp swords, and the houses in the rocks that you told us of.”

Jane said, “I think it is the prophecy that protects them.”

“Exactly so,” answered her Papa. “The Scriptures cannot be broken ; and while there is a nation upon earth, it must needs be that Ishmael's children shall dwell in the presence of all their brethren. Go on, dear Peele, to show us how that is.”

“You are every way as well able to do it as I am,” answered Mr. Peele ; “but, since you wish it, I will. My young friends were both right, only that Edward mentioned the means, and Jane the cause of the wonderful preservation that we speak of. The brethren in whose presence the Arabs dwell, may be taken to mean the nations that surround them—the Turks, the Persians, and others. These, however powerful or numerous, cannot subdue the wild Arabs, nor even put the least check on them, except by paying them large sums of money to purchase their own safety or that of their caravans. Travelers may obtain both protection and guidance from them, by the same means : but the tribes of Arabs are so independent of each other, that those who have undertaken the safe conduct of a stranger must sometimes fight to secure their charge from their own plundering brethren. No one thinks of going regularly to war with the Arabs : no one dares to provoke them. They fear none, but are feared, and hated, and courted by all who have anything to lose. Their protection is bargained for, to a certain day, or as far as some particular place, and

then it ceases. No people on earth are so independent as the Arabs ; and their history I think you will allow to be most wonderful."

"There is no end to the wonders that we have seen and heard here," said Edward ; "and how very good it is of you, Sir, to take so much trouble in giving us all this nice instruction !"

"Ah, yes," said Jane ; "we never can thank you enough, Sir ; and I hope that we shall be much benefited by it."

"My dear children," answered the kind gentleman, "I am well repaid by finding that you listen with a real desire for information. Nothing is so encouraging to a teacher, as to see his pupils anxious to learn ; and nothing more distressing than to behold them careless and inattentive when he endeavors to instruct them. I have been quite sorry to see some young people, and some older ones also, just cast their eyes over such interesting collections as this, and go out again, having got nothing by their visit, as I should fear, but just an excuse for saying that they had been to see the curiosities."

Edward said, "That is what I talked of

doing before I came here : but my sister convinced me it would be foolish to play the butterfly when we might imitate the bee. She was right ; and I am very glad that I followed her good example."

" And what can be more delightful to me," said his Papa, " than to see my dear children setting a good example to each other ? We may all lead our companions right or wrong, more than we are aware ; and this should keep us ever praying for grace to ' shew out of a good conversation our works with meekness of wisdom.'* I am myself glad that I did not lose the sight of these Arabian spoils ; for indeed they interest me more and more, every time I compare the prophecy with its most wonderful and exact fulfilment."

Mrs. Cleveland said, " I think the wonder is not in the fulfilment of prophecy, for what God has said **MUST** and **SHALL** come to pass ; but it is truly wonderful that, when people see such changes as those of Egypt and Babylon, or such an unchanged state as that of the Arabs, they will puzzle themselves to

* James iii. 13.

find out causes which never could account for them to any body's satisfaction, instead of following the prophet's advice, 'Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read.'* Men do not like to be reminded of God's unchangeable truth, because they know that his word is full of threatenings against impenitent sinners; and therefore it tells them that, except they repent, they must perish; and that it will be more tolerable in the day of judgment for Tyre and Sidon, than for those who have the gospel, and yet will not obey it."

"Is there any thing here from Tyre and Sidon?" said Jane. "I shall be glad if there is, as I wish to hear about them."

Mr. Peele smiled, and replied, "You may hear of them, my dear, without having any other thing from thence to look at than the friend now before you; for I have been there, and in Jerusalem too."

"In Jerusalem!" cried out both children together—"and have you been at Bethlehem?" Jane asked; "And on Calvary?" said

* Isaiah xxxiv. 16.

Edward, both looking at him with greater eagerness than ever.

“Yes; I have trod the plains of Bethlehem, where shepherds kept watch over their flocks by night; and the angel of the Lord came to tell them that in a stable was born unto them a Savior, even Christ the Lord. And I have been on Calvary, where that Saviour, nailed to the shameful cross, cried out, ‘It is finished,’ and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.”

A deep awe came over the children: they looked down, and all the party remained in solemn silence for a minute. Then Mr. Peele went on:

“I have also been at Damascus, where Paul went as a persecutor, and remained as a preacher; and I have visited the seven churches of Asia, admonished so strikingly in the second and third chapters of the Revelation. Your kind Papa promises to take me home to dinner; and then, if the Lord permit, you shall hear something of my travels, in the course of which I have had more than one meeting with the unconquered and unconquerable race of Ishmael.”

Edward and Jane did not know how to express their delight at hearing this. They thanked Mr. Peele over and over, in which their Papa and Mamma joined.

After looking a little longer at the curiosities around them, Mr. Peele said, "Now I have to conduct you to one more room, which, though the smallest, and containing but a solitary object, is perhaps the most interesting of all, and the fullest of instruction."

It may be supposed that Jane and her brother were anxious enough to know what this could be; so they gladly accompanied their friend, who, taking a hand of each, led them into a very small room, where, in a niche or recess, there stood something which perplexed them to guess what it might be. In shape, it was much like a coffin, set on the smallest end; but the upper part was in the form of a head. All, from top to bottom, was covered with some substance like paper, with painting and gilding, in strange figures, on every part. This covering was ragged in some places; but under it they could see more of the same sort, only softer, and not so much ornamented.

After looking at it a long while, Edward said, "Now do tell us what it is, Sir."

"It is a human being," answered Mr. Peele.

"Oh! is it a man—a dead man?" cried Jane, shrinking back.

"Do not run away," said her Papa. "I heard you once say that you should like to see an Egyptian mummy, and now you have your wish."

Jane was surprised. "Is that a mummy? It is curious indeed: I did not know that a mummy was so large."

"It is a very fine one," said Mr. Peele; "and it is wonderful to consider that it cannot have been in that state less than between two and three thousand years. How much longer, no one can tell. It came from one of the catacombs of Egypt, where it had lain embalmed, until the curiosity of man brought it from its resting-place, for the idle to gaze at, and for the serious to meditate upon.

"That is really such a body as ours, though you cannot see the limbs: for the arms are bound down, and the legs and body all together wrapped up in the many coatings of linen, and papyrus, and other compositions, for which we now have no name. Great art must have been used in preserving corruptible clay so perfectly; and no doubt the form

before us was that of some great noble, or king, from the vast care and expense used in his interment. Oh! what a lesson to human pride, when the very means taken to keep that body from mixing with its kindred dust, have only occasioned it to be brought here, an unburied corpse, to be gazed and wondered at by the humblest who choose to approach it!"

"I am sure," said Edward, who seemed half crying, "I would rather be put into the grave, and return to dust, as God decreed, than be made such a show of!"

"But," added Jane, "though I think so too, yet, after all, what does it signify where our poor bodies go to, if our souls be safe with the Lord Jesus in heaven? That is the great thing to care about. Is that person's soul in heaven; Sir? do you think it is?"

Edward said, "I am afraid not."

"Why do you suppose so?" asked his Papa.

"Because he was an Egyptian, Papa; and I think those people are always mentioned as God's enemies."

"Yes," replied his father, "the Egyptians, as a nation, are so spoken of. They were the

oppressors of the Lord's people, who, however, at times sought their alliance against other enemies; and for so doing they were severely reprov'd, as you may see in the thirtieth chapter of Isaiah, where the prophet threatens, 'Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord'—'that walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth, to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion.' Observe, the cause of God and of his people is one: Christ is the Head—his church the body; the enemies of his church are his enemies, and the persecutors of his people persecute him. When, therefore, the followers of the Lord seek to strengthen themselves by forming alliance with those who despise Him, they greatly dishonor their Master—making it appear as though the might of his glorious arm was not enough to defend, and to give them the victory. The least service from the humblest believer is readily and graciously received by our Almighty King; but he seeks not to be

helped by his adversaries. You know that a damsel possessed with a spirit of divination—an evil spirit—used to follow Paul, in the city of Thyatira, when he and his companions were preaching the gospel; and she constantly cried out, ‘These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.’* What she said was true; but the Lord would not accept the witness of an evil spirit, and therefore enabled Paul to silence the girl, by casting out the devil. We must be very cautious, as to where and how we seek help, remembering that God would not suffer Israel to receive assistance from Egypt, though it was against the powerful and cruel Assyrians.

“But, to return to what you said, Edward, we must not be sure that no good thing could come out of Egypt. You remember Nathaniel, who, on being told by his brother Philip that they had ‘found Him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph,’ doubted, asking, ‘Can there any good thing come out of

* Acts xvi. 16, 17.

Nazareth?*" Even in the days of the cruel tyrant who oppressed the children of Israel so dreadfully, we find the daughter of Pharaoh herself acting a most tender and merciful part towards the forlorn Hebrew babe whom she discovered amid the bulrushes. We read also, that when the people of Israel went out of Egypt, a mixed multitude followed them: and of these we may suppose that some at least were induced to do so from having seen that God was with them, and, becoming obedient to the law, as given to Abraham and to Moses, were received among the true worshipers. We must beware of judging too hastily, and of condemning individuals because of their place of birth, or other matters not depending on themselves: you know that, in some parts of the world, a black skin is considered excuse enough for making our fellow-men slaves, and treating them far worse than beasts of burden are treated among us. God cannot approve of such distinctions, even putting the dreadful wickedness of oppressing our brethren out of the question. He tells us, by the mouth of his apostle, that He 'hath

* John i. 45, 46.

made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth'*—that 'the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men.'† By his prophet He invites them, 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth : † and, to show that no nation is cut off from his promises, we are told by St. John, in his sublime and glorious Revelation, that he beheld, 'and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.'‡ We know that an immortal soul once dwelt in that body now before us ; but whether it is, at this day, with Christ in blessedness, or with the rebellious spirits reserved under chains and darkness to the public and awful judgment of the last day, it is not for us to decide. One thing alone we are sure of—that is, that our own portion

* Acts xvii. 26. † Titus ii. 11. ‡ Isa. xlv. 22

§ Rev. vii. 9, 10.

must be eternal and unchangeable in heaven or in hell, according as we are in Christ or out of him."

"Tell me, Papa," said Jane, "will that very same body which we now see come to life again at the day of judgment?"

"It will be substantially the same, my dear. That we shall all arise with our own bodies, is clear from many passages of Scripture; but they must be greatly changed.— We know that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven;'^{*} neither could it remain unconsumed in the fires of hell. We also know that, while of innumerable millions of bodies scarcely one is preserved like this before us, the greater number are soon turned into dust, and many have been burnt to ashes, or devoured by wild beasts and fishes. When the dust is blown into my face on a windy day, and I turn from the disagreeable annoyance, I often think how probable it is that the little particles have, some time, formed part of a human being like myself—perhaps of some proud child of wealth, who would have disdained to walk upon the

^{*} 1 Cor. xv. 50.

ground with which he is now mingled ; and who was as much admired and envied in the shape of man, as he is now disliked and despised in that of a handful of dust. Such thoughts help, at times, to keep me mindful of my state. The Lord, in mercy and compassion, 'remembereth that we are but dust :'* we ought also to remember it in humility and sorrow, because it is for our sin that we are condemned to return to the ground from whence we were taken.†

Mr. Peele said, "The apostle Paul, in the fifteenth chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, has told us all that we need to know, while he reproves the proud curiosity, or worse unbelief, of those who wish to be wise above what is written. Let us read his words, commencing at the thirty-fifth verse. 'But some man will say, how are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die ; and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain ; it may chance of wheat, or of

* Psalm ciii. 14. † Gen. iii. 19.

some other grain : but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.' This is a very beautiful comparison, and may help us to understand as much as God sees fit for us to know of this great and glorious mystery. We put a grain of wheat in the ground ; there it swells, and corrupts, and dies ; yet from it springs a plant, which could not have grown except the seed had been so buried. The blade of wheat is not the grain, nor does it resemble it ; the green stalk is not the grain ; neither is the full ear of corn the grain that was sown ; yet we know, and are sure, that they are all of that particular grain, and of no other."

"I can understand something of this," observed Jane ; "for last autumn Edward picked up an acorn, and put it in the ground, in a corner of the garden : in the spring a young plant grew up, and that got larger ; and Edward is quite fond of it, and says, ' See, sister, this is the acorn that I sowed last year : how nicely it grows !' The young tree is not a bit like the acorn ; but Edward speaks true for all that."

"You have helped us out very satisfac-

torily," said Mr. Peel; "and how merciful is the Lord, so to order what we call the works of nature, as to give us a better understanding of the nobler work of grace? If our hearts were right with Him, every spot that we see,—the garden, the corn-field, the sheep-fold,—the river and the ocean,—the starry heavens above, and the small blade of grass under our feet,—all, all would speak to us of Him—would tell us of his creating power, of his providential government, and of the unsearchable riches of his redeeming love. We know not what delight we lose by suffering Satan to fill our minds with idle fancies, and with worldly thoughts, when the great works of the Most High are spread before us, and he invites us to meditate on them in our hearts, and to let our lips show forth his praise."

Edward, after a little while, said, "I cannot help thinking, when I look at this strange figure—of Lot's wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt."

"I am glad," replied his Mamma, "that your thought is of so profitable a kind; for

we are commanded to 'remember Lot's wife.'* Do you recollect why she was so awfully set up as a monument?"

"Yes, yes, Mamma, I do; and I was considering, too, that, like her, the Israelites would have gone back to the place from which God had delivered them; for they hankered after the flesh-pots of Egypt, you know. And this rich Egyptian, whose friends could afford to preserve his poor body in this wonderful way, what is he the better now, Mamma, for his flesh-pots? If he be in heaven his riches never brought him there; and if not, ah! what good can the remembrance of them do him?"

"Poor Egyptian man!" said Jane—"it makes me sad to look upon him, because I have not much hope that he belonged to Christ. But will you tell me, Sir, how they can contrive to keep a person in this way for so many hundred years?"

"I cannot exactly tell you, my dear," answered Mr. Peele; "for the art of embalming so perfectly, is lost, with many other wonder-

* Luke xvii. 32.

ful arts, which were known to the ancient Egyptians. What you see is not, in fact, the body, but the outermost of a very great number of wrappers, in which it is tightly bound up. These are prepared so as to prevent the least degree of air or moisture from reaching the corpse within; and where all is so perfectly dry, corruption does not easily take place. The body was opened after death, and filled with many strong spices and other things, to prevent decay there. This was practised in most Eastern countries, and is still done, for kings and great men, though not with the perfection of art that we see here. Do you not remember that the pious women were going to have the same thing done for the body of our blessed Lord Jesus?"

"Yes, Sir; they wound it in linen clothes, with the spices that Nichodemus brought—a hundred pounds weight of myrrh and aloes."*

Edward said, "And on the first day of the week, the women came with spices and ointments which they had prepared on the night of the crucifixion; but the Lord had risen from the dead before they arrived."

* John xix. 39, 40.

“Yes,” said Mr. Peele; “and do you not see the hand of God very remarkably in all this? Our Lord being crucified on the day before the Sabbath, was not taken down from the cross until towards night; and as the Jews reckoned the Sabbath from sunset on the preceding day, it would not have been lawful to have done what could not be called necessary work, after their Sabbath had begun. The winding of the body with spices was to keep it fresh until the day of rest should have passed away; and by this means, the sacred body of our Lord was preserved from any other wound than those inflicted by the nails and the spear. We are told that, having prepared the spices and ointments, they rested on the Sabbath day according to the commandment.* O children, what a Sabbath was that! God rested from his work of creation on the first seventh day, and from heaven beheld all that he had made, and called it good: but what words can we use, when speaking of the awful Sabbath on which the Lord of glory rested in the darkness of a se-

* Luke xxiii. 56.

pulchre ! Six days had seen the vast work of creation completed : thirty-three years of sorrow and suffering were numbered by the Son of God, before he could say, 'It is finished,' and rest from the yet more mighty and amazing work of redemption. Can we know these things, my young friends, and yet be cold and careless towards that Savior who for our sakes stooped even to the tomb ? Alas ! what a lesson we have before our eyes at this moment ! We may talk of the love of Christ, of his Almighty power, and perfect willingness to save : but here is one of our sinful race who cannot profit by it,—a mortal body from which the spirit has long flown, and taken its station either before the throne of the Lamb, or in the place where is wailing and gnashing of teeth. He was a heathen by birth, no doubt : and we cannot tell whether he was ever joined to the people of the God of Abraham, who were saved by faith in a coming Savior. He died before that Savior came in the flesh. Let us lay to heart what concerns *us*, and ask, how shall *we* escape if we neglect so great salvation, which is every day spoken in our hearing, or engraved before our

eyes in the pages of our blessed Bibles ! I long traveled about the world, pleasing my fancy with such things as you have seen collected here, but under no concern about the things that are not seen, though the first are temporal and perishing—the last eternal and unchangeable. It pleased the Lord, at length, to shew me a sight which I never had desired to see—the sinfulness of my own heart ; and many a sorrowful hour I have spent in regretting days and years thrown away in idleness, while so much work was to be done for my heavenly Master. Dear children ! pray that He will early impress your young minds, as indeed I trust he does, with a sense of what you owe to Him who giveth you richly all things to enjoy ; and beseech him to bestow on you grace to be his faithful servants, and to show forth his glory among men, ere you become like this, a lump of senseless, helpless, immoveable clay.”

Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland were very thankful to hear their friend give so much good counsel to their dear boy and girl. Pious parents are often much disappointed, when visitors who are well able to speak of the Savior, and to direct young people to him, do not

take the opportunity of instructing the children of the family on that subject, but merely question them about their other studies, and their amusements. Children, too, are seldom found so anxious as they ought to be for profitable conversation with those who love God: It is not good for young people to put themselves forward, and to interrupt the discourse of their elders; but if, when a pious friend is so kind as to notice them, they would modestly ask such questions as might show a desire for spiritual instruction, they would often have cause to be very glad that they did so. Let them remember the holy child Jesus, who was found sitting among the doctors (or teachers) in the temple, "both hearing them, and asking them questions."* No young boy or girl need be afraid to follow that example, so long as it is done with the meek and lowly spirit of the blessed Jesus; without pride, or pertness, or affectation of being wiser than other little folks. Nothing can be more teasing than the silly questions of an idle child; but the serious inquiries of one who really wishes to be taught it is very delightful to answer.

* Luke ii. 46.

CHAPTER IV.

HAVING now seen all that was interesting in the collection, the party turned towards home—Jane and Edward not a little anxious to learn from Mr. Peele the particulars of his travels in a country so very dear to every person who loves the Bible. However, they did not trouble him with any questions; but, while their Papa was talking with him before dinner, they quietly went to their maps, and looked at that of Asia very carefully, in order that, when Mr. Peele should mention any place, they might know whereabouts it was. This, and talking over what they had seen, employed them pleasantly, until they were called to the dinner-table, where they heard a good deal of instructive conversation between their parents and Mr. Peele.

At the removal of the cloth, some fruit was brought in; and among the rest, some very fine grapes. Mr. Peele pointed to them, and

asked Edward what they reminded him of. Edward answered that he was then thinking of the grapes of Eschol, which the spies brought to Moses from the land of Canaan, to prove what a good and fruitful country it was.*

“And what has Jane to say,” asked their kind friend.

Jane replied, “I was not thinking about them, Sir, till you asked my brother; but they often remind me of what the Lord Jesus said, ‘As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me:’ for He had said, ‘I am the vine; ye are the branches.’”†

“And how do you understand that passage, Jane?”

“I think, Sir, when I look at a bunch of grapes, how sure I am that the branch where they grew was really a part of the vine; for if it had been cut off, no fruit could have come of it. Then I remember that, if I do not belong to Christ as much as the branch belongs to the vine, I can no more do anything to please God, than a dead stick can bear fruit.”

* Num. xiii. 23.

John xv. 1, 2.

“Very right,” said Mr. Peele: “and you know what St. Paul says about living through Christ only. ‘I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.’* Let us hear what Edward can make of that passage.”

Edward considered a long time; and Mr. Peele handed his Bible over to him, bidding him not hurry, but try to find out the exact meaning. At last Edward said, “I think I understand it well; but it is not easy to put my thoughts into proper words.”

“Do the best you can, my boy; and we shall be well content.”

“Then, Sir, I am thinking that, when a man leaves the wicked, ungodly world, he is like a little branch cut off from a tree.”

“Very well: go on.”

“I suppose that is what the apostle means by being crucified with Christ, because our Lord says that, if a man will follow him, he must leave all that he has, and take up his cross.”

* Gal. ii. 20.

“Right.”

“Then, Sir, the little branch is not able to live by itself; but if you graft it into another tree, and settle it nicely, it will grow and bear fruit.”

“Proceed, Edward.”

“Is not that the way with the believer, Sir? He is grafted into the Vine, and he lives, but not of himself: it is the life of the Vine that makes him live. The sap comes to the grafted branch, to nourish it; and so Christ makes his branches to grow. If they were cut off from him, they could not live any longer.”

“I am much pleased with your explanation, Edward,” said Mr. Peele; “and I hope your Papa is so likewise.”

“I am,” said Mr. Cleveland. “But, Edward, what made you think about the grafting?”

“Partly, Papa, what St. Paul says about the olive-tree, in the eleventh chapter of the Romans, which Mamma explained to us last spring, when we were seeing the gardener graft the pear-tree.”

“It is a great encouragement to me, Ed-

ward," said Mrs. Cleveland, "to find that you remember the instruction given. And here, again, take notice how the Lord has ordered his wonderful works, so as to explain his blessed word."

"Now," said Mr. Peele, "though I cannot, alas! give you of the grapes of Eschol—no longer fruitful as in the days of Moses—yet I will fulfil my promise, and let you hear something of that country, so long the rest of God's chosen people, and now, because of that people's sin, trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and made little better than a barren wilderness, compared with what it formerly was."

Nothing could be more delightful to the children than this beginning; nor were Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland less desirous of hearing what could not but be very interesting to them. Mr. Peele could not have wished for more attention than he saw on the countenances of the little party around him.

"After passing some short time in Egypt, I proceeded to visit the land of Canaan; and I need not tell you that it was with very great interest I approached the country where 'God

manifest in the flesh' had dwelt among men—the country, too, chosen and prepared by the Lord to be the earthly resting-place of his own people, whom he had brought out of the Egyptian house of bondage ; and the type of that heavenly rest where his redeemed ones should dwell forever, when safely delivered out of the sorrows of this sinful world. You know how beautiful and how wonderfully fertile the land of Judea was—'A good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills ; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates ; a land of oil olive and honey.'* This, and many other passages, show us the richness of the country in what are called its natural productions ; and when you consider that the twelve tribes were settled within its borders, with all their wealth, and all their power, employed in making it a place of commerce and of strength, you may suppose what a vast number of noble and populous cities it contained, even if the Bible did not constantly make mention of them. Indeed, so great was the traffic, and so con-

* Deut. viii. 7, 8.

stant the passing of large companies to and from Jerusalem, and from city to city, that we know there were no fewer than forty-two large and convenient high roads through the land—with the greatest abundance of carriages, to bring the Jews up to the temple on their solemn feast-days. Then, the multitude of the people being so great, not a spot of ground was left waste, but up to their highest tops the very rocks were cut into terraces, rising one above and behind another, like a flight of stairs; and every one covered deep with fine rich mould or clay, in which they planted their vines, and their corn, and the great number of fruitful roots, herbs, and trees which that soil nourished. The plains were covered with noble cities, broad roads, splendid gardens and vineyards, fountains, lakes, and rivers; the art of man formed fine aqueducts, by which the water was conveyed to those places where it did not naturally flow; and, altogether, the glory, and beauty, and riches of that land seemed to be unbounded. You know that the Lord promised temporal blessings and prosperity to the Jewish nation, if they would walk in his ways, and do his

commandments. Every man must give account of himself, alone, to God ; and he will be happy or miserable in eternity, according as he has served the Lord, or not : but nations are not so judged, because they are no longer nations, but separate persons, after death ; and therefore we see the Lord blessing or punishing a country, according as they do good or evil. Pharaoh king of Egypt was very wicked—so were his subjects ; and you know that, when they oppressed God's people, and refused to deliver them, He sent plagues throughout all the land, still preserving the place called Goshen, where the Israelites dwelt, from these terrible visitations. Can my young friends tell me of any passage in the Scriptures, where the Lord is represented as thus dealing with countries according to the conduct of their inhabitants ?”

Edward repeated, from the hundred and seventh Psalm, “ He turneth rivers into a wilderness, and the water-springs into dry ground ; a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein. He turneth the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into water-springs,

and there He maketh the hungry to dwell, that they may prepare a city for habitation; and sow the fields, and plant vineyards, which may yield fruits of increase."

"There are many such striking and beautiful descriptions in the Bible," said Mr. Peele; "and most terrible threatenings against those nations who, knowing God, forsake him and break his laws. We have been considering the state of Judea during the time when God was owned as their King: now let us look at the prophecy which particularly describes the judgments that should be brought upon it when the people had filled up the measure of their iniquities."

The first passage to which they turned was the twenty-first chapter of Leviticus, in which the Lord makes known what shall be the dreadful consequences of departing from his laws. In that chapter they read—"I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation, and I will bring the land into desolation, and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it: and I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land

shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate; and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate, it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths when ye dwelt upon it."

Jane was reading this; and paused as if she wished to speak, then said, "May I ask a question?"

"Certainly," replied Mr. Peele.

"Then, Sir, please to explain to me what is meant by the land enjoying her sabbaths?"

Mr. Peele answered, "It was one of the strict commandments given to the Jews, that, as every seventh day was a day of rest to themselves, so every seventh year should be a sabbath to the land. Turn to the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus, and see what is there written: 'Six years shalt thou sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord; thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard. That which groweth of its own

accord of thy harvest, thou shalt not reap, neither gather the grapes of thy vine undressed; for it is a year of rest unto the land.' ”

The children seemed surpris'd at this, and Edward inquired whether all the corn and fruit that grew of itself was to perish on the ground in that year.

“ Oh, no,” answered Mr. Peele: “ for if you proceed you will find it written, ‘ And the sabbath of the land shall be meat for you; for thee, and for thy servant, and for thy maid, and for thy hired servant, and for thy stranger that sojourneth with thee, and for thy cattle, and for the beasts that are in thy land, shall all the increase thereof be meat.’ ”

“ I should like to understand the reason of all this,” said Edward.

“ God’s ways and thoughts are far above ours,” replied Mr. Peele; “ and it is also written, ‘ He giveth no account of any of his matters;’* so that, in reading the Bible, we must beware not to search too far into the counsel of the Lord; but in this case we may

* Job. xxxiii. 13.

perceive many beautiful and instructive lessons conveyed in what you appear to think so strange. First, it is the Lord who gives us all that we enjoy ; and he will be acknowledged as our great Benefactor in every thing : but this land of Judea, or Canaan, was in a very particular manner prepared of God for his chosen people, and given them in such a way as to make them feel that they were to possess it only so long as the Lord should acknowledge them for his own. Now, considering how anxious people always are to make the most of their property, nothing could be better fitted to keep the Jews mindful of their dependence on God, than this command to let their land lie waste once in every seven years. Next, we are to remember that covetousness is a propensity very hateful indeed to the Lord—so much so that the Scripture calls it idolatry ; and it was a great check on the covetousness of man's mind, to be thus forbidden even to gather into his own barns and storehouses what might grow of itself upon his own land, and commanded to let his servants and his neighbors, the traveler, and the very beasts of the field, regale themselves up-

on his corn, his grapes and olives, and many precious fruits of the earth. It also shews the tender mercy of our God over those whom we are too apt to neglect and forget, and teaches us that what is given to the poor, the destitute, and the hungry, is given to the LORD. We are further taught how far better it is to look to the divine blessing than to any wisdom, skill, or forethought of our own : for as the manna which fell on the sixth day was made sufficient for the seventh also, to the obedient Israelite, so was the sixth year's produce enough to support the holder of the land through the sabbatical year. And, lastly, what a proof it is of the wonderful richness and fertility of the soil which we are speaking of, that it could supply such an immense multitude of inhabitants in this way ; whereas our own country, which is a very good and fruitful one, would be suffering from one end to the other, if there were only one year of very bad crops. Are my young friends satisfied now ?”

“ Oh yes, Sir,” answered both the children; and Edward said, “ There is no end to the beautiful proofs of God's wisdom and love.”

“No end indeed; my dear boy; and it will be the blessedness of happy souls throughout eternity, that there is no end to them. St. Paul saw a part of this, and exclaims, ‘O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!’ The more we search, the more we shall be convinced that there is no end, nor measure, nor limit to the glories of our God, as the Maker and the Governor of this world; and, oh! what shall we say when we view him as the Redeemer of sinful, ungrateful man, stooping from his glorious high throne in the heavens, that he might raise such beggars from the dunghill to set them with his princes! We cannot love, we cannot praise Him as we ought to do: our hearts are too hard, our feelings are too cold, our affections too much set on the things of this vain world; and if we had no other sin to answer for, our ingratitude would alone be sufficient to condemn us. Who can meditate upon His works, and not long to be praising him in the heaven where He dwells!”

Mr. Cleveland repeated the two last verses of a beautiful hymn :

“ Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought ;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.

“ Till then I would thy love proclaim,
With every fleeting breath ;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death !”

“ That will be a blessed sabbath indeed,” observed Mr. Peele ; “ and how happy are they whose weekly day of rest is spent in earnest preparation for that sabbath which shall never end ! We will now return to the subject from which we have wandered into one even more pleasant and profitable. We have seen that the Israelites were very strictly commanded to observe this seventh year as a sabbath of their land ; but, alas ! that stiff-necked and rebellious people continually departed from the law of their merciful God. He reproveth them, as you know, by the mouths of his prophets, for ‘ polluting his sabbaths.’ They regarded not the seventh day

aright, to keep it holy to the Lord ; neither did they observe the sabbath of years ; and for this sin the Lord declared that he would chastise them by giving the land a very long sabbath, so that it should lie desolate and uncultivated while the people were scattered abroad ; and most awfully is it fulfilled at this very day. The first threat in the passage which we read is, ‘ I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation.’ We have already observed how numerous the cities were ; and every city had its synagogue or place of worship, according to the number of inhabitants. I cannot tell you how awfully the threat is fulfilled. In passing through the land, I saw in every place the ruins of large and beautiful towns—the foundations of stately palaces and sanctuaries, with fragments of broken columns. Chorazin, and Bethsaida, and Capernaum, are but great heaps of rubbish. Jericho, and Sarepta, and the city of Tiberias, are perfect ruins ; while Cana, and Emmaus, and Nain, continue but in the form of little hamlets, mere groups of cottages. One very grand remnant of ancient magnificence there is, in

the city of Gerasa ; but it consists only of ruins more fine and perfect than any other, so that we could trace the streets, with double rows of noble columns on each side, and show where stood the temples, the theatres, the bridges, and other stately buildings of fine marble, with a cemetery, or burying-place, and many costly monuments of art and wealth. It would seem that so much was allowed to remain, just to show us the general character of what has been destroyed. The city of Arimathea must have been extremely large and populous, if we may judge from the present extent of its ruins ; but not a house remains habitable within its boundaries. I could name to you a great many more, which you would love to hear of, because they are so often on your lips when reading the blessed Bible ; but what I have told you is enough to prove that the cities are desolate."

"It is indeed," said Mr. Cleveland, "and reminds me of the prophetic lament of Moses — 'O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end ! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except

their Rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up!" But proceed, and tell us what is the appearance of the once fertile land, whose cities thus lie overthrown upon the plains."

Mr. Peele went on. "We will first turn to some other descriptive prophecies, to shew in what manner the Lord declared that he would afflict the land; and then I will bring proofs to convince you that they have been literally fulfilled. We will take the thirty-second of Isaiah, and see what is there predicted. 'Many days and years shall ye be troubled, ye careless women; for the vintage shall fail, the gathering shall not come. They shall lament for the teats, for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers; yea, upon all the houses of joy in the joyous city.' And in the next chapter we read, 'The highways lie waste, the wayfaring man ceaseth—the earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down; Sharon is like a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.' In this way we find the prophets describing what was to be the

state of that land in its desolation ; and who could believe that a soil so wonderfully fruitful should become thus barren, if the mouth of the Lord had not spoken it ? The plains are choked up by the rubbish of the crumbled ruins of stately cities ; and what once was rich gardens and cultivated land upon them, is so ruined by the tyranny of the Turks, and so constantly trodden down and laid waste by the roving Arabs, that it is exactly what was predicted—a joy of wild asses—a pasture for the flocks and cattle of those Arab plunderers. The mountains, as I told you, were made wonderfully fruitful by the way in which they were formed into terraces, and planted ; but these are now all gone, except on a part of Lebanon, where they remain, to prove to us what was once the condition of those lovely hills. The soil has been washed away by rains, and no man has attempted to restore it ; so that you would see nothing but barren rock, or moss, or thorny shrubs, where once the cedars waved, and the olive trees bent under their loads of fruit, and the rich grapes ripened on the vine under that bright and sunny sky. The land is unplowed and un-

sown; the feet of cruel strangers tread it down; and it lieth desolate in a long sad sabbath of comfortless rest, while the race of Abraham, to whom that beautiful land was given, wander throughout the world, and find no home."

"Most wonderful," said Mrs. Cleveland, "it is to observe how the country seems to mourn for the absence of its ancient inhabitants; while they, in turn, lament all over the world their exile from the land of their fathers. I have heard that the Jews in Europe, and other places, sometimes save up all their money for the sole purpose of going, in old age, to be buried near the walls of Jerusalem, which themselves, and perhaps their families, for many generations, had never seen."

"It is indeed true," answered Mr. Peele; "and most affecting is the sight of those weeping pilgrims, who come with pain and toil to look upon the barren rocks that encompass Jerusalem, and there to lie down and die."

"Oh, Sir," said Jane, "when will you tell us about Jerusalem itself?"

“ I can tell you but a sad tale my dear. Jerusalem is trodden under foot of the Gentiles, as our Lord declared it should be ; and where the splendid temple once stood, a mosque is built—that is, a place of worship for the followers of Mahomet, who hate alike the Jews and the Christians, and profess a religion as different from that of the true God as darkness is from light, or evil from good. Yet, even in this particular race who are now masters of the land, and have been so for many hundred years, we see a very remarkable fulfilment of a passage, which says, ‘ they shall not drink wine with a song—strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.’ The Turks are the gravest, the most melancholy people possible,—loving to sit with their legs crossed, smoking, all the day long ; and taking drugs to make them stupid : and it is one of the most strict laws given by their false prophet, Mahomet, that they never taste wine. If any break this command, they are obliged to do it secretly, or they would be cast out by their brethren. And thus, in this country, where the grapes of Eshcol grew, where vineyards covered

the ground, and spread to the very hill tops, —“the vine languisheth ;’ it does not answer to cultivate it; and what is made is so extremely bad, that it may truly be called bitter to those who are obliged to drink it. Is it not wonderful to see the least particulars relating to Judea, and her present inhabitants, thus made to agree with the exact prophecy given when the land was in its richness, and the chosen people made fat upon its abundant delicacies ?”

“It makes me feel very sorrowful,” said Edward. “I don’t know why it is so; but when you tell me these things about Judea and Jerusalem, they seem to trouble me more than all that I heard concerning Babylon and Egypt, and the other places.”

“I do not wonder at it,” observed his Papa; for you are daily reading about that country in the precious Bible; and the place where the Lord Jesus was born, and where he lived and suffered, cannot but be nearer to the hearts of his people than other countries, of which we know comparatively very little.”

“What sort of a place is Mount Calvary, Sir?” said Jane. “I often think how I

should like to stand upon that hill, and look round me upon the very places that were before the eyes of the blessed Lord Jesus when he hung upon the cross, 'bearing our sins in his own body on the tree.' "

"You would be disappointed in visiting that place, Jane," replied her friend; "and not only disappointed, but shocked, and grieved, and disgusted, more than by all that has been done by the Turks and the Arabs."

"Oh, Sir, how could that be?"

"I will tell you, my dear: on the spot where it is supposed that our blessed Lord was crucified, a large chapel is built, taking in also the place of his burial, as nearly as they can judge of it; and this church is in the hands of poor Greeks and Roman Catholics, who pay the Turks a very large sum of money for being allowed to possess it. Here the deluded people worship the Virgin Mary and the saints, together with a representation of the cross. Here they have 'changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like unto corruptible man.'* They

* Rom. i. 23.

make a great deal of profit, not merely by shewing these places, but by persuading sinners that they may obtain the pardon and the peace of God by visiting them ; and that one prayer offered up in this chapel is of more avail than a great many in another place. And, to give them an appearance of miraculous power, the Greeks contrive a sort of show, particularly at Easter, when fire is made to appear in the sepulchre, by means of persons concealed within it ; and the poor deceived people, who come sometimes thousands of miles to worship there, are persuaded to believe that it is fire from heaven."

"And do the Turks see all this?" asked Jane.

"If they do," said Edward, "I am sure they must think very ill of Christianity. At least, if I were a Turk, and saw such tricks played on the people, I should hardly wish to change my religion for theirs."

"The Turks," said Mr. Peele, "are always keeping watch there, to prevent any deceit in paying them the money, which is all that they care about: but I perfectly agree with you, Edward, that it must make the

Christian name contemptible among them, as indeed it does: they seldom bestow on a Christian any title more respectful than 'dog:' and, as they know of no other sort of worship among the professed followers of Jesus, than this sad mockery of holy things, you may suppose how they look down upon us all. But, it is even more sad, to reflect what must be the impression made on the poor Jews, who always are found scattered about, generally in extreme poverty and wretchedness; in this the land of their fathers. Suppose a Christian Missionary goes and tells them, that for crucifying Jesus of Nazareth, all these calamities came upon them and their country: and that, it is only by believing on Him, that their souls can be saved from eternal death: the Jew may, and does, point to the open worshiping of images and saints among the Roman Catholics, and then to those awful commands of God, which positively forbid every thing of the kind. He tells us, that, for the sin of idolatry the Jewish people were once before given into the hands of their enemies, their beautiful and glorious temple destroyed, and with it the ark of the covenant,

of which you so often read in the Old Testament: that the nation was carried away into Babylon, and remained for seventy years in cruel captivity, until the Lord had pity upon them, and put it into the heart of their conquerors to permit the rebuilding of the temple, and to restore them to their own land.—The Jew will relate all this, and say too, that since the Babylonish captivity, his people have never fallen into their old sin of idolatry; and that it is a mockery to invite them to worship the wooden representation of Him whom their fathers crucified. The poorest and most depraved Jew looks down with scorn and contempt on such a religion: and thus it is a most fearful stumbling-block in the way of God's outcast and sinful Israel, who never can be restored to His love, or enjoy his peace, until they look 'on Him whom they have pierced,' and mourn for the unbelief which has separated between them and their God."

"But, why don't the Missionaries tell all this to the ignorant Roman Catholics?" said Edward.

"They do so, and to the Greeks too, and prove to them out of the Bible, that their

religion is as far from the truth of the Gospel, as that of the Turk or Jew ; and some few, by the Divine blessing, have been convinced, and converted : have thrown their idols to the moles, and the bats, and received grace to worship the Lord in spirit and in truth. But the poor people who belong to the Romish Church are so enslaved, that they are not allowed to study the Bible for themselves, but taught to believe that their own priests are able to save their souls,—that they have no need of any other guide or instruction,—and that, so long as they obey all the directions of their clergy, they are sure to be in the path to heaven. This sort of religion is so agreeable to the heart of man, that the people are very willing to be deceived by it ; for, among them, confession of sin to a fellow-creature, and obedience to his commands, stand instead of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. So you see, Edward, that in preaching the true gospel to a Roman Catholic there are very great difficulties to be encountered : for he is confident of his own safety, and unwilling to believe that, instead

of trusting the whole matter of his salvation to a creature as ignorant and sinful as himself, he must work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, by seeking to discover the real will of God, and acting according to the knowledge which he gets from the Bible."

"I should not like to visit Mount Calvary to witness such abominations as these," said Jane. "I thought it was an open hill, on the outside of Jerusalem; and that there I should see the rocks which rent when the Lord Jesus died, and the sepulchre where they laid Him in the midst of a garden; and every thing so still and solemn."

Mr. Cleveland remarked, "To the true Christian these things must be as grievous, as the desolation of Judea to the descendants of Abraham."

"Indeed," replied Mr. Peele, "it is no small part of that desolation to see the souls of men lying waste as the country which they inhabit. It is not possible to be happy in that once holy land, except as the Christian knows that his own soul is safe with God; for whether we look to the Turk or the Arab, to the Jew or the Roman Catholic, all is dark

and sad, hopeless and depraved. I passed through the streets of Jerusalem, pondering not only on the privileges of her more ancient days, when the visible glory of the Lord rested upon her towers, and the cloud of his presence filled Solomon's Temple : not only on the far greater glory that shone in the second Temple, when ' God manifest in the flesh ' walked and taught within its porches ; but also on the yet later period, when the Christian church dwelt there, and Stephen, and James, and many other of the Lord's beloved people, sealed with their blood the testimony which they bore. Most true indeed it is, so far as any right feeling abides in a man's mind, that, in the land of Judea, ' all the merry-hearted do sigh.' "

" I can believe that," said Jane, " for it makes me quite sorrowful to think about it."

" Then, my dear child, let your sorrow be made known to God, in earnest prayer that he will again have mercy on the rebellious race, and pity his people, and remember the land. We have many sure promises that thus it shall be in the latter day ; and we are commanded to pray and to labor earnestly for

the coming of that expected time. The twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah gives a most awfully true picture of the present state of that land once so good, and of the nation so long beloved and favored above all others; but read also the twenty-fifth, and you will find sweet encouragement to expect greater glories and richer blessings than ever yet the world knew. Pray continually that the time may shortly arrive, when all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, and the earth be filled with the knowledge of his glory, even as the waters cover the sea."

"I hope that I shall pray for this more than ever I did," said Edward, "after hearing all these things. But, Sir, you said that you had seen the seven churches of Asia: and we have been reading those two chapters in the Revelation of St. John where our Lord sends the messages to the angels of the churches. Please to tell us what you saw there."

"My dear boy, in the passage that you speak of, 'angel' signifies a pastor of a church. The word angel, in the Greek language, in which the Holy Ghost caused the New

Testament to be written, means 'a messenger,' and it is therefore fitly applied to ministers of the Gospel, who are Christ's messengers,* sent to publish the glad tidings of salvation to guilty man. The places named in the second and third chapters of the Revelation had all of them the gospel established among the people, through the labors of the apostles and their followers; and the Lord saw good to send them those remarkable messages, both as a warning to them and an example to us. You will observe, there is prophecy mingled in each message; and what I have to tell you is the wonderful fulfilment of those predictions at the present day, particularly those relating to Philadelphia (now called Allah-Shehr, the city of God,) Sardis, and Laodicea. The other four have some of them a few remains of their Christian name, being still the abode of a few families calling themselves Christians; but these belong chiefly to the Greek Church, which is hardly more enlightened, in many respects, than the Church of Rome. Smyrna, and

* 2 Cor. v. 18--20.

Thyatira,* and Pergamos, have little congregations who confess the name of Christ, and most interesting it is to witness even these poor remains of what was planted by the hands of the apostles : but observe what is said concerning the other four, that we may the better perceive how the Lord has dealt with them according to his word. To the church at Ephesus, who had left their first love—that is, had ceased to look to the Lord with all the zealous devotion that they shewed when first they received the Gospel,—He threatens to remove their candlestick out of its place, except they repent ; and as by a candlestick is meant the church, we might expect to find no appearance of a Christian congregation. When I visited it, there was in all the place but one person who professed Christianity ; and the whole of that magnificent city is a heap of ruins.”

“What a visitation,” said Mr. Cleveland, “on a place once so honored and blessed—

* Mr. Hartley says, “The Greeks occupy 300 houses, and the Armenians 30—each of them have a church.”

so dear to the heart of God's faithful servant Paul, as his beautiful Epistle to the Ephesians testifies, where he says that for their faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, he could not cease to give thanks for them ! The warning is awful to those who are becoming cold and careless in prayer—a sure sign that they are losing their first, earnest love for God. But in the morning of the resurrection, how numerous a company of faithful Christians shall arise from the dust of Ephesus, to partake in the fulness of that joy which the apostle delighted to set before them, as the sure portion of God's children. But what of Sardis ? for our Lord threatened that church, if they became not more watchful, that he would come upon them as a thief, unexpectedly ; and from that I should suppose them to be severely visited."

"It is even so," answered Mr. Peele ; "for scarcely a single Christian was to be found there ; and that most splendid city is reduced to a mass of ruins, with only a few miserable cabins, inhabited by Turkish peasants, throughout its spacious extent. I could not look on Sardis without remembering how

awful it is to bear the name of Christ without having his Spirit within us. Of what avail is it to have our heads full of knowledge, and our mouths of religious talk, when He who searches all hearts can say to us, 'I know thy works: that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.' A corpse has still the form and features, and name, and nature of man; but who would therefore bring a dead body, and place it at his table, among living guests? Much less will the Lord endure that a soul dead in trespasses and sins, while still claiming the title of a child of God, shall appear, and occupy a place among his holy and happy family in heaven.

"But, sad as is the present state of Sardis, that of Laodicea is even worse. You know that our Lord used the strongest expression possible to show how utterly he would reject that church, even as men cast from their mouths something very nauseous and disgusting that they cannot bear to swallow. From this threat we might expect a more total overthrow of all that was great, all that was or appeared to be holy, in Laodicea, than any where else; and this I found to be the case.

There is not only a total absence of the very name of Christianity in that place, but not even a Turk makes it his dwelling. It would be as totally without inhabitant as the ruined Babylon, only for a few tents which a wandering Arab tribe sometimes pitch there for a season. The place is known, and the broken remains of its once-magnificent buildings are tenanted by wolves and other wild beasts; while the most striking thing around it is the great number of sarcophagi, or places where the dead were deposited, as if to remind us of those who, by their sin, brought the wrath of the Lamb upon that proud and lukewarm church."

"Please to tell me, Sir," said Jane, "what is meant by a church being neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm; for the Lord says to Laodicea, 'I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.' I don't quite understand it."

"Then I will try to explain it, my dear," said Mr. Peele; "for it is of great consequence to us to consider it. When we say that a person's heart is warm towards us, we mean that he has a real affection for us—that

he loves our company, and would delight to do us any service. Every body, I suppose, likes to see this character in a friend. But one who is cold towards us would not care if we never met, is ready to turn away when we do meet, takes no notice of us or our concerns, and goes on as if we never had been born. Now, Jane, supposing you felt kindly towards two people of these very opposite characters, how would you behave to them?"

"Oh! I should take care to let the warm friend know that I valued his love," said Jane, looking very kindly at her brother as she spoke; "and I would try to return all his kindness, and avoid doing any thing to lose it."

"Right; and what of the cold person, who cared nothing about you?"

"Why, Sir, I would watch for an opportunity of doing him some very great kindness, which he could not expect from me; and then, perhaps, he would change, and be kind in return to me."

"You would act properly in so doing: but now, suppose there was a third person of your acquaintance who did not care in the least for you, did not take any interest in your

comfort, who could not rejoice in your joy, nor feel grieved for your severest distresses, —who would not speak a good word for you if he heard you slandered, nor go a step out of his way to afford you the greatest gratification—suppose, too, that instead of shewing this disregard, he came to call upon you every day, with a long talk about his esteem for you, and thought all the while that, by so doing, he put you under a great obligation, and deserved all the benefits that you could confer upon him—I say, Jane, in such a case, what would you do, to make such a person really your friend ?”

Jane looked puzzled, and considered for some time—then said, “ Really I don’t know how I could make any thing of such a strange character ; for, as he did not in his heart care about me, it would not signify to him if I seemed ever so affectionate : and as to doing him a service, I should, because it is my duty to be kind to all ; but I could expect no return for it, as he would think it no more than he deserved for his long visits and civil talk. I am afraid that I should never get fond of such a character.”

“ Well, Jane,” said her father, “ Mr. Peele has described to you the difference between a warm friend, a cold stranger, and a lukewarm acquaintance ; and you seem ready to prefer either the first or the second to the last.”

“ Indeed I do, Papa ; because the warm one is a friend already ; the cold one might be made a friend by some kind action that he did not expect ; but I think the lukewarm acquaintance would be little better than a trouble, with not much hope of his becoming any thing else.”

“ Then you may partly understand,” said Mr. Peele, “ how very hateful must be the outward forms and unmeaning prayers of lukewarm worshipers to Him who at once looks into the heart, and sees that it is far from him. We are able to judge of men’s feelings only by their actions, and may often be mistaken in our opinion ; but the Lord searcheth and trieth the spirit, and cannot be deceived. The Laodiceans, to whom he spoke were this sort of worshipers : they attended his house, said their prayers, observed all outward ceremonies, perhaps, and could talk as well as others of their devotion

to the Savior; and because of this, they thought themselves among the very best of Christians,—that they were, in respect of religion, ‘rich, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing.’ They did not ask for faith, humility, love, zeal, or any other grace, because they thought their formal services quite sufficient, and knew not, while depending on their own works, ‘that they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.’ They did not, therefore, pray for the riches of that grace which the Lord Jesus alone can bestow: they did not ask him to remove their blindness by giving them true wisdom, nor to cover their naked souls with the glorious garment of his righteousness. We could not love such hypocrisy in a fellow-creature, if we suspected it; how much less will the King of kings endure such mockery from a rebellious servant! Let us often think of Laodicea, and examine ourselves, lest such sinful lukewarmness be found in us, and we share the same awful rejection. God sends his gospel to the cold dark heathen, who never heard of him; they receive it, wonder at his unlooked-for mercy, and love Him who first

loved them. He sends it to his faithful people : and it is ever new delight to them to hear of his love, and to render back the praises of their lips, and the service of their hearts and lives. But the gospel itself is lost on those who trust in themselves that they are righteous, and who take as a reward for their works what is a free and most unmerited gift to sinful man. They do not feel concerned for the glory of the Lord Jesus ; they do not give him their hearts ; they do not study to walk in his ways, nor earnestly pray for the help of the Holy Spirit, without which we cannot stand one hour, or one moment in safety. I had many solemn thoughts when looking on the ruins of Laodicea, and hearing the growl of savage animals where the voice of prayer and praise once so loudly arose. May the page of Scripture which tells the sin, and threatens the fall of that lukewarm church, be ever blessed to the quickening of every soul among us !”

“ It is indeed a subject for deep reflection,” said Mrs. Cleveland, “ and shews how needful was the apostle’s injunction ‘ to walk circumspectly,’ seeing how liable we all are to

fall into temptation, and through temptation into open sin, and to find too late that the wages of sin is death. Surely pride is that sin to which we are most continually inclined, and against which we must never cease to watch and to pray."

"We will now turn to the last and most interesting of the seven churches," said Mr. Peele—"last, I mean, in my account: and most interesting as shewing how, in spite of every disadvantage and seeming impossibility, the Lord makes good no less his promises than his threats. To the angel of the church of Philadelphia he said, 'Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' 'Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.' This would lead us to expect some particular mark of the Lord's favorable remembrance being still seen in Philadelphia; and it is wonderful, when we consider the state of all the rest, and the situation of the place in the midst of what is now, alas! a heathen land—it is wonderful, I say, to be-

held no less than twenty-five churches, all proclaiming the Christian name, within the boundaries of the ancient Philadelphia. No man has been able to shut the door which the Lord opened; nor could the temptations and changes of nearly eighteen hundred years take that little spot out of the safe keeping of Him who is faithful, him who is holy, him who is true. While we pause with trembling over Laodicea,—fearing lest by any means we also should become cast-aways,—let the remembrance of Philadelphia be to us a strengthening cordial, encouraging us to trust, and not be afraid. The commendation of that church is very remarkable: ‘Thou hast a little strength, and has kept my word, and hast not denied my name.’ The Lord graciously acknowledges in us those gifts which his hand alone bestowed. In ourselves we are totally ‘without strength,’* and whatever we possess of it is from God. Our character by nature is, that we forget God; and he must first give us his word, and then enable us to keep it. Naturally we dread the cross, and fly from it,

* Rom. v. 6.

and would not have the world brand us with the name of saints, though the Holy Ghost has so often used that name, in speaking of God's dear children. But when the Lord has made known to us the preciousness of his own name, we are enabled by him to rejoice in it, and to bless him for the privilege of being numbered among his people, though it be by some title of mockery which pride would fain reject. Philadelphia had nothing to glory in, save in the Lord her Righteousness; and the name which that church did not deny, none has been able to deprive her of. Oh! that we may all have grace to make a like confession of our Redeemer before men,—assured that he will also confess us before the angels in heaven!"

"Sir," said Edward, "I have been thinking of something that is like what you have said about the Lord giving us his name to keep."

"What is it, my dear boy?"

"Why, Sir, some time ago, I was at a farm-house, and I saw a flock of sheep marked. The way was this; the men drove one sheep at a time into a small room, or shed, where

another man stood with an iron in his hand, dipped in some red color. When the sheep came in, he caught it, and pressed the iron on its side, which left the letters of the master's name quite plain. Now, I was thinking that, if a great many flocks of sheep all got mixed together, the master could point out one after another, and say, 'This is mine,' and 'that is mine,' and all because his own name was upon them. But the sheep, poor things, could not have marked themselves; and indeed it took a great deal of trouble and patience to drive them into the shed, and to catch them when they were there."

"Well," said Jane, "I never should have thought of that, though I saw it also; but it seems a good thought. For, now I remember, the Lord Jesus says, 'I know my sheep, and am known of mine.' It is no great wonder if the sheep know the one shepherd who takes care of them; but the shepherd would not know every single sheep of his, unless he had marked them."

"Yes," said Edward, "God knows every creature that he has made, and all about it. You know, Jane, it is written, 'He telleth

the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names.' ”

“ I know that, brother dear : but I am speaking of the Lord Jesus knowing his own people who follow him as their shepherd. I cannot exactly tell what text it is that explains what I mean, but there is one.”

Mr. Peele repeated, “ But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, fear not ; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name ; thou art mine.”*

“ That is it ! ” exclaimed Jane ; “ that is the very thing, indeed.”

“ And a very precious thing it is,” said her Papa. “ The Lord, in compassion to our great weakness, expresses himself so as we may best understand the meaning, by comparing it with things that pass around us every day. In the passage which our dear friend has just repeated, there is a great deal of beauty and comfort. Israel is put to represent the church of Christ : you know that when Jacob had passed the whole night

* Isaiah xliii. 1.

wrestling with God—a type of earnest and persevering prayer—he prevailed to obtain the blessing which he sought, and received at the same time the name of Israel in memory of it. So, when God reminds him that he has called him by his name, it is meant as the highest encouragement not to fear: for, ‘if God be for us, who can be against us?’ And this falls in very sweetly with Edward’s comparison of the sheep; for it is the good Shepherd’s part first to put the name upon them, and then by that name to own them, and to watch over them, and to bring them at last to his heavenly fold. But, in order to judge whether we rightly understand each other tell me, Edward, what particular thing do you mean by the putting of the Lord’s name upon his people—is it their being called by any distinguishing title?”

“Why, not exactly, I think, Papa,” said Edward. “There are a great many people called Christians, whom I fear the Lord Jesus will not own among his sheep.”

“If it be not really a name, what is it then?”

Edward was not able to answer directly.

People often find it difficult to put their thoughts into words ; and then the best thing that they can do is, to take time ; to consider, and not to be in a hurry. When Moses wanted to be excused from delivering God's message to the Israelites, he complained that he was not eloquent : the Lord answered by asking him, who made man's mouth ? and when we want power to express ourselves aright, for the benefit of others, we should ask ourselves the same question. It will, or at least it ought to lead us to pray to Him who gave us the faculty of speaking, that he may help us to use the gift aright. We must hope that our young friend Edward did this, while delaying to answer his father's question. At last he did speak, and spoke very well too.

“Papa,” he said, “you know it is written that ‘the Lord seeth not as man seeth ; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.’* Now, I suppose that, if people have only the name of Christians, it goes for nothing in God's

* 1 Sam. xvi. 7.

sight; so I would say that having his name, rightly, is being made Christians in their hearts. And then, you know, when the Lord looks into their hearts, and sees his own name there, he owns them for his sheep."

"Oh, brother!" said Jane, "I am sure that is true: because it is said in the Bible, 'I will put my law into their hearts, and upon their minds will I write them.' Is it not so, Sir? Is not Edward right, Papa?"

Mr. Cleveland looked pleased; and a nod and a smile from him were always understood and valued by his affectionate, happy children. Happy indeed those children are, and very thankful they should be, whose parents or friends delight to instruct them in the paths of truth. Mr. Peele too was very glad that his little acquaintance had given so much of their early thoughts to the word of God, not merely reading it over, as some children do, but meditating upon it, and considering how one part of the blessed Bible is made to explain another. Some say it is a difficult book to understand: and so it is, in the way that they set about studying it. My good reader, what would you think of a person who should

open a book in a dark room, and complain that he could not make out the different letters,—when, by lighting a candle, he might read it without any trouble? Just so foolish and unreasonable is he who sets about studying the Bible without beseeching the Lord to enlighten his dark understanding with the beams of the Holy Spirit, that the gospel may be clearly discovered to him. If people would but believe God, they would find themselves much wiser. He has expressly said, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”* Now, we are all in the state of the natural man, until the grace of God makes us spiritual; and therefore, if we believed this truth, we should never find fault with the difficulties of the Bible; but with our own blind hearts; and never cease praying, until God opens the eyes of our mind.

Many young people, when reading this little book, may think that Jane and Edward

* 1 Cor. ii. 14.

seem to know a great deal more about the Bible than children usually do; but when children pray with all their hearts, and study every day over the pages of that blessed volume, it is delightful to see how much they are able to learn from it. God loves to instruct the humble spirit of a pious child. You know what is related of our blessed Lord, when his poor and unlearned disciples returned to tell him how powerfully they had been able to work through his name alone. "At that hour, Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes." This ought to be a very sweet encouragement to the young and the ignorant, to seek for the teaching which God is so ready to bestow. Timothy not only read, but *knew* the Scriptures from a child; and we may easily perceive from St. Paul's beautiful Epistles to him, what fruit that knowledge produced.

We will, however, return to Edward and his friends. Mr. Cleveland, as we have said, gave his son a nod and a smile of approval; and Mr. Peele said that he was quite right in

supposing that something more than an outward name was necessary to be the mark of Christ's sheep. "I will tell you," he went on, "a little circumstance that I witnessed myself, quite to the point of what we are saying. I once passed a flock of sheep on the road, which were marked with the letters J. B. The drover was taking them to a large town, not far off, where a great cattle fair was held that day: flocks, and herds, and beasts of all sorts, were coming from different directions. A butcher had taken a fancy to one of these sheep, which was not in such good condition as the rest; he was trying to get it cheap, and as the men stood bargaining, up came another flock; while, along a cross-road, I saw a drove of cattle approaching, followed by a dozen or so of sheep, under the care of the same person. Now, this cross-road happened to be very narrow, and a post-chaise was driving along at a smart pace: the postboy hallooed, and cracked his whip pretty loud, to hasten the animals which blocked up the road before him; and this either frightened or affronted a frolicsome young bullock, who immediately put down

his horns, kicked up his heels and with a loud bellow ran on. You may have perceived how very ready the animals usually are to follow any other who is pleased to offer himself for a leader: one run-away horse, ox, sheep or dog, may take his whole company with him. So it proved in this case; for no sooner did the young bull begin to gallop, than all the herd put themselves to their speed, shaking their fat sides, lashing their long tails, and plunging through the mud. The sheep would not be left behind their old comrades, so kept close to their heels; and the united party plumped upon us, just as the butcher had completed his purchase, and the poor sheep was being secured. Nor was this all; for the other and more extensive flock were then close by; and the horn of a mail coach sounding behind, with the clattering of hoofs and rattling of wheels, made them also quicken their pace,—the whole three parties becoming so completely mixed up together, that when they separated for the mail to pass through, I suppose there was one half of each company on either side of the road.

“Then followed a great deal of shouting,

and scolding, and bawling on the part of the different drovers, whose noisy attempts to separate the flocks only made them mix together more completely, until the butcher cried out to let them alone, and they might be presently parted; for that they were all marked and could be divided in a quiet way. 'True enough,' said the drover who came up last; 'for mine are all branded in red, and the rest in black.' 'Yes,' added the man who had been selling the sheep; 'and my master, Farmer Bell, has put his own letters on every fleece of his.' The party from the cross-road were under the care of a respectable-looking elderly man, who seemed fatigued with his run; and, taking off his hat, wiped his forehead, while he said, 'As sure as my name is John Brown, you'll find it on all mine in good lamp-black.'

"The red-brands were soon collected, and quietly pursued their way; but Farmer Bell's dog, who had taken this opportunity to refresh himself with some odd bits in the slaughter yard, and to lap a little clean water, now returned. Seeing his master's sheep mixed up in confusion with others, and conscious, I

suppose, of having deserted his post, he dashed in among them very roughly, displeasing the captious young bullock, who again began bellowing, while the sheep ran in all directions ; and it was judged better to call off the dog,—each being sure of distinguishing his own charge by the proper mark. But, alas ! though James Bell, and John Brown were different names at full length, it was found that the same two initials served for both ; and when branded in the same color, each on both sides of every sheep, it was no easy matter to determine which was which.”

The children appeared quite amused with the description, and Jane asked how they settled it at last.

“ With a great deal of trouble,” said Mr. Peele. “ First they got the cattle, and shut them up in a yard ; and then the dog was called out again, who, without paying any attention to external marks, knew, by the wonderful instinct which God has given to his species, every single sheep of his master’s fold. It was most striking to see him gather them, one by one, from the confused mass,—driving them all off in perfect order,—while I

stood with the drovers and endeavored to show them what instruction the scene was calculated to impart. I found Farmer Brown very ready to listen, and seemingly pleased at my remarks. He told me that he looked after his cattle himself, and never trusted them to be driven by servants; for that, although he had a right to sell or to kill them, he could not see that he had any right to let them be tormented by cruel or thoughtless drovers; and he was bringing up his little lad in the same merciful opinions. I gave them some tracts, which I hoped would lead them to the Good Shepherd, and then I departed, to reflect on what I had seen. It certainly agrees with Edward's explanation: on the great day of final separation, it is not a name, nor any outward mark, that can prove our right of being numbered among the flock who have the Lord Jesus as their shepherd."

"And I hope," said Mr. Cleveland, "that another consideration will occur to my children from what you have kindly told us. We are apt to be very glad, and we ought indeed to be most thankful, when there is in our own minds any disposition to draw wisdom from

what passes about us; but how cruel is the selfishness that rests satisfied with its own profit, and does not seek the advantage of those around us. God is giving us daily opportunities of inviting sinners to come to him; and we are not guiltless in his sight, if we neglect one. All may not be able to speak to others on the subject; but who is there unable to offer a little tract to the passer-by? I believe that more good has been done by means of those cheap and simple publications, distributed on the highways, than any one has ever suspected; and I should be sorry to find my pocket empty of that sort of treasure, whatever else may be wanting there."

"You are right," said Mr. Peele; "and nothing proves the value of such gifts more than the very great dislike which our own proud and cowardly hearts often have to the work. One rude rejection of a tract has often tempted me to put up my stock, and not to expose myself to any more affronts; but I pray against the temptation, and go on offering them as far as I can."

Mrs. Cleyland said, "I have also found the discouragement very great, and, when

mortified, I have almost resolved to give it up; but a little incident lately, in the country, gave me fresh courage. I was walking to church one Sunday morning, with Edward and the maid servant, when a part of our road was along the public highway, where we were sadly grieved to see numbers of carriages of every sort, stages, post-chaises, and all kinds of vans, wagons, and so forth. I had some tracts in my hand, and had given a few to the country people who passed on foot, when we met a postboy riding one tired horse, and leading another: he looked at my tracts with so much curiosity, that I desired Sally to hand him one, which he took very civilly. I suppose that he thought it a profane song-book, or idle story; for, on reading the title, which was, 'Christ the only Refuge from the Wrath to Come,' he turned his head over his shoulder, and threw the tract back at us, with a blasphemous expression of angry disappointment and contempt. Edward ran to pick it up, and I heard the maid say to him, 'O, Master Edward, that is a wicked bad man, and God will punish him.' I asked her who made us to differ—whose grace was leading

us to worship in his temple, while that poor wretched sinner was going on in the broad path of destruction, ignorant that without such refuge as he rejected he must actually perish under the wrath to come; and I charged her rather to pray for him, than to condemn him in the proud tone which she had used. I confess that I had begun to slip my tracts into my bag, to avoid another such insult; but my own reproof had reached my conscience, and, by grace, I resolved to go on offering the little books. Soon after, we met a wagon; the man was riding on the shaft; and Edward, taking the tract, went up, asking him if he could read. The man called to his horses to stop, and civilly answered that he could not, the worse for him, inquiring why he put the question. 'Because,' said Edward, 'I would have given you this little book.' 'Oh, if that's it, Sir, there are some passengers inside, that I dare say can read;' he then called to them to inquire, and several voices answered that they could. On being told that there was a book for them, the cover of the wagon was put aside, and sundry heads and hands appeared, eagerly asking for

books. We gave them three or four, which they received with great delight. Immediately after, another wagon came up; and the driver, seeing what Edward was about, touched his hat in a way that made us directly offer him a tract. 'Many thanks to you, young Master,' said he; 'I am walking the road beside my horses night and day, backwards and forwards, and this will be nice company for me: 'tis lonesome enough, I can tell you.' We gave him two more, since he was likely to make so good a use of them; and Edward makes it a point now to supply all the wagons that he meets."

"Yes, Mamma," said Edward; "but you have not told us what you said to encourage me. You remarked that we should never be disheartened, if a tract was even thrown back in our faces: for, you said, a person standing on a rock, by the sea-shore, and seeing a shower of rain fall, might be apt to fancy it fell in vain. The rock could not be softened by it; the sand would suck it down, and yield no fruit; and the sea did not need more water. But, you said, the same shower would be falling where some little field or cottage

garden wanted the moisture ; and seed would spring up there, which otherwise might have perished in the parched ground."

"To sum up all," said Mr. Cleveland, "we will take the delightful precept and promise : ' Be not weary in well doing ; for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not.' We have made a long trip to the land of Canaan, and back to our own shores ; and still find something to profit, wherever we turn. That is the privilege of the Christian : God, who ' is not far from every one of us,'* in his works, though too often forgotten, is brought ever before us, when once we have given ourselves to the study of his word ; and by his presence he sweetens our daily walk, and sanctifies our hourly converse. You went to the Museum yesterday my dear children, like many others, full of interest and curiosity ; and if it has proved a more instructive scene, and led to more lasting benefit to you, than some of your own age have found in the visit, all glory, all thanks, are due to Him from whom cometh every good and perfect gift : and he

* Acts xvii. 25.

looks to you for a right use of what you have received, even in these two days' enjoyment. You have seen a small part of his works, in the different specimens of beasts, birds, fishes reptiles, insects, and the inanimate productions of land and sea. You have traced the proofs of past judgment on a guilty world, in the shells from mountain caverns, and in the ruins of rebellious cities, overthrown by his wrath. You have beheld how awfully the Lord is insulted where idols are worshiped, in heathen lands ; and heard of the triumphs of redeeming love, even in the midst of such abominations. You have had death itself most forcibly brought before your view, and have thereby been solemnly reminded of judgment to come, while looking upon the lifeless body of one whose soul has now abode for thousands of years in that separate state where our spirits likewise must shortly go, to await their final doom : and you have listened to the account of Jerusalem's present desolation, which speaks to us most awfully, in proving that the greatest outward privileges will not shield us from the vengeance of the Lord against those who abuse his gifts, but will

rather add to the condemnation. All these things ought to sink deep into your hearts ; and if you beseech the Holy Spirit to make them profitable, you will often have cause to look back with thankfulness on what you, perhaps, at first expected to find only an hour's idle amusement."

"I have frequently before seen most of the objects in the Museum," said Mr. Peele, "or others exactly resembling them, in distant countries, and at different times, and I found them always lead to profitable reflection ; but this has been a day of very great enjoyment to me, and to be gratefully remembered. I cannot tell you, my dear young friends, how often I was reminded of the mercies that have followed me all my life, when glancing over the various things in that collection. Some the most beautiful, and others the most interesting, made me almost shudder at the recollections of great peril, awakened by seeing them. Before I met you yesterday, had you remarked some beautiful specimens of white coral?"

"Oh, yes, Sir," said Jane ; "I was admiring it greatly, particularly one that branched

and spread like a very fine thick tree. Mamma told us that it was the work of insects; and that great rocks, and whole countries, are sometimes supported by that delicate-looking coral."

"It is the case," answered Mr. Peele, "The work proceeds very rapidly, and the circumstance which I am going to relate will prove it. A long while ago, I made a voyage to a very distant part of the coast of Asia; in one place we discovered, by sounding, that there was a hard bottom, no doubt, of coral, at a great depth below where we were sailing. Two years afterwards, or rather less, we passed again exactly on the same track; and found the coral so wonderfully grown up, that as we glided along we could distinctly see it, often within less than three yards of the keel of our ship. It was extremely beautiful,—the white coral branching out in most delicate forms, and shining through the clear green of the water; but the danger was most dreadful. We were watching in anxious alarm, lest in any part it should have shot up so high as to strike against the bottom of the vessel; for, had that been the case, a leak would have

been sprung. Do you know what I mean, Edward?"

"Yes, Sir: springing a leak is making a hole in the ship where the water gets in, is it not, Sir?"

"It is: and the water coming in makes the ship too heavy to float; and if not presently got out by means of the pumps, it sinks the vessel into the depths of the sea. Now the coral reef, as I said, branched out in every direction, and was most unequal—the ridges being so sharp and hard, that our ship might have stuck fast on one of the points, until beaten to pieces by the sea. Most mercifully, we were favored with a very gentle wind, and smooth water; so that we were carried steadily and safely over this perilous place, but not until we had been for an hour looking down upon it. Had the weather been rough, the violent breaking of the waves upon the reef would have prevented our seeing our danger, and very probably have dashed the vessel upon a part of the rock, and sent us all into eternity in a moment."

"Many perish in that way," said Mr. Cleveland. "The ship strikes—they go

down, and can no more be heard of, no more seen, until the sea gives up the dead that are in it."

"No doubt," said Mr. Peele. "I have often thought, when lying down in my cabin at night, how many perils must be passed, before I could again behold the bright streak of the eastern sun upon the billows. And surely, if ungodliness can be more hateful in one person than another, an ungodly mariner must excite our most painful feelings. David says, 'They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep.*' Yet, awful to say, there are hundreds and thousands of these men who will not see, who refuse to acknowledge the hand of the Most High in these his most wonderful works—who tremble not at his judgment when some fellow-sinner is washed away from their side, and tossed on the billows, and swallowed up into eternity before their eyes—who confess not his mercy when their own preservation appears little short of a miracle, while winds and storms, fire and wa-

* Psalm cvii. 23, 24.

ter, are all combined against their lives, and are yet restrained from harming them."

"Did not the mariners pray to God, when you sailed over the coral rock, Sir?" asked Jane.

"I hope that some of them did," answered Mr. Peele; "and that they also gave him thanks when the danger was past. There was no public praying, and many looked as bold and as hardened as ever: others seemed frightened, as if death was an object that they did not like to behold so near. Two or three of the passengers were so taken up in admiring the beauty of it, that they scarcely appeared sensible of the peril; and others, like me, hung over the ship's side, watching, and meditating, but saying very little."

"Did you not preach to them, then?" said Jane, quite surprised.

"My dear child, I was at that time ignorant myself of the only way of salvation; and, instead of taking thought for the spiritual concerns of others, I was trying to find out what I had done to deserve eternal life, if that hour should prove my last."

"And did you deserve it?" asked Jane.

“Do you put that question in earnest, Jane?” said her father.

“Not exactly, Papa ; because I know that nobody can possibly be saved by any works of his own ; and that we all deserve nothing, at best, but to be sent away into the place where the wicked go. But I meant to ask Mr. Peele whether he found out any goodness in himself to be saved by, when he was over the coral reef.”

“I cannot tell you,” answered Mr. Peele ; “for I was very blind to my own state, and knew nothing of the holiness and justice of Him with whom I had to do. I did not see that One mightier than I must help me ; nor did I understand that the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross was that in which alone I could find freedom and peace. It is the recollection of my dark and heathenish state at that time which affects me so much when I look on a piece of coral ; and my heart is raised in thankfulness to the Lord, who spared my life then, that he might also save my soul.”

“I shall think of it, too, when I next see coral,” said Edward. “But, Sir, were you not also in danger among the Arabs ?”

“Yes,” answered Mr. Peele, “and to that I also alluded ; but then I had learned to fix my sole hope on my glorious Redeemer,—a hope which maketh not ashamed,—and my feelings were very different you may be sure.”

“Pray tell us about it,” cried Jane.

“There is not much to tell : I was traveling to the eastward of Jerusalem, and had missed a party with whom I meant to go. Having made a positive engagement to meet a Missionary friend at a particular place, and having a box of Arabic Testaments under my charge, which I knew he was anxiously expecting, I got a firman, or letter of protection, from the governor of the city, who paid the Arab sheick, or chief, for not molesting those who had his firman, and set out with my own servant and a guide. We got on well for a while ; but at length in a very desolate spot, we were surrounded by the lawless Arabs and taken captive. It seems that they were expecting some travelers with rich merchandize to pass that way ; and my large box, so carefully secured, was supposed to contain treasures far less valuable than it real-

ly did, but of much greater worth in their eyes. The language of the Arabs was strange to me, nor could they comprehend any that I addressed to them. The guide made his escape evidently with the consent of the robbers, to whom, I was afterwards told, he had probably betrayed me. Seeing no remedy, I quietly committed myself to God, exhorted my servant to do the same, and was conducted by my new acquaintance to a small camp, at some distance, where they refreshed us with camel's milk, and boiled rice. The box was very carefully guarded, and it soon occurred to me what the mistake was: I therefore made signs to have it opened, which they agreed to. I cannot describe their astonishment and vexation, when they had completely turned it out and found only books. Some appeared disposed to revenge their disappointment on us: but their anger was restrained, as I afterwards found, by the principal man among them, who proposed giving us in exchange for some of their own people, lately captured. Signs were made to me to write a letter to the place from whence we came; and I did so, addressing it to an English gen-

tleman residing there as consul. My letter was accompanied by one from the chief, and sent off by a messenger without delay.

“While awaiting the answer I endeavored to discover whether any of my companions could read the Arabic Scriptures, but none seemed to know a letter of them. We passed the time in prayer, being treated pretty well on the whole, but with the rudeness of men in such a savage state as these roving tribes of the Arab race are generally found in. After some days, the answer arrived to our despatch: it was favorable, and our savage hosts prepared to accompany us to the place where they were to be met by the other party, and exchange their prisoners.— For a long time they refused to be troubled with the box; but finding me resolved not to stir without it, they at length placed it on a camel, and we commenced the journey. I had first, however, prevailed on the chief to accept two copies, which as he told me by signs, he would take far up the mountains to some who could read them; and thus I have the cheering hope that my short captivity was made instrumental to bringing the

Gospel where probably its joyful sound had never before been heard."

"And what sort of people did you find the Arabs to be?" asked Edward.

"Just what the Bible tells us: wild men—their hand against every man, and every man's hand against them; and dwelling in the presence of all their brethren most independently, as was proved by the bold proceeding of first stealing us, and then demanding the liberation of their brother thieves, as the price of our release. Their dress was very simple, composed of coarse linen or woollen garments shaped into a vest, with loose trowsers, and a sort of mantle thrown occasionally over the shoulder, with a cap of red cloth. Their abodes were tents formed of camels' hides, with the hair outermost, appearing so dark, that I could not but remember the Psalmist's complaint of being compelled to have his habitation among the tents of Kedar.* Under these, the Arab with his whole family, including the horse, dwelt, subsisting on ground corn, rice, milk, and some fermented liquors.

* Kedar signifies blackness—Psalm cxx. 5.

In their manners they were very grave, even melancholy,—their very songs being accompanied with sighs and lamentations,—bringing forcibly to my mind one part of the prophet's description of those who should possess the desolated land of Judea—'All the merry-hearted do sigh.' Of their conversation we could judge but little; it appeared to consist chiefly in repeating stories. The Arabs would seat themselves in a circle on the ground, while one related a long history to a most attentive audience, who sometimes seemed to be greatly interested and excited by what they heard. At these times I have often looked at them with a deep feeling of their claim to the distinction often addressed to the Jews, 'Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord:'* and greatly have I desired to set before them the story of their father Abraham's faith, that they, believing in the same Savior, might find the like acceptance with God. These children of Hagar were the subjects of a divine prediction, delivered from heaven to their afflicted parent; and the Lord himself,

* Isaiah xlii. 10.

when conversing with Abraham concerning the promised seed, graciously heard his intercession for Ishmael, of whom He declared that he would make a great nation ; and not one word of his good promise hath failed."

" Oh, sister," said Edward, " what a wonderful deal there is between the two covers of this small book !" and while he spoke, he pressed his little Bible to his bosom.

" That book, Edward," said his father, " is, to those who use it aright, the key to unlock all treasures. This world must be a scene of confusion and perplexity to such as look upon it with the natural eye only ; but take the Bible for an interpreter, and how glorious it becomes ! Many a man has puzzled himself through a long life, in order to discover the meaning of things which any young child, instructed out of the Scriptures, may explain : and, after thus wearying himself, has died as ignorant as he was born. Wherefore ? Because he suffered that book to lie neglected on the shelf, while turning over the multitude of books that men have written, not one of which could even explain to him why thorns and thistles are brought forth by the ground

without our labor, while it must be tilled to afford a crop of corn."

"Yes," added Mr. Peele; "and I have heard a party of learned travelers debating for hours on the very subject of the Arab tribes, describing their undoubted antiquity, their wild way of life, the defeat of all who have ever attempted to conquer them, and their unbroken independence to this time. Attempting to account for these things, they have traced them to every cause except the right one; and you would smile to hear the extravagant fancies of some, who undertook to shew the reason of what human wisdom never can explain. But when I drew forth my Bible, and read the prediction, which at once set the whole matter clear, it seemed to some a foolish interruption: while others owned the truth of the passage, but could not see how it explained what they were speaking of. That is to say, they acknowledged the promise of the Lord, but would not yield to his name the glory of having so astonishingly performed it."

"Let us then be thankful," said Mrs. Cleveland, "that from our hearts the veil is so

far removed, as to make the word of God truly precious, and to give to all his works a meaning which we can partly understand. From the glorious sun, shining in yonder heavens, down to the tiny kernel that Edward is squeezing out of that grape, He has made nothing in vain. The whole creation should be a perpetual feast to our eyes and minds, and every step that we took would call forth a song of praise."

"A sigh of grief too," said Mr. Cleveland, "for the havoc that man's wickedness has made in such a beautiful world."

"Yes, my friend," said Mr. Peele; "and that sigh of grief would end in a song of yet louder praise, when we remembered the loving-kindness of God our Savior in coming into this ruined creation, in order to build up again what man and Satan had united to destroy. What thanks can we render to Him who took upon himself a body made like unto ours in all things, sin only excepted, and walked as man among all the sorrows and distresses, pains and persecutions, that man has brought upon his own race—who came into this den of unclean beasts, this polluted world,

a Lamb without spot or blemish, holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and far removed from their inherent sinfulness as the heavens are high above the earth, yet daily enduring every outward assault, and having his holy, gentle heart pierced with the view of our unbelief, our ingratitude, our wicked rebellion against his merciful rule : yea, himself afflicted in our afflictions, and weeping over the hardened opposers whom he desired to gather under his sheltering wings ! Oh ! how shall we thank him who by dying disarmed death of his sting, and by ascending again led our captivity captive ! Our hearts cannot conceive, much less can our feeble lips proclaim his rightful praises ; but he sends the Holy Ghost, the Spirit which helpeth our infirmities, to kindle now within us a spark of that heavenly fire which shall shine through eternity, and warm us with rapture, when, with all the heavenly hosts, we shall utter that glorious song, ‘ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain ! ’ ”

After this, the party read some chapters in the Bible, blessing God for giving them that precious book ; and then they prayed that

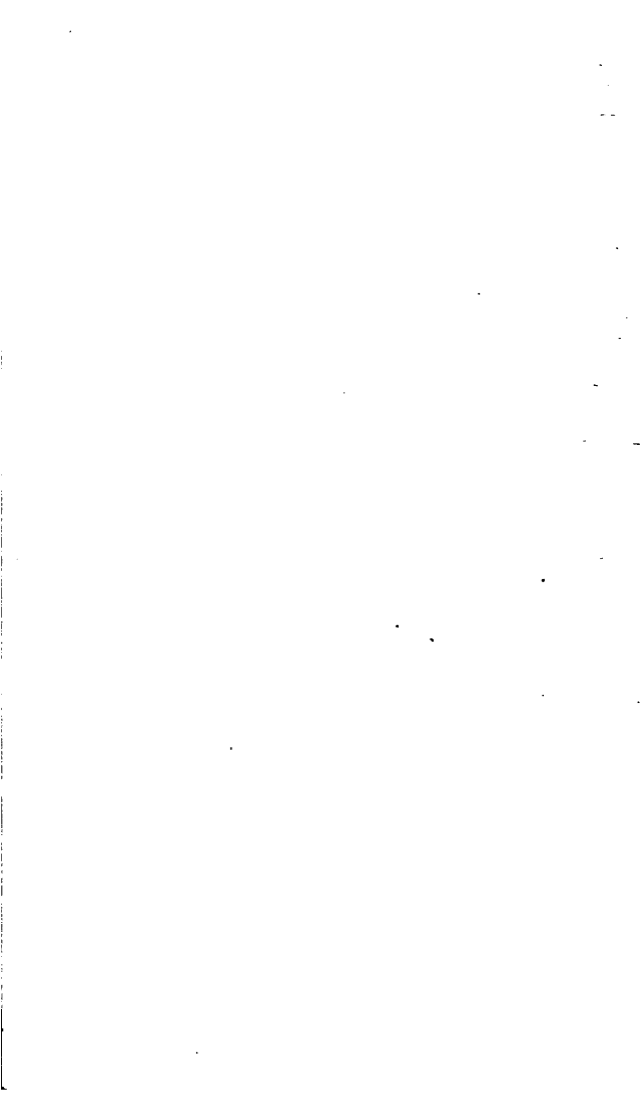
the same light might shine upon all the lands now sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

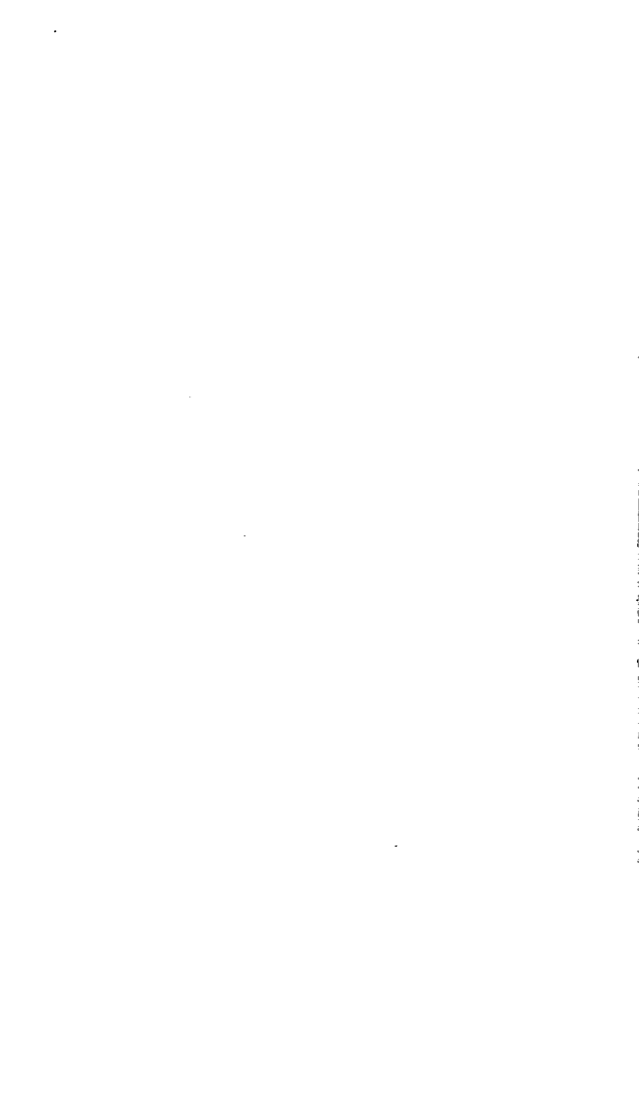
Edward and Jane procured some paper, upon which they put down a list of the things that had most interested them during those two pleasant days ; and often did they open their little memoranda, after their tasks were done, to talk over the history of the Museum.

“ I love the Museum,” said Jane, “ because it made me value my Bible more than ever.”

“ And I,” said Edward, “ love my Bible, because it makes the whole world a Museum to me, where I may look about and own God’s handy-work in every thing that I behold.”

Quellen C.





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