

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER,

And Bible Society, Missionary, and Sabbath School Advocate.

E McLEOD, Editor.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

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TERMS:

ONE DOLLAR A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

Providence in the Early Life of Cyrus.

Having yesterday considered the circumstances attending the birth and preservation of Cyrus, in the face of the interests engaged in his destruction, we may proceed to notice the incidents of his early life down to the commencement of his public career. In this portion of his history the indications of Divine interposition and guidance grow upon us, and the recognitions and acknowledgments of this on the part of the youthful hero himself and of the narrator, become frequent and distinct.

When the lad had reached the age of ten years, an incident occurred which made him known. As he was playing in the village near which the herds were fed, with boys of his own age, they, in their sport, be- thought themselves of electing a king; and they fixed upon him who passed for the son of the herdsman. He forthwith assumed the name of king, and he was to be his body-guard, one to be "the king's eye," on another he bestowed the honor of presenting embassies; to every one appointing a part. One of these boys, being the son of Artabazus, a noble Mede, yielded no obedience to the commands of Cyrus, who directed the others to seize him; which they did, and he begged him to be released. No sooner was the youth released than, full of resentment at the treatment, he hastened home, and related with tears to his father what he had endured from the son of the herdsman of Artabazus. Artabazus, in high wrath, presented himself with his son before Artabazus, and complained of the indignity he had sustained, saying: "O king, thus by thy slave, the son of thy herdsman, have we been maltreated." And as he spoke he displayed his son's shoulders. Hearing and seeing this, Artabazus, fully purposing to give Artabazus satisfaction, sent for the herdsman and his son. When they both appeared, Artabazus, fixing his eye upon Cyrus, said: "Hast thou who art but the son of a slave, dared to use thus shamefully the son of a man who is first in my favor?" to which he replied: "O sir, I did indeed thus treat him, and with justice; for the boys of the village, of whom he was one, in their play, appointed me their king, thinking me the best fitted for the office. The others accordingly yielded obedience to my commands; but this one was disobedient, setting at naught my will, on which account he was punished. If now I am guilty in this matter, here I am before you."

The king, who had observed him attentively while he spoke, was struck not more by the words than by the noble air with which they were delivered; and he began to trace certain resemblances in his countenance, his voice, and his manner, which awakened his suspicions; and these were strengthened when he reflected that the boy's age corresponded to that which would be the age of his daughter's son, if he were still alive. He, therefore, became anxious to question the herdsman alone, and dismissed Artabazus with the promise that neither he nor his son should have any reason to complain. Cyrus was then removed to an inner chamber, and the herdsman on being questioned, declared that the lad was his own son, and that his mother was now living. But the king told him sternly that nothing was to be gained by perjury, for that the truth should be extracted from him by the most painful tortures. He then beckoned the guard to seize the man, who being led away to the torture, declared the whole truth, relating all that happened from the beginning, and concluded with entreating pardon for himself. This was granted; but the heart of the king was filled with wrath against Artabazus, who was summoned to his presence. This nobleman having noticed the herdsman in the palace, did not disguise the truth, but related the circumstances, just as they occurred, affirming, however, that the child was dead, for that the body had been seen and buried by some of his trusty servants. The king, concealing the anger he really felt at the evasion of his commands, repeated the account he had received from the herdsman; and went on to say that the child was living, and all had turned out for the best, as he had since regretted the course he had taken towards his daughter's child. In testimony of his satisfaction he invited him to supper, and desired that he would in the near future send his son to be with the young stranger. Artabazus hastened home with a relieved and happy heart, and forthwith sent his son to the palace. The cruel king forthwith caused the boy to be killed, and his flesh to be dressed in various forms of preparation as food—all save the head, the hands and the feet, which were placed separately in a dish. At supper various meats were presented to his guests, but Artabazus was supplied with the flesh of his own son. When he had eaten heartily of it, the king, with a cruel smile, asked him how he liked his fare; and on his declaring that he had highly enjoyed his repast, Artabazus directed his attendants to deliver to him the reserved dish; and we may easily guess how he was horrified to behold there the head, and feet of his own child. But, by a mighty effort, he restrained his emotions; and when Artabazus asked him if he knew of what game he had eaten, he answered, "Yes, he knew; and was pleased with whatever the king had done." He then withdrew, heart-stricken, to his own house, taking with him the remains of his son.

This dreadful transaction is at least consistent with the character which the historians give to Artabazus, as evinced in the previous treatment of his own daughter's son. Concerning him he now again consulted the magi, who had prophesied that if he lived he should reign. They were now disposed to consider his destinies satisfied by the mock royalty which his playmates had conferred upon him, and that his grandfather need be under no further apprehensions concerning him; and they counselled that he should be sent back to his parents in Persia. He was accordingly sent home, and was most joyfully received by his parents, who had believed him dead, and whom the account of his early adventures deeply interested. They took advantage of the name of his foster mother Cyrus, which name was often heard from his lips, to give out that their son had been preserved by a particular providence, for that when he was exposed he had been suckled by a bitch (which Cyrus signifies), and this report spread far and near, and appears to have been still current in the time of Herodotus.

The lad grew, and seems to have excelled all his companions in strength and every manly grace.—There were eyes that watched him with earnestness. Artabazus nourished the hope of making the young prince the instrument of that vengeance against Artabazus, which burned the more fiercely in his heart because he dared not give it the least vent. At length,

when Cyrus had grown up, this person sent him by a trusty servant a secret letter sewed up in the belly of a hare, calling him to vengeance against one who had been virtually his murderer; "for," said the letter, "by his intention you had perished, although by the providence of the gods, and by me, you survive." Artabazus further assured him, that many noble Medes had become disaffected to Artabazus, and would declare for him if he incited the Persians to revolt, and invaded Media at their head.

Yielding to these suggestions, Cyrus convoked an assembly of the Persian tribes, and desired that every man would bring his axe with him. When they had assembled, Cyrus commanded them to take their axes and clear in one day the country around for three miles of the briar with which it was covered. This they accomplished; and they were then desired to present themselves the next day purified from the dust and stain of their past labor. Meanwhile Cyrus collected and slaughtered all his father's—goats, sheep and oxen; and caused them to be cooked to entertain the assembled thousands, nor were bread and rich wines wanting for the intended feast. On the morrow, when they appeared, he made them recline upon the grass and partake of the feast he had provided.—When they had finished, Cyrus addressed them, and asked them whether the labors of yesterday or the enjoyments of to-day had been the most pleasant. They declared that there was the greatest possible difference between the two, for that on the first day they had endured every hardship, but on this they had possessed every good. Taking up the word, Cyrus opened to them his whole intention, saying: "Persians, thus stand our affairs—if you are willing to follow me, these, and a thousand other good things, shall be yours; and servile labour shall be unknown to you; but if you refuse to obey me, toils innumerable, like those of yesterday, will be laid upon you. Now, therefore, follow me, and be free. For I believe myself to be divinely ordained to fill your hands with these benefits; and you being yourselves not at all inferior to the Medes, as not in other respects, so not in military virtues. This being the state of your affairs, revolt instantly from Artabazus." And they did so, according to this account, and eventually succeeded not only in casting off the Median yoke, but in establishing the sway over many lands.

Such, in substance, is the account of Herodotus. The writers of the early part of the last and the latter part of the preceding century manifested a prevailing disposition to reject his account of the infancy of Cyrus, and to prefer that of Xenophon; and this still operates, through the just influence of the writer to whom we refer, although the relative positions of the authorities in question have been considerably altered. The extensive researches which have since taken place into the history and antiquities of Egypt and the East, have confirmed, and in many cases established, the authority of Herodotus in many matters in which it was formerly most disputed; while it is now universally recognised that the account which Xenophon gives of Cyrus in his *Cyropædia*, is, in the account of the youth particularly, of no more historical authority than the *Telemachus* of Pseudo, to which it is in many respects similar.

Let us try to understand this matter a little; for it is well worth our while to have some distinct ideas on the subject. It is now generally admitted that Herodotus related what he heard—that is, what was the general report among the educated classes at the time and in the countries of which he wrote. His intention and care to give the true account, is incidentally evinced in this case by his mention, only for rejection, of the story of the bitch-nurse which Cyrus received when exposed upon the mountains. This, he distinctly states, was the common rumor of his time, but which he corrects and explains from the more authentic information to which he had access. Now, when Herodotus travelled among the Persians and discoursed with their learned men, the persons with whom he associated were those whose fathers had lived under Cyrus, and who must have been acquainted with his true history; and the accounts which the Greek traveller heard were those which these contemporaries of Cyrus had delivered to their sons. The value of this kind of testimony lessens in proportion to the number of links in its transmission, and Herodotus was in all respects nearer, in time, in place, and in circumstance than Xenophon, as we could show at large if space allowed and occasion required. Indeed, the matter might be thought to rest sufficiently on the fact, that Herodotus certainly intended to write true history, whereas Xenophon purposed to furnish a philosophical romance, where it is not that so strange a preference has nevertheless been given to his materially different account of the youth of Cyrus. We are ready to admit, indeed, we believe, that in the later and more public events of the career of the great Persian, the authority of Xenophon may be accepted, because the facts were more notorious, and because they well known, even in his own country, as reported by the Persians of his age to many other Greeks who had been in the Persian service; and could not, therefore, be so easily turned from the direct truth to suit the purposes of his book; but in regard to the youth of Cyrus, he had "ample room and verge enough" to trace what characters he pleased; nothing of public importance—nothing that impresses itself upon a nation's history, being involved in the details, beyond the simple fact that the child's existence had been preserved. That much obscurity hung over the early life of Cyrus, as evinced by the conflicting accounts of that life to which Herodotus refers as existing in his time, seems strongly to corroborate the recital which he has given seeing that the circumstances which he relates accounts adequately for it. The same consideration may help us to conclude that the father of Cyrus was not a king, as Xenophon reports, but merely, as Herodotus tells us, a Persian of noble birth and a member of the royal tribe. If the father had been king of the Persians, and if Cyrus had, from infancy, been brought up in distinction and honor at his father's court, the facts must have been too well known to allow room for the existence of the story which Herodotus gives, or of the other to which he refers.—*Dr. Kitt's Bible Illustrations.*

HE CALLS HIS OWN SHEEP BY NAME.

O that your ears were anointed, and opened to hear His voice! He calls you by your name, speaking to you by those Scriptures that are applicable to your character, experience, and need. Do you not often wonder at the marvellous appropriateness of some promise to your state,—at the richness, and fullness, and blessedness of the gospel, which the opening of some word, like the opening of a door in heaven, unfolds before your delighted soul? Ah, that is the good Shepherd calling you by your name, and leading you out of the desert into green pastures; out of the dry land, where no water is, to the side of the still waters.—*Herodotus's Remarks.*

Who is the Happiest Girl.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE.

Dear children, would you like to know who was the happiest child I ever saw? Listen to me, and I will tell you.

The happiest child I ever saw was a little girl whom I once met travelling in a railway carriage. We were both going on a journey to London, and we travelled a great many miles together. She was only eight years old, and she was quite blind. She had never been able to see at all. She had never seen the sun, and the stars, and the sky, and the grass, and the trees, and the birds—and all those pleasant things which you see every day of your lives;—but still she was quite happy.

She was by herself, poor little thing. She had no friend or relations to take care of her on the journey, and be good to her; but she was quite happy and content. She said when she got into the carriage, "Tell me how many people there are in the carriage. I am quite blind and can see nothing." A gentleman asked her "If she was not afraid?" "No," she said, "I am not frightened; I have traveled before, and I trust in God, and people are always very good to me."

But I soon found out the reason why she was so happy;—and what do you think it was? She loved Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ loved her;—she had sought Jesus Christ and she had found Him.

I began to talk to her about the Bible, and I soon saw she knew a great deal of it. She went to a school where the mistress used to read the Bible to her; and she was a good girl, and had remembered what her mistress had read.

Dear children, you cannot think how many things in the Bible this poor little blind girl knew. I only wish that every grown-up person in England knew as much as she did. But I must try to tell you some of them.

She talked to me about sin; how it first came into the world, when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, and it was to be seen everywhere now. "Oh!" she said, "there are no really good people. The very best people in the world have many sins every day, and I am sure we all of us waste a great deal of time, if we do nothing else wrong. Oh! we are all such sinners! there is nobody who has not sinned a great many sins."

And then she talked about Jesus Christ. She told me about the agony in the garden of Gethsemane—about His sweating drops of blood—about the soldiers nailing Him to the cross—about the spear piercing His side, and blood and water coming out. "Oh!" she said, "how very good it was of Him to die for us, and such a cruel death! how good he was to suffer so for our sins!"

And then she talked about wicked people. She said she was afraid there were a great many in the world, and it made her very unhappy to see how many of her school-fellows and acquaintances went on. "But," she said, "I know the reason why they are so wicked; it is because they do not try to be good,—they do not ask Jesus to make them good."

I asked her what part of the Bible she liked best. She told me she liked all the history of Jesus Christ, but the chapters she was most fond of were the three last chapters of the book of Revelation. I had a Bible with me, and I took it out and read these chapters to her as we went along.

When I had done she began to talk about heaven. "Think," she said, "how nice it will be to be there!—There will be no more sorrow, nor crying, nor tears. And then Jesus Christ will be there, for it says, 'The Lamb is the light thereof,' and we shall always be with Him; and besides this, there shall be no night there; they will need no candle nor light of the sun."

Dear children, just think of this poor little blind girl. Think of her talking in talking of Jesus Christ. Think of her rejoicing in the account of heaven, where there shall be no sorrow or night.

I have seen her since. She went to her own home in London, and I do not know whether she is alive or not; but I hope she is, and I have no doubt Jesus Christ has taken good care of her.

Dear children, are you as happy and as cheerful as she was?

You are not blind, you have eyes and can run about and see everything, and go where you like, and read as much as you please to yourselves. But are you as happy as this poor little blind girl?

Oh! if you wish to be happy in this world, remember my advice to-day,—do as the little blind girl did,—Love Jesus Christ, and He will love you—seek him early and you shall find Him."

The Wayside Traveller.

AFTER having descended a precipitous hill, and entered a glen of varied beauty, I alighted from the carriage, in order to visit a picturesque church that was situated near the road-side. As I lifted the latch of the little gate that opened upon the church-yard, I saw an aged woman bending under the weight of eighty-five years; with one hand she held a crutch, and with the other the corners of a well-mended apron, filled with sticks. She paused upon seeing me. "Nay," I said, "pray pass through first; your hands are full, and mine are at liberty." She accepted the slight attention in a way that interested me.

After walking round the receptacle for the dead, I turned into a shady lane, and saw the aged pilgrim seated upon a fallen tree. I went toward her, and said, "I am glad you have found a resting place this warm day." "I thank God for this, as well as for every other blessing, lady. The Lord provides care for his servants here, and never-failing rest hereafter."

"I am glad to find that you can trace God in your mercies." She replied, "I have reason so to do; I have been a widow thirty-five years, and have not known the want of a bit of bread; I was left with eight children, and their labour and mine procured a decent subsistence, through God's blessing, until they married, and had to support their own families."

"Do they give you any assistance at present?" "They are far removed from me, lady; but God is a present help in time of trouble. He opened the heart of our clergyman's lady to pay the rent of my present hut, 1s. 6d. per week, and she kindly gives me a dinner, when I am able to walk for it."

"Can you read?" I inquired. "No, I cannot read; but my heavenly Father will not reject me on account of my ignorance; for, in his great mercy, he has taught me by his Spirit to know that I am a sinful creature, and that he has given to me—even to me—his own dear Son to save my immortal soul, and with a full heart I bless his holy name. Oh, the joy of having such a refuge to flee to! My God meets me; he sends his Holy Spirit into my heart, and warms my soul with thoughts of my Saviour."

"Do you live alone?" I asked. "I have no one in the hut with me," she replied; "but I am not alone, for God—the mighty God—is with me; I lay down to sleep in his arms, and when I awake he is present with me. He graciously gives me power at this advanced time of life to help myself; my hearing is good, my sight is perfect,—I can see the finest hair of my head. What shall I render to my God?"

"I trust, then," I said, "that when the last summons comes, his rod and his staff will comfort you." "Oh, lady, he will never leave me nor forsake me. I do not fear death; my eyes fill with tears of joy as I walk along the road, at the thought of soon seeing Jesus face to face; this is all my desire in this life; it cheers my declining days, smooths my cares, and makes every thing appear trifling here below."

"Do you think your sins are forgiven?" I asked. "I do; the heavy burden of them is gone, and instead of the weight of them the love of Christ comes more deeply into my heart. I wish I could serve him as I ought; I am a poor insignificant creature, and yet he deigns to make me as one of his own. I cast myself upon his mercy, upon the great Sacrifice, and find him all-sufficient. We parted with mutual expressions of hope that we might meet at the right hand of God.—*Churchman's Monthly Magazine.*

Gratitude—how to increase it.

The tide of gratitude increases as it flows. When we render thanks to God for one mercy, a second presents itself to view, then a third, then others successively come to our remembrance. The goodness and the mercy of the Lord are, like the mighty deep, unfathomable. His acts of love are innumerable; and constant, therefore, should be our thanksgivings:

"My soul, in blessing wonder lost,
Thy various love surveys;
Where shall my grateful lips begin,
Or where conclude thy praise?"

Gratitude increases as we offer thanks, and mercies multiply as we contemplate them. A poor woman had fallen into a melancholy and murmuring frame of mind. She made no effort to check the temptation, but considered that she did well to be angry and to complain. Her minister tried every argument in his power, but to no purpose. He spoke to her of temporal and of spiritual mercies, but no response of gratitude was awakened. She said that she had "nothing in body or soul to be thankful for." Lifting up his heart in prayer to God for wisdom, he inquired, "Does not your neighbour's husband drink when he is out, and beat her when he comes home?"

"Yes was the only reply.
"Does your husband do so to you?"
"No," was the reluctant answer.

"Well, then, should not you thank God that you have a kind husband?"
No reply was returned. The inquiry was several times repeated, till an assent was obtained. The minister said he would not leave, till she promised to thank God for this mercy, night and morning, upon her bended knees. Having at last obtained her promise, he said to her at parting, "I have now shown you one thing which you have to be thankful for, and you must keep your promise till I see you again." Intentionally delaying his return, several days elapsed before he revisited her dwelling. But what a different woman met him now!

"O," she exclaimed, "I have longed to see you, I have wished to thank you! For a morning or two, I did as I promised, but I did not rightly feel what I said. Then, one day, when I was thanking God that I had a kind husband, I thought I should thank him that I had bread to put in their mouths; and when I was thanking the Lord for that, I thought that I should thank him that I had clothes to put upon their backs, and a house to cover their heads; and so, sir, when I was thanking God for one thing, another came into my head, and another still, and now I know not where to stop, or how to thank him enough; and I feel so happy."

Thus gratitude increases with use. The more thankful we are, the more thankful we shall become, and the more we shall have to be thankful for. The truly humbled, spiritual mind, will learn the lesson of thankfulness from the most common things, yea, even from the most revolting.

Practical Talks.

The man of business says to himself, "If I were a minister, how much good I might do! It would be so easy then to lead a holy life. But as it is I must attend to my business, and there is little time for anything beside." The minister sighs heavily, and thinks, "Oh, if I were in Brother M.'s place, I trust I should not become so totally engrossed in the cares of this life. What a precious opportunity he has to honour his Saviour in his immense intercourse with the world!" Poor Brother M.! It may be that you are thrown into a furnace heated one seven times hotter than that in which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were cast. And it does fearfully threaten to consume every good thing in you. Yet if you keep ever near you one whose "form is like the Son of God," you will be as safe as were they. It may be, indeed, that your minister does not conceive how desperately hard it is for you to keep living in your heart the "things which are unseen and eternal," while engaged in the fierce strife for your portion of this world, among the throngs of godless men. But he who "was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin," knows how it is. He is no uninterested spectator of the rude assaults upon your Christian integrity, and it needs but the quick, prayerful upgoing of the heart to secure to you an omnipotent ally. The snares which Satan is so cunningly weaving to draw you down on to the deceitful ground of this world's right and wrong are not hidden from his all-piercing eye.

What though you are a man of business? Is there the less laid up for you a crown of righteousness? Waits there the less for you the "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord?" Ah! when the day of judgment comes, you will begin to realize that business life has a wonderfully intimate connection with eternity. You may see some soul condemned to hell, whose fatal unbelief was sealed by some little dishonest trick of trade in you, a professed Christian. Or, overwhelmed with joyful surprise, you may see one example of incorruptible principle which you set, reflected from a jewel in the Saviour's crown! What humble gratitude will fill your soul as you hear some ransomed spirit repeating words of kind exhortation which you spoke years ago! You had forgotten them, but how they are returned, "full measure, pressed down, and running over," into your bosom! God used that faithful remembrance of the honoured employer to turn the reckless youth from the ways of death. You have no right to get so deep in business as to lose sight of your Saviour. Have you forgotten what you probably once believed, that "man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever?" But is it not your chief end to make money? Which query occasions the most frequent and anxious solicitude, "How may I uphold Christ's kingdom?" or, "How may I compass a good bargain?"

That it is not impossible at once to live very near to God and to do vast business with the world, there have been some noble witnesses; men of whom commerce has been proud, and for whom the church has blessed the Lord. But with them the God was supreme, and money was for his sake. Whatever they did, they did it all to the glory of God. They sought first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all other things have been added unto them. If it is thus that you do, you will find that the life which you hurried through amidst the whirl of business, led not less surely to the gates of heaven than the more sequestered path trod by your evanished pastor. You have no need to wish for another sphere that you may honour your Master. The pearl of great price may fix the eyes of men even more, worn upon your breast in the busy mart, than where they look to see it.

Christ Dwelling in the Heart.

Not a few real Christians have ill-defined ideas concerning Christ's "dwelling in the heart by faith." A simple illustration should remove the difficulty. Think of the affectionate mother in yonder cottage. Her little daughter is by her side, her constant companion day and night. She is dutiful and lovely. She dwells in her mother's heart; this is obvious to her neighbour. She dwells there by sight, as she is habitually under her mother's eye, and her deportment is a daily source of comfort. But time rolls on. The daughter is growing up to womanhood—she must go to service. She is engaged to a family in a distant town. The term-day has come! With a trembling heart the mother bids her "farewell," and the daughter is soon lost to sight. Her seat in the family circle is empty. Attending to domestic duties throughout the day, the mother often goes out, often comes in, but the daughter is no longer seen. Does she therefore no more dwell in her mother's heart? She now dwells not by sight, yet she dwells really there. She is probably getting rooted and grounded more firmly there than ever. She dwells in her mother's heart by remembrance. This is something different from dwelling there by sight, but it is not something more difficult to comprehend. Weeks pass away. The mother has her daughter always in remembrance, and thus has her daughter dwelling in her heart. A trustworthy friend in the town to which the daughter has gone has promised to write in course regarding her behaviour. In due time a letter arrives. The mother opens and reads. Why does her countenance brighten, and the tear of joy start from her eye? She has received a favourable testimony concerning her daughter—a testimony relating to a humble but firm exemplification of principle in a position of trial. She knows the friend who writes is a man of truth. Why is that mother more cheerful than ordinary throughout the day? Why has she set herself to devise the means of sending some new year's gift, of more than ordinary value, to her daughter? Throughout the day the daughter dwells in her heart—far more securely rooted and grounded than ever—but how? She dwells by faith. The mother believes—has faith in—the letter received from the trustworthy friend. Now, for that mother to have the daughter dwelling in her heart by faith, is something different from having her dwelling there by sight, or dwelling by remembrance, but it is not more difficult to understand. What can be more simple than the idea expressed by the words, "Christ dwells in your hearts by faith?" When the truth that testifies of Jesus' love, and of the satisfaction he has made for our sins, it believably thought of, Christ dwells in the heart by faith.—*Christian News.*