

Christian



Visitor.

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“BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED.”—ST. PAUL.

Rev. E. D. VERY, Editor.

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From the N. Y. Recorder. THE WAY OF LIFE.

BY REV. SIDNEY Dyer.

I would not have life's pathway smooth,
And always glowing 'neath the light,
Nor ever feast the eyes on scenes
Where beauty dwells with fond delight.
No, I would choose at times to climb
O'er rugged ways and mountains drear,
And look on skies where whirling clouds
Amid the darkling storm appear.

All earth's bright hours show God is good;
And this should raise the heart above;
But when he smiles 'mid storm and light—
Ah, this is proof that "God is love."
'Tis thus we prove the promise true,
That crooked ways he maketh straight,
And smoothest spreads the roughest way
For all who on his statutes wait.

I would not wish for life to end
But in the stillness of the grave—
If we sought not the Saviour there,
How could we feel his power to save;
Then let its dark, drear cava appear,
My soul shall bless the dying strife
Which snaps the cords that bind me here,
That I may soar to endless life!

The Basques.

In looking over a recent number of the *Daguerre-type*, we met with an account of a singular people, the Basques, whose homes are in the mountain fastnesses of the Pyrenees. Though the history of these mountaineers can be traced back to so remote a period as 200 years before the Christian era, yet their origin remains hid in obscurity.

Few in number, these dwellers amongst the western Pyrenees are formidable by their courage and energy; and from the remotest periods of their history, have made themselves respected and even feared. Hannibal treated them with consideration, and was known to alter his proposed line of march to avoid the fierce attacks of this handful of mountaineers. The Roman proconsuls sought their alliance. Cæsar, against whom, and under Pompey's banners, they arrayed themselves, was unable to subdue them.—After the fall of Rome, the men of the Pyrenees were attacked in turn by Vandals, Goths and Franks; their houses were destroyed, their lands laid waste, but they themselves, unattainable in their mountains, continued free. A deluge of barbarians overflowed Gaul and Spain; conquerors and conquered amalgamated, and divided the territory amongst them; still the Pyreneans continued unmixed in race, and undisturbed in their fastnesses. The vanquished Goth retreated before the warlike and encroaching Saracen, and the crescent standard fluttered amongst the mountains of northern Spain. It found no firm footing, and soon its bearers retraced their bloody path, strewing it with the bones of their best and bravest, and pursued by the victorious warriors of Charles Martel. But of all the historical fights that have taken place in the Pyrenees, there is not one whose tradition has been so well preserved as the great defeat of Charlemagne. The fame of Roland still resounds in popular melody, and echoes amongst the wild ravines and perilous passes, whose names, in numerous instances, connect them with his exploits.

The Basques are brave, intelligent and proud—simple, but high-minded. They have ever shown a strong repugnance to foreign influence and habits; and have clung to old customs and to their singular language. It is curious to behold half a million of men—whose narrow territory is formed of a corner of France and another of Spain, closely hemmed in, and daily traversed by hosts of Frenchmen and Spaniards—preserving a language which, from its difficulty and want of resemblance to any other known tongue, very few foreigners ever acquire. They have their own musical instruments—not the most

harmonious in the world; their own music, of peculiar originality and wildness; their own dances and games, dress, and national colors, all more or less different from those of the rest of Spain. There is no doubt of their being first-rate fighting men, but the habit of contending with superior numbers has given them peculiar notions on the subject of military success and glory. They attach no shame to a retreat or even to a flight; but those antagonists who suppose that because they run away they are beaten, sooner or later find themselves egregiously mistaken. Flight is a part of their tactics; to fatigue the enemy, and inflict heavy loss at little to themselves, is upon all occasions their aim. They care nothing for the empty honor of sleeping on the bloody battle-field over which they have all day fought. They could hardly be made to understand the merit of such a proceeding; they take much greater credit when they thin the enemy's ranks without suffering themselves. And if they often run away, they are ever ready to return to the fray. They are born with a natural aptitude for the only species of fighting for which their mountainous land is adapted. We have been greatly amused and interested, when rambling in their country, by watching a favorite game frequently played upon Sunday and other holidays. The boys of two villages meet at an appointed spot and engage in a skirmish; turf and clods of earth, often stones, being substituted for bullets. The spirit and skill with which the lads carry on the mock encounter, the wild yells called forth by each fluctuation of the fight, the fierceness of their juvenile faces, when, after a well-directed volley, one side rushes forward to the charge, armed with the thick bamboo-like stems of the Indian corn, their white teeth firmly set, and a barbarous Basque oath upon their lips, strongly recall the more earnest and bloody encounters in which their fathers have so often distinguished themselves. These contests, which sometimes become rather serious from the passionate character of the Basques, and often terminate in a few broken heads, are encouraged by the older people, and compose the military education of a race, who do not fight the worse because they are acquainted with the drill-sergeant, and with the very rudiments of scientific warfare. The tenacity with which these mountaineers adhere to the usages of their ancestors, even when they are unfitted to the century, and disadvantageous to themselves, is very remarkable. The Basque is said to be so stubborn, that he knocks a nail into the wall with his head; but the Arragonese is said to surpass the Basque, inasmuch as he puts the head of the nail against the wall, and tries to drive it in by striking his skull against the point. When in the ninth century, the French Kings conquered for a short time a part of the Basque provinces, they prudently abstained from interferences with the privileges and customs of the inhabitants, and when the whole of Spain was finally united into one kingdom under Ferdinand the Catholic, the Basques retained their republican forms. Every Basque is more or less noble. The genealogical pride, proverbially attributed to Spaniards, is outshone by that of these mountaineers, amongst whom a charcoal burner or a muleteer will hold himself as good and ancient a gentleman as the best duke in the land. Certainly there is no country where such equality exists amongst all classes; an equality, however, rather pleasing than disagreeable in its results. The demeanor of the less fortunate of the people towards those whom wealth and education place above them, is as remote from insolence and brutality, as it is from cringing servility. The poorest pea-

sant, tilling his patch of maize, answers the question of the rich proprietor, who drives his carriage past his cottage, with the same frank courtesy and manly assurance, with which he would acknowledge the greeting or interrogatory of a fellow-laborer.

Faculty of Illustrating Truth.

ANECDOTES OF DR. PAYSON.

Some preachers have a delightful faculty of illustrating truth, whether in the pulpit or in pastoral labours, by means of happy or appropriate *suppositions*, employed by way of simile or comparison. The late eloquent and heavenly minded Dr. Payson possessed this faculty in an eminent degree, and often used it with the most delightful results in his faithful and affectionate ministrations. Those who are familiar with the history and writings of this holy man, will immediately call to mind a variety of instances.—One or two specimens will suffice for our present purpose. 'Suppose,' says Dr. Payson, 'you wished to separate a quantity of brass and steel filings, mixed together in one vessel; how would you effect the separation? Apply a loadstone, and immediately every particle of iron will attach itself to it, while the brass filings remain behind. Thus, if we see a company of true and false professors of religion, we may not be able to distinguish between them; but let Christ come among them, and all his sincere followers will be attracted towards him, as the steel is drawn to the magnet, while those who have none of his spirit will remain at a distance.' Is it possible, I ask, to conceive of any other form or figure of speech by which the exact idea in the mind of the speaker could have been more accurately or more forcibly conveyed to the mind of the hearer? If the object of true eloquence be, as has sometimes been said, 'The imparting to others the emotions with which we ourselves are agitated,*' then, certainly, comparisons like the above must be a powerful aid to the orator, in the performance of his task.

Nor was Dr. Payson less happy in the chamber of sickness, or the dwellings of sorrow, in the employment of these illustrations for the solace of the disconsolate or the bereaved.—'Suppose,' said he, on one occasion, to a Christian sufferer, who was almost in despair, because the influence of her bodily agonies so distracted her mind, as to prevent her from concentrating her thoughts on the Saviour as she wished, 'suppose you were to see a sick child lying in its mother's lap, with its faculties impaired by its sufferings, so that it was generally in a troubled sleep; but now and then it just opens its eyes a little, and gets a glimpse of its mother's face, so as to be recalled to the recollection that it is in its mother's arms; and suppose that always, at such a time, it should smile faintly with evident pleasure to find where it was.—Should you doubt whether that child loved its mother or not? The application of the comparison, though not expressed, was easily made by the afflicted sufferer, and we are not surprised to hear that her doubts and despondency were gone in a moment. Equally happy was he on another occasion, so painfully familiar to every sympathising pastor—a visit to a weeping Rachel, refusing to be comforted for the loss of a beloved child. 'Suppose now,' said he, 'some one was making a beautiful crown for you to wear, and that you knew it was for you, and that you were to receive it and wear it as soon as it should be done. Now if the maker of it were to come, and, in order to make the crown more beautiful and splendid, were to take some

of your jewels to put into it—should you be sorrowful and unhappy, because they were taken away for a little while, when you knew they were gone to make up your crown? The mother smiled through her tears at the thought that her jewel was taken from her but for a season, and said, in meek submission, 'The Lord gave; and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.'

Happy, thrice happy, will it be for that preacher who shall be able to combine, as well in the pulpit, as in the parlor and the chamber of sorrow, the seraphic piety, the Christ-like tenderness, and the vivid power of illustration of the sainted Payson.—*Dowling's Power of Illustration.*

What is Time?

Time is measured by duration; the material of our being, and the index of our progression to eternity.

There was, before time began its course; there will be, when time shall be no longer.

Time has been a favourite theme with philosophers, moralists, and sages. Some have extolled it much, but none ever knew its intrinsic worth. The light of eternity must reveal it, the day of doom declare it, and all eternity re-echo it.

Time past, how transient; time present, how evanescent; time to come, with many, how uncertain! How different are the lessons it teaches, and the impression it makes!

The child wastes it in play, and knoweth not its worth; the anxious youth would hasten its course, and the aged put a drag upon its wheels.

Deferred hope and endured pain biddeth it fly, enjoyment would arrest its flight, and the condemned malefactor is overwhelmed at its velocity.

So intrinsically excellent, it is dealt out in moments, and two contemporary ones never existed at the same period.

Its travel is regular, silent, but sure. It never wearies, nor halts, nor turns aside; on, on, is its motto; and on, on it has sped for nearly six thousand years.

A thousand years were given to the antediluvians, one hundred and twenty to the patriarchs; but thirty are the measure of the modern generation of mankind.

Time is the space of man's existence, the bounds of his probation, and his seed-time for eternity.

In possession, it may be improved and enjoyed; gone, it is irrecoverably lost.

Used, it blesses; neglected, it condemns; abused, it leaves its curse behind.

Time should be redeemed from vain conversation—frivolous pursuits—foolishness of life.

Time should be anticipated by prudent forethought, improved by holy diligence, and laid up for serious reflection.

The records of time will furnish the subjects for judgment, and influence the destinies of eternity.

Reader, what thinkest thou of time! how hast thou spent time past, how art thou using time present, and how purposing for time to come.

Know its intrinsic value, be taught its importance, and so number thy days as to apply thy heart unto wisdom.—*Christian Philosophy.*

MISSING IMMIGRANT SHIP.—The British bark *Thalia* sailed from Cork, Ireland, for Boston, on the 5th of November last, with two hundred immigrant passengers—since which time nothing has been heard of her, and there is but very little doubt but that she has gone down at sea with her living cargo. For months a poor Irish woman, whose parents, brother and sisters were on board this vessel, has been in the habit of visiting the Merchants' Exchange, to inquire for tidings of the absent ship, and though each time she left sorrowing, yet again she came, until yesterday she was told of the probability that her family had found a grave in the depths of the Ocean.—*Boston Traveller.*

*Biblical Repository, Vol. vii. Second Series, p. 80.