

Poetry.

THE SAD CHOICE.

The following lines were written by the late Rev. R. M. M'Cheyne, upon it being stated concerning a young friend, "that she was determined to keep by the world."

She has chosen the world,
And its paltry crowd,
She has chosen the world,
And an endless shroud!
She has chosen the world,
With its misnamed pleasures:
She has chosen the world,
Before heaven's own treasures.

She hath launched her boat
On life's giddy sea,
And her all is afloat
For eternity.
But Bethlehem's star
Is not in her view:
And her aim is far
From the harbour true.

When the storm descends
From an angry sky,
Ah! where from the winds
Shall the vessel fly?
When the stars are concealed,
And the rudder gone,
And heaven is sealed
To the wandering one!

The whirlpool opes
For the gallant prize;
And, with all her hopes,
To the deep she hies!
But who may tell
Of the place of woe,
Where the wicked dwell—
Where the worldlings go!

For the human heart
Can ne'er conceive
What joys are the part
Of them who believe;
Nor can justly think
Of the cup of death,
Which all must drink
Who despise the faith.

Away, then—O! fly
From the joys of earth!
Her smile is a lie—
There's a sting in her mirth.
Come, leave the dreams
Of this transient night,
And bask in the beams
Of an endless light.

The Family.

THE POWER OF PRAYER.

Not very long ago there lived a poor but pious woman. Her name I cannot tell you, but she was a widow; her husband was dead, and she had but one son. He was a wicked boy, and often caused his mother's heart to ache. At last he went off to sea: he cared not for his poor mother; but was anxious to be out of her sight, to be far removed from the sound of her earnest and affectionate advice and entreaties. Deeply and bitterly did she mourn over her wild and wayward child; but she did not abandon herself to sorrow. She remembered she had a Father in heaven, and to him she unburdened the grief of her heart.

From the time of her son's departure she resolved to set apart one hour every week to make him an object of special prayer. She besought God to watch over him, to keep him from falling into sin, and to convert his soul. No other engagement was permitted to set aside this duty, and regularly, at the appointed hour, she withdrew from the toils and cares of the world, to plead with God for her absent boy. Days, weeks, months, years rolled on in rapid succession, and no tidings of the young sailor were received—no letter, no kind message reached the heart-stricken mother. She was inclined to think that he must be dead; yet could not bring herself to discontinue the weekly practice of praying to God on his behalf. One evening she went into her little room, intending as usual to pray for his conversion; but not a word could she utter, she could only sigh and weep. Were those sighs and tears in vain? We shall see.

A long time after this, one warm, bright summer evening, when the beams of the setting sun cast on everything a golden tinge, and all nature was peaceful and lovely, the poor widow was seen sitting at her cottage porch.

Her countenance had a sweet but melancholy expression, and often did the unbidden tear tremble in her eye. She thought of her son, her long-lost boy. As she sat there a tall and weather-beaten sailor approached the little wicket-gate, and looking very wistfully at her, said, "Is Mrs. M. at home?" "Yes, sir," she replied, not knowing to whom she spoke; "I am Mrs. M." Pray what is your business?" "O mother!" he exclaimed, "don't you know me? I am your son!" What a joyous meeting they had, and how much they had to say of many things that had transpired during this long period of separation!

For some time after the young sailor had left his native land, he had lived a sinful life, and endeavoured to forget all the good things he had heard. One Sabbath day as he wandered through the streets of Calcutta, his attention was arrested by the sound of voices singing a tune that was familiar to his ear. It was one to which he had sung hymns, when sitting at his mother's side. He went into the building (which was a chapel) whence the sound proceeded, and when the singing was over, he thought he would stay a little to hear what the minister had to say. His attention was riveted, and his heart was touched, by what he had heard from the good missionary. He lifted up his heart in prayer to God, exclaiming, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" That prayer was heard. He had bid adieu to his sinful pursuits and his worldly companions, and had returned to fill the heart of his mother with joy, and to receive her blessing.

My children, have you a mother who prays for you? Bless God for this; but, remember, your mother's prayers will not save you.—Like the sailor at Calcutta, you must cry for God's mercy for yourselves.

Learn from this story, too, what a good thing it is to send missionaries to foreign countries. Not only will they be useful among the heathen: sailors, and soldiers, and merchants from this country may go and receive instruction from their lips. They may save many an English or American sailor-boy. They may be blessed by God to fulfil many an anxious mother's prayer.—*London Miss. Repository.*

BEAUTIFUL ANECDOTE.

In Mr. Kilpin's school were two brothers from 11 to 12 years old. One of these children had, after repeated admonitions, manifested a determined obstinacy and sulky resistance. Mr. Kilpin told him that the result of such conduct would be a chastisement that would not easily be forgotten. He was preparing to inflict it on the still hardened child, when his brother (Paul) came forward and entreated that he might bear the punishment in the place of his brother. Mr. Kilpin remarked, "My dear Paul, you are one of my best boys, you have never needed chastisement, your mind is tender, I could not be so unjust as to give you pain, my precious child." The dear boy said, "I shall endure more pain to witness his disgrace and suffering than anything you can inflict on me; he is a little boy, and younger and weaker than I am; pray, sir, allow me to take all the punishment; I will bear anything from you. O do, sir, take me in exchange for my naughty brother!" "Well, James, what say you to this noble offer of Paul's?" He looked at his brother, but made no reply. Mr. K. stood silent. Paul still entreated for his punishment, that it might be finished, and wept. Mr. K. said, "Did you ever hear of any who bore stripes and insults to shield offenders, Paul?" "O yes, sir, the Lord Jesus Christ gave his back to the smiters, for us poor little sinners, and by his stripes we are healed and pardoned. O sir, pardon James for my sake, and let me endure the pain. I can bear it better than he." "But your brother does not seek pardon for himself; why should you feel this anxiety, my dear Paul: does he not deserve correction?" "O yes, sir, he has broken the laws of the school, after repeated warnings; you have said he must suffer; therefore, as I know you would not speak an untruth and the laws must be kept, and he is sullen and will not repent, what can be done, sir? Please to take me, because I am stronger than he." The boy then threw his arms around his brother's neck, and wetted his sulky, hardened face with tears of tenderness. This was rather more than boor James could stand firmly. His tears began to flow, and his heart melted; he sought for forgiveness, and embraced his brother.—Mr. K. clasped both in his arms, and prayed for a blessing on them from Him, of whom it was said, "He was wounded for our transgressions." &c.

It would be easy to make remarks on this (in my opinion) beautiful anecdote, but they would be like painting the diamond.—*Cross and Journal.*

RELIGION AT HOME.

"Let them learn first," says Paul, "to show piety at home." Religion begins in the family. The holiest sanctuary on earth is home. The family altar is more venerable than any altar in cathedral. The education of the soul for eternity begins by the fireside. The principle of love, which is to be carried through the universe, is first to be unfolded in the family. We learn to love God by loving our brothers and sisters and mother. That is, we exercise the same feeling which, in an exalted degree, is to be directed to God. So that it is true in a sense more familiar, and yet more comprehensive, than is commonly given to it: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

The Farm.

LAST OF RAILS.

Rails split in the spring when the bark will leave them, last much better than those split in winter, as the bark remaining on the wood causes it to retain moisture, which soon rots the rail. When there is bark on the rails, to turn it down so that, as it becomes loose, it can fall off, will promote their last. Small rails last much longer than large ones. All fences should be torn down and re-set within three years after they are first built. The rails are not then so rotten as to break in throwing about, while the bark has generally become sufficiently loose to jar off. For durability, Spanish oak is much better than either red or post oak.—*Southern Cultivator.*

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD TOOLS.

Those mechanics only who have excellent tools can duly estimate their importance.—Many work year after year with poor tools, when a little time or expense would supply them with good tools, enabling them to do far more work and do it better. Sometimes a mechanic will use a poor implement, when a good one could be obtained for one or two dollars that would last for years, and would annually make a saving of more than double the cost of the implement.

A blacksmith who had far better and more tools than was common with others in the same business, hired an Englishman to assist him. The first thing the stranger did was to make tools, and for more than a week he plied himself closely to making tools, before he would do any other work. His time was well spent, as was shown by the neatness and dispatch with which he worked after being properly prepared.

A poor saw often requires twenty-five per cent. more strength than a good one. If it be used one sixth of the time, the loss would be about one day a month, which in a year would be equal to a sum sufficient to buy a dozen good saws. Mechanics should make estimates occasionally. They will present results in a long run that are highly important, though they may seem trifling for a single day.—*N. E. Farmer.*

EARLY POTATOES.

We feel it a duty to impress upon our readers the necessity of pursuing the plan of early planting for potatoes. The foreign journals for February are full of testimony on this subject, and the experience of ourselves and others in the vicinity of New-York, corroborates that of experimenters abroad. Early plantings, and particularly of the earlier kinds of potatoes, have not suffered as yet from disease, and as many of these kinds are good keepers, the plan should be pursued.—*Working Farmer.*

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At the OBSERVER Office, Prince William Street, corner of Church Street, opposite Sands' Arcade.

TERMS:—10s. per annum, in advance; 12s. 6d. if payment is deferred 6 months. Eight copies sent to one address for fourteen dollars; if payment is deferred for 3 months 10s. each invariably.

TERMS OF ADVERTISING:—For one square, (12 lines or less) 3s. for the first, and 1s. 3d. for each subsequent insertion.

All Communications, &c., connected with the paper, to be directed to the Editor.

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