

GETHESEMANE.

Into Gethsemane Jesus led his three favoured disciples, and there he commanded them to sit and watch while he prayed. May he now kindly lead us there in spirit, help us to retrace its wonders of love and sorrow, and to think with holy delight upon him "who ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Every traveller from professedly christian lands, who treads the mountains of Palestine, is sure to visit the spot still recognized as Gethsemane, and to wander awhile under the shadow of its ancient olives. But it is mournful to think how, from age to age, superstition has triumphed there, and how many have deceived themselves with the mere shadow of religion. Superstition is not true devotion, neither is sentimentality worthy of the name of spirituality, though many confound the two. The pilgrim kneeling devoutly on the very spot where the Man of sorrows endured such bitter griefs, and the poet at a distance stringing his lyre, in order to describe that scene in tragic numbers, may both be alike deceived. We, too, may listen to eloquent discourses upon the Saviour's sorrows, and repeat with much feeling touching poetry, which caught its inspiration from Gethsemane, and by such means, get our sensibilities excited, and yet not realize real fellowship with Christ in his sufferings.

If we would be truly profited by visiting Gethsemane, we must not only look at the Saviour's sorrows, but trace the cause of them; not only admire his resignation, but feel in our hearts his unequalled love—not only wonder at his loud lamentations when bearing sin, but cry out against ourselves on account of it, and condemn ourselves for it. Then, when our sins appear very hideous, his love most wonderful, his blood infinitely precious, and his character altogether lovely, and his person divinely powerful, we shall have real fellowship with him. This is faith, not fancy. This is no poetic vision, but a blessed verity. No painting, no poetry, no music, can move the soul like this. Those who thus think and feel, have been led by the Holy Spirit into Gethsemane, who has, in some measure, interpreted those deep groans of Immanuel, melted their hearts by applying his precious blood, enabling them by faith to receive his righteousness, and rejoice that he hath borne their sins, and carried their sorrows. Blessed spot! Gracious teacher! Favored believer! Glorious Saviour!

My soul! is this thy happy case? Here, then, "tarry and watch." Here, wonder and adore! Here, in Gethsemane, God laid thy sins on Jesus; rejoice thou in that blessed One who bore them; in that pardoning mercy which takes the dreadful burden, with all its curse, from thee. Here, Judas the traitor gave Jesus the treacherous kiss; tremble thou at the thought of imitating him, and cry earnestly for grace to be sincere at heart, and faithful unto death. Here, the disciples slept, notwithstanding their Lord's gracious commands and gentle upbraidings; but do thou "watch and be sober;" let eye, ear, heart, be all open, all attent, all employed. Here an angel came and ministered to thy sorrowing, thy agonizing Lord; learn thou to be his willing servant, counting it thy highest happiness and honor to spread his fame, and to be a messenger and minister of comfort to any of his sorrowful members.

But while thus musing, the thoughts revert to the circumstances under which Jesus left the garden, and went forth to new sufferings, and to fresh displays of that love which is stronger than death. See, a light flashes through the trees; a low suppressed sound of human voices is heard, and a multitude approaches. Their dark errand is to betray, to arrest, to slay, the Lord of glory. Behold, he rises and goes forth to meet them. How majestically calm his late anguished countenance! There is no perturbation, no shrinking now. He is ready to be "led as a lamb to the slaughter." He no longer says, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me," but with unparalleled resignation and meekness, stretches forth his hand for the bitter position, saying, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" His visit to Gethsemane, his prayers and supplications, his strong cryings and tears, have prepared him for the last sad scene. He has been "heard in that he feared." He goes forth with "his face like a flint," determined, whatever it may cost him, to subdue Satan, to destroy death, to save sinners, and to glorify God. "He failed not, neither was he discouraged," till on the cross he said, "It

is finished;" till he had burst the bands of death, and sat down the accepted Saviour of sinners, and the life-giving head of his church, victorious on his Father's throne.

My soul! when difficult duties or trying sufferings are before thee, go to Gethsemane. Muse upon thy Saviour's passion and triumph, so shalt thou be prepared for all service and sorrows, by communion with thy suffering, loving, triumphant, sympathizing Lord.—Primitive Church Magazine.

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS.

"The character of Jesus combines the most rare and apparently opposite qualities.—Some good men have one excellency, and some have another; but Jesus displays them all. In ordinary mortals they appear to be incompatible, but in him they blend in sweetest harmony. His courage was divinely heroic, so that he went calmly on to confront the powers of hypocrisy and malice, though they arrayed against him all the appliances of treachery and violence, and all the horrors of the crucifixion: yet so tender was he, that he clasped the infants to his bosom, and wept, as if his heart were breaking, by the grave of a friend. Such was his dignity, that Herod and Pilate and Caiaphas seem like grovelling meanness by his side; yet he held familiar converse with the woman of Samaria, and lived as a brother and a friend in the cottage of Bethany, and amongst the fishermen of Galilee. So pure was he, that he instantly detected and utterly loathed all spiritual pollution, and in all his intercourse with mankind remained untainted, as the solar light is uncontaminated by the defilement which it reveals; yet he had compassion and benedictions for the penitent publican; and the vilest heart, when contrite, he accepted and blessed. Though he was perfect in his obedience to the law, and allowed not one jot or tittle to fail, accounting it the highest glory to 'fulfil all righteousness;' but he had a forgiving heart, and a gracious promise, for the once abandoned Magdalen, and for the dying thief. Of matchless fortitude, he voluntarily endured the cross, despising the shame; yet, gentle and unresisting, he was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and 'being reviled, opened not his mouth.' Amongst the poor he was the poorest, he 'had not where to lay his head;' yet, with a generosity that never paused or failed, he lived to demonstrate how much more blessed it is to give than to receive. So pensive and devout was he, that he spent the midnight hours in the solitude of the mountains, that he might meditate and pray; but nevertheless, he lived in incessant activity, in the city and the crowd, and found all his delight in finishing his Father's work. His intelligence fathomed the profoundest themes, and tracked, at a glance, all the thoughts and feelings of the human soul, so that, in his presence, subtlety was as folly, and learning as ignorance; yet he was never betrayed into ostentation or superciliousness, but children might understand his language, the common people heard him gladly, and dulness itself, if united to humility, always found him patient and kind. Performing the most stupendous miracles, often surrounded by awe-struck and admiring multitudes, and always aspiring to universal empire, he did not 'strive nor cry.' A bruised reed he did not break, and the smoking flax he did not quench. He lived in the unseen and eternal. His mind and heart were always and intensely filled with love for God and zeal for his glory. Mankind ever appeared to him in their spiritual relations and immortal interests; yet his feelings were always touched by the sight of temporal sufferings, and his hand was always prompt to relieve it; and this is the grateful memorial of his life that 'he went about doing good.' Any one of the graces of his character, developed as Christ developed it, would have constituted something higher than man, but all of them combined, reveal to us unequivocally the Son of God.—Rev. J. Aldis.

Character.

Men are to be estimated, as Johnson says, by the mass of character. A block of tin may have a grain of silver. The mass of Elijah's character was excellence; yet he was not without the alloy. The mass of Jehu's character was base; yet he had a portion of zeal, which was directed by God to great ends. But men are made the same use of as scaffolds; they are employed as a means to erect a building, and then are taken down and destroyed.

ARRAIGNING GOD.

Men do not always perceive that when they call in question the Providence and ways of God, they thereby arraign him at the tribunal of their own reason. Could they realize this, they would be more cautious and devout in speaking of his dispensations. On this head our cotemporary of the Philadelphia Presbyterian thus remarks:

In this world, it is designed by the Creator, that we should know but in part; and yet our conclusions are often rashly ventured. We see but a part of his ways, and because apparently disjointed, they are regarded to be so in fact. A higher and more comprehensive knowledge would lead to a different conclusion. Could we see the beginning and the end, as well as all intermediate points, the whole would appear perfect. As we could form no adequate opinion of the geography of this world from a survey from its highest mountain, so we cannot from the small eminences which we may attain, form a just conception of the boundless government of God. An angelic mind would be utterly foiled in attempting to comprehend it in its infinite ramifications and relations, since what is infinite can be understood only in part by the highest created intelligence. How great, then, must be the presumption which would arraign the proceedings of the Most High before a human tribunal, and what temerity to pronounce with positiveness on those proceedings, imperfectly as they are understood!

The dealings of God with a single individual, by which he is made to pass through numberless vicissitudes of feeling and changes of condition; his dealings with nations, by which they are elevated and depressed, shaken by convulsions, involved in wars, and destroyed by a thousand different agencies; his dealings with the race at large, from the commencement of time to its close, may present many problems which human reason and philosophy can never solve. Why is man a sinner? Why does he suffer? Why do the wicked triumph? Why are the blessings of civilization and civil liberty so partially diffused? Why are so many hearts broken, so many hopes disappointed, so many tender ties dissolved? Whence come war, famine, pestilence, earthquake? Why is the gospel, which professes to be a remedy for human woes, so partially diffused, so differently interpreted? Why is the happiness of those who most sincerely embrace and practise it, so often interrupted? Why is the human mind subject to so many fluctuations, to such fierce conflicts of opinion, to such varying frames? As such queries are suggested, shall we undertake to determine, that God either does not govern the world, or that his government is disjointed and conflicting? Shall we say this is unwise, that cruel, and the other thing unjust? Thus to arraign God is sin, folly, madness!

Did we know all his his plans, could we see the great objects he is accomplishing, did we see the nice adaptation of all means to the end, we would at once pronounce him wise in counsel, wonderful in working, and perfect in all his ways. Until, then, a fuller disclosure is made, faith should be the substitute for sight, and in the exercise of it, we should trust him unreservedly, and in relation to things to us inexplicable, be content with the assurance that we shall know hereafter. Avoiding all infidel cavils, and impious judgments, we should trust to his guidance, submit to his will, rejoice in his sovereignty, and wait patiently until God, who is his own interpreter, shall make everything plain, and place us in a region whence doubt and distrust shall be forever banished.

The Lord Jesus a Pattern for his People.

- CHRISTIANS SHOULD IMITATE.
1st. His early Piety. Luke ii. 46, 47.
2nd. His obedience to his Earthly Parents. Luke ii. 51.
3rd. His Baptism in the River Jordan. Mark i. 9, 10.
4th. His unwearied diligence in doing good. Acts x. 38.
5th. His Self-denial. Phil. ii. 7, 8.
6th. His contentment in a mean condition in this World. Luke ix. 5-8. Phil. iv. 11.
7th. He submitted to be a Carpenter. Mark vi. 3.
8th. His frequent and long continued private Prayer. Mark i. 35. Luke vi. 12. Matt. xiv. 23. Luke ix. 18.
9th. His faith in Prayer. Matt. xxvi. 42.
10th. His frequent praise and thanksgiving. Matt. xi. 25. John xi. 41.
11th. His compassion towards the miserable and distressed. Matt. xx. 34.

- 12th. His edifying and useful discourse. Luke xiv. 7, and xxiv. 18.
13th. His kind and condescending behaviour. Matt. xi. 19. Luke v. 29.
14th. His patience under sufferings and reproaches. Peter ii. 23.
15th. His readiness to forgive injuries. Luke xxiii. 34.
16th. His laying to heart the sins as well as the sufferings of others. Mark iii. 5.
17th. His zeal for the public worship of God. John ii. 17. Luke iv. 16.
18th. His cheerful submission to his Heavenly Father's will. Matt. xxvi. 39.
19th. His love and practice of the divine command. John iv. 34.
20th. His subjection to government. Matt. xvii. 27, and xxii. 21.
21st. Victory over temptation. Matthew iv. 1-10.—[Selected.]

Personality and Power of the Devil.

As a motive to "resist the devil" and "watch" against him, we copy from Carpenter's "Guide to the Study of the Bible," some of the most striking passages revealed to us of his character and power, in the hope that we may be on the alert often to say—"Get thee behind me, Satan."

- Abaddon, Destroyer, - - - Rev. 9 : 11
Accuser of the Brethren, - - - Rev. 12 : 10
Adversary, - - - - - 1 Pet. 5 : 8
Angel of the bottomless pit, - - - Rev. 9 : 11
The Beast, - - - - - Rev. 19 : 19
Beelzebub, - - - - - Matt. 12 : 24
Deceiver, - - - - - Rev. 12 : 9
Great Dragon, - - - - - Rev. 12 : 7
Evil One, - - - - - John 17 : 15
God of this world, - - - - - 2 Cor. 4 : 4
Liar and Murderer, - - - - - John 8 : 44
Prince of this world, - - - - - John 12 : 31
Prince of the power of the air, - - - Eph. 2 : 2
Satan, - - - - - 1 Ch. 21 : 1
Old Serpent, - - - - - Job 1 : 6
Sinner, - - - - - Matt. 4 : 10
Tempter, - - - - - 1 Thess. 3 : 5
Wicked One, - - - - - Matt. 13 : 11
He that hath the power of Death, - - - - - Heb. 2 : 14
The Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, - - - - - Eph. 2 : 2
Earnestly labors after man's destruction, - - - - - Job 1 : 17
May be conquered if properly resisted, - - - - - 2 Tit. 2 : 26
His suggestions should be carefully guarded against, - - - - - Matt. 13 : 19
Inspires evil thoughts and draws men into sin, - - - - - Gen. 3 : 1

"Why Stand Ye all the Day Idle?"

We were created to work; activity is our native element. But having sinned, our moral powers are palsied, and "we are like them that dream." We have not, however, escaped from the divine government; Christ's searching eye still surveys us; and as he beholds the children of men, for whom he died in anguish, with the offers of pardon in their hands, and the solemn realities of death and eternity but a step before them, sleeping away their probationary existence, he comes with the startling inquiry, "Why stand ye all the day idle?" This is the voice of our Saviour, addressed to each one of us, arousing to activity,—not in worldly business, for in this we are sufficiently active, often too much absorbed,—but in the work of God and the soul's salvation. And while so busy in securing that which must perish with the using, why are we so sluggish in a work whose fruits are immortal? Can we not be made to see our inconsistency, and awake?

Are not our obligations strong enough to incite us to effort? God has given us all our powers and capacities. He has, therefore, an absolute right to them, and to all the services we are thereby capable of putting forth; and shall we refuse to employ them, as our beneficent Creator designed? Is not the loveliness of Christ's character attractive enough to draw forth all the activities of the soul? Were not his sufferings in our behalf stupendous enough to awaken our gratitude, and thus win us to obedience? What could he have done more? He laid down his life for us. Are not the rewards of salvation from sin and woe everlasting, and elevation to a crown that fadeth not away, great enough to move our moral susceptibilities? He has offered us himself as our undying portion, and what could he have offered more? Can we continue to slumber under all this pressure of motives?—N. E. Puritan.