

From the Edinburgh Witness.

THE QUEENS OF ENGLAND.

On those anniversaries when it pleases the authorities to remind, by the flash and roar of the Castle guns, all within their reach, of historical event or royal birth-day, there is excitement as well grandeur in the sound, from the unbroken succession of flash and roar.—It may be the mere effect of association; but we ourselves feel as if there were a different sensible impression in the report that spreads across the city, when a minute's interval betwixt each sound tells that royalty is on its way to the lonely grave.

In the course of our lifetime we have but seldom heard this iron note of woe. Of these occasions, most affecting of all was that which, startling the stillness of the night, told the citizens of Edinburgh that there was moving onwards from the palace to the tomb, the flower, with the bud, of England's hopes—Princess Charlotte and her babe. We must confess that, next to the vividness of our grief at that mournful hour, were our feelings on Thursday last, when we were loudly warned of the funeral of Queen Adelaide.

Deeply engaged in our ordinary avocations, we were taking no note of the world without us, when the sound of the Castle's cannon at an unwonted hour drew our wondering attention. In a minute more, a second flash, and the boom of the sounding gun reverberating from street, and square, and hill, till the long echo died away in the valley of Arthur's Seat, reminded us that mourners were bearing away to rest in the vaults of Windsor, the remains of her who once most worthily wore a royal crown, and by her virtues added fresh lustre to the station which she held. The future continuator of the "History of the Queens of England" will not have to dwell on her beauty, or the graces of her person; but of none will there be an opportunity of recording a brighter example of conjugal, domestic, and pious worth, than of the wife of the Sailor King.

We have had opportunities on which we can implicitly rely, of knowing something of her home-life. Our readers will delight, with us, to dwell at this time on such traits as the following:—

Queen of England Adelaide did not forget the homely virtues of her German life. Her dying expressions of contempt for the pomp and vanities of this world were no mere utterance of disappointment, or of the languor of a wasted frame, but proceeded from the habit of her mind. In her visits to her royal relatives, she was fond of laying down all the pomp of royalty, and visiting as private friend visits friend. It was no unusual thing for her to repair quietly to such of her connections as were enfeebled by disease or age, and tend them with ministrations more valuable than what pertained to mere bodily wants. In such households, the servants were often surprised to find that their Queen had made her way, by the private entrance, to the chamber of sickness, without ceremony,—without her arrival being even known to them. And in her own palace; wherever sickness was, there was she to be found by the bedside, Bible, in hand, comforting, exhorting, warning. In the evenings, it was her custom to seek, by a private staircase, the rooms of such of the servants as happened to be laid up with sickness, and to direct their thoughts to Him who alone is the Physician of the soul and the King of kings. On one such occasion she had a melancholy duty to perform. She quietly intimated to a young man, wasting away with consumption, that the medical attendant had assured her that his end was approaching. She besought him to lay aside all the anxieties of this world, and to fix his thoughts and his hopes on the Saviour of sinners. And, that he might the better do this, she entreated him to confide in her any care that might be pressing on his mind, assuring him that she would endeavour to remove it, if within her power. He had one great care,—that of an aged mother, whom God had assigned to him to protect and to maintain. Queen Adelaide at once took upon her the charge of providing for her wants; and the dying man fell asleep, blessing her name; and trusting his soul to Him who had raised up, even in her who wore the Crown, a friend and a benefactor to the helpless.

We would not, however, have the merits of the dead to hide the virtues of the living.—From the same source we have pleasure in placing on record an incident in the domestic history of Queen Victoria. We learned that it is the usual fashion for the Queen and Prince Albert to breakfast alone, and with no

attendant but a confidential page. When we heard this, we were led to dream of a graceful youth, with ruffles at his wrist, and powdered hair, as, in our youth, we beheld the pages that annually bewildered us by their grandeur, in attendance on his Grace the Commissioner, who represents royalty in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. No such thing. A page, it seems, is often a common-place specimen of adult humanity. One such was, on one occasion, waiting at the breakfast table, when, like Nehemiah of old, he looked sad in the royal presence. "Wherefore," the Queen said unto him, "why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart." As in the case of Nehemiah, the page, at first sore afraid, at last took courage, and revealed to his Royal Mistress the cause of his grief. His daughter's husband was on his death-bed at Brighton, and his wife and six children had none to comfort them. The Queen instantly ordered the presence of another attendant, furnished the sorrowing man with money for the journey to his daughter, and ordered him, on his return, to report to her the circumstances in which the family were placed. His son-in-law, as had been feared, died, leaving his widow and family unprovided for; but in the Queen they had found a friend. The children were placed in various hospitals in London; and for the mother a situation was procured, at once honourable and comfortable.

Long may it be before the Castle guns shall spread grief throughout our houses, with the dread announcement that another Queen hath departed!

The Intermediate State.

It has been questioned with deep earnestness, What is the state of man in the interval between death and the resurrection? As to this, we can know but little with certainty. The body evidently undergoes chemical changes which dissipate it as air, or scatter it as dust. Whether the soul, thus deprived of its material organs, can hold any converse with things out of itself, or even retain a trance-like consciousness of things wholly within itself, might not be determined by anything short of revelation and the facts it brings to light.

Who can believe that the human soul of our blessed Lord slept in unconscious lethargy while his mangled body lay lifeless in the rocky vault? Had he not said to the expiring penitent, at his side, before they gave up the ghost, "To-day, shalt thou be with me in Paradise?" Then, surely, the disembodied soul of that penitent walked, on that very day, amid the delights of the garden of God. If this was not heaven, it was certainly more like it than any thing that man has known since his expulsion from Eden.

Our Lord, also, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, countenances the Jewish belief, that men at the instant of death, enter upon a state of initial retribution. "And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments."

The manner in which our Saviour spake to his disciples of his own departure and theirs, encourages the persuasion that they were to dwell with him in his Father's house. "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

The blest doctrine, that believing souls are in vital and eternal union with Christ, as members of himself, seems to preclude the thought that they may spend thousands of years in a state of utter unconsciousness, as deep as though, for the time being, they were annihilated. They are in living union with their exalted Head,—with the seat of all holy intelligence, and all pure affection; and it is impossible that they should neither know nor feel.

The inspired apostle, speaking of himself, desires to depart and to be with Christ, as something far better than his lot in this life.—But could he, as a Christian man, who in this life enjoyed, among many trials, the blessings of eminent usefulness and of sweet communion with his Lord,—could he desire to depart into a state of utter unconsciousness, so useless and cheerless, and to desire it as something better than the work and the blessings of his apostleship? It is not credible.

The same apostle, speaking of his rapture when "caught up into the third heaven," "into paradise," says of what he then experi-

enced; "whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth!" But how could he have been ignorant on this point, if the soul, when out of the body, must be destitute of all consciousness? His belief on this point seems to be expressed with the greatest distinctness, when he says; "We are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." With him, to forsake his clay was the same as to join his Lord.—And, doubtless, when the martyred apostle took his leave of earthly scenes, he took his place among "the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held," whom John saw gathered together as recent victims, under the shadow of heaven's high altar, and heard them crying with a loud voice, and saying; "How long, O Lord, holy and true?" If this was but a vision, it was vision of the true and not of the false.

We conclude, then, that the intermediate state of such departed souls, though far less perfect and glorious than their longed-for condition in the resurrection will be, is one of active thought and feeling. The "spirits of just men made perfect," and the souls of the lost in all their naked deformity, will respectively abide, the one in joy and the other in woe, the time of re-awakening at the trump of God.—*Puritan Recorder.*

Presentiment of a Revival.

Almost every one has had occasion to notice, in some season of summer drought, how, at length, all the aspects of external nature will seem to be associated in his mind with an impression of approaching rain; and yet it may be exceedingly difficult for him to designate the grounds of this impression. There has been no marked or sudden change in the outward world—the sun is yet shining much as before—hardly a cloud is to be seen in the heavens; but there is, he fancies, a peculiar sighing of the wind, a peculiar tone in the music of the insect tribes—distant noises fill the air with unwonted power, and all the sights and sounds of nature seem to harmonize most perfectly with some past experiences of approaching rain. The best account which he can give of the matter is, that everything suggests to his mind an idea of rain. The influences which operate upon him, are too subtle and delicate to be separately recognized and pointed out, and yet their combined effect is none the less definite.

In like manner, the Christian often seems to foresee the approach of a revival. Everything is fitted to produce upon his mind a strong impression that a "rain of righteousness" is near. And yet, when he looks around, it is difficult for him to tell why he so thinks and feels. He knows of no one about him who is seriously inquiring for the way of salvation; the church is yet far from being in a true state of life and activity—the sleep of worldliness still rests heavily upon her; but after all, there seem to be many forerunners, proclaiming amid these desolations, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The wants of the soul are expressed in deeper and more earnest tones—the holy truth of God's word seems to be resuming its power and solemn majesty; there is an unwonted reach in its influence; in the public assembly it penetrates the heart, and produces a sacred stillness and awe, and the Christian feels—he cannot but be impressed with the conviction that God, in the might and power of His Spirit, is beginning to move in the kingdoms of his grace.

There is no spectacle more majestic, than when God, by the energies of his Word and Spirit, wakens throughout the length and breadth of a land, a deep sense of things "unseen and eternal," when the congregations of men seem to be under the all-prevailing feeling that they are soon to be gathered to the judgment. Many times in the history of our land this state of things has been experienced, and it has seemed to us that Christians, widely are again beginning to discern the signs of such a time, a time when, "in the wilderness, waters shall break out, and streams in the desert—when the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water." How much does this land need such a "refreshing from the presence of the Lord."—"It is time to seek the Lord until he come and rain righteousness" upon us.—*Congregationalist.*

Life's Reckonings.

Every experienced mariner feels the necessity of frequent and accurate reckonings. He

must do this to ascertain his position amid the wide waste of waters; the distance he has run, and his possible vicinity to hidden rocks or dangerous shoals. On his vigilance and care depend the safety of the ship and lives of the passengers. Some voyages are longer, and some are shorter. Some are dangerous, amid stormy seas, over distant oceans, while others are made by gentle winds or favouring gales across the tranquil waters. Many a voyage is rapid and prosperous; many others are abruptly terminated, and end disastrously on some iron-bound coast or lee shore. The winds will blow; the storm will rage; the waves will rise and roar. The gallant ship will be tossed and tumbled amid the surges, but the skilful seamen will trim his ship and watch his helm, and keep his reckoning; and then, let the winds blow and the billows rise, his ship shall hold on her course or ride out the gale in safety.

Not much unlike this is the voyage of human life. Every man has launched his bark firm or fragile, on life's ocean. He must make the voyage. It may be longer or shorter; it may be tranquil or tempestuous; it may be beneath sunny skies, or amid the darkest storm-clouds of ocean. The winds of temptation may blow furiously. The waves of sorrow and the billows of disappointment and disaster may roll, roar and threaten to engulf and destroy. The prince of the power of the air may send his fiercest blasts to drive the tossed mariner on some rock-bound coast or lee shore. He has done it often; innumerable wrecks of richly-laden barks are scattered all along the shores. But the voyage must be made—made once for all. There is no return voyage. The dangers and storms must be encountered. Look then to your reckoning. Examine well and often your chart, O immortal mariner on life's ocean! Keep a watch on deck—be vigilant. When the fierce winds of temptation rise, and adverse gales blow furiously, stand by your helm. Keep your bark steady, and your eye of faith on the compass. Let the storm rage and the winds howl, it will but test your skill and constancy of faith, while you look up to heaven for strength and firmness to meet and encounter the tempests and trials which are incident to the voyage of life. It will soon be over.—The dangers will be passed and the voyage ended, when the soul, calm, peaceful and triumphant over every difficulty, shall enter joyfully the haven of eternal rest.—*N. Y. Evan.*

Be in Earnest.

The following earnest exhortation was penned by John Janeway, a Puritan divine, who flourished about the middle of the seventeenth century. It is as applicable to the reader as it was to those to whom it was originally addressed.

"There is such a thing as being almost a Christian; as looking back unto perdition, as being not far from the kingdom of heaven, and falling short at last. Beware lest thou lose the reward. The promise is made to him that holdeth fast, holdeth out to the end, and overcometh. Labour to forget the things which are behind, and reach unto the things which are before. He who is contented with just enough grace to escape hell and get to heaven, and desires no more, may be sure he hath none at all, and is far from the kingdom of God.—Strive to do every thing as in his presence and for his glory. Act as in the sight of the grave and eternity. Let us awake and fall to work in good earnest. Heaven and hell are before us. Why do we sleep? Dulness in the service of God is very uncomfortable, and at best will cost us dear; but to be contented in such a frame is the certain sign of a hypocrite. Oh! how will such tremble when God shall call them to give an account of their stewardship, and tell them they may be no longer stewards! O, live more upon the invisible realities of heaven, and let a sense of their excellencies put life into your performances! For your preciseness and singularity, you must be contented to be laughed at. A Christian's walking is not with men but with God. He hath great cause to suspect his love to God, who does not delight more in conversing with God and being conformed to him, than in conversing with men and being conformed to the world. How can the love of God dwell in that man who liveth without God in the world?"

POMPOUS FUNERALS.—A society has been formed at Vienna for the object of discouraging the wasteful expense attending pompous funerals.