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"NO."

BY ELIZA COOK.

Would you learn the bravest thing
That man can ever do;
Would you be an uncrowned king,
Absolute and true?
Would you seek to emulate
All we learn in story,
Of the moral, just and great,
Rich in real glory?
Would ye lose much bitter care
In your lot below?
Bravely speak out when and where,
Tis right to utter "No."

Men with goodly spirits blest,
Willing to do right,
Ye who stand with wavering breast
Beneath Persuasion's might,
When companions seek to taunt
Judgement into sin;
When the loud laugh fain would daunt
Your better voice within,
Oh! be sure ye'll never meet
More insidious foe;
But strike the coward to your feet,
By Reason's watchword "No."

Ah, how many thorns we wreath
To twine our brows around,
By not knowing when to breathe
This important sound!
Many a breast has ruled the day
When it reckoned less
Of fruits upon the moral "Nay,"
Than flowers upon the "Yes."
Many a sad repentant thought
Turns to "long ago."
When a luckless fate was wrought
By want of saying "No."

Few have learn'd to speak this word
When it *should* be spoken,
Resolution is deferred,
Vows to virtue broken,
More of courage is required
This one word to say,
Than to stand where shots are fired
In the battle fray.
Use it fitly, and ye'll see
Many a lot below
May be schooled and nobly ruled
By power to utter "No."

ABRAM'S SURVEY OF THE PROMISED LAND.

Abram knew whatever was handed down by incorrupt tradition to Moses. It must have passed through his hand. A moment's reflection will satisfy us that knowledge must have been considerable. If a thousand years later, Hesiod could sing of a golden generation of primeval purity and bliss, much more may Abram be supposed to understand the Eden picture-garden.

He knew that a *Seed* should spring to being, who should crush the serpent's head, and restore all things into the state whereof Eden was the symbol-microcosm. Abram had heard what Enoch said: "The Lord cometh with his holy myriads." Hence there were in Abram's mind facts and ideas enough to build upon. It was easy for him to identify the seed of the Eden-legend with the seed now promised to him, in whom all nations should be blest. It was easy for him to understand that that future Redeemer should, in some sort, be intimately connected with the land he was now called to survey.

With such ideas, he might inspire and persuade his family to accompany him. Without such ideas, it is difficult to conceive how he could induce them to forsake idolatry, and incur the ridicule of the polished Chaldeans. The world then, as now, would regard with

derision the conduct of any who should act as if they believed what they could not see, on the bare testimony of God. To believe God's testimony is quite excusable, provided one do not act accordingly. But to reduce belief to practice—this is mere fanaticism.—Hence as Abram, Terah, and Lot, with a slender caravan, wended southward in Mesopotamia to the great Euphrates, doubtless the city of the Fire-worshippers was convulsive with laughter. We however can appreciate a sublime, and not altogether obscure faith, as lying at the bottom of this seeming inexplicable exile.

Without accompanying their journey, or pausing in Haran, where aged Terah is consigned to dust, let us pass at once to the heart of the land of promise, and anticipate their arrival. Coming from Gilead, they cross the Jordan, and pitch tent in a fat vale between two steep mountains. Thus the first encampment is in a vicinity afterwards the scene of many a wondrous incident. Those steep mountains shall by-and-by be known as Ebal and Gerizin; that fat valley shall have Jacob's well—shall be the portion of Joseph, and Joseph's tomb be there. And on that well-side that promised Seed shall sit. Little does Abram dream, however, of all this, as he looks forth from his lowly encampment upon the swarthy sons of Canaan, of whom he has heard it said, "Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be to his brethren!" Lo! now these sons of bondage he beholds masters of the promised heritage of God! For Moses seems to imply that Abram knew that before this, even as far back as when "the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, and separated the sons of Adam," that he "set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel." Now, however, the children of the curse carry it over the children of the covenant. The seed of the serpent are in the ascendant, while the Church wanders despised in tents, disinherited in her own inheritance. The sons of the stranger look down on her in pride. Here are their cities, their kings, their groves, their altars, and their images. Here already, more gross than the apostate family of Shem, they are worshipping the dead, and multiplying demon mediators between God and man. Yes! that mystery of iniquity is already rife, which shall reappear in the temples of Babylon, Athens, Rome, and of apostate Christendom.

How little do they imagine these pilgrims, heirs by eternal covenant to every foot of the soil they are profaning? With what wonder would they listen to such an intimation from this Chaldean adventurer! And indeed, how strange must seem that claim to the adventurer himself, as confronted by tangible realities! How strong the faith to say, with aught like sense of reality, "This land is mine! I shall hereafter possess it!" How much more consonant with natural instinct to say, "I am too late. There is no probability I or mine will ever wrest this territory from the grasp of these usurpers." If any such misgivings arose they were presently dispelled. He who should after sit on Jacob's well, now comes to Jacob's forefather's side. Christ, who bade him seek these plains, now meets him here, the same form of divine beauty whose words so thrilled his heart before.

With a smile of heavenly friendship, that Redeemer speaks: "Unto thy seed will I give this. The darkness of the night again throws light about him, and the joyful pilgrim recognizes the land." And He vanishes. And in these simple words faith finds a mighty consolation.

Seven years pass by. The Patriarch completes one tour of survey. He abides some time in Egypt. He sojourns in Gerar. He returns to the highlands of Bethel.

These seven years, however, have materially changed the outward aspect of the pilgrim band. From his princely friends, Abram has received presents of retainers, flocks, herds, camels, asses, silver and gold. His servants are married in families around him, and the servants of Lot likewise. Thus a little tribe is formed, very like the tribes of pastoral people that now exist in oriental countries.—Abram sustains the rank of Chief or Emir. He is both king and priest. So greatly increased are they, that we find them compelled to divide. Lot, with one party, goes east, into the fertile vales of Sodom, which were like the garden of the Lord. Abram, at the head of the other division, proceeds north.

As then, the Patriarch wears in years, we may well imagine the constant trial of his faith. His nephew Lot, his vassals, even the bondsmen that obey his will, are blessed with offspring, and children of different ages are rising round him to call him Leader and Lord. Yet there is none that breathes to call him father. Here again, he beholds the towns and villages of the Perizzite filling the land. True, he is enriched and strengthened, and himself enabled to match with these petty princes of the soil. But can this satisfy him? Does he begin to think he is possessing what was promised? Here he is undisturbed in his easy progress up and down, at liberty to choose the choicest spots, the fairest pastures, the richest fruits of that garden soil; is not this inheritance enough? What had Solomon in all his glory really better? True, Abram lives not in palaces of cedar, but in tents. But that was one charm of their free and easy style of pastoral life; even so do nomad tribes at this day possess their inheritances; why not Abram in like manner, regard himself in possession? Or was there something in possession, as he understood it, incompatible with mortality? What can a man be said to possess who knows that at any moment he may die? Can he truly be said to possess that soil, whose clods may to-morrow cover his decaying form? And even while living, what sort of possession of the soil is that whereof Gravity is the fee-simple, binding down the possessor by a weight of hundreds of pounds of gross matter? Does the captive possess his chain and his cell, or they him? And may no such reasoning have ever found its way through the Patriarch's mind? Hears he not the Eden-word of wo: "Dust into dust? Cursed is the ground for thy sake?" Conceives he of no species of Possession involving the absolute liberation of the possessor from thralldom to thing possessed? Methinks he were an unhappy heir of a territory whose limits he might never once cross! And he a sorry "heir of the world,"* above whose dust he might never for an instant soar.

Methinks I see the Patriarch, after he has just been calling on the Lord in the midst of his assembled retainers about the altar, as he now retires to a neighboring elevation, to survey the entire encampment. His eye rests on the white tents; on the herds, and flocks, and camels, spread far and wide over the sunset plains; on the retainers hieing to and fro in their evening toil; and on his ear comes the mingled hum of rural life. And he thinks, "Soon I must leave all this! I shall not attain to the days of the years of the pilgrimage of the venerable Shem who yet survives to tell us of the mighty past. No, my short course is almost run. A few more years, and these palms will wave for me no more: these skies no longer form for me a temple; this promised soil no longer feel my falling footstep. And these limbs, this frame, so active once and vigorous, must moulder back to dust! Ah then, what are worth all these flocks and herds, these tents, these vassals, this treasure, all I

have or can have, seeing I must leave it, decay, and be forgotten? Ah, where then is the *Promise*? Where the Seed, the Redeemer, through whom I and mine must expect to be rescued from death's dominion, in such sort as that we may possess without being ourselves possessed and held in bonds of corruption?

As these thoughts pass through his mind, lo! again he finds himself no longer alone, but in the presence of that Friend, whose form of unfading lustre speaks of a life over which death exerts no control—a form which sheds its own inherent illumination forth on every object, transfiguring it in splendor."

"Lift up now thine eyes," exclaims the form, "and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth, so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered! Arise! walk through the land, in the length of it, and in the breadth of it, for I will give it Thee!"

What comfort to the mortal hearer, thus admitted to behold immortality! To perceive, by actual sensation, that there is a style of existence, of life, far different from that of flesh and blood. On that glorious brow time writes no wrinkle. There is a life of liberty superior to the elements. And so the great idea of Immortality finds entrance to his soul. It becomes to him a nearer, more tangible reality perchance than it is to us, whose subtler minds have refined and defined until we have sometimes cold abstractions in the place of warm and glowing realities.

And hence, when he hears this Immortal promise to him the Mortal, that solid soil on which he treads; how does the mighty argument get hold upon his soul, that there shall be for him a time when this mortal shall put on immortality, this corruptible incorruption, so that he shall inherit, without being chained upon, the soil where now he is a stranger and a pilgrim!

How does he perceive afar off this celestial inheritance; become persuaded of it, and embrace it, and confess that he is a pilgrim seeking a heavenly country?—*Christian Parlour Magazine.*

The Progress of Comfort.

In the first period of occupation of England by mankind, there is no doubt that, as the flesh of animals served for food, so their skins served for clothes. They had no woollen fabrics to use for such a purpose; they had neither manufactures of their own, nor money, nor other articles of barter, to exchange for the clothing materials made by the nations of the continent, who were more advanced in knowledge and comfort. Woollen clothes, (first made in this country in 1191,) and those of flax, were the early products of advancing knowledge and civilization. Those of silk were not made in England till about the year 1604. Hats were not made in this country until about the year 1510. Shoes were not produced, of the present fashion, until 1633. As to furniture, the early inhabitants of England employed leaves and dried grass for beds; logs of wood, or stones, served the office of chairs and tables; the earth was their floor.—It was only by gradual degrees that benches and other raised seats were used. The floor was at length garnished with rushes and straw, mixed with sweet-scented hay or flowers.—Another long interval elapsed before—about 1750—carpets were first made in England.—The beds on which our ancestors slept were often made of straw; even the kings' beds were made of it, to the year 1234. Linen

* Romans iv. 13.