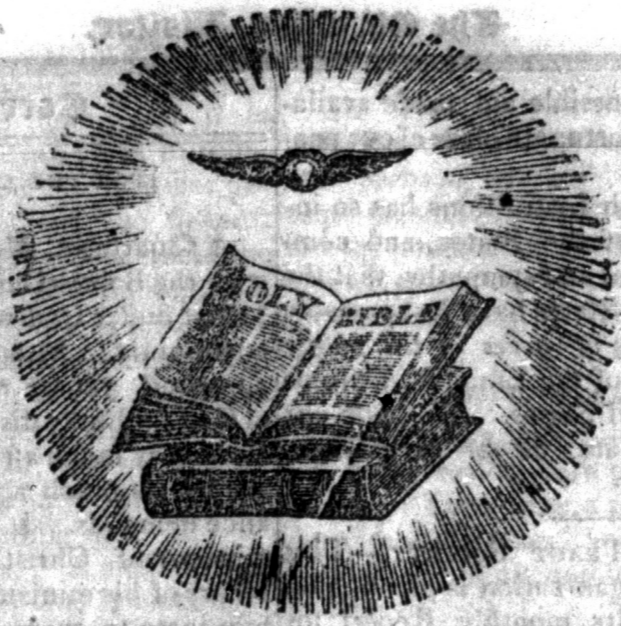


CHRISTIAN



VISITOR.

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REV. E. D. VERY,

"BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY LOVE UNFEIGNED."—ST. PAUL.

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SYMPATHY.

There is a fount that brightly flows
For others' griefs, for others' woes,
A bosom'd thought that deeply swells
With all the tear of pity tells.

The flowers of spring in softness twine,
The stars of eve in sweetness shine,
And bland the summer breezes float,
And wild the mingling woodland note;

And deep and dear the varying tone
Of torrents in the midnight thron,
When in the calm hour's solitude
The strange heart seemeth most endued:

But calmer, deeper, purer, fraught
With quiet's calm selected thought,
Enduring, filling, comforting,
Without a shade, without a sting—

Oh, even such the tear must be,
The sacred tear of sympathy,
When the regarding spirit owns
A brother's griefs, a brother's moans.

The dew falls down at dead of night,
The rain-drop forms concealed from sight,
The flower-bud hath its secret cell,
The mountain rill its hidden well:—

Thus unobserved, and thus unknown,
The sense of kindness forms alone,
The dew, the rill, the rain, the flower,
Fair fitting emblems of its power.

The bow of beauty loves its cloud,
The ray of eve its thunder shroud,
In swiftest stream the star is still,
The eve lone lingers on its hill:

And thus corrupted, thus imprest
On woes disturb'd, conflicting breast,
The sacred beam of kindness glows
In wild and cherishing repose.

Ere the bright sword o'er Eden waved,
Ere woe was born, or souls enslaved,
Ere sin had made fair earth a tomb,
And life's deep vale a vale of gloom:

When man was in his Eden bowers,
Encircled by the undying hours,
Then—there there was no shade for thee
Affliction's soother, sympathy.

But death has pass'd, and sin has changed—
Behold the last loved work estranged!—
And thou, the fondest, noblest one,
What could'st thou do? what hast thou done!—

But peace falls o'er the earth like even,
For Righteousness looks down from Heaven,
And pitying love hath stoop'd to see,—
Her earthly name is sympathy. X.

SAMUEL AND SAUL.

THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

BY J. T. HEADLEY.

One evening, just as the sun was setting over the hills of Palestine, a host was seen encamped in a beautiful valley, through which wandered a clear stream, and over whose green surface, woods, and fields, and flocks, and herds, were scattered in endless variety and profusion. The white tents dotted the landscape far and wide, standing against the green background distinct as a fleet of snowy sails against a storm-cloud on the sea; while long rows of chariots glittered between, and gay standards floated above, and groups of officers and ranks of soldiers moved about, giving an

imation and life to the scene. At intervals came triumphant bursts of music; and the thrilling strains of the trumpet arose and fell over the plain, till the echoes were lost in the woods beyond. And the evening sun was shining on all this, tipping the tens of thousands of lance-points with silver, and flashing back from burnished armor till the eye became dazzled with the splendor.

On a gentle eminence that overlooked this glittering plain, was spread the tent of the king. Of ample dimensions, and decorated with gorgeous hangings and costly ornaments, it looked like a fairy palace there upon the swelling hill-top. Underneath its spreading canopy sat the monarch himself, looking thoughtfully upon the prospect below him. It was a scene to stir a warrior's heart, for every one of those countless tents that stood bathed in the sunlight, contained soldiers true and tried; and all the vast host at his feet was but a single instrument in his hand. At the blast of his trumpet, that plain would tremble under the tread of armed men, twice ten thousand lances shake in the departing sunbeams, and, at his command, rank upon rank would rush all steadily upon a stand of levelled spears. They had often crowded after him to battle, had stood a wall of iron about him in the hour of peril: he had heard their shout of defiance ring over the clash of arms and tumult of the fray—aye, and their shout of victory, too, louder than all, as they drove the broken and shattered forces of the enemy before them. Well, then, might the sight of that tented host send the flush of pride to the monarch's brow, and fill his heart with exultant feelings.

But, alas, no color came to that marble face: pale and anxious the chieftan sat and gazed, his brow knit in gloomy thought, and care resting like a cloud upon his countenance.—No food had passed his lips all day, yet something more than fasting had wrought that haggard look and bowed that regal head. The white tents sprinkling the field, the chariots beside them, the shining ranks of warriors, the triumphant strains of music, the glorious landscape smiling in the setting sun, the hum of the mighty host, were all unheeded. He saw them not, he heard them not; his troubled soul was busy amid other scenes, struggling with far other thoughts. The past and the future shut out the present. Another army arose before him—a host of sins in ghostly array, in whose dread aspect no relenting could be seen. And worse, than all, the oracles of God were dumb; to his earnest questioning no response had been given; the Urim and Thummim ceased to be irradiated at his call, and silence and darkness rested on the ark of God. And now as he thought of his crimes, and the silence of God, and of the battle on the morrow, "Coming events cast their shadows before," and he saw his army routed and slain, and himself and his throne trampled under foot. No wonder the waving banners below him brought no glow to his wan and wasted features.

As the light of day disappeared, and the fires began to be kindled in the broad encampment, he entered his tent, and putting on a disguise, stole forth and, as a last resort, turned his steps towards the house of a sorceress, and asked that Samuel might be raised from the dead.

THE INTERVIEW.

Scarcely had his request been made when a stately form arose before him clad in a dark mantle, his long gray locks and beard falling upon his breast and shoulders. It was Samuel—the same Samuel who had anointed him king over Israel, and for so long a time been the pillar of his throne; the dread and fearless prophet who so often had withstood him to his face and hurled the malediction of heaven upon

him, whose last curse, backed with the startling declaration, "*The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent,*" still rang in his ears.—The frightened monarch stood dumb and powerless before the dread spirit he had evoked from the land of shadows, when the deep sepulchral tones of the prophet broke the silence "WHY HAST THOU DISQUIETED ME TO BRING ME UP?" "*I am sore distressed,*" murmured the king, "for the Philistines make war upon me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets nor dreams: therefore have I called thee that thou mayest tell me what I shall do." "*Wherefore,*" answered the spirit, "*dost thou ask me, seeing the Lord has departed from thee and is become thine enemy?*" He would only repeat over again the curse of former days, and his words fell like a funeral knell on the ears of the monarch, "The Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thy hand, and given it to thy neighbor David." Not only has the throne gone, but the dynasty closes with thee, and thy family is disinherited forever for thy sins. Nor is this all: the battle to-morrow shall go against thee, for "the Lord will deliver Israel *with thee* into the hands of the Philistines; and"—the prophet's voice here made the heart of the listener stand still in his bosom—"and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." The thunderbolt had fallen, and the utter silence that followed was broken only by the shock of the king's body as he fell lifeless and headlong upon the earth. No shriek, no groan, told when and how deep the blow struck; that heavy fall was more startling than language. The fearful apparition sunk away, and Saul was left alone with the night.

The next morning found the king in his tent, nerved for the worst; and to those who saw him, as his servants buckled on his armor, he appeared the same as ever, save that a deeper pallor was on his cheek than thought can ever give,—the pallor of despair. Nevertheless, the trumpets were ordered to sound, and soon the plain shook with the preparation of arms. Chieftains, each with his retainers behind him, marched forth, prancing steeds and chariots of war followed, banners and lances and helmets fluttered and flashed in the morning sunlight, and all was hope and confidence in the army. As the troops defiled before the royal tent, shouts of "Long live the king" rent the air. Ah, with what a sudden death-chill those shouts fell upon his heart; that host was going forth to be slaughtered and that bright sun in its course was to witness the loss of his army, his throne, his sons, and his life. Perhaps he cheered his desponding spirit with the vain hope that God might yet be appeased, or that Samuel had spoken falsely; at all events he was determined to battle nobly for his crown. As his guard closed sternly around him, the determination written on his brow betokened a bloody day, and a fierce struggle, even with fate itself.

The hostile armies met, and rank after rank, troop after troop rushed to the onset. The Hebrew sword drank blood; and the shout of Israel went up as thrilling and strong as it ever rose from Mount Zion itself. And never before did their monarch lead them so steadily and fiercely on; or give his royal person so freely to the foe. But courage, and heroism, and desperate daring were alike unavailing; the sentence was writ on high, and Israel was scattered before her foes. Vainly did their leaders rally them again and again to the charge. Vainly did the three princes, the sons of Saul, call on their followers to emulate their example, as they threw themselves on the foe. Vainly did the king himself lead on his troops, while the blood from his wounded side trickled over his armor. God was against them all; and discomfited and scattered they fled on every side. The three sons of the

king fell one after another, bravely battling for their father's throne and Israel's honour, till at last Jonathan, the bravest and noblest of them all, fell lifeless on the hill-side. The wounded monarch, hard hit by the archers, at last turned and fled for his life, but finding no way of escape, he stopped and commanded his armor-bearer to stab him to the heart, "Lest," said the dying man, "these uncircumcised come and thrust me through and abuse me." His armor-bearer refusing to commit the horrid deed, he placed the hilt of his own sword upon the ground, and fell upon it. His faithful armor-bearer followed his example, and he and the king and his three sons lay corpses together on the mountain of Gilboa. The prophecy was fulfilled, the curse had fallen, and morning once more broke on the land of Israel.

Central America—Its Population and State of Education.

The following extract from Dunlap's "Central America" published in London in 1847, will be read with interest, as the above work is one of the latest and most reliable sources of information as to the above interesting country:

"The native population of Central America may be said to consist of six distinct races, which, however, have been intermixed to so great an extent that their derivation cannot often be traced.

"First: May be classed the white descendants of Spanish colonists.

"Second: The mestizo descendants of Spaniards and Indians.

"Third: The mulatto descendants of Spaniards and negroes.

"Fourth: The zambo descendants of Indians and negroes.

"Fifth: The native or indigenous Indian.

"Sixth: The African negro.

"In all the States except Costa Rica the second and fifth classes are much the most numerous. The State of Guatemala is said to contain about 1,000,000 of inhabitants, the Indians of whom probably amount to 800,000, the mestizos to 150,000. The whites in New and Old Guatemala may amount to 4,000 or 5,000, but in other parts of the State not above 20 or 30 will be found in the largest towns, and I do not suppose that their total number exceeds 7,000, or 8,000.

"In San Salvador, supposed to contain 350,000 inhabitants, the number of whites does not appear to exceed 3,000 or 4,000, as they are only found in the principal towns of the State; of the rest about two thirds would appear to be mestizos and indigenous Indians, the number of the other classes being very trifling. Honduras is said to contain a population of 250,000; of these there may be from 4,000 to 5,000 whites, and 20,000 to 30,000 negroes, zambos and mulattoes, on the northeast coast only, the remainder consisting of about one half mestizos and one half indigenous Indians.

"In Nicaragua, the population of which is estimated at 300,000, there may be 2,000 or 3,000 whites, and 5,000 or 6,000 of negro blood in the ports; of the remaining population about a third are mestizos and two thirds indigenous Indians.

"In Costa Rica, the population of which is rated at 85,000, at least 70,000 are whites, the remainder consisting of a few negroes near the port of Matina, on the northeast coast, and mestizos and their descendants who have come from the other States. I have not noticed a single pure Indian.

"Of the foreigners, the natives of Spain are by far the most numerous, being generally emigrants from Andalusia and Murcia, either of the lower classes, or desperate adventurers who have been ruined in their own country