

Religious Miscellany.

Distressing Consumption Cured.

The Puritan Recorder describes a form of disease which is said to be somewhat prevalent in the families of clergymen. The disease reaches in its influence far beyond the minister, and all his flock suffer in consequence, though often ignorant of the cause. It seems strange that so much evil should be allowed to come on the people by a disease so easily cured. We quote from the Recorder:

"There is a dreadful case of sickness at the parsonage," said Aunt Dorothy, as she shut the door of her dwelling, after an hour's absence, and sat down in the midst of the family. This announcement created no small consternation, and half a dozen voices cried out in a moment—"Who? who is sick there?" "Is it our pastor?—is it his wife?" "Pray, what is the matter?"

"Very sick—very poor and emaciated, scarcely anything but skin and bones! It seems as if the patient would certainly die. No, it is not our pastor, nor his wife that is sick, but it is a very dear member of the family—one he sets a store by—one with whom he spends a large portion of his time—one that has been of great service, and would have been of still greater, had there been better health—one that has been a great comfort to him, and may yet, if spared and cared for as such a friend can be, and ought to be. No cholera, nor fever, nor gout—no, it is a dreadful consumption, and not much, nor ever was, to be consumed either. But the poor sufferer must not die, must be cured—can be cured—shall be cured!"

Thus ran on, with fervent volubility, our honored aunt, till a gap having occurred, it was instantly filled by a good old grandmother, who had been startled at the first announcement, but who had cooled off while the maiden lady was in utterance. It had flashed through her mind who this sufferer was whom aunt Dorothy had found, and dropping her specs, and looking up with a face that had lost all its alarm, and was restored to a quiet smile, calmly affirmed that the patient could certainly be no other than the *Pastor's Library*. To this aunt Dorothy bowed assent, and the consternation of the family circle subsided.

The case was not indeed one which bade every body fly off, in all possible directions, for any relief which could be found handiest. Yet the case was a painful one. The patient was a great sufferer—was a mere skeleton, and the danger was that there would be sad results if nothing was done. But Miss Dorothy's compassions were kindled, and something must be done, and would be done.

And when one of the good ladies of one of our congregations—it is not necessary that she should be a maiden lady—gets thoroughly roused to the doing of a good thing—why it has got to be done. That is all about it.

But as for our patient, the pastor's sick library. It was an auspicious morning for that sufferer when aunt Dorothy set about finding relief. Had I time I could interest the reader mightily in the nature and progress of this work of love. I could tell how Blackstone, the lawyer, gave the fair applicant a sunny smile of approval with a valuable volume; how Topsail, the captain, divided his purse; how Sinew, the blacksmith, let his hot iron cool when he searched for and handed over a donation; how Index, the judge, decided the case in favor of the patient, and Dr. Pestle made a noble prescription for the sufferer; and how M., the merchant caught also the fire of benevolence, and emptied his till; how F., the farmer, stopped his cart before the parsonage, and paid the patient a visit; how the matrons and the misses, how the whole parish, in short, were awakened to the most substantial kindness toward the skeleton which aunt Dorothy found at the pastor's house.

It was not five days before the bones ceased to be visible, and in a few more the flesh came again, and from being as gaunt a spectre as had ever been in a parsonage the sufferer became of portly bearing and noble dimensions. It was a perfect cure to the unutterable astonishment of the pastor. He had seen, for years, poor man, such images of want and woe, of consumption and emptiness in his study, that he could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw that dreadful consumption cured, and that want and emptiness had taken their departure and left not a vestige behind.

Christ's Spiritual Attractions.

Christ so presented himself to the world that men must love him, if at all, for his char-

acter. He was born in the most humble circumstances. Though maternally descended from the house of David, his royal extraction secured for him no more consideration or influence than would pertain to an obscure peasant of France who could trace his lineage to some exploded dynasty.

The few who were waiting for "the consolation of Israel," attached a just importance to the preservation of the royal seed. The Jews at large looked for a deliverer to arise from the seed of David. But the house of David was politically dead. His throne had long been vacant. Judea was a mere province of the Roman Empire. Christ received no honour from his countrymen on account of his birth. Of course that could not make his person sacred in the estimation of the Romans. He was known as "the carpenter's son," "the Nazarene;" not as "the son of David." There was nothing in his condition to attract the lovers of wealth and power. He grew up "as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground." He resembled a little sprout or sucker from an old and decaying stock, too insignificant to notice; or a plant of stunted growth whose position in an arid waste gives little promise of maturity.

We do not even know that the personal appearance of Christ was prepossessing. We naturally imagine that it was.—Painters have conceived of him as the very model of the human form and countenance. Phrenologists have delineated for him a head upon which every faculty was developed in its just proportion.—Monkish legends extol his beauty. Luke is said to have painted his portrait, a pretended copy of which we have seen.—Were it genuine, the evangelist would deserve no less encomium as an artist than as a historian. But all this is mere fancy. The evangelists do not give us the least hint concerning the features of their Lord. This omission was partly through a design to guard against superstition in his followers. But, doubtless, the *moral* so far surpassed the natural beauty of Christ, that the latter was almost unnoticed. Isaiah describes him prophetically, as having no form nor comeliness, and "no beauty" on account of which men should "desire him." The terms "form," "comeliness," "beauty" &c., many refer to that outward dignity and pomp in which the Messiah was expected to appear, but of which he was entirely destitute. It is reasonable to suppose that one whose heart was so pure and whose life so amiable, who breathed love and joy into all around him, was not void of personal attractions. But the general idea which the prophet meant to convey was, that there would be nothing about Christ to please the worldly-minded; so that all who should become his friends would do so from their love of his character, his doctrines, and his work.—And such was the fact. His life was an experiment of the power of simple holiness, pure moral excellence, without any artificial accompaniments, over the minds of men. Such would he have the lives of his followers to be. Christ purposely divested himself of every thing in his appearance, circumstances, doctrines, or works that might attract men to him independently of a love of truth and holiness. He furnished the least possible occasion for hypocrisy or the indulgence of a worldly spirit among his followers.

Christianity, in this respect, partakes largely of the spirit and the wisdom of its Founder. Its institutions are designed, not to sanctify worldliness, but to promote holiness. Hence their extreme simplicity. Christianity has no occasion for institutions, officers, forms, or ceremonies beyond just what are necessary to bring it before the minds of men in the simplicity of truth—the beauty and power of holiness. It seeks only a spiritual seed. The followers of Christ will best represent their Master, and best promote his kingdom, by cultivating spirituality of life.—*Independent*.

Justification by Faith.

One great recommendation of the whole doctrine of justification by faith, is that it brings out clearly and unequivocally the personality of God on the one hand, and the personality of the sinner on the other. All schemes of false religion tamper with one or other of these two things, the personality of God or the personality of the sinner. But the great doctrine of justification by faith brings a personal God and a personal sinner face to face.—God personally dealing with me personally. It is not that God deals in the lump with the Church; it is not that God sanctifies in the mass the Church, and then, that I am admitted, through some mystical ceremonial

rite, into the benefit of the blessing which the Church has received.

There is no such procedure on the part of the living God: it is the very error of Popery and of Puseyism, that it makes God deal thus in a wholesale way. No, it is not thus that God so deals with one Church on earth, as to have it in a state of acceptance and peace, and then that I am ceremoniously admitted into the benefits of that peace. God personally deals with me personally. It is not through the Church I come to my God, but through God I come to his Church. It is not a wholesale procedure on the part of God towards the Church collective, that wholesale procedure on the part of God towards the Church collective, that wholesale procedure becoming available through the admission, often unconsciously of one and another into the communion of the Church; but it is that God deals with us according to our rational nature, according to our nature as men, reasonable, intelligent, conscientious, free, living agents. The living God comes to me as a rebel against his authority, asking no questions about the Church, but asking questions about his law, his authority, his government, charging me as a rebel against his throne, a breaker of his law, responsible personally and individually for my transgression. He comes to me, and through the blood of his Son, he makes terms of peace with me, drawing me to himself, and then he makes a Church out of believing souls on earth, and ultimately a Church in heaven; not by any wholesale process, but by units, one by one, soul by soul, man by man, being brought personally, individually to his bar. They are dealt with, they are made to confess, they are reconciled, they are accepted, they are adopted into a participation with the very Sonship of Christ himself, and each one as thence proceeding as no more a guilty man, but an accepted and adopted child,—thence proceeding to glorify God on earth, and enjoy him here and hereafter for ever. The entire community of saints is at last completed: the whole family in heaven and earth is formed, named after Christ, its true and only head.—*Dr. Candlish*.

Dr. Carey's Early Struggles.

Carey was a journeyman shoemaker, in the small hamlet of Hackleton, a few miles from Northampton; and when, as a "consecrated cobbler," (the term of reproach applied to him by Sidney Smith, in sneering at his missionary efforts,) he removed to the neighboring village of Moulton, it was to preach to a small congregation of Baptists, for a salary under £20 a year, and to teach a school besides, that he might eke out a scanty livelihood. To Sidney Smith, as to nine-tenths of the British population at that time, it looked ridiculous enough that such a man should not only trouble his own mind, and try for years to trouble the minds of others about the conversion of 420,000,000 of pagans; but that he should actually propose that he himself should be sent out to execute the project. He succeeded at last, however, in obtaining liberty to bring the subject before a small religious community, of which he was a member; and on the 2d of October, 1792, at a meeting of the Baptist Association at Kettering, it was resolved to form a missionary society; but when the sermon was preached and the collection made, it was found to amount to no more than £12 13s. 6d. With such agents as Carey, and collections like this of Kettering to support them, Indian missions appeared a fit quarry for that shaft, which none knew better than our Edinburgh reviewer how to use; and yet, looking somewhat more narrowly at the "consecrated cobbler," there was something about him, even at the beginning, sufficient to disarm ridicule; for if we notice him in his little garden, he will be seen motionless for an hour or more, in the attitude of intense thought; or if we join him in his evening hours, we shall find him reading the Bible, in one or other of four different languages, with which he has already made himself familiar; or if we follow him into his school, we shall discover him with a large leather globe, of his own construction, pointing out to the village urchins the different kingdoms of the earth, saying, "These are Christians, these are Mohammedans, and these are Pagans!" his voice stopped by strong emotion as he repeats, and re-repeats the last mournful utterance. Carey sailed to India in 1793. Driven by the jealousy of the East India Company out of an English ship, in which he was about to sail, he took his passage in a Danish vessel, and chose a Danish settlement in India for his residence: yet he lived till from that press which he established at Seram-

pore, there had issued 212,000 copies of the sacred Scriptures in forty different languages—the vernacular tongues of 330,000,000 immortal beings, of whom more than 100,000,000 were British subjects, and till he had seen expended upon that noble object, on behalf of which the first small offering at Kettering was presented, no less a sum than £91,500.—*Dr. Hanna*.

General Jackson on Preaching.

The following anecdote is related of Gen. Jackson, while he was President of the United States. It is a good story, even if not true:

In the Winter of 1832, President Jackson conferred the mission to Russia upon a justly distinguished son of Pennsylvania. Before the newly appointed minister however had departed on his mission, he deemed it due to the President to ask his counsel in reference to the selection of a secretary of legation. The President declined all interference, and remarked to the minister, that the U. S. Government would hold him responsible for the manner in which he discharged his duties, and that he would consequently be at liberty to choose his own secretary.

The minister returned his respectful acknowledgements, but before taking a final leave, sought his especial advice in regard to a young gentleman then in the service of the State Department, and who was highly recommended by the (then) Secretary. Gen. Jackson promptly said, "I advise you, sir, not to take that man, he is not a good judge of preaching." The minister seemed puzzled, and observed that the objection needed explanation.

"I am able to give it," said the old hero, and he thus continued: "On last Sabbath morning, I attended divine service in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in this city. There I listened to a soul-inspiring sermon by Professor Durbin, of Carlisle, one of the ablest pulpit orators in America. Seated in a pew near me I observed this identical young man, apparently an attentive listener. On the day following, he came into this chamber on public business, when I had the curiosity to ask his opinion of the sermon and the preacher.

"And what think you, sir, the young upstart, with consummate assurance, pronounced that sermon all froth, and Professor Durbin a humbug. I took the liberty of saying to him—'My young man, you are a humbug yourself, and don't know it.' And now," continued the venerable old man, his eye lighted up with intense animation, "rest assured, my dear sir, that a man who is not a better judge of preaching than that, is wholly unfit to be your companion. And besides," he added, "if he were the prodigy the Secretary of State represents him to be, he would be less anxious to confer his services upon you—he would rather be anxious to retain them himself." The President's advice was of course followed by the ambassador, and the young man's subsequent career of vice and folly proved that the General's estimate of his character, albeit founded upon a common-place incident, was substantially correct.

The Praying Collector.

Two little girls, sisters, were collectors for a Missionary Society; and, at the end of the year, they brought to their mother more than £6, which they asked her to send to the treasurer of the Society. She was a pious woman, and pitied the poor heathen, and wished above all things that her dear children should be trained up in the way of wisdom and usefulness. You may suppose, therefore, how gratified she must have been at the success of her two girls. But there was something which pleased her even more than the large sum of money which they had collected. It was a conversation she overheard between them, which was as follows:—

"You have got much more money than I have," said Helen to her elder sister, "but that is not very wonderful, because you are older than I am." "That is quite true, Helen," answered the sister, "but you might have collected quite as much as I did, if you had done all that you ought." "How is that, Jane?" said she; "for I am sure I took quite as much trouble as you took, and asked as many people." "Very likely; but there is one thing, Helen, which you neglected. You did not pray to God, before you asked your friends for their money." "Pray! No I did not. I never saw the good of that. God could incline their hearts to give without our asking." "No doubt," said Jane, "he could; but you know we ought to undertake nothing without