

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

OLIVE LEAVES FOR THE PEOPLE.

Martial Victories.—The word "victory" has become of frequent use, and of various significations. In private life we hear much of the victory which such and such a man has gained over his passions, appetites, or evil habits; and we rejoice with such an individual, and congratulate him on his success; for it is not only victory, but a conquest. He has not only overcome his worst enemies, but he has gained a new life of happiness for himself and his family, and perhaps for his posterity, to remote generations. What great acquisitions of prosperity and permanent pleasure are embraced in this signification of victory! Then we hear frequently of a great victory won by science, skill and labour over the very elements themselves. The broad Atlantic is bridged by the agency of steam, so that the people of the two hemispheres may cross over to each other at railway speed; and then they clap their hands for joy, and cry victory!—An immense and permanent advantage has been gained to all the populations of Christendom. The distance between the two worlds has been virtually reduced more than one half. Again the people cry victory!

What now! The electric telegraph is extended across the English Channel, from Paris to London, that the capitals of the two great nations may whisper to each other every hour of the night and day, with the noiseless tongue of lightning. What new conditions of intercourse and intimacy! What new bonds of brotherhood between these great people, are signified by this great victory!

Let us for a moment contrast these great achievements with those veritable catastrophes which are commemorated in different countries, by certain columns of stone or iron, or by tablets and tattered banners protruding upon the view in churches dedicated to the religion of Peace. As an American we have been much struck with the number and variety of these martial monuments in London.—What is their signification? we ask. "O, they are to commemorate a victory won on such and such a field of battle." A victory indeed! and what was gained? And who were the vanquished? Let us see. From 1688 to 1815, the wars waged by England against France cost her in principal and interest, about £3,000,000,000, besides the sacrifice of millions of precious lives. The annual interest of that part of the national debt contracted for her wars with France, alone, is £26,000,000! Think of that fact a moment. The people of Great Britain have been obliged to pay £26,000,000 every year since the battle of Waterloo, for what some of their military leaders have called victories won over the French. Let us weigh this burden. It is estimated that there are 1,000,000 agricultural labourers employed on the island of Great Britain, whose weekly wages do not exceed ten shillings per head. Thus the whole amount paid to this million of hard working men and women, for a year, is £26,000,000, or merely the precise amount which the people of that country are obliged to pay every year for the wars which their ancestors waged with their French neighbours! The Duke of Wellington once said that there was nothing worse than a victory, unless it were a defeat. But what defeat could have been worse than such a victory? As well might one exult over the ashes of his dwelling, or the tomb of his children, or at the sight of his prison, as over such victories. What element of prosperity or progress—what one good thing did the people of England gain from all their wars? Not one! Is there a single man, woman or child among the laboring classes in that country better fed, clothed, or educated, or elevated in the slightest degree, either in his social or political position or prospects, by all the victories won by British arms on the continent of Europe?—No! the cost of those pretended victories weighs upon them, day and night, like a caustic atmosphere, exhaling as it were, the very blood from their veins. It hangs over every table, and steals from the scanty meal of the poor, and even pawns their rags to pay for the human slaughter perpetrated on Waterloo and other fields of enormous fratricide.—*Christian Citizen.*

One Hour Nearer to Eternity.

A Clergyman travelling in one of the public coaches, now some years ago, had for his companion a young undergraduate of Oxford, and occasionally addressed him on some of the weighty truths of "the glorious gospel of Christ." The young man listened with atten-

tion, and with a certain degree of interest, though he too clearly manifested the want of spiritual knowledge, and appeared to class religion with things decent rather than with things essential. When thus engaged in conversation, the cathedral clock of the town through which they were passing, loudly and solemnly struck four in the afternoon. Upon this the clergyman remarked to the young Oxonian, "That clock tells us that we are one hour nearer to eternity." He immediately replied, "Ah, Sir, that thought would make me very melancholy." The clergyman rejoined, "Suppose, my young friend, I say we are now one hour nearer to Heaven?" The youth exclaimed,—"That were a delightful thought. Upon which the clergyman remarked, "Well, if it be not our own fault, you and I must be nearer Heaven than we were one hour ago." Here the conversation almost necessarily ended, but not till after the clergyman had endeavored plainly to point out to the young man the only way to salvation to every lost child of Adam—even that living dependence on the crucified, but now exalted Jesus, which, if wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, is the spring of genuine repentance, and the security for a life of holiness.

Now, however impossible, from circumstances, to trace the permanent effect of this deeply interesting conversation on the mind of the young Oxonian, it may be useful to dwell awhile on that part of it which related to the striking of the cathedral clock. Ought not such a sound to make a suitable and deep impression on the minds of all who hear it? True, it is commonly disregarded, even as the sound of the wind, the humming of the bee, or the customary music of the woods. Still we cannot but admit the plain and awakening fact that, whenever the clock tells us of the termination of an hour, it proves to us that such a portion of our mortal existence being gone, we are so much nearer the borders of that life which is eternal. Thus we are either brought onward towards glory, honor, and immortality in Christ Jesus; or towards that "weeping and gnashing of teeth," which are also unchangeable and eternal.

Among the reflections that may present themselves to the Christian mind on listening to this simple tale, one is, How many who are in the dust, once heard the striking of the clock? Here we may speak of generations. The young, the old, the rich, the poor, the living, the dying, all were once familiar with the successive warnings of our mortality, that proceeded from that piece of mechanism which marks the hours as they pass away. To some no doubt it was a useful, to others an unprofitable, monitor; the latter being occupied and engrossed with their business, their studies, their wealth, their amusements, their honors; the former being bent on the attainment of those higher objects, which are not less lasting than eternity, and "looking unto Jesus" as that Saviour who secures them to his true disciples. The one set of hearers may hereafter think with sorrow of their disregard of the lessons taught them by the faithful clock; the other may joyfully remember their wise and Christian use of them.

And, as it ceases not to tell us that "we are one hour nearer to eternity," another natural reflection is, How soon the various occupations of this mortal life will cease. Whether they are bodily or mental; prosecuted in the fields, the garden, the study, the office or the shop; peaceful or warlike, honourable or obscure; they are all of a very limited duration. Nor can each reckon on the continuance of his own peculiar employment till another clock shall strike. For death not seldom breaks in upon us with resistless power, and we have done, perhaps in a moment, with those things which are seen and temporal. "In that day (as the psalmist says,) all his thoughts," i. e. his worldly thoughts, "perish." So that the speaking clock, or even the speechless dial, may remind us how soon, and even how suddenly, all that is earthly may terminate; and the things which we account important, necessary, and delightful, may rival the vapor in their disappearance, and the very lightning in their flight.

Visiting.

To make and return visits is both friendly and fashionable; but it is sad, that too often, when we commence the visitant, we drop the Christian. How melancholy, that it cannot be known whether we be Turks or Christians; but by our posture at table! Where the entertainment is remarkable for nothing but noise and nonsense, loud peals of laughter

and buffoonery, fit is a poor welcome we give to our guests, and a shameful return we make to our host. If at one table we find profanity, at another folly, he that visits least will suffer least. A whole day spent in mirth, and not one word in any discourse about religion, and not one thought of God in any heart, is an awful blank, and a sad waste of time.

Though at a friendly feast or social entertainment, we do not meet to preach, yet we should always meet to improve one another in useful knowledge; and a serious "word fitly spoken," might shine "like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Such a conduct might, at some times, though not often, produce the laugh against us; but the approbation of Heaven and the testimony of a good conscience will easily balance this. If our company be such that we can get nothing serious introduced, let us rejoice that they can not prevent our ejaculations to God; and, in our meditation, let us now and then retire to converse with God above.

In how many houses, at how many tables, may *Ichabod* be written—Religion is not here—The glory is departed! Whatever table our Saviour when on earth sat at, he was sure to enrich it with some heavenly dishes, and feed his audience with sacred truth; so it should be our constant endeavour never to come away the worse of any company, but the better—never to leave any company the worse of us, but the better. Why should not our grace, as well as the impiety of others, like the rich perfume, betray itself, whether we will or not? Every where, and every time, at home or abroad, whether we eat or drink, receive or return visits, and in every company, we should do all to the glory of God, who gives us all that we enjoy below, and will at last make us sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb, where the converse shall enlarge, delight, and ravish evermore!—*Solitude Sweetened.*

How Near is Heaven?

Christians sometimes look far away to the blissful seats of their destined rest. But it is not far. The clouds that hide the shining world are thin; they are transient, and soon will obscure no more. The journey may end this hour—one short step may place him in the world of delights. One dark hour may hang upon him; but the morning comes and no shade behind it. Day, bright, peaceful and eternal, succeeds. A pang may wound for a moment, and then it flies forever away. A conflict sharp and painful, may continue for a night, but victory, eternal victory, ensues. How soon! O, how soon the Christian's cares are o'er, his struggling soul at rest, his eyes suffused no more with tears! Near at hand is the land of his pursuit. Hope cheers. How glorious the object that hope embraces; how holy its spirit! Who can contemplate the home our heavenly Father is fitting for his children, and not feel his soul athirst for its enjoyments and employments? Well, these delights, that happy clime, THOSE EVER-VERDANT FIELDS ARE NOT FAR DISTANT.

Christ the Mediator.

Live by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot with any confidence wait upon God but in and through a Mediator, for it is by his Son that God speaks to us, and hears from us; all that passes between a just God and poor sinners must pass through the hands of that blessed "Daysman, who has laid his hand upon them both;" every prayer passes from us to God, and every mercy from God to us, by that hand. It is in the face of the anointed that God looks upon us; and in the face of Jesus Christ that we behold the glory and grace of God shining. It is by Christ that we have access to God, and success with him in prayer, and therefore must make mention of his righteousness, even of his only. And in that habitual attendance we must be all the day living upon God; we must have an habitual dependence on him, who always appears in the presence of God for us, always gives attendance to be ready to introduce us.—*M. Henry.*

A Student's Impressions.

We have been gratified in reading the impressions of a student connected with Madison University, received while labouring as a colporteur of the American Tract Society during a late vacation. Students who have been engaged in this useful work, have uniformly expressed their opinion that the time they have thus spent has been among the most profitable periods of their preparatory training for their great work. We doubt not that the

churches will be richly the gainers from the experience gained in this useful school of practical theology.

"I can truly say," says the student above referred to, "that the time I spent as a colporteur has been one of the most delightful periods of my life. It seemed sometimes that I was engaged in too exalted a work for mortals. Often have I gone into some lowly cabin where everything betokened extreme poverty and wretchedness, and tried to pray and converse with the inmates; and when I have seen their apparent gratitude and heard them imploring blessings in my behalf, I have been quite overwhelmed. I felt that I was indeed imitating the example of my Redeemer who was the friend of publicans and sinners. Surely, I have thought, this is preaching the gospel to the poor. With few exceptions, I was in every case received with the utmost kindness.

"In my visits I have observed the redeeming tendency of colportage upon the minds of opposers. I ascertained that I was received with attention in some families, and permitted to pray and converse with them, where the colporteur previously was turned out of doors. They had learned to be more respectful and attentive.

"I also observed that the tendency of colportage was to destroy sectarian prejudices, both in the mind of the colporteur and in the minds of those whom he visited; that however attached the former might be to any particular denomination or to its doctrines, he will find there are quite as sincere and devoted Christians among others as in his own, and that he will learn that he and his church are not the people, and that wisdom will not die with them. He will find sometimes at least that there are other hearts whose chords can beat to the touch of Christian sympathy as well as of his beloved fraternity. And much the same will also be the effect upon the minds of the Christian brethren with whom he associates.

"A number of incidents occurred which might be interesting to relate, were there time and space. To see one or two of a family bathed in tears after rising from prayer, was no uncommon occurrence. I found it best as far as possible to avoid all heated controversies, even with errorists themselves, as nothing so effectually excited their minds against the great work in which I was engaged. When they were not thus aroused, I could much more frequently sell them some of my books which I knew could talk to them far better than I could, and long after I was gone."—*N. Y. Recorder.*

The Planets.

We have something more than the mere magnitude of the planets to alledge in favor of the idea that they are inhabited. We know that this earth turns round upon itself; and we observe that all those celestial bodies, that are accessible to such an observation, have the same movement. We know that the earth performs a yearly revolution, round the sun; and we can detect, in all the planets which compose our system, a revolution of the same kind, and under the same circumstances. They have the same succession of day and night. They have the same agreeable vicissitude of seasons. To them light and darkness succeed each other; and the gaiety of summer is followed by the dreariness of winter. To each of them the heavens present as varied and magnificent a spectacle; and this earth, the encompassing of which would require the labour of years from one of its puny inhabitants, is but one of the lesser lights which sparkle in their firmament. To them, as well as to us, has God divided the light day, and the darkness he has called night. He has said let there be light in the firmament of their heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and for years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of heaven, to give light to earth; and it was so.—To all of them he has given a sun to rule the day; and to many of them he has given moons to rule the night. To them he has made the stars also. And God has set them in the firmament of heaven, to give light upon their earth; and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness, and God has seen that it was good.—*Dr. Chalmers.*

Repentance is not a single act, but a habit, or virtue. Rebuke with soft words and hard arguments.