

[FOR THE CHRISTIAN VISITOR.]

Dear Editors.—After Adam had sinned he was commanded by God to get his living by labour, see Gen. iii. 17-19; and Paul said to some in his days who were disposed to lift their heads above the industrious, "We commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." 2 Thes. iii. 10-12.—This I think is a good Rule, and all who are so aristocratic as to despise such wholesome advice, would do well to read the enclosed anecdote, which you will oblige me by inserting. I am yours truly, R. T.

THE BASKET-MAKER.

DEDICATED TO THE ARISTOCRACY.

In the middle of the vast ocean commonly called the South Sea, there is a large cluster of Islands little visited by Europeans, though inhabited by a people nowise inferior to them in knowledge and civilization. An ancestor of the prince who now reigns over them, was so celebrated for the wisdom of his government, that he was surnamed the Solomon of his age, and the territories under his sway have ever since retained the name of the Islands of Solomon.

A descendant of one of the great men of king Solomon's time, became a gentleman to so improved a degree as to despise the good qualities which originally ennobled his family. He had a house on the sea-side, where he spent great part of his time in hunting and fishing; but found himself impeded in the pursuit of these important diversions by a long slip of marsh land overgrown with high reeds, that lay between his house and the sea. The owner of this slip was a poor but honest basket-maker, who gained his livelihood by working up the flags of these reeds in a manner peculiar to himself; and he had resisted every effort to make him yield up possession. His gentleman neighbor resolving at length that it became not a man of his quality to submit to any restraint on his pleasures for the ease and convenience of a vulgar mechanic, took advantage of a very high wind, and commanded his servants to burn down the barrier.

The basket-maker, who saw himself undone, complained of the oppression, in terms more suited to his sense of the injury than the respect due to the rank of the offender; and the reward this imprudence procured him was the additional injustice of blows and reproaches, and all kinds of insult and indignity.

There was but one way to obtain remedy, and he took it; for, going to the capital, with the marks of his hard usage upon him, he threw himself at the feet of the king, and procured a citation for the oppressor's appearance; who confessing the charge, proceeded to justify his behavior, by the poor man's unmindfulness of the submission due from the vulgar to gentlemen of rank and distinction.

"But pray," replied the king, "what distinction of rank had the grandfather of your father, when, being a cleaver of wood in the palace of my ancestors, he was raised from among those vulgar you speak of with so much contempt, in reward of an instance he gave of his courage and loyalty in defence of his master? Yet his distinction was nobler than yours. It was the distinction of soul, not of birth; the superiority of worth, not of fortune. I am sorry I have a gentleman who is base enough to be ignorant that ease and distinction of fortune were bestowed on him but to this end, that being at rest from all cares of providing for himself, he might apply his heart, head, and hand for the public advantage of others."

Here the king, discontinuing his speech, fixed an eye of indignation on the sullen resentment of mien which he observed in the haughty offender, who muttered out his dislike of the encouragement this way of thinking must give the commonalty; who, he said, were to be considered as persons of no consequence, in comparison of men who were born to be honored. "Where reflection is wanting," replied the king, with a smile of disdain, "men must find their defects in the pain of their sufferings. Tanhuma," added he, turning to a captain of his galleys, "strip the injured; and the injurer; convey them to one of the most barbarous and remote of the islands; set them on shore in the night, and leave them both to their fortunes."

The place in which they were landed was a marsh, under cover of whose flags the gentleman was in hopes to conceal himself, and give the slip to a companion, whom he con-

sidered it a disgrace to be found with. But the lights in the galley having given an alarm to the savages, a considerable body of them came down, and discovered in the morning the two strangers in their hiding-place. Setting up a dismal yell, they surrounded them; and advancing nearer and nearer with their clubs, seemed determined to dispatch them without sense of hospitality or mercy.

Here the gentleman began to discover that the superiority of blood was imaginary, for between a consciousness of shame and cold, under the nakedness he had never been used to, a fear of the event from the fierceness of the savages, and the want of an idea whereby to soften or divert their asperity, he fell behind the poor sharer of his calamity, and with an unsinewed, apprehensive, unmanly sneakiness of mien, gave up the post of honor, and made a leader of the very man whom he had thought it a disgrace to consider as a companion.

The basket-maker, on the contrary, to whom the poverty of his condition had made nakedness habitual; to whom a life of pain and mortification represented death as not dreadful; and whose remembrance of his skill and art, of which these savages were ignorant, gave him hopes of procuring safety from demonstrating that he could be useful, moved with bolder and more open freedom, and having plucked a handful of the flags, sat down without emotion; and making signs that he would show them something worthy of their attention, fell to work with smiles and nodding; while the savages drew near, and gazed in expectation of the consequence.

It was not before he had weaved a kind of coronet of pretty workmanship, and rising with respect and fearlessness, approached the savage who appeared the chief, and placed it gently on his head. The figure of the sable warrior, under this new ornament, so charmed and struck the followers, that they threw down their clubs, and formed a dance of welcome and congratulation round the author of so prized a favored.

There was not one but showed marks of impatience to be made as fine as his captain; so the poor basket-maker had his hands full of employment; and the savages observing the one quite idle, while the other was busy in their service, took up arms in behalf of natural justice, and began to lay on arguments in favor of their purpose.

The basket-maker's pity now effaced the remembrance of his sufferings; so he rose and rescued his oppressor by making signs that he was ignorant of the art, but might, if they thought fit, be usefully employed in waiting on the work, and fetching flags for his supply as fast as he should want them.

This proposition luckily fell in with a desire the savages expressed, to keep themselves at leisure, that they might crowd round and mark the progress of a work they took such pleasure in. They left the gentleman therefore to his duty in the basket-maker's service; and considered him as one who was, and ought to be treated as inferior to their benefactor.

Men, wives, and children from all corners of the island came in droves for coronets, and setting the uninstructed gentleman to work to gather boughs and poles, made a hut to lodge the basket-maker, and brought down daily from the country such provisions as they lived upon themselves, taking care to offer the imagined servant nothing till the master was done eating.

Three months' reflection in this mortified condition, gave a new and juster turn to our gentleman's improved ideas; insomuch that, lying weeping and awake one night he thus confessed his sentiments in the ear of the basket-maker.

"I have been to blame, and wanted judgment to distinguish between accident and excellence; when I should have measured nature I but looked to vanity. The preference which fortune gives is empty and imaginary; and I perceive too late that only things of use are naturally honorable. I am ashamed when I compare my malice, to remember your humanity: but if the gods should please to call me to a repossession of my rank and happiness, I will divide all with you, in atonement of my justly punished arrogance."

He promised and performed his promise; for the king soon after sent the captain, who had landed them, with presents to the savages and ordered him to bring both back again.—And it continues a custom in the Island, to degrade all gentlemen who cannot give a better reason for their pride, than that they were

born to do nothing, and the word for this just punishment is "Send him to the basket-maker's."

THE YOUNG LADY'S FIRST GIFT.

Not far from forty years ago, Miss H—, in a New England city, heard one Sabbath, for the first time, a missionary sermon. She had distinguished family connexions; her personal character already gave promise of great superiority, and more than all she was an ardent Christian. With a glowing heart she listened to the wants and woes of the heathen. Her attention was especially called to the Sandwich Island Missions, and she shed many tears of pity in thinking of the misery of those who had never heard of her Saviour. "What can I do?" was the question she asked herself.

On returning home, she said eagerly to her astonished father, "Father, I want all my money." "All your money to-day—what can you want it for?" "I must give it to that good man who preached this morning, that the poor Sandwich Islanders may have the gospel." It amounted to sixteen dollars, and she cast the whole into the Lord's treasury.

The interest felt for the new mission spread throughout the town. By and by the church was repaired, and the old pulpit was sent to the Sandwich Islands, for the new house of worship erected there.

Years rolled on. The young lady entered upon the arduous duties of a pastor's wife, and had become a mother, yet she still found time to labor and pray for the "nations sitting in darkness;" and though in early womanhood her warm heart and liberal hands became cold in death, "God still had respect unto her and her offering."

One of her sons, after some years' absence attending to his profession in a remote part of the land, found it necessary, owing to the declining state of his health to take a voyage. He embarked for the Sandwich Islands; and he arrived in safety, and found himself not among heathen, but was immediately surrounded by Christian friends. He was hospitably entertained; his wants and sicknesses were cared for, and in due time he was enabled to go up to the house of God, when almost the first object that met his eyes was the 'old pulpit,' beneath whose droppings his sainted mother had felt the first springing up of missionary fervor. Yes, there was the pulpit and there was her son, both witnesses that God is faithful.

How little that young lady thought, so many years before, when she placed her sixteen dollars in the contribution box she was thus contributing to the future comfort and entertainment of her own child.

But God saw it all; and every gift, wish, effort, tear, prayer which we bestow upon his cause, are 'bread' cast upon the great waters of his truth and benevolence, and shall surely return upon us after 'many days.' M. A. H.

PREACHING CHRIST.

"I have had to interline your sermon all through and through, with the name of Christ," was the criticism which an aged parishioner once passed upon the discourse of a young pastor. Said the lamented McCheyne, "Some speculate on the doctrines of the gospel, but say very little about the gospel itself. I see a man cannot be a faithful minister, until he preaches Christ for Christ's sake."

"That is the best looking-glass, not which is most gilded, but which shows the truest face." And so is that the best preaching, not which most pleases the fancy or conforms to the caprices of men, but which furnishes the truest reflection of the heart. Louis XIV of France, said one day to the famous Massignon, "I have heard many great orators in my chapel, and have always been satisfied with them; but every time I hear you I am dissatisfied with myself."

AN INCIDENT.

A passenger who was on board the ill-fated steamer Henry Clay, relates the following incident connected with the sad disaster:

"He had been on the bow of the vessel, and was one of the first to escape. Upon reaching the shore, he counted twenty-three persons who sunk to rise no more. He sickened at the sight, and was just turning to leave the spot, when he saw a little boy only seven years of age emerge from the smoke and flame on the after part of the promenade-deck, kneel down and clasp his hands as if in prayer. He remained in this attitude but a moment, and

then leaped into the water. Our informant watched the little fellow as he went under the water, expecting not to see him again. Presently the young hero rose to the surface, brushed aside his auburn ringlets, and struck out manfully for the shore, which he reached in a short time. Upon landing, he sat down upon the bank, exclaiming, 'Oh, these poor people! I wish I could save them!' and then burst into a flood of tears at the awful scene before him. What a noble heart was in that boy, who, so young, could not only ask deliverance from danger of his heavenly Father, but feel for the sufferings of others! Does it not also speak volumes in praise of the mother of that boy?"

ON LOWLINESS.

While the man of the world is aiming at something great, and crying, O! that I were higher, the true Christian with grace in his heart, cries, O! to be lower, lower, lower! Give me humility, O Lord! When shall I be lower? Lowliness of mind is not a flower that grows wild in the field of nature, but requires to be planted by the finger of God; and God is always ready to put a finger to this work. It is a most excellent disposition; it makes a worm stand higher than an angel. All experience has proved it safer and better to be humble with one talent, than lifted up with ten. It is one of those lessons a man sits down and learns at the feet of Jesus Christ.—It is one of these parts of practice which enlists the sympathy of angels, and call down the care and condescension of Jehovah himself, for "He giveth grace to the humble."—Palaces and thrones have no attraction for him, so he passes them by; but "to this man will I look who is of a poor and a contrite heart." It is a preparative for receiving grace, and the effect of grace received, from both which considerations, the more a man has of it the better. It not only fits a man for the grace of God, but puts him in possession of a God of grace; and he who seeks earnestly the best gifts, will find this to be one of them. Let us not be satisfied with a small degree of lowliness, but strive after it, make it an object, so to run as to obtain it, and remember that he who is contented with grace enough to get to heaven, and desires no more, may be very sure he has none at all.—*Christian Intelligencer*.

ALL MAY BE USEFUL.—How barren a tree is he that lives, and spreads, and cumbers the ground, yet leaves not one seed, not one good work to generate after him. I know all cannot leave alike; yet all may leave something, answering their proportion, their kinds.—*Owen Feltham*.

Prayer is the golden chain of union between heaven and earth, and it keeps open the blessed communication.

Beautiful Tribute to a Wife.

Sir James Mackintosh, the historian, was married early in life, before he had attained fortune or fame, to Miss Catherine Stuart, a young Scotch lady, distinguished more for the excellencies of her character than for her personal charms. After eight years of happy wedded life, during which she became the mother of three children, she died. A few days after her death, the bereaved husband wrote to a friend, depicting the character of his wife in the following terms:

"I was guided in my choice only by the blind affection of youth. I found an intelligent companion and a tender friend, a prudent mistress, the most faithful of wives, and a mother as tender as children had ever the misfortune to lose. I met a woman who, by the tender management of my weaknesses, gradually corrected the most pernicious of them. She became prudent from affection; and though of the most generous nature, she was taught frugality and economy by her love for me. During the most critical period of my life, she preserved order in my affairs, from the care of which she relieved me. She gently reclaimed me from dissipation; she propped my weak and irresolute nature; she urged my indolence to all the exertions that have been useful and creditable to me; and she was perpetually at hand to admonish my heedlessness or improvidence. To her I owe whatever I am; to her whatever I shall be. In her solicitude for my interest, she never for a moment forgot my feelings or my character. Even in her occasional resentment, for which I but too often gave her cause, (would to God I could recall those moments!) she had no sullenness nor acrimony. Her feelings were warm and impetuous, but she was placable, tender, and constant. Such was the woman I have lost; and I have lost her when her excellent natural sense was rapidly improving, after eight years of struggle and distress had bound us fast together, and moulded our tempers to each other; when a knowledge of her worth had refined my youthful love into friendship, and before age