

The Christian Visitor.

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"Hold fast the form of sound words."—2d Timothy, i. 13.

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For the Christian Visitor,
NO. THREE.

CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.

Mr. EDGEMOND—It is very desirable that the middle classes should understand their position and know the power which is their own, and how to use it beneficially, not only for individual benefit, but also for the social, moral, and political benefit of communities. With a strong desire to impart useful information how this may be accomplished, I have selected your intelligent and interesting paper as the medium to further my object. I said in a former letter that Building Societies and Co-operative Associations, were "twin institutions," and have now a stronghold on the public mind in Great Britain. My purpose now is to bring before your readers the doings of the Co-operative Associations. A return was lately presented to the British Parliament of these Industrial and Provident Societies in England, registered under the Act of last Session; the return comprises 332 Associations, with 90,458 members, and a subscribed capital to conduct their business of £439,315, in addition to which they had £54,207 borrowed money. The object of these Associations are to open stores for the carrying on a general business, under the management of fit and proper persons; a general grocery business forms a leading feature, but every article which enters into the economy of families is bought in the best markets and on the best terms, and sold for cash only at current rates. Only one cotton mill is particularized in the return, as a co-operative factory at Mitchell Hey Mills, with a share capital of £65,172. There are many such co-operative factories in England (chiefly in Lancashire). There are 74 associations, with a subscribed capital exceeding £7000 each. Members of the Societies in Lancashire drew out £184,873 in the course of the year 1862, but on the other hand, there was £265,874 received on shares by the Societies in Lancashire. Goods were sold in the course of the year to the amount of £2,331,650—the expenses were £135,588—the profits are stated at £165,770. The value of the property held by the Societies at the end of the year is estimated at £584,766, and their liabilities at £492,802 only.

Before closing this letter I will add a few particulars from the sixth half yearly meeting of the "Preston Industrial Co-operative Society," held on the evening of 20th July last. The Secretary read the Committee's and the Auditor's reports, and balance sheet, from which it appeared the receipts had fallen off as compared with the corresponding half year of 1862, to the extent of £1,871 18s., notwithstanding the committee recommend a dividend of sixpence in the pound on members' purchases, in addition to five per cent. per annum for capital, and ten per cent. per annum on fixed stock. The report and balance sheet, as read, was unanimously adopted. These particulars show the way in which members were benefited, and render further observation unnecessary. In my next letter I will furnish interesting data of an important association in Liverpool, and now remain,

Very respectfully yours
A MEMBER.

LIBERTY, POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS, IN AUSTRIA.

(Conclusion.)
The majority report produced the desired effect on the mind of the Emperor, and led him to issue a decree, called "The Diploma," laying down fundamental principles in regard both to the Imperial Reichsrath and the provincial Diets.

I. The Diets should be restored to a form modified to suit the requirements of the times.

II. The Reichsrath should legislate on those matters only which relate to the common interests of all the Crown-Lands; "commercial and monetary (customs, excise, and currency), post, telegraph, railway, military, and foreign affairs."

III. "All other matters will belong to the respective Diets according to the constitutional laws of the countries."

These and other clauses were declared "fundamental and unchangeable laws of the State, as based on the pragmatic sanction of the Emperor Charles VI., and equally binding on the present Emperor and his successors."

This gave great satisfaction to the mass of the Empire, and raised the highest hopes that excellent institutions of freedom were soon to be established. But now the Emperor committed one or two mistakes, which threw affairs into confusion. He appointed to the office of Minister of the Interior Count Goluchowski, and entrusted to him the drafting of statutes for the Crown-Lands. This man was a thorough bureaucrat, and decidedly opposed to the majority of the committee. He was very unpopular with all classes, and his statistics made him more so. The Emperor was obliged to dismiss him. In his place was appointed Herr von Schmerling, a man of capacity, liberal in politics, but more opposed than Goluchowski to the Diploma, though for opposite reasons. He managed to lead the Emperor to substitute for the Diploma a sort of Constitution, called the "February Patent," which, with Goluchowski's statutes, so regulated the elections in the Crown-Land Diets as to give the German minority a very undue influence in the national councils. Instead of the 100 of which the Reichsrath was to be composed, according to the Diploma, the number was enlarged by the Patent to 343. Of these 85 fell to Hungary and 64 to Bohemia. The Diet of Hungary were so dissatisfied as to refuse to be represented at all. It was hoped by the Hungarians that Bohemia would do the same, and the Bohemian deputies, though appearing, took their seats under protest.

Only 200 of the 343 assembled, and a large part of these in bad temper towards the Government. Still the electoral laws had been so framed that the party of the "Patent"—now the Government party—had 70 out of the 200 who were so connected with the central power as to be entirely at its control, making on all questions a sure majority for the Ministry. The Upper House, or Senate, was no less subservient. The session was very stormy—the best speakers with the opposition; but the same majority uniformly carrying everything for the Ministry. The opposition took their stand on the Diets of the 30th Oct. 1860, and the Ministerial party ignoring that document, declared the "Patent" of 1861 to be the only constitutional guide.

The Diploma plainly secured the different "Crown-Lands" their ancient historical privileges, and to each a distinct voice in the Reichsrath as a separate nationality. The "Patent," on the other hand, sought to melt down all the distinct parts into one homogeneous Austria, to be ruled by one central congress. To illustrate this point we quote: "On the Bohemian national party objecting to the competency of the Reichsrath to legislate on a question affecting the interests of their country, and the solution of which legitimately belonged to its Diet, a leading centralist declared that he could acknowledge no

kingdom of Bohemia, but only a land of that name, a part of Austria, adding that he attached just as little importance to the Emperor's title of King of Bohemia as to that of King of Jerusalem." This was peculiarly trying to the Bohemians, because every previous Emperor had been crowned King of Bohemia at Prague, and Francis Joseph had but little while before declared his purpose to do the same.

The Diploma partly pleaded their right to claim its protection; because its principles had been solemnly established by the Emperor, "as fundamental and unchangeable laws of the State," binding alike on himself and his successors. The party of the Patent, on the other hand, denounced as the enemies of Austria all who questioned the validity of the latter decree. The Hungarian Diet, probably anticipating that such would be the ruling spirit in the Reichsrath, refused all participation in it. This perhaps was unwise, as 85 members possibly might have turned the scale to the side of the nationalities. As it is, she has deprived herself and her sister States of an influence which had hitherto outweighed that of any other of the "Crown-Lands."—Jealousy of Hungary with her 9,000,000 of people, her large municipal privileges, and her profusion of public-spirited men, educated in the school of political contests, was doubtless a strong reason for forming the Centralist party as a counterbalancing weight.

One of the severest conflicts in the Reichsrath occurred on the question of laying new taxes. By the decree of July 17, and the Diploma of Oct. 20, it was fixed that new taxes should be assessed only in a complete Reichsrath. The Emperor was, by another clause, empowered to decide all matters necessary for the interests of the State whenever the complete Reichsrath should not be assembled. The Ministry still determined to bring the budget before this "Rump Parliament," hardly more than half complete, and have new taxes voted to meet the estimates. They admitted the Constitution did not authorize it, but pleaded that the Emperor delegated to the Parliament his right to act on the finances. It was done against the most energetic resistance of the opposition, pleading the specific pledges of the July and October, and claiming that the Emperor, who had equal sympathy for all his subjects, should exercise personally his constitutional right, rather than delegate it to an accidental parliamentary majority, representing one interest only and one portion of the realm.

This led so many of the Polish and Slavonian members to refuse further co-operation, that only 143 members voted in fixing the financial details, which was the principal business of the remainder of the session. This course of the Centralist party has led to great conflicts between Hungary and the central government, resulting in a forcible dissolution of the Hungarian Diet, and, if we rightly recollect, a collection of taxes in that country by military force.

We said the Emperor committed one or two mistakes. In saying this we did not mean to side with either party, for we do not know enough of the historical relations of the different Crown-Lands, and the character and intelligence of the people, nor of the designs of the Centralist party, to form an opinion on the subject. But if it was right to publish the Decree of July, and the Diploma of October, it was a mistake to put the drawing of statutes for the Diets into the hands of Goluchowski, and to give Herr von Schmerling power to substitute for the Diploma the antagonistic "Patent" of February. He should have pursued one course, not two. If the Patent is right, that alone should have been decreed. Things in Austria are certainly in an unhappy state, yet the Empire is, by dire necessity, irrevocably committed to liberal reform: and the Emperor, notwithstanding the above mistakes, seems honestly bent on doing a thorough and good work in this matter.

Much of reform has already been accomplished. The Concordat with the Pope of 1855 has been annulled—marriage has been made a civil institution, and is no longer in the hands of the priests alone—the schools are taken away from the Jesuits—the rights of conscience are conceded—religion is no longer a test for political preferment, and the Bible, in all languages, may be freely imported for sale into Austria. So sincere is the Emperor, that a petition of the Diet of the Tyrol to have that province exempted from the operation of the law enfranchising Protestants, has not been granted. On the other hand, the Emperor has given to the Protestants a place of worship in Vienna, has allowed the utmost freedom of speech, and that publicly, in eulogizing Gustavus Adolphus, the great champion of Protestantism in the thirty years' war. Still further, Herr von Schmerling telegraphed, last year, to the Austrian delegates in the Gustavus Adolphus Society—the great Protestant protectionist and home-missionary Society for Germany—that they might, if they pleased, invite that body to hold their next meeting in Vienna: and further still, the Moravians have been permitted to commence Protestant missions in Austria. Truly the world moves! Even Austria has made more unexpected progress in the two years ending last December, than any other portion of the globe.

Will not American Christians so enlarge their contributions to the funds of the American and Foreign Christian Union as to enable that Society to take a part in the good work for Protestantism in Austria?

CHRISTMAS EVANS IN THE PULPIT.

Mr. Evans was very fond of the use of the Old Testament Scriptures in their more spiritual relations. The following extract will not perhaps be acceptable to the taste of all readers, but it is an illustration of Mr. Evans' very natural style:—
"THE HIND OF THE MORNING ON THE MOUNTAINS."
It is generally admitted that the twenty-second Psalm has particular reference to Christ. This is evident from his own appropriation of the first verse upon the cross—"My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?" The title of that Psalm is—"Ajjeleh Shaha," which signifies—"A hart, or the hind of the morning." The striking metaphors which it contains are descriptive of Messiah's peculiar sufferings. He is the hart, or hind of the morning, hunted by the black prince, with his hell-hounds—by Satan, and all his allies. The "dogs," the "horns," the "unicorns," and the "strong bulls of Bashan," with their devouring teeth, and their terrible horns, pursued Him from Bethlehem to Calvary. They beset Him in the manger, gnashed upon Him in the garden, and well-nigh tore Him to pieces on the cross. And still they persecute Him in His cause, and in the persons and interests of His people.

The faith of the Church anticipated the coming of Christ, "like a roe or a young hart," with the dawn of the day promised in Eden; and we hear her exclaiming in the Canticles—"The voice

of my beloved! behold, He cometh, leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills!" She heard Him announce His advent in the promise—"Lo, I come to do thy will, O God!" and with prophetic eye saw Him leaping from the mountains of eternity to the mountains of time, and skipping from hill to hill throughout the land of Palestine, going about doing good. In the various types and shadows of the law she beheld Him "standing by the wall, looking forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice;" and then she sung—"Until the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like the roe or the young hart upon the mountains of Bethel!" Bloody sacrifices revealed Him to her view, going down to the vineyards of red wine; whence she traced Him to the meadows of Gospel ordinances, where "He feedeth among the lilies"—to "the gardens of cucumbers," and "the beds of spices;" and then she sung to Him again—"Make haste"—or, flee away—"my beloved! be thou like the roe or the young hart upon the mountains of spices!"

Thus she longed to see Him, first "on the mountains of Bethel," and then "on the mountain of spices." On both mountains she saw Him eighteen hundred years ago, and on both she may still trace the footsteps of His majesty and His mercy. The former He hath tracked with His own blood, and His path upon the latter is redolent of frankincense and myrrh.

"Bethel signifies division. This is the craggy mountain of Calvary; whether the 'Hind of the Morning' fled followed by all the wild beasts of the forests, and the hunting-dogs of hell, summoned to the pursuit, and urged on, by the prince of perdition; till the victim, in His agony, sweat great drops of blood—where He was terribly crushed between the cliffs, and dreadfully mangled by sharp and ragged rocks—where He was seized by death, the great greynound of the bottomless pit—whence He leaped the precipice, without breaking a bone; and sunk in the Dead Sea, sunk to its utmost death, and saw no corruption.

Behold the 'Hind of the morning' on that dreadful mountain! It is the place of skulls, where death holds his carnival in companionship with worms, and hell laughs in the face of heaven. Dark storms are gathering there—convulsing clouds, charged with no common wrath. Terrible set themselves in battle-array before the Son of God; and tempests burst upon him, which might sweep all mankind in a moment to eternal ruin. Hark! hear ye not the subterranean thunder. Feel ye not the tremour of the mountain? It is the shock of Satan's artillery, playing upon the Captain of our salvation. It is the explosion of the magazine of vengeance. Lo, the earth is quaking, the rocks are rending, the graves are opening, the dead are rising, and all nature stands aghast at the conflict of Divine mercy with the powers of darkness. One dread convulsion more, one cry of desperate agony, and Jesus dies—an arrow has entered into his heart. Now leap the lions, roaring, upon their prey; and the bulls of Bashan are bellowing; and the dogs of perdition are barking; and the unicorns test their horns on high; and the devil, dancing with exultant joy, clanks his iron chains, and thrusts up his fettered hands in defiance towards the face of Jehovah!

Go a little farther upon the mountain, and you come to 'a new tomb hewn out of the rock.' There lies a dead body. It is the body of Jesus. His disciples have laid it down in sorrow, and returned weeping to the city. Mary's heart is broken, Peter's zeal is quenched in tears, and John would fain lie down and die in his Master's grave. The sepulchre is closed up and sealed, and a Roman sentry placed in its entrance. On the morning of the third day, while it is yet dark, two or three women come to anoint the body. They are debating about the great stone at the mouth of the cave. 'Who shall roll it away?' says one of them. 'Pity we did not bring Peter or John with us.' But arriving, they find the stone already rolled away, and One sitting upon it, whose countenance is like lightning, and whose garments are white as the light. The steel-clad, iron-hearted soldiers lie around him, like men slain in battle, having swooned with terror. He speaks—"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here; he is risen; he is gone forth from his cave victoriously."

It is even so! for there are the shroud, and the heavenly watchers; and when He awoke, and cast off His grave-clothes, the earthquake was felt in the city, and jarred the gates of hell. 'The Hind of the Morning' is up earlier than any of his pursuers, 'leaping upon the mountains, and skipping upon the hills.' He is seen first with Mary at the tomb: then with the disciples in Jerusalem; then with two of them on the way to Emmaus; then going before his brethren into Galilee; and finally, leaping from the top of Olivet to the hills of Paradise; 'fleeing away to the mountains of spices,' where he shall never more be hunted by the black prince and his hounds.

Christ is perfect master of gravitation, and all the laws of nature are obedient to His will. Once He walked upon the water as if it were marble beneath his feet; and now, as He stands blessing His people, the glorious form so recently nailed to the cross, and still more recently cold in the grave, begins to ascend like 'the living creature' in Ezekiel's vision, 'lifted up from the earth,' till nearly out of sight; when 'the chariots of God, even thousands of angels, receive Him, and haste to the celestial city, waking the thrones of eternity with this jubilant chorus—"Lift up your heads, O ye gates! and be lifted up, ye everlasting doors! and the King of Glory shall come in!"

From these extracts it will be seen that Christmas Evans excelled in the use of parable in the pulpit. Sometimes he wrought this mine like a very Bonyan, and we believe no published accounts of these sermons in Welsh, and certainly none that we have translated into English, give any idea of his power. With what amazing effect some of his sermons would tell on the vast audiences which in these days gather together in London, and in our great towns! This method of instruction is now usually regarded as in bad taste; it does not seem to be sanctioned by the great rules and masters of oratorical art. If a man could create a "Pilgrim's Progress," and recite it, it would be found to be a very doubtful article by the rhetorical sanhedrim. Yet our Lord used this very method, and without using some such method—apocryphal or illustration—it is doubtful whether any strong hold can be had of the lower orders of mind. Our preacher entered into the spirit of Scripture parable and narrative. One of the most famous of his discourses is that on the Demonia of Gadara; some of our readers will be shocked to know that in the course of some of his descriptions he convulsed his audience with laughter in the commencement. Well he need not be intimated there; but he held it sufficiently subdued before the close, and an alternation of tears and raptures not only testified to his powers, but to his skill in giving a readable of the narrative. For the purpose of producing effect—and we mean by

effect, visible results in crushed and humbled hearts, and transformed lives—it would be a curious thing to try in England the preaching of some of the great Welshman's sermons. What would be the effect upon any audience of that great picture of the churchyard world and the mighty controversy between Justice and Mercy? Let it be admitted that there are some things in it, perhaps many, that it would not demand a severe taste to expel from the picture; but take it as the broad, bold painting of a man not highly educated—indeed, highly educated men, as we have said, could not perform such things; a highly educated man could never have written "The Pilgrim's Progress"—let it be remembered that it was delivered to men, perhaps we should say rather educated than instructed; men illiterate in all things except the Bible. We ourselves have in some very large congregations tried the preaching of one of the most famous of Evan's sermons, "The Spirit walking in dry places, seeking rest, and finding none"—we find it in Mr. Cross' volume; but our version of it was received from the lips of those who listened to it among the mountains of Wales. The version in the volume before us seems to be but a poor caricature of the reality. Evan's preaching was by no means defective in the bone and muscle of thought and pulpit arrangement; but no doubt herein lay his great forte and power—he could paint soul-subduing pictures. They were not pieces of mere word painting, they were bathed in emotion, they were penetrated by deep knowledge of the human heart. He went into the pulpit mightily, from lonely wrestlings with God in mountain travellings; he went among his fellow men, his audiences, strong in his faith in the reality of those covenants with God, whose history and character we have already presented to our readers. There was much in his preaching of that order which is so mighty in speech, but which loses so much, or which seems to acquire such additional coarseness, when it is presented to the eye. Preachers live too much now in the presence of published sermons, to be in the highest degree effective. He who thinks of the printing press cannot abandon himself. He who uses his notes slavishly cannot abandon himself; and without abandonment what is oratory? what is action? what is passion? If we were asked what are the two greatest human aids to pulpit power, we should say Self-Possession and Self-Abandonment; and the two are perfectly compatible; and in the pulpit the one is never powerful without the other. Knowledge, Belief, Preparation, these give self-possession; and Earnestness and Unconsciousness, these give self-abandonment. The first without the last may make a preacher like a stony pillar, covered with runes and hieroglyphics; and the last without the first may make a mere fanatic, with a torrent of speech, plunging lawlessly and disgracefully abroad. The two in combination in a noble man and teacher become sublime. Perhaps they reached their highest realization among us in Robertson of Brighton. In another, and certainly inferior, order of mind, they were nobly realised in the subject of this sketch.

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE.
Suppose you were in possession of a jewel of inestimable value. Suppose you carry it with you by day and by night, for weeks, months and years, and never know the value of that treasure until it depreciated upon your hand, and then, when it is too late for you to profit by the knowledge, you learn what a treasure you had always, till that time, possessed; would you not most deeply regret it? Would you not write bitter things against yourself, for your ignorance? Suppose you possessed in your house a remedy for a specific disease; suppose your children were afflicted with that disease to such a degree that one became deformed, another blind, another deaf, whilst some by its fatal power were hurried to the grave, and not until these dreadful results had been reached did you make a discovery of the fact that you had always had a remedy at hand; would you not be filled with grief and self-condemnation that your knowledge came so late?

Let me assure you that maternal influence is that inestimable treasure! Maternal influence is that valuable remedy! By means of it many a mother has made her children rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom of God; many a mother, by the divine blessing, has arrested moral diseases in her children, and prevented them from becoming moral lepers and paralytics, whilst others in consequence of a wrong influence upon their families, have not only seen them growing up in immorality and irreligion, but have aided them in so doing.

Maternal influence is subtle, invisible, mysterious, and peculiarly powerful. It will follow a son even when he becomes a man, across oceans; it will penetrate with him the jungles; it will surround him by day like the light; it will be around him at night like the darkness; in the midst of his business, his pleasures, his temptations, and his sorrows, will his mother, by her influence, like a guardian angel, watch with the deepest interest in his course.

To a young man, the recollection of the anxiety of his mother for his moral character, has operated as a most powerful incentive to resist temptation. Maternal influence, like a shield of adamant, blunted and rendered harmless the fiery darts of the wicked one, which, otherwise, would have pierced, scorched, and injured the soul.

See that young military officer surrounded by his boon companions. They are indulging in the fashionable habit of drinking. The cup is offered to him. He at once declines. He is chided for his cowardly refusal. Why will you not drink? "Because," says he, "my mother would not wish me to." A noble reply, in which is exhibited more true heroism than was afterwards displayed when he fell upon the plains of Mexico, fighting the battles of his country. Thus the hallowed, elevating moral influences of home followed that young officer to the camp and the field, and prevented him from drinking the enchanted cup.

A gentleman of this city, now carrying on an extensive business, was, some years since, locked up in a room in the second story of a house, with a demon in human shape, who used every possible means to entice him from the path of virtue. "Whilst in that room," said he, "I thought of my mother! I knew that if I yielded, my mother would die of a broken heart. Under the influence of that thought I suddenly threw up the window, leaped into the yard, and ran as for my life—and that was my salvation!" Oh, the influence of that mother! how it formed a coat of mail around that son, and enabled him to ward off successfully the fiery darts of the wicked.

THE HAMPSON COURT VINE.—The great vine is, this year, in magnificent condition, the expected yield being above the average. It is estimated that there 1,400 bunches of grapes, computed to weigh, when ripe, 800 lbs.

THE SKY.

It is a strange thing how little in general people know about the sky. It is the part of creation in which nature has done more for the sake of pleasing man, more for the sole and evident purpose of talking to him and teaching him than in any other of her works, and it is just that part in which we least attend to her. There are not many of her other works in which some material or essential purpose than the mere pleasing of man is not answered by every part of their organization; but every essential purpose of the sky might, so far as we know, be answered if once in three days, or thereabouts, a great ugly black rain-cloud were brought up over the blue and everything well watered, and so all left blue again till next time, with perhaps a film of morning and evening mist for dew. And instead of this, there is not a moment of any day of our lives when nature is not producing scene after scene picture after picture, glory after glory, and working still upon such exquisite and constant principles of the most perfect beauty, that it is quite certain it is all done for us, and intended for our perpetual pleasure.

And every man, wherever placed, however far from other sources of interest or of beauty, has this doing for him constantly. The noblest scene of the earth can be seen and known but by few. It is not intended that man should live always in the midst of them, he injures them by his presence, he ceases to feel them if he be always with them; but the sky is for all; bright as it is, it is not "too bright, nor good, for human nature's daily food;" it is fitted in all its functions for the perpetual comfort and exalting of the heart, for the soothing it and purifying it from its dross and dust. Sometimes gentle, sometimes capricious, sometimes awful, never the same for two moments together; almost human in its passions, almost spiritual in its tenderness, almost divine in its infinity, its appeal to what is immortal in us, is as distinct, as its ministry of chastisement or blessing to what is mortal is essential.

And yet we never attend to it, we never make it a subject of thought, but as it has to do with our animal sensations; we look upon all by which it speaks to us more clearly than to brutes, upon all which bears witness to the intention of the Supreme, that we are to receive more from the covering vault than the light and the dew which we share with the weed and the worm, only as a succession of meaningless and monotonous accident, too common and too vain to be worthy of a moment of watchfulness, or a glance of admiration. If in our moments of utter idleness and insipidity, we turn to the sky as a last resource, which of its phenomena do we speak of? One says it has been wet, and another it has been windy, and another it has been warm. Who, among the whole chattering crowd, can tell me of the forms and the precipices of the chain of tall white mountains that girdled the horizon at noon yesterday? I saw the narrow sunbeam that came out of the south, and smote upon their summits until they melted and mouldered away in a dust of blue rain! Who saw the dance of the dead clouds when the sunlight left them last night, and the west wind blew them before it like withered leaves? All has passed, unregretted as unseem; or if the apathy be ever shaken off, even for an instant, it is only by what is gross, or what is extraordinary; and yet it is not in the broad and fierce manifestations of the elemental energies, nor in the clash of the hail, nor the drift of the whirlwind, that the highest characters of the sublime are developed.

God is not in the earthquake, nor in the fire, but in the still small voice. They are but the blunt and low faculties of our nature, which can only be addressed through lampblack and lightning. It is the quiet and unadorned passages of unobtrusive majesty, the deep and the calm and the perpetual—that which must be sought ere it is seen, and loved ere it is understood—things which the angels work out for us daily, and yet vary eternally, which are never wanting, and never repeated, which are to be found always, yet each found but once; it is through these that the lesson of devotion is chiefly taught, and the blessing of beauty given. These are what the artist of highest aim must study; it is these, by the combination of which his ideal is to be created; these, of which so little notice is ordinarily taken by common observers, that I fully believe, little as people in general are concerned with art, more of their ideas of sky are derived from pictures than from reality, and that if we could examine the conception formed in the minds of most educated persons when we talk of clouds, it would frequently be found composed of fragments of blue and white reminiscences of the old masters.

The chasm of sky above my head
Is Heaven's profoundest azure. No domain
For fickle, short-lived clouds to occupy,
Or to pass through; but rather an abyss
In which the everlasting stars abide,
And whose soft gleam, and boundless depth, might tempt
The curious eye to look for them by day.—Rossetti.

THE PULPIT A TEACHING POWER.

The world has no conception of what it owes to the educating power of the pulpit. No influence goes deeper into the soil of social life, than that of the Christian ministry.

A faithful man of God, witnessing for Christ, in a village pulpit, through a period of twenty years, will be found to have lighted the elect of two generations on their path to glory. He has in the same time lodged a power in the breast of every neighbor, and his precepts and examples will prove to the entire community a savor of life or of death. Old men have ripened themselves for heaven in the sunlight of his ministry. The middle aged have shown themselves men under the stimulus of his influence. Children have come into the kingdom, one by one, as their pastor has lifted the latch for them in the preaching of Jesus. And even the wicked, the profane, the infidel, will go up to the judgment, bearing the scars which they received from the arrows of truth shot forth from that village pulpit.

The minister may die, but his influence cannot. His warnings, his invitations, his words of consolation, linger in the old meeting-house, and hover around well-remembered graves, over which he said, in the faith of Jesus, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Down in the grove by the river side, the very trees and the rocks ring yet with the words of piety and patriotism which the minister uttered there. The whistling boy, looking for the cows there in their vast pasture fields, comes to the opening where once, at a festival, the tables were spread, and prayers were offered; and the spell of a pastor's influence comes over him, lifting his thoughts towards heaven. And so it is found that the power of a faithful minister lives after him in men's hearts, and on the very face of nature.

These things are no fiction, but sober truth. There are men all around us, in whose hearts such influences are to-day as fresh and as fragrant as the violets of this very spring.—Rev. F. G. Clark.

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