

THE PRESBYTERIAN CASKET.

VOL. III.

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NO. I.

CITY MISSIONS:

IN VIEW OF

Our Emigrant Population.

A DISCOURSE on the *Seventy-Second Psalm*,
Delivered in the Presbyterian Church on
Lafayette Square, in behalf of DOMESTIC
MISSIONS.

BY THE REV. DR. SCOTT.

[Published by Request.]

THIS psalm, my brethren, is a metrical prayer. It seems to have been composed by David just before his death, when he settled his own son Solomon's succession to his throne. It is the prayer of a father for his child—the dying blessing of a patriarch upon his son. It is the prayer of a king for his successor, and of a patriot for his country. It is also the prayer of the people for their sovereign. One reason why the aged king clothed this prayer of his affections and of his faith in verse, no doubt, was his desire, that while the people were praising God in holy song, they might, at the same time, be praying for his son. This psalm, considered in its literal application to Solomon teaches:

First, That parents feel a deep concern for the welfare of their children. This is natural and proper. The best thing parents can give their children is the knowledge of God. This is better than gold. Although it is true that parents cannot impart saving grace to their children, yet they can teach them the Holy Scriptures, the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Catechism. They can set them an example of faith and godliness. They can use, with unwearied pains, the means of education and of grace. They can pray to God to give their children wisdom and grace to know and do their duty. They can bring them to Jesus by

prayers, precept and example, and Jesus can give them a new heart.

Secondly, David's example teaches us that we should feel a degree of anxiety for the prosperity of our country after we fall asleep with our fathers. It is natural for a pious man to desire that those who come after him on the stage of life, should be more useful and serve God better than he has done. It is a mean, narrow, little, selfish spirit, that cares nothing about the church and the country, when we ourselves are gone to the grave:

"The generous mind is not confined at home;
It spreads itself abroad through all the public,
And feels for every member of the land."

He that is unwilling to do anything for posterity, because posterity has done nothing for him, shows conclusively that his own father has acted on his own principles, and that neither the past, present nor future will feel his loss.

Thirdly, The royal psalmist penned these lines for the use of the people—not only for their enjoyment in singing, but that in their singing they might also pray for his son Solomon, their King. It is an apostolical injunction to fear God and honor the King. We are to pray for all that are in authority that we may lead godly and peaceable lives.

Another, a higher, and a far more important view of this psalm is to consider it as a prophecy of the prosperity and perpetuity of the kingdom of Christ, under the type of Solomon. Even Jewish expositors allow that this psalm refers to the Messiah. There are many passages in it which cannot be applied to Solomon. The pious old king having set his beloved son on the throne, seems to have become transported with joy and gratitude to God, and then to have given utterance to the thoughts that were within him by the spirit of God. In pouring out from the fullness of his pious heart his blessings on the young king, and upon the people, the coming of the great Messiah that was to spring from

THE CASKET.

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For The Casket.

LETTERS FROM A FATHER TO HIS SON.

LETTER VII. — NOVEL READING — ITS TENDENCY — OTHER BOOKS RECOMMENDED — THE BIBLE.

My Dear Son: — You are aware how much I am opposed to the reading of novels and other light and frivolous trash; for I have often spoken to you on the subject; and I would now pass it over in silence, were it not that I consider it of so much importance, that I wish, once more, to lift up my voice, and bear my feeble testimony against it. On this subject, I can speak from *experience*. I know the evil consequences of the practice, for I have felt them on my own mind; and, therefore, I can, with the more earnestness, warn others of the danger. Do you ask, what bad influence novel-reading can have on the mind? I answer that it makes the mind *light* and *trashy* — just like the *thing read*. All reading has this effect, more or less; for the mind, like the chameleon, seems to assume the color of the object brought in contact with it. The person who indulges in the practice of reading novels, acquires such a taste for this kind of reading, that he has no taste for any thing else — he loses all relish for solid reading — the very *best books*, and such as are best calculated to improve the mind, are *dry*, *uninteresting* and *insipid*. I always think that a love for novels, is indicative of a weak mind — indeed, I have never known an instance of a great novel reader having a strong and vigorous mind. And how could it be otherwise? The practice has a natural tendency to make the mind *weak* and *effeminate*.

Another injurious effect of novel reading is, that it weakens our regard for *truth*. A

person who can read any work of *fiction*, knowing that it is *fiction*, must necessarily acquire a love for the marvelous, and a relish for false representations; and in proportion as this taste *increases*, in the same proportion will his love of truth *diminish*.

Again, novel-reading has a tendency to influence the passions. This must be admitted by all who are candid. We know how easy it is to influence combustible matter — nothing but a spark is wanting. In the same manner, the passions, by reading novels, become highly combustible, and nothing is wanted but a suitable opportunity of applying the match, to kindle them into a flame. The *narrow escapes* — the *clandestine interviews* — and *moon-light elopements*, enlist the feelings, fill the mind with admiration, and cause many a poor, weak creature, to sigh for such adventures, and think that there is no such thing as *true love*, unless it is accompanied with something of the *marvellous* and *romantic*.

Those who spend their time in writing novels for the young, I think will have an awful account to render in the Day of Judgment. Generally speaking, they are idle persons who have nothing else to do; and being too lazy to earn their living, by following some laudable occupation, they betake themselves to novel-writing for a support; or having a desire to figure in the literary world, and having no taste or talent for any thing of an improving nature, they turn into scribbling novels for the amusement of the young. Their trash is bought up by some bookseller, who has his own interest at heart, more than the good of his fellow-creatures — thence it is sown broad-cast through the land, and at so cheap a rate, that it finds access to every hut and cottage in the country. In this way, the minds of thousands of the young are poisoned, and finally ruined. I consider it one of the most powerful weapons, in the hand of

For The Casket.

REMEMBER ME.

BY J. M. KIRKPATRICK.

Before the parting hand I take,
I have this one request to make,
My friend, of thee:
Since we must part, perhaps no more
To meet upon this earthly shore,
Remember me.

We many pleasant hours have past
Together, but perhaps the last
This hour will be;
But still I will thy friend remain,
And if we never meet again,
Remember me.

Soon with the friends you lov'd before,
You'll part, and part to meet no more;
Then you will see
Strange forms and faces all unknown,
But will you not, when you are gone,
Remember me?

And now, since we must part, adieu!
Remember that my prayers for you
Will ever be,
That when your soul from earth is riven,
It may be safely housed in heaven,—
Remember me.

Selected for the Casket, by E. M.

WHICH IS THE WEALTHIEST?

THE INTERVIEW.

My friend Eugenio thus described to me:
He led me to a terrace, where the eye
Drank in a boundless prospect, hill and dale,
Meadows and cornfields. "Seest thou," he said,
"Yon distant farm, just where the river bends?
Well, that is mine; and this way, dost thou see
A small white cottage? that is likewise mine—
Each bounds my estate, the intervening lands
Are all my own; and I must fain confess,
I think that few have better." Eugenio smiled.
"Seest thou," he said, "yon village? Dwelling there
In a thatched hovel, lives a widow, poor indeed
In this world's wealth; a barley crust, sometimes
With water, all her meal; yet she can boast
Richer possessions." "Why, what can she say?"
"Sir, she can say, I'm rich, for Christ is mine;
I think her wealth superior."
This was Eugenio's tale; and often since,
I've thought about the widow and her wealth;
And when I see the rich and titled ones
Roll by in voluptuousness, I think
How very poor they are, compared to her
Who dwelt in the thatched hovel; and my prayer,
Reckless of gold and gems and palaces,
Asks but the widow's wealth—may Christ be mine.

For The Casket.

LONDON, AND ITS FINE ARTS.

BY REV. J. A. LYON.

*Madame Tussaud's Wax Gallery—Colosseum,
&c., &c.*

I HAD often seen wax figures—never fancied them much—and had, therefore, determined in my own mind not to favor Madame Tussaud with a visit; but I met with a gentleman, from New York, who urged me, by all means, to see this celebrated gallery. He said it exceeded any thing of the kind he had ever seen. Accordingly, I changed my mind, and spent one evening in this splendid saloon, and found it a truly brilliant affair.

The saloon is, perhaps, sixty by forty feet in dimensions, and fifteen or twenty in height. The interior walls are ornamented with fluted Corinthian pilasters, supporting an elaborately wrought cornice, consisting of rich tracery, carved work, wreathed flowers, vines, lily-work, and little winged cherubs, all beautifully gilt with gold. From the ceiling, which was also fretted and pleasingly ornamented, hung fifty small chandeliers, adorned with glass drops and prisms. The spaces between the pilasters, around the entire chamber, were filled with immense mirrors, which reflected a thousand times over, in endless vistas, the lamps, the moving throngs, and the multitudinous figures, in their brilliant and gorgeous array. At one extremity of the saloon, midway between the floor and the ceiling, a balcony, or orchestra, projected, in which a select band of musicians performed at intervals during the evening.

The figures may be divided into two classes—those representing living characters, and those representing distinguished individuals of former times. The former were habited in the richest garbs, and according to the latest fashion: the latter were dressed in the costumes characteristic of the times in which they lived. They were judiciously and ingeniously arranged in the body of the saloon and around the walls, not like statues or sentinels on duty, but some were grouped as though they were engaged in social intercourse one with another; others were looking on the moving throngs and interesting scenes before them; while others, again, were apparently indulging in thought and meditation. There were three great groups occu-

pying the body of the vast chamber. One represented her Majesty, Queen Victoria, in the midst of her court, surrounded by her ministers, foreign ambassadors, royal visitors, and members of the royal family, all elegantly arrayed, and paying court to the seemingly happy Queen. In this group were Prince Albert, Louis Phillippe, Mehemet Ali, the Emperor of Russia, Sir Robert Peel, Lord John Russell, the Queen Dowager, &c. In the rear of them was another and similar court, of some preceding age — some of the Georges, I think — and still behind them, or in the west end of the hall, was a representation of the Coronation of the Queen in Westminster Abbey. In one corner was to be seen the royal household in private, or domestic life, surrounded by a multiplicity of little princes and princesses, whose number I do not recollect. Aside from those mentioned, various figures were interspersed amongst the crowds; some standing, some sitting on divans and sofas, intently engaged in contemplating the scenes before them, and constituting, to all appearance, part of the actual visitors and living observers. These figures were often mistaken for living characters, possessing flesh and blood as we do! Some contained within them certain curious machinery, or clock-work, which made them move their heads and eyes and hands, and heave the breast as in breathing; and were generally, at first sight, mistaken for living men or women, and addressed as such! I, myself, actually asked one figure's pardon for treading on his toes! There was one figure, especially, that was the source of a great deal of merriment: it represented the celebrated Cobbett, dressed in a suit of grey cloth, with hat and spectacles on, seated on a divan, in front of the first royal group that I have described. He moved his head slowly and alternately from one side to the other, surveying, apparently with deep interest, the various distinguished characters that stood before him. Often, persons would ask his pardon for jostling him; and sometimes, ladies, wearied with standing, would take their seats on the same settee by his side; but invariably, when they discovered that he was not a living man, but a wax figure, moving his head and eyes about, they sprang up in alarm, as though they had seen a ghost!

Amongst the numerous figures representing the living, my attention was particularly ar-

rested by those of the royal family and present ministry, the King of the French, Father Matthew, Pope Pius, Mehemet Ali, Jenny Lind, &c. The figures representing distinguished characters of a former age, that most interested me, were those of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Milton, Byron, Hume, Voltaire, Washington, &c., &c. Voltaire is there ludicrously represented. He is bowing and scraping, in true French gallantry, to an old, wrinkled, sear and yellow coquette, hideously ugly, daubed and painted up with rouge, pomatum and fantastic gewgaws! The crowds invariably stopped to laugh when they passed these figures.

But of all the figures that graced that splendid hall, including kings, queens, popes, bishops, poets, painters, orators, philosophers, theologians, warriors, statesmen, &c., there was none, not one, that attracted so much attention, and before which the moving throngs never failed to stop and gaze with silent, but visible admiration, as that of WASHINGTON. It was the noblest in that curious and vast collection. Such majesty, such dignity, such firmness, and yet such benevolence, I never before saw radiate from the human countenance. As the admiring crowds stood before that figure, I felt my breast swell with conscious pride, and could not but exclaim — "*That is Washington, the Father of my Country!*"

The fear of being tedious induces me to pass in silence, Guildhall, and its paintings and monuments, the Model of Jerusalem, Madame Wharton's Tableaux Vivans, and many other things of equal interest. I cannot conclude, however, without alluding to the Colosseum. This is a colossal building, situated in Regent's Park, consisting of a vast polygon of sixteen sides, each twenty-five feet in length. Its front is ornamented with a bold Greek Doric portico, of six columns; and an entablature of the same character, supported by pilasters at the angles, surrounds the building. The whole is surmounted by a vast dome. This institution is emphatically the *pride* of London, the emporium of English arts, the greatest attraction of this great city. I cannot now take time to describe it; and if I could, I fear I should not be able. It is superlatively grand, beautiful and magnificent — the most splendid display of art I have yet seen. It consists of some ten or eleven parts, or departments, which I shall

simply enumerate, without attempting to describe them. First, the *exterior*, the building itself, its *portico*, the *gardens*, the *statuary* in and about the walks, the "*ruins*," &c., &c., make it an exceedingly interesting object, simply to pass by, without entering or stopping. Next, the Corridors and Rotunda, full of sculpture and statuary. The Rotunda is surpassingly beautiful; the whole finish and furniture of the vast amphitheatre is gorgeous and splendid, aside from the brilliant array of sculpture which it contains. There, the beautiful, the grand, the chaste, the elegant, the fanciful, the sublime in sculpture and statuary, are arranged around in these circles, one within the other, and all within the area of the vast Rotunda. In the centre of this extensive circle is a huge shaft—I will call it a covered pavilion—hung around with the richest drapery, concealing an organ, which is played at certain hours in the morning, afternoon and night. Third: we ascend up through this shaft, or pavilion, by a spiral stairway, to the great "Panorama of London." This is the most magnificent exhibition of this species of art the world has ever seen. The painting covers a surface of 46,000 square feet! You seem to be looking down upon London from the dome of St. Paul's. The night view is very wonderful. The city lies at your feet; the lights gleam in every part of the vast metropolis; the full moon shines brightly; the river is seen flowing along; the ripple is distinctly seen; the clouds at length fly by, and obscure the moon; the heavens are darkened; it thunders, lightens and rains; you hear it pour down in torrents; and the storm rages without; then the winds abate, and the rain ceases to fall; the moon comes out again, and the stars twinkle! It is the most wonderful illusion I ever witnessed, and I am still unable to understand how it was all effected. Fourth: from the panorama we retrace our steps, and descend into the beautiful and wonderful "Stalactite Caverns"—an imitation of the caverns at Adalsburg, in Germany. This is an exact representation of a vast subterraneous cavern. Fifth: the "Conservatories," which contain all beautiful flowers, shrubs, vines, &c., &c. Sixth: the "Gothic Aviaries," an octagonal shaped pavilion, wholly lined with mirrors, in which the little *jets d'eau*, and the birds of various and rich colors are repeated a thousand times over!

Seventh: "The Ruins," presenting models of the ancient temples of Theseus and Vesta, the Arch of Titus, &c. Eighth: the Panorama of Mount Blank, the "Mer de Glace," Swiss mountains, a literal cascade, eagles, wild goats, a Swiss cottage, &c., &c.

After walking for hours through this labyrinth of wonders and amazelements, until I was completely worn out with fatigue, I re-entered the vast and splendid Rotunda, and threw myself down upon a damask divan, leaning my head against a porcelain pillar, in the midst of the silent groups of statuary and beautiful figures. The light was obscured and dim, so as to throw rather a sombre shade over the silent and speechless marbles. All was perfectly quiet and still as death, except occasionally a whisper or a low voice would be heard, and a solitary visiter would glide softly by. In this quiescent attitude, I began to muse upon the scene before me. Just at this moment, the organ, which I had not seen—and indeed the organ and the performer were both concealed from my view—began in low, soft notes to play. It was the most delightful music I ever heard. O, how sweet, how soothing, how pensive, how melting were its tones! Now its low murmurs would almost die away; then its peals would wax louder and louder, until it filled all the vast labyrinth, and rolled to the highest dome its muttering, smothered thunder, shaking my heart, and making the whole pile to tremble. Then, again, it would die away to softest, sweetest, most enchanting tones, resembling the moan of the pine tops, or the murmur of distant waters! As I leaned my head against that porcelain pillar, and listened to that enrapturing, ethereal, soul-melting music, my heart felt tender, my mind was disposed to reverie; the scenes around me became gradually confused, and finally faded away altogether. Then a new vision was before me: my thoughts wandered far, very far, away to my sweet home, and presented before my burning heart, my *dearest wife* and *darling babes* (since gone to the other world), with all their innocent prattle, and charming faces; and before I was aware, my eyes were suffused with tears, and I was sobbing! I again realized my situation; tore myself loose from the enchantment of this sweet and soothing reverie; walked to my lodgings, and commenced writing a letter to my wife.