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shady thickets I slept, or feasted with
my love in Glenlee.

Thus literally by O'Flanagan,

Vale of Laith, O in the vale of Laith
I used to sleep under soft coverlets,
Fish and venison, and the delicious
prime of the badger,

Was my repast in the vale of Laith.

A principal object of learning languages is to acquire a knowledge of the manners and customs of the people by whom they were spoken, and therefore the naked idea of the original, however foreign to our modes, is to be preferred to all the meretricious, and accommodating drapery of translation. Dr. Neilson thought perhaps that it was unbecoming a Lady of Deardra's rank and consequence to praise the delight she had in feasting on a *brock*, and therefore, omitted the passage in his translation. But this very circumstance is an internal evidence of the antiquity of the poem. No such ideas are to be found in M'Pherson's Ossian, a certain proof that it is an imposition. The language and manners of his heroes and heroines are such as never existed in any age nor in any country.

There is a striking difference between the orthographies of Dr. Nelson and O'Flanagan. The latter has been endeavouring to restore the true orthography, and it is much to be wished that Irish scholars would fix on some determinate standard, to prevent the errors of ignorant or careless transcribers. H.

Practical Sermons, on interesting subjects, by Thomas E. Higginson, A.B. Curate of Lambeg, and Master of the Lisburn Academy. Sermon 1st, 8vo. pp. 24. Belfast, Smyth and Lyons. Price, 10d.

THE author's design in publishing this sermon, which we are informed, is intended as the commencement of a series on similar subjects, reflects much credit on him as a teacher of Christianity. They are meant, to use his own words,

"To exhibit a specimen of discourses calculated for general utility, and uniting an exposition of the Christian Faith with its practical tendency, avoiding too frequent recurrence to controversial disputations. He is apprehensive

that the generality of our warm disputants have never gathered their creed from the Bible, but having formed an attachment to some favourite sentiment before they were qualified to come to any settled decision from the scriptures, they save themselves the trouble of a laborious research, by using the compilations of some favoured guide, and judge of the doctrines of Scripture by his exposition of them.

"The beauty of truth is best exhibited in the Bible, and were men to employ such a portion of their time in studying it, as they expend on human compositions, and studying it with a proper temper of mind, with a resolution to do, as well as to know their duty, and with an application for divine light and assistance, we should soon see a different aspect of things in the Christian Church; divisions would cease among us, unity would take the place of discord, and truth and righteousness prevail over error and sin.

"To forward this desirable end, to exhort to a spirit of love and union among Christians, and as a great *mean* (means) of promoting it, to an unbiassed enquiry for ourselves into the sacred records, to explain the essential doctrines of our faith in a scriptural and practical manner, and in these eventful times to strengthen the stability of these kingdoms, *wherein only the Ark of God may be said to rest*, by pointing them to the strong hold for strength, and by exhortations to loyalty and piety, is the object the author has in view by his intended publications."

We heartily agree with our author in lamenting the deadly effects of the various differences of opinion existing in the Christian world, both on the happiness of society in general, and on the mind of every individual who devotes his thoughts to the investigation of the controverted points; we also coincide with him, that when the Bible is the standard by which all these differences must be ultimately regulated, it would be better to refer to it at once, than to depend on the expositions given by partial, perhaps ill-informed advocates. When the text is plain, why turn to the comment? By this mode of proceeding, one essential point, and which the author of these sermons justly deems of the first

importance, would be established. The perusal of the sacred volume, by showing how frequently the spirit of love and union among mankind is inculcated, that there is not a page which does not teem with precepts and instances to this effect, while the differences in doctrine, which have been the cause of most of the national and many of the private calamities of man, are noticed seldom and occasionally, such a perusal would prove that the instilling of this spirit into the human mind, and making it the grand mover of our thoughts and actions, is the very essence of Christianity. It would be then found that Benevolence, Toleration and Philanthropy, words which have of late years been almost banished from the vocabulary by the clamours of a party, and which are now so little in repute, that their very mention raises an outcry against the speaker, these exceptionable words, or as they are otherwise expressed, "Peace on earth, good will towards men," would be found to be the basis of christianity.

But though we highly approve of the author's motive, it may be questioned whether he has taken the proper method of accomplishing his purpose. If the Bible be the proper source of necessary information, to what purpose are these sermons? That they are not written solely for the purpose of recommending the study of that book, is evident not only from this before us, which is avowedly published as a specimen, but from the words of the author already quoted, that he intends to *explain the essential doctrines of our faith, in a scriptural and practical manner.* By what right is his explanation to supersede all others? Does he think himself competent to a task which has baffled the piety, learning and ingenuity of all the teachers to the present day? While every other commentator who has undertaken to expound the word of truth, has, instead of promoting union, traced the line for some new distinction among christians, does he hope to be able to amalgamate all the heterogeneous sentiments into a coalescent mass, to unite all the branches that are every day dividing in greater numbers, and form them again into a single trunk as at first? That such an union is *possible*, we doubt not;

that it will happen, we sincerely hope; but how or when, we dare not venture to conjecture. Yet this is the undertaking on which Mr. Higginson has ventured. Let us see how far the ability of the execution corresponds with the boldness of the attempt.

The subject of the first sermon is of a general nature, totally unconnected with any controverted point among Christians, concerning which there is but one opinion, and requires rather to be recommended to the practice than enforced on the understanding. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" The truth of this as a point of doctrine is undeniable. But as the saving of the soul is a distant motive, while the enjoyment of the world incessantly presses on us, the frequent reiteration of the precept cannot but be useful in directing the enquirer to the proper means of guarding against the one and securing the other. This seems to be the writer's view in this prefatory discourse, and so far it is judiciously prefixed. He proceeds to prove by example the insufficiency of the several sources of worldly happiness, which he classes under the heads of sensual enjoyments, riches and honours. The following quotation will serve as an example both of his style and method of treating his subject.

"Is Belshazzar happy? Behold the king feasting with his thousand lords; himself and his princes, his wives and his concubines, drinking out of the golden vessels taken out of the temple of God. What an enviable object of carnal enjoyment! The very existence of the true God ridiculed and despised, *his worship trampled upon*, futurity forgotten, *given up to weak minds*, and present enjoyment all in all. Here, *if you please*, was true philosophy. But behold, in the midst of his drunken riot, a hand writing on the wall, "Thou art weighed in the balance, and found wanting." How are the joints of his loins loosed? How do his knees smite against each other? And how are his thoughts troubled within him? Infidelity now becomes conviction; conviction without profit. That night was Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans slain, and all his pleasures perished with him.

Yet Belshazzar at his death honoured the God of Israel, and Daniel his servant. Alas! it was too late. It is not *dying*, but *living piety* that God requires of us. There is nothing in any situation that precludes us from the worship of the true God. Had Belshazzar honoured Jehovah, and given up his sensuality, he might have been as exalted in his character for his virtues, as he was remarkable for his vices; he might have lived honourable and died happy."

The train of argument in general is rather vague and desultory, and towards the latter part deviating into a kind of wild rhapsody of unconnected expressions which convey no fixed and determinate idea to the mind. But what strikes us as particularly censurable, is, that while the author professes to keep clear of all controversial points, he lays down as principles some of those very points whence the greatest schisms of the christian church have originated. Indeed without going farther, the passage we have marked in our quotation from his preface, is a sufficient proof of this, in which he asserts that the true religion is exclusively confined to the British Islands. In entering on this part of the subject, it must be premised that we do not intend to give an opinion on any of the points at issue, but merely to shew by them that the author has at the very commencement deviated from that course which he had traced out for himself.

In the second page we find these words. "For this end he emptied himself of his glory, and tabernacled in the flesh," evidently assuming the divinity of Christ, as if of universal acceptance, which we know is by no means the fact. In another place the following passage occurs;

"Let us suppose that this awful day is come. The Son of Man appears in his glory: The Heavens melt like wax at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth: the day of vengeance is come, and the glory of our God: The judgment is set and the books are opened. You too are arraigned at the bar: the law is read, and its dreadful anathema, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;"

where now are your pleas of merit? alas! all fled—who will produce his works of supererogation? Conscience, now a swift witness, exposes the cheat. Demerit, all demerit appears to belong to humanity; and the scrutinizing eye of man, as well as of God, exposes every vain plea of human righteousness.

What have I said? is there not a human righteousness? there is. *Human yet complete. Complete, because divine. Humanity and Deity connected, constituting a Righteousness which is our only security, a Righteousness acceptable, because ordained of God, the sinner's plea.*

In this passage the doctrine of supererogation and its necessary consequence the meritoriousness of our actions considered in themselves, is openly controverted. Yet to this doctrine one great division of the christian church rigidly adheres. This teacher's mode of preaching unity is like that now in fashion in the political world, "think as you please, provided you think with the establishment."

We have dwelt longer on this sermon than its appearance seemed to require, because it is not to be considered as a detached essay, but as the commencement of a larger treatise. We have been circumstantial in pointing out an inconsistency, because it must have pervaded the whole volume. The author has departed from his professions; he has erred; his error however is not to be attributed to a design to mislead, but to a self confidence too commonly indulged, which leads us to think our own opinions not only right but exclusive. He ought to have considered that every one claims the same privilege, and that the pertinacious assertion of disputed opinions, instead of inducing assent must confirm opposition, and even force it into obstinacy.

To a reader who thinks with the author, we doubt not the sermon may convey some useful reflections.

Some grammatical and idiomatical inaccuracies occur, which might have escaped observation, had not the author introduced himself in the secondary character of a writer on English Grammar. In two places we find the verb "to impress," used in a neuter sense,

We have also noticed the following passages.

“Which (pleasures) are succeeded by the most bitter consequences, and (are) the precursors of our ruin.”

“They might expect a similar treatment.”

These are trivial errors: but we certainly have a right to say to the physician, “Heal thyself.”

Woman: or Ida of Athens, by Miss Owenson, 4 vols. 12mo. p.p. 979. Longman, Hurst, and Rees, London, 1809.

Continued from P. 143, No. VII.

THE capture of Osmyn gives our heroine another opportunity of displaying herself. She is described as wandering through the scene of carnage to discover his body; at length on discovering the truth, she again goes to the Acropolis (Anglicæ, the citadel) to plead in his favour.—But her application now is not equally successful. She is brought to the Aga, and induced by the hopes of saving Osmyn from the tortures with which he is threatened to consent to marry his persecutor. But that very night the Aga's daughter, who was in love with Osmyn contrives his escape, and flies with him to Russia. Ida escapes to her father's, and there receives the intelligence that her hated spouse is no more, having been put to death by the suspicious government which he served.

A new character now appears, and gives rise to a train of incidents which form in our opinion the only entertaining part of these volumes; yet it is a hazardous pleasure. The style and sentiments are of that enervating, voluptuous tendency, which excite emotions the most dangerous. The pleader in the cause of virtue, for such is the character to which we conceive Miss Owenson wished to attain, has assumed the air and habiliments of the most dangerous auxiliary of vice.

An Englishman resident at Naples, a professed sensualist, of the most refined order, goes to Athens in quest of those pleasures which variety alone can furnish to the votary of the senses. In the summary description of character, Miss Owenson has merit; al-

though she constantly fails in its development, as it incidentally displays itself through the circumstances of the narration. The present personage may serve as an example of her talent.

“The Englishman was born of the younger branch of an illustrious family. He was impressed with an extravagant sense of the value of rank, because rank in the early part of his life had been his sole possession; ardent from nature, luxurious by education, he pursued the path to opulence merely as the medium by which pleasure (in its common acceptation) was to be obtained; he pursued it like a man of elevated notion in political career, and pursued it with a success no less the result of his talents than of his fortune. The evil chances of education had given him many faults, but they had also left him many virtues; the leading traits of excellence which illuminated his character were all his own; and the leading vice which shadowed its brightness, owed existence to the influence of woman. Of an ardent, impetuous, and affectionate character; at an age when the receptive power of men are so eager for impression, and so fatally capable of rendering that impression decisive, his heart had been first touched, his passions had been first awakened, by one who with more art than beauty, more ability than principle, and more passion than sentiment, charmed his imagination by her brilliancy, his self-love by her ardour, and deceived his hopes and betrayed his confidence, by that train of conduct, which deprived feeling and vitiated habits inevitably produce in woman.

“With a general and passionate admiration, united to a total want of esteem for women, his opinion of the sex was founded on the first impression given him by an individual: he had therefore never married, and never intended to marry. He laughed at the man who voluntarily threw his honour into the keeping of a being, who (drawing the inference from his own experience) he believed so seldom capable of preserving her own; he laughed at the man who voluntarily hung a chain over his pleasures, and devoted himself to anxiety at home,