

ART. III.—*The Life of Hugh Heugh, D.D., with a Selection from his Discourses.* By his Son-in-Law, HAMILTON M. MACGILL, Minister of the United Presbyterian Congregation, Montrose Street, Glasgow. In two volumes. Edinburgh, 1850.

WE have heard it publicly stated, as the opinion given of these memoirs by a living theologian, fully competent, equally from his sound judgment, and his extensive reading, to form a just estimate, that there had issued from the press no biography so much fitted to stimulate and benefit students and young ministers of the gospel, since the publication of the *Life of Philip Doddridge*. We happen to have learned that the very same judgment, even to its comparative element, was expressed by an excellent and intimate departed friend of Dr. Heugh. The unconcerted coincidence is curious: and itself no inconsiderable presumption in favour of the accuracy of the opinion formed independently by two able minds with so minute an agreement. Leaving out of view, however, the comparison involved, we have no hesitation in recording our deep conviction, that the volume of biography before us is singularly full of the most valuable lessons for every one who would discipline aright his intellect and heart. We shall make it our principal aim in the few following pages to gather up some of these hints; conceiving that we can perform no more important service than that of directing the general public, and especially students of theology, and the younger clergy, to a fresh source of sanctified excitement and instruction.

The fitness of the volume of biography before us for the study of the younger pastors of the Church of Christ, is enhanced by two considerations, the mention of which may seem, for a moment, but doubtful commendation. First, it is not the biography of genius. In saying so, we are far, certainly, from intending to disparage the intellectual endowments of the late Dr. Heugh. He was not one of those lights whose splendour dazzles and amazes, but, what is principally valuable, he was one of those whose beams shine and guide. Let the balance, however, be adjusted as it may between genius and gifts less brilliant, in regard of the power lent to their respective living possessors, it might be shewn, we think, by obvious considerations, that the biography of a man of genius must form, generally speaking, an inferior field for imitative study. Even were the majority of readers themselves “great wits,” endowed with this “*mens divinator*,” if we must call it so, it might well be questioned whether the best

culture for their young strength would be found in the contemplation of those ethereal models presented by the life of genius. But the mass of readers are ordinary mortals, and to the youthful aspirant after eminence, himself no winged soul, it is of less importance to learn how the eagle on his own strong and swift pinion can reach the mountain crest, than to acquire a knowledge of the path by which, with slower and more laborious course, yet not less surely, a man may plant his footstep on the summit. Or if there should be some height inaccessible to pedestrian toil—incapable of approach save by a pathway of air, it is well to know it, and eschew the “unearthly fluttering” of vain attempts to reach it. Most men need lessons, not how to soar, but how to climb. There is a twofold effect, incidental to the study of the life of genius, disastrous to the young reader. On the one hand, juvenile vanity may whisper, as he reads, that the same fire burns within himself, and the mistaken apprehension lead to the waste of his faculties in the pursuit of an unattainable position, to the neglect of that which is within his reach. Or, on the other hand, conscious that he lacks this ethereal inspiration, the ingenuous youth wonders and admires, indeed, but rises from his reading without stimulus to action, concluding that the lessons of such a life can only be for the aristocracy of intellect. The biography is to him a spectacle, not a pattern. It will be hard for the readers of the present memoirs to glide into either error. We do not mean that the mental gifts of their subject belonged to the common level of endowments, so that the ordinary reader, in supposing himself equally equipped, should run no hazard of thinking more highly of himself than he ought to think. On the contrary, we are inclined to think that faculties individually so high as his—and in their combination so felicitously balanced—mental powers, especially, so finely under control, so promptly and nicely obedient to the helm, are rarer than, in one form or other, genius itself is. But then Dr. Heugh’s talents were precisely of that sort which a man cannot dream himself into the belief of possessing; there is a daylight, a distinctness, a practicalness about them, which defy the persuasive tongue of vanity itself to argue a man into the seeming consciousness of inheriting them. We believe, that for every half-dozen young readers who, in perusing memoirs of some great orator or poet, might fancy themselves born to rival him, hardly one will be found imagining himself such a man as the subject of this biography. Something higher, to his idea, he might suppose himself to be, but not quite this. Yet, while scarcely any reader will miss the lessons of this book by supposing, against truth, that he was born to be all its subject was—while the majority of readers will naturally

look on the standard here exhibited as too difficult of attainment for themselves to reach, the feeling superinduced will be far from one of discouragement or despondency. For, perhaps, the prominent instruction of the book consists in the exhibition it gives of what resolute system, and discipline based on principle, may make a man, whatever they find him. The ingenuous reader of these volumes will readily say to himself,—I may never equal this model; my starting point, in respect of natural endowments, may be far lower than his, but with similar plans, pursued in a similar spirit, I may conquer faults, supply defects, and strengthen powers possessed, so as to reach a position honourable and useful, and higher, it may be, than all my present hopes.

But there is another consideration which commends the "Life" before us to the earnest study especially of the young pastor. It is the record of a life of action. The reader of this biography is not conducted into the intellectual laboratory of some copious author; deep research, vast learning, years spent in the library, profound and masterly written works, are not the objects he is called to contemplate. He will find Dr. Heugh, indeed, in his study, and, beyond many, busy there. Few things have surprised us more than the evidences produced in this life of his untiring industry in his retirement, by his pen in the study, as truly as otherwise on the arena of public life. But he wrote chiefly for the pulpit; or, if for the press, it was in those forms, and on those occasions, which demand not patient plodding investigation, but energetic readiness: the prompt tact and power of one to whom, as he seizes the passing juncture, printing his present thoughts, is just another form of action. His writings, after all considerably numerous, are the extempore of the press, bearing, to more elaborate works, something like the relation which the unpremeditated speech bears to the set oration; the former, in both cases, being often the more effective production. The prominent type, therefore, of his character is not associated with the seclusion of the library. His life is not contemplative, but active. Now, we certainly have no intention to disparage profound learning, or to underrate the value of those productions which bespeak large consumption of the midnight oil. Nor are we indifferent to the great importance of obtaining, universally, a well-educated ministry. But the majority of Christian pastors cannot be pre-eminent for learning. Our men of varied lore we must have, competent to deal with any question, archæological, critical, or philosophical—able to meet, if need be, the perverted thought and learning of scepticism or pantheism on its own ground. But to have the mass of our ecclesiastical workmen such, is neither possible nor desirable. We do not need a whole army of sappers and miners;

nor would the available force of the host be increased, could we arm every soldier with a piece of ordnance. In different words, and away from figure, the designs of the Christian ministry are such as to preclude the propriety or possibility of the majority of the pastors of the Church being men of learned and laborious leisure: their duties call for action. Studious they must be, but chiefly in connexion with the immediate demands of their current pastoral work. And if these sentiments, as we believe, must prove just at all times, there are features in the present aspect of society which give them special applicability to the passing age. These days cry, trumpet-tongued, for holy action. If the existence of a very general expectation on the part of religious men of all classes, founded on various facts, according to the special direction of their individual inquiries and observations, may be held as constituting true augury, then a conflict of no ordinary character with the powers and principles of evil is awaiting the Church. Now, without undervaluing or denying the need of ripe scholarship, extensive acquirements, scientific knowledge, and bookish research, we are persuaded that not by these weapons must the battle be fought in the main. We rely less upon the arguments of the pen in the imminent struggle, than upon the eloquence of the life. Self-denying, self-sacrificing action—love begirt with high-souled purpose, casting itself into the midst of perishing multitudes, not reasoning so much as proclaiming and beseeching, exhibiting the proof of the truth it utters in its own very attitudes and activities—strong in faith and prayer withal—this is an agency we specially need. The best answer, we are persuaded, to many a sceptic cavil will be found in working zeal, that leaves no doubt of the sincerity and depth of our faith. And, practically, the most effective breakwater against the tide of modern infidelity, pantheistical or socialist, would be an increase in the number of persons ready from their own experience to confess, “whereas we were blind, now we see.” In every other department of human avocations, the age is one of restless action, and whatever thought would impress itself on the bosom of society must stand out in the embodiment and relief of deeds. Now Dr. Heugh belonged to the active rather than the studious class of ministers. His pattern is, accordingly, peculiarly seasonable. He furnishes a fine model of the accomplished, inventive, unwearied workman, asserting in its highest and holiest walk, the dignity of labour.

The book is in essence, though not in form, an autobiography. Dr. Heugh tells his own history. Extracts from copious diaries, and an extensive correspondence, leave not much room for the biographer appearing in his own person, except to supply the needful links for connexion. It is difficult to say whether the

“Journals” or the “Letters” contribute more to the delightful impression which the well-arranged whole produces on the mind. The epistolary correspondence is very charming: full of graceful ease, innocent playfulness, large-hearted affection, and holy sentiment; we read it often with a pleasurable smile, always with instruction. The merest note, if it sparkles with a flash of humour, drops some solemn striking thought, throwing the soul back on the realities of the unseen world. But with all this, it is, we think, in his diaries that Dr. Heugh will be perused with deepest admiration of the writer, and with greatest profit to the reader. It is rare to meet with so full and prolonged a record of patient, resolute, successful discipline of mind and heart, resulting in that kingly rule of a man’s own spirit, which makes him better than the mighty.

The extracts made from these journals suggest two inquiries. The first relates to the propriety or importance of a man’s keeping such a record of his inner history. Dr. Heugh’s opinion on this subject was very decided, as appears not only from his own practice, but from express and repeated recommendation of the habit to others. He began at an early period of his life, to pen memoranda in the form of a journal; soon gave these notes a more regular and continuous shape; and when, as repeatedly happened, his avocations led to the interruption of his jottings, he resumes them with unfailing expression of regret for the temporary disuse of a means of self-cultivation in his eyes so important. And once and again we find him addressing to young friends the counsel, to keep a diary. Thus he says to one,—

“Let me suggest one thing more; keep a diary, or something like it: not certainly for the use of others, but for your own. I believe every person who has gone through life with any considerable benefit, either to himself or others, has done something of this sort. To note facts which would otherwise prove fugitive, and would soon fly into oblivion; to give some permanence to emotions which might be forgotten almost as soon as they had subsided; above all, to turn the eye of his mind inwards upon itself, and to gain fresh acquaintance with the depths of the heart, and its operations towards God and man—all this is worth trying, and if tried in earnest, and accompanied with prayer, will prove successful. \* \* \* Do keep a diary, and try thoroughly to know yourself, to watch, and, through grace, subdue the tendencies of the heart to evil, and to endeavour through that grace to set your affections on the objects which above all others deserve them.”

His own life is one of the strongest arguments that can well be conceived in enforcement of the advice tendered in this extract. One cannot read it through without carrying away the

conviction that the penning of these delightful notes was one effective instrument in forming, strengthening, and polishing the writer's character. Something, however, there is to be said on the other side of the question. There is some difficulty in being strictly and severely honest with one's heart on paper. It must be hard at all times to get quit of a half-conscious reference to possible supervision, different from that of the writer's own eye, and to prevent the pen from being warped aside from the true course by an insensible under-current of regard to the opinion of others, when friends, perchance the public, may peruse the pages of our unfolded inner history. After all, however, this can operate only, to any extent, in withholding the hand from recording everything: and this is as it should be. The only friend who should read any man's whole heart is God. Behind the chamber opened by the most faithful diary, there must be, and ought to be, an *adytum*, where the soul pouring itself out can never have any other auditor than the Hearer of Prayer. Much, however, being reserved, it can yet hardly be questioned that the habit of committing to paper somewhat of the hidden history of the soul must furnish valuable aid in the culture of the understanding and heart. It is not altogether that in this way the results of self-inspection are set down for after reference, serving as landmarks at once to stimulate and measure future progress; but the very shaping of our thoughts into written words concentrates the attention—detains the mental exercise we would dissect and delineate before the contemplation of the mind, and serves as a glass to aid the intro-vision. In some form or other, however rude, such paper aid will be found necessary even to the private Christian who would thoroughly examine himself, and keep his heart with all diligence. No matter though the record should feed the flames, as soon as it has been written, it will do the writer good. We cannot but regard the advice therefore, already adverted to, as sound counsel, and say to young men—dissect and know yourselves by keeping something like a diary, truthfully and honestly. Dr. Heugh's own is manifestly faithful. The evidence of this does not lie so much in the circumstance mentioned by the biographer, that his journals, in great part, had been kept in a peculiar short-hand which the writer could not anticipate should ever be deciphered, as in the character of the notes themselves. The penman is too resolute in his self-scrutiny, lays his grasp too firmly, and turns his eye too keenly on the subject of his search, has too high a purpose in view by the investigation, to leave us in doubt that he is dealing with himself in the process, with an earnest fidelity—and that his notes display at once a skilful and a faithful chemistry of the heart.

But another question presents itself: How far are we at liberty to make use of such records of departed friends? Is the public disclosure of their experience an injury done to them: and is our pleasure in perusal of their notes to be marred by the reflection that we are feasting on forbidden spoils? We know not that with such a book as the present in our hands, we can at all hope to decide a question of this sort impartially. Our logic will naturally be biassed by the liking to retain our treasure. But are we really wronging the dead when we reveal what they never themselves meant to disclose, and had even locked up from our inspection? Are we doing indignity to their memory? That every reader of this "Life" has risen from its perusal imbued with a higher regard for Dr. Heugh than even the living man commanded, we are well persuaded; but it has not been so in every such case—and the question is not to be decided by results in individual instances. Have we the right to penetrate the bosoms of men when they are gone, as we could not, and would not, when they were alive? The answer depends, we think, on the promise of benefit to the living. If no high purpose can be served by such unveiling as we speak of, then no more think of it than you would open their coffin, and rend the shroud from their bosom. But there is hallucination about what we call the memory of the dead. We are far from regarding the name which men leave after them as a matter of slight importance. From the memory of the just, ever blessed in its influence for good over others, a tribute of fresh happiness is always ascending to the glorified spirit; while to many a wicked man it is a boon when his name so rots as to ensnare by its example no more. The works that follow the departed to glory or wo, are often a series stretching through many generations, flowing on like a stream, while the earth abideth. Were it possible—to take a particular case for illustration—to collect and destroy the copies of the excellent Commentary of Matthew Henry, the deed of extinction would be like plucking jewels from his heavenly crown, diminishing his honour and joy eternally. On the other hand, could you cast into oblivion the works of the impious sceptic, or ribald poet, or ephemeral story-teller, you might earn the lost one's thanks, by lightening, as it were, the stone which presses for ever on his soul's sepulchre. Deal truly, then, and wisely by the memory of the dead; thus viewed, use his works reflectingly and reverently, since a blow may be struck on earth, reaching in its effects to heaven or hell. But in the sense in which we use the term, when we speak of injuring a man's memory, the idea has illusion in it. Fame is nothing to the dead; no more to the living soul of the departed than to his inanimate dust. The honour that cometh from God is everything beyond

the grave. That "fancied life in others' breath," which "even before our death" is found an evanescent shadow, an unsubstantial and mocking echo, can have no place amid the stupendous realities of the world behind the veil. In this acceptance, we think, a man's fame belongs wholly to his surviving friends: a name which has existence only on earth must have its custodians here. The dead are not wronged, while the living are unwounded. We are sure of unanimous suffrages among the readers of the present volumes as to the valuable contribution towards their instruction and improvement, which the near friends of Dr. Heugh have presented in the extracts made from hidden treasures left to them by the dead. Guardians besides of their friend's honoured name, they have not misjudged but have added fresh lustre to a reputation to them so valuable. We know that the study of this "Life" has evoked the remark even from some who shared the intimacy of the deceased, that in his lifetime they had been ignorant of his true worth.

The mere story of Dr. Heugh's life, like that of most ministers of the Gospel, may be told in a few sentences. Born at Stirling on the 12th August 1782, and educated in boyhood at the Grammar School of the borough, his early years were spent under the roof and care of his father, the respected minister, at the time, of the General Associate Congregation in that town. At the age of fifteen he entered on his academical course in the University of Edinburgh, and having closed the requisite literary curriculum, was admitted to the study of divinity under the Professor of the body to which he belonged. On the 22d February 1804, and while yet in his twenty-second year, he was licensed to preach the Gospel; was ordained some two years thereafter as colleague to his father, and continued diligently to discharge the duties of the pastoral office in Stirling till the year 1821, when he was translated to Glasgow. Here he continued till his death in 1846, laborious beyond most in the functions of the ministry, and distinguished for the honourable share he took in public matters affecting the prosperity of his own communion, the interests, generally, of the Church of Christ, and the wellbeing of mankind at large.

This brief and general outline, in the hands of the biographer, and with the materials for illustration before him, expands and ramifies into a goodly volume, full, without tediousness, of instruction and interest. We have already said that extracts make up the mass of the book; the editor, with judgment and taste, weaving his selected paragraphs into a continuous picture of the progress of Dr. Heugh's mind, fully as much as a delineation of the events of his outward history. It is not so much the scenes through which he passed that the biography



brings before us, as what he was amid these successive scenes. It is the constant insight into the inner life of their subject, and the consequent perception of his growth as a man and a Christian that gives this work its charm. The book is a mind-history, a memoir of the soul.

One remark here occurs: We have no distinct record of his conversion. When we first view him, his inner life is already a stream advancing somewhat freely, purely, and joyously on its way to Heaven; and we cannot learn with what strugglings and windings it took its rise and pursued its earlier course from the riven rock. We see him, like some of Bunyan's pilgrims when first descried, already on the narrow way of life, and know not how he was first warned to flee from the City of Destruction, or found entrance by the wicket-gate. There is sufficient evidence, however, that he obtained admission by the legitimate portal, and had not climbed up some other way. And while it would have been interesting to know how divine truth first dawned on such a mind as that of Dr. Heugh, the absence of any record, and indeed of any remembrance of the manner of the change, need not surprise us in the case of one educated religiously in his infancy, and knowing from a child the Holy Scriptures. It may indeed be questioned, whether with more prayer, faithfulness, and distinct aim at the Christianity of children on the part of parents, the great mass of the young of our Christian flocks might not be introduced into the true fold in childhood, and be unable, in after life, to tell how or when, because they had been recipients of the Divine influence prior to the dawn of abiding recollections.

Taking up the course of this inner history where we first meet with it, we discover a kind of twofold and twin development; the intellectual and the spiritual—the education, so to distinguish, of the understanding and of the heart—the discipline of the study and of the closet. A similar co-ordinate progress appears at the beginning of his pastoral work: we have the professional somewhat distinct from the personal training. This latter distinction, necessarily, to some extent, obtains to the close. But it is illustrative of the progress of this mind (as well as of this mind-memoir) that not a few things pertaining to its intellectual education and professional acquirements, which occupy considerable place in the earlier notes, disappear wholly as the diary advances. The discipline of intellect and heart become blended in the one nurture of the soul, as sister streams unite and flow on in one full channel; and the minister is hardly to be distinguished from the man, nor the Christian from the Christian pastor. Referring, in illustration of the earlier nurture which gradually disappears, to such extracts as register rules for the acquisition of habits of attention, of the power of conversing with

facility and usefulness, and of a natural and easy manner in public speaking, it may be added, that most who knew Dr. Heugh will conclude that the discipline in question had ceased even from very success. For few men were ever distinguished more by powers of close observation, vivacious speech, and a graceful, effective style of oratory.

It will be greatly to the advantage of every young reader to pay special attention to those passages in this biography which bear on the former of the points now mentioned—the acquiring of habits of wakeful and accurate observation. There are not many things more essential to all mental greatness or power, or more serviceable to a man's usefulness. Of that drowsy and listless posture of mind which permits intercourse with men and things to pass away without leaving behind any distinct impression, or more than a remembrance which is vague confusion, like colours and distances to the eye which has but partially learned to see, Dr. Heugh speaks in terms of strong reprobation, as unworthy alike of a rational being and Christian man. He notes the want of fixed attention as among his own early defects, and sets himself to supply the lack with a hearty resoluteness, which merited the result it secured. Few men have passed through life more thoroughly awake to all around, and the keenness and fixedness of his observation are displayed equally in his survey of nature and in his pursuit of subjects of meditation. Let his example direct and encourage young men (who, he somewhere says, in regard to the surmounting of difficulties, “can do anything they please”) to cultivate as one of the choicest mental acquisitions, the power of attentive observation. In their walk through life, let them keep the eye open, and the mind alert; every object in nature teaches, and all society too; and whatever they do, let them perform with alacrity and spirit. It was a favourite and a worthy maxim with Dr. Heugh, *that whatever was worth doing at all was worth doing well.*

It was one result of the habit of vigilant observation which Dr. Heugh had successfully cultivated, that the varied scenes of this beautiful world presented attractions to his eye similar to those which they possess for the poet or painter. There is an affected delight in fine scenery, but his love of nature was genuine and profound. He seems to have been especially captivated and impressed by whatever was majestic and grand, and to have found intense pleasure in musing on mountain and sea. His love of nature, moreover, was Christian. It was not after all the scene so much, as God in it, that he delighted to see. And surely it cannot be needful to vindicate such love of the works of God in creation, on the part of a renewed man. The principles of natural religion are involved, and though exhibited in new rela-

tions, are not lost in the religion of revelation. David loved the works of nature, and sang them in hymns of praise. The Son of David loved them : it was not mere convenience, but delight, as well, in the scenes they presented that led him so often to the mountain-side and the sea-shore : and it constitutes one charm of his discourses that they are full of such allusions to natural objects. He peoples thus the whole landscape with monitors, makes bird and flower preach to us, and twines immortal truths around the tendrils of the vine. But if aught were needed to defend or urge such love of nature, how could we better put the argument than in Dr. Heugh's own words ?

“ Why are not God's works studied more ? Why are not all who have the means acquainted with *His* birds, *His* fishes, *His* herbs, trees, flowers ; the habitudes of *His* creatures existing around them, the structure of *His* world and of *His* universe ? Many have access to this volume, and live and die as ignorant of its instructive pages, as if it never had been unfolded to them. Alas ! it is so with the Scriptures also.”

In the same place where he penned these sentences, he writes as follows ;—and though the paragraph consists of jottings, not of expanded description, it yet illustrates well his powers of observation, and his habitual care to find “ good in every thing.”

“ What a place is this ! . . . Visited a small apartment of this temple, a hidden ravine, little known. An assemblage of precipices, produced by some *throe* of nature, but now adorned with mosses, grasses, wild flowers, and dense natural wood, oak, fir, mountain ash, &c. Vast caves ! Pure streams everywhere, and fish gliding unmolested in the transparent pools. Concert of natural sounds ; the breeze sighing through the woods, and on the crags, and along the mountain-sides ; the thrush, the blackbird, the linnæus, the swallow, the chirping finch ; the bleating of sheep and lambs ; the lowing of the larger cattle ; the shrill bark of the shepherd's dog ; and the whistle and call of the shepherd ; the tinkling of the streams ; the rush of the distant sea, &c. What God does in secret, in nature ; analogous to what he does in secret, in grace—giving the water of life—causing the graces of the spirit to spring, and exciting to joyful, tuneful praise. The shooting of the grass and flowers through the decayed vegetation of other years, analogous to each living generation springing up in this world of death. Some old trees quite decayed, yet covered with beautiful mosses ; the old adorned though near their fall. A slight push, or incautious touch, breaks off their branches. How little can the aged endure !”—P. 390.

We must append another brief extract, where the description is more extended :—

“ I cannot particularize the tour to Oban : I am bewildered with this variety. But there are parts of the day, which memory must die ere she can cease to remember. The whole sea was unruffled,

and the islands among which we floated seemed like dark, massive lead, on a bright molten surface. But as you approach them, and observe their outline, rocky, broken, and worn, you perceive that the element amid which they have been reared has often risen in its wrath, and assailed them with dreadful fury. The great whirlpool of Corryvreckan is well known. The island of Jura is here about a mile separated from that of Scarba. Both are lofty and precipitous, and look at each other like two frowning giants. The prodigious whirlpool, whose influence no vessel could resist, but would be feeble like straw before it, works only in certain states of the tides and the wind. This day even Corryvreckan did not disturb that universal tranquillity which the God of nature had commanded. It was still as if it kept Sabbath; and its glassy surface seemed bright, as if it had put on its Sabbath's attire. We passed at the distance of about a league. But to gaze at this bright watery avenue, at this pathway to the vast Atlantic, now so placid, often so terrible, with its huge mountains on either side of it, and all forming but a small part of a corresponding scene, was a luxury of delight, of which every admiring eye spoke, though no tongue was bold enough to attempt to utter it."—P. 223.

But better still than observation of external nature is accurate inspection of the world within. There is an inactivity—a listlessness of mind which permits thoughts and feelings to drift past us, like the thousand objects of a varied landscape gleaming on the eye of a railway traveller; unexamined, unarranged, unremembered; a half-slumbering state of mind in which it becomes passive, and thoughts flit over us, rather than pass through us, like the shadows of clouds over the lake's surface. This is a pernicious habit to be guarded against and assailed with the most resolute energy of will, by every man who would be master of himself, and live a life of advantage to his kind. It is worse than unobservant vagrancy of eye or ear. A man may be something who can pass through the finest external scenery without having his gaze rivetted, and without remembering more than that he rode over so much ground, or at most beheld an assemblage of hills, vales, trees, streams, buildings; but the mind which lets its thoughts glide past thus unobserved and uncontrolled, is fast losing its power for good. The tendency to foster this indolent and feeble habit we regard as one of the worst effects of the light magazine and novel-reading of the present day. Unconstrained, as he devours the sparkling article or stirring romance, to make any effort in the way of chaining his thoughts or defining them, the reader is apt to acquire that passivity of intellect in which the helm of attention is surrendered from the mind's own grasp, and given wholly up to the objects before it, till it is attentive only when something so striking or stirring presents itself that attention cannot be avoided—like an

ear that should hear nothing but the roar of thunder, or an eye sensible to no colour but flaming scarlet.

We find that to promote habits of inward attention, and to correct what it may surprise many to learn beset him in his early years,—a disposition to enervating melancholy, Dr. Heugh prescribed as a specific to himself, effort after continuous meditation on some selected object. And (at page 35) there occurs a paragraph of jottings on the ocean, presenting an illustrative instance of the kind of meditation intended, which we had designed to cite, as exhibiting also some characteristics of the writer's mind—his love of nature, for example, already noticed, and the clear, strong, wide survey he was accustomed to take of whatever presented itself to his thoughts. But we must economize our space, and leave room for reference to some other matters.

It is instructive to note at how early a period Dr. Heugh began to base all his conduct on what he calls "fixed principles," and how highly he rated the importance of such a foundation for each of his actions. There are some useful suggestions on this head even in his youthful diaries. And in the following extract it will be seen how he had discovered the master-spring, and how wisely and minutely he applies to the whole of his deportment the apostolic rule—Do all to the glory of God :—

"As the foundation of every plan of conduct, in whatever station I am, I should ever remember, that with all I am, or possess, I am bound to glorify God. This to be always at the foundation of every scheme, and to serve as a rule and spring to the whole. The way in which I have been hitherto professing at least to glorify God, has been by serving him in the gospel of his Son. This should proceed from a desire to honour God in this way, and from pure benevolence to man; and while I continue in my present station, all my exertions of every kind should be subordinated to this great end from these principles. As the foundation to all, then, I must myself believe this gospel, in order to glorify God in the service of it. This will exclude my being brought to the saving knowledge of the truth; my receiving it in the love of it. I must understand it in some degree, and have some aptness to teach it. With these things in view, in order to the grand end, I must uniformly act and arrange every thing in subordination to them. Hence the propriety of habitually cultivating and strengthening by all probable means those dispositions of mind, in the exercise of which the gospel should be delivered,—*benevolence, fervour, impression of its importance, &c.* Hence, in order to confirm by my example, what I teach, and to prevent any offence at the gospel, from any thing in myself, the necessity of a rigid attention to every point and circumstance of my deportment. Hence the importance of increasing in knowledge of every kind,—of human nature, of myself, of history, of philosophy, &c., in order to fit me the better to adapt

my instructions to the cases of those who hear me, to enable me to treat every subject in a proper manner, to replenish and strengthen my mind, and for a thousand other purposes. Hence in general, the propriety of doing with the greatest diligence everything having a tendency to gain the great object in view."—Pp. 36, 37.

One of the acquisitions to the possession of which Dr. Heugh in early life aspired, and in mature days had attained in very uncommon measure, was the power of conversing with facility to himself, and interest and advantage to others. This power he sought not for ostentation, but for usefulness. He by no means over-estimated the importance of the accomplishment he coveted. If persons sufficiently reflect on the influence of speech in ordinary intercourse, surely the efflux of frothy gossip—to name no graver classes of offending words—were a rarer thing. Who can tell the power for good or evil of but one sentence, falling on a fellow-creature's ear; or estimate the mighty series of emotions, purposes, and actions, of which one articulate breath may be the spring? "A word spoken in season, how good is it!" In another sense than the poet's—all words are winged, and imagination can ill track their flight. Evil or idle words may seem as they are uttered light and trivial things; yet, if light, they are like the filaments of the thistle-down, each feathery tuft floating on the slightest breeze, bears with it the germ of a noxious weed. Good, kind, true, holy words, dropt in conversation, may be little thought of too, but they are like seeds of flower or fruitful tree, falling by the way-side, borne by some bird afar, haply thereafter to fringe with beauty some heretofore barren mountain-side, or make some nook of the wilderness to rejoice. And we know not if there is any thing, viewed either as an element of character; or a means of usefulness, which admits of more thorough reformation, or calls more imperatively for the regulation of fixed and resolute principle, than the ordinary conversation of Christians. The subjugation of the untameable tongue is ranked in the New Testament as the highest achievement of self-control; and judging from the paucity of cases where the conquest has been attained, the difficulty of the task must assuredly be great. Above all, it were well that we could exorcise the spirit of censoriousness, manifesting itself in a thousand ways—the whispered insinuation, the suggested suspicion, the eagerly retailed scandal, the eulogy which prepares the way for some damnatory *but*, the prejudiced judgment, the undisguised utterance of bitterness and wrath. The reader will find in this biography some important hints for the attainment of the habit of instructive and charitable conversation. In reference to the species of tongue-sin particularly named, take the following resolution:—

“ Let me have the following maxims always in mind, for the regulation of my conduct :—*Never to praise myself, never to speak evil of, or detract from, any other individual.* Better not to speak at all, than speak to slander and calumniate. Resolve, *never to use such language of any person as I should be ashamed to use in his presence.*”—P. 29.

Did the Christian world, from a high principle of love and duty, but adopt and practise this determination ; implying, as it does, the relinquishment of backbiting on the one hand, and the faithfulness of true affection on the other, by that one result the shadow on the dial-plate of Time would be found advanced by ten degrees, as with a bound, towards the hour marked for the dawn of the millennium.

It is cognate to the subject just adverted to, to notice a beautiful feature of Dr. Heugh's character from his earliest life—his spirit of generous catholicity. There are a hundred instances, scattered over his Life, of his hearty appreciation of the excellencies of good men of every religious communion. At a recent date, the subject of Christian union employed his pen, in a manner which proved how thoroughly congenial to his heart would have been the practical movements towards the closer fellowship of all good men, which are so happily characteristic of the Christian Church in the present day. And in years when the Evangelical Alliance was yet undreamed of, and long ere the lesson of union had been wrought into the history of his own communion, we find his warm and liberal Christianity overflowing the bounds of sectarian distinction, at that time somewhat rigidly maintained and jealously guarded. Some of the dearest friendships of his life were formed with brethren of other sections of the Church ; and his exertions were honourably, and with some success, expended to make such sections fewer. We forbear to expatiate on this inviting topic ; but there is a letter relating to it, written by him, in 1817, from which we must extract a portion, partly on account of the opinions embodied, and partly as presenting an illustration of the subdued humour which so often enlivens his correspondence, now breaking forth into a single joyous sparkle, and at other times playing and coruscating, aurora-like, through continuous sentences, and even consecutive paragraphs. After referring to the subject of Christian union as one to which his thoughts had often turned, and which he regarded as one of the most important which could occupy the mind, he proceeds :—

“ A revolution has in fact been already produced both in men's minds and in practice. It is not long since each religious party was surrounded with lofty walls of its own rearing ; partly for separation, partly for defence, and partly for annoyance ; and there was little either of ingress or egress, but for its own exclusive friends. If the

walls are not thrown down, the artillery is dismantled, the works are neglected or going to decay, and there is a constant coming and going by the gates. There are, moreover, many pieces of neutral ground discovered, where men from all the various enclosures assemble; and if they do not construct a formal treaty of union, they at least contract attachment from the habits of peace, and feel strange longings for the entire demolition of their old scowling parapets. A good many in each enclosure grumble when their friends issue from their precincts, and meet old enemies on these newly discovered commons, and look with a jealous eye, from a distance, at these strange festivities; but even these grumblers venture sometimes from curiosity, or other motives, to visit them themselves; and it is wonderful what tendencies to revolution even they experience. When they get out from their old walls, and narrow streets, and old-fashioned dark lanes and tenements, to the open green commons, they feel they breathe a freer air, their very hearts warm and expand, and something within them says, 'It is good for us to be here!' Yet we must not be too rude to the enclosures,—after all they are venerable hallowed abodes. In some of them piety has flourished for ages, salvation has been in their gates. Prayer, and praise, and holiness have hallowed many of their dwellings, and the King of Glory has long blessed them with his presence. And if we, their sons, feel and enjoy liberty to step without, we must not be harsh to those who remain behind. We must not attempt furiously to bring down their walls and their houses upon their heads. And, after all, if the revolution be prudently conducted, perhaps these ancient cities may be permitted to remain."—P. 160.

Among the matters which must engage the attention of the pastor are two subjects of much difficulty and eminent importance,—the visitation of the sick and the admission of applicants to the communion of the Church. The second of these is one of the best subjects we know for the next prize essays; to be called for in such a way as should summon to the task the profoundest intellect and most fervent piety which the Church possesses. There are in this biography many helpful hints on both these subjects, by one who proves himself to have felt at once their interest and their special difficulty.

Another cognate topic, of a practical kind, lay so near Dr. Heugh's heart, as disclosed in this "Life," that we cannot avoid noting it. We refer to the revival of religious energy and of missionary enterprise in the Christian Church. Few men ever did more than Dr. Heugh to evoke, foster, and wisely work, the elastic principle of Christian beneficence. So high, indeed, was the standard he looked to, that some of his plans and hopes have appeared to the minds of many like dreams; but we are persuaded the dreams of the present generation—as has happened so often in the march of modern science—will be outrun by the ordinary realities of the Church of the future.



Our materials for lessons are not yet nearly exhausted. We have attempted no sketch of the narrative contained in this biography. We have thought it better to narrow our remarks to a single definite purpose, and we have kept by our design. Otherwise, following the track of the biographer, it would have been delightful to accompany Dr. Heugh through the successive stages of his life. It would have been a profitable task to go with him into the noiseless walks of pastoral duty—to commune with him through the medium of his intimate and domestic correspondence—to ramble with him on his many journeys—now in pursuit of labour, now in quest of health—to the Highlands, to Ireland, to England and her metropolis, and to the Continent, listening to his comments on men and things—to note the public social labours which his sympathy with all benevolent movements led him to undertake, and, above all, ever and anon, to retire with him into the calm of his own closet, and hear his wrestlings with himself and with his God. But we can only thus give some imperfect indication of the kind of walk prepared for the reader of this book. When he has gone through it we are mistaken if he will not be disposed to say, this is true living. He will find such instruction and pleasure at every turn that it will seem as if the man of God, whose steps he is tracing, had realized the old fable, and blossoms and fruit had sprung up with his advancing footsteps.

It would be ungrateful to dismiss these volumes without adverting to the manner in which the biographer and editor has accomplished his task. We do not know a biography better written. There is a unity of aim and purpose in the construction of the work, announced, kept in view, and attained. The reflections and observations which incidentally arise are neither tedious nor trifling, and sometimes touch on a vein of deep and beautiful thought: and opinions relating both to persons and subjects are penned with a sobriety of diction and a judicial calmness that bespeak the lover of truth. Mr. Macgill was perhaps cumbered by the very riches of the materials placed within his reach; but he has used them with much skill; constructing a work which holds no mean place among the classics of religious biography.