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CHRISTIAN ORNAMENTS,


AND

SENTIMENTS

OF THE HEART.



“ This doth speak  
Of better ornaments, than gold, or pearls,  
Or rich array.”



LOWELL:

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE succeeding pages are presented to our readers with a view to that desire for sympathy of which the human heart is so deeply sensible even on subjects of ordinary importance, but more especially on that subject which of all others, moves the inmost soul, claiming all the assistance which kindred minds can impart ; and, "as in water, face answereth to face, so doth the heart of man to man." It is hoped that the delineation here given of the true ornaments of the Christian character, and the expression here given of the sentiments of the heart by holy men who have gone before us in the way of wisdom, may afford direction, consolation, encouragement and strength to some who now pursue that road with feeble, fluctuating steps ; and that this little volume may, in the hands of God, promote their progress in the divine life.



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## CHRISTIAN ORNAMENTS.

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### ORNAMENTS OF THE HEART.

THE ornaments in which a Christian may be most appropriately arrayed, are denominated in the word of truth, "kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, and above all, charity." These and their kindred virtues are our true ornaments, and it may be well to compare them for a moment with external decorations, that we may more justly appreciate them.

Our personal ornaments, as gold and gems, durable as they are, may in time wear away, and are liable to a variety of accidents, while the ornaments of the heart cannot be destroyed: the former

are less glorious in their nature for they are of the earth, earthy ; while the latter are of heavenly origin : the former are not securely worn, being merely externally attached ; while the latter are so inseparably united as to become identified with ourselves : in the exhibition of the former, regard must be paid to time and place ; while the latter are equally suitable on all occasions, whether common or uncommon, festive or sad : the latter obtain the notice and commendation of observers of a higher rank ; for while our outward ornaments are admired only by persons of the same order as ourselves, these are approved by beings of refined, spiritual wisdom and pure, unerring taste, even by the occupants of heavenly mansions.

## FAITH.

FAITH is the principal thing in the christian religion. It is the spiritual eye, enlightening the eye, directing the feet, and cheering the heart ; the whole turns upon it. As our faith is, so are our strength and fruitfulness in good works. At the same time there is nothing more difficult to be maintained than faith, even after the work of grace has been actually wrought in our hearts. Therefore, nothing is more needful than to pray for faith, as long as we live. May the Lord give and increase it continually !

Nothing can be stronger in the universe than the hand of faith. By this we lay sure hold on our most glorious and Almighty Lord in heaven ; and such an inviolable union is thus established between Christ and a believing soul, that nothing can separate the one from

the other. All the powers of earth and sin avail nothing against it. Faith overcomes the greatest obstacles, removes mountains of difficulties, and possesses a kind of omnipotence. "For this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

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#### WORKS.

To believe in Christ for justification, is but one-half of the duty of faith. Christ in the gospel is proposed unto us as our pattern and example in holiness. And as it is a false imagination, that the whole end of his life and death was to exemplify and confirm the doctrine of holiness, which he preached; so to neglect his being our example, so as not seriously to consider him by faith unto that end, and labor after conformity to him, is a great and destructive evil.

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Wherefore, let us meditate on what he was, what he did, and how in all instances of duty and trial he conducted himself, until a glorious image of his perfect holiness be established in our minds, and all around take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus, and that we walk, even as He walked. "For even hereunto were we called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps."

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PRAYER.

IF we have not grace enough, it is because we do not pray enough. For most true it is we need not strive to move God to compassion, and extort as it were by our prayers, the blessings which he has promised. Very far from it. He is every minute communicating himself to us; in every word he holds

forth Christ, and every good thing to us. But we must always have a soul hungering after Christ, and by incessant prayer stretch out the hand of faith to receive him. This is chiefly to be understood of the inward groanings and desires of our spirit; but we must not omit to pour out our supplications daily, as often as we can, by words; else our secret, mental prayers, at last may become so secret as to cease entirely.

As soon as I appear with my prayers before the Lord, he writes all my petitions in his book of remembrance. Should I not pray much? Yes, O Lord; and though I have many things already in thy book, yet I would give thee occasion to write down more and more every hour. Nothing can be forgotten. All will be granted by him. Delays we must expect, but all shall be made up with so much the larger gifts in due time, though the best will be reserved for a blissful eternity.



## FREQUENT PRAYER.

THE longer we neglect writing to an absent friend, the less mind we have to set about it. So, the more we neglect private prayer, and closet communion with God, the more reluctant we grow in our approaches to him. Nothing so speedily estranges the soul from God, as the restraining of prayer before him. And nothing would renew the blessed intimacy, if God himself, the neglected party, did not as it were send us a letter of exhortation from heaven, and sweetly chide us for our negligence. Then we melt, then we kindle, and the blissful intercourse gradually opens as usual. David would not have been so often on his knees in prayer if affliction had not weighed him down. There are I believe more prayers in the writings of David and Jeremiah, than in any other portion of scripture.

The longer you are with God on the mount of private prayer, and secret communion, the brighter will your face shine when you come down.

Either prayer makes a man leave off sinning, or sin makes a man leave off praying.

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#### ONE HOUR WITH THEE.

ONE hour with Thee, my God! when  
daylight breaks

Over a world thy guardian care has  
kept,

When the fresh soul from soothing slum-  
ber wakes

To praise the love, that watched me  
while I slept,

When with new strength my blood is  
bounding free,

That first, best, sweetest hour, I'll give  
to Thee.

One hour with Thee, when busy day  
begins

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Her never ceasing round of bustling  
care

When I must meet with toil and pain  
and sins,

And through them all, thy holy cross  
must bear ;

O then to arm me for the strife, to be  
Faithful to death, I'll kneel one hour to  
Thee.

One hour with Thee, when rides the  
glorious sun,

High in mid heaven and parching na-  
ture feels

Lifeless and overpowered, and man has  
done

For one short hour, with urging life's  
swift wheels ;

In that deep pause, my soul from care  
shall flee,

To make that hour of rest, one hour  
with Thee.

One hour with Thee, when sudden twi-  
light flings

Her soothing charm o'er lawn, and  
vale, and grove ;

When there breaths up, from all created  
things

The sweet enthralling sense of thy  
    deep love ;  
And when its softening power descends  
    on me,  
My swelling heart shall spend one hour  
    with Thee.

One hour with Thee, my God ! when  
    softly night  
Climbs the high heaven with solemn  
    steps and slow,  
When the sweet stars, unutterably  
    bright,  
Are telling forth thy praise to men  
    below ;  
O then, while far from earth, my tho'ts  
    would flee,  
I'll spend in prayer, one joyful hour with  
    Thee.

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#### SPIRITUAL DELIVERANCE.

If thou sayest Christ is thy Prince,  
answer to these interrogatories. First,  
how came he into the throne ? Satan  
had once the quiet possession of thy

heart. He would not surely of his own accord resign his crown and sceptre to Christ; and for thyself, thou wert neither willing nor able, to resist his power; this then, must only be the fruits of Christ's victorious arms, whom God hath exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour. Hath Christ come to thee, as once Abraham to Lot, when prisoner to Chedorlamer, rescuing thee out of Satan's hands, as he was leading thee in chains to hell? Didst thou ever hear a voice from heaven in the ministry of the word, calling out to thee as once to Saul, so as to lay thee at God's feet, and make thee turn thy face to heaven? to strike thee blind in thine own apprehension, who before hadst a good opinion of thy state; to tame and weaken thee, so as now thou art willing to be led by the hand of a child after Christ? Did Christ ever come to thee, as the angel did to Peter in prison, rousing thee up, and not only

causing the chains of darkness and stupidity to fall off thy mind and conscience, but making thee obedient also, that the iron gate of thy will hath opened to Christ, before he left thee? then thou hast something to say for thy freedom. But if after all this, I be a barbarian, and the language I speak be strange, thou knowest no such work to have passed upon thy spirit; then thou art yet in thy old prison. Can there be a change of government in a nation by a conqueror that invades it, and the subjects not hear of this? The regenerating spirit is compared to the wind; his first attempts on the soul may be so secret that the creature knows not whence they come, or whither they tend; but before he hath done, the sound will be heard throughout the soul, so that it cannot but see a great change in itself and say, I that was blind, now see; I that was as hard as ice, now relenting for sin; now

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my heart gives, I can melt and mourn for it; I, that was well enough without a Christ, yea, did wonder what others saw in him, so to desire him, now have changed my note with the daughters of Jerusalem; and for "What is your beloved?" as I scornfully have asked, I have learned to ask, "Where is he, that I might seek him with you." O, soul canst thou say it is thus with thee? thou mayest know who hast been here; no less than Christ, who by his victorious spirit, hath translated thee from satan's power, into his own sweet kingdom.

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#### UNION WITH CHRIST.

Now, O my soul, meditate again. Am I indeed brought in by Christ, to union with God? Are we no longer two, but one spirit? Can such a thing be? I do not doubt it, but admire it. What!

he that made heaven and earth ; he who is the very life of the whole creation ; he to whom Abraham, Moses and David and all the worthies of old prayed ; to whose truth, wisdom, love and glorious power, they did bear witness, and do still testify it to all ages ? Is this God really mine ? Is it the word of his own mouth " I am thy God ? " How unsearchable is this union ! Is he whom Simeon embraced in his arms, and said, " Mine eyes have seen thy salvation ; " is he mine ? He who wrought all those miracles, who healed diseases, cast out devils, forgave sins on earth, is he mine ? He who preached the gospel from heaven, who did bear my sins in the garden on the cross, in his own body ; who did sweat blood, and was pierced through for sinners ; is he mine ? Was I comprised in his prayer ? And is this Jesus yet alive and his nature not changed, but glorified to the perfection of power



and sympathy ; Is he mine ? And am I indeed his ? He who comforted his disciples, buried their sins and miscarriages and blessed them ; and in the full warmth of his love, ascended and sat at the right hand of the Majesty on high, where love never ceaseth ; is this, the Judge whom I expect ? even my Lord and my God ; he who is exalted to give repentance, and remission of sins ; is he mine, to teach, purge, justify, and quicken me ? As near as the head to the body, the root to the tree and branches, as near and dear as the husband to the wife ; doth he call me his own flesh and bones ? Doth he live and breathe in me and I in him ? O, for more faith, reverence, thanksgiving, with all manner of becoming thoughts, words and deeds concerning him, and concerning the reality of such a privilege. O, when will the shadows fly away ? Be very serious in exercising faith, to represent

the truth and reality of this union-state, that there is such a thing ; and in that exercise, dilate your thoughts in an awful, serious, conformable reverence and reverend love of God, manifested in the flesh, to be Immanuel, God with us. Pursue this meditation, till you make this union visible as may be to the eye of faith.

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#### JOY IN GOD.

IF thou desirest to delight thyself only in the Lord, and art more solicitous for the increase of faith, love and holiness, than temporal happiness ; and wouldest even part with some earthly good, provided it would enlarge thy spiritual welfare ; this comes not from nature, but is an infallible mark of grace and regeneration ; and the Lord shall give thee also the desires of thine heart

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and even much more than thou desirest.

Nothing can be more foolish than to harbor one or more secret lusts in our hearts, after we have been awakened. We must certainly suffer for it; our conscience will check us; we cannot enjoy it with half the pleasure as before; our course is hindered and our peace disturbed. How much more prudent and profitable then, would it be, to forsake all and follow Christ, who only can satisfy the desires of our hearts! Consider this, O my soul; act the wiser part; let thine eye be single, and cleave to Him alone; while others, seeking to serve two masters, God and Mammon, are disappointed here and hereafter; avoid thou this folly, and be wholly for Christ. Thus thou wilt be able to taste the crystal streams of his heavenly love.

## SEEKING AFTER GOD.

'Thou hidden love of God, whose height,  
Whose depth unfath'rd, no man knows ;  
I see from far thy beauteous light,  
I only sigh for thy repose.  
My heart is pained ; nor can it be  
At rest, till it find rest in thee.

Thy secret voice invites me still  
The sweetness of thy yoke to prove ;  
And fain I would ; but though my will  
Seem fixed, yet wide my passions rove ;  
Yet hindrances strew all the way ;  
I aim at thee, yet from thee, stray.

'Tis mercy all, that thou hast brought  
My mind to seek her peace in thee ;  
Yet while I seek, but find thee not,  
No peace my wandering soul shall see.  
O when shall all my wanderings end,  
And all my steps to thee-ward tend !

Is there a thing beneath the sun,  
That strives with thee my heart to share?  
Ah ! tear it thence and reign alone,  
The Lord of every motion there !  
Then shall my heart from earth be free,  
When it hath found repose in thee.

## RELIANCE ON CHRIST.

IT highly concerns believers, who desire to keep constant peace in their bosoms, to be ever sensible of their spiritual poverty. Disquiet of mind, and spiritual slothfulness, often proceed from self-righteousness, and not looking to Christ for every thing, but trusting secretly to something in ourselves. Salvation and the means of attaining it, are to be sought for in Christ. To him, therefore let us apply, and in him let us confide; thus shall we become spiritual and happy; and thus will he receive from us the tribute which he deserves from all his church.

## CHRISTIAN IMPROVEMENT.

HAVE every day lower thoughts of yourself; higher thoughts of Christ;

kinder thoughts of your brethren; and more hopeful thoughts of all around you. Love to assemble in the great congregation; but above all love to pray to your Father in secret; to consider your Saviour who says, "Look unto me, and be saved;" and to listen for your sanctifier and comforter, who stands at the door and knocks to enter into your inmost soul; and to set up his kingdom, of righteousness, peace and joy, within you. Let every one with whom you converse, be the better for your conversation. Be a burning and a shining light, wherever you are. Let not the good ways of God be blasphemed thro' you. Let your heavenly mindedness, and your brotherly kindness be known to all men.

## FEEBLE CHRISTIANS.

THE more delicate and tender the plant, the greater is the gardener's care and watchfulness over it; this but faintly expresses the infinite attention of the Lord to the feeble among his people, could they perceive his kind concern, and understand his constant love for them, how happy and resigned in their hearts, how holy and regular in their lives, might they find themselves privileged to be. He doth not drive the lambs of his flock before him, but he gathers them with his arms; and if they cannot walk, he carries them; carries them in his bosom, close to his heart. Can the believing soul doubt of his love, who is all love; of his conduct, who is all wisdom; of his ability, who is all strength; of his promise, who is all truth; of his fulness, who is all in all? Ponder this again and again, O my soul!

and say unto thyself, what thy Lord perhaps would say too; O thou of little faith wherefore dost thou doubt?

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#### EXPERIENCE OF MARTIN LUTHER.

IT may be profitable to us to reflect on the words of Martin Luther. "It is very useful for sincere and pious persons to know and meditate on Paul's doctrine concerning the contests between the flesh and the spirit. When I was a monk, if at any time I happened to feel the motion of any bad passion, I used to think my hope of salvation was over. I struggled in a variety of ways, both to overcome my bad passion and quiet my conscience, all in vain; the lust of the flesh returned, and I was harrassed with thoughts of this kind: thou hast committed this, or that sin; thou art impatient; thou art envious; in vain hast thou entered holy orders.



Now if I had rightly understood Paul's doctrine, of the flesh lusting against the spirit, I should not so long and so miserably have afflicted myself; I should have reflected, and said, as I do at this day, in similar situations; "Martin, as long as thou remainest in the flesh, thou wilt never be entirely without sin; thou art now in the flesh, and therefore thou must experience a contest with it; and this agreeably to what Paul says, 'the flesh resisteth the spirit;' despair not thou then, but strive manfully, against all carnal dispositions; and fulfil not their lustings: do this, and the law shall have no condemning dominion over thee."

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BENEFIT OF TEMPTATION.

TRUE Christians, in a right spirit are still subject to temptations from within

and without, but watching unto prayer, they do not fall by them. On the contrary, as temptations are great helps to discover their hidden infirmities, and stir them up to be more cautious, serious and faithful, they are followed and rewarded with great and glorious victories. Temptations are not indeed joyous in themselves, but are attended with good fruit, and blessed effects in the faithful.

Hence St. James bids us count it all joy, when we fall into divers temptations. What reason have those to be afraid of temptations, who find that every one carries a new blessing along with it.

Jesus, lover of my soul,  
Let me to thy bosom fly;  
While the waters o'er me roll,  
While the tempest rages high.

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,  
Till the storms of life be past;  
Safe into the haven guide,  
O receive my soul at last.

## INVITATION OF CHRIST.

“COME unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” This is a free invitation to every weary, heavy-laden sinner, made by Him who alone is able to take away the load of sin and give us rest. Every person under the pressure of sin, not only may, but must come to Jesus, thus laden with a consciousness of guilt, if he hopes to procure pardon. While we endeavor to prepare our way, by self-created claims, we rather fill it with stumbling-blocks, whereby our souls are hindered from attaining to the salvation of Christ. Christ would have us to believe on Him who justifieth the ungodly; he came as a Physician for the sick, and does not expect that they should recover their health in the least degree, before they come to him. The cure is entirely his own; and thus he shows the excee-

ding riches of his grace, pardoning our sins, and saving us freely.

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### CONTRITION.

THE spirit of God alone can drive the ploughshare of penitential conviction through the sinner's heart, and give us to mourn at a spiritual sight of him whom our sins have pierced. The Lord give us to mourn more and more, until we have mourned away our unbelief, carelessness and hardness of heart. The soul is never safer than when with returning Mary, we stand at the feet of Christ, behind him weeping. I have lately heard of a minister, whose departing words were, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." Nor can I think such a state to be at all inferior, in point of real safety,

to that of a good man who died a few years ago, in London, with these triumphant words on his lips, "Now angels do your office." Of some it is written, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them;" while others of the Lord's people enter the haven of everlasting life, as it were with full sails: they "return with singing unto Zion." May the Father in his plentitude of saving grace and heavenly love, descend upon our souls as dew, and make us glad with the light of his countenance! When I consider the goodness of God to me the chief of sinners, I am astonished at the coldness of my gratitude, and the feebleness of my love. Yet little and cold as it is, even that is his gift, and the work of his spirit — an earnest, I cannot doubt, of more and greater. The Lord Jesus increase the spark to a flame and make a little one to become a thousand.

## THE TIME TO DIE.

As our Lord did not pray for the departure of his disciples out of the world, neither does he for his people's. Those who are saints indeed, are often praying to be delivered out of the present state and taken to glory; but they are not then looking to those words of Christ which say, "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." They are not then submitting to the wisdom of Christ, neither are they of the same mind with Christ. But flesh is flesh, and sense is sense, and carnal reason, carnal reason, even in saints. All those who are born again feel sin, have an inward sight, sense and perception of it; they groan under the ruins of a spoiled nature. They often think nothing would be so expressive of their Father's love to them, as a speedy translation to heav-

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en, but there are very important reasons and designs which he hath in continuing his people in the world; such as are beneficial to themselves and others. And such as will increase his praise and glory. They are here to be made conformable to Jesus Christ; to be subject to affliction and temptation, to experience death; by these they are the fit instruments for Jesus to display his powerful grace.

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#### CRUCIFIXION OF THE FLESH.

ALTHOUGH the flesh be alive still and frequently stir, yet it cannot fulfil its desires, when it is fastened to the cross. With the crucifying of the flesh, we have to do, as long as we live. The cross enhances the value of the word of God. Be therefore, O my soul, always ready to endure it. If no cross

present itself without, thou must still carry on the crucifixion of thine own will, in every thing which is contrary to the will of God. Painful and hard as this may be at first, yet it will soon become easier and be matter of real joy. Blessing and peace will attend thy ways and steps; and thou shalt glorify God, for having been resigned and guided, not by thine own, but by his good will and pleasure. Self-will, on the other hand, creates vexation, uneasiness and trouble. It is punished by itself, deprives us of real blessings and therefore deserves to be broken and crucified, in its first motions.

---

#### FORBEARANCE.

“WE then that are strong, ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves,” “considering



thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”  
“Who art thou, that judgest another man’s servant?”

Extraordinary quickening and strengthenings, being often followed by particular temptations, require particular watchfulness. Fear, therefore, rejoice with trembling; and as a needful means to secure thyself from falling, temper thy joy with humility and gentleness towards the faults of others. Be not high-minded; say not, when thou observest the misconduct of others, “Nothing would tempt me to do as they have done,” for if God does not hold thee up himself, thou wilt surely make greater mistakes. Therefore, thou hadst better not look on others, but on thyself; and from fear of falling, be continually watchful in prayer. Others would not have fallen so far, had they been truly humble, and more charitable in judging of others. He who exalts himself above others, and does

not bear with the weak, is sometimes humbled and debased below the very weakest of all. Bear, therefore, since God bears with thee : he that bears most with others, shows the greatest strength.

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#### DIVINE GUIDANCE.

“LEAD me in thy truth, and teach me, O thou God of my salvation.” He that offers this prayer from his heart, will certainly be led of God. Now, O Lord I am blind, and heartily desire to be directed by thee in all my ways, in great and also in small things. Suffer me never to follow my own spirit and natural dispositions, when hostile to thee, whatever good appearance they may have, but be pleased to cross them continually. Often have I been deceived by false appearances already ; my zeal has not always been according to knowledge.

I have put natural passion in the place thereof, and thought I was contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and have afterwards found it to be no better than the effects of party spirit. Be then, a Father to me, O Lord, and instruct thy waiting child in all necessary truths, and lead me in all thy righteous ways.

O that the Lord would guide my ways  
To keep his statutes still ;  
O that my God would grant me grace  
To know and do his will.

Order my footsteps by thy word,  
And make my heart sincere ;  
Let sin have no dominion, Lord,  
But keep my conscience clear.

Help me to walk in thy commands,  
'Tis a delightful road ;  
Nor let my heart, or head, or hands,  
Offend against my God.

## LOOKING TOWARDS CHRIST.

WHEN Cyrus took the king of Armenia, and his son Tygranes, with their wives and children prisoners, and upon their humble submission beyond all hope, gave them their lives and their liberty; on their returning home, when they were commending Cyrus, some for his person, some for his power, some for his clemency, Tygranes asked his wife, "What thinkest thou of Cyrus; is he not a comely man, of majestic bearing?" "Truly," said she, "I know not what manner of man he is; I never looked on him." "Why," said he, "Where were thine eyes all the while; upon whom didst thou look?" "I fixed mine eyes," said she, "all the while, upon him (meaning her husband) who in my hearing, offered to Cyrus to lay down his life for my ransom." Thus, if any question the devout soul, once indeed

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captivated by the world, but now, by Christ her heavenly bridegroom, whether she is not charmed with the riches, pleasures and gayeties of the world? Her answer is, that her eyes and her heart are now fixed on a nobler object, even on him who not only made an offer like Tygranes, to die in her stead, but actually laid down his life to ransom her. As her dear bridegroom is now in heaven, her looks are after him, and she can esteem nothing on earth in comparison with him.

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#### RELIGIOUS DEVOTION.

To be *almost* a Christian, is to be the subject of manifold vexations; but to be a Christian altogether, makes all easy and pleasant. Such as desire to have the whole of Christ's salvation, and all that is his, must needs give themselves

up to him, not only in part, but wholly, according to that most reasonable rule, "All for all." As far as we deny him any thing, we make ourselves unhappy ; but the more we are resigned to him, the more we are fit to enjoy him and his spiritual blessings.

Many would easily be persuaded to follow Christ, if it was allowed to serve him by halves, and reserve some things to themselves. But what would that profit them? Christ will not be bargained with ; and nothing is more dangerous than the dividing of our hearts between him and the world, or waiting from time to time for a more convenient season. Thus you may live many years, and be neither hot nor cold ; and so at last be rejected by the Lord. Consider this well, O ye double-minded and lukewarm. Christianity requires great striving and overcoming all things, even our most favorite and darling lusts.

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Awake, therefore, to righteousness ; spare yourselves no longer ; rise above the trifles of this world ; fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.

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#### RELIGIOUS EFFORT.

“ Stir up the gift of God which is in thee.”

How can this be done ? By looking as well upon thy great poverty and wants, as upon the riches of that grace which is in Christ for thee, and so drawing near to God through him in faith. But it is not enough to do this once for all, or now and then only. It is to be thy daily work. One day's omission may greatly injure the soul. The morning hours are especially adapted to this purpose. These must be directly laid hold on to converse with God in prayer, before we meddle with

any thing in our business, though ever so needful and important; lest we be entangled and distracted the whole day. Pour out thy whole heart before God; not giving over too soon. Be instant in thy supplications, till thy heart burn within thee, and thou feel the quickening influence of his grace and Spirit. Then care is to be taken to preserve this blessing and strength in a quiet and well composed mind. Examine thyself frequently, especially at night, how the day has been spent.

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DAY'S DUTIES.---Written 1595.

When first thy eyes unveil, give thy soul  
leave  
To do the like; our bodies but forerun  
The spirit's duty; our hearts spread and  
heave  
Unto their God, as flowers do to the sun;  
Give him thy thoughts, then; so shalt  
thou keep  
Him company all the day, and in him  
sleep.



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Yet never sleep the sun up; prayer  
should  
Dawn with the day; there are set awful  
hours  
'Twi'xt heaven and us; the manna was  
not good  
After sun rising; the far day sullies  
flowers;  
Rise to prevent the sun—sleep doth sins  
glut,  
And heaven's gate opens when the world  
is shut.

Walk with thy fellow creatures; note  
the hush  
And whispering amongst them; not a  
sprig  
Or leaf but hath this morning hymn;  
each bush  
And oak doth know "I AM;" canst thou  
not sing?  
Oh, leave thy cares and follies; go thy  
way!  
And thou art sure to prosper all the day.  
Serve God before the world; let Him  
not go  
Until thou hast a blessing; then resign  
The whole unto him—and remember who

Prevailed by wrestling ere the sun did  
shine ;  
Pour oil upon the stones—weep for thy  
sins—  
Then journey on and have an eye to  
heaven.

When the world's up, and every swarm  
abroad,  
Keep well thy temper—mix not with  
each day ;  
Despatch necessities—life hath a load  
Which must be carried on, and safely  
may ;  
Yet keep those cares without thee ; let  
the heart  
Be God's alone, and choose the better  
part.

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#### HUMILITY.

TRUE Christians form a lowly estimate of their spiritual attainments ; accounting themselves comparatively barren trees in the plantation of God. Hence, when they approach the last

tribunal, they will be ready to disclaim those pretensions which even their Judge will distinctly support. Matt. xxv. 37—39. The reason is, they are poor in spirit, and are not satisfied with the fruits which they have borne; all that they were ever tempted to pronounce excellent in themselves, vanishes before the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. Grant, O Lord, that I may earnestly seek to bring forth fruit, and may increase in fruitfulness, as I grow in years, and never cease from yielding fruit; hereby proving myself to be a tree of the Lord's planting, whose leaf is green, and whose branches are flourishing and productive. Yet bless me also with deep poverty of spirit, that I may acknowledge myself still to be nothing, having nothing of my own to glory in, or to justify me, and thus may esteem Christ my All, and rest upon him wholly.

## FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

IT is not the prostration of an enemy, but the forgiveness of him, that evinces a divine filiation, and conducts to the noblest victory. Our great exemplar of righteousness, the purity of whose life baffled the scrutiny of malice, and compelled that blood-stained wretch, who had often sported with the rights of innocence, to exclaim, "I find no fault in the man," how did he meet injuries, and what was his demeanor towards his enemies?

Mark his entrance into Jerusalem, that city blackened by crime and steeped in the blood of martyrs. From the Mount of Olives it opened to his view. At which sad sight, he wept. Wept not over friends, but enemies; enemies who had rejected, vilified, persecuted him, and who were still waiting, with fiend-like impatience, to wreak their vengeance on his person, and quench their malice

in his blood. Nor is this a solitary instance of benignity. Trace his path from Bethlehem to Calvary, and you will find him every where meek, humble, long-suffering. Surrounded by adversaries, and called to meet calumny, and even persecution, he supported his matchless clemency to the end ; and left the world, good above conception—great beyond comparison.

From the toils and trials of a distressing, but perfect life, follow this illustrious personage to the place of death. Approach his cross, and fix your attention on the prodigies which signalize his sufferings, and stamp divinity on his martyrdom. Think not that I allude to the terrific drapery which, in that dread hour, was flung around the great theatre of nature. No 'tis not the darkened sun, the bursting tombs, the quaking mountains, or the trembling world, that I allude to ! These are indeed prodigies ;

but these vanish before the still greater prodigies of meekness, humility, and sin forgiving goodness, displayed in the dying Saviour. When I behold him amidst the agonies of dissolving nature, raising his dying eyes to heaven, and forgetful of himself, interceding with the God of mercy, with his last breath, and from his very cross in behalf of those wretches whose insatiable malice had fixed him there — then it is that the evidence of his claims rises to demonstration, and I feel the resistless force of that impassioned exclamation which burst from the lips of infidelity itself, “If Socrates died as a philosopher, Jesus Christ died as a God.”

And shall a worm covered with crimes, and living on sufferance, in that same world where the agonizing Saviour uttered his dying supplication, and left his dying example for imitation, shall such a worm, tumid with resentment,

lift his proud crest to his fellow worm, and incapable of mercy, talk of retribution? No, blessed Jesus, thy death is an antidote to vengeance. At the foot of thy cross, I meet mine enemies, I forget their injuries, I bury my revenge, and learn to forgive those who have done me wrong, as I also hope to be forgiven of thee.

Forgive thy foes ; nor that alone,  
Their evil deeds with good repay,  
Fill those with joy who leave thee none,  
And kiss the hand upraised to slay.

So does the fragrant sandal bow,  
In meek forgiveness to its doom ;  
And o'er the axe, at every blow,  
Sheds in abundance rich perfume.

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#### THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MANY *say* the Lord's prayer, who do not *pray* it ; they are afraid lest God should hear them ; they do not desire

that God should say, Amen, though they themselves will say so. They say, "Our Father;" but if he be their father, where is his honor? They say, "Which art in heaven;" but if they believed it, how durst they sin, as they do upon earth? They say, "Hallowed be thy name;" yet take God's name in vain. They say, "Thy kingdom come;" yet oppose the coming of his kingdom. They say, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;" yet will not abide their words, "for this is the will of God, even their sanctification," but they want none of that. They say, "Give us this day our daily bread;" yet regard not the supply of their souls with the bread which came down from heaven. They say, "Forgive us as we forgive others;" but alas, if God should take them at their word, how miserable would they be, whose hearts burn with malice and revenge! They say, "Lead us not into



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temptation ;” yet run into it. They say “ Deliver us from evil ;” and yet deliver themselves to evil, and give up themselves “ to fulfil the lusts of the flesh.”

Reader, how often hast thou been guilty of such vain petitions and repetitions ! Be not surprised, if thou prayest in such a manner as this, that thou receivest nothing.

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#### CHRISTIAN REPROOF.

IF thou rebukest others, and would'st have them be like thee, thou oughtest to examine thyself first, whether thy reproofs flow from a blind party-zeal, impatience, and self-will, or from a true principle of love ; and whether thou art also much in prayer for them, both before and after. He who lays the long suffering of the Son of God truly to heart, and considers how gently that heavenly

Benefactor has treated him, and still treats him, must needs be moderate towards all men, and think, "If no one else would bear with others, surely I must." May the Lord give us all the spirit of meekness, that we may exercise forbearance and lenity to our fellow beings.

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#### MERCY IN AFFLICTION.

GOD is wonderful in all his doings, and his ways are often past finding out; but on the review of his dealings with us, we are compelled to acknowledge, that even those which once seemed the severest, were the fruit of mercy. Therefore, when things take such a turn, that we are quite at a stand and do not know which way to go, we may believe that the hand of the Lord is in it, and that some good will arise out of it at last.

Such reasons may serve to remind us of the prediction, "He shall be called Wonderful;" and to encourage the expectation, that he will show himself to be our Counsellor, and mighty God also. At first, every thing may seem to be against us, and go quite contrary; but at last, we shall see plainly, that all the disappointments of our corrupt nature were intended to produce unspeakable advantage. Though the ways of God are marvellous, yet they are all capable of an explanation that will demonstrate them to be worthy of our highest praise.

While over life's dark varied plain,  
Unheeding as we roam,  
Through many a path of joy and pain,  
God leads his children home.

And though sometimes, in prospect  
viewed,  
The winding way seems dark and rude;  
Ah! who the backward scene hath  
scanned,  
But blessed his Father's guiding hand.

## THE SABBATH DAY.

READER, I know not who, or what, thou art; but may the God of all grace bless this meditation to thy soul. Perhaps thou art a careless sinner, who to this day, hast trifled with Sabbaths. O, do not profane the Lord's day any more. But if thou hast any value for thy soul, attend upon his worship, and desire to be "in the spirit" on his day. Perhaps thou art punctual in outward services,—so far is praise-worthy; but awful is thy mistake if thou makest any outward service the ground of thy acceptance. "In the Lord alone," says the enlightened believer, "have I righteousness and strength;" and so wilt thou say if "in the spirit." Or thou mayest have been a splendid professor, but now a grievous backslider. If haply once more thou should'st be "in the spirit on the Lord's day," thou wilt look to God for his restoring influences.

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If thou art a believer under sharp trials, may'st thou be "in the spirit," that so, when tribulations abound, consolations may abound also. If thou art a believer walking close with God, rich in knowledge and experience, thou wilt wish to be "in the spirit," that grace may be magnified, Jesus more loved, and his name more honored.

Reader, whatever thou art, whether master or servant, parent or child, if thou wishest to be "in the spirit," and would have thy temporal and spiritual concerns prosper, make conscience of keeping the Sabbath day holy.

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#### EXPERIENCE.

IT is an important thing to know assuredly, that the Scripture has such a witness as experience, and that there is a real correspondence between the saints

and the word, between the believer and Christ. What an empty thing would religion be without a *heartfelt* knowledge of its truth! Experience is the sure and secret mark whereby the Christian knows that the Scripture is of God, and feels his own interest in Christ; he has been often raised from the depths of gloom by the application of the word to his heart. O what an excellent interpreter is experience! Thus the serious Christian obtains a view of the Scripture and spiritual things, which the most subtle and piercing eye of an unsanctified schoolman cannot teach.

This cannot be found in books; it confounds the wise and disputer of this world, while the meanest and most simple Christian understands it well, to the satisfaction of his soul.

Reader, press after experience; live not by hearsay, and upon the comforts of others, but entreat the Lord to give

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thee this inward testimony ; it will help thee in future trials ; it will remove many of thy fears, make thy passage through life easy and comfortable, and be as a pledge of thy future glory.

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#### THE BIBLE OUR GUIDE.

“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way ? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word.” “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” “Teach me, O, Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I shall keep it unto the end.” “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.” “Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage forever ; for they are the rejoicing of my heart.” “I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes always, even unto the end.”

Neither the young, nor the old, can

walk uprightly without taking heed to the word of God. If they depart from that, they soon fall into error, and vicious courses ; but, if they would make the word their rule, they must read it carefully, and pray diligently for the aid of the Holy Spirit. If David considered his eyes as shut, how much more should we consider ours too, and pray, Open thou mine eyes. He who does not fervently pray thus, is still blind ; even though he should consider himself a profound divine, and be esteemed by others, Lord give me to see the wonders both of thy law and gospel ; and turn my feet from every crooked path. Let thy commandments be always before me as my guide, and enable me to choose the narrow path of truth, and steadfastly walk in it to the end.



## APPEALS OF GOD.

“I AM the Lord thy God, which teachest thee to profit, which leadest thee by the way that thou shouldst go. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” “Behold I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

How often and how variously does the Lord knock at the door of our hearts; by the voice of his word, of his Spirit, or of conscience! But how seldom are we inclined to give him the hearing! We are often so distracted with business or pleasure, that we can hardly notice his voice amidst the hurry and noise of worldly things, and we are not at home when he knocks, and seeks to take up

his abode with us. Even now he is knocking. Harken to his voice and open the door to him directly, since he desires nothing from us that is unreasonable; but intends to make our heart a glorious residence and banqueting room of love, to fill it with heavenly treasure, and give us every thing along with himself.

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#### LOVE OF GOD.

O WOULD you be assured you love your  
God,  
Make him a God that must be loved of  
need,  
A God you cannot otherwise than love.  
Throw off that yoke of joyless servitude,  
That niggard balancing of right and  
wrong,  
Which fears to give too little or too much.  
Doubt is not love—suspicion is not love!  
Believe that he has known you, pitied  
you,

Taken you himself from prison and from  
death,  
Sought and pursued you through a world  
of ill,  
Restrained you, taught you, reared you  
for his own.  
Believe that he forgives you every sin,  
Pays every debt, and cancels every  
claim ;  
Watches beside your pillow while you  
sleep,  
Supports you, leads you, guards you  
when you wake,  
And bids his angels know no better task,  
Than to administer to you, his child :  
And while in heaven's high mansion, he  
prepares  
The seat of royalty he bids you claim,  
Arrays you in a vesture so divine—  
Of holiness and goodness like his own—  
That when the hour of just adjudgment  
comes,  
All may confess in you the heir of hea-  
ven.  
Believe the Lord your God is such an one,  
And you must love him, even to your  
soul.

## SPIRITUAL DEADNESS.

IF a man be naturally dead, though the sun shine in his face, he sees not its splendor, nor feels its worth. Offer him rich presents, and he receives them not; he has no eye to see them, no heart to desire them, and no hand to grasp them. Thus it is with one that is spiritually dead; let the sunshine of the gospel shine out ever so clearly, he sees it not, because he is in darkness; though he live under plentiful means, and rich dispensations, yet he is blind and poor; offer him the rich pearls of the gospel, the rich treasures of grace in Christ Jesus, yet he has no heart to them, no hand of faith to lay hold upon them; so blind, stupid, and senseless is he, that though these rich treasures, these graces, the pearls of the gospel be conveyed to him in earthen vessels, in a plain and familiar manner, yet he does not, he

cannot apprehend them ; judgments do not affright him, and mercies cannot allure and persuade him. In the mean time, this creature is all life in the element of sin ; he loves it, he pleads for it, he commits it with greediness. This is St. Paul's account of the unconverted Gentiles ; and how many such have we under the Christian name ! O Lord, exert thy great power, quicken all that are thus dead in trespasses and sins ; turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto thine own self. Amen.

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#### WORLDLY PURSUITS.

THE apostle says, " Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called." Most of the employments of life are in their nature lawful ; and all those that are so, may be made a sub-

stantial part of our duty to God, if we engage in them only so far, and for such ends as are suitable for beings that are to live above the world. This is our only measure of application to any worldly business ; it must have no more of our hands, our hearts, or our time than is consistent with a hearty, daily, careful preparation of ourselves for another life. For, since all true Christians have renounced this world to prepare themselves by daily devotion for an eternal state of quite another nature, they must look upon worldly employments as upon worldly wants and bodily infirmities — things not to be desired, but to be cheerfully endured, till death and the resurrection have carried us to an eternal state of real happiness. A person's being called into the kingdom of grace, is not designed to make void the duties that arise from his peculiar calling or situation in life, but to enforce the prac-

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tice of them in such a way as may be most to the glory of God. He therefore that does not consider the things of this life as of little moment, or even nothing, in comparison with the things that are eternal, cannot be said either to feel or believe the greatest truths of Christianity.

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#### ANTICIPATIONS.

WE sometimes stand on Pisgah's height,  
And view the glorious, pleasant land,  
Behold those boundless fields of light,  
That stream of matchless, pure delight,  
Flowing at God's right hand.

By faith we sometimes enter in  
To that eternal, peaceful rest,  
Where freed from sinning and from sin,  
From want, from woe, from wandering,  
Jesus' redeemed are blest.

By faith we view the glittering throng  
Of God's elect, salvation's heirs,  
And hear them swell the choral song,  
And think with joy, that we ere long  
Shall join our notes to theirs.

Sweet visions these, that cheer our way,  
And lead our weary spirits on ;  
As sunbeams on a wintry day,  
So bright, so beautiful are they,  
But oh ! so quickly gone.

But faith shall shortly yield to sight,  
And we shall gain that pleasant land,  
Shall tread those boundless fields of light,  
Drink of that stream of pure delight,  
And near our Saviour stand.

Our ransomed soul shall enter in,  
To that eternal, peaceful rest,  
And freed from sinning and from sin,  
From want, from woe, from wandering,  
With Christ the Lord be blest.

Soon shall we join that glittering throng  
Of God's elect, salvation's heirs,  
With them shall swell the choral song,  
And through eternity prolong,  
Praise to our God, and theirs.



## DIVISIONS IN RELIGION.

JARS and divisions, wranglings and prejudices, consume the growth, if not the life of religion. These are those waters of March that embitter our spirits, and quench the spirit of God. Unity and peace are said to be like the dew of Heaven, and as the dew that descended upon Zion, when the Lord promised his blessing. Divisions run religion into briars and thorns, contentions and parties. Divisions are in churches, like wars in countries; where war is, the ground lieth waste and untilled; none take care of it. It is love that edifieth, division pulleth down. Division is as the north-east wind to fruits, which causeth them to dwindle away to nothing; but when the storms are over, everything begins to grow. When men are divided, they seldom speak the truth in love, and then, no marvel, they grow not up to Him in all things, which is the Head.

It is a sad presage of an approaching famine, as one well observes, not of water, nor bread, but of hearing the word of God, when the thin ears of corn devour the full ones; when our controversies about doubtful things, and things of less moment, supplant our zeal for the indispensable and practical things in religion; which may give us cause to fear that *this* will be the character by which *our* age will be known to posterity, that it was the age which talked of religion most, and loved it least.

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#### CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Do we then, weak souls, tremble to think of appearing before the dreadful tribunal of the Almighty? We know Him indeed to be infinitely and inflexibly just. We know his most pure eyes cannot abide to behold sin; and we know we have nothing but sin for him

to behold in us. Certainly were we to appear before him, in the mere shape of our own selves, we had reason to shake and shiver, at the apprehension of that terrible scene ; but now that our faith assures us that we shall not otherwise be presented to that awful Judge, than as clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness, how confident should we be, thus decked with the garments of our elder Brother to carry away a blessing.

While, therefore, we are dejected with the consciousness of our own vileness, we have reason to lift up our heads in the consciousness of that perfect righteousness which Christ is made unto us, and we are made in him.

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**SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.**

HUMAN wisdom is no competent judge in spiritual things. You may as well try

metals on a brickbat, or judge of colors by moon light, as of spiritual matters by natural reason; they are above it, though not contrary to it; nor will the clearness of light without help in this case; high noon and midnight are both alike to one that is born blind; the light of the sun, if seven-fold, would but dazzle the sight that is not adapted for it. Divine things are not visible, but by an organ suitably disposed; in the want of which the scripture itself is often perverted, and the letter of it set up, to obliterate its meaning. The very disciples of Christ knew not the scriptures, but as he opened their understanding, and shone into it, and enabled by this, they looked upon and handled the word of life as such. They beheld his glory—the glory as of the only begotten Son of the Father, while the Scribes with all their endowments, saw no such thing, but counted him a deceiver, and one

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possessed. The things of God, knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God, and he to whom the Spirit will reveal them; but the natural man (while such) receiveth not the things of the Spirit, they are foolishness to him.

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#### THE SPIRITUAL LAW.

SAY not the law divine  
Is hidden from thee, or afar removed ;  
That law within would shine,  
If there its glorious light were sought  
and loved.

Soar not on high  
Nor ask who thence shall bring it down  
to earth ;  
That vaulted sky  
Hath no such star, did'st thou but know  
its worth.

Nor launch thy bark  
In search thereof upon a shoreless sea,  
Which has no ark,  
No dove to bring this olive branch to  
thee.

Then do not roam  
In search of that which wandering cannot win ;  
At home ! at home !  
That word is placed, thy mouth, thy  
heart within.

Oh ! seek it there,  
Turn to its teachings with devoted will ;  
Watch unto prayer,  
And in the power of faith this law fulfill.

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#### RELIGIOUS FEELING.

It is impossible for any, who have not been spiritually quickened from above, to pant for God as a thirsty land ; to grieve from a heartfelt sense of sin ; and to be pained after a godly sort.

A good man of the last century, somewhere observes, that " He who cries out I am dead, proves himself by that very cry to be alive." Can a dead person feel ? Can a dead man complain ? A

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believer may lament his deadness, but he cannot lament his death, without his lips refuting themselves. There must be spiritual life, or there can be no spiritual sensibility, no spiritual motion, no spiritual breathings. If the Lord had not drawn you, you had not followed hard after him. Nor could you say, "The desire of my soul is to thy name," unless God's spirit had awakened that desire in your heart. If you were not truly converted, you would not be so anxious about the truth of your conversion. It is not the untamed bird of prey that pours its plaintive strain. No, it is the dove that mourns; it is the nightingale that sings with her breast against a thorn.

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#### TRUST IN GOD.

IN the difficulties of life, we are prone to double them, by taking all upon our-

selves; we are not able in our own might, properly to sustain or master the least trouble, and our usual object in trying to get rid of it, is merely our own ease; too often we forget who sent it, or for what it was sent, and hence we neither glorify God in it nor reap as we ought, any spiritual improvement for ourselves. We never had a sorrow, nor a temptation, but if we had brought it to our God, we might have been the wiser or the better for it; our very slips and falls, with this management of grace would have made us stronger, and more on our guard, for the time to come; but we too often encounter trials in our own strength, and especially if we think them small; and then our trials, even the least, bring us down with grief and shame. The sorrows of the believing soul, in this respect, no unbeliever can know; the troubles of the believing mind are more from what the world



cannot see, than from what it can. The making God our strength, or reposing ourselves upon his holy arm, is no slight business, but the hardest work in the world; it is easy to believe a matter out of trial; and so it is for people to talk of storms, and shipwrecks, in a warm room on shore; but let evil spirits, or corruptions, blow like the winds; let the floods of ungodly men beat on every side; and if faith have not fixed the house upon the rock, it will fall; there is but one support in the case, and that support is at the foundation; if this be not right, all the rest will soon be found wrong; and even where it is right, the tempest is not pleasant, although the soul is safe; it may be shaken, although it stand; and so shaken, as to put the trembling inhabitant in fear of his life. Our Lord requires all his people to pray "lead us not into temptation; and whether we see it or not, there is a temptation

lurking in every thing. It is our duty to pray in all circumstances, against the temptations which attend them. If we saw sometimes what temptations lay disguised under our greatest blessings and privileges, and even under our holiest duties, we should be almost afraid to use them; when we are alone we are beset by them, and we are kept from being a prey, only by a superior power. In company we have these and other snares in our way, and we have need repeatedly to pray, "Lead us not into temptation."

In our nearest approaches to God, and when our souls are most enlarged, we are not beyond the reach of a snare, nor able of ourselves to repel it; and we are never safe but in him who is our strength, and who alone can keep us by his Almighty power, through faith, unto salvation.

## EXTRACT.

A BELIEVER'S affections are too often like a cascade, or waterfall, that flows downward; instead of being like a fountain, which rises and shoots upward, towards heaven.

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## GRACE AND GIFTS.

GREAT grace and small gifts, are better than great gifts and small grace. It is not said, the Lord gives *gifts* and glory; but the Lord gives *grace* and glory. Blessed is such an one to whom the Lord gives grace, for that is a certain forerunner of glory.

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## DEATH.

BELIEVERS should not have a slavish fear of death. Where is the infant that is afraid to go to sleep in its nurse's arms?

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A MAN would not be sorry to be ejected from a cottage in order to his living in a palace; and yet how apt we are to fear death, which to a child of God is but the writ of ejection that turns him out of prison, and transmits him to his apartments at court.

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#### WANDERINGS FROM CHRIST.

As it is only with thee, O my Saviour, that I can be happy, I would never leave thee any more; sooner than that I should depart from thee, under whatever plausible pretences, let my way be hedged up, and let thorns grow all around me. Let me quickly discover and crucify every thing that would intercept the manifestations of thy love, or diminish mine. Never would I take one step out of the way which thou frequentest, lest I bring on myself guilt and trouble. As

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for the cross which thou imposest, I will cheerfully bear it, and even bless thee for the burden.

Glory be to thee, that thou hast not given me up yet, and suffered me to run into destruction in my own ways. Be pleased to restrain me still; and whenever I am in danger from wandering into the broad way, let me find no rest till I am brought back, though it be through the briars of affliction.

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#### WORLDLINESS.

“ALL things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”—ST. PAUL.

Many who are well affected towards religion, and receive instructions in piety with pleasure and satisfaction, often wonder why it is they make no greater progress in that religion which they so

much admire. Now the reason of it is, because religion lives only in their heads, while something else has possession of their hearts; and therefore they continue from year to year, mere admirers and praisers of piety, without ever coming up to the reality and perfection of its precepts. If it be asked why religion does not gain possession of their hearts; the answer is, not because they live in gross sins, (for their regard to religion preserves them from such disorders) but because their hearts are constantly perverted, and kept in a bad state by the wrong use of such things as are lawful; for our souls may receive very great hurt, merely by the abuse of innocent and lawful things, What is more innocent than rest and retirement? Yet what is more dangerous than sloth and idleness? What is more lawful than eating and drinking? Yet what is more destructive of virtue than sensual indul-

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gence? Care in the management of a family is certainly commendable. Yet what is more prejudicial than an anxious, worldly temper? Reader, follow the apostle, and be on thy guard, as it respects even lawful things; let them not engage thee, beyond due measure.

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## WARNING.

“IF ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.”—ST. PETER.

Reader, dost thou believe that there is a God, who will shortly judge thee for every action thou hast done, and for all the secrets of thy bosom? How then canst thou meet thy Judge, unless thy heart be changed and thy sins pardoned? There will be no opportunity of excusing, dissembling, or escaping these. Begin, therefore, in time to consider how thou

wilt appear before that judgment seat. The door of mercy is yet open. Call upon the Lord for repentance and pardon, before the door shall be shut, and thou be lost forever.

O God my inmost soul convert,  
And deeply on my thoughtful heart  
Eternal things impress.  
Give me to feel their solemn weight,  
And tremble on the brink of fate,  
And wake to righteousness.

Be this my one great business here;  
With serious industry and fear,  
My future bliss to insure.  
Thine utmost council to fulfill,  
And suffer all thy righteous will,  
And to the end endure.

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#### WORLDLY SEDUCTIONS.

“No man can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”—JESUS CHRIST.



Doth satan tempt thee, either by pleasures, dignities, or profits? O my soul, stand upon thy guard; gird on thy strength with such thoughts as these; What can the world profit me, if the cares of it choke me? How can pleasures comfort me, if their sting poison me? Or what advancement is this, to be triumphing in honor before the face of men here, and to be trembling in confusion before the throne of God, hereafter? What are the delights of the world, to the peace of my conscience, or the joy that is in the Holy Spirit? What are the applauses of men to the crown prepared by God? Or what is the gain of the world to the loss of my soul? The vanity of the creature is far beneath the excellency of my soul; and the things of time are not worthy to be mentioned with the things of eternity. Two masters of such opposite principles as God and mammon, I cannot serve

Deign, blessed Lord, to employ me in thy family, and at the same time engage my whole heart, that I may admit no rival to thyself, but serve thee eternally and thee alone.

Thou seest my heart's desire  
Still unto thee is bent ;  
Still does my longing soul aspire  
To an entire consent.

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#### REWARDS OF PIETY.

WE are all naturally intent on present gratifications. It is by no means sufficient, therefore, to explain to us our duty and enforce it by future rewards and punishments. There must be pleasures at hand, to outweigh the enticements of sin, and outbid whatever that sorceress can offer. The religion of Jesus adapts itself to this prevalent feeling,— it brings the possession of the best happiness

here; a rich foretaste in this life of heavenly glory. Salvation cometh of the Lord to the sinner upon believing, as an ample estate bequeathed to a person in debt; at once it alters his whole condition, setting him free from all he owes, supplies all his wants, gives him rank and authority, to which before he was a perfect stranger. Such blessedness, in the pardon of all my sins, in access to God with confidence, in victory over my spiritual enemies, give me, O my God, to enjoy.

The hill of Zion yields

A thousand sacred sweets,  
Before we reach the heavenly fields;  
Or walk those golden streets.

## THE HEAVENLY MINSTREL.

ENTHRONED upon a hill of light,  
A heavenly minstrel sings ;  
And sounds unutterably bright,  
Spring from the golden strings ;  
Who would have thought so fair a form  
Once bent beneath an earthly storm ?

Yet was he sad and lonely here ;  
Of low and humble birth ;  
And mingled, while in this dark sphere,  
With meanest sons of earth ;  
In spirit poor, in look forlorn,  
The jest of mortals and the scorn.

A crown of heavenly radiance now,  
A harp of golden strings  
Glitters upon his deathless brow,  
And to his hymn-note rings ;  
The bower of interwoven light,  
Seems, at the sound, to grow more bright.

Then, while with visage blank and sere,  
The poor in soul we see,  
Let us not think what he is here,  
But what he soon will be ;  
And look beyond this earthly night,  
To crowns of gold and bowers of light.

## CAREFULNESS.

SOME affirm that experienced Christians meet with no strong temptations, and feel no evil suggestions from within, and of course no striving against the same; but it is quite the contrary. Young converts are engaged chiefly in escaping from the outward pollutions of the world, while those who are farther advanced, find it necessary to strive more immediately against their inward and spiritual iniquities. Therefore take heed to your spirit, though your meaning be ever so good, and your assurance ever so great. Be not high-minded, for fear of falling. The least sin may, unawares, and by degrees, draw thee into many others, so that thou mayest at last be entangled in such a manner that without great exertion, it will be impossible to extricate thyself; therefore, be not deceived; flee all occasions of sin.

Say not within thyself, "It is a light thing, it only concerns outward things, which do not belong to the essence of Christianity." Such language betrays a most unbecoming levity, or rather a seared conscience. If we indulge any degrees of improper conformity to the world, we so far supply the enemy of our souls with the means of ruining them, and may well fear that our latter end will prove worse than the beginning.

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#### REST IN JESUS.

THE needle in the mariner's compass cannot rest till it points directly to the pole. The wise men of the east followed the course of the star which appeared unto them; and the star itself stood not still till it came over the place illuminated by that other star, which shone more brightly in the manger, than the one in

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the firmament. Noah's dove could find no rest for the sole of her foot all the while she was fluttering over the flood, till she returned with an olive branch in her mouth. So the heart of the true Christian can find no rest all the while it is hovering over the waters of this world, till with the silvery wings of the dove, and the olive branch of faith, it flees to Jesus, the true Noah and rest of our souls, who puts forth his hand out of the ark and taking the dove in, receives it to himself. In his presence, and in communion with him, the believer finds safety, strength, and the most exalted joy.

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#### JUDGMENT.

MANY things now accounted indifferent, will, in the final day of investigation, be condemned. Hence the necessity of

circumspection, even where there is no apparent danger. We can scarcely consider our ways with too much attention, or scrutinize our hearts with too much rigour. Under the presumption that certain pursuits and amusements are innocent, thousands advance in the broad road to destruction. Conscience, perhaps, interposes with a scruple, till overborne by the suggestion that the measure contemplated, unquestionably agreeable, is also harmless; to this the heart, already attracted and engaged, yields a willing consent, and thus guilt steals in and ruin follows. O Lord, grant that I may have a quick and clear perception of right and wrong, and that I may revolt from the latter, however pleasing to the flesh, and eagerly prosecute the former, at whatever cost and hazard, so that my leaf may not wither, and that whatsoever I do may prosper.



## FORCE OF CONSISTENCY.

WHEN a man delineates religion not so much as the result of study and reasoning, as a matter of his own history; when he unfolds it with that inexpressible character of life and earnestness which accompany truths drawn from one's own bosom, he cannot be powerless. There is nothing obscure or unintelligible in the speech of such a one. He presses earnestly towards his object. His heart's desire is that his hearers may be saved. The power of that inward emotion he cannot conceal. Chains cannot bind it. Mountains cannot bury it. It thaws through the most icy habits. It bursts from the lip. It speaks from the eye. It modulates the tone. It pervades the manner. It possesses and controls the whole man. He is seen to be in earnest; he convinces; he persuades.

It is a most important service which religion has rendered not only to the eloquence of the pulpit, but to every department of Christian literature, by putting *the faculties under the pressure and power of a grand motive*. The heart of man must be pressed and well nigh crushed before it will give out its wine and oil. "Wo is me," said Paul, "if I preach not the gospel of Christ." He who would preach with force and effect, must subject himself to that religious sense of responsibility, which is alone competent to bring into action every dormant faculty; and bear about with him the solemn and weighty reflection that he watches for souls as one that must give an account. Whenever the heart and conscience exert their combined power in this direction, every talent will be employed; the whole man is urged to full and efficient action. Cast such a man into prison, and like

Bunyan, "ingenious dreamer," will he describe the progress of the soul to God ; confine him to a bed of sickness, and like Baxter will he sweetly muse and write of the saint in heaven ; blind his eyes in total night, and ' celestial light ' will shine inward, enabling him, like Milton, to

———— see and tell

Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Fetter him with chains, and in the very presence of kings and governors, he will, like Paul, reason about a judgment to come ; nail him to the cross, his heart will still palpitate with inextinguishable love, and his latest breath will be spent, like his Master's, in praying and speaking for others' good.

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STEADINESS IN RELIGION.

O MY blessed Saviour, enable me to rest humbly and quietly in thee, avoiding

all such novelties as might breed presumption, distract my thoughts, and cause my heart to swerve from thee. Whoever has tasted the sweetness of thy word, will be satisfied with it; and better it is to improve in the life of faith and power of godliness, than in new words, forms and professions. May the Lord quicken me by the truths that have been established of old, and humble my heart evermore, so that I may receive them better, and abide in that which I have heard from the beginning.

Novelty often proves the bane of souls, and is always calculated to unsettle and distract them. It is enough for the weak and quiet to keep within the bounds divinely prescribed, and effectually to centre in God. How can those enjoy true rest who from a vain curiosity to know every thing, are continually longing to hear new doctrines! Lord save me from this mortal fluctuation, and

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make me determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.

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### THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

It is an awful and a solemn thing to die; and I am sometimes amazed at myself, that seeing it is not only awful but sure, I can be so void of reflection or recollection, as I frequently am concerning it.

Some talk bravely about death, and of encountering it with great natural courage, or upon high philosophical principles. These may, indeed, defy or meet the sting; but they can neither soften nor take it away.

O eternity! eternity! It is fearful indeed to burst the bonds of life, and to break forth into the boundless and unalterable regions of eternity! Nature in its senses cannot bear the shocking

reflection, which death affords, either of being an everlasting nothing, as atheists talk, or of enduring everlasting misery, as sin deserves. It is grace only which can inspire the heart with a hope full of joy and immortality, that, when this brittle, transitory life is past, the soul shall possess a being, happy and long as the days of heaven.

Through Jesus Christ alone is death disarmed. When the Saviour speaks peace and salvation through his cross and righteousness, this last great enemy is no more the king of terrors. He gives up his fearful sting, and destroys nothing about the Christian but sin.

O how sweet is the smile of that Christian, who, dying in the body, feels himself just upon living forever! "He is not sick unto death, but unto life," indeed. He quits his cares, his sorrows, his infirmities, and all that could distress or distract his spirit here, and looks

calmly into the state before him, where he can meet with nothing but concord and joy, in the society of the redeemed and of his Saviour. He is weaned from the earth, and therefore can part with it easily: he is fitted for heaven, and therefore longs for it earnestly. He cannot but desire that which is congenial with his own renewed mind; and this can only truly and perfectly be found in the regions of glory.

Lord, when I shall quit this clay, I know not, nor do I desire to know. It will be sufficient for me, if thou sustain me by thy grace now, and if I am divinely assured that I shall be forever with thee in the world to come. O that this invincible "joy of the Lord may indeed be my strength," when I lie down upon the bed of languishing and death, waiting from moment to moment for Christ, and for my dismissal to be with him.

Whence, at times, is the shuddering reluctance I feel at the prospect of dying? Surely, it is because my faith and hope are not so lively as they are privileged to be; it is because I do not so steadily trust in the truth of those things which my mind apprehends, and which I profess to be waiting for. Earth is too real, and heaven too unreal, or I could not thus hesitate, or tremblingly stand on the bank of the brook which keeps me from the fruition of my God. The struggle of my heart would not be for longer and longer continuance here, if my spirit were as firmly persuaded as it should be of my inheritance and mansion in glory.

Thou, blessed Saviour of poor sinners like me, on thee, and thee alone, my eyes are fixed. In the solemn, last hour of my pilgrimage below, O let my eyes of faith be yet more steadily and more ardently fixed upon thee! And do thou in the tender compassion of thy heart,



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which can sympathise with all thy people's woes, look down in my departing moments upon me. Soothe the pangs of death with thy rich consolation and care. Let me then see thee by precious faith, who to carnal sense art invisible, ready, willing, glad to receive my soul; and let me pour it forth, in an ecstasy of praise and desire, as into the bosom of everlasting love! O my God, thus to die would not be dying, but only departing to live and be happy forever!

So true are thy gracious words, O my Jesus, that "whosoever liveth and believeth in thee, shall never die" no, "he shall never perish, but is passed from death unto life, and shall live forever more." Glory be to thee for this rich, this invaluable promise! Lord, I believe; O help mine unbelief.

## RELIGIOUS ADVANCEMENT.

MANY complain that though they will not turn back, yet they have no power to advance further. If this be thy case my reader, remember that the enemy of souls will discourage thee. But go thou on, praying, and venture evermore upon the Lord. Consider how he awakened thee at first, how often he has since heard thy prayers, and assisted thee in many hard struggles. Surely, he will help thee now also. If that will not do, begin, as it were, afresh; acknowledge thyself guilty, and as a great sinner, plead for mercy, and be instant in humble supplications; looking at the same time upon God as a reconciled Father through Christ, who is willing to pardon thee, and bless thee in spite of all thy misery; then thou wilt soon make a better progress. To despair of our own strength is good; but we must never

despair of the power of Christ, who is risen from the dead, and will enable thee to overcome with him at last.

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THOUGHTS ON ADVERSITY.

1. JUDGE nothing before the time. When the end cometh, pass a judgment on providential dispensations ; not before. Psalm, cvii. 43, "Whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." David's haste might have cost him dear, Psalm, cxvi. 11. "I said in my haste, All men are liars." "Samuel and all are liars, I shall never obtain the kingdom ; I shall now perish by the hand of Saul." It was well God did not take him at his word, as he refused to credit God. God works often above means, sometimes without them : nay, sometimes contrary to them : but it is a

settled rule with him, which every believer has found true in experience, viz: He led them forth by the *right* way, that they might go to a city of habitation. There may appear some flaws at present, but there will be none in the end, it will appear to be the *right* way. Wherefore humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up, James, iv. 10. Humbling providences are sweetest in the end, for they bring a man to himself; and till a man be thoroughly emptied of self, he can never, as he ought, improve Christ. What though God bereave you of children, friends, substance, health, *All is well*. There is no empty, void space, but what he himself fills up. "Surely," says one, "he dieth oft whose life is bound up in the dying creature; as oft as the creature fails, his hope fails, his heart fails: when the creature dieth, his hope giveth up the ghost." He only lives an unchange-

able life, that by faith can live on an unchangeable God.

2. Bring the promise and a promising God close together; whatever be the promise, consider He is faithful that hath promised; all intervening difficulties should be viewed in the light of the promise. What is that? Why, all things are yours, and all things work together for good. We *need* our crosses as well as our comforts. Are we through many tribulations to enter the kingdom? Then we must have these tribulations ere we possess it. *Abraham*, you have heard, staggered not at the promise through unbelief: he, against hope, believed in hope; he left out all *but*s, and *whys*, and *ifs*; he had God's word of promise, and he knew God's arm of power, and also that He was faithful who had promised; that is, enough: but we shall never say *All is well*, till God's promise and faithfulness are

brought closer together. Faith sets all difficulties aside, removes them out of the way, never considering them but in the light of the promise.

3. Weigh your sins and your mercies together, before you look at any of your trials. Never think of your sufferings, but at the same time think of your sins; afflictions will sit light where sin sits heavy. You will find then, that you have sinned away this comfort, and over-loved the other blessings; have abused God's mercy, and stood in need of his rod; for he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; whatever be the temptation or affliction, there is no need of it; and then, have we no mercies under our strong temptations and sore trials? The church, upon consideration, found it thus, Lam. iii. 23. Though God had written bitter things against her in righteousness, "it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed,

because his compassion fail not." No trial is so grievous and bitter but it might have been worse.

4. Be much in the actings of present faith. Thou lovest a child, a friend, a husband, or wife ; but thou hast not lost thy God. Psalm xciv. 19: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." "As much confusion as I have within, I have comfort when I look above ; my thoughts are dark and doleful, intricate and perplexing, and there is a multitude of them that break in upon me, as if they would swallow me up ; but thy comforts are life and light, and delight to my soul ; my thoughts do not sink me deep, but thy comforts are a heaven to me." *It is well.* God hath said, "Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me." Jer. xlix. 11. If they are God's care, they shall be well provided for. He that

feedeth the ravens and clotheth the lilies, will he be less kind and bountiful to thee? "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein." Psalm xxiv. 1 Every heart is at God's disposal: rather than his poor shall want bread, God will feed them from their enemies table. You have a certain promise; God hath given his word, and there is no exception to it. Psalm xxxvii. 3: "Trust in the Lord and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." I had rather, (says one) have God's *amen*, his *verily*, than a promise from all the princes and potentates of the world; if God has said it, it shall be well. Be much then in the actings of present faith; believe for this trial; believe to-day; put not off till you see how things will go; that is to *know*, not to *trust*. Faith brings down general promises to a man's own particular case and circumstances. "I



will never leave thee nor forsake thee," Heb. xii. 5: there is the promise: says faith, "Lord I trust thee, I credit thee upon that word of thine; I am poor, but the poor committeth himself to thee; I am a widow, and desolate as to outward comforts, but I trust in God." The Lord thy maker is thy husband; and fear not, nor be dismayed, for he will help and uphold thee; it is as easy for God to help me in these distressing circumstances as in any other. Thou art the Holy One of *Israel*, and all thy saints have borne testimony to thy faithfulness and truth. Lord, shall I be an exception? sure thou wilt not fail me; I feel thou hast not; my cup is sweetened by thy presence and love; thou strengthenest me with strength in my soul. I will believe; Lord, I do believe, help my unbelief; it is well: Lord, it is well. Present faith must be exercised when present trials come; and God, where he

gives a promise, gives faith also to lay hold of it.

5. Be frequent in thoughts of heaven, your rest, your home, where all your sorrows will have a full end. There remaineth a rest for the people of God; every one of our sorrows takes off one from the account; we are one step the nearer to glory; the same trial is not to come over again; and "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labors," Rev. xiv. 13. Christian! you shall rest from your labors soon: there is a heaven above, and the hope of it comforts and delights you here; it is well; it must be so: "In thy presence there is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore," Psalm xvi. 11: and heaven will make you amends for every thing. What a blessed reckoning Paul made! and do not you account it so too? Rom.

viii. 18: "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." And you have them, not all at once: God proportions your day to your strength; it is but here a little, and there a little, as you are able to bear it; you have a wise and gracious God, which orders and over-rules all that concerns you; hitherto he has done all things well, and he will perfect that which concerneth you.

These considerations are of use to beget and keep alive in the Christian this spirit of resignation.

Two cautions upon the whole, and I have done.

**CAUTION 1.** Do not think this great and sweet lesson is to be learned at once. God teaches his children as you do yours, little by little, somewhat this week, and more the next; somewhat by this affliction, more by another: and as

our crosses, so neither do our comforts come all at once ; the fruit of affliction is not gathered presently. Heb. xii. 11 : “ Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous ; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.” The fruit is not gathered presently, it must have a ripening time ; faith must be tried before it will come out precious, as gold does out of the fire. Do not expect to learn this lesson at once, *It is well*. Such knowledge and attainment is the fruit of long experience and observation.

**CAUTION 2.** Do not expect, if you are able to use the language in my text now, that you shall do it with the same ease and comfort always. Abraham staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, when he received the tidings of a son : but it should seem afterwards he doubted it.

My mountain stands strong, says David ; but let God hide his face, and immediately David is troubled. A Christian is flesh as well as spirit. We hear not only of Job's patience, but of his impatience too. Observe it, we usually read of the failure of the saints in that grace for which they were the most eminent ; the reason is this, to show that no man is to be trusted in, no, not to trust himself, or his own heart. A settled, even frame of hope and trust, few Christians maintain here. When we come to be with God, we shall walk by *sight* ; now we walk by *faith*, and this faith is often weak, therefore the Christian's trust often fails. But though moved he is, he shall never be removed ; though he fall, he shall never fail ; this is the foundation of every Christian's hope. O that it were more the rejoicing of his hope. May God the Spirit enable us so to do.

## CHRISTIAN CONVERSATION.

IF we are under obligation to promote the temporal good of our neighbor, how much more the spiritual, by edifying discourse! But how often have we occasion to remark that the children of God seem at a loss for conversation, or slide into unprofitable subjects. It would be well for them if at such seasons they were thus to appeal on high; "O my God, here I receive a guest, and having nothing to set before him, I pray thee to give what will prove wholesome food, both for him and myself." They would often be indulged with a gracious answer; and thus at once receive and convey spiritual improvement.

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## BURDEN OF SIN.

IT is a sure sign that a man is awakened out of his sleep when he discovers

the error of his dream. In the drawing up of water out of a deep well, so long as the bucket is under deep water, we feel not the weight of it; but as soon as it comes above water, it begins to hang heavy on the hand; and if a man dive under the water, he feels not its weight, though there may be many tons of it over his head; whereas a small vessel full of the same water, would be very burdensome to him, and make him soon grow weary of it. In like manner, so long as a man is overhead in sin, he is not sensible of the weight of sin, it is not troublesome to him; but when he begins to come out of that state of sin wherein he lay and lived before, then sin begins to hang heavy upon him, and he groans under the weight thereof. So long as sin is in the will, the proper seat of sin, a man feels not the weight of it, but it is sport and pastime to him to do evil. It is, therefore, a sign that sin is removed

out of its chair of state, when it becomes burdensome to us; and such a sense of sin may well be considered as an entrance into a state of grace.

Great God create my heart anew,  
And form my spirit pure and true;  
O make me wise betimes to see  
My danger and my remedy.

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#### WORLDLY PLEASURES.

IF you were to see a man endeavoring all his life, to satisfy his thirst, by holding an empty cup to his mouth, you would certainly despise his ignorance; but if you should see others of finer understandings, ridiculing the dull satisfaction of one cup, and thinking to satisfy their thirst by a variety of gilt and golden empty cups, would you think that these were the wiser or happier, or better employed, than the object of their contempt? Now this is all the differ-



ence that you can see in the various forms of happiness caught at by the men of the world. Let the wit, the great scholar, the fine genius, the great statesman, the man of the world, unite all their schemes and they can only show you more and various empty appearances of happiness; give all the world into their hands, let them cut and carve as they please, they can only make a greater variety of empty cups; for search as deep, and look as far as you will, there is nothing greater to be found, unless you look for it in wisdom and the laws of religion. Reader, reflect upon the vanity of all who live without godliness, that you may be earnest at the throne of grace, to be turned from the creature, and seek for happiness in the Creator,

## CHRISTIAN ASSURANCE.

“LET him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.”

He who stands fast in faith, and is of a cheerful temper, must not magnify the measure of his own faith, nor undervalue that of weaker believers; such conduct would declare that he is even now fallen into pride, and a contempt of his brother; therefore, however fast we may seem to stand, let us be wary and watchful. We are never so near a fall, as when we grow self-confident. He who knows the nature and power of temptations, will not discourage the weak, nor insist too much upon particular enjoyments and sensible assurances, which are not the constant witness and marks of faith. The Holy Spirit himself is the earnest and seal of adoption; who is to be known, not only by this joy, but all his other fruits and operations. To

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trust too much upon feeling, disturbs our peace, as soon as it is gone; but to rely upon the word preserves a settled assurance.

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#### THE WATER OF LIFE.

“THE water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life,” said our blessed Saviour to an early disciple. This well being opened in us, it highly concerns us to draw living water out of it daily, by fervant prayer, and then it will spring up freely. But reader, if thou beginest to be slothful, and distracted with worldly cares, not abiding closely with Christ, nor calling diligently on him, thy spirit soon will be dried up and thou wilt scarcely be able with anxious groans to draw a single drop from this well. Therefore, take heed to thy spirit

and if thou desirest thine own comfort, and God's glory, keep near the well's mouth and drink thereof abundantly.

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#### THE UNPROFITABLE SERVANT.

“CAST ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matt. 25, 30.

Look at this man to whom his Lord had given one talent; he could not bear the thought of using his talent according to the will of him from whom he had it, and therefore he chose to make himself happier in a way of his own.

“Lord,” said he, “I knew thee that thou wast a hard man, reaping where thou hadst not sown, and gathering where thou hadst not strewed.” But his lord having convicted him out of his own mouth, despatched him with this

sentence ; “Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness.” Here you see what this man secured by not acting wholly according to his Lord’s will. It was according to his own account a life of murmuring and discontent ; “I knew thee,” said he, “that thou wast a hard man ;” it was a life of fear and apprehensions. “I was,” said he, “afraid ;” it was a life of vain labors and fruitless travels ; “I went,” said he, “and hid thy talent.” And after having been awhile the sport of foolish passions, tormenting fears and fruitless labors, he is rewarded with darkness, eternal weeping, and gnashing of teeth. Look at the man with his five talents. “Lord, thou gavest me five talents, behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.” Here you see a man wholly intent on improving his talents ; his work prospers in his hand, the blessing of five becomes the blessing of ten talents ;

and he is received with a "Well done good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

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#### EXTRACT.

IF I ever arrive in heaven, I expect to behold *three* wonders; I shall see some that I never expected to see there; some whom I expected would be there, will not be there; but the greatest wonder of all will be, that I myself am there.

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#### OLD AGE OF ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

"To him," observes the biographer of Archbishop Leighton, "death had lost its sting," it was become a pleasant theme, and gave occasion to some of his most cheerful sayings. He would

compare the heavy load of clay with which the soul is encumbered, to the miry boots of which the traveller divests himself on finishing his journey, and he could not disguise his own wish, to be speedily unclothed, instead of lingering below, till his garments were worn out and dropped off through age. In general, his temper was serene rather than gay; but his nephew states, that if ever it rose to an unusual pitch of vivacity, it was when some illness attacked him; when from the shaking of the prison doors, he was led to hope that some of those brisk blasts would throw them open, and give him the release he coveted. Then he seemed to stand tip-toe on the margin of eternity, in a delightful amazement of spirit, eagerly waiting the summons, and feeding his soul with the prospect of immortal life and glory. Sometimes, while contemplating his future resting place, he

would break out in that noble apostrophe of pious George Herbert :

“ O let me roost and nestle there,  
Then of a sinner thou art rid  
And I of hope and fear.”

“ Thus hath the prospect of speedily having done with the world, and going to be with Christ, which is far better,” comforted the hearts of God’s people under their most overwhelming sorrows ; and the same source of consolation would prove equally abundant and efficacious still, were the hearts and conversation of believers more in heaven. But alas ! alas ! this world is too much the home of many of God’s people. They are too much engrossed with its cares—too much occupied with its pursuits—too much fascinated with its enjoyments, too sanguine in their expectations of what it is calculated to yield them ; and thus, what was intended to animate and console them under tri-



al, (the shortness of their stay where trial alone can reach them,) is converted into a source of uneasiness and disquiet. Let us rouse ourselves from such earthliness, let us have our conversation in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, and then, in the deepest affliction, we may apply to ourselves the words of the poet :

“ Though long of winds and waves the  
sport,  
Condemned in wretchedness to roam,  
Soon shalt thou reach a sheltering port,  
A quiet home.”

## LIFE AND DEATH.

O fear not thou to die !

But rather fear to live ; for life  
Has thousand snares thy feet to try  
By peril, pain and strife.

Brief is the work of death ;

But life ! the spirit shrinks to see  
How full ere Heaven recalls the  
breath,

The cup of woe may be.

O fear not thou to die !

No more to suffer or to sin ;  
No snares without thy feet to try,  
No traitor heart within.

But fear, O ! rather fear,

The gay, the light, the changeful  
scene,

The flattering smiles that greet thee  
here,

From heaven thy heart to wean.

Fear lest in evil hour,—

Thy pure and holy hope o'ercome  
By clouds that in the horizen lower,  
Thy spirit feel that gloom ;

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Which over earth and heaven,  
The covering throws of fell des-  
pair;  
And deems itself the unforgiven,  
Predestinated child of care.

O fear not thou to die!  
To die and be that blessed one,  
Who in the bright and beauteous sky,  
May feel his conflict done—  
May feel that never more  
The tear of grief or shame shall  
come,  
For thousand wanderings from the  
power  
Who loved and called him home!

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#### LOVE OF THE BRETHREN.

“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another.”  
—St. John.

“God is love, and every one that loveth is born of God;” if we love one another as brethren in Christ, and love

all saints as such, not because they are of this or that party ; and if we love not in word only, but in deed, and show the truth of our love by works and labors of love, this is a solid proof to ourselves and to others, that we are real disciples of Jesus. It is a clear testimony that we have truly learned Christ and that we have his spirit and his love shed abroad in our hearts ; that we are of the household faith and shall enjoy all the privileges insured to the happy community. This is a better evidence, and more convincing to all around us, of what we are, than all knowledge, gifts, attainments and outward privileges whatever. O God of love, cause me to love thee and all thine, the poor, the weak, and the feeble, as well as the strong ; for all are thine.

BE CAREFUL FOR NOTHING.

“How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily.” “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be known unto God.” “Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall sustain thee; he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.” “He hath done wonderful things; his counsels of old are faithfulness and truth.”

“Be careful for nothing,” is a wall against a thousand troubles. If, on the other hand, we give way to care and unbelief, they will spread their mischievous effects through all our actions. Therefore we ought while prosecuting our lawful engagements, to rely in all things on the good promises and faithfulness of God; firmly believing that he will never fail to carry us through the

most difficult and intricate circumstances though there should be ever so little probability in our own eyes.

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#### ATTRACTION TO GOD.

MANY and various are the ways the Almighty takes in bringing his children to himself, and to the knowledge of the things which belong to their peace. Sometimes he draws by the silken bands of love; sometimes by the knotted cords of pain and sickness; sometimes he urges them by the storm and tempest of his broken law; sometimes, and most effectually, by the display of their Redeemer's sacrifice. Reader, pray that he may make thee sensible of the secret, tender influence of his mercy. This habit of praying is very needful, because we are always in want; and without being instant and earnest, we cannot

receive much. Therefore, it is not a hard command, but a great benefit and privilege if God should say, "Thou art a poor child, always wanting something ; but thou mayest always pray to me and I will always hear and assist, and draw thee after me."

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#### CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

" ABRAHAM against hope believed in hope." Rom. 4, 18.

O my soul, thou hast not one single promise only, like Abraham, but many promises, and many patterns of faithful believers before thee. It behooves thee therefore, to rely with confidence upon the word of God. And though the Lord delay his help, and the evil seem to grow worse and worse, be not weak. but rather strong and rejoice ; since the most glorious promises of God are gen-

erally fulfilled in such a wondrous manner, that he steps forth to save us, at a time when there is the least appearance of it. He commonly brings help in our greatest extremity, that his finger may plainly be seen in our deliverance. And this method he chooses that we may not trust in anything that we see or feel, (as we are always apt to do) but only upon his word, which we may depend upon in every state.

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#### FEAR OF MAN.

How many people swell with pride and vanity for such things as they would not know how to value at all, but that they are admired in the world! How fearful are many of having their houses poorly furnished, or themselves meanly clothed, lest the world should make no account of them! How often would a



man yield to the haughtiness and ill-nature of others, and show a forbearing temper, but that he dare not pass for such a poor spirited man, in the opinion of the world. Many a man would often drop a resentment, and forgive an affront but that he is afraid if he should, the world would not forgive him. How many wish to be real Christians and would carefully practice christian temperance and sobriety, were it not for the censure which the world passes upon such a life. Others have frequent intentions of living up to the rules of the christian religion, which they are frightened from, by considering what the world would say of them. Thus does the impression which we have received from living in the world, enslave our minds, that we dare not attempt to be excellent in the sight of God and holy angels, for fear of being little in the eyes of the world. Reader, how is it with thee? What

can the world do for thee in sickness, death and judgment? Make serious reflection upon this, with prayer to God; and the snare of the world will be broken.

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#### COVETOUSNESS.

A COVETOUS man is called an idolater, and has no part in the kingdom of God; but who believes that he is covetous? The charge attaches to every one who is not content with what he has. O, reader, it is fit that thou shouldst take alarm. Get the covetous desires of thy heart subdued, and keep disentangled from worldly things; for who knows how soon thou must go out of this world and leave every thing behind?

Withdraw thy heart from it, else thy death will be very hard. The Christian's motto is, God is enough; for he that has

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God is content, and consequently always rich enough, even in poverty. He must be a covetous man indeed, who has not enough, having God. O Lord make me so free, by faith from the love of earthly things, that I may equally praise thee, whether thou be pleased to give me something, or take it away from me; and that I may never covetously refuse that to others, or to myself, which thou hast given for my own and my neighbor's comfort.

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#### EFFECTUAL PRAYER.

WHAT a condescending king we have, who may always be approached; You say, O that my coldness and indifference would permit me to do it. But are you sensible of your wants and miseries? Is not this backwardness of which you complain, misery enough?

Therefore you ought always to pray, and to pray most when you feel yourself sinking into a worldly and torpid frame. Arise, therefore, and pray; the good spirit of God will assist you in it. Encouraged by the promises of a prayer hearing God, and the special assistance of the Holy Spirit, in this work we must even in the greatest conflicts not omit to resist the temptations of the Devil. Though we have sinned, we must not refrain from prayer, for what can we do better? What can we do besides? If we stop until we make ourselves worthy, we shall never approach God. Lord, grant me more of the spirit of prayer, and let it never be extinguished in my heart.

In reference to this subject this exhortation is given us by the Psalmist; "*pour out* your heart before God." What a different view does this lively text give us of *praying*, when opposed

to the usual expression of *saying* our *prayers*; saying what our books or our parents teach us; or what we have long been used to say, in a formal and customary manner! To pour out our hearts is like emptying a vessel of all its contents, so that nothing remains; and what a pleasing, awful, important thing must this be! Whatever is in my heart, my guilt or fears, my sins or sorrows, my cares or crosses, my wants, dangers, weaknesses, temptations, darkness, and ignorance, my doubts and anxieties respecting both body and soul, myself and others, the church and the world; every thought that arises relating either to past, present, or future—I have leave to empty myself of, to pour out my drops, in a more copious stream, till not one burden remains; and this not by myself, or before men; (for what help can I get from either?) but before a God, both able and willing to relieve, and who will not

turn away from his creatures, when they pour out their hearts before him, but will fill them with his consolations, which are neither few nor small. He can send a Hannah away no longer sad ; can say, son or daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee ; and send an instructor to an inquiring Cornelius to inform him what he must do. No wonder then that real prayer is such a cordial, when it is made before him who is a Refuge for us.

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#### WALKING WITH GOD.

“The Lord is not far from every one of us, for in him we live and move and have our being.” St. Paul.

“Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.” Jesus Christ.

How close and tender the love which the Lord bears to his people ! Nothing

is so mean as to be overlooked by the providence of God; and scarcely any thing is so minute as not to be capable of either injuring or profiting the soul. How sweet it is to observe the divine footsteps, even in the least considerable affairs, and to be satisfied that we can trust every concern, in the divine hands. O Lord, grant that I may never swerve from thee, nor do any thing without thee; but that in going in and out, I may always have respect to thy presence, as if I had to do with none but thee. O that I could transact all my affairs as if with thee alone; and in all places look upon Thee as my observer and friend! Let me carefully mark the inward workings of thy grace and the outward tokens of thy providence, so as daily to have a true sense of thy gracious presence in every thing, whether more or less important; and thereby to be strengthened in faith, and kept in a

composed state of mind; considering that nothing happens by mere chance, but that all is wisely ordered by thy providential care for our good; firmly believing that if any thing goes contrary to expectation, some benefit will accrue from it, if I be but patient and resigned.

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#### DILIGENCE IN RELIGION.

You are concerned for having no more grace. What is the reason? Perhaps you are indolent, careless and unfaithful. And though you have no warrant even for an hour to live, yet you unreasonably suppose that you have time enough; therefore you are not serious, diligent and fervent in prayer for sufficient strength to be always prepared, and to have boldness in death. No wonder, if you do not immediately re-



sist sin, that it grows strong, and you are always weak and discouraged. And how can you expect to receive more grace, if you do not faithfully improve what little you have? If you would but diligently and faithfully apply yourself to the word and prayer, God would certainly not be wanting on his part to fulfil his promises, and give you enough. It is well to be observed, that there is no such thing as making any progress in grace, and carrying our point, unless we are mindful of ourselves, watching and praying against all sins, and whatever may be a hindrance on the one hand; and following with all diligence, that which is good, and what may be a furtherance on the other. It is not enough to use *some*, we must use *all* diligence; and according as our grace is increased, our diligence must increase also.

The hearts of men are not like their clocks, which need, at most, to be wound

up only once a day. They are liable to become inactive, and to fall into disorder every moment, and must therefore be searched and excited without intermission. We should accompany all our actions with prayer, strictly examining the principles whence they flow, and anxious that those principles should be of the highest order. If we proceed according to this rule, accepting every monition from above, we shall both avoid many severe chastisements, and glorify our Father who is in heaven. A Christian has daily his proper burden, like a clock its weights, by which the flesh is kept under, so that the spirit may rise. Therefore when any trouble occurs, he looks upon it as his weight for the day, to stir him up to the exercise of prayer and meditation on the word of God. O Lord, grant that I may always bear thine easy yoke, and never be the cause of my own distress and dullness.

## CONSTANT GRATITUDE.

O LORD, how many are thine unknown mercies! I am surrounded with them on all sides; yet how little do I observe them and acknowledge them to thy praise. If thou hast punished even the heathen for not having glorified thee in thy works, what will become of me? Pardon, O Lord, this my blindness and ingratitude; and to all thine other mercies, add a thankful heart, that I may joyfully praise thee for the blessing of my creation, the daily bounty of thy providence, and the adorable gift of thy Son. In all thy creatures may I see and adore thine infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; and be thereby continually strengthened in faith, and stirred up to thy praise and love. Thus let me always converse with thee, adhere to thee, and have uninterrupted communion with thee that nothing may in the least disturb this

disposition of my soul. O Lord, grant me this privilege for thy glory's sake.—  
Amen.

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#### GOD WITH US.

READER, dost thou desire that in all thy removals, God's presence may go with thee? That thou be not permitted to stir, without the testimony that thou art in the path of duty? Art thou waiting upon the Lord, earnest to serve him in sincerity and truth, not being conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of thy mind, and desirous to be numbered with his peculiar people? Then thou mayest expect the divine blessing, and that thy way will be prosperous. It was a distinguishing privilege of the Israelites that they were to "dwell alone," and not be reckoned among the nations; and it is the privilege and duty

of the spiritual Israel to be separate and distinct from the world; they are a separate people in the love of God; in their election in Christ; in the covenant of grace made with them in him; in effectual vocation; in their being seated with him at his right hand in the day of judgment; and in their being with him to all eternity. Nor are they reckoned among the nations, but they are called out of them; they do not reckon themselves to be of the world, but as pilgrims and strangers in it. Lord, let my lot be among thy separate people, the righteous, both here and forevermore. Amen.

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REST.

WHEN God first made man,  
Having a glass of blessings standing by,  
Let us, said he, pour on him all we can;  
Let the world's riches, which dispersed  
now lie  
Contract into a span.

So strength first made away,  
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, hon-  
or, pleasure,  
When almost all was out, God made a  
stay,  
Perceiving that alone of all his treasure,  
*Rest* at the bottom lay.

For, if I should, said He,  
Bestow this jewel also, on my creature,  
He would adore my gifts, instead of me,  
And rest in nature, not the God of na-  
ture.

So both would losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,  
But keep them with repining restless-  
ness,  
Let him be rich, and weary, that at least,  
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness  
May toss him to my breast.

THE LAND WHICH NO MORTAL MAY  
KNOW.

Though earth has full many a beautiful  
spot,

As the poet or painter may show ;  
Yet more lovely and beautiful, holy and  
bright,

To the hopes of the heart, and the spirit's  
glad sight.

Is the land that no mortal may know.

There the crystalline stream, bursting  
forth from the throne,

Flows on and forever will flow ;  
Its waves, as they fall, are with melody  
rife,

And its waters are sparkling with beauty  
and life,

In the land where no mortal may know.

And there, on the margin, with leaves  
ever green,

With its fruits healing sickness and  
wo,

The fair tree of life, in its glory and  
pride,

Is fed by the deep, inexhaustable tide,  
Of the land which no mortal may know.

There the pale orb of night, and the pale  
fountain of day

Nor beauty nor splendor bestow ;  
But the presence of Him, the unchang-  
ing I AM!

And the holy, the pure, the immaculate  
Lamb !

Light the land which no mortal may  
know.

O ! who but must pine, in this dark vale  
of tears,

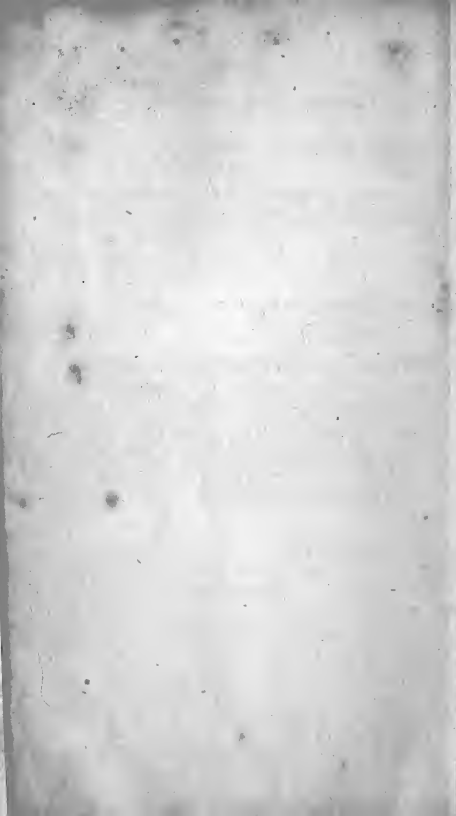
From its clouds and its shadows to go,  
To walk in the light of the glory above,  
And to share in the peace, the joy, and  
the love,

Of the land which no mortal may know.

THE END.











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