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THE
NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR
GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ Crucified—
“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

VOLUME II.

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P R E F A C E.

REVOLVING time has brought us to the termination of another year of our labours; and we trust a blessing from above has attended them; and that, though weak the instrument, still, in the hands of the Great Head of the Church, it has been found mighty in “preparing the way of the Lord,” and “turning the hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just.”

The volume which we now present to the public represents, we are happy to say, not merely the clergy of Dublin, but those in remote parts of Ireland, who, notwithstanding the evil days on which our Church has fallen, and the privations to which a large portion of our national clergy are forced to submit, have still held forth in a consistent course, bearing faithful testimony to the truths of the everlasting Gospel, and contending boldly for “the faith once delivered to the saints.”

From Cork, where the torch of truth has been lighted up by one* who may well be styled the father of the Gospel in that district, many awakening appeals are here perpetuated and preserved to the edification of future generations, when those who have addressed them to their congregations, and the congregations themselves, shall have gone down to “the house appointed for all living.” And, though we may mourn the loss of him who once stood *alone* a faithful witness for the truth, we may take comfort from the fact, that others, his brother ministers, keeping his example before them, and “following him as he followed Christ,” “are much more bold to speak the word without fear;” and

* The late Rev. Doctor Quarry.

we hope, in another volume, to show what testimony it was he bore to the truth which he loved, and to his Divine Master, in whom, full of years and rich in honors, "he fell asleep."

From other parts of the country no less faithful testimony has been borne. That faithful Church—the *Church of Scotland*—a branch of which has been established in Ireland, has also been somewhat represented in these pages; and, we trust, in the ensuing year, (should the Lord prosper our efforts), to exhibit more and more the unity of doctrine that exists between the two sister Churches—to show that both are burning and shining lights, placed in a dark world which lieth in wickedness, to point to "the Day Spring from on high," whose beams alone can dispel the darkness in which this world is enveloped.

In fine, the public have here presented the testimony of a faithful band of *brothers*, "striving together for the truth of the Gospel," "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace;" and they can see that though "there are diversities of gifts, it is one Spirit; and though there are diversities of operations, it is the same God that worketh all in all."

T. R. & R. D.

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No. XXI.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1836.

PRICE 3d.

REV. C. M. FLEURY

REV. DR. URWICK

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, DUBLIN, ON CHRISTMAS DAY,
DECEMBER 25, 1836,

BY THE REV. C. M. FLEURY, A. M.

One of the Chaplains of the Lying-in-Hospital

ISAIAH ix.—6 and 7.

“ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

THE arrangement for this day's service has supplied us with a text well suited to the subject of the present discourse, which is to be according to the order we have hitherto followed.—The glory of the Church,—of the redeemed saints, of the Most High, at and after the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The first lesson selected to bear on the first coming and divinity of Christ has given us the text just read, and we may consider from it, generally, the great event of which this day is the anniversary—viz. the birth of Christ.

The text is in fact an abstract description of Messiah, in the relation which he bears to his redeemed people in every age. We shall take the particulars of this description consecutively. “ Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty

God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

“ Wonderful.” The attention is here brought to the Godhead, and manhood of Christ. By that first name was known of old the second person of the Trinity, —the great agent or representative of Jehovah, as we read in the book of Judges, xiii. chapter, in which is given us the account of an interview with God, vouchsafed to Manaoh—“ And Manaoh said unto the angel of the Lord, What is thy name, that when thy sayings come to pass, we may do thee honor. And the angel of the Lord said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret,”—or, as it is in the margin “ Wonderful.” The explanation of that term is given us in 1 Timothy, iii. last verse,—“ Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gen-

tiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." In the First Book of Kings, we find, that after the death of David, Solomon ascended the throne; and, by the good blessing and favor of his God, arranged in order all things belonging to the temple service. In his address to God, eighth chapter, we meet with this expression—"And will God indeed dwell on the earth?—behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have builded." There the infinite greatness of the Supreme Being is acknowledged by Solomon. It seemed to him almost irrational to suppose, that the infinite God could condescend to dwell in any limited habitation on earth; but the wonder of all wonders, that which makes Christ the truly "*wonderful*" personage of the Deity is the incarnation.—That God for whom immensity alone affords a suitable habitation, did condescend to circumscribe his glorious nature, and occupy the form of humanity; that God who created the worlds, who filleth eternity, as well as immensity, did inhabit the body of a frail, feeble infant! Behold then the great mystery of godliness, the Creator of the universe lies a helpless wailing babe, in the manger of Bethlehem! And all this was done for us; unto us this child was born—that great and glorious God—of a pure virgin, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and present us to himself at the last without spot or blemish. Yes, that God whose holiness did prevent the unconditional activity of his benevolence, and the truth of whose nature did prevent the free and sudden absolution or manumission of his guilty creatures—that great God who, in his spiritual nature and perfections, could not pronounce a simple amnesty on the guilty, seeing no mode in which his attributes could be maintained inviolate, and his dignity and honor remain uncompromised while pardoning sin, but by suffering in our stead, in his own real person—taking on him flesh and blood, such as we now possess—became, as we are, man—identified himself with us—became our substitute—and endured the curse of sin, which his own holiness had denounced. The mystery of godliness then was not gratuitous—it was necessary for our redemption. What God foretold by his prophet, and subsequently acted out on the stage of this world, was, to do

good to our lost race, to restore us to our original dignity, yea, to exalt us to much greater dignity, to confer on us, in some extraordinary sense, himself; adopting believing sinners to be his own children, his own offspring,—not only bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, but spirit of his spirit! This is the mystery of the Gospel. Christ became man, to bear our punishment, and take away our guilt, to raise redeemed sinners into his own family and communicate to them the divine nature—(Peter xii. 1.) Can we say, this communication of the Divine nature is impossible, when we find that the whole fulness of the Godhead once dwelt in man?

The second title of Christ in the text, is "Counsellor." In various passages of holy writ, we find Christ called the *wisdom* of God, especially in that remarkable verse in 1st Corinthians, addressed to the Church—"Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who, of God, is made unto us wisdom." Christ is our wisdom—he has conferred on us saving and sanctifying knowledge; he is the true light that lighteneth all his people, he is the great source of *spiritual* understanding. As the Creator, he imparted to man, the peculiar prerogative of reason or wisdom—as Redeemer, he confers on his saints new reason, heavenly wisdom—"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Christ, as our wisdom has revealed to us that God is just, yet merciful, the avenger of iniquity, yet the Saviour and preserver of all who trust in him. Wisdom in all its fulness was not enjoyed till Christ came in the flesh, and we beheld him, full of grace and truth. Thus John speaks of Christ, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. "he has given us an understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ;" he has taught us all the moral nature of God, and done all this for our salvation. Man's ruin consisted in his ignorance of God; man knew not at first the faithfulness and unchangeableness of God, or though he knew them for a time, his knowledge was darkened—his mind obscured by the subtle temptations of the Devil; although he had heard God say, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," he forgot that God was infallibly true, and the moment an oblivion of the

Divine nature, a temporary ignorance of God's nature passed over his soul, he fell. Christ has brought back to us the knowledge of God, and has not only addressed himself to the world generally, by proclaiming the name of God, as gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in mercy and compassion, but has also addressed himself to churches, to individuals, and spoken to them with a voice of admonition, with a voice of loving counsel to win them from voluntary destruction, to win them from infidel despair. Thus in the third chapter of Revelations, "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God." "Because thou sayest I am rich, and increased in goods and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white rayment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear, and anoint thine eyes with eye salve, that thou mayest see." He exhorts them to buy of him "without money and without price," that righteousness, holiness, understanding, or wisdom which he provides for their eternal salvation. Thus Christ is indeed the "Counsellor," the merciful instructor of his redeemed.

The next title is, "the mighty God." By many signs and wonders done among the people of Israel, and the Gentiles, who witnessed his miracles, and watched him with suspicious hatred, Christ proved himself to be the master over nature, "the mighty God." But "the mighty God" is a title belonging to Christ in his *mediatorial* character, and not in his *creator* character. We contemplate this Saviour as the manifested God, and the titles attached to him as such are titles that convey to us the facts of redeeming goodness.

We do want a mighty Saviour to be a present help in the midst of the troubles which we now experience, while we did want a mighty God—an infinite Saviour, infinite in strength, to carry out our cause; for when Christ came to stand against the severity of the law in the weakness of human nature, and did realize that weakness, and through the might of the Spirit, fulfil all the commandments of the law, still had he to contend against

the powers of darkness—the great enemy of God, who had overcome the best, the noblest work of heaven, even man. And we need the presence of this Almighty Saviour to this hour; we have to wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickedness in high places. If the Apostles were told by the Lord Jesus, "without me ye can do nothing," oh with what force do the same words apply to us poor fallible disciples, while busied in the warfare of faith. They could do nothing to sustain that victory which Christ accomplished for them; but when once instructed in their own weakness, and taught by bitter experience their insufficiency to do any thing without Jesus, they then learned the admirable lesson, "I can do all things through Christ, strengthening me;" the same assertion is free to the use of every believer now, however humble his rank or obscure his position in the Church. He can do all things through Christ strengthening him; he can rejoice in tribulation, exult in poverty, in the face of death he can live, he can lift up the banner of the cross against Satan, when he cometh in like a flood, and trample him under foot. On this subject hear the voice of the Church, (Isaiah, 12th chap. "O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me, behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation." There the Church rejoices in a present Saviour, an almighty Mediator, one who will bear up her weak hands and strengthen her feeble knees, and cause her to say, "therefore, with joy, shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."

The next title is, "The everlasting Father; were we to translate this correctly, it would be, "the Father of the age." This is no new translation, nor the translation merely of one who looks to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the critical and correct translation by Socinians. They saw the force of the 6th verse; they saw there proper divinity attributed to Christ; they could not gainsay the force of the whole passage, "wonderful, counsellor, the mighty God," as bearing out and supporting

the divinity of Christ; but when they discovered in our authorised version that the expression "everlasting Father," was not precisely accurate, they rejoiced in the discovery; and we yield them all the fruits of their success; nay, we thank them for this discovery, it has led us to see the perfection of the whole passage, as giving us an entire description of Christ from first to last. While he is called the mighty God—the God of strength—and thus distinctly proved to be the supreme Jehovah, the phrase Father of the age shows us that God purposes again to visit this world, to dwell in it, not as a sufferer, but as a ruler, a merciful and compassionate ruler, the Father of his people, the patriarch in the midst of his family, his own family gathered around him from countries, a renovated world.

"The Father of the age,"—the personal reign of Christ is here insisted on; the 7th verse shows what the real nature of that age will be. "Of the encrease of his government and peace there shall be no end—on the throne of David, and on his kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever;" if it be true, without a figure or metaphor, that to us "a child is born," that to us a son is given, that he is the mighty God, so it is equally true, that of the encrease of his government and peace there shall be no end, and there is nothing more figurative in the expression, "throne of David," than in the expression, "wonderful Counsellor, mighty God,"—all possess the same meaning, and demand the same interpretation. When from the expression, "the Father of the age," we turn to Daniel, we see a description of one who is appointed to rule with a sceptre of righteousness over a redeemed world. "One like unto the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations, and languages should serve him—his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

And as we are thus led to consider Christ as the "Father of the age," so are we to look on Christ as "the prince of peace," not only in his evangelical or saving capacity, but as reigning with authority, he is the prince of evangelical

peace or grace to us, as we learn from Ephesians, 2d chapter—"he is our peace who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us: and "has come and preached peace to them that were afar off and to them that were nigh." This was the song of the angels to the shepherds, "glory to God in the highest, and on the earth, peace, good will to men." Christ is "the Days-man," who came to lay his hand on both parties—on the Father in heaven and the rebel on earth, to reconcile them, and to make of twain one.—"Christ is our peace, peace to the soul," "the peace of God that passeth all understanding;" "peace," saith he, "I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, give I unto you—let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid," "I will send you another comforter and he will abide with you for ever; he shall teach you," open to you "all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Christ is present with us as the prince of peace in the heart of every believer assuring him that his iniquity is pardoned, his transgression removed, and the anger of the great Judge of heaven converted into paternal love.

But when we are told that Christ is to sit upon the throne of David, we are led back to the reign of Solomon, the literal son of David. His reign was not like that of David, a reign of blood, a reign of victory, carried on by warfare, and incessant contention; it was a reign of peace, from sea to sea, from shore to shore. Thus was typified the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ: he shall enter on the throne of David, and seated in Jerusalem, reign in peace over a tranquilized realm.

The believer in Christ owes all his welfare to the great mystery of "godliness to God manifest in the flesh;" he owes his spiritual understanding, that is to say, his faith, to the counsel and teaching of Christ; he owes his consistency, his devotedness, and practical holiness to the indwelling in his soul of Christ, the mighty God. "Christ," says the Apostle, "in you the hope of glory;" he owes his peace now, and in the hour of death to that same Jesus who giveth him to say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon

the earth, and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another." Yes, the believer owes his faith, his holiness, his victory, his peace, to the very last gasp of life, all to Christ.

But when shall the believer rise again? Paul tells us, 1 Cor. xv. "at the last trump." There is the first resurrection, "every man in his own order, Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming,"—"the dead in Christ shall rise first." We turn to Revelations, and find a specification of a second resurrection, and that the first is peculiar to the saints of God—"I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given unto them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast neither his image, neither had received his mark on their foreheads, or on their hand, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished,—this is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."

You see thus in the epistle to the Corinthians, and in the Revelations, a distinction between the first and second resurrection—the first proper to the saints, the second or general resurrection proper to the ungodly, when they shall stand before the judgment seat of Christ to receive the last award of heaven. At this first resurrection, we are told, the saints shall be like their Lord, "for they shall see him as he is," shall enter into his glory, ascend to his throne, share with him the sceptre, and break in pieces the nations with a rod of iron. Such are the promises of Christ, "To him that overcometh, will I give to sit on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne." And at that first resurrection shall be the perfect consummation and bliss of the redeemed in body and soul; they shall resemble Christ, rejoice before him with exceeding joy as rulers of the world, as dispensers of blessings; so saith the prophet Daniel, "And the kingdom and

dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him."

Such a resurrection, such a reign with Christ, ought to be the expectation of the church on earth, and such undoubtedly is the expectation now of the church in heaven. "And they sang a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." Rev. v. 9, 10.

We must not, however, limit the bliss of the saints to the mere participation of millennial glory; the millennial glory is, after all, but introductory, for during that glory (Isaiah lxxv.) there will be on earth age, disease, sudden judgment on transgressors, death; but the perfect glory of the world remains to the last dispensation, which is clearly and beautifully described in xxi. and xxii. chap. of the Revelations. After the millennium is past, the last dispensation shall enter, when "the devil shall be cast into the lake of fire with the beast and the false prophet, when death and hell likewise shall be destroyed." Then will be the state of pure perfection, of unalterable felicity, to the saints and servants of God. Oh, what a description is given us of that last state or age in the 21st chapter of the Revelations—"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, and I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

From the text then we are reminded by the incarnation of Christ of mercy,

counselling us to draw near and drink of the fountain of life; of mercy conferring strength, to make us "more than conquerors through him who loved us." By the text we are led to look forward unto futurity: we are told that Christ is the Father of the age to come, and when every sorrow is blotted from our souls, the Prince of peace will rule over and bless us with a redeemed and regenerated world. Are we excited by this descriptive passage to "look to the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, waiting till his foes become his footstool?"

Oh, we should not divide the history of Christ—we should receive him as a complete Saviour—our faith should be of that full character which marked the days of old. Mark the account of faith given us by St. Peter, the faith of the saints in his own time—they looked to the return of Christ, and the expectation of the coming of Christ was their comfort in every tribulation—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God

through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness, through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ, whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1 Peter, chap. i.

Look forward then, brethren in the faith, to the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ as the great era of your triumph over trial and pain and death—the great era of peace and joy, for then these words shall greet you, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning of the world." Whether you desire comfort, it is to be had by looking to the coming of Christ—whether you desire patience, it is to be had by considering the approach of Christ, "Be patient," says the Apostle James, "unto the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ,"—whether you need holiness, it is to be had from the expectation of Christ, "For every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

PATIENCE AND SUBMISSION.

With peaceful mind, thy path of duty run,
 God nothing does nor suffers to be done,
 But what thou would'st thyself, could thou but see
 Through all events of things as well as He.

INFIDELITY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN YORK-STREET INDEPENDENT CHAPEL, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY,
4TH DECEMBER, 1836,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM URWICK, D.D.

2 CORINTHIANS, VI. 15.

“ What part hath he that believeth with an infidel ? ”

The term “ infidel,” as it occurs in the text now read, has a much wider range of application than that in which it is used in the common intercourse of society. Of course it includes atheists, men, if there really be such, who can look nature in the face, abounding as it does with indications of infinite intelligence, goodness, power, and sovereignty, and affirm that there is no all-creating and governing God. It includes, likewise, persons, who, while they admit the existence of a Divine Being as more or less clearly attested by the things that are made, discard the Bible and the Christian religion as not coming from his inspiration and authority. It takes in the Jew, who, while he believes in the inspiration of the Old Testament, denies that of the New—while he affirms the divine mission of Moses, denies the messiahship of Jesus. Under it are comprehended, also, those who, professing to receive the Christian revelation as the testimony of God, put from them as fictions of man the great and prominent doctrinal peculiarities by which it is distinguished from other religious systems, and which it presses on our regard, as necessary for us to recognise in order to our being saved. And, further, it applies to all who, admitting to their creed the existence and providence of God, the inspiration of the Bible, the messiahship of Christ, and the various leading truths which the Gospel inculcates, do not practically acknowledge the influence of Christianity as the law of their dispositions and character. In contrast with the “ infidel,” “ he that believeth ” is a man who, while he accords with the position that God is, and with the great

outline of what the Scriptures teach regarding his purpose of mercy to mankind, submits to the power of evangelical truth, and has it lodged in his bosom as the renovating and transforming principle of his moral being.

Now, between the “ infidel ” and the “ believer ” as thus explained, according to the use of the words by the apostle in the appeal before us, there is the widest imaginable distance and contrariety. With the exception that they are both human creatures, accountable to God, destined for immortality, dwelling for a short season upon earth, and partakers of the bounties and afflictions of Providence—they have little or nothing in common between them. The one is in league with the Wicked One—the other is in covenant with Jehovah. The one is engaged in rebellion against the King of kings—the other bears him habitual sincere, though imperfect, allegiance. The one is a willing abject slave of depravity—the other is a regenerated and adopted child of God. The one is under the Divine malediction—the other is an object of the Divine favor. The one has his affections and desires narrowed down within the confines of earth and time—the other's rise lofty as the heaven of heavens, and stretch into eternity. The spirit of the one is alien from his Maker, disaffected towards the Author of his being—the spirit of the other goes out after the Deity, and rests upon him as an object of supreme complacency and delight. The one has before him everlasting unmitigated misery in hell—the other has before him everlasting unalloyed happiness in heaven. Excepting that

which is exhibited between devils and angels—between lost souls in perdition and souls perfected in glory—does the creation furnish an example of greater diversity and contrast? Is there not ground then for the appeal—"What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" and if an answer be given to that appeal, it manifestly must be—"no part whatsoever."

Believers—the appeal is from above to you. It stands the last but one in a series as pointed and irresistible as any that inspiration has produced besides. They are designed to enforce the command, "be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for," the apostle proceeds, "what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord; and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." These instructions, I need scarcely observe, do not intend that believers are to have no intercourse or communication of any kind with unbelievers. Whatever relations are sustained by them as members of families or of general society, must be faithfully discharged. Transactions in business must be carried on. The converted must endeavour to do good, in every practicable way, to the unconverted—letting no opportunity of doing them service pass unimproved—and especially seeking to restrain them from the ways of the destroyer, and turn them into the path of life. But, 1st, believers are not to unite themselves in marriage with unbelievers. If the union has been formed it is not to be dissolved; but if its formation be in prospect, no law for our guidance can be more plain than that we are to "marry only in the Lord." 2nd, Unbelievers are not to be recognised as members of God's church. "Him that is weak in the faith" is to be received to our Christian confidence and affection as

a brother in the Gospel; but not the man who by profession, or practice, or both, shows that he has no faith at all. And, 3rd, the saints of God are not to choose the society, adopt the maxims, and follow the ways of the people of the world. They "are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness unto his marvellous light;"—and such being their condition, they are to act accordingly.

I have thought it right to say thus much in illustration of the text in its original import and reference. I now dismiss that line of statement, and take up the word "infidel" in its ordinary restricted application, viz., as intending one who denies the truth and divine origin of the Christian religion. The class of persons to whom I allude may not publicly blaspheme the Gospel. Scoffers are infidels, but all infidels are not scoffers. Numbers, it is to be feared, have scepticism rampant in their hearts, while they pay outward deference to the institutions of piety. I apprehend that infidelity is much more prevalent than it appears to be. For a man to declare himself a freethinker would subject him to suspicion, if not to reproach. The Christian religion has gained that standing in public opinion which would endanger the general good feeling towards any man who should dare openly to repudiate it. Infidelity is a latent evil; yet not less real, or powerful, or deadly. It is a portion of leaven from beneath, infused into the mass of society, here and there proving its existence by its effects on the surface, but for the most part working secretly. My object by this address is to put you upon your guard against it—to rescue such, if present, as have in a measure caught the baleful infection—and to confirm all in the faith of Christianity as a Divine revelation. I shall comprize what I have to advance in the way of argument under three observations.

I. VARIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES DEMAND THAT CHRISTIANITY SHOULD NOT BE REJECTED WITHOUT GRAVE CONSIDERATION.

For instance,

1st. *On its own showing, man's interests and obligations are deeply involved in it.*

It comes to us as a revelation of mercy from God to his rebellious and con-

demned creatures. It professes to find us in a state of apostacy from our Maker, and exposed, as the natural fruit and just recompense of our doings, to misery hereafter. It declares that, in order to our recovery, the Divine Son of God became incarnate, and offered up his sinless humanity as an expiation for our guilt, that we might be redeemed and reconciled without disparagement to law and justice. It publishes pardon, holiness, and heaven, as the free gifts of grace to every one who trusts for them in the Lord Jesus Christ; and it affirms that there is no other medium through which these benefits can be obtained. Obviously then, if true, it must be of the highest imaginable importance to our well-being. Moreover, it presents itself before us as enjoined upon our reception and obedience by the authority of the Ruler of the universe so that to neglect it is offering a high affront to his wisdom, his dominion, his equity, and his love, as it also impugns his veracity. "He that believeth shall be saved,"—"he that believeth not shall be condemned,"—are the sanctions sustained and enforced by which it demands our homage. Surely then, if true, it must be of paramount concern to us.

2nd. *If Christianity be not true, no substitute exists that can supply its place.*

By the confession of infidels themselves there is no system in the world, having the name of religion, which will bear comparison with it. It infinitely transcends all its competitors in moral excellence—in the rational consistency of its parts with each other, and of its instructions regarding the Deity and man, with what we learn of them from other sources, and in the amount and character of the evidence by which it is commended to our belief. How puerile, paltry, worthless and absurd, does Mahomedanism, or any code of ancient or now existing Paganism, appear when placed in juxta-position with it!

Withdraw the religion of the Bible, and in what ignorance and perplexity must we find ourselves on all subjects affecting our relation to our Maker and our hopes of the future. Nature proclaims that God is. Reason dictates that if a God there be, he must be perfect in moral glory, the highest attribute of intelligence. Conscience bears witness that we are guilty. The Bible alone

reveals the Deity as ready to forgive and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon him. Without the Bible, whatever we may conjecture, and whatever probabilities may exist favouring our belief of the fact, we have not certainty as to the soul's immortality. Without the Bible, we have no assurance that God is propitious to the guilty—all supposition is against it. Still less, if possible, do we know in what way, on what terms, or to what extent he will dispense mercy. Our circumstances may be those which the Gospel describes; enlightened experience and observation attest that they are; but if that Gospel be not throughout true, no provision has been made to meet these circumstances. In what an awfully distressing state of mind must the reflecting infidel be in regard to sin, and God, and eternity!

3rd. *Christianity is adapted to exert a most beneficial influence on man as a member of society, on which account it is highly desirable that it should be true.*

Look at it if you will in its bearing upon the intellectual faculties—how it tends, by calling them constantly into exercise and familiarizing them with sacred and sublime objects, to quicken, and enlarge, and elevate, and strengthen, and regulate them. Look at its operation upon the moral habits—how it tends to purify and ennoble the character, placing the whole man under the dominion of the most enlightened and hallowed principles, enjoined by motives of irresistible power. Look at its effects in the domestic relations—how it establishes and perpetuates the due adjustment of all claims, affords scope to, and calls into full play, the sympathies and good offices of natural affection, and infuses happiness throughout the family circle. Look at its working in the intercourses and transactions which man has with man in the world. Were it ascendant, and in proportion as it did prevail, what sincerity and integrity, what forbearance and courtesy, what active, self-denying, and diffusive benevolence, would it inspire. Surely, if permitted to do its work, it would prove a panacea for social ill. No enactments of civil rulers, however well-intentioned and just and prudent they may be, can for a moment compare with it; they can but partially control the outward actions, while this transforms the heart, and assimilates man to the Creator's

sanctity, truth, and love. Every one must concede that a system fraught with such tendencies ought not to be rejected but on the most clear and thorough conviction of its being an imposture—while the very tendencies themselves, with which it is fraught, indicate that an imposture it cannot be.

4th. *It has been received as true by many persons whose judgment is entitled to respect.*

I allude not to the mass of people moving in what is called "good society," who identify themselves with it as the matter of their religious profession, without knowing, and it may be without caring, why or wherefore they prefer it to any other system. I do not intend the multitude of canonized visionaries, whom superstition, under the name of Christianity, has exhibited as objects of worship to its votaries. I have in view men of confessedly high moral worth, varied learning, profound research, independent thought, giant mental capacity. The Seldens, the Boyles, the Lockes, the Ushers, the Newtons, and a host besides, whose names are the boast and glory of the age in which they flourished, and of the country that gave them birth. The circumstance that such men, as the result of the severest scrutiny they could apply to the investigation, settled down in the conviction that the Gospel was true, and came from God, though not of itself sufficient to challenge our reception of it, ought to make every man of inferior grade in intellect and information, or who has not given the same attention to the subject—to pause and deliberate well before he puts it from him, and pronounces that a fiction, which they believed and avowed to be a divine verity.

5th. *The present life is the only opportunity in the compass of our existence that we shall have of believing Christianity to purpose.*

If it be false—though surely falsehood never bore such properties and proofs of truth, yet, I say, if it were a delusion—the reception of it can do no harm hereafter, while it imparts, as we have seen, a fulness of blessing here. But, on the other hand, if it be true, the consequences of rejecting it will be, as we have seen, most awful. The imagination fails to pourtray them; the feelings cannot steadily contemplate what the imagination can pourtray. What

is to be done regarding it must be done *now*—for ever. The decision must be finally resolved on *now*—never to be revoked when the spirit has entered the invisible world. He that dies a believer indeed, will inherit the blessings of his faith in undecaying fruition, durable as his being. He that dies an infidel, infidel must remain not in judgment but in privation, and guilt, and doom, to immortality—I say "not in judgment," for to know that Christianity is a substantial truth, man has only to set his foot outside the line that bounds this region of shadows, clouds and darkness, and open his eyes in the light of eternity. *There* no sceptic dwells. *There* is no place for doubt. *There* fact presses upon every mind; and every being sees, and owns, and, according to his condition, feels, what is. When consequences like these are possibly pending, ordinary discretion requires that a decision should be come to in the matter without delay, and that the decision should not be to reject the Gospel without the most serious, impartial, diligent, and, I will add, prayerful, examination of its claims.

II. My second general observation is, that THE CAUSES WHICH ORDINARILY INDUCE INFIDELITY TOWARDS CHRISTIANITY ARE OF A NATURE ALTOGETHER INSUFFICIENT TO WARRANT IT.

I do not mean to concede that infidelity is in any case justifiable, but affirm that in the great majority of cases it proceeds from causes altogether separate from the amount of evidence by which the Gospel is commended to our faith. Of these causes I shall specify a few.

1st. *Christianity is often rejected because it is disliked.*

With as much reason as if we were to estimate the excellence and efficacy of a medicine by its pleasantness to our taste. The condition in which the Bible places man as a fallen, depraved, guilty, condemned and helpless being, is a condition in which man likes not to feel himself to be. His self-complacency revolts at the idea of such being his circumstances.—The Gospel requires that he should seek salvation and life eternal as the free gifts of Divine love, through the sacrifice of Christ—and this mode of deliverance and bliss comports not with the high notions men are prone to cherish of the meritoriousness of their doings. It reveals a God glorious in holiness, as he is

sovereign in grace, and towards such an object of devotion there are no awakenings of homage in man's evil heart. The calls of the Gospel to repentance, regeneration, habits of prayer, daily self-denial, weanedness from the follies and vanities of the world, inward devotedness to God, and heavenly-mindedness—are utterly contrary to our natural inclinations. Now every one's experience tells him that what his feelings approve, his judgment readily accords with, though it may offer little to warrant his faith; while that to which his dispositions are averse, he readily discovers a pretext, more or less plausible, for discrediting and putting from him as a thing of naught, by whatever amount of evidence it may be certified for his belief. And, indeed, when I reflect on the contrariety of the Gospel to the propensities of man, and on the predominance which his inclinations possess over his understanding, my wonder is not that infidelity prevails in society, but that it does not prevail much more.

This dislike to Christianity causing its rejection, is the ground taken by our Saviour in charging moral culpability on unbelief. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light neither cometh to the light, because their deeds are evil. But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

2nd. *Persons are often led to reject Christianity, by identifying with it what does not belong to it, or by estimating its merits by some false representation that has been given of it to the world.*

They regard as parts of Christianity, or as countenanced by it, all the fooleries and vices that have been broached or practised in connexion with its name. Or, they fix their eye upon the creed, the ritual, or the habits of the sect in which they have been brought up, or which stands out before them as most prevalent, or as making the highest pretensions;—and observing much that is contrary to what is worthy of reason and of God, in the dogmas, the ceremonies, or the conduct which thus comes under their notice, they at once exclaim,—“Can this religion have its origin with a Being who is infinite in wisdom, purity, and goodness?—impossible.”

Whereas, had they taken up the New Testament, and by a careful analysis of its contents, examined what those doctrines and duties are which, according to the teaching of our Saviour and his Apostles, really compose the Christian system, they might have found it to be a very widely different thing from the impressions they had received of it from other sources. And surely honesty to the Gospel and honesty to ourselves, demand that it should be thus fairly dealt with.

3rd. *Infidelity may arise from ignorance of the evidences by which the Gospel is attested.*

Those that have been in the habit of observing, are well aware what numbers of people call themselves Christians, who are unable to give any satisfactory reason why they believe in Christianity as a Divine revelation. Some if interrogated on the subject, would probably be unable to give any reply. Others adopt Christianity, because their fathers did so before them, and it is the way in which they have been educated. Others do so because it is customary and fashionable, and they would not be equally respected or trusted if they did not. Others do so, because it is the law of the land, and they consider themselves bound to act as the state requires, without asking the sanction of a higher authority. Others, again, do so, because “the Church” ordains it—they, as required, regard the Gospel as true, on the affirmation of “the Church.”

We need only to look at them to perceive, that none of these things can be rested on as a clear, rational ground of belief, by any rightly-thinking man.—These principles, acted upon, would make a person a Christian here—a Mahomedan elsewhere, and a Pagan in a third place; in fact, would oblige us to believe that Christianity, Mahomedanism, and Paganism were alike and at the same time true. To base our faith in the Gospel, as a religion from heaven, upon such grounds as these, is a perfect and glaring absurdity. And who can be surprised that a superstructure, reared upon such foundations, should be levelled with the earth by the first wind that blows. The probability is, that when persons of the kind described, come into contact with some clever, keen, designing sceptic, who addresses to them a pointed, probing question, or a cutting, contemptuous sneer, or a dark, envenomed

insinuation, or a proud, overbearing, confident assertion, or a droll, witty, jest, or perhaps, merely an apparently modest inquiry, according to the measurement he has taken of the person he designs to make his victim—I say, that persons of the kind before described, will probably, when thus assailed, suddenly startled into thought, be at once confounded, and, supposing there is no reason for believing the Gospel, because they have none, at once quail before the infidel, and basely, as ignorantly, yield themselves an easy prey to the deceiver.

4th. *Not a few are infidels, because they are too proud to trouble themselves with inquiring into the merits of Christianity.*

There is a class—men of mind, learning, science—who give themselves, for the most part, to intellectual pursuits, and look upon themselves, and are looked up to by others, as the wise men. Feeling elevated in capacity and occupation, far above the range of the vulgar—having no impressions of God and immortality—and looking down on all not of their caste, as at an almost immeasurable remove below, they either do not think at all upon the subject, or if their eye occasionally glances at it, they immediately turn from it, just as the ancient philosophers did from the superstition of their day—with the complacently-cherished idea that, however suitable it may be for the multitude, religion is a thing utterly beneath them.

And I suspect that young persons devoted to literature and science, are not unfrequently in danger from this quarter. To attain to an equal standing with the class I have named, or properly speaking, to be recognised and revered as belonging to it, is an object, if not the summit, of their ambition. They have come within a circle of most bewitching and perilous enchantment. Not having any settled convictions of the claims and excellence of piety—perhaps inclined to evil rather than to good—and desirous of symbolizing, as quickly and entirely as they can, with the reputed *Savans* of the age, they readily merge all serious thought about religion, and assimilate in opinion and disposition towards it, with those whose equals and associates they aspire to be.

5th. *That there are mysteries in Christianity is not seldom allowed as a pretext for rejecting it.*

It has been usual to demand explanations of facts, as a condition without

which they were not to be believed, on whatever testimony affirmed. Happily for science and piety, that habit is beginning to be exploded, for certainly our faith must be circumscribed within very narrow bounds, were it limited to things and events, all particulars regarding which we thoroughly understood. Yet some persons to whom you propound the Christian religion, will at once begin to question and cavil as to the "how" and the "why,"—calling upon you to answer to their satisfaction every inquiry which their curiosity or opposition may suggest, respecting the modes, and reasons, and circumstances of the matters you endeavour to press upon their attention, and who, if you cannot give all the explanation they call for, will turn from you and the Gospel, with scornful disdain.

I deny not that there are mysteries in Christianity, but I deny that mysteries are peculiar to it, or that mysteries are incompatible with undoubted and acknowledged truth. How much that is inscrutable is admitted in the belief of a God! a being that is omnipresent and omniscient, is beyond the grasp of human or any other intelligence, besides himself. Who can understand eternal existence—a duration that had no commencement and will have no end? yet who doubts eternity? or what opinion would be formed of him who should assert that a period had been when strictly nothing was, or that a period would arrive when strictly nothing should be? The doctrines of the incarnation, sacrifice and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, which form the distinctive character and peculiar glory of the Christian system, are in many respects mysterious. Ah! who can thoroughly trace out the wisdom, or the love, which they display! The union of the Deity with humanity in the Saviour's person, is a fact beyond the reach of our powers to explain. But are we to withhold credit from the statement that a fact is, because *how* it is, is not made palpable to our vision? in other words, are we warranted to deny as not existing, or as what cannot be, every thing which we do not ourselves clearly and fully perceive? If the principle be admitted, then let man deny the reality of his corporeal frame, for where is the anatomist that has comprehended all the parts, arrangements and processes of the human body? If the principle be admitted, let man deny

that he has mind, and that mind and matter are so united in his constitution as reciprocally and powerfully to affect each other—for who can tell us what mind is? or how, or where, the thinking faculty and the material organizations are combined and sympathize? If we admit the principle, we must deny that the sun shines, that the planets move, that the grass grows, that there is aught that lives. Wherever I turn my eyes, through nature's vast and varied domains, the more steadily I gaze the more I see of mystery most multiform and profound. And did the Gospel include no mysteries the circumstance would be strongly presumptive against its pretensions—would prove that it was not the workmanship of Deity.

6th. *The diversities of opinion current among the professed disciples of Christianity operate as a stumbling-block in the way of its reception.*

And with no more justice than the diversities of opinion among the votaries of natural science militate against the belief that the world is of God's creation.

But upon this or upon other topics that might be noticed under this part of the argument, I shall not enlarge. The conclusion from what has been advanced in the course of it is, that Christianity is commonly rejected by the operation of causes which are not of a nature to warrant its rejection.

III. My next and last general remark is, that THE PROOFS ON WHICH THE CLAIMS OF CHRISTIANITY REST AFFORD HIGH MORAL CERTAINTY OF ITS TRUTH.

1. *It bears in itself indications of Divine authorship.*

We might safely challenge the impugners of the Gospel, to account rationally for its existence, on any other supposition than that of its superhuman origin. Is it credible then that an imposter, a man of craft and cunning, actuated by any low or depraved intention, would have invented such a system? Could a man of ordinary powers of mind—could a man, or an assemblage of men, of the greatest amount of intellectual endowment—contrive a system so vast, so sublime, so perfectly harmonizing with itself and with all ascertained facts in the economy of the universe? a system so unique, so admirably well adjusted to its professed designs, and those designs and the means for securing them so diverse from and far transcending anything that

ever was proposed besides? a system that affords developments of what is so truly godlike? Or if Christ the son of a Jewish carpenter, with his associates the fishermen of Gallilee, framed this system to pawn it upon mankind as a cheat, how is it that another system, or many others, equal to it have not been devised? if *they* invented *this*, why have not the ancient sages of Greece and Italy, or the boasting sceptics of modern times, contrived and made public a system far excelling it in grandeur of conception, in wise arrangement, or in moral beauty and glory? I doubt not that in proportion as Christianity is understood, it will be seen and felt to possess inherent tokens of being the "handy-work" of God, as numerous and convincing as those which are exhibited around us in the wondrous magnificent structure of the earth and heavens.

2nd. *Christianity is vouched by the fulfilment of prophecy.*

Genuine prophecy fulfilled attests the existence of God, and that the prophecy itself is a divine revelation, because foreknowledge, not derived from reasonable calculations and conjectures founded on what already exists, is a prerogative of God alone. Moreover, what prophecy, shown by its accomplishment to be a Divine revelation, commends to our belief, must be received as of Divine authority.

The Jewish Scriptures abound with predictions regarding nations, families and individuals, which have been fulfilled to the very letter—predictions delivered centuries upon centuries before the events they announced took place, before the persons or countries they regarded had existence. Prophecies delivered when there neither was nor could be any conjecture entertained that the events would take place, but when on the contrary, nothing could be more unlikely or even impossible according to all rational calculation than that they should occur. Prophecies whose accomplishment depended on the most minute and unlooked-for individual contingencies, or which required the most stupendous revolutions that could not be effected without a combination of endlessly varied and remote circumstances.

These prophetic oracles had, as their principal theme of announcement, the appearance of an illustrious, yet for a

while depressed, personage, sustaining the character of Saviour, by whose death, mediation and dominion, unspeakable divine benefits were to be vouchsafed to the human family; and to him these oracles demanded that Jews and Gentiles should bow. They marked the date, place, and other circumstances of his advent—his parentage, condition, doings, character, trials—numerous particulars connected with his death and subsequent resurrection—with astonishingly exact precision. Comparing these prophetic descriptions with the details of history regarding Jesus Christ we find a correspondence so obvious, so complete, as leaves no room for scruple in regard to his identity. We have only to look at them and be assured that the Messiah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New Testament, are one.

He himself and his apostles commissioned by him prophesied also. *He* foretold his own death and resurrection, the destruction of Jerusalem and demolition of the Jewish polity by the Roman armies, the possession and exercise of miraculous powers by his disciples—and all came to pass as had been foretold. *They* predicted the rise of various heresies, the ingathering of the gentiles to the church, and the overthrow of the Roman empire then in the zenith of its strength,—all either has been fulfilled, or is in course of accomplishment at the present day.

3rd. Miracles are joined with prophecies in another form of divine attestation, but equally decided in behalf of Christianity.

To understand and appreciate the bearing of this branch of evidence all that men have to concede is the veracity of the Gospel narrative—and we cannot withhold faith from the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as historians entitled to credit in what they relate, unless we also reject as unworthy of confidence every other record of the events which occurred in the world during that period. The proofs of authenticity and credibility accompanying these documents are incomparably greater than can be adduced in favour of any others of similar antiquity.

Assuming then the veracity of these narratives it is undeniable that certain works appealed to by our Saviour as attestations of his mission and doctrine,

were really done. To be satisfied that they were wrought by special divine agency you have but to observe their nature. In instances not a few the maimed were made whole, the dead were raised to life, and small portions of food were multiplied to an abundance that more than satisfied the wants of hungry thousands. These and other works altogether beyond the reach of human effort to achieve, were performed without the intervention of a second cause, and, in many cases, when the visible agent was not present at the place of action. These works could not have been wrought without the cognizance of the Deity, for they were his own doings. They were performed avowedly as evidence, clear and decisive, that Christianity was true and from heaven. That also must have been known to God. And what must be our ideas of the Divine wisdom, goodness, justice, and faithfulness, if we imagine it possible he should have concurred to perform the works, if the testimony and claims they were appealed to to confirm, were not of Divine origin and authority? These works bespeak with undeniable certainty that there is a God, and that the Gospel is from him.

4th. The resurrection of Christ combines in it the evidence supplied by prophecy and that supplied by miracles.

That it occurred we are assured of not merely by the word of the Evangelists and Apostles, whose writings as we have said are entitled to implicit credit as historical documents, but likewise by a combination of circumstances, which, so far as the nature of the subject will admit, amounts to absolute and positive certainty.

It is allowed that Jesus died—that he was crucified under the government of Pontius Pilate in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and actually expired. He was buried. The sepulchre was sealed and guarded to prevent the removal of the body. The body was not there after the morning of the third day.

The account given of its disappearance by one party was, that his disciples came by night and stole him away while the guards slept. Is this credible? How came the guards to sleep—to sleep so profoundly as not to be disturbed by the breaking open of the tomb? If they were so asleep, how could they know by

whom the body was taken away? If the disciples stole it, why were they not sought for, brought to justice for the theft, and the corpse produced?

The account given by the other party was, that he was alive again. The persons affirming this were competent, by previous habits of intimacy with him, to judge of his identity. They were not forward to believe the report that he was risen, but instituted a close and satisfactory investigation before they gave credit to it. They heard his voice; they marked his actings; they looked upon him with their eyes; they handled him with their hands. They had ample opportunities for deliberate examination—he remained with them for nearly six weeks. They were not few in number. They were men of sound and strong understanding, and integrity above suspicion. They never discovered any doubt or misgiving as to the conclusion they had come to;—not one of them gave the slightest intimation that imposition had been practised. When they had no worldly purpose to serve by it—when privations, disgrace, imprisonment, banishment, sufferings, death lay before them—they constantly affirmed that it was as they had declared. Multitudes, living in the place and neighbourhood, and placed in circumstances most eligible for judging of the case—believed their testimony though they exposed themselves to great sacrifices and self-denials by avowing their faith.

The conduct of both parties indicated with which the consciousness of truth lay. The one sought to put down the report and belief of the resurrection by authority and persecution. The other courted inquiry—laid open all parts and bearings of the matter—sought to inspire faith by argument and evidence alone.

Moreover, all the proofs from miracles and prophecy which attest the apostles to have been divinely commissioned and inspired, confirm, as of Divine verity, their testimony to the resurrection of Christ.

That event was repeatedly foretold by him, which it could not have been, without a communication from God; and its occurrence thus sealed his claims. It was miraculous; it could not have occurred but by direct and extraordinary operation of God; to it our Saviour appealed, and on it his apostles rested, as attesting the truth of his religion; and the religion so attested must be divine.

In examining the evidence of Christianity, the great difficulty seems to lie, not in discovering enough to warrant our belief, but to grasp the variety, and amount, and power, of that which is placed before us. Signs of weakness, and credulity, and otherwise defective or perverted understanding, are to be sought and found rather with infidelity than with faith. It would be easy to show that the things mysterious, the things absurd, the things unaccountable, the things contrary to experience, the things absolutely incredible, according to all recognized rules of probability, which man must believe in order to be an infidel, do far surpass all that has been urged as objections to the belief of Christianity.

I have intimated my fears that there is more infidelity abroad, than appears on the surface of society. If any persons present are tempted to question the truth of the Gospel, I call upon them to sit down and examine calmly, honestly, prayerfully, its nature—to sit down and examine calmly, honestly, prayerfully, its evidences. Think not that it contains no indications of Divine wisdom, sanctity, and grace, because you have not yet perceived them. Think not that the arguments for its Divine origin are inconclusive, because you do not see them to be of sufficient weight—but apply yourselves to cool, thorough, patient, impartial, and devout inquiry on the subject. Dare not to become a sceptic till you have mastered, and duly weighed, all that has been urged in favor of the Gospel. Dare not to become a sceptic till you have, by persevering and accurate analysis traced out and placed before you the whole system recorded in the New Testament. Dare not to yield your soul to scepticism, till you have traversed the entire range of the controversy, and ascertained all that can be advanced in favour of the religion of the Bible. A Christian complete and sincere, infidelity itself will tell you, you may be without peril, nay with much profit now, altho' Christianity were false. An infidel you cannot be, (infidelity itself must admit), without being deprived of much pure and sublime enjoyment here, to be obtained by believing the Gospel, whether the Gospel be true or not. An infidel you cannot be without exposing yourself to a risk tremendously awful as to your destiny hereafter, on the peradventure that, notwithstanding all your wishes and

convictions to the contrary, the Gospel may be true. Therefore dare not to trust yourself with scepticism while there exists within your reach any shadow of probability that Christianity is from above. Yield not to the tempter till you have read all that Leland has written, all that Leslie has written, all that Butler has written, all that Lardner has written, all that Chalmers has written, all that all other able and learned and honest advocates of the divinity of the Christian faith have written, in illustration of its verity and claims. Why, my friends, the length of time and amount of mental labour required for man to attain the standing of a rational infidel, exceeds what any one has at his command—the years of a Methuselah, and powers of the highest order, would not qualify for the terrible achievement.

But, my hearers, think not that a conviction or confession of the truth of the Gospel is all that it demands, or is sufficient to interest you in its blessings. It must be received as “the word of God which effectually worketh in them that believe.” Its contents must be recognised as the light of the mind, the joy of the heart, the life and law of our inner being.

And now I place before you the two contrasted claimants on your regard, whose respective merits have been briefly discussed—

There is infidelity! What says she? “Give me thine heart: I will allow thee to indulge thy pride, and worldliness, and selfishness, and other evil propensities and appetites, whatsoever they may be, that have lodging in thy depraved heart. I will permit and aid thee in the indulgence of them all until, if thou likest it, they acquire a predominance that shall make thee a very fiend incarnate—a fiend in doing and in destiny.” Will you yield to the destroyer?

Not, surely, till you have seen and heard Christianity. Ah! there she is, with form how full of grace, and truth and beauty, and majesty, and divinity! “My son,” she cries, “give me thine heart: I will humble thy pride; I will teach thee self-denial; I will crucify thee to the world; I will satisfy thee with peace that earth could never give; I will lead thee to the Lamb of God once slain to take away sin; I will lift thy affections above the beggarly allurements of time

and sense; to associations, desires, and hopes, lofty as the heaven of heavens. I will bring down to thee, while thou sojournest below, the gracious presence of the King of glory, and will introduce thee to his fellowship. I will set on thee the seal of Jehovah’s love; I will make thee his child, and thou shalt daily walk with God. I will be to thee a counsellor, a friend, a guide, a stay, a comforter, a benefactor, that will never fail thee even in the hour of thy greatest extremity. And when thou comest to die, that crisis above all others most trying to man, I will kindle the light of heaven around thy bed, and will open before thee the gates of perfect and immortal joy. Borne on my wing thou shalt ascend to the sanctuary in the skies, and there I will establish thee for ever in the blissful vision and worship of the Deity.”

To which pleading will you surrender? Christianity admonishes, “he that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” “Oh!” says one, “I will not be an infidel; I cannot become an infidel; the thought is beyond endurance.” I tell you that, whatever be your feelings regarding it now, Christianity will disown you, and infidelity will seize upon you at last as its victim, and plunge you into the abyss of woe, if you do not give your heart to the Gospel. The infidel is an *unwise* man: he hazards upon a dubious peradventure the forfeiture of untold good. The infidel is a *cruel* man; he inflicts on himself calamities beyond imagination great. The infidel is a *wicked* man; he denies the truth of God, and puts from him as things of no account the revelations of redeeming love and the hopes of celestial glory. O let us beware lest any of us be found at last, while Christians in name, infidels in heart.

Were the preacher called this morning into the presence of his God to render an account of each that has heard this address, what answer, my hearer, would he have to give regarding thee? It seems to him as though he could not go, even to heaven, himself unless he took with him the pledge that you were all Christians indeed.—My prayer is, that the Gospel may not have been commended to you in vain—that you may all understand it, and believe it, and live for ever. Amen.

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God’—1 Cor i. 23,

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REV. RICHARD S. BROOKE.

VEN. B. W. DISNEY

GOD GLORIFIED BY HIS PEOPLE.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL MARINER'S CHURCH, KINGSTOWN, ON SUNDAY,
OCTOBER 9, 1836

BY THE REV. RICHARD S. BROOKE. A.M.
Chaplain.

JER. xiii. 16.

“ Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness.”

THE Prophet Jeremiah was a peculiar person, raised up by God at a peculiar time, to suit and to serve a peculiar dispensation. He had great variety of character, as will be seen from his writings: at one time we find him a Boanerges—a son of thunder, at another time he is a Barnabas—a son of consolation. Now he is filled with holy indignation and wrath against stiffnecked and rebellious Israel, and cries “ Woe is me, my mother, thou hast borne me a man of strife:” now he melts into tenderness and says, “ Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” How strong and vehement is the prophet in the words of my text, “ Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and your feet

stumble on the dark mountains.”—Yet how tender and pathetic is the next verse, “ But if ye will not hear it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride; and mine eye shall weep sore, and run down with tears, because the Lord's flock is carried away captive.”

These texts are national and historical in a literal sense, but they are generally applied to the professing Church of Christ in a spiritual point of view. May we receive them as such, dear friends, this day, and may God bring them home to our hearts, may his Spirit be with us while we are together, a teaching Spirit to him that speaks, and an applying Spirit to them who listen, so that the word may do its work to God's glory, and profit “ being mixed with faith in those that hear it.”

The text contains two subjects :

I. *An exhortation*—"give glory to God."

II. *A motive*—"before he cause darkness."

Before we ask what is meant by giving glory to God, we will first prove that God's essential and incommunicable glory is *not* meant here: man could never reach to *that* glory, for 'tis said of God that "He dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto:" man could never alter *that* glory, for God says, "I am the Lord, I change not,"—"I am that I am:" man could never add to *that* glory, for we find the "man after God's own heart" confessing, "My goodness extendeth not to thee:" much less could man diminish from *that* glory, for thus saith the Lord, "My glory will I not give to another."—If you were to bring ten thousand torches into the light of the mid day sun, you could not add to, or diminish from one beam of its meridian splendour; no, it would still shine on in unalterable, and unapproachable majesty;—and thus it is with God and his people; our most shining actions can never alter or affect his essential glory.—The Church shines alone by light reflected from the glorious countenance of its God, when he lifts up his face upon her, and puts his candle within her—a lamp in a pitcher of clay. If we then inquire, what is meant by giving glory to God, we answer, to ascribe glory to his name, to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, to show forth his glory, to confess him before men, not only with our lips, but in our lives, to believe on him, to fear him, to put our whole trust in him, to call upon him, to honour his holy name and his word, and to serve him truly all the days of our life. But all these can be traced to *two* fountains, from which they flow as streams from their source: these are "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," and he who possesses these, brings, through Divine grace, glory to God.

1st. By *faith in Christ* we glorify God. Be not deceived, dear friends, for there are many kinds of faith, called so, which

are not genuine faith, and which bring no glory to God. There is that sleepy, self satisfied, inert belief, whose only virtue is that it never takes the trouble to question any thing;—"the devils believe and tremble," but they who hold this faith, believe and *slumber*:—like Moab they settle on their beds; we are told the Bereans of old with a noble ardour "searched the scriptures," but these search for nothing. We read of the mariners of Joppa, who *cried* to God in their danger, but these never ascend to a cry, they only speak softly or say nothing. They forget that the life of faith is a fight, a race, a strife. This kind of belief, therefore, brings no glory to God, but brings glory to Satan. Oh! if I speak to such here to day, I would say, "What meanest thou oh sleeper," lift your head from the lap of this unsanctified slumber, and burst your green withers, "awake, arise, and Christ shall give you light!" Again, there is an unsanctified faith, stronger than the former, and higher, and more hopeful, yet it brings no glory to God. They who possess it say, "we believe," "we agree," "we assent:"—at times they are touched by the ordinances—they melt, they glow beneath the word; but they have not the "root of the matter in them;" they have no pleasure in the things of God; the *heart* is untouched; and when the enemy comes in like a flood, not having an anchor beyond the veil, they are swept off their feet, and drift with the world's stream of heartless pleasures, of unsanctified customs, and vain amusements. Now this belief brings no glory to God, but much to the world, who watch and rejoice over cases of this kind. Oh! if such be here to day, I tell you, you are like Naaman bowing in the house of Rimmon, but you have not his peace; no, you are unhappy—I have seldom met a subject of this kind who was not so—you have one foot on the land, and one on the water, you are a house divided against itself, you are trying to serve two masters; may the Lord

bring you home and glorify himself by your perfect conversion !

There is again that timid, cautious, imbecile faith, which is always fearing to go too far—yet we hear of “the angels desiring to *look into* these things;” which bears on its neighbour’s arm, and not on the arm of God; which looks here and looks there, for creature encouragement; which decrys enthusiasm, which talks much of morality, while the lives of those who profess it are often libels upon holiness. This faith brings no glory to God, nor no glory to man; an illustration of it is to be found in the Apostle Peter when he said, “Be it far from thee Lord.” If such a character should be here this day, oh! may the Lord deliver you from this Laodicean feeling! remember “’tis good to be zealously affected in a good cause;” oh! for a greater measure of simple enthusiasm towards God, and something of the mind of him whose “zeal for his Father’s house consumed him,” whose love for his people was strong as death—whose “jealousy” for his elect was “cruel as the grave.”

Let us now proceed to consider that true faith in the Lord Jesus, which *does* bring glory to God. 1st. It is his gift, and God is glorified *in his* gifts. 2dly. It is “the substance of things hoped for,” brought home to the believer’s mind; and these being things of glory beyond the veil, God is glorified by their manifestation. 3dly. It is “the evidence of things not seen,” and thus brings glory to God, because it takes God at his word, and “sets to its seal that God is true,” and glorifies him in his truth. 4thly. Through it we are saved; it opens a window in the soul’s dark dungeon, and lets in the glories of a crucified and an exalted Saviour; it opens a fountain of new-born hope in the mind, and that fountain is “Christ in us the hope of glory;” it brings back God’s image, and restores in Christ what we lost in Adam. And thus through faith as a means, is God

glorified in the salvation of sinners.

Now mark the characteristics of this faith. It is a *lowly* faith, and thus brings glory to God; it casts man down by shewing him the unutterable distance between him and his Maker, and then the unspeakable love which filled up all that distance, by the atoning work of Jesus. It strips man of his purple and fine linen, and sends him to sit as a beggar at heaven’s gate:—it makes God’s saints cry out “unclean, unclean!”—it made Job cry, “I am vile”—it made David ask for “a clean heart”—it made Isaiah say “woe is me”—it made Jeremiah exclaim “I am a child”—it constrained Daniel to pray “O Lord forgive!”—it caused Peter to cry “I am a sinful man!” and made Paul exclaim, “Oh! wretched man that I am!”

It is a *living* faith; it comes from a living root, even the “root and the offspring of David”—it comes from “Christ who *is* our life”—it lives *for* God—it lives *to* God—it lives *on* God—“the manna which came down from heaven,” and *with* God, for “its life is hid with Christ in God.”

It is a *loving* faith; and thus brings glory to God—it shews us the glories of Jesus, and makes us love him who first loved *us*—it brings love to man for Christ’s sake; and thus brings glory to God in the fulfilment of his law—for “love is the fulfilling of the law.”

It is a *working* faith:—and thus brings glory to God—it “works by love”—it works for itself, like Nehemiah’s soldiers—the sword of the Spirit in one hand, while with the other it builds the walls of Jerusalem—it works for the Lord, and finds his service perfect freedom—it works for its neighbours, they are sick and it visits them; and when all this is done, it feels that nothing is done, and that it is an unprofitable servant. It is a *watching* and a *waiting* faith—it watches for the coming of the Lord—it watches and “waits more than they that watch for the morning.” It counts the degree,

on the great dial of time, it cries "Watchman, what of the night, what of the night?"—it watches "till the shadows flee away, and the day break"—it looks out of its lattice likethe mother of Siserá, and says, "why tarry his chariot wheels"—it watches itself, lest it stumble or fall—it watches its inward man, that every high or swelling thought may be brought into captivity beneath the meek yoke of Jesus—it watches and prays, lest it should enter into temptation, and is anxious to watch during the little hour of this life, while its dear Master is gone yonder, (into the heavens) to pray for his people. These are, therefore, some of the marks of a true faith. Dear friends, examine yourselves by them, and remember the emphatic words of Scripture—"Without faith it is impossible to please Him."

2ndly. *By Repentance we glorify, or bring glory to God.* Now, what is repentance? Be not deceived, dear friends, many think they have repented, whose repentance brings no glory to God; mere sorrow for sin is not repentance: Judas repented, yet brought no glory to God: mere tears are no evidence of repentance; the tears with which Mary wiped the Saviour's feet, did not or could not wash away her sin; but they flowed from a fountain of love, which Christ had opened up in her heart—and because she loved much, she was forgiven. A mere determination to reform is no certain proof of a true repentance:—we often hear people, after great sin, great sorrow, or great sickness, saying—I am determined to reform—I am determined to turn over a new leaf in the volume of my existence. Now this self determination is not indicative of a true repentance; the words of the poor publican would better suit such a case—"God be merciful to me a sinner!" Mere excitability is no proof of repentance, for it brings no *lasting* glory to God:—the people of Israel, when God, with his glorious arm, divided the waves of the Red Sea, that there might be a way for the ransomed to pass

through, under the strong excitation of that triumphant hour, sang praises to God; and afterwards we read, "that they forgot Him, and murmured against the Holy One in the wilderness:" the inhabitants of Jerusalem, under the strong excitement produced by the raising of Lazarus from the dead, shouted Hosannas and blessings to the Saviour, as he entered their city: "Blessed be he," cried they, "that cometh in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest;" while, alas! in a short time afterwards, when this transitory feeling had subsided, the voice of adoration was succeeded by that of execration, while with loud and eager cries they exclaimed, "Away with him, crucify him, crucify him!" It will not do, therefore, to follow Jesus merely for his miracles, or for the "loaves and fishes"—nor even merely for "the gracious words which proceed out of his mouth;" but they who love him, must "continue with him in his tribulation;" they must "follow him whithersoever he goeth," and they must be found "sitting clothed and in their right mind at his feet." But, the *true repentance*, by which we bring glory to God, is a saving work wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, producing a renovation and re-creation of the inward man—bringing back in Christ the image lost in Adam, and making "all things new." We will best explain it by stating some examples of it from Scripture. After David had fallen so grievously in the matter of Uriah, he repented, to give glory to God, as we find in the 51st Psalm—"Create in me, O God! a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within me!" After Manasseh, the king of Judah, had sinned so deeply against the Lord, as we find recorded in the 33d chapter of 2d Chronicles, the Lord sent him a rod of affliction, and he repented, to give glory to God, and "Gat him to his God right humbly." The thief on the cross, after he had reviled the Saviour, was found, by God's grace, a penitent at the eleventh hour, and

repented to give glory to God. Saul, the persecuter, was struck to the earth, from which he arose a worshipper of that Saviour, whom once he blasphemed—and Peter's tears flowed from a fountain of true penitence; his Master's look of meek reproach went to his heart; like a sword it opened the springs of godly sorrow, and then and ever afterwards, through his long life, "when he thought thereon, he wept." Oh! how truly do these few examples bring glory to God! The evidence or characteristic mark of this true repentance is *holiness*; we give glory to God by a holy *spirit*,—"Glorify him," says the Apostle, "in your bodies and *spirits*, which are his." We give glory to God by a holy *life*—"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and *glorify* your Father, who is in heaven." We give glory to God by holy *lips*, for the Spirit, speaking by the Psalmist, says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." Oh! try yourselves, dear friends, by these tests, whether you have indeed repented to give glory to God, and remember that "Unless you repent, ye shall all likewise perish," and, "Without holiness"—the evidence of repentance—"no man shall see the Lord."

We now come to examine the *motive assigned here*—"Before he cause darkness". God never *positively* causes darkness, for he is not the author of evil—he does so *negatively*. The clouds and mists ascending from the earth obscure the light of the sun's beams from our sight, nevertheless, far above those mists and shadows, though invisible to us, that glorious orb is shining as undimmed and unbroken as before. Thus it is with God and his sinful people—our iniquities go up as a thick mist from the face of the earth, and our transgressions as a thick cloud and separate between us and our God. We sit in darkness of our own creating; God in his love would say "Let there be light;" but man's sin intercepts between him and the shining of his Maker's countenance.

What then is this darkness?

1. There is a spiritual darkness in man's soul, of *despair*. Such is that which brooded over the spirit of the suicide Judas. One would hope that cases of this kind are rarely to be met with; but can we not fancy that after repeated warnings, and repeated convictions of sin, and repeated opportunities of grace, door after door opened, and knock after knock unheeded, and cry after cry disregarded—can we not fancy the still rebellious heart listening with dismay to the retreating footsteps of God, and feeling that though God had spoken once, and twice he had heard the same, yet, because he called and was refused, he stretched out his hand and was disregarded, that now the day of grace had passed, and the day of "darkness, and gloom, and desolation had come as a whirlwind?" Oh! dear friends, you who have the means of grace so freely offered to you, oh slight them not. God forbid that the darkness of despair should ever come on any of you; while you have life and light, oh "make your calling and election sure," and give "glory to God" by faith and repentance "before he cause darkness!"

Again, there is a *mental* darkness caused by disease of the body affecting and effacing the mind. Have you not seen how often a fever can wipe away, as if with a sponge, all records from the brain?—have you not seen how palsy with its cruel night-mare weight can crush to imbecility the loftiest energies of the mind?—have you not seen how madness can disturb and pervert the powers of the intellect?—are not such examples common amongst us? The greatest genius that Ireland ever produced, though, alas! most unsanctified in the use of its powers—the patriot, the politician, the poet, the satirist—after having lived a life of intellectual eminence, died in the darkness of mental imbecility: need I declare his name—Jonathan Swift—like a scathed and blasted tree he withered at the top! Oh! dear friends, God

forbid this kind of darkness should ever come upon you ! but who can say he is exempt from such things. Oh ! then, give glory to God by faith and repentance, that should this visitation come, it might only be a passing trouble, and though a brief cloud might shadow the mind in this life—*no cloud* or darkness could dim the lustre of those characters of light and glory, with which the hand of God has written your name in the Lamb's book of life !

Again, there is a *mortal* darkness—the darkness of death. Oh ! give glory to God before he cause *this* darkness ! who can tell the dimness of the chambers of death ? We can only judge of the substance by the shadow it casts. To a believer, death has no sting, for Christ has plucked it away—to a believer death has no gloom, for Christ has passed through its dark vaults and left a track of light behind him ; but who can paint the darkness that settles round the deathbed of an ignorant or unbelieving sinner, who dies knowing nothing, fearing nothing, hoping nothing ! (and how little do these two qualities of ignorance and infidelity differ, the former is passive, the latter active, unbelief, but both meet the same doom, the blackness of darkness for ever). Look at the deathbed of the infidel—a “ leap in the dark ! ”—an “ everlasting slumber ! ”—how descriptive, how awfully descriptive, his own phraseology ! the bed he lies on and dies on—the bounds of his existence—the grave of his soul. Alas ! how fearful—a high black wall seems to span his mortal life—no strong wings of faith to raise him above it—no sweet voice heard beyond it, crying “ Come, for all things are ready,” calling from heaven, “ Come up hither ; ”—no conquering Saviour to cast it down ; hope's radiant eye quenched, the pulse of joy ceased, the heart of love cold and silent—*gloom, gloom, and utter darkness !* Oh ! dear friends, if you do not know God in Christ, as God only can be savingly known ; if a single doubt of a revelation is darkling over your

mind—oh come to Him, even this night, as a child would come to its parent's knee to be taught of him, and give him glory by faith and repentance, before the darkness of a death of ignorance or of unbelief come upon you !

Again, there is an *immortal* darkness—the darkness of hell. Oh ! give glory to God before he cause *this* darkness. it is called out in Scripture—outer as respects God and heaven, all joy and all comfort—“ I shall behold him, but not *nigh*,” said the reprobate prophet. But 'tis *inward* darkness also—the darkness of the inward bosom full of remorse—the darkness of the inward mind full of despair—the darkness of the inward spirit full of anguish—the darkness of their prison-house, where everlasting pain is their portion and where the sins of time will be changed into scorpions to bite through eternity. Oh ! how they will wail, and howl, and gnash their teeth—how they will ask, with unanswered prayer, that the fiery roof of their dungeon may fall and crush them ! but no, no, life is their portion—intense life, exquisite life, nervous life, sensitive life, shrinking life, shrieking life ! for the worm *will not* die and the fire *will not* be quenched ! Oh ! dear friends, knowing the terrors of the Lord in his revealed word, I would fain persuade you to “ escape for your life.” “ How can you escape if you neglect the great salvation ” which God freely tenders you through the Son of his love ? Give glory, then, oh ! give glory to the Lord your God, by faith and repentance, before he cause this darkness or this doom.

Oh ! *give Him glory*—all creation gives Him glory, and shall man, the constituted lord of all, refuse it to him ? The heavens declare his glory, and the stars which he calleth by their names ;—the sun which he hath made and ordained goeth forth, and in voiceless majesty from east to west proclaims his glory ;—the moon, “ walking in her brightness ” in the silence of heaven, tells of his glory ;—the everlasting hills which

strike their roots beneath the deep, and pierce the clouds with their summits—these are monuments of his might—they give him glory ;—the rivers which intersect the globe, and fertilize and enrich their banks—these are types of his goodness and the riches of his grace—these give him glory ;—the sea which he hath “ set in bounds” and “ set a watch over,” as old as creation, and vexed with ten thousand storms, yet ever fresh and beautiful and young—the sea lifts up its majestic waves,—and there is a voice in every wave—and gives him glory ;—“ fire and hail, snow and vapour, stormy wind fulfilling his word”—these glorify him ;—every leaf in the forest, every fruit in the plain, every flower in the valley, every green herb in the field—these glorify him ; the birds of the air, the “ wild beasts of the forest,” he knows them all—they are his, and “ so are the cattle upon a thousand hills”—these all glorify thee, oh God ! “ in wisdom has thou made them all”—“ behold they are fearfully and wonderfully made”—“ behold they are very good !”

Oh give him glory !—ye give it to each other ; the *wise* ones of the earth have their glory, and the *strong* ones have their glory, and the *wealthy* ones have their glory, and the *great* ones have their glory, and the *lovely* ones have their glory ; but what are these in God's sight ?—their wisdom is foolishness—their strength is weakness—their wealth is dust—their greatness is vanity—their loveliness, alas ! is corruption. These are imperfect and transitory properties—these are glories of the creature. Turn ye and give glory to God in *His* attributes, imperishable and everlasting as they are, and shining as they do to the eye of faith in moral and spiritual glory. Give him glory, for he is *Holy*—he is “ glorious in holiness ;”—holy Father, holy Son, holy Ghost—thrice holy—“ in whose sight the heavens are not clean, and who has charged his angels with folly.” Give him glory for he is *just*—his justice

demanding a glorious victim, and the glory of his love paid it—paid it for your sakes, oh ! give him glory. Give him glory for he is *longsuffering*—his longsuffering is great ; if we tread upon a worm—the meanest thing in creation—it will turn upon us ; yet, may there not be some here to-day who hath trodden the blood of the incarnate Lord under their feet, and yet still, 'tis the glory of his Divine patience to love the sinner while he hates the sin which keeps him from him. Give him glory for he is *loving* ; we are told of Codrus, the Athenian, who died for his country—we are told of Curtrius, the Roman, who embraced destruction to benefit his native city ; these died, and a grateful and enthusiastic people wept over them and embalmed their memory in the page of history. But our dear Master died for his enemies—he loved those who sinned against him—he did good to them that hated him, and his last breath was a prayer to his Father for those who despitefully used him and persecuted him ! Give him glory for he is *lovely* ; “ he is fairer than the children of men”—“ full of grace are his lips,” “ he is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person”—“ he is the rose of Sharon,” “ the lily of the valley,” “ the king in his beauty,” “ chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely.” Oh ! dear friends, may God give you the faith to see him as such, and then you will bring glory to God.

But if you *will* not give him glory for these things, the time will come when you *must* ; for he is *true*, and he is mighty, He has said, “ The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God ;” and his own right arm will get him the victory over disobedient and stiff-necked sinners ; and as they are cast forth from his presence, and as they fall from the threshold of heaven, and as the burning pit yawns to receive them, the choral song of millions of adoring saints and angels will peal

through heaven as they shout and cry
 " True and righteous are thy judgments,
 O Lord God Almighty, just and true are
 thy ways thou King of saints!"

And dear friends, remember, as a
 further incentive for you to repent, to give
 glory to God by faith in Jesus, that the
 darkness of death—that "night in which
 no man can work"—may come upon you
suddenly, like a thief in the night—like
 lightning shining under heaven—like
 a gin and a snare. Remember, too,
 that darkness may come upon you *speedily*,
 for "in the midst of life we are in death"
 —we have no lease of our lives, and
 "which of us by taking thought can add
 one cubit unto his existence?" Remember
 again that *darkness* must come *certainly*,
 it may not come to-day or to-morrow,
 but it is sure to come at last; in
 this world of uncertainties nothing so
 certain as death. Oh! then give glory
 to God before he ease this darkness.

The whole professing world is divided
 into two classes—those who are savingly
 converted to God by the Spirits' showing
 them a dying and an exalted Jesus, and
 those who are not. Suffer me to address
 practically first, some of the latter class.
 I would speak to the gross and hardened
 sinner—surely you bring no glory to God,
 but quite the reverse; your shame is your
 glory, and you glory in your shame.
 Oh! put aside those things from which
 you have no profit, "for the end of these
 things is death;" "wash you" in the
 fountain of Jesus' blood; "make you
 clean" in the laver of the Spirit's rege-
 neration; ask for grace to "cease to do
 evil;" ask for wisdom to "learn to do
 well;" go into God by the new and living
 way which Christ has made for you; lay
 your mouth in the dust and cry "unclean,
 unclean"—"Jesus, Master, have mercy on
 us!" and "though your sins be as
 scarlet they shall be white as snow."

I would say a word, too, to those who
 are styled the respectable and moral
 members of society, but who are following
 the course and guided by the customs of

this world—to whom do you give glory
 by your life and conversation? Not,
 surely, to God, but to a vain world which
 is lying in sin and darkness. The decree
 is gone forth that you should *not* worship
 the golden image which has been set up
 in the plain of this world—and alas! are
 you not all and each bowing down to the
 idol? Oh! know you not that the
 "fashion of this world passeth away,"
 and the "friendship of this world is
 enmity with God!" Turn, then, and give
 glory to God. O! my dear young friends,
 who are floating down the stream of
 pleasure—wasting thought—killing time
 —pursuing the bubble-happiness, reckless
 of God, and ignorant of the Gospel of
 his dear Son;—if you have any value for
 your everlasting interests, any wish for
 heaven, or any dread of hell, turn ye,
 turn ye and give glory to God by faith
 and repentance.

And lastly, I would say a concluding
 word to God's people. God is glorified
 in your salvation—give him glory in your
 souls, by ascribing to his free grace all the
 work of that salvation from first to last—
 give him glory as your Alpha as well as
 your Omega—"give him glory in the
 highest, and thanks at the remembrance
 of his holiness"—give him glory with
 your neighbours—say unto them, like
 David, "Come and see what the Lord
 has done for my soul;" say to them like
 Moses, "Come with us and we will do
 thee good;" tell them how true and
 faithful he is; tell them, like Joshua, that
 "not one thing has failed of all the good
 things which the Lord your God spake
 concerning you, all are come to pass;"
 tell them of the Father's electing love—
 of the Son's dying love—of the Spirit's
 enlightening love; tell them of the glory
 to be revealed when Christ will come to
 gather his saints, and finish Redem-
 ption, and complete his Church. Dear
 brethren, comfort your hearts with medi-
 tating on these things; he hath shown
 unto you their glory; even in this your
 pilgrim-age, in the glass of his word, and

by the teaching of his Spirit, things that eye hath not seen or ear heard have been revealed unto you in his word ; but oh ! these are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall follow, “when you shall awake up after his likeness and be satisfied therewith !” all will be glorious there ; there will be a glorious “house of many mansions”—even the ivory palace of our God, where the King’s children, all glorious within and without, shall be brought to their reconciled Father ; there will be a “glorious city— even the new Jerusalem, which has no need of the sun by day or the moon by night, for the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof ;” there will be “a glorious high throne” set up from everlasting, where Jehovah in Jesus and Jesus in Jehovah—the Triune God—“glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders,” shall sit and reign, while an adoring world shall bend and worship, and ten thousand times ten thousand swell his praises ; there will be a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle,

not as the poor Church militant is on earth now, torn by schism and distracted by dissent and error, but a Church triumphant—a Zion—“the perfection of beauty” shining for ever and ever in the uplifted countenance of its God !

You, too, dear friends, as members of that mystical Church, will be beautified in her glory ; like your Master, you will be transfigured on that high mount—you will be made like unto Jesus, and partake of his glory—you will sit on his throne—you will shine in his light—you will live in his life—you will love in his Spirit—you will last in his eternity—and to each of you shall be given to lie on his bosom, that angels may say of you, “Behold the disciple whom Jesus loved !”

Oh ! if you would wish the dawn of this glory to break upon your soul, in this dark world—and the door of this glory to be opened upon your soul and body, in the world to come, “give glory to God,” by “repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.”

HEAVENLY INFLUENCES.

Are there not hours of an immortal birth,
Bright visitations from a purer sphere,—
A trance of glory, when the mind, attuned
To heaven, can out of dreams create her worlds ?
Oh ! none are so absorb’d, as not to feel
The calm of thought, the melody of mind !
When prayer, the purest incense of a soul,
Hath risen to the throne of heaven, the heart
Is mellow’d, and the shadows that becloud
Our state of darken’d being, glide away ;
The heavens are open’d ! and the eye of faith
Looks in, and hath a fearful glimpse of God !

REV. R. MONTGOMERY.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN STOCKALLAN CHURCH ON DEC. 11, 1836.

BY THE VEN. B. W. DISNEY, A.M.

ARCHDEACON OF RAPHOE.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM URWICK, D.D.

ROMANS, iii. 28.

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

WHEN we examine the character of that exalted Saviour, who is the sinner's only refuge, we find it comprehending every thing which the soul's salvation may require. In him all fulness of spiritual blessings is stored up, as in an inexhaustible treasure-house of mercy and of love; a treasury, upon which, the man, who is united unto him by faith, may draw, fearlessly, and with an unsparing hand, for it is boundless as the glory, infinite as the essence of Jehovah. He that puts on Christ is complete in him, by receiving him in whom all fulness dwells; all things then are his, and he is Christ's; and Christ is God's.

Out of Jesus exists no requisite of salvation. there is salvation in none other, neither is there any other name under heaven, given unto men, whereby they may be saved, except the name of Jesus Christ. The Syrian scoffed at the injunction of the Prophet, and exclaimed, "Are not the rivers of Damascus better than all the waters of Israel?"—yet might he have bathed for ever his leprosy in the unprofitable streams, for there was one river, and one alone, which was impregnated with the healing balm; and thus if we desire to be made whole, there is our Saviour, to whom

we are invited to draw nigh, in whom our perishing souls may be fulfilled with plenteousness of grace; without whom, we are destitute indeed. Even as the rays of light which diffuse themselves over earth's surface, shedding life, and health, and joy around, are derived from one material sun, so, that flood of saving mercies, which is streaming spiritual light and peace and glory on our fallen race, flows down from the essential brightness of the sun of righteousness, who has risen to give light to them that sit in darkness, and to guide their footsteps into to the way of peace.

Destitute, then, as we are of all things; plunged in spiritual poverty, it must be, to each of us, a deeply interesting inquiry, how shall I obtain possession of the goodly treasure?—the pearl of great price to me, and to my perishing soul?—how shall I be enabled to call this Saviour mine? united unto whom, poor, though I may be, in time, I shall become rich unto eternity, the inheritor of blessings, compared with which, the honors, and the possessions, and the joys of earth, are but as the small dust of the balance, lighter than vanity itself.

Had we been commanded to do any thing, to entitle us to call this Saviour

ours: had the Eternal Father, in revealing unto us the person of his Son, promised him to the man who could produce one single acceptable thought, one solitary act, flowing from the only true principle of obedience, love to God, we should be as widely and hopelessly separated from him, as if we were required to stand in sinless purity, before his throne: there would be a gulf fixed between the Saviour and the sinner's soul, deep, and impassible, as the abyss which yawned between Lazarus and the remorseless Dives. Even, in our helplessness, should we resemble the impotent man beside Bethesda's pool, who could mark the ripple of the waters fanned by the rustling of the angel's wing, yet, see the healing influence pass to him unprofitably by.

Imagine a number of individuals, immured within a prison for certain debts they had incurred; all of them, however differing in the amount of their obligations, resembling each other in one respect, an utter inability to meet the demands against them: suppose, that after a confinement of many years, a proclamation were sent forth, announcing to them, liberty, on the payment of a certain portion of their debt: in what respect would such an offer benefit them?—certainly in none—for, being destitute of every remnant of property, they would be as incapable of paying the smallest composition, as of liquidating the entire debt. Thus, are we debtors in a spiritual sense; and if, in order to our attainment of an interest in Christ's salvation, one single acceptable performance alone were required at our hands, that salvation would be as unavailing to our souls, as if we were called upon to render the sinless obedience of our entire lives.

But suppose the proclamation to declare the prisoners free, and without condition or reserve, remit their debts; then is it evidently a message of free mercy, suited to the exigencies of those to whom it is addressed, and capable of conferring benefit upon them.

And, thus, God, who himself is love, knowing our spiritual destitution, and the inestimable preciousness of Jesus Christ, has imposed upon us no condition, has required of us the repayment of no portion of our debt: but He gives his Son to us; he grants him to us freely, bestows him upon us, without money and without price, and encourages all who desire Jesus as a Saviour, to receive him freely, as he is freely given, to believe upon him, and enjoy him as their own. What an act of grace is this!—we had thrown off our allegiance to our rightful Lord, we had ranged ourselves beneath the banner of the apostate spirit, and, convicted of that treason against the Majesty of Heaven, we awaited, in condemnation's gloomy cell, the infliction of the outraged justice we had provoked; when, lo! the bolts of our prison house are drawn, and, instead of the dark summoner to execution, an angel of mercy has entered in, announcing that the Eternal Son of the Sovereign whose allegiance we had renounced, voluntarily substituting himself, had endured our punishment, and that even now, upon our receiving him as our deliverer and Lord, and the chiefest object of our renovated hearts, pardon, and liberty, and peace, are freely granted us.

If love like this fail to melt down our hearts, our case is one of hopelessness; if such display of grace, unmerited, be ineffectual in constraining our souls back to their rightful Lord, there remaineth but for us, a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries of their God.

The doctrine, which I have been endeavouring to illustrate, is the fundamental doctrine of justification by faith only; for faith is nothing more than a reception of Christ, as a full and all sufficient Saviour, from the dominion, the guilt, and the love of sin. Thus says the Apostle, "To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that

believe on his name." Where, to "receive," and to "believe" on Christ, are regarded by the Apostle as synonymous with, and explanatory of each other.

Whensoever, therefore, any individual receives the Saviour, as proposed to sinners, in his Gospel, he then believes upon him, and by that faith is justified in the sight of God. The Lord says, "deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom."

My brethren, you are, every one of you, invited to believe upon this name; you are authorised to regard Jesus, proposed as a deliverer to each of you, as expressly, and as unreservedly, as if you were yourself the only dweller upon the broad surface of the earth. You are invited, if indeed you seek deliverance, to lay hold upon this salvation, boldly, and promptly too—the word is not "to-morrow," but "to-day"—"to-day if you will hear his voice." You have the testimony and record of the God of truth, that if you thus apply to him, your transgressions shall at once be forgiven you, and deliverance from the yoke of sin ensured to you; and if you have already laid hold upon the Saviour, you are encouraged to believe, that God, even now, has remitted your offences, that the Holy Spirit has quickened you from death to life, and has entered you on that course of spiritual advancement, by which the heirs of glory are conducted to their rest.

Now, this message of free salvation, this proclamation of a Saviour, will be received in different ways by different individuals amongst you, even, as we might suppose, the unconditional announcement of liberty would be variously received by the imprisoned debtors. Some, like the man we read of, when the foundations of the Bastille rocked beneath the shout of the multitude, and its cells were opened to the light of day, would treat the messenger of emancipation as the troubler of their rest, and worn unto the soul by the debasing

thrall, would cling even to the stanchions and the bars that excluded the glorious sunlight from their cells. To such the proclamation would bring no joyful tidings; to others, in the hardness of their heart, incapable of appreciating such benevolence, it would be rejected as unworthy of belief. To others, desiring to participate in its proffered blessings, pride might suggest the propriety of repaying, at least a portion of their debt, ere they could accept the boon. To these also the proclamation would be useless. Whilst a few, upon the strength of the declarations it contained, might arise from the dungeons of their captivity, and rush forth with exclamations of grateful joy, into the bright sunshine, and free air of heaven. Thus, some amongst you may have never felt the bitterness of sin; others of you may have your affections set upon it; and both will reject the Gospel message. Others amongst you cannot understand the nature of a free pardon; it wounds your pride, and, as you hesitate to receive it freely, as it is proposed, you also stand excluded from the blessing. While some, under the teaching of God's Spirit, may hail the joyful tidings of a Saviour, and embrace the blessings he holds forth.

And then, it is evident that, while these last, embracing Christ, in all his offices, and believing themselves in him pardoned and justified, and saved, enter at once into the enjoyment of that blessedness to which they are invited; the other classes I have described, who, through inveterate apathy, or incredulity, or pride, recede from God's promises, and refuse to credit the extent of his mercy in his Son, exclude themselves, by their own deliberate act, from restoration to God's love and favour, and seal themselves up in a fearful condemnation.

It is to be regretted, however, that this doctrine of justification by faith only, is much misapprehended. Many well-intentioned persons seem to be afraid of going, as far as scripture warrants us in go-

ing on this subject. They are fearful of inviting sinners, as freely as the Lord invites them, to the fountains of salvation; in their self-embarrassing timidity, they construct fences and barriers, where God has created none, and annex conditions and limitations to that message of love, which God willed should be freely, and unconditionally published, even to the chief of sinners. The invitation of the Saviour, "whosoever will, let him take the waters of life," appears to them, somehow, too extensive in its meaning, and they contract and narrow down its comprehensiveness, until they have all but destroyed its efficacy. To preach, that a sinner, on his reception of Christ, is at once justified in the sight of God, so that his reconciliation actually takes place before his faith has been productive of any of those fruits of righteousness, which subsequently flow from it—to preach a doctrine such as this, is, in the opinion of many persons, to open wide the door to licentiousness and immorality. They would prefer detaining the sinner for some time in a state of probation; they seem to think faith does not justify until it has been for some time in exercise, and has produced some proportion of good works, and instead of permitting the individual, who has fled for refuge unto Jesus, to assure himself at once of reconciliation upon the promise of God, they desire that he should remain in doubt as to his reception, until he has been, for a period at least, walking in the love of God, and in communion with Him. According to this system, therefore, a man must not only believe, but also work, in order to his justification. But, to confine ourselves to one passage of scripture, amongst many, St. Paul expressly says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," i. e. to him that worketh not at all, with a view to justification, but simply believeth on that Saviour, whose office it is to justify, not the individual

who, for some time previously, has been evidencing the saving nature of his faith, by the production of certain fruits, but the ungodly, the man who is completely destitute of works, the man who until then has been *απενης*, one absolutely an alien, and estranged from God, *his* faith is counted for righteousness. And to prove by one or two practical illustrations that the sense, in which we have been considering the passage, is the sense in which God willed that it should be understood, in the 7th chapter of Luke's Gospel we find a certain woman, a sinner, drawing near to our Lord, and, by her unfeigned and deep contrition, evincing her desire of pardon and her reliance on him for its attainment, and we find her subjected to no probationary process, no previous requirement of the fruits of faith, no delay of the boon. She had believed on Jesus, and her justification followed momentarily; the Saviour said, "Thy sins are forgiven, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." Again, St. Matthew tells us, they brought to Jesus a man sick of the palsy, and he seeing their faith, said unto him, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee." Now, in both these sentences we perceive faith in the Redeemer justifying, before it had operated to the production of the works of righteousness, unless, indeed, we except the mere act of making application to the Saviour for relief. We conclude, therefore, that "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

And, in proof that the doctrines I have stated, as those of scripture, are in perfect accordance with the sense in which our Church has understood the sacred volume, I would simply desire to refer you to the 11th, 12th, and 13th articles, the first of which expressly asserts that we are considered righteous before God by faith only, in the merits of the Saviour; whilst the latter two coincide in excluding all works of men, whether in nature or in grace, whether before, or subsequent to, the exercise of faith in the Redeemer, from any share

or concernment in the justification of the sinner before the sight of God.

But, let us proceed to examine the objection frequently urged against the doctrine of justification by faith only, that it is one which tends to immorality : and first of all let us briefly consider what is the nature of that faith which justifies. It is a faith which embraces Christ in all his offices, embraces him even as he is proposed to us in his Gospel, not merely as the Saviour from the punishment, but as the Redeemer from the power of sin ; not merely as the deliverer from the consequences of guilt, but as the liberator from its infatuating and degrading thrall. The believing soul applies to Christ, not merely to wash away the stains of its transgressions, but to rend asunder the strong gyves of its corruption, to liberate it from passion's servile yoke, to enable it to crucify the flesh, with its affections and lusts. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of that great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

The doctrine of justification by faith only, therefore, so far from being productive of the evil effects which, even from the days of the Apostle to the present hour, its gainsayers have imputed to it, is, in truth, the only doctrine which conduces to spiritual holiness of life, the only one which furnishes the believer with a vital principle of obedience, or which places the sinner in a capacity of loving or serving God ; and consequently, individuals objecting to this doctrine, from an idea of danger attached to it, or, from an unbelieving timidity, glossing it over, and refraining from setting it forth in its scriptural length and breadth, are,

in fact, subverting that which they ought to lay down their lives to uphold, and laying the axe to the very root of all spirituality and holiness of life. The love of God is the alone principle which can produce a life of devotion unto him, and the heart which is destitute of that love can never be really interested in its Master's service. Until the Lord be seated upon the throne of the affections, there can be no spiritual-mindedness, neither acceptable obedience ; the dread of punishment may, it is true, in some instances, produce an external and forced submission, even as the terror of his country's laws, restrains the rebel from the overt act of treason he would fain commit. But in such constrained homage God has no delight—he desires the willing and cheerful service of the affections ; he says unto the sinner, "Give me thine heart."

Now, this is a principle of which unregenerate men are wholly destitute ; they are, indeed, at enmity with God, alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them ; the unconverted man, conscious of guilt, and fearful of coming wrath, regards God as an object of terror, an object from the contemplation of which he would gladly altogether relieve his mind ; but when once, by the enlightening influences of the Holy Spirit, the veil of darkness is removed from his eyes, when God, "who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in his heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," when in the gift of the Eternal Son, he discovers that God is indeed a God of love, when he is told that the Saviour is freely offered to him ; that, upon the reception of that Saviour, his sins and iniquities shall be blotted out, and that God will henceforth deal with him as a child, and co-heir with Christ—then indeed, this amazing display of mercy, applied to the soul by the Holy Spirit, melts down the stony heart, then

indeed he recognises God as a pitying Father, he beholds all the glories of his character, centering in the brightness of salvation, and, with a true and filial affection, he then loves God, "because he first loved him."

And now, my dear brethren, how will you receive the message we are commissioned to deliver unto you? Individually, owing immense sums, there is offered you a cancelling of all your debts—Rebels, as you have been, against your Sovereign, there is promulgated an act of unconditional amnesty—Slaves, as you are to sin, and to the world, you are offered deliverance from both, and an entrance into the glorious liberty of the children of God! What is there in you, on account of which God should offer you such blessings? Nothing; they are derived from the overflowing fountain of his grace: we deserve the rod of punishment at his hands, and he extends to us the branch of peace. Can you still turn away from such a God as this?—can you still lift up your hands, in impotent rebellion against him, who but lifts up his to pour down mercies upon you?—can you deem lightly of a Saviour, who is willing freely to impart to you the waters of eternal life, which he himself had, *not* "without price," for he paid for them in the costly price of his own most precious blood. Upon the gates which open unto glory is graven, in eternal characters, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." Will ye not enter, by these everlasting doors, into the possession of your rest? If to one alone amongst you no invitation were addressed, while the others were bidden to the marriage supper of the Lamb, how grievous to that individual would his exclusion seem? But you are all invited, God says to each of you, "Come, for all things are now ready." O, what folly is it to refuse the proffered boon. Will you fight against your own mercies?—will you be the murderers of your own souls? Lift up your eyes; behold!

there are realms of glory, ages of blessedness, stretching out before you; can you then, with reverted and wishful eye, look back at the vanities of the world, the entanglements of sin? Have they made you happy? Examine truly—what fruit have you had in those things whereof you ought now to be ashamed? Remember the stings of conscience which embitter your unlawful pleasures, the reproaches of the monitor, whose still small voice you cannot wholly drown. Think on the suddenness, with which the spectral shapes of death and judgment, flash betimes across your mind—Is this freedom? Nay, it is very bondage. Is it not a liberation to be rescued from such a state? to be disentangled from the ghastly embraces of the body of that? sin—How can you abide in that pestilential dungeon, when you may walk forth into the pure and blessed air of heaven. Come to Jesus and he will deliver you, he will give you rest, he will raise you up out of this debased and degraded state;—the prince of darkness the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience is now working in you, but Jesus is Almighty, he will cast out the evil one, he will cleanse your heart, and cause you to become the temple of his own Spirit. Let but your fevered pulse, throbbing with the fever of earth's vanities, and earth's cares, subside into a moments soberness, and ask yourself, what has the world you are so desperately, madly loving, yet done for you?—Are you happy?—No—there is a void within your heart which that false friend has promised to fill up, but never filled it yet—Your happiness is but a pretence, there is no substance in it, it is a lie to others, a cheat upon yourself. The world is trifling with you, as with a child promising what it never means to give, and you are content to be the dupe of its vain professions; It is casting now and then, some gilded bauble in your path, its pleasures or its riches, or its fame, and with eager fondness, which even repeated disappointments can-

not check, you grasp at each airy pageant as it appears, but after all, what benefit have you derived from them? the amusement of a fleeting hour—but they have not filled the craving void within—No, if earth's treasures were strewed beneath your feet, the soul would remain unsatisfied amidst them, and pine in secret for a better portion. Yes, the world is a hollow friend, and, under the semblance of affection, it is betraying you with a traitor's kiss. Love that world no more: it merit not your love; "the friendship of the world is enmity with God." But there is One, whose love is warm and true, and

who, when he loves, loves even unto the end; whose is a love, which many waters cannot quench, and the floods cannot drown, and who now is saying, "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 sup with him, and he with me."

May the Spirit give him entrance into your hearts, that you may henceforth be enabled to exclaim, "O Lord our God, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us, but by thee only will we make mention of thy name!" Amen.

DEATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Oh! beautiful beyond depicting words
 To paint, the hour that wafts a soul to heaven!
 The world grows dim, the scenes of time depart,
 The hour of peace, the walk of social joy,
 The mild companion, and the deep-soul'd friend,
 The lov'd and lovely—see his face no more!
 The mingling spell of sun, of sea, and air,
 Is broken; voice and gaze, and smile, that speak,
 Must perish; parents take their hush'd adieu;
 A wife, a child, a daughter half divine,
 Or son that never drew a father's tear,—
 Approach him, and his dying tones receive
 Like God's own language!—'tis an hour of awe,
 Yet terrorless, when revelations flow
 From faith immortal; view that pale worn brow,
 It gleams with glory!—in his eye there dawns
 A dazzling earnest of unutter'd joy.
 Each pang subdued, his longing soul respire
 The gales of glorified eternity!
 And round him, hues ethereal, harps of light,
 And lineaments of earthless beauty throng,
 As wing'd on melody, the saint departs,
 While heaven in miniature before him shines.

REV. R. MONTGOMERY.

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OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God”—1 Cor i. 23, 24.

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REV. J. C. LLOYD.

REV. WM. ST. GEORGE SARGENT

CAN OUR FAITH BE REGULATED BY OUR TASTES ?

A SERMON

PREACHED IN THE MOLYNEUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, JAN. 8, 1837.

BY THE REV. J. C. LLOYD, A.M.

Chaplain.

ISAIAH, xliv. 20.

“ He feedeth on ashes ; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand ?”

THE Prophet Hosea (c. iii. v. 4,) delivers a very remarkable prophecy concerning the Jews, and which has received as remarkable a fulfilment—“ The children of Israel,” says he, “ shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim”—That is to say, they shall continue for many years without any government of their own, without the exercise of their divinely-appointed religion, and yet without having recourse to idolatry in any shape.

It is a thing of fact and history that since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, and the final dispersion of the chosen nation, they never have embraced the idolatrous superstitions of the Gentiles, with whom they have been inter-

mingled, and this, although in many instances doubtless, the temptations (in a worldly point of view,) must have been extremely strong. This prophecy of Hosea's is the more remarkable in its fulfilment, because delivered at a time when the Jews were nationally almost devoted to the service of false Gods, and because delivered also concerning a people in whom the practice of idolatry seems to have been a vice incurable, and neither by the exhibited *mercies* or *judgments* of Jehovah to be remediable.

In fact, when we consider, on the one hand, the extraordinary dispensation under which the Jews were educated, and the light and knowledge which it was calculated to impart upon the subject so continually pressed on them, “ the unity of God,” and when we consider, on the

other hand, the frequency and the grossness of their departures from what would seem so reasonable and self-commended a religious system; when we consider the individuals, too, who fell into the practice of this crime, and by their influence and example fostered it—(such an one, for instance, as Solomon)—when we consider these things, there is forced upon the mind almost inevitably the question, “What could have been the temptations to it?” Some show of excellence idolatry must have had to commend itself to persons so well instructed, as we should say, upon all the relative points and bearings of the subject; and it becomes, in fact, a problem demanding a distinct solution, how any individual having the means of religious knowledge within his reach, should ever, by any possibility, embrace a system of belief and practice so much at variance apparently, not merely with the revelation of truth God had entrusted him with, but even with that common sense with which God had endowed him.

Having considered this subject with some attention, the conclusion I have come to is this, that the prevailing attraction which idolatry presented was its exhibiting “*Heaven as in subserviency to Earth.*” Idolatry was a religion of many gods—upon its sacred books were the names of many claimants to divinity, and of many aspirants by consequence to priority of dignity and greatness. The devotee, who selected one or more of this great crowd, did by such selection pay to that deity or those deities *peculiar honor*, and might therefore reckon on *peculiar favor*—and that favor not dependent so much on the personal goodness of the worshipper, as on the exclusiveness and devotedness with which he cultivated the good will of his favorite God or Goddess. We have only to look at the oldest Greek poetry extant, and to see that this was precisely the very state of the case. Homer, who introduces us as often into the councils of his deities as

into the debates of his warriors, represents the discussions taking place as to which party should be helped, as turning still upon the question which party offered most in sacrifice. Personal pique, or private revenge for slights offered, seem certainly (among those “*dunghill deities,*” as Milton calls them,) to have great influence too; this, however, was but part and parcel of the one system of corruption—and the effect produced upon the minds of men was, in the main, just this—that a *judicious choice* as to the Gods you served, and a *liberal expenditure of altar-offerings* and the like to those thus chosen, would enlist upon the worshipper's side the powers of deity itself. Any strong propensity might be gratified, any powerful passion indulged, did the inquiring mortal only fortunately ascertain the right direction in which to push his suit. In short, as I before said, the religion of idolatry was, and is plainly, “*Heaven in subserviency,* (or capable of being made subservient,) *to Earth.*”

It may be said here, “Granting all you say as true, in respect to the adaptation of idolatry to men's *corrupt tastes*, is it not still with difficulty conceivable how it could commend itself to their *understandings*—and this, especially, where (as in the case of the Jews) those understandings were enlightened by revelation? However one might imagine a man *wicked* enough to *wish* that he might find a God that would pander to his inclinations, is it not hard to imagine a man *weak* enough to *believe* it? *Can our Faith be regulated by our tastes?* This is a question flowing out of the former considerations—it is, however, the *exact point to which I have been aiming in this discourse to call your attention ultimately.* I am satisfied that our likings and dislikings have an immensity to do with the formation of our religious creed, and I am persuaded that *God has so intended it to be.*

You perceive at once then how wide,

and, at the same time, how interesting a field of inquiry is here opened to our view. The inquiry, why an instructed Jew should embrace idolatry? is manifestly but a small portion of this. Here is involved the question—why any individual having the sources of religious knowledge available, should still drink at the fountain of error?—or how any man should believe a lie, who has before him the evidences of truth?

There is a remarkable expression of our Lord's which bears, I think, upon the subject; you will find it—(John vii. 16, 17,)—"My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will *do his will*, he shall *know* of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." To an inquiring Jew the question was manifestly of the highest moment—whether or no Jesus was the true Messiah. The determination on this point is, however, as you perceive in the above passage, connected, not so much with *accuracy of judgment*, as with *piety of heart*. The decision as to whether one coming in so plain a way, in poverty and not in pomp—leading his followers to no contests, but those of the flesh against the spirit, and bestowing no crowns but those of righteousness in the great day of judgment, whether such an one were the true deliverer to be looked for, such a decision, I say, would surely be much influenced by the private bias and tendencies of mind of the investigator. It required a degree of piety, of devotedness to *God's own truth, for God's own sake*, to renounce the glittering prospects which opened to the views of those who looked for a carnal prince and conqueror, that should establish temporarily the throne of Israel, and bid the lion standard of Judah wave over the towers of imperial Rome itself. They who did the will of God, who desired the knowledge of his doctrine, they would have light afforded them, and help; the Scriptures bearing on the point would be opened to them, and

they should be established in the truth—they should find evidence enough to know of the doctrine, that "*it was of God.*" But equally the reverse might take place; the man who mused in his heart whether or no Jesus were the Christ, and musing, *wished that he might not be*—such an one might be allowed to find out *arguments against* it. The deceived heart might be permitted to turn such an one aside, and, with all the process seemingly gone through of a conscientious inquiry, the conclusion might be arrived at, settled down in, and acted on, that the Son of Mary was but an impostor, and so the threatened judgment in my text might have its full operation on him, so that he should not *be able to deliver his soul*, or say, "Is there not a lie in my right hand?"

When we consider the human mind as engaged in the investigation of truth, it should be remembered that truths are not all of the same class or kind. If, for instance, the inquiry be, whether the earth move round the sun, or the sun round the earth, the conclusion, whichever way it be decided, has no bearing whatever on morals. A man coming out of a brothel or a gambling house, and a man coming out of a church, after sincere devotion offered, may be equally and alike fitted and prepared for an honest and impartial examination of the evidence for and against—it is a matter of philosophy or mathematics purely. But if the question were, whether or no God could consistently forgive sin? you must perceive at once that the two individuals I speak of would probably, nay, almost certainly, address themselves to the prosecution of it, with very different feelings, and under very different circumstances. For here is a moral truth,—one which must have a direct bearing upon the conscience, and life, and conduct. If the decision is to be on the easy side of the matter (so to speak)—if arguments may be had in favour of the opinion, that God is as ready almost to overlook iniquity, as man is to commit it, how

attentively will such arguments be listened to by the sensualist, in comparison with those cold, stern pleadings, which would appear to advocate the opposite side? As is the nature of these two various truths, so would be the various nature of the causes of inquiry. The latter question of the two would clearly be one in which the previous habits, tastes, and feelings of the man would have most powerful influence. In fact, a kind of moral test would be presented, and the trial would be a thing not merely of pure intellect, but of principle also. It might be possible, therefore, for a man, after investigation had, to embrace the wrong opinion; wishing for the evil thing, it might be permitted to come nigh him; error, under the garb of truth, might be allowed of God to fasten on him, and his case might exhibit an instance of fearful, but yet most appropriate punishment—that he who *desires falsehood* may be *established in the belief of it*. Is not this in fact, the explicit language of St. Paul concerning some—(2 Thess. ii. 11.)—“God shall send them strong delusion that they should *believe a lie*,”—and why is this? “Because they had pleasure in unrighteousness. That they all might be damned, (or condemned), who believed not the truth, but *had pleasure* in unrighteousness.” There is an intimacy of connexion here, between unbelief and unholiness.

It would be impossible for a man, looking abroad upon the world, and perceiving the vast variety of notions, which are entertained on subjects of which it might be concluded that there should be either *one opinion* among men, or *none*, it would be impossible, I say, for a man, looking out simply on the differences of creeds which exist in professing Christendom, not to find the question pressed upon him—*how can this be?* For myself, I confess it, to have been one which presented often and importunately. I think, however, that I see how this may be, and yet truth be one, and indivisible. God, so far as I can per-

ceive, has permitted the evidences of Divine truth to rest, *in a degree*, as to their weight and importance with any individual, upon that individual's mode of estimating them. The Divine Being furnishes his responsible creatures with arguments for what is right; and yet, at the same time, hinders not but that they may hear arguments for what is wrong. Moral truth, my dear friends, (and I pray you to consider this.)—moral truth comes to the door of all your hearts, not in the guise of one armed with official authority, and who will make *forcible* entrance if a *peaceable* one be not afforded—but rather as one asking hospitality; and who, if rudely repulsed, or grudgingly received, may depart, *never to return*. Think you not, as you walk along the aisles of some antique cathedral, and look upon the recumbent images of departed Romish devotees, with hands upturned in seeming prayer, think you not, that under this marble pomp of stole and crosier, there may be crumbling beneath, oftentimes, the dust of “*hearts deceived*,”—hearts which, in sincerity, received the corrupt superstitions in whose ruinous embrace they died? Ah! surely the religion of saint-worship may have its plausibilities, wherein to dress itself, as though it were an “angel of light.” Or, to pass from Romanism, shall we look upon the graves of Priestly, of Wakefield, of Belsham, and the other doctors of that school, and say, that they have been necessarily and essentially wilful deceivers? I think not; we may well suppose of them just as the prophet states in the text, “*A deceived heart led them aside*.” This, however, though it may *account* for their fearful progress in error, does not *excuse it*. It shows us simply how the sinfulness of man may operate to man's destruction, but it does not palliate, *in the least degree*, the crime. But to pass from those more definite deceits—may not the creed of that huge host, the spiritually careless, have its strong hold upon the spirit, and yet that

spirit be deceived? May not that popular creed, which I once heard so briefly expressed by a rich London merchant (and with all the emphasis of a sincere believer,)—the creed, *that, to enjoy is to obey*—may not such a system find advocates to commend it to man's notice and regard, and give it currency and force? Alas, believe me, there is no code of opinion, however opposed to the dictates of revealed truth, which may not appear to some as having

—————"Confirmations, strong
"As proofs of Holy Writ."

But this should make us pause.

I fear exceedingly, that although I have endeavoured to set forth a truth which is of the very first importance to all here, I may not, by any means, have made myself clear and intelligible to all. The fact is, we are all of us naturally more or less opposed to *true religion*, to the religion of the cross, the heart-searching religion of the Gospel. Yet without some

religion, few propose to themselves to live and die; and, by consequence, the object of the many is just to find out sufficient show of argument wherewith to content themselves in the particular course which they may be bent upon pursuing. I scarcely believe that the veriest worldling who ever heard of God and his dear Son, but has some creed, in whose sufficiency he rests, though it may be one thorough-woven mass of falsehood. And, therefore, my heart's desire for all here is, that they would look at *what it is they believe, and why they believe it*. For there may be a security, (so imagined,) to those in error, as well as to those in truth—a man may believe confidently in that which shall bring him to eternal ruin. How infinitely important then, for every soul here to ponder well those words of the great Redeemer—"Take heed that the *light* which is in you be not *darkness*,"—a light to lead, not into *heaven*—but *hell*!

THE LOVE OF GOD.

How shall we fathom its depths—how gauge its extent? The attempt is vain and impotent, "It is high as heaven, what can we know? it is deep as hell, what can we do?" The subject is one which angels desire to look into, yet it is far above the reach even of the comprehension of the cherubim; it will employ the faculties of the redeemed in glory, throughout eternity, while the song arises from angelic harpers, from the minstrelsy of heaven—"To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God!" Fired at the thought, my soul burns to join the celestial throng; like a bird that's hampered, it longs to leave the flesh behind, to clap its glad wings, and haste away to its native skies; it longs to reach the heaven of love—the paradise of God, to mingle with those who have already crossed the flood, and are even now basking in the sunshine of the Saviour's

presence; to join the society of Abraham, of Moses, David, and Elijah, of Paul and Peter, of the beloved John, of the noble army of martyrs, and of the wise and good of every nation and clime; of those who have "Washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." But I hear a voice, coming from the records of inspiration,—"*Be patient*," and I obey the divine injunction. I know that, in his own good time, my Lord will issue his summons for my presence, because it is his will, that "Where he is, there should his servants be;" and although I am feeble, and unworthy of his mercy, yet I feel that "I love him, because he first loved me." And, therefore, I wait with patience for the period when death shall be swallowed up in victory, when this shall be the Christian's triumphant song—"O grave, where is thy victory?—O death, where is thy sting?"

S. T.

CHRIST'S COMPASSION.

How multiform are the miseries of human life! Yonder stands one, waiting for a hand to guide him—the eye is extinguished, and, while day smiles on the face of nature, night gathers for ever round his head. There is another, whose ear never drank in a stream of melody—the organ is closed against strains which steal through that avenue, into the heart of his neighbour—“He never heard the sweet music of speech,” nor perceived the tones of his own unformed, untuned, unmodulated voice. Here is a third, who appears before me without the power of utterance—the string of the tongue was never loosed, and he never spake—the organs of speech are deranged, or were never perfectly formed—he hears tones, which vibrate on his heart, but he cannot impart, through the same medium, the same pleasurable sensation. These could not escape the compassionate eye of Jesus—he gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, limbs to the maimed, health to the sick, strength to decrepitude.—But yonder is the chamber of death!—darker is the cloud that broods there. Where the tongue was silent, the eye was eloquent—where the palsied limb refused to move, the ear heard, and discriminated sounds which melt the passions, and stir the spirit within us. It was sad to tend the couch of sickness; but still we seemed to have

some hold upon the sufferer, and he to have some interest in life:—but that is the bed of mortality; and the young, the beautiful, the only hope of her family, is stretched there—and *there is Jesus also*, rousing her from death, as from a gentle slumber, and restoring her to the arms of her parents. There is yet another class of suffering worse than death:—it glares in the eye, it raves in the voice, struggles in the limbs of that man, whose throne of reason imagination has usurped, and over the whole empire of his mind, madness reigns, in all its accumulated horrors! Visions—horrible visions of unreal and inconceivable objects float before his disordered senses,—while he hears not, he distinguishes not, he regards not the voice of parent, or of wife, or of child, or of friend!—The spirit sits, surrounded by the ruins of nature, terrified amidst shattered, and useless, or perverted organs, *and covered with the midnight of despair*.—Oh, let the compassionate eye of the Saviour fix upon this object. And it does—he meets him coming from among the tombs—he speaks the word—he calms the tempest—behold “The man sitting at his feet, clothed, and in his right mind!” He gave “reason and understanding” to the distracted, and release from the power of Satan to those who were possessed by him.

ANONYMOUS.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN BALLINATONE CHURCH, CO. WICKLOW,
ON SUNDAY, 9TH OCTOBER, 1836,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM ST. GEORGE SARGENT, A.B.

Perpetual Curate.

ROMANS, iii. part of 26th verse.

“That he might be just and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”

WERE I destitute of argument from Scripture truth, as well as from the recorded history of man's doings from the earliest ages, to prove the total depravity of the human race, and man's being *altogether fallen* from the original righteousness in which God first created him, I could point the inquiring mind to a proof and text incontrovertible on this important point, namely—the various specified plans of reconciliation with God, which are broached by minds *unenlightened* by the revealed truths of God's Bible. Whether we examine the abominations connected with heathen sacrificial reconciliation—the blasphemous and absurd doctrines of human merit, as forged by Roman Catholic apostacy, in their penances and works of supererogation—or the far more deluding so called works of faith, which are substituted by the apparently enlightened Protestant, for faith in the atonement once offered on the cross for “the sins of the whole world”—far more deluding, I say, because held with a *seeming* acquiescence with God's word—when we examine those various systems of human inventions for the reconciliation of offended Deity, we not only behold their weakness and vanity, but we can see them, further, branded with reckless

depravity—trying to subvert the principles of God's government, and to trample upon his holy law, by denying the extent of its requirements, and by setting aside its sanctions. *All* their darkened and unbelieving hearts wish for, is to get free from the *punishment* due to those transgressions their consciences tell them they have committed,—without any regard to the *honor* of God's broken laws—without any *anxiety* to remove the foul blot from his holiness—his justice and truth:—like the guilty and self-condemned criminal before an earthly bar, who would *wish* to induce the judge to act falsely, as regarded his oath in the administration of justice, to hold back the *true* interpretation of the laws of the country, and leave a false bias on the minds of the jury—who would wish to escape the punishment richly due to his own deeds, by causing the witnesses not only to hold back their evidence as regarded the real crime, but also to substitute a feigned character of worthiness, which character, although he did not possess, yet it might tend to thwart the ends of justice; and thus he would poison the fountain of all the laws of society, and the honour of human testimony, *merely* to escape himself:—thus fallen man would, in exactly the same

way, *wish* (for I do suppose that with such an administrator of justice as an all pure God he cannot succeed) to make God interpret the law, so as to do away the *extent* of its demands, in order that he might not appear guilty in thought, word, and deed—to forego the *truth* of His solemn declaration, “The soul that sinneth it shall die”—and instead thereof to substitute a false witness, whom he, in the night of his ignorance and unconverted state calls *mercy*, to aver his innocence, and to put in the false plea of a certain vague honesty of heart against the immorality of his actions and positive breaches of his Creator’s pure and holy law. Although man has such selfish wicked thoughts concerning his reconciliation with his Creator, yet shall the Judge of all the earth *not* do right?—shall He not justify himself when he judgeth, and also when he showeth mercy?—shall he not vindicate the honour of his laws, and assert the truth of his own revelation, wherein it is stated that “the wrath of God is revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men?” Yes he will exhibit himself to a gainsaying and stiff-necked people, “a *just* God, and yet the *justifier* of him that believeth in Jesus.” With respect to the glorious doctrine of justification by faith *only* without works, we cannot have a fuller exposition than that presented here to us by the Apostle in the preceding part of this chapter. Having shown from the 9th to the 19th verse that God regarded *all* the world, both Jews and Gentiles—the two families into which the human race was divided—as guilty of breaking and dishonouring his holy law, he draws his conclusion in the 20th verse, “*Therefore* by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” Therefore, since the law only reveals to man that he is a sinner and transgressor, how can he expect salvation through such a medium? As well might the culprit I had been speaking of above, expect pardon from

the very act of parliament in which his crime had been denounced. No; the most honourable, virtuous-minded man or woman that ever lived, comes equally with the most base-minded and profligate wretch that breathes the air, under the sweeping clause, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”

Since, then, there is no one that ever was, or ever will be, justified by the deeds of the law—that is by a conformity of their lives, in thought, word, and deed, to the one immutable and holy law of God—how can this justly incensed being unbar the gates of his favour, and admit to his presence those bold rebels who had run counter his laws, and slighted the conditions of his divine covenant? This, which was impossible with man, was brought about by the strength of him who laid the foundations of the world. Yes, it was accomplished by him who “travelled in the greatness of his strength.” These impediments the Lord Jesus Christ has removed—the mighty mountain that stood between God and man—the mountain reared by human transgression, and strengthened by the uncompromising truth of the Deity, has been cleared away by the arm of Jehovah Jesus. He has more than obeyed the law—he has “*magnified*” it, and made it honourable; and God, who was above all law, by becoming incarnate, and paying to it a divine obedience, brought in an everlasting righteousness, which could uphold in all its dignity and majesty the laws of heaven’s legislator. And permit me to remark, that we entertain very erroneous opinions of the laws of God, if we imagine that they resemble the enactments of human legislators, which can be repealed and modified at the pleasure of the legislating power. No; the law of God is perfect and immutable as he himself is perfect; and as a clear lake reflects the various hues of colours and glories of a spangled heaven—so the law is a mirror in which we can visibly read the everlasting perfections of Jehovah. So that as soon might you succeed in altering in the

slightest manner the perfections of Jehovah himself, or in changing the principles of his government, as in altering those laws by which his government is administered; they are based on that relationship which must *eternally* exist between the intelligent creature and his Creator, either by demanding universal and unswerving obedience, or enforcing its sanctions both here and hereafter; and permit me to say, that it is when the eyes are lifted up in hell, that the peculiar holiness of the law, and strict rigour with which its demands are enforced, will be most fully acknowledged and most keenly felt; and not only in hell will this be acknowledged, but also in heaven, the loyal angels and the redeemed shall not only dwell with wondrous rapture on the amazing love displayed to sinners by the incarnation and death of Jesus, but also shall, with increasing and holy admiration, contemplate the holiness and rigour of that law which demanded such a sacrifice; yea, which required to be re-written in the blood of Jesus! Well might the Apostle, when he opened out the doctrine of justification by faith only, without good works, either directly or indirectly, as a *means* of justification, ask, "What then do we who profess to be justified by faith in the blood of Jesus, *without* works of righteousness which we have done or can do, make *void* (that is of none effect) the law through faith," and answer, in the fulness of his heart, "God forbid!" and oh! my fellow-sinners, is not the holiness of the Lord written in letters of fire on the cross of Christ, when the Almighty and most merciful Father visited on the person of his dearly beloved Son the penalty and curse of a broken law—and made him who knew *no* sin to become a sin-offering for us, that we might become the righteousness of God through him? In this manner, I say, the righteousness, holiness, spirituality, and extent of God's law was more vindicated than if all the race of mankind, from Adam to the last of his posterity, had paid it an unsinning obedience—and

still more, when it *was* transgressed, the rigorous sanctions of it were more clothed with honour, and more satisfied than if (in addition to all the heart-rending calamities, travails and groans, it brought upon the children of men, including the national overthrows of Sodom, Gomorrah, and all the cities of the plain, and the engulfing a wicked world in the flood,) God had raised the uplifted sword of his vengeance, and plunged the congregated population of the world in everlasting burnings. Let us then, my fellow-sinners, have done with the trifling we hear in the world concerning the keeping the law of God as a way of reconciliation—concerning big and little sins—sins of infirmity and damning sins—such talk is more than trifling, yea, it is blasphemous, when we reflect that for *one single omission* in not loving the Lord our God with all the powers of that heart he gave to beat in our breasts—for the withholding from him the powers of our mind, and the devotion and consecration of every minute we live—we are cursed—"Cursed," says the Scripture, "is *every* one who *continueth not in all* things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Such a transgressor is a sinner, for "sin is the transgression of the law;" and unless his sin be wiped away in the blood of Jesus, its mountain weight (which already has crushed devils,) will bury him deep in the dark grave of hell—where no ray of heaven's light shall ever visit him—no sound of mercy ever meet him—but he shall be a wondrous monument of the righteousness and holiness of his Creator's law, throughout the fearful period of eternity.

Let us then not wish to put ourselves under "the deeds of the law" as a *means* of justification, but joyfully hail the doctrine so plainly taught, of justification through faith in the blood of the atonement, and see that God can "be *just*, and yet the *justifier* of him that *believeth* in Jesus." It has been remarked by a judicious and acute writer, that the term

justification is only used by the Scriptures, or by those persons who have taken their ideas of salvation and reconciliation from the Scriptures, as making provision *not only* for the safety of the sinner, but also for the righteousness or *justice* of God.

It was for this purpose I dwelt on the nature and terrors of the law—that we might go with minds prepared to understand the nature of justification through faith, which is the only suitable way in which God can punish sin, (for he don't as men talk, pardon it,) with safety to the sinner, and be *just* the same time that he is the justifier of the ungodly. And oh, my dear brethren, while I am feebly endeavouring to open to your understandings the Scriptural view of this all-engrossing subject—"How can a man be just with God?"—may your hearts be lifted from the pulpit to the throne of God, praying for a mouth of wisdom and faithfulness to his ministering servant—and that hearing ears and understanding hearts might be given to all who hear me! For oh! it is passing grievous to the servant of God, to see with what frivolity of mind many shift themselves away from the urgency of this question; and, by an act of indefinite postponement, can commit its consideration to a future period, which, in all probability will be the awful moment that will hurry them from a mis-spent time to an unprovided eternity,—and, on the other hand, how is he pained to behold that class of people, who do give their minds to this question, stained with all the polluted pride of fallen nature, trying to narrow the fearful distance between their Creator and themselves, by making some advances on their own side, and taking from the strictness and rigor of the requirements of the law, on God's. They, indeed, seek after some justifying cause, but one different from that declared in the Bible to be the only cause of the sinner's justification; and it is this justification that Paul dwells so fully on from the 21st verse. After having brought in the whole world guilty before God, that every "mouth should be stopped

and that no flesh should glory, save in the Lord,"—and having argued from the universal alienation of men from the life of God—that "by the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight," he goes on from the 21st verse to say—that "Now the righteousness (or justice) of God, without the law, is manifested, being witnessed (or borne testimony to) by the law and the prophets, even the righteousness which is, by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The Apostle then asserts, in the 24th verse, the Divine prerogative of justifying, and that, too, not in the way of debt or reward, for any moral qualification in ourselves, but as his free, sovereign and unmerited mercy, through Christ—"Being justified *freely* by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, thro' the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

Since then the sinner cannot stand at the bar of God, in his own conformity to his holy law, let him hear the glad tidings of the Gospel, which bring to his notice the cheering intelligence of *foreign* worth; that God has provided, and will, by the act of his free grace, confer on, and impute—to whom? Is it to the learned?—no; "The Lord will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." Is it then to the noble and rich?—no; "*Not* many mighty, *not* many noble are called." Is it then exclusively to the virtuous and moral of society?—no, my fellow-sinners, startling as it may appear, but equally to the rebellious sons and daughters of Adam—to the immoral and profane, and to the ungodly. God's ways are not as man's ways, nor his thoughts as their thoughts—man must

find something hopeful in the creature on whom he bestows his benefits, but not so with the heavenly dispenser of good. He has "mercy on whom he will have mercy," and it is written, for the comfort of all sinners that can see themselves as such, (for few, I believe, can see through their own natural character before God, or their neighbours, we hear so much about honest hearts, &c.) that "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

This Bible truth—that God does *justify the ungodly*, is the most wounding to the pride of the natural heart, and the most offensive to those who imagine that they are *busily engaged* in propitiating the Sovereign of the universe; therefore, learned Bible scholars have set themselves in common with the well-inclined portion of mankind, to do away the reality of God's justifying the ungodly, by explaining the word ungodly to mean those that *once were* ungodly, but now, having repented of their ungodliness, and determined to be better subjects of God's laws, and more useful members of society—that God will not hold in remembrance their former ungodliness, but graciously show them something hopeful *in themselves*,—give them *the peace* which, when any one of these improved characters feel, they esteem themselves justified. Now, my dear friends, that I have not overdrawn the popular views of divinity current under the name of Christianity, judge ye; you either have renewed or unrenewed breasts—if renewed, you well know that God has literally justified and saved you in these same ungodly opinions—and if unrenewed, you still are wrapping these very rebellious (although styled religious) feelings closer to your affections, in direct opposition to these views of the Gospel: hear the Apostle, who was determined that he should not be misunderstood—"To him that *worketh*" (that is, to the man engaged in those religious exercises and pious determinations mentioned above), "is the reward" (of justification and God's favor) "not reckoned of grace,

but of works." And then he goes on to say, that the subjects of justification are such as not only are destitute of a perfect righteousness, but have, in truth, performed *no good works at all*; but are *still* in their ungodly state, *when* justification is bestowed upon them. Hear how explicit is the Apostle's declaration—"To him that *worketh* not, but believeth on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his *faith* is *counted* for righteousness." So that when God affirmeth expressly that he justifieth him that *worketh* not, and that freely by his grace, I cannot understand what place our works and religious duties can have in our justification—and is it not, I would ask (with an old writer,) a great boldness for any of God's creatures to rise up in opposition to such express and divine testimony; however, they may be harnessed with philosophical notions and arguings, which are but as thorns and briars, which the word of God will pass through and consume? and this testimony of the Holy Ghost we must not forego, let men be as angry as they please.

It is comfortable to reflect, that the way of acceptance, thro' the blood of a crucified Redeemer, is of God's appointment—that very God before whose awful judgment-seat we shall sooner or later appear; and when we know, with the Apostle Paul, that the justification bestowed upon us is the Divine prerogative, we can put forth the heroic challenge—"Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?—it is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, and is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." If God justifies, who in heaven, earth, or hell, shall reverse the sentence? This sentence of Jehovah shall not be made void by any unworthiness of him on whom the sentence is passed—the accusations of Satan are lighter than vanity. Yes, the mountains and everlasting hills may be moved, but this sentence will be as firm and unshaken as the throne of God, throughout eternity.

Persons often confound justification with sanctification, by supposing that justification is more than the act of the judge pronouncing the guilty person acquitted from all charges—and that, in addition, it consists in a real change from sin to holiness. That this is not the case, will appear by remarking that the justification mentioned in Scripture is the opposite of condemnation, as we find from the passage above—"Who is he that condemneth?" coming in connexion immediately after the Apostle had said, "It is God that justifieth." And although the Spirit of God gives us that faith which is not only requisite to our justification, but which also purifieth the heart, and is a vital principle of all obedience; although, I repeat it, the ungodly criminal is (at the very *time* of his justification), purged from dead works, and made willing, by the energies of the Eternal Spirit, that opened his darkened understanding to receive the saving truths of the Gospel, yet, I do affirm, that we are not to mix up, but carefully to distinguish between the justification and the sanctification of the sinner; but let me not be misunderstood; I do not mean to countenance the unscriptural view taken by some persons, that the justification of a sinner could be registered in the courts of heaven, *without* his being also set apart for God's service; for I fully believe, that the *moment* he is justified, he is the subject also of the sanctifying influences of God's Spirit; yes, and, as in the case of the thief on the cross, if it would be the will of his Father at that very moment to call him from this world, he would be a vessel fitted for the fruition of glory throughout eternity. Oh, then, dear Christian brethren, rejoice with me over this glorious privilege, in which Divine grace reigns with such magnificence and glory; and oh, may we be willing to be nothing—yea, less than nothing,—in this, as well as every other part of our salvation—that grace may appear transcendantly excellent; yes, that it may be all in all!

The connexion instituted in our text

between justification and faith, is very plain—"That he might be just, and the justifier of him that *believeth* in Jesus."

In the former part of my sermon I have dwelt on the rich provision appointed by God for the sins of the whole world; how he "Sent forth his Son, when the fulness of the time was come, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;"—how Christ was the end of the law, for righteousness to every one that *believeth*—it remains then for us only to believe the report of the glad news, and to hail the welcome tidings, as they are presented to us by the sacred penmen. Yes, to set to our seal that God is true, by believing the record that he has given concerning his Son, "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son."

Now I know that many, unintentionally perhaps, discomfit the souls of heavy laden sinners, anxiously inquiring, how they can "be just with God," by instituting a *difference* between the way we are to receive the truth of the Gospel, and other ordinary facts in which we may or may not have any concernment, when in reality there is none—as all that is required in both cases, is to believe the fact stated; and further, there is a still greater cloud of dust raised about the truth in people's minds, by carrying the same erroneous idea so far as to say, that the same truth can be believed in many ways—yea, by going so far as to give, actually, *names* to the different ways a man might believe the same truth—calling one way a *notional belief*, and another way a *heartly belief*:—such an unscriptural way of guarding the *true import* of the Gospel, tends to harass the minds of simple Christians, and set their minds inquiring *how* am I to believe, instead of *what* am I to believe? I would, my dear friends, wish to undeceive your minds on this subject, if perchance they may be in error:—in the first place, discover carefully the *true import* of the Gospel—that

is, how far the finished work of Christ saves—whether in part or altogether—whether you yourself can *help* this perfect work of Christ by works either directly or indirectly in the saving of your own soul; and, dear friends, this is the all-important question that the word of God is so very explicit on—“the Son of man is come to seek and to *save* that which was lost”—he shall be called Jesus. Why? “For he *shall save* his people from their sins.” Observe, Christ is not one that *helps* a man to save himself, but one that *saves* from sin. Again, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save* sinners.” In fact, it would be to quote the entire Bible to bring forward all the passages that speak of the work of Christ as *fully* and *altogether saving*; therefore all that remains for the sinner to do is, to believe the testimony of God on this truly anxious point, that he (being well pleased with the death of his Son, as a propitiation for the sins of the whole world,) can “be just, and the *justifier* of him that *believeth* in Jesus.”

When a man believes this testimony, he has become possessed of a truth which is his faith, for we have no idea of truth except in reference to its being believed, and this truth will constitute him an heir of heaven and all its glories.

2ndly. I would recommend you to inquire whether this divine testimony, declaring Jesus to be an all-sufficient Saviour, is directed to you. Yes, to you brethren, is the word of this salvation sent as fallen children of Adam, as rebellious, as sinners, as ungodly—so that if you can discern these characters in yourselves towards God, you must truly believe the Gospel to be glad tidings to yourself; no matter how others set it aside of little importance, you, by the bare reception of this truth into your mind, (this notional belief, as some would style it,) will have the only untainted joy possessed by mortals—this bare belief will cause you, as it did those of old,

to go on your way rejoicing. A person may indeed believe many things about the Gospel, yea, sincerely believe, and not receive any comfort from such belief, either by not believing it in its genuine import, (and that is very like not believing it at all,) or not seeing in themselves the character the Gospel addresses: in the same way, the devils believe the Gospel in its genuine import, but so far from giving them comfort, it increases their malignity and envy, by its not being addressed to themselves.

Every one who believes the truth which the Apostles believed, has with them like precious faith, and shall assuredly be saved; and if their faith fails in saving—they are believing not the Gospel, but a lie dressed up in the same form of expression; for instance, if you would hear all professing Christians *talking* of Christ and the Gospel, you would imagine they all believed the same thing; but let most of those persons explain themselves, and you will find they will attach a very different meaning from the Apostles to that important confession, that *Jesus is the Christ*: and if those persons who imagine that all to be required to have like precious faith with the Apostles, is to acknowledge the same faithful form of words with our lips (no matter what meaning we attach to them) would be consistent, they would walk into the Popish mass-house with the same degree of comfort and conscience as into this our beloved Established Church, which has been so uncharitable as to split with Romish apostacy on the simple reason, that an unscriptural meaning has been attached to the expression so often in their mouths—*Christ the Saviour and Redeemer of mankind*.

The Apostle Paul, in the next chapter (the 4th) of this same Epistle, adduces the case of the Patriarch Abraham, to prove that works of no description are admitted by God into the grounds of our justification—no, not even as *auxiliary* to the perfect and finished work of Christ; he further shows the connexion of faith

(or belief in the glad tidings of a Saviour for the "lost,") with the justification of sinners. In the 3rd verse we read, (after he had said in the 2nd that "if Abraham were justified by *works*, he would have whereof to glory but not before God;") "For what saith the Scripture, Abraham *believed* God, and it" (that is his faith) "was counted unto him for" (or in the place of) "righteousness;" and then, lest any person should suppose that this unconditional favour was merely for the circumcised descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, he expressly asserts the contrary in the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses—"Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? When he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in *uncircumcision*. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which *he had, yet* being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised: that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." The Apostle in the 23d, 24th, and 25th verses, sets this question in a still clearer light.

Are you, dear friends, walking in the comfort of this Scripture, which is calculated to cheer your footsteps as you walk along this dreary wilderness—surrounded as we are by trials and sorrows in this vale of tears, is it not passing sweet to have the promises of our God to stay our souls upon? Yes! when our spirits are vexed, with holy Lot of old, at the vanity and wickedness we see those on our right hand and our left hand plunged in, we can take courage and be of good cheer, knowing according to the promises that there remaineth a rest for the people of God—for those who are the subjects of the Father's drawing, the Son's finished work, and the Holy Spirit's almighty agency.

To this doctrine of justification by

faith only there are very many objections; many of the objectors to the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, puffed up by the pride and atheism of an unconverted state, attack the persons who hold those Scriptural doctrines, and derive all their comfort from them; attack, I say, the persons, for they are anxious through them to show their enmity to those Bible doctrines their stiff-necked and uncircumcised hearts abhor. For such persons I know no answer more seasonable than the answer of our great reformer Luther, who (although he is thought by some persons to have rejected with them those very doctrines of free grace yet,) answers Erasmus thus—"If, my Erasmus, you consider those paradoxes (as you term them) to be no more than the inventions of men, why are you so extraordinarily heated on the occasion? in that case your arguments affect not *me*, for there is no person now living in the world who is a more avowed enemy to the doctrines of men than myself. But if you believe the doctrines in debate between us to be (as indeed they are) the doctrines of God, you must have bid adieu to all sense of shame and decency thus to oppose them. I will not ask whither is the *modesty* of Erasmus fled? but which is much more important, where, alas! are your fear and reverence of the Deity, when you roundly declare that this branch of truth, which he has revealed from heaven, is at best *useless* and unnecessary to be known? What! shall the glorious Creator be taught by you, his creature, what is fit to be preached, and what to be suppressed? Is the adorable God so very defective in wisdom and prudence, as not to know till you instruct him, what would be useful, and what pernicious?"

Thus I would press upon such objectors, with this great reformer, that the doctrines of free grace are *Scriptural*, and humbly pray that God would give to them repentance, to the acknowledging the truth; that they may receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save

their souls; and it is only in the free and electing love of God, (to which they so violently oppose themselves), that I can see any hope for their repentance.

But the devout Pharisee, and decent moralist are highly offended at the promulgation of a doctrine that takes from man all those false excellencies with which he is clothed, by a heart deceitful above all things; such doctrines being advanced they think it incumbent on them to stand up for what *they call* holiness of life, (which is, in reality, nothing save varnished hypocrisy,) and to support the sinking credit of good works, as tending in some measure to our justification.—Dear brethren, the most shining and dazzling qualities, (altho' highly useful to society,) are treated by the Scriptures as nonentities, *when advanced as a ground of justification*. In this respect, the most zealous religionist is as far as the most profane and impious, from the truths of the Gospel—and the Scriptures, by addressing all as lost, and all as condemned, until they are given to believe the Gospel report of glad tidings, thro' Christ, have given the undivided glory of the salvation of the sinner, to the infinitely rich and free grace of God.—Persons think it fit to rail at the promulgators of those Apostolic doctrines as avowed enemies of holiness—nor will they spare to give them the honorable title of—a friend of publicans and sinners, a title Christ himself never shrunk from. Thus they despise the Gospel, under the fair pretence of more than ordinary zeal for the interests of holiness. But I must express my wonder at persons professing to reverence the Scriptures, identifying themselves with the opposers and objectors to the Apostles; and further, to determine on the evil tendency of any doctrine, (clearly revealed,) is to be wiser than one's Maker.

But the doctrine of justification by *faith only* is objected to by some persons, (whose only anxiety is to be assured that the doctrine is scriptural,) that it cannot be supported, except from St. Paul's

writings, and that St. James expressly asserts, that a man is not justified by faith only, but by works also. This objection is certainly worthy of notice; and I rejoice that the objector and myself have gotten on ground we both acknowledge and rejoice on. We must, in the first place, see whether St. James and St. Paul use the word faith in the *same sense*—one Apostle saying that it saves, and the other that it does not save, leads me to make the inquiry, well knowing that they could not differ on such an important subject as that involving the salvation of souls, and the ground of our acceptance with God.

As I have fully treated of St. Paul's way of reconciliation thro' faith in the atonement, *without* works, directly or indirectly, being admitted into the ground of our justification, I shall proceed to examine whether St. James proposes any other plan of salvation. No; the apparent difficulty vanishes as soon as we examine the contents of the proposed passage in the 2nd of James, 14th verse, "Can faith save him?" It is plain that James does not mean *faith at all*, but a *profession of faith*—he means not to doubt the reality of *faith only* saving a man, but the *bare profession* of faith.—Mark the word *say* in the preceding part of the verse—"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man *say* he hath faith, and have not works?—(to justify, not his person in the sight of God, but his *profession of having faith*,) can faith, (or his merely saying that he has faith,) save him?" The Apostle's meaning is illustrated by the example he gives in the following verses, the 15th and 16th.—where the person, addressing the distressed brother or sister, (desiring them to "Depart in peace, to be warmed and filled,") although he gave them not the things necessary for the body, was making a *profession with his lips* which he himself did *not believe*. Also the case of Abraham is proposed by St. James to prove that every one's *faith* must be justified by works—or, other-

wise it is *not faith* (you may perceive I do not confuse you by supposing *different kinds of faith*) but only a *profession of faith*. In fact, the act that is mentioned here, as having justified Abraham, (his offering up his son.) took place after he was pronounced justified by the Scriptures. Therefore, this temptation, (or *trial*,) was to prove the reality of his faith; so that the Apostles do not at all clash in opinion, as St. Paul was speaking of faith, St. James only of the *profession* of it, St. Paul of justification of the sinner's *person*, and St. James of the justification of the professor's faith, the sincerity of which had been doubted. And oh, brethren, believe me there is no such thing as faith without an accompanying influence; yes, the devils' faith have fruit, they "tremble." In the very same manner many a poor sinner, believing the reality of death, eternity, and judgment, trembles because he does *not* believe in the reconciliation of the cross, which, if he did believe, he would "Rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

Do not, dear friends, put faith in the place of the Redeemer's finished work—for it was not your faith, (but Christ,) that was "the end of the law for righteousness." If it were so, faith would share the glory with Immanuel, as tending in some measure to ransom the sinner, and people would be justified differently, according to the *strength* of their faith. Surely, if you had heard of some kindness done on your behalf, you would not let your sense of hearing have any share in the thanks due your benefactor. No! our blood-bought crowns must be cast solely at the feet of the Lamb, when we are permitted to approach the mansions of light and glory, and every string of our harps must be struck to the Redeemer's praise; and while the loud pealing hallelujahs roll along the boundless tract of eternity, no other song shall engage the attention of the redeemed, but this unwearied, never-ceasing strain of triumph—"Unto him that loved us, and washed us in his own blood, be glory, and dominion, for ever and ever!"

But, dear Christian friends, you that do believe, and are really walking under the influence of faith, let me freely tell you, that *many walk*, who walk inconsistently, and do not altogether live after the dictates of the heaven-born principle which resides within them. And oh, what shall I say to you who make an honest profession, and *yet* walk disorderly—who are, nevertheless, the enemies of the cross—"Whose glory is their shame, and who mind earthly things?" I would direct the attention of such to the Apostle Paul *in tears*, when similar conduct was displayed by those whom he vainly thought would be his crown of rejoicing. Yes, this veteran Apostle, who never shrunk from the battle shock, who never suffered his sword to meet his scabbard, until he fought the good fight of faith—whose manly breast bore him up against the accusations of foes and the scoffs of princes—whose invincible fortitude never forsook him, even in the expectation of an ignominious death, yet wept with the softness of childhood, when told of the conduct of those professors who turned the pardon of the cross into a license to sin. Yes, this bold and noblest champion on the field of controversy, was only overcome by the foul blot his master's honor had sustained, through the profligacy of his own professing converts.

Oh! that you may not increase either your own condemnation, by acting thus, or pain your minister's breast, whose heart is yearning over and longing after the salvation of your souls—Oh, dear friends, consider well concerning the full, free, and unconditional salvation treasured for you, if you will lay hold on the promises of God by the hand of faith; and oh! may this glorious doctrine of justification through faith be ever before your eyes,—this very doctrine by which Luther dispelled the darkness that overhung his time—for which the martyrs bled and died—which, I may in safety say, is the essence of the Gospel, and the hinge on which the golden doors of heaven are rolled back to admit the ransomed sinner.—Amen.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God”—1 Cor i. 23, 24.

No. XXIV.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. R. C. DILLON,

REV. S. A. WALKER,

THE ROBE OF CHRIST'S RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THE SIN OF
WEAVING ANY THING WITH IT:

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN BOOTERSTOWN CHURCH, IN THE DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 1836.

BY THE REV. R. C. DILLON, D.D.

Minister of Charlotte Chapel; and Sunday Evening Lecturer at St. James's Church, Clerkenwell, London.

DEUTERONOMY, xxii. 11.

“ Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.”

THERE were three ways in which the book of Deuteronomy was magnified and made honourable under the Old Testament dispensation. Every king of Israel was required to copy out the whole book with his own hand, and read therein all the days of his life. It was to be written on great stones placed at the passing of the Jordan: and it was to be read every seven years, at the feast of tabernacles, by the priest, in the audience of all Israel. And it is observable, that all the quotations by which our blessed Lord resisted and overcame the temptations of Satan in the wilderness, were taken from the book of Deuteronomy.

With these things in our remembrance, let us now enter on the consideration of the text. And as “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”—we may gather a lesson of weighty importance from this singular and impressive injunction, “Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together.” This prohibition of linsey-woolsey garments in its primary application to the Israelites was intended to show that they were not to mingle themselves with the heathen, nor to weave any of the *usages* of the *Gentiles* into the *ordinances*

of *God*. But what means this prohibition in reference to ourselves? these things were our ensamples, and were written for our instruction. Then what is the lesson taught us by this verse? Evidently this—that the service of God and mannaion cannot be reconciled—that works and grace can never be blended in the matter of our justification before God—that we cannot wear the woollen garment of nature, though the very best of our own spinning, with the linen garment of the Redeemer's righteousness.

I shall request you to consider, then,

I. THE ROBE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH ALL GOD'S PEOPLE MUST WEAR.

II. THE OFFENSIVENESS OF ALL ATTEMPTS TO WEAVE ANY THING WITH IT.

I.—It may perhaps be said, that as the text merely forbids our interweaving woollen and linen *together*, it leaves it at our choice whether the garment of our salvation shall be woollen or linen. But it is not so. It must be of *linen*, and of *fine* linen only; for it is expressly declared in the sixth of the Revelations, verses 7, & 8, that when "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready; to her was granted that she should be arrayed in *fine linen* clean and white; for the *fine linen* is the righteousness of the saints." And it is further said in the 14th verse, that "the armies which were in heaven were clothed in *fine linen* clean and white." We must, then, be clothed in *fine linen*, and not in woollen. This robe of righteousness is for two purposes:—

1st. For their *justification*; and 2ndly. for their *sanctification*. The robe of righteousness must not only be such as Jehovah can *accept*, but it must be such as he cannot *reject*—it must be the pure, perfect, supernatural, divine, righteousness of an incarnate God. No fallen descendant of Adam can ever stand before God *with acceptance*, but in the *righteousness of God*. Nothing less will suffice than the sinless obedience and satisfactory

atonement of Emmanuel; which must be placed to our account by Sovereign Grace, and pleaded by *faith* before the throne. For though the *essence* of this righteousness abides in Christ, it is yet placed to our account, though Christ; and Christ alone, actually *performed* it; and though Christ, and Christ alone *personally possesses* it,—yet as he performed it in *our stead*, and possesses it as our *covenant-head*,—God *imputes* it to us—God *accepts* us *for* it—and accepts us *as much* as if we had, on our own behalf, and in our own persons, severally *fulfilled* it. Just as when Christ mercifully put himself in our place, he was treated *as a sinner*, and all the scalding drops of God's righteous vengeance were poured out upon him as though he had himself *deserved* them all; so the poor believing penitent when clad in the garment of Christ's *righteousness* is treated as righteous as the Son himself! Is this strong? I only ask was Christ treated as the veriest and vilest of transgressors, as our surety? then, if God be just, he cannot but treat the Christian as righteous—more righteous than an angel. And this robe of righteousness is not only for our justification, but for our *sanctification* also. Though we do not *confound* these infinitely rich blessings, we yet dare not *separate* them: for they always *go together* in the work of our salvation: and you can have no evidence that your *sanctification* is in Christ, unless you have evidence that Christ's Spirit is in you. The man who has the *robe* of Christ's righteousness upon him, must have the *influences* of Christ's Spirit within him: for it is only by our *sanctification*, that we can prove the reality of our *justification*. There is a *renewing* process as well as a *reconciling* one. The energy of our *works* is the only test of the efficacy of our *faith*: for, as by *justification* we are restored to the *favour* of God; so, by *sanctification* we are made *meet* for his heavenly kingdom. Without the *one* there could be no *title* to heaven; and

without the other no *enjoyment* in heaven. *Justification* changes our *state*, *sanctification* our *nature*, and both these blessings constitute that robe of righteousness which every man must wear who would enter the kingdom of heaven. Both proceed from Christ—"who of God is made unto us wisdom, and *righteousness*, and *sanctification*, and redemption." And mark, brethren, the exquisite *beauty* of this robe which is "unto and upon all them that believe." The infinitely pure and holy God, in whose sight the smallest iniquity is a hideous abomination, sees myriads on myriads of his believing family arrayed in this robe of righteousness—and sees it without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. It is radiant throughout with heavenly glory, and is *spangled* from the top to the bottom with the graces of God's Holy Spirit. The whole family in heaven and earth is seen perfect through the comeliness which the Lord God hath put upon them—complete in *him* which is the head of all principality and power: not merely pardoned, but *reconciled*; and not only reconciled, but justified, and made *complete*; not a single thread of *woollen* in the whole garment but all of finest linen, clean and white,—not only before men and angels, but before infinite purity and omniscience itself! Surely then, we can never think too highly of this robe of the Redeemer's righteousness. It is a subject into which we can never dive too deeply:—it is the master-pillar, on which our eternal welfare rests:—there is nothing equal to it on earth, or in heaven, or throughout the universe! It surpasses the enormity of our guilt! it surpasses the utmost reach of our imagination! Yea, it surpasses all that we can *express* or *conceive*; being truly, properly, absolutely DIVINE!

Let us learn, then, 2ndly—THE FOLLY AND OFFENSIVENESS OF ALL ATTEMPTS TO INTERWEAVE ANY THING WITH IT—And yet this folly is attempted; and *that*, in a thousand and a thousand instances. But let it be most solemnly noted, that

claiming any degree of merit whatever on the part of man, in the work of the soul's salvation, is an insult to God the *Father*, and to God the *Son*. It is an insult to God the Father, who has determined that every child of his family shall be habited in the one robe of the family—the perfect spotless garment of his only begotten Son, "unto and upon all them that believe." The way which he has himself devised and published, in consistence with his own character, and with the stability of his august and righteous government, for taking sinners into reconciliation,—is this—he tells us that "there is no other name given under heaven, whereby man can be saved, but the name of Jesus"—he tells us that it is only "in Christ that he has reconciled the world unto himself,"—and so infinitely condescending is our God, that he has vouchsafed to give us a *reason* for the peculiar way of reconciliation which he hath set before us: it is, that "he might be just, while the justifier of those who believe in Jesus." In the dispensation of his mercy, he had to provide for the dignity of his throne: he had to guard the stability of his truth and righteousness. And as he could not strip his eternal throne of a single attribute that supported it, he awoke the sword of vengeance against his fellow—he sent his own Son to be the Saviour—that on *him* the truth and justice of his character might receive their most illustrious vindication. Therefore it is that the *mercy* of God is now free to rejoice amid the glory of his other bright and untarnished perfections; and he pours the expression of his tenderness, with an unsparing hand, over the most worthless and the most wandering of his children.

How, then, must that man expect to be dealt with, who, in the wantonness of his resistance to God's method of salvation, shall refuse to rest solely on the righteousness of God's own Son, or shall dream of *adding* thereto his own imperfect and perishable doings? If Jehovah has

been pleased to turn the throne of his glory into the throne of his grace, and has cleared away from the pavilion of his residence all the darkness that encompassed it, will it not be an insult to his majesty, such as cannot be forgiven, to presume to *alter* the terms of reconciliation, and to venture into his sacred presence in "a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together," which he has expressly *forbidden*, and when he requires to be approached in a garment of *fine linen* only? One can hardly conceive what it must be for a man to throw scornfully away from him the only garment in which it is safe to venture into the presence of the king eternal, immortal, invisible, and to look for a gracious audience though habited in another? Such daringness will only draw down upon him the indignation of the Almighty, for presuming to expect the divine favour on some plea of his own, and resolutely declining it on that only plea, under which the acceptance of the sinner can be in harmony with the glories of God's holy and inviolable character. The consequence can only be, that all the sanctions and severities of God's unchanging law will be let loose upon him in all their force, if he ventures either on his *own merits only*, in a *woollen* garment, or conjointly on his own and on the Saviour's, in a garment of linen and woollen together, and thus refuse his undivided reliance on him alone, who magnified the law and made it honourable. Such confidence as this will be put assuredly to shame. God *cannot* accept the man who thus makes free with his unchangeable attributes;—he cannot descend with such, to any intercourse of affection whatever; for man refuses the grant of external life on the only terms of the grant. There is so foul an imputation of vanity and uselessness fastened on all that the *Son* hath *done*, and on all that the *Father* has *devised*, for the redemption of the guilty—when man presumes to interweave his cursed doings

with the blessed work of God's own Son, and has the hardihood to bring *the garment of divers sorts* to the gate of the sanctuary, and bid the piercing eye of Omniscience look upon it and be satisfied—that nothing can remain for such a man, but a dreary "looking for of judgment, and of fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries."

Nor, assuredly, is there less insult offered to God *the Son*, in this attempt to combine works and grace in the matter of salvation. For what purpose was his mission to our world? why did he become God manifest in the flesh, and thus throw a veil upon his glory? was it not to let us see in his tears and sympathies, and in all the recorded traits of his kindness and gentleness and love, what a God we have to deal with? was not his coming associated with such circumstances of humiliation, and conflict, and deep suffering, that heaven looked on with astonishment, and earth was bidden to rejoice because of the great salvation?

Did he not pour out his soul an offering for sin, and by his obedience unto death bring in everlasting righteousness? Is it not through the channel of *his* great expiation, that the guilt of every believer is washed away, and through his imputed merits, that every believer is admitted to the rewards of a perfect obedience? was *he* not the great sacrifice on whom the iniquities of the whole Church were placed and borne away—and *so* borne away that there is no more mention of them?

Think you, then, brethren, that this great and gracious Saviour will consent to be insulted by men's attempts to join *their* works with his, and to "wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together," when the *fine linen* only of his finished work—dyed in his precious blood—is the righteousness of the saints? Know ye not, that he lays an absolute claim to *all* the honour of our salvation? That he will suffer no righteousness to be put in competition with his? That he will not give his glory, nor the least

degree of it, to another? Have you forgotten St. Paul's powerful question—"Is Christ DIVIDED?" Is half of his work undertaken by others, and half by himself? Yea, rather, is not his satisfaction finished, and his righteousness complete? "What fellowship, then, hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness?" "Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together."

I charge you, then, brethren, to lose no time in examining the garment of your own salvation. You are all in hopes of sitting down at last at the marriage-festival in heaven. Of what materials, then, is that garment composed, in which your souls are now enrobed? Is it of "divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together?" I am seriously afraid, brethren, that in most of our garments there are too many threads of *woollen*, while all should be of the purest and finest *linen*. We profess to take the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness as our only wedding-garment; but how incessantly are we tacking on thereto some phylactery, or fringe, of our own tears, or prayers, or purposes, or charities! Verily, dearly beloved brethren, there is more of Popery in even Protestant hearts than we are any of us fully aware. And what is Popery? The argument of the Romanists on the question of salvation is this:—"If a man trusts to *his own* righteousness *entirely*, it may deceive him: and if he trusts *wholly* to *Christ's* righteousness, he may perhaps be mistaken in being too presumptuous. It were safer, then, to trust to his own righteousness and to Christ's *conjunctly*; just as the man who rests one foot on one branch of a tree, and the other foot upon another branch is much safer than if he ventured his whole weight singly on either." But, brethren, is not our own righteousness a *rotten* branch? a branch that will assuredly snap, if the least stress be laid upon it, and let us

fall into the gulph of perdition? But the righteousness of Christ is an *able* branch, (he is called "a righteous branch," Jer. xxiii. 5.) an *omnipotent* branch—a branch that will never fail, that will never break, though winds and storms beat vehemently thereon:—therefore on *this* branch shall we stand firm for ever.

Suffer me to ask, then, brethren, on what are *you* depending? What are you *wearing*? What, and where, is your trust? Have you felt all your righteousness to be only filthy rags? You know what *St. Paul* thought and felt? How willingly he renounced a dependance upon all that was his own, in order to a dependance on all that was his Saviour's. His main anxiety was that he "might win Christ and be found in Him, not having his own righteousness which was of the law, but the righteousness which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." He refused to mingle the *woollen* with the *linen* in the garment of his salvation—"Not having mine own righteousness," is his solemn declaration. Now, is it *your's*? Is your faith trusting for everlasting peace on what Christ has done and suffered for you? And is your experience the life of Christ in you? You are not to mistake *indwelling corruption* for *Christian experience*. You have just so much Christian experience, as you have of the *Spirit* of Christ, and the *life* of Christ, and the *love* of Christ, and the *temper* of Christ in you, animating, controlling, drawing, sanctifying, and strengthening your spirit in the inner man. If you *have* the Spirit of Christ, in any measure, poured out upon you, then I congratulate you as having on the robe of "fine linen, clean and white," and

"Midst flaming worlds in this arrayed,
With joy shall you lift up your head."

But, let the scrutiny be deep and decided. A mistake on this point is final. If I, whose eyes are of fire, shall detect but *one thread of woollen* in thy wedding-

garment, it will ruin thee for ever. There is only one sort of robe that will admit to the marriage-supper of the Lamb. Be careful, then, in examining your dress, and ascertaining your real state before God : and if there be but a single thread

of woollen in thy garment, pray for grace, that you may extract it, ere it be too late ; that so you may make *Christ* your Beginning and your End—the Author and Finisher of your faith—your Alpha and Omega—your ALL AND IN ALL.

THE RAVAGES OF TIME.

'Tis in the noiseless sphere of common life,
 In humble homes, by happy ev'ning hearths,
 Where once the social hearts were gather'd round,
 We trace a fearful havoc in thy flight !—
 Alas ! how many whom the infant year
 Beheld in beauty, looking on through life
 As through a vista of eternal joy,
 Have vanished,—like the bloom of early hope !
 What blue-eyed babes, beside the parent knee,
 Reflecting smile for smile, have flown away,
 Like birds of Paradise, to their own home !—
 What creatures, budding into womanhood,
 Who loved the silent walk, and made the flowers
 Companions of their virgin thoughts,—have gone
 To graves, with all a mother's treasur'd hope !
 Go, see the mournful chamber, where of yore
 When winter howl'd his dirge, the gush of song
 And heart-warm fellowship of evening hours
 Were heard,—now mute, as if the tones of joy
 Had never scatter'd echoes there !—Alas !
 For him, who, in the green young spring, had wed
 The heart he worshipp'd ; brightly laugh'd the sun
 Upon that morn of love complete ; long days
 Of bliss, and all the warm romance of youth,
 In radiant vision, gather'd round his heart !—
 And now——*the world's become a tomb to him !*

REV. R. MONTGOMERY.

IS DEATH A REALITY?

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. MARK'S CHURCH, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 1837,

BY THE REV. SAMUEL ABRAHAM WALKER, A. B.

(Rector of Gallo and Drumlagan, and Curate of St. Mark's.)

GENESIS iii. 4.

“Ye shall not surely die.”

DEATH, if it be not directly the theme of every pulpit discourse, must invariably be the hinge on which all sermons turn. The certainty that we must all die is the cause, however remotely viewed, which assembles us together to hear them; and when present, at least, we acknowledge its influence, in giving interest to the announcements which are made, and the reflections to which they give birth. The truth is, however, and the familiarity of the fact reconciles us to its extravagance, that few, indeed, believe the declaration, however solemnly urged, or incontestibly demonstrated: few identify themselves with those whom it embraces, or appropriate the consequences it involves to their individual selves; and this conclusion, I think, can be rendered evident by a very simple process. The usual proceeding of the minister is to argue from its inevitability, and, in proof of this, to adduce reason, Scripture, and observation; but the general result is exactly the reverse of what might be expected. Its principle, if it has any, is—“Since to die is our ultimate destiny, let us endeavour to banish its remembrance, and live as though it were not true.”

It has occurred to me, then, to examine the question upon the negative side, and,

from establishing the natural result which a supposition of its correctness would involve, and comparing it with the actual state of things around us, to vindicate my position, that few embody their notions of death into the substantial form of a practical reality.

This, then, is my text—“Ye shall not surely die”—contenting myself with assuring you that it is to be found in the Scriptures, and not stopping to inquire into the nature of the circumstances under which, or the authority by whom the assertion is made: let us put it to the test of reason, Scripture, and observation, and I think I shall be able to satisfy you upon such testimony, deduced from all these, as is generally considered, by immortal beings, quite sufficient to prove that the soul that sinneth shall *not* die—that death is a nonentity, existing only in the brains, and on the lips of clergymen, and useful only to terrify the credulous into restraint, and give weight and pungency to pulpit exhortations.

I. Let us first consult *Reason*. It says, God is good, and as to die would be painful, and to be attended with all the ills of sickness, confinement, abstinence:—as it necessarily includes the privation of accustomed pleasures, the abandonment of gay associates—the absence of every

eye to admire, and every tongue to praise—it is not reasonable to suppose that he would inflict it whose name is love. He is merciful—could he behold beings of his own organization writhing in the agonies of diseases consequent on their indulgence in gratifications for which he gave them capacities and tastes, and the materials of which he has himself created and scattered lavishly in their path? God is wise—could he have given to men a frame so exquisitely wrought—so furnished with all the requisites for strength and endurance—so enriched with organs to receive and convey delight—so symmetrical to the eye—so obedient to the will, only that he might destroy it as it were in a moment—only that the worm might be fed? He is just—must the righteous be slain with the wicked? Must the infant and the aged perish together?—But what is death? Has any one ever seen or heard it? Can any tell where it is? Till all these difficulties be removed, reason rebels against the assumption that we must all die.

2. It is true, Scripture asserts “It is appointed unto men once to die” and that “Death has passed upon all men” but is it not also said in Scripture “Ye shall not surely die?” David plainly says in Psalm cxviii. 17th verse. “I shall not die” and Habakkuk, giving extension to the opinion and including his brethren, exclaims, “We shall not die”; Hab. i. 12. In what other sense are we to receive the declaration of St. Paul, “We shall not all sleep?” 1 Cor. xv. 51; and does not God himself assure us that he has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, much less therefore in the death of the righteous? Now my friends, I have quoted for you Scripture for Scripture.—You may impugn my manner of doing it—you may say I moulder and mutilate it for my purpose—that I sacrifice its spirit to its letter, and make the one contradict the other. To this I answer, whatever contrivance my method exhibits, it is not mine—it is in use by thousands and millions of rational beings

for the settlement of every question involving the paramount interests of their immortal souls. Are there not many here whom it satisfies upon the subject of eternity?—Is it then so absurd to use it in the far inferior considerations of the things of time?

3. Passing from Scripture, let us turn to the last test by which I propose to try the validity of my assumption—*general observation*. Were there such a formidable enemy as death to be encountered by all, it would be but natural to expect to find it the subject of general conversation and the object of universal alarm, its very name filling all faces with dismay, and occupying all heads with devices either to evade or successfully resist it. Were the waters of some vast river to swell and greatly overflow their channel, there is not a hamlet on its banks which would not exhibit the stir and hurry of unusual activity to escape the threatened inundation. Were a fire to break out in a dwelling house, who would suspect the inmates of abandoning themselves and their property to the devouring element? or could we readily believe that the occupiers of an adjoining tenement would, upon notice of the neighbouring conflagration, resign themselves calmly to slumber, or deliriously rush into some scene of revelry or intoxication, to shut out from their remembrance their condition and its consequences, until consciousness should awake amid the stupendous horrors of irreparable ruin and unavailing self-reproach? No, consternation would be upon every face, and activity in every movement—nor could an observer question the reality of the danger, were he even to confine his observation to the looks and conduct of those whom it threatened.—Can there therefore be such an enemy as death, not only in existence, but continually in our very neighbourhood, and not a whisper regarding it issue from the lips of its assumed victims in their most crowded assemblies, or an apprehension of its approach blanch for an instant

the check or interrupt the ceaseless smile of the most sensitive among the daughters of mirth, who nightly record their satisfaction with the joys of time, and their scepticism regarding those of eternity? Both reason and precedent reject the supposition.

Now my friends, let us suppose the position established, that death is only an empty name—a bugbear to terrify the ignorant and superstitious. Fancy that I succeeded this day in convincing every child of man that they should not surely die, what do you suppose would be its effects on yourselves? Would you not go forth from these walls determined to forget all you had ever heard upon the subject? Doubtless, you would consider it expedient, to erase every serious impression which your mind had received, under the discipline of an imaginative subject of apprehension—to shake off the trammels of a vulgar superstition, and assert the freedom of a more enlightened judgment. How would you proceed? Considering the world now as your inalienable possession—you would rush freely into the intoxication of business, pleasure or ambition—you would devote yourselves with unshackled assiduity to the study of all this world's resources of enjoyment, and as there would be no fear of death, and consequently no contemplation of a judgment to be encountered—God—Eternity—Heaven—Hell, and all reflections which those subjects suggest, would be banished by every possible means from your thoughts. Self would be your only idol, earth its capacious temple, and every achievable gratification its justly due and most appropriate offering:—to ensure the admiration of your fellows would be your highest ambition, and to evade their censure your most anxious solicitude:—the Allwise and Allgracious Being who created you and the world you inhabit, who bestowed upon you all the sources of gratification you possessed, and the ability to enjoy them, would naturally be disregarded, for he is

a Spirit, and your object would be to cultivate only such sentiments as issue in the indulgence of the flesh:—no discretion would preside over, or no economy regulate the expenditure of time and health—for as their resources would be inexhaustible, prudence would be misplaced in limiting their disbursement:—therefore likewise all respect for hours and seasons—the prescribed periods of labour or repose would be superfluous:—the worshipper of wealth would rationally devote his time and talents to the acquisition of riches, commensurate with the demands of immortality:—the votary of pleasure would lack either argument or occasion for seriousness, while the ball-room, the theatre, the concert, the promenade, or any other weapon for time-murder was at hand; and while all, though equally selfish, would seek to secure pleasure by combining their powers to please, we should have a society presenting a surface of sparkling hypocrisies with an undertide of biting jealousy or burning resentment, bearing its victims impetuously on—every face would wear a smile, but every hand and every tongue would be ready to plant a dagger.

Oh, my friends, what an awful picture have I permitted my imagination to draw! Surely it could never be realized, except on the supposition that there was no death—no judgment—no eternity!—What if I undertake to convince you that such a supposition must prevail now? What if I announce to you, that such is the portrait but too faithfully delineated, of that society which is emphatically called the world?—such the sentiments—such the conduct—such the pursuits of thousands, whose indignation would be extravagantly excited, were their Bible to become a proscribed book, or the door of their parish church to be closed against them. But meanwhile the besom of a long-insulted, but long-suffering God, is sweeping our land. Wrath has gone out from the Lord, and hundreds are dying in the plague; but where are the evi-

dences of its recognition,—of the hand from whence it issues, or the object for which it is sent? Where is the ear, attentive to the lesson of mortality it conveys?—where the fleeing, under the convictions it awakens, for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us? Where the awaking of the soul from its slumber of ignorance and death? Where the cry for Jesus, amid the hurricane of Jehovah's vengeance—the mighty swelling of the waters of Divine judgment—the yawning gulf of long-despised, long-defied wrath, and the now evident insufficiency of that refuge of lies in which the souls of millions are content to embark on the perilous ocean of eternity? Let the daily, nightly scenes of festivity throughout our capital—interrupted—no, not for an hour—reply: let the hoarse voice of midnight revelry respond.—How adequately does the music of the ball-room harmonize with some neighbouring chamber of death! How uniformly do the orgies of Christian defiance to the warnings of Omnipotence, correspond with the chilling solemnity of many a surrounding scene, over which the avenger has spread the pall of desolation! Oh, must it not be, that there is a voice proclaiming in our ears—"Ye shall not surely die!"—and that we may believe it, is not reason paralyzed, Scripture set at nought, or perverted—and (oh, most daring impiety,) Jehovah himself represented as a liar! Can it be the voice of a friend?—is it the voice of truth?—no!—incontestably no—it is the voice of a *fiend*—it is a *daring lie*! Is there one here that believes it? Oh, my friends, am I not justified in presuming that there are many within those walls to-day, who act upon its suggestion, and who invariably in their lives, if they do not with their lips, assert its credibility? To such let me address an interrogatory or two. Imagine that you stood on the scaffold, beside the culprit who had forfeited his life to the violated laws of his country: as he awaited in agonizing suspense the fatal

signal which was to be the last earthly sound he should hear, would you whisper the impious falsehood in his ear? would you dare to tell him, in vain has your crime been detected—in vain has your sentence been pronounced—in vain has the fatal hour of its execution arrived—in vain shall the engine of death, with fearful certainty, obey the signal—"You shall not surely die?" Would you tell it to the gamester, as you beheld him in the frenzy of disappointment and despair, directing the suicidal pistol to his heart? Would you tell it to the emaciated victim of pleasure, as he lay extended upon the bed of bodily pain, and mental horror?—would you whisper it to him as the film of approaching night gathered over his distorted eye-balls, and the last quiver shook his lip? Would you dare to urge it upon a son or daughter of dissipation, as they retired, languid with exhaustion, from the scene of their nocturnal riot—the pale cheek and sunken eye proclaiming the midnight hour long past, and the fatal inroads upon health of what the world calls gaiety? Ah no, you would not—you dare not—and why? The very condition of each, at the moment of such a communication, would be abundant evidence of its falsehood, and assuredly furnish its refutation even to the minds of those whom it was intended to delude.—Reason might in such cases advance her arguments, and deduce her inferences. Scripture might be wrenched into a contradiction of itself, and experience, consulted through a partial or vitiated medium, might echo the impious lie; but the simple truth of God's word from the beginning, and as it is in Jesus now, would be found to maintain its resistless sway, and vindicate its eternal fame.

This, then, my friends, is the communication of Jehovah to every individual present—"Set thy house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."—Isaiah xxxviii.—1. And from the same source we have also this assurance—"The soul that sinneth it shall die,"—Ezek. xviii. 4.

Now, if the character of the Divine authority upon which we receive the one, be a sufficient guarantee for its truth, we cannot refuse our assent to the other. But further, if as we have seen, certain cases might present themselves, in which the most flagrant scepticism could not deny the former—may we not fairly hesitate, since both have received the same unqualified contradiction—to reject a statement which stands exactly in the same position as to authority, and may also, possibly, as to fact?

Is death eternal, a reality? And oh! my beloved friends, bear in mind, I beseech you, that this is no speculative inquiry, involving merely the interest of investigation, and offering only the establishment of an abstract fact; but a question possessing deeper interest, for every one of us here to-day, than would the accumulated concerns of innumerable worlds, could they all be grasped by one finite mind, and responded to by one set of feelings and affections. The simple question is, will any immortal soul be sentenced to die an immortal death?—God affirms it of the soul that sins. Satan responds in the negative. There are millions enlisted on both sides of the question, and it must be admitted, that a vast majority is found in the ranks of the latter—from openly avowed sceptics to mere worldlings, who live the unbelief and the defiance they only want courage to avow—all occupy a position on that side of the controversy. To-day, my friends, I am commissioned to call you, who are present, into judgment upon this question, and to demand from each of you a solemn declaration of your belief, such as you shall not hesitate to maintain at the bar of eternal justice, where we shall all see, even as we are seen, and know even as we are known.

You have heard the fiat of Jehovah,—“The wages of sin is death.” To this Satan replies, addressing the soul, as he did before the body—“You shall not surely die;” and here again he employs

reason, Scripture, and experience, to substantiate his assertion.

I. Reason testifies that the God with whom we have to do, is merciful, loving, and just, but when under the dominion of Satan, it exacts as the price of this admission the privilege of representing him in an attitude of falsehood—as too tenderly alive to the well-being of his creatures, to expend a thought upon what is due to his own divine attributes—upon the demands of his justice, holiness, and truth. Its solution of a human difficulty is the degradation of him who dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto—Its appeal is to attributes which it is found convenient to exalt under the circumstances for which they are used, but which are never found to awaken a responsive feeling of gratitude or love in the breasts of those who are compelled by the terms of their spiritual bondage to employ them. “God is gracious”—therefore he is to be unscrupulously treated with insult!—“He is merciful”—therefore are all his declarations, however solemnly urged, to be despised!—“He is a God of love”—therefore we may fearlessly hate, revile, dishonour, and labour to degrade him!—Is there no error in such reasoning as this? Would it pass current in the world around us? Would man be content to maintain a character for general amiability, upon the condition of being injured to any extent with impunity, and receiving hourly the keenest provocations without exhibiting resentment? My friends, I believe, no one will assert this; judge therefore yourselves, is it decent, is it safe, to visit Omnipotence with an indignity which it would be absurd to expect a fellow worm to endure with patience?

II. We might expect, that the inspired word of truth, would be the last authority to which the deniers of eternal retribution would have recourse for the establishment of their convenient but fatal assumption: but it is far otherwise—nor can we wonder, on recollection, that the spirit that now worketh in them did not on a

notable occasion, shrink from intruding into this divine armory and thence purloining a weapon, which after fashioning to his purpose, he audaciously employed against the great master offence himself. I mean not, however, on the present occasion, to advert to the case of those who give this fundamental truth a direct and unqualified contradiction. Indeed I do not consider it likely that there are many occupying this more advanced stage of delusion or impiety before me. Let it suffice now to advert to the mode by which Scripture is made to countenance a practical denial of God's repeated admonition to the wicked—"thou shalt surely die." This then is two fold—

1. By taking refuge behind particular characters or occurrences which bear a fancied analogy to ourselves and our actions, in some case under reprehension, and from their acknowledged exemption from divine censure, feeling satisfied that we establish our own. The character and conduct of Him who was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners," Heb. vii. 26. ; are, strange to say, the most usual refuge of "revellers, banquetters, and such like," from an assumption that he indulged on particular occasions in the society of the worldly and profane—engaging in their festivities and partaking of their cheer. The tempter's art is here very characteristically developed—that scripture may be broken, the garment of Christ is rent, and a shred exhibited as a specimen of the shape and fashion of the entire. The cry of the Scribes and Pharisees is still echoed by their modern imitators, "Behold a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," Matt. xi. 19. Wisdom is still justified of her children. But say, ye faithful followers of the friend of sinners, is there no portion of his earthly career which you would desire to imitate but that upon which you rest with such evident satisfaction?—Have you no admiration to bestow upon his labours of love for both the temporal and eternal

interests of those sinners with whom he associated? His sleepless nights of prayer? His unwearied days of active benevolence? His un murmuring submission to the will of his Heavenly Father? His endurance of injuries? His humility under provocations? His meekness? His condescension? His anxiety for all?—Have you no ambition to imitate him in the holiness of his character, the purity of his life, and the unparalleled wisdom and godliness of his conversation?—Would you indeed eat and drink with him? Then hear him announce the fare you are welcome to participate, "my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work," John iv. 34. Would you indeed accompany him in all his movements?—Then you must "go about doing good," Acts x. 38. ; for that was the path he invariably occupied. Would you, in fine, act in all things as he acted? To do so you must seek not your own will but the will of your Heavenly Father, John v. 30. My friends I ask you solemnly, is this your object on all those occasions for which you plead the example of him who came "to seek and to save those which were lost?" Luke xix. 10. If it is not, oh do not, I conjure you, rest your soul's eternal interests upon a sophism too contemptible to impose upon the weakest intellect not pandering with most slavish subserviency to the malign object of the old serpent.

Another and very common mode of arguing the point with Jehovah out of his own Scriptures, is by reminding him of such examples of his long suffering mercy and forbearance, as they represent to have been admitted by a late repentance to the forgiveness of their accumulated guilt, and thence asserting a claim to similar indulgence to be followed by a similar result. I need scarcely remind you how the sacred episode of the thief on the cross has been abused to this purpose, or how a glaring misinterpretation of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard has been similarly employed: but

if there is one soul here addicted to the gross absurdity, not to say awful impiety, of this practice, I will assure them, on the credit of a minister of the Gospel, whose experience, though comparatively short, has not been inconsiderable:—I never had the comfort to witness, in the death of an aged votary of the world, such a recognition of the “Truth as it is in Jesus,” as led me to believe “Old things had passed away, and all things had become new.” No; not even a sense of danger, which usually attends the summons of a young disciple of Satan, in the midst of their suicidal career, can be awakened in minds which have grown familiar with ungodliness, and have so often repeated to themselves the ready lie of Satan as to have made it their own, and thus rendered self-deception identical with self-love. Who can for a moment doubt that the retribution of Divine justice is evidenced in this?—who will not connect it with the fearful commission of the prophet—“Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed?”—Isaiah vi. 10.

III. The sect of the Sadducees, as it existed in our Saviour’s time, is now fully represented by the generality of professing Christians, in their notions of that spiritual kingdom of which Christ is the head. Still earth and its constitutions, its laws, its maxims, and its incidents, supply to them their only conceivable model of the things which must be hereafter; and, consequently, Satan finds a ready basis for his falsehood, in the apparent discrepancy between the character of God, as revealed in his providences here, and such as it is represented in the Bible. Here his hatred of sin is but faintly delineated, and his vengeance against the sinner by no means strikingly displayed: many who confine their view to the results of conduct here, are ready to

exclaim—“The ways of the Lord are not equal,” since his chastisements do not seem proportioned to the number or depravity of the offences committed. From this the believers of the tempter often infer, that there is no positive law to regulate the adjudications of eternal punishment. Oh, my dear friends, can I suppose that there is one soul here harbouring a presumption so fraught with dishonor to Jehovah, and with everlasting perdition to itself! Consult not the world without, I entreat you, but the world within, and say, is there, in any case, peace to the wicked, or permanent satisfaction to the neglectors of God? Is there no voice to whisper you, that every misery, whether of self or circumstance under which you have ever groaned, was the execution of God’s irrevocable sentence against sin? Consult your own inclinations, propensities, hopes, fears, and anxieties, and say, is not every one of them the tomb of your immortal soul, within which it lies hid—dead, neglected, and forgotten? Have you not then the sentence of death in yourselves—are you not by nature spiritually dead?

Where is he whose ear first drank in the impious falsehood? What was the issue to him of the controversy between God and the serpent? You may read it in the 5th chapter of Genesis, and 5th verse—“And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years—AND HE DIED.” So much for what related to the body—but the assurance of exemption had also reference to the soul, the falsehood of which we may likewise collect from Heb. ii. 9—“We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Of what death may we suppose the Apostle to speak? Of natural or spiritual? temporal or eternal? Whichever it be, Jesus has tasted it for, or instead of, all, so as to give them an immunity from its power; but no such immunity

is enjoyed by the body. Still it is appointed unto all once to die : this benefit must therefore have been extended to the soul ; and if Christ died for all, then all must have been dead : hence in this sense also, is the prince of this world judged and found a liar, upon the testimony of Jesus.

And now, my friends, of what we have spoken this is the sum. The representation of Satan is disproved—Adam died, and we all die in him—his body has never revisited the earth—it returned to its dust ; a similar fate awaits every being in this house to-day—sin brought death to him and to us. The same sin brought every immortal soul under the same sentence of death. This is indisputable, for Jesus has died, but death did not detain him in bondage, it was not possible he could be holden of it : he burst its bands, and in him we triumph, for he died to reprieve, and rose to enfranchise our souls. Had Adam never sinned we would not have known death ; and had not Christ died, that death would have been to us eternal. Is then death a reality to the body ? Adam and his whole posterity say *yes*—our object for assembling here to-day says *yes*. Are we not now experiencing a startling visitation of Almighty resentment ? It says *yes*. Is there not many a heart among those whom I see before me, clad in the dark vesture of mortality, which throbs a convulsive *yes* ? Is death a reality to the soul ? Ask the sentence of man's condemnation, and it says *yes* ? Ask the law of a holy God—ask the spirit of your natural minds—consult the lives, the pleasures, the pursuits of the children of this world— inquire at the lips of one who has drunk the intoxicating cup of dissipation to the dregs, who was once the life of every festive scene, the promoter of every scheme to banish solemnity from the brow and reflection from the heart—of one who lived without God, and has just learned the inevitability of death at the awful moment of dissolution—

all, all, will answer *yes* ! But ask Jesus—Jesus as he expires upon the cross, or Jesus as he sits enthroned in his glory at the right hand of the Majesty on high.—Oh believer, call upon him as your Saviour—your deliverer, your friend : ask him, shall you die eternally ? Tell him you have incurred the sentence—ask him must you pay the penalty—will *he* say *yes* ? God forbid ; “let God be true, but every man a liar.” He has promised to say *no*. He will turn the fatal sentence of deception and death into one of truth and life eternal, “out of the eater will he bring forth meat.” He will say, “you shall not surely die,” “I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die,” John xi. 25, 26.

Thus, dear friends, “I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing ;” your choice is now the old Adam or the new.—They walked in different paths, and their children follow in their steps : one ate of the forbidden tree ; he saw that it was pleasant to the eye, and to be desired to make one wise, but he found death in the indulgence ;—the other ate the bread of sorrow and drank of the cup of bitterness, but “he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied,” he “learned obedience by the things which he suffered.” The forbidden tree is still flourishing in the midst of this world's garden—its fruits are the pleasures, the vanities, the riches, the enticements of earth ; but the only wisdom they bring is a too late discovery of the madness with which they were partaken. The cross is still planted on Calvary—it is forbidding to the natural eye, and at first heavy to bear ; but its only inconvenience is to the body ; it is an easy yoke and a light burden to the soul. The body it crucifies with its affections and lusts, but it is an object of everlasting pride and exultation to the soul.

THE GOSPEL.

When we examine the Gospel, and try it by every possible test, we find that it maintains the character which its name denotes, "*good news.*" It is the good news of salvation to a perishing race—"tidings of great joy to all people." Look at its *origin*—the love of God; look at its *promulgation*—love dictated it; look at its nature—is not love depicted on it? It had its origin in the love of God, and that love, not induced by any merit on the part of man, not generated by any, the least spark of love on the part of the creature, for the heart of man, when the fall had blighted it, was "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," and on it was written, "enmity to God;" and so the Apostle reminds the believers to whom he wrote, "Not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins;" and every spark of love to God in the heart must be kindled there by the Holy Spirit, for this was the experience of the Apostle, and must be that of every believer, "We love him because he first loved us." "God is love," if then, he has sent forth his Gospel to man, if it be the result of his divine counsel, it must, so to speak, partake of his nature, it must, reason would suggest to us, be "good news."

Look at its *promulgation*,—"Go ye," said the Lord to his Apostles, when about to leave the scene of his humiliation and enter into his glory, he sent them to propagate his truth, "Go ye into *all* the world, and preach the Gospel to *every creature.*" He commanded them to make no distinction as to Jew or Gentile, clime or color, bond or free; to make no distinction as to the comparatively moral or depraved, but to preach it to *all*

"Whether they would hear or whether they would forbear." As the effects of the fall were universal, "As death passed upon all men, for that all had sinned," so he graciously ordained, that the remedy should be promulgated to all, that he should be exhibited in all his offices to a perishing world—the antitype of the brazen serpent in the wilderness, that men might look and live: "Look unto me," was, and still is his language, "And be ye saved, all the ends of the earth," "The Spirit and the bride say, come; and let him that heareth say, come; and he that is athirst, come; and *every one that will* let him come and take of the water of life *freely.*" If then, as we have seen, the Gospel is good news as having its origin in the Divine love, does not its extensive promulgation by the command of the same gracious Being, show to us that it is "good news?" for assuredly, were it not, the divine love that planned it would not ordain its promulgation.

But it is in the nature of the Gospel itself that we most clearly perceive, that it is indeed good tidings. What then is the Gospel? What is its announcement? It is a message of free pardon from the God of heaven to his creature man; it is an announcement of perfect manumission from the insulted Monarch of the universe to those who had rebelled against his authority and exposed themselves to the curse of his law. And is not this good news? Is not this the best news that can sound in the ear of man? Is it not news that should gladden the heart of sinners such as we are? go whisper in the ear of one condemned to perpetual imprisonment, that his prison doors have been opened, and his sentence remitted; or tell the convicted criminal, awaiting

execution, that his king has extended his pardon to him, and he is restored to liberty and life:—and how will the tidings vibrate on his ear, how will his heart beat for joy? And yet the one has but his liberty secured for the duration of his life, and the other, his life preserved for a brief and uncertain period. But the offer of the Gospel is *everlasting liberty, eternal life!* and this offer made to those who had forfeited both, secured by the word and oath of Jehovah! Were the Gospel indeed such as some represent it, a system, enabling a sinner to save himself by his own merits in conjunction with that of Christ, it indeed would bring no joy, it would not be good news, for how could man, under the curse of God's violated law, fulfil that law which demands a perfect obedience, and of which our Divine Master has said, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than for one tittle of the law to fail?" Christ must be all or is nothing to the sinner. He must perfectly fulfil the law for us or we must sink under its condemnation. Blessed be God, this he has done, "It is finished," was his dying cry; He has fulfilled all its demands. When he had overcome the sharpness of death, he opened the king-

dom of heaven to all believers. "This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, he that believeth on the Son hath life," "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," "He that believeth in me," said Christ, "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."—This is the Gospel message, a message just suited to man in his ruined state, as he is represented in Scripture, "dead in trespasses and sins," "Alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him," "Without God and without hope in the world." Surely we must admit, that judging the Gospel on its merits, viewing it as a message from God to us, and seeing its adaptation to our state, it maintains the character which its name implies, "Good news." Oh, that while we admit this to be true by the exercise of our understanding, the Spirit would enable us to feel it in our hearts, and induce us to cleave unto Christ as "all our salvation and all our hope," through whom we may approach God as a reconciled Father and enjoy his presence throughout eternity!

X

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“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God’—1 Cor i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. WILLIAM CLEAVER,

REV. JAMES KELLY.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, 29TH JAN., 1837,

(On behalf of the Parochial Schools,)

BY THE REV. WILLIAM CLEAVER, A. M.,

(Rector of Delgany.)

ISAIAH, lv. 1—9.

“ Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money : come ye buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price.

“ Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labour for that which satisfieth not ? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

“ Incline your ear, and come unto me ; hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.”

“ Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

“ Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not ; and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel ; for he hath glorified thee.

“ Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.

“ Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

“ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

“ For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

What mercy breathes in every line,—whether we consider the earnestness of the invitation, “ ho ! every one that thirsteth ;” or, to whom it is made, to those who are “ spending money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which satisfieth not” who are living to the world and the flesh—or, as it is in the 7th verse, “ Let the wicked forsake his

way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord”—that it is to the *unrighteous*, to the *wicked*, the invitation is made :—or, whether we consider, what is promised to such, “ that the Lord will have mercy upon them, that he will abundantly pardon them, that their soul shall delight itself in fatness :”—or lastly, what are the conditions of the

promise, that it is for such to buy what is invaluable, "without money and without price." And shall any of us be found in the day of judgment among those who *refused such salvation?*

Yes, we are invited, my brethren, to buy it "without money and without price," for it is to this part of the passage I would more particularly draw your attention this morning.

The pearl of great price, what is above all price, we are invited to buy "without money and without price." The sweet Gospel riddle this—the Gospel contradiction, and yet no contradiction—the meaning is plainly, that the Gospel is free,—that though we have no equivalent to offer, nor any thing like an equivalent; though we have nothing of our own to recommend us to the favor of God; but when, alas, every thing that is our *own*, would shut us out from his favor, yet we are not shut out from *the grace of the Gospel*. The meaning is, that the Gospel has no more respect to our deservings, no—than the light of the sun has to the world's darkness,—than the showers of heaven have to the earth's drought; that the drought is as much the cause of the rain, that the darkness is as much the cause of the light, as any thing in us is the cause of the favor extended to us in the Gospel. The Gospel is mercy springing *out of mercy*, kindness springing out of pure kindness, out of God's own goodness, and nothing else: you might as well look for holiness in sin, for brightness in midnight darkness, as for any thing in ourselves to recommend us to the Divine favor. It is therefore we are said to buy it "without money and without price"—because, when the world hated God, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to save a world which hated him—that those who hated him without a cause, as the Redeemer so affectingly complains, he loves and saves without a cause. Might he not well say, "my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord, for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

Man had contracted a debt,—a debt which bound us over to eternal condemnation—a debt which neither man nor angel could discharge—the Son of God takes it upon himself, as in the 53d chapter

introductory to this, he becomes the debtor in our stead, makes himself responsible for all we owed, goes to "prison and to judgment" for us, discharges our dreadful debt to the uttermost farthing. "Come unto me," says Christ, and buy that for which *I*, for which *I* have paid the price, without money and without price. The unriddling of the riddle, this, that the Gospel of the tender mercy of God, while it cost such a price, is as *cheap* to us, as it was *dear* to him who paid the price.

We learn, at the same time, from our being called to buy it, how it is for us to act, to have the *benefit* of this Gospel; that as when a person buys any thing, he makes it *his own*, we must make the Gospel *our own*, that we must not be satisfied with hearing it, or knowing about it, unless it become our own property, unless we have as real an interest in it, as unquestionable a right to it as a person has to articles of merchandize for which he has paid his money.—As it would be no relief to a starving man, though he were in a baker's shop surrounded with loaves, unless he could get one of them for himself—as the hart, which panteth for the water brooks, the hunted deer, is not satisfied with gazing at the water at a distance, but still pants and gasps till he drink of the water-brooks—in like manner, that the thirst of the *soul* may be quenched, that the hunger of the *soul* may be satisfied, there must be a *personal appropriation* of the Gospel. It would have been of little use to Hagar in the wilderness, to have had her eyes opened to see the well of water *near* her, unless she had supplied herself out of the well.

And *how* to make the Gospel our own, we learn also; something however of what is for us to do, we may learn, from our being called to *buy* it. When a person is about to purchase any thing, he *considers* well—considers what the house, the land, the furniture, the article of clothing, or whatever the marketable commodity may be, has to recommend it—whether it be such as will suit him. As in the 31st chapter of Proverbs, it is said of the woman there described, "She *considereth* a field, and buyeth it." In like manner, to those who would have the benefit of the Gospel, the Gospel becomes the subject of serious consideration; not as in the 44th chapter of this Book, it is said of the worshippers of idols—"None

considereth in his heart"—not, as in the complaint in the 1st chap of Isaiah, "Israel doth not know, my people doth not *consider*," but as it is in the 18th chapter of Ezek. for example at the 28th v.—"Because he *considereth*, and turneth away from all his transgressions which he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die."—"Because he *considereth*"—Those who would have the benefit of the Gospel, their minds are much exercised upon it; they are not satisfied with hearing it, or reading it *for half an hour in the morning*; but it is much in their thoughts, and upon their hearts *the day long*. They remember it upon their beds—and the result of all their thought and consideration is, "What is a man profitted," say they, "though he gain the whole world, if he lose the salvation of the Gospel?"

We learn further, from our being called to *buy* it, that we must give something in exchange for it—as a person gives his money in *exchange* for what he *buys*. We must part with our *sins*, that is, or part with the Gospel: "His name shall be called Jesus," said the Angel, "for he shall save his people *from their sins*,"—not, as it has often been remarked, not *in* their sins. Nay, we must be like the merchantman in the parable, who, when he had found the pearl of great price, went, and sold all that *he had*, that he might buy it. We must be prepared, that is, to make any sacrifices, to make a sacrifice of our prospects, our interests, our friends in this world, of character, of liberty—of life itself, if we cannot have the Gospel, as it *may* be we cannot, at a lower price. It is not, oh no, that Christ receives anything from us, we receive all from him "*without money*." The faith with which we *embrace* the Gospel, is from himself; our consent to part with our sins is from Christ; he is the Alpha as well as the Omega, the author as well as the finisher of our faith—he *begins* the good work in us, as well as *performs* it unto the end. Not a touch of conviction have we, or ever had, but it was a touch of the finger of Christ upon the heart; there is not a spark in the smoking flax, but it was Christ kindled that spark; not a sigh was ever heaved for sin, but it was Christ made the bosom to heave; he took our nature, our sin upon him, that we might *receive* in exchange his righteousness—*his nature*. From first to last, it is the song, and ever will be, all who

embrace the Gospel—"Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thyself, Lord, belongs the glory."

In truth, in this Gospel market, Christ is at once the seller, the merchandise, and the buyer. He is the *seller*. When you go into a shop, or to market, what is it the person does who wishes to dispose of his goods? He endeavours to persuade you of the value of them, and that it would be for your advantage to purchase them. And what else is Christ doing throughout the Bible, not to speak of the passage before us, but commending his goods, that is, himself, to us, as the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, as in whom we shall be complete, as the Apostle speaks; for he is himself, as I said, the *merchandise* also. It is to as many as receive *Christ*, says St. John, power is given to become the sons of God; it is Christ in the heart, who is the hope of glory; it is Christ himself who "Is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." And when, notwithstanding all that he is to us, we feel little need of him, what persuasions, what solicitations he uses! as in Revelations iii. 18, for example—"I *counsel* thee," (those who had said "I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing,")—"I *counsel* thee to buy of me gold, tried in the fire, that thou *mayest* be rich; and white raiment, that thou *mayest* be clothed, and eye-salve, that thou *mayest* see." He counsels them thus to buy of him.

Yes, and he is the *buyer* also himself, for, let us be never so much persuaded of the value of Christ, or of our own need of him, yet, unless he incline the heart—unless he make use of his own sweet compulsion, we shall never *strike the bargain*—shall never *close* with him.—What Christ does for us is this—not to speak of what he has already done for us, or of what he will yet do for us—it is no less than this: he stands at once without the heart, and within the heart; he stands without, knocking at it, as he speaks, with his word, and in his various other ways,—and within, opening it by his Spirit—as to the Church of Philadelphia he describes himself as "Him that openeth, and no man shutteth." When Paul was preaching by the river side at Philippi, it was not Paul, it was the Lord who opened the heart of Lydia.

So that, let the heart be never so much disinclined, a touch from Christ gives it a new bias, an inclination towards himself. He invites those who have the greatest unwillingness, to come to him for willing—*he makes them* “willing in the day of his power.” By the exercise of a power from himself upon their heart, he takes away the heart of stone—do not then make hardness of heart a reason for not coming to him—and he creates a heart of flesh within us—a heart of sensibility, a heart of tenderness—a heart to feel all that is for us to feel. Will they not then be speechless in the day of judgment, who after all, hold out against him?

You have now heard, my brethren, after a manner however, what is for *sale*, (if I may so speak in continuation of the figure used by the Prophet,) Wonderful to tell, no less than the unsearchable riches of Christ, the forgiveness of sin, reconciliation, peace with God, brokenness of heart, tenderness of conscience, the love of God shed abroad in the heart, love for all whom God himself loves, the hope of glory—in a word “*Christ and with him all things*”—as the Apostle speaks; so that we can want nothing if we have him, as we have nothing, if we want him—no *happiness*, be our condition otherwise never so prosperous *without him*, nor *unhappiness*, be it one of never so great suffering *with him*—Christ then, I say, and with him *all things*, are exposed and offered, as really and truly as provisions or any other marketable commodities are offered, for public sale—with this difference however, that no money is required, as at other markets, nor any thing corresponding to money, to buy at this. At this market, then, (still to carry on the metaphor) at this market, thus supplied from Heaven, and open to those who have no money, you are invited to buy, my brethren—yes, and this is marketday—the sabbath is the Gospel market day, on which, if ever, the opportunity is given to lay in a supply of “the meat which endureth to everlasting life.” And we are now in the market place. It is in the house of God *this market* is held, for is it not here the precious merchandize—Christ, is set forth? Is it not here, in the midst of those who are gathered together in his name, Christ is present? What is wanting? buyers, buyers! O! for buyers! Where are they who are not to be satisfied till they have made this Gospel their own,

who instead of banishing all thought of it after hearing it, give it that deep consideration it demands, and are ready to part with whatever they are called upon to part with in exchange for it? Not but there are those present, I am very sure, who know what the traffic at this market is. Oh! that you may know it better and better, dear brethren! that you may be engaged in this traffic with Heaven, to a yet greater extent, upon a yet larger scale! that while others would add house to house, field to field, the covetousness may be yours to “add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance: and to temperance, patience: and to patience, godliness: and to godliness, brotherly-kindness: and to brotherly-kindness, charity,” to be accumulating these, the *Gospel riches!* that your continual prayer may be, such as that in the litany, “That it may please thee to give to all thy people, *increase—* increase of grace,” that your heart may burn within you “to comprehend with all saints, what is the height, and length and depth and breadth of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.”

But, there may be those also present, to whom the prophet is saying “wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” who are spending their time, health, youth, it may be,—yea, heart, mind, soul, strength, in the pursuit of what, let them be never so successful, cannot satisfy the deep cravings, cannot quench the burning thirst of the soul. The soul, when such things are its objects, is an insatiable, bottomless gulf, throw into it riches, honours, pleasures without end, it is no nearer being filled than at the beginning. Truly may it be said to such, as it is in the 52nd chapter of this book, “ye have sold yourselves for nought;” but though you have, Oh, hear the words which come next, “ye shall be redeemed without money:”—it will not be for any thing wanting on the part of the Redeemer, if you be not.

Or, say you, it is not to the world you are looking for happiness? Ah! but are you looking to the *Gospel* for it? have you made, or *would* you make the Gospel *your own*, as others would secure for themselves—would make houses, land, the things of the world their own? or are you satisfied *without* securing a *personal interest*, in the Gospel?

You may have seen persons in a shop,

who, when they have been shown *almost all the contents of the shop*,—when article after article has been brought down from the shelves for their inspection, have at last, to the no small disappointment of the shopkeeper, gone out without buying any thing. And we who have the Gospel wares to dispose of, are subject to like disappointments. We also have customers who, when they have looked at, and turned over, so to speak, again and again, the goods which we offer them, as though they would make an offer for them, content themselves with the looking at them, hear and listen to the Gospel, that you would think they were going to embrace it, yet go out of Church, ah! and out of the world, *without embracing it.*

And are you content to remain,—if there be any such present?—(and can I think there are none?)—are you content to remain thus *hovering about* the Gospel—lingering at the gate and not entering—“Ever learning,” as the Apostle describes you, “yet never coming to the knowledge of the truth,” to any real knowledge, which cannot be without a participation of it? Are you content to go on, *playing* with the Gospel, instead of seeking to be *saved* by it? God is in earnest, Christ is in earnest, shall it be yourselves only that are not? God would have you *saved* by the Gospel—Christ would have you *saved* by it—oh, would he not?—and shall he have to say of you, as of those whom he would have gathered as a hen gathereth her chickens, but *ye* would not?” Oh, begin—as those who would be buyers in earnest; take now the first step towards being such, that of serious consideration,—consider only, consider, whether the Gospel have not enough to recommend it to you; whether it be not entitled to more than a passing hearing from you,—nay, whether it be not the very thing you want—whether it would not *indeed suit* you? What have you no sins to answer for? What would it not then be to you to have him *your own—your own Saviour*, who has answered for the sins of all to whom he is a Saviour? As you look forward to death, judgment, eternity, have you no qualms at times, no secret apprehensions, no throbs of conscience, no dread of the judgment to come? But let Christ once be yours, and fear not; “Peace, be still” it will be for you to hear—all will then be brightness before you. The answer of a conscience purged by the blood of

Christ, will stop the mouth of an accusing conscience: and when death comes—when you lie at the last gasp, death itself will be gasping under the cross which you are embracing.

And consider on the other hand, what the Gospel, presented and not accepted—what Christ crucified, Christ preached, and Christ rejected, will be to those who do reject him, in the day of judgment! that they will have the Gospel as well as the law condemning them, that they will have the wrath of the Lamb against them, that for them, the blood of Christ will speak *worse* things than the blood of Abel, that “it will be better for Tyre and Sydon, for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment than for those who had the opportunity of embracing, and neglected so great salvation! What! linger! when a question like this is depending! Oh, do but consider, what the present life is, that it is the first link of a chain of an unending existence! Nay, time itself is but as the duration of a moment between eternity past, and eternity to come.—We are now as upon a bridge, stretching across from eternity to eternity! Is there not that, in considerations like these, to recommend the everlasting Gospel to you? to make you desire to be among the *real buyers*?

Or is it that you cannot bring yourself to give what you are required to give in *exchange* for the hope and peace of the Gospel? to give up certain practices, certain indulgences, to break through certain habits, to contend with temper and self-will, to deny your own inclinations, that you cannot bring yourself to make the required sacrifices—is it? Oh, but that you could be persuaded to cast a look at *him*, who would *incline* you to make them, who would incline you to relax your grasp of all that you are clinging to, who would take away this unwillingness, and make you willing!

Turn thou me, O, good Lord, say, and so shall I be turned, “draw me till I *run* after thee!”

Think of Zaccheus after he had climbed up into the sycamore tree, to catch a passing *glimpse* of Jesus as he passed by it; hear him who was but now a griping, grasping man, one who scrupled not to make his fortune by dishonesty and extortion; hear him when he had now looked to Jesus, and Jesus had looked up to him, “behold, Lord,” have I been a covetous man? alas,

I have, but, "behold, Lord, half my goods I give to feed the poor," have I been guilty of exaction, oppression? In every such instance "I restore four fold." Christ will make you as willing to *give up* your sins as to be *forgiven* your sins.

At a meeting which was held, not long since, in London, to promote the better observance of the Sabbath, a large proprietor of the new public conveyances known by the name of Omnibus's, came forward in the spirit of Zaccheus; he gave a most interesting account of the manner in which he had been led to give up running his carriages on the Lord's day. When he went to Somerset-house to strike off his name for a Sunday license, though he stood alone in what he was doing—was the only Omnibus proprietor who would consent to make a sacrifice of Sunday gains—yet, had the whole world, he said, then met him, he felt he could have *withstood* the whole world in the strength that was given him, and he would not now run an Omnibus on the Lord's day for ten thousand pounds! Christ will make you as willing, I say, only cast a Zaccheus look at him, he will make you as *willing to give up* your sins as to be *forgiven* your sins. And will you not then look to him and be saved?

Or, am I addressing any, who, like certain merchants or tradesmen (not to lose sight of the figure before us) make an appearance and keep up a hollow credit without capital? am I addressing any who are in *religion* what the others are in *business*? while they make an appearance, have a name, maintain a character, before men, are bankrupts before God and their own consciences, dead—while they have a name to live? And are you content to continue in this hollow, false state,—not knowing how soon a crash may come?—and what a crash! rather than throw yourself upon him who would relieve you from all your embarrassments and apprehensions, and to whom you will not be less welcome for having no other resource—for having no money: aye, who will set you up with a capital which there will be no danger of your drawing upon too largely?

Or there may be individuals present, to whose case, the terms proposed are, as they think, inapplicable, who would not class themselves with those who have no *money*, who cannot understand, that persons of moral conduct, unblemished character, amiable in the relations of life,

exemplary in the duties of life, should have no ground of acceptance, no hope of salvation, but such as the dying thief had. If it be not, in such cases, that there is a clinging still to sin, an unwillingness to be released from the bonds of some sinful inclination, and that they would therefore have a Saviour and a Gospel of their own, consistent with the indulgence of it; if this be not the explanation—such objection to the terms of free grace will be found to arise continually, from the difficulty of believing that there is such grace; and then, when conscience takes alarm, and the King "begins to reckon with his servants," recourse is had to any thing that may be thought available in ourselves, as a plea for lenity, as a recommendation to mercy. It is not, till it be believed what the freeness of the Gospel—what the extent of its grace is, what the heart of God towards sinners in the Gospel is, that the soul can stand before the tribunal of God, without any support from its own goodness. It is not till it be seen with some clearness, what we have to depend upon *out* of ourselves, that we can resign all dependance *upon* ourselves. To venture out of our own righteousness, and without any reservation, commit ourselves to the Gospel promises, is to make a plunge, which, till we be somewhat *sure* of what we are about, till we *know* whom we have believed, we dare not:—and yet, thus commit ourselves, make this plunge we must, or perish! Yes; whatever our estimation with man, whatever our respectability in the world, if we would find mercy in the day of the Lord, we must buy it now, like any other, "Without money and without price." Oh, and as the prophet is thus bringing you to the brink of these depths of the grace of God, that you may have the faith to cast yourself into them; letting go every cord of self-dependence, in the shipwreck of every other hope, that you may be able to cast yourself upon grace—pure grace,—salvation, "Without money, and without price!"

I am addressing some, it may be, who once knew what it was to buy at this market, but are buying at it no longer, who have since been supplying themselves at another market—who have gone back to the world. But "return ye backsliding children, saith the Lord, and I will heal your backslidings." Say, "I will go and

return to my first husband, for it was then better with me than now," and you will be as welcome as ever. Oh, come to the market at which to the last, as at the first, you may buy, "Without money, and without price." Let faith reach out her hand, though with no money in it, a beggar as at the first, and from him who "giveth liberally, and upbraideth not," from him whose compassions fail not—from him "Whose nature and property is always to have mercy and to forgive,"—from him who, having loved his own that were in the world, loved them unto the end—no fear but you shall receive the alms you ask as at the first; let the cry go up, as from one in like circumstances, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation:" and it shall be restored, unhappy backslider, it shall be restored as freely as it was first given.

Only "seek you the Lord while he may be found," and it is not to you only the prophet says it, to which of us is he not saying it? "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near," before it be too late,—delay not; how often has the opportunity of making an advantageous purchase been lost by delay—by hesitation, indecision? In such matters however, it is of no great moment, but to how many has delay proved fatal in the matter of *salvation*? I will wait says one, till I be in more favourable circumstances; I am at present too much engaged says another, I will wait till I have more leisure; I will wait says a third, till I have completed such and such arrangements, till I have accomplished such and such plans, till I have provided for my family, till my children are placed out in the world, and then—but before then, you may be out of the sight of this sun, beyond the sound of this Gospel, before then the grave may have your body, and hell your soul! I am too young yet, says another, I will wait, are any now saying it, till I be older?" But what says God? "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near;" *God* says, "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation;" *God* says, "To-day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;" And what says He to those who *do* harden their hearts, when he is thus calling to them? "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought

all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you: then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me." Oh, that I could think of you, one and all, Dear brethren, returning this day to your homes—as they return from other markets, who in exchange for the money which they have spent, carry home with them the several commodities of which they were in want—that I could think of you all, as you return to *your* homes, leaving your *sins* behind you, and taking *salvation* with you; for depend upon it, be willing only to part with your *sins*, and the salvation is yours—depend upon it, nothing but the preference of sin to Christ, keeps you out of Christ's arms. Nay, and ask of him to take away the *love* of sin out of your heart, and put himself in the place of it, and he will do it, you have heard. For, from first to last, all is from himself, from first to last all is given by him and received by us, "without money and without price." Take courage then, you who say, I am wretched and miserable, and poor and blind and naked, even though your heart be as stone.

Oh! and as we hear of this abounding grace, as we see God thus smiling upon sinners, loving those without a cause, who hated him without a cause, does not the heart relent, does it not melt? "The carnal mind which is enmity against God, which is not subject to the law of God" thus becomes reconciled to God, and to the law of God. Oh, for the obedience which is wrought in the heart as it sees God "justifying the ungodly!" as it sees "God in Christ reconciling sinners unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them!" as it sees God *embracing* sinners in the arms of Jesus Christ! for that obedience which is the response of the heart to the grace of the Gospel, which is an answer to the question "How much owest thou unto thy Lord?" which runs upon the wheels, which flies upon the wings of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, as it flows out upon us in Jesus Christ! Has that love been in any measure apprehended? Then it has bound a cord round your heart to *draw* you to him who so loved you, to *bind* you

to your God for ever. Ah! yes, it is thus it will be seen whether we have been *indeed* buyers, or like those who content themselves with looking at what is to be sold *without* buying. If a man has been buying clothes, for instance, he will be seen *wearing* the clothes; if he has been buying cattle, he will *stock his land* with the cattle; if he has been buying provisions, his table will be *supplied* with the provisions; if he has been buying furniture his house will be *furnished* with it; and if we have been buying of Christ, the heart and mind will be *furnished*, we shall be clothed, we shall be *adorned* with what Christ has for those who buy of him. When you return to your families, it will appear in your intercourse with them, in the spirit and temper in which you converse with them, what you have been buying of Christ. In your *money* transactions it will be manifest you have dealings with Christ, as well as with men; it will be seen in habits of self denial, in self sacrifice that you have had to do with him who pleased not himself; the heart will be more or less discharged of its selfishness, you will take an interest in others, you will feel a solicitude for others, such as comes from that blessed Being who "went about doing good" who came "to seek and to save that which was lost;" you will no longer be insensible to the cries of a world perishing for ignorance of him, no more than you will be to the cries of want and wretchedness around you—you will be no unconcerned spectator of the efforts made to *save* a perishing world; while in the spirit of that divine Saviour, who on his way to the *cross*, and for all that he was so straightened till he should accomplish our redemption on it, would stand still, to give sight to the blind, or health to the sick, or comfort to a mourner—You will not, in your anxiety for the higher interests of man, overlook his *other* numerous demands upon you. In a word, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things, are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise"—these *sparkles* of the pearl of great price, these *beams* from the sun of righteousness will more or less shine out in your life, and cast a lustre over your profession. In your place and neighbourhood you will be *a sweet savour of Christ*—Oh, to be *such*, instead of giving occasion, as Jacob

felt the inconsistent conduct of his sons had done, "to make him to stink among the inhabitants of the land,"—you will recommend your Divine Master by the impressive eloquence of a life derived from himself to those who know him not. As when we have been well served (again to return to the figure before us,) by a person in business, the superior quality of the articles with which we are observed to be supplied, will, without any further recommendation, draw others to the same shop; Christ would have us in like manner, by our appearing in the character, not of this world, which he forms in those who are his, by our letting the happiness appear with which he blesses them, to encourage others to go to the same *source* of blessedness, to the same adorable Saviour of whom (he would have it to be carried, as upon the wings of the wind to every human being, there is to be blest,) let them be in themselves never so *unhappy*, in character never so *unholy*, they may buy what will make them as the angels of God, "without money and without price."

And if there be such a response, brethren, to the grace of the Gospel, if you would *express*, you are not insensible "how much thou owest to thy Lord," if you would express that you take an interest in others, feel a solicitude for others, such as your Divine Saviour feels, you will not be wanting to the occasion of this day.

Oh, let not the familiarity of an application for the support of schools make it one of less interest to you—as alas! the familiarity of the Gospel itself will abate men's interest in the Gospel—no, nor let it be thought, that in *this* part of our address to you, my brethren, we are descending from higher to lower ground—that Gospel which you have so freely *received*, we now call upon you freely to *give*; for what, if after all you have been hearing of the Gospel-market, you should be yourselves chargeable with a monopoly of it! And do not you hear from the streets and lanes of our metropolis, cries enough of that world which is perishing for ignorance of the Gospel?

In the midst of the surrounding darkness, and wretchedness, and wickedness, (Oh, for is it *not* with such we are surrounded?) there are schools connected with this Church—but which call for no common exertions, no measured liberality to support them—it was indeed the

urgency of the case, as it was represented to me, that induced me, in the difficulty of finding an advocate, to appear before you this day, my brethren; which however I did the more willingly, when I heard what the schools are; that the same market to which you have been now invited; yourselves, is *thrown* open to those who are educated in them. As in our own case, my brethren, it is not by a *common* acquaintance with the Bible, and occasional access to it, but as we contract a familiarity with it, that, as in *other* instances, the Bible throws off its reserve, and opens itself to us; in like manner, according indeed to the express injunction, "These things which I command thee this day, thou shalt teach diligently to thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." We would render the Bible familiar to the children under our care, would, from first to last, interweave the golden threads of God's word through the *whole texture* of the instruction which we provide for them.

In truth, to whom does the invitation belong, if not to those who are so especially spoken of as subjects for the Gospel—as being free from all pretensions of their own? Was it not when the children were *prevented* from coming to him, as though the Gospel were *not* for such as *them* that Jesus was so much displeased? I remember to have read a conversation between two sisters, one of whom contended that the Saviour was never known to smile. What! not smile, said the other, when he said, "suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not,"—when "he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them!" not smile, when he rejoiced in spirit, and said, "I thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes!" And he is now smiling, even upon such attempts as that which is made in these schools, to bring the children to *himself*, to train them up in *his* school, and for *his* kingdom.

One of the cheering features of the present times, one that looks promising for the extension of Christ's kingdom, is the growing attention bestowed upon the young, the variety of suggestions and works adapted to their age, which the

press is continually supplying, as well as the sums of money which are expended to assist in bringing up the rising generation "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

You are called upon to-day, my brethren, to express *your* interest in this cause and; I am happy to have to tell you, that no small measure of success has attended the education afforded in the schools for which I am now applying to you; that many sweet fruits of it have appeared in after life; and let me add, what should be no small additional recommendation of these schools to you, as it was a great encouragement to myself to undertake to plead for them, that they are under a superintendence in which you can place all confidence. And I know few ways in which a congregation can better cheer the hearts of their ministers, and hold up their hands in the midst of the anxieties and disappointments to which they are subject, than by providing that these *nurseries* be in a state to send out as leaven for the mass of the population, a constant succession of christi-*anly* instructed youth, in a state to supply materials for revival and new life, when from other quarters, they may have little to encourage them. I must repeat, however, that to give *efficiency* to the schools for which I am now applying to you, an *effort* of liberality will be required of you—but for *what* purpose, rather, make such an effort?

The schools consist of a daily school for boys, which is now attended by ninety-two boys; of another for girls, attended by seventy; and an infant school, at which there is an average attendance of one hundred; and which, from the extreme poverty of the neighbourhood in which it is situated, is peculiarly acceptable and valuable. There is, besides, a boarding school for twenty-four Protestant girls, whose recommendation for admission is usually that they are fatherless, motherless, friendless, or that their families are in a state of destitution, to make such a provision the greatest object to them:—and a boys' boarding school, (which for some years had been closed,) in consequence of the urgency of the cases that presented themselves, for which such an asylum was desirable, and a hope of support which has not been withheld, was in the year 1834, again opened, and the number of twenty have been admitted into it.

The circumstance of there being no longer the opportunities that there once were of obtaining admission for destitute Protestant children into the charter schools under the incorporated society, on account of the great reduction which has been made of late in their number, was an additional reason for restoring *this* school, as I trust it will be with you, my brethren, for *supporting* it.

More than usual anxiety is felt for the success of this year's appeal, in consequence of the expence which has been incurred in establishing this boys' boarding school, and the number admitted into which has been doubled during the past year, and a large dormitory for the boys has been built at the expense of near two hundred and fifty pounds within the same period. The funds have been also considerably drawn upon to meet a deficiency for completing another parochial school, which was much wanting near St. Stephen's Church; and now that the buildings have become so valuable, the expense of insurance has been incurred. I should also mention, that whereas a part of the income by which the schools are supported arises from the rent of houses, (some of which, it is not an uninteresting circumstance, were bequeathed by a respectable citizen who had himself been brought up in the Boys' boarding-school)—several of these houses are now untenanted; and the present high price of provisions adds considerably to the expense of maintaining those in the boarding-schools. I would only add, that there are, at this moment, cases of no common interest, of boys for whom admission is solicited, depending upon this day's collection. So that, though, I am happy to say, the establishment is not in debt, which, under the circumstances, speaks not a little for those to whom the management of the funds is entrusted, yet there are large demands upon it—and large

demands upon *you*, therefore, my brethren, I hope you will allow me to add, no, I cannot doubt, but that the means to meet the demands will be supplied.

Let what you have been hearing this morning be present to your minds; it is from no ordinary motive you are called upon to give—not from motives which might influence heathens as well as Christians—but as “Knowing the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet, for our sakes he became poor—that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.”

I feel as though in *each* of you, brethren, I were addressing the man who owed the ten thousand talents; and, forasmuch as he had not to pay, his Lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made; when one, a stranger to him, comes forward in his behalf, undertakes to be responsible for his debt, and, in discharging it, makes himself a beggar.—A train of children are seen at the door of the man who had thus been rescued from ruin—they are no other than the children of his benefactor! Is there a kindness he can show them, that he will withhold from them?—is there a thing in his possession, that he will deny them?

My brethren, you are called upon to express something of what you owe to him who interposed between *you* and ruin,—who gave himself a ransom for you—who went to prison, and to judgment for you—through whose interference in your behalf, you have pardon, peace, heaven, “Without money and without price. You are called upon to express something of what you owe to this benefactor, by showing kindness; and you have the opportunity of doing an act of substantial kindness, to those whom he sends this day to *your* door—kindness which will be felt as kindness to himself.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1836,

(ON BEHALF OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL SOCIETY,)

BY THE REV. JAMES KELLY, A. M.

JOHN xvii. 17.

“Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.”

This chapter is a continuous prayer offered up by our blessed Saviour in the days of his flesh, and may be regarded by us as a model of that intercession, which, as the high priest of his Church, he is now carrying on within the veil. The verse which I have just read to you is one clause of it, of which the Apostles, his immediate disciples, who were at this time his auditors, and doubtless, his anxious observers, may be considered as primarily the objects; for they were now about to be bereft of their beloved master, and exposed, as they would be in his absence, to the most venomous shafts of earth and hell; they indeed required to be clothed with the “armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left,” and no doubt to all, who hold the sacred office of the ministry, this prayer has a special reference.—If, as the apostles, we ministers are not appointed to preach and confess the faith, amidst the terrors of fire and sword, yet is it our province, as it was theirs, “by a manifestation of the truth, to commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in God’s sight.” Hence the very position we occupy involves the requirement of more than ordinary holiness; that which may suffice for the mere soldier of the cross, is not enough for the leader; as has been well observed, “ministers, like the statue, because of the eminence on which they stand, *must be larger than life.*”

It is but right, then, I say, for you, my friends, to expect your Ministers to be holy men even beyond others; but bear in mind it is no less your duty to pray for them, instant in season and out of season, that they may be so; extraordinary responsibility on their part should be attended with corresponding solicitude on yours.

But even more particularly are you concerned with the passage before us, its application must not be limited to the Apostles or their successors. Our Lord himself guards against such restriction, v. 20. “Neither pray I, says he, for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” He thus extends his thoughts to the remotest ages of his Church, and doubtless, yet unborn generations are to experience the efficacy of this solemn prayer.

Nor is it less obvious from the necessity of the case, than our Saviour’s own statement, that all are concerned in the petition before us, for “without holiness,” the very subject matter of this petition, “no man,” says the Scriptures, “shall see the Lord,” and all, without exception, are by nature destitute of this, “there is none righteous, no not one.” “Every imagination of the thoughts of the natural man’s heart, is only evil, and that continually.”

The subject before us, then, is *sanctification*: and secondly, the *means by which it is wrought*. May the Lord, the Spirit make our meditation profitable on these important points.

Only before we enter upon their immediate consideration, let me not omit to assign to the matter of sanctification, its right place; and this is highly necessary—for, suppose an architect having undertaken a pile of building, and laid the foundation for it deep in the earth, to be giving directions to his workmen concerning the carrying of it on; if he knew that ignorant persons were at hand ready to imitate the labours of his men, and, in running up an edifice for themselves, to be laying brick for brick, and stone for stone, after his injunctions, whilst yet they had thought of no foun-

dition; think you not but he would feel it expedient, under these circumstances, to preface all his directions with the information, that they were only useful in case of a foundation being laid, that without this, all the labour expended would be lost—and this is the very parallel of what happens to God's ministers, in their work of edifying the flock of Christ. Whilst they explain and urge upon their hearers the duty of holiness, and a walk becoming the Gospel, there are those in the congregation who yield a ready ear with regard to the propriety of all that is thus laid down, and would even aim at conformity with the precepts of the word; but, nevertheless, who have not yet been built upon that "Sure foundation," which God has laid in Zion, in the person of his dear Son. In like manner, then, as in the case of the architect, is it necessary for the minister to proclaim to all whom he addresses, when preaching the Gospel, that sanctification comes after justification, that pardon of sin and acceptance with God must first be obtained, ere the work of holiness can go on.

And this point, beloved brethren, I would earnestly press upon your attention. Sanctification, it is true, is a great part of our salvation, it is the making us meet for glory; but the entitling us to that glory, or the justifying, must first take place. Till your sins are blotted out in the blood of the Lamb, and your Redeemer's righteousness cover your nakedness, your labour after holiness is all in vain; it is but the building a house upon the sand; and "When the rains descend, and the floods beat, and the winds blow," when "God lays judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet"—that house will fall, and great will be the fall thereof.

I. Premising thus much, then, let us first consider WHAT IS SANCTIFICATION.

And 1st I would say, *It is the setting apart the sinner for the service of his God.* This is the primary acceptation of the term, according to that Scripture, Psalm iv. 3—"Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself."—Thus the tabernacle, the temple, and the altar of old were sanctified and called "Holy unto the Lord." In the day of effectual calling, when the Gospel is preached to the sinner's heart, not with the mere voice of man, but with the power of "The Holy Ghost sent down

from Heaven," this consecration takes place—then, as in the day of the Saviour's flesh, when he scourged the traffickers out of the sanctuary of God, is Satan, 'The strong man armed,' dispossessed of his palace and his goods, they revert to their rightful owner—"Lord I am thine, save me," is the ransomed sinner's cry, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" and, constrained by the "tender mercies of God," he henceforth presents himself as a living sacrifice at the feet of Jesus, "Which is his reasonable service."

2nd. I would say *Sanctification is a putting off of sin.* Thus the Apostle Paul exhorts, Ephs. iv. 22—"Wherefore put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man," and what he means by the old man he elsewhere expresses, Col. iii. 8, where he adds, "Ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth;" in a word, mortification of our sinful nature is plainly involved in the work of holiness,—the right eye must be plucked out, the right hand must be cut off—we must be dead to sin, as Christ died for it. And is not this, brethren, instructive to us, who have a name to live, who are professing Christians? Are we not warned by this refection, not to trust to the mere activity and engagements in outward duty, which prevail in this our day, as characteristics of real religion, but to remember the forcible words of the Apostle, that "pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is" not merely to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, (in connexion with religious societies we have a great deal of this), but also "to keep ourselves unspotted from the world."

3rd. But again, *sanctification is a putting on of holiness.* "Put ye on," says the Apostle, (Col. iii. 10,) "the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him." And if we would know what the new man means, we are told, in striking language, that it is identical with conformity to the image of the Saviour. "Put ye on," says the same Apostle, (Rom. 13, 14,) "the Lord Jesus Christ." Holiness, in short, is "Christ formed in us," just as in the taking of the ordinary profile, the machine which is used, passes over with one extremity the features of the person, but at the same moment, with the other, sketches out his likeness on the card placed to receive it—so, in the work of

sanctification, the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the believer, till Christ's image becomes developed in every feature of the believer's conversation, and the more of Christ's image, the more of holiness.

Would we, then, beloved, be adorned with the beauties of holiness, here is the course for us to pursue: cleave close to Christ, and cultivate fellowship with him. Be this our character, which the Apostle Peter gives of the early Christians,—“Whom, having not seen, ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” It is affectionate, heartfelt communion with the Saviour, that the Spirit employs as an instrument to beget his likeness upon us,—here, also, as before, against mistaking the discharge of outward duties for religion, let us further be cautioned against having our religion of a mere negative character—let the garden of the soul be not only wed, but sown,—remember the doom of the unprofitable servant; his guilt consisted only in omission, and yet was he cast into outer darkness. The fig-tree also was cursed, not because it bore *bad* fruit, but because it was barren of *good*.

4th. Once more, *sanctification is an inward work*; it is not to be confounded with mere reformation of life—it does not skin over the wound of men's corrupt nature, leaving the venom and malignity yet rankling within; but it has its seat in the heart, and thence sends forth its streams of health, throughout every pore of the moral fabric.

Oh that you would remember this, my beloved friends, when in your desire to cast off the works of darkness, you have recourse to the superficial regulations and restraints which are taught by this world's morality! “Make the tree good,” says Christ, “and then the fruit will be good;” and so says common sense; in other words, “Make you a clean heart,” and then the actions will correspond. What would you think of the man who, having a defiled clock, that was always going wrong, should devote himself, hour after hour, to the pointing its hands right on the dial, instead of sending for the artist, that it might be taken to pieces, and its works cleaned? Why, brethren, you would call him a fool; and oh! what less are you, who spend your days in using outward remedies for an inward evil, who force your-

selves to this duty and that duty, refrain from this loved lust and that loved lust, instead of imploring, and yielding yourselves up to, the governance of that Holy Spirit who can make duties privileges, and divest your lusts of all their sweetness.

Thus much, as to the blessing our Lord prays for in the text,—it is sanctification, the setting apart of the sinner to the service of his God, the putting off of sin, and the putting on of holiness, and all this a work having its seat in the inner man. In short, the partakers of this blessing—the children of God—are a royal priesthood; they are chosen out from the rest of mankind, and consecrated to their office, even as Aaron and his sons—they are washed in the laver of regeneration, and they are clothed upon with the beautiful vestments of holiness, they serve God here, in the midst of a wicked world, and they shall serve him hereafter in the new Jerusalem, “Day and night without ceasing.”

II. It remains to consider—THE MEANS, THE INSTRUMENTALITY EMPLOYED BY THE HOLY GHOST, IN EXECUTING SO GREAT A WORK—and this is the second head of our subject. The instrumentality employed, then, the text tells us, in concise language, is God's truth—“Sanctify them,” says Christ, “*thro' thy truth*.”

Now, *nature proclaims God's truth*, “the heavens,” we read, “declare his glory, and the firmament showeth his handy-work; day unto day uttereth speech, night unto night showeth knowledge.” “There is no speech nor language,” adds the Psalmist, speaking of the works of God, “where their voice is not heard; their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world;”—or, as the Apostle says, (Romans i. 20), “The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head.” But what end, brethren, I ask, has this knowledge ever answered; it has, indeed, left “All men without excuse,” but has it ever converted one immortal soul? Harken to the Spirit's verdict, by the mouth of this same Apostle—“They became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened—professing themselves to be wise, they became fools;” yea, with all this light of nature shining about them, did they proceed to “Change the glory

of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, even to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things ;" or, even waiving this, admitting that the light of nature can lead us up to nature's God, does this suffice for fallen man?—can there be communion through such a medium, between a God "Of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and the impure sinner? Oh, no, brethren, as well might we think to behold, with lidless eyes, the meridian splendor of the sun.

Again, there is such a thing as *truth in human writings*, but separate from it all that the knowledge of revelation has contributed to form, and which is found there as in its parent mine, and what have you left, in all the literary and scientific lore of the wisest of the sons of men? have you any thing which can renew the sinner's heart? Yea, look to history, and have not the men of sagacious minds, the most eminent in her annals, been, many of them, the greatest profligates in life?

The fact is, brethren, earthly knowledge is no more to the mind than manure is to the soil; it will increase the crop, but nothing more; and the Bible tells us what the crop is which grows, by nature, in the sinner's heart—"Evil thoughts, murder, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies"—so that we need not hesitate to say, that by giving men *mere* worldly knowledge, you make them more like Satan, *more capable* than before of injuring God and their neighbour, *but not the less disposed*.

It is not then the truth of nature, brethren, neither literary acquirements, which can sanctify the soul, but it is "The truth as it is in Jesus"—accordingly, to the prayer of our Divine Saviour, which we have been considering, "Sanctify them through thy truth," he adds, in explanation, "Thy word is truth."

And here an interesting field of discussion opens to our view, *The efficacy of the word of God*, of course I mean, under the agency of the Holy Spirit—and first, I would say, *it converts the soul*, "Of his own will begat he us," we read, "with the word of truth."

Man naturally shrinks from a discovery of his guilt and wretchedness—he has a conceit in himself, that "He is rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing"—he therefore would avoid the unpleasant intelligence of his state, and he also recoils from the simple terms of

the Gospel. But the Word of God searches and probes his conscience, "It is sharper than a two-edged sword," and alarms him with the truth; then shows him the only refuge from the coming wrath, and sweetly leads him to the Lamb.

The sinner, thus convinced and saved, is strikingly likened, by the pious Mr. Hervey, to the hunted stag. When the stag is first roused from his lair, he scampers through the plain, and branches his horns in defiance of his pursuers, as though he heeded them not; but gradually the hounds gain upon him, and his courage sinks; in eager trepidation he flies to the hills, thence to the vallies, but all in vain; they hang on his scent—at last, as a desperate effort, he takes to the water, and swims the river, but still he eludes not the excited pack, they follow him, they gain upon him, and in another moment he becomes their prey, when, just in this extremity, the Royal sportsman rides in and commands him to be spared.

The convinced sinner, I say, has been compared to this hunted stag. At first, when the word is brought to bear upon him, he throws off its influence, he regards it not; but, in the Spirit's hands, it is still applied, and he begins to get uneasy—he then betakes himself to one false refuge after another, but the Word is now omnipotent—it drives him thence, it becomes "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of his heart"—he is reduced to self-despair, when, just as he gives over all for lost, putting himself, as it were, the rope about his neck, grace, free and sovereign grace, interposes, and he is snatched as a brand from the burning.

The Word, then, converts the soul,—but this is not all, it not only imparts, but strengthens spiritual life. Hence we read—"As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby;"—nor, again, is it only the food of the soul, to support it, it is also medicine to purify; and this property is ascribed to it by the Spirit of God, in two of the worst cases, so to speak, which we could select. What, for instance, more difficult to restrain than the impetuous lusts and unruly passions of youth? and yet, if you ask how this shall be effected, "Wherewithal shall the young man cleanse his ways?" the answer is—"Even by taking heed thereto, according

to *God's Word*." And, again, what harder to achieve than the preservation of an humble spirit in the monarch seated upon his throne?—and yet, if you turn to Deut. xvii. 20, you will find provision made for this, in the enjoined diligent perusal of the sacred word—"It shall be," says God, speaking of the future King of Israel, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, "that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book—and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life, *that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren*, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand or the left."

And now, in the way of application, I would ask, are there any of you, brethren, on whom this good word of God, often as you have heard it preached, has had no efficacy? Oh! if there be, I would remind you of the solemn truth, that where the Gospel is not "The savour of life unto life, it is the savour of death unto death." Not only is there in it the still small voice of redeeming love, but there is the lightning and thunder of despatched mercy. Haste then to be wise—ponder over the precious truths this word contains—submit yourselves to the righteousness of God—"Oh taste and see that the Lord is good—blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

To you, beloved brethren, who know by happy experience the efficacy of the Word of Life, I would now address myself, and I would say to you, *give yet more diligence to the reading of the sacred Scriptures*. Here lies your safety from the corrupting influence of a wicked world—"By the word of God's lips, you may keep yourselves from the paths of the destroyer;" and here, also, a holy curb on the treacherous spirit within you,—*"Thy word, (says David,) I have hid in my heart, that I should not sin against thee."*

But you will not, you cannot stop in mere enjoyment of the word yourselves; God, in converting you, has destined you to be dispensers of good to all around you—*you will send that word then to others*—long, indeed, has the Church been forgetful of this holy duty.

A modern writer, in speaking of her delinquency, on this head, puts the following case: He supposes intelligence of one of our colonies being in a starving condition, reaching the parent country—

upon which, universal commiseration is excited, public meetings are called—a supply of provisions is voted by acclamation for our perishing fellow-subjects, and a vessel, freighted with the same, is devoted to their relief, and all is committed to the care of a responsible crew. Well, the day arrives for the sailing of the vessel, and she is wafted onward amid the sighs and prayers of anxious thousands. But alas! no sooner is she out of sight, than her crew steer a different course, to some interjacent islands, and there, occupying themselves in trafficking with the inhabitants, leave the poor colonists to perish.

Now to the conduct of this crew, the eloquent writer to whom I have alluded compares the conduct of the Church of Christ. She was entrusted by God with the bread of life to dispense to a famishing world; but, instead of executing her high commission, she has sat herself down, and taken her ease—her own temporal aggrandizement has occupied all her thoughts, "She has sought her own things, not the things of Jesus Christ."

Nor is this picture, brethren, too highly drawn; we have been all verily guilty on this head; the Lord forgive us. But, beloved, at present there seems to be a general rising to duty on the part of the Lord's servants throughout the world, and a diligence to gather in the flock of Christ.

Is such then the case with you, and do your hearts beat responsive to the call for increased exertion? if so, allow me to introduce to your notice as one agent for the purpose, the Institution in whose behalf it is my privilege this day to plead—the Sunday School Society for Ireland, a disinterested and successful agent—a *disinterested agent* we must all admit, when we remember that its committee is composed of men who have gratuitously embarked in this blessed work, with no other motive to constrain them than the love of souls—and I am sure you will let me add, a *successful agent*, when I state a very few particulars connected with its operations. Previous, then, to its establishment, in the year 1809, be it observed there were only seventy Sunday Schools throughout the whole of Ireland, but now, exclusive of from forty to fifty which are supported in a great degree by their conductors, there are no less than two thousand eight hundred and sixty three; whereas, also,

previous to the year 1809, there were not seven thousand scholars attending Sunday Schools, there are now two hundred and eighteen thousand nine hundred and seventy six. The proficiency too, of the children, under God, is not to be overlooked: as an instance, during the last five years there has been an increase of readers in the Bible and Testament to the number of twenty four thousand six hundred and twenty, and this not to be attributed to the accession of new scholars, for of these there have been but sixteen thousand six hundred and forty four. Many other particulars of an equally cheering character might be mentioned but surely there is enough here to make us thank God and take courage. In a mercantile view, we often hear of the conduciveness of canals to the prosperity of a country, as facilitating the transmission of its produce, from one place to another. But here, I would say, is the prospect of a still better prosperity for our country, in the establishment of so many conduits, throughout the length and breadth of it, for conveying the waters of life to our rising population. Nor is it only that the machinery is thus useful, and the proficiency in instruction thus marked, but the cases of decided conversion to God among the young are especially animating.

Such then, brethren, is the case made out for the Sunday School Society: but to commend it still more strongly to your support, I must not suppress the important fact, that one half, or one hundred and nine thousand of the children thus taught at Sunday Schools, go to no other schools during the week, being altogether dependent accordingly on this medium of instruction; yea, my brethren, I will add, that *so far as the national provision for education is concerned*, the other half of the children who go to Day Schools are not much better off, because that the word of God has not "free course," among them.

If the design of this system of educa-

tion, were, as has been charged against Popery, to save both the souls and sins of men, it could not rest on a more consistent principle, for, in that, Scripture is given at all, it would seem the soul is to be saved, but in that Scripture is withheld, it would equally seem *sin is to be spared*.

It is a grievous thing that there should be such a fettering of the word of God; and when we think of the presumption it involves, it is equally startling. History tells us of a Monarch who was surrounded by such flattering sycopants, that planting his throne on the sea-shore, they represented him as able to define the boundary within which the ocean should roll its course, to say to its waters, "hitherto shalt thou come and no further!" but their base and impious adulation was treated by him as it deserved, with becoming indignation. Here, however, as regards our national education, we have men high up in civil and ecclesiastical rank tempted successfully by Satan to think of circumscribing the channels of the water of life; presuming to tell the Holy Ghost, that he is not to regenerate the children of this country, except through the medium of certain extracts of his own blessed Book! awful contemplation to be presented to the mind! nor can we, brethren, be lovers of the Lord, and not take it to heart, that there should be such an evil committed within this land? whilst however, we sympathize in the dishonour thus done to our God, let us be stimulated to increased exertion, let us support the schools where the Bible is read *unmutilated and ungarbled*.

To conclude. In behalf of the Sunday School Society for Ireland, I would now simply say to you, the Lord hath need of whatever you can bestow: and I would call to your mind, that saying of the Lord Jesus, "it is more blessed to give than to receive." May you, at this time, realize afresh its truth, and become fellow-workers together with Him, to whom be all the glory ascribed of every good word and work—Amen.

☞ A sermon preached by the Rev. HENRY WOODWARD, in St. Peter's Church, Dublin, on behalf of the *Irish Society*, will appear in the next number.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXVI.

SATURDAY, MARCH 18, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. HENRY WOODWARD.

REV. WALTER GEO. HARMAN.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE MAGDALEN ASYLUM, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, 19TH FEB. 1837

(*On behalf of the Institution,*)

BY THE REV. HENRY WOODWARD, A. M.,

(*Rector of Fethard.*)

ST. MATTHEW X, 15.

“ It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgment, than for that City.”

SUCH was the declaration of our blessed Lord, when he sent forth his apostles to preach the glad tidings of the kingdom. To all who should receive them, they were to be the messengers of salvation; the bearers of a treasure of more value than ten thousand worlds. But to those who should not receive them, there would be more than the loss (incalculable as that must be) of so great, so inconceivable a blessing—to this mere privation, positive and substantive evil would be added. The rejectors of God's mercies would not stand upon the same footing as those who never heard them:—the Gospel would be to them, a savour of death:—the heaviest

curse that ever befell them would be having had the offers of pardon and acceptance.

Those to whom the ministry of reconciliation never came, have not fairly been put to proof: they will still have ignorance to plead: and it is the language of immutable justice, no less than the unerring declaration of the word of God, that those who know not their Lord's will are not strictly chargeable if they do not do it. The many stripes are reserved for those who “knew their Lord's will, and prepared not themselves, neither did according to his will”—who heard his call and did not obey it; who were acquainted with the

righteous revelation of God, and disregarded it. It was on these grounds that our Lord thus commissions the heralds of his kingdom—"Whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet"—do this in solemn testimony that you have done with them, and they with you, that nothing of theirs shall cleave to you; that you are pure from the blood of their souls; that they have despised the messengers of heaven, and rejected the covenant of their God. "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment than for that city."

Now, my brethren, these are serious things. We have all had the Gospel preached to us;—have we from our hearts believed, embraced and obeyed it? If we have—our iniquity is pardoned, and heaven is our sure inheritance. If not, a mere profession will not do; our being christians in name will not do; our being and living like the world around us will not do. We may deceive ourselves if we please now, but death and judgment will teach us a different lesson—"in that day it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, than for us."

The most careless amongst us are apt to congratulate themselves on the great blessing that it is to have been born in a christian, and protestant land:—to have been baptized, and to be members of our pure and apostolical church. Nevertheless I will leave it to your own common sense to determine, upon principles of natural justice, as well as upon the plainest intimations of Scripture, which will be best off in the day of judgment—the heathen sunk in darkness and gross idolatry—or the christian, such as the generality are in this country and at this present moment? Christianity has its mysteries; and there are secrets of the Lord, known only to them that fear him. But this is a matter which lies as level to ordinary apprehension, as the plainest case

which a jury in a court of justice ever decided without five minutes deliberation. To bring it to a point, I shall make the following supposition; one which has been set forth with much felicity in a sermon preached, I believe, in this place, by the late revered and lamented Charles Wolfe. From such a man, indeed from any man, I should feel it no discredit to borrow a suggestion, and to own that I had borrowed it: but the truth is, I had committed the thought, which I would now present to you, to paper many years before I saw or read the discourse alluded to; or indeed before it was published.

Let us then suppose the day of judgment come, with all its awful terrors—signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars—the heavens passing away with a great noise, and the elements melting with fervent heat; the sea and the waves roaring, and men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things which are coming on the earth—the voice of the archangel, and the last trumpet sounding—the Son of man appearing in the clouds of heaven—ten thousand times ten thousand of angels all around him—the judgment set, and the books opened—the graves giving up their dead, all the myriads of the human race, from Adam to the latest generation of his sons—all nations and kindreds and people and tongues rising from the dust, and standing forth to hear their sentence according to the things done in the body whether they be good or bad! Amongst this countless multitude, let us then, in imagination, single out and fix our eyes on *two* individuals—let the *one* have been a *heathen* who lived and died in a land which knew not the God of the Scriptures, but who had been faithful to the dim light he had. Let the *other* have been a *professing christian* who had been—I will not say a scandal to the name he bore—but what may be termed an average specimen of the christianity which we see around us. Let us suppose them both lifting up their hand before the bar of God, and put upon

their trial. Let us begin with the *heathen*;—and here then might be his defence. “Alas! my lot in life was cast where ‘darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people’—I drew my first and latest breath where no beams of light, no ray from heaven, shone down upon my path. No father, no mother taught my infant lips to pray:—no minister told me of a Saviour, or pointed out the way that leads to God—and no man cared for my soul:—I lived in every abomination; but I was told that many of these were virtues—I was told that if I seized my enemy by successful stratagem, and conquered his obdurate patience by new modes of torture, I should be honoured by my tribe, and sung of in the warriors’ songs, and be rewarded after death with whatever would gratify my natural desires—

I asked no angel’s wing, no Seraph’s fire;
But thought, admitted to that equal sky,
My faithful dog would bear me company.

“My religion taught me, that the God I worshipped was inexorable and cruel—and to please that hard master, I spared no penances, no pains, nor self inflicted torments; I emaciated my body with fastings, I tore my flesh with stripes, and withheld my eyelids from repose; I ‘gave my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul’—I took the infant, dearer to me than myself, and while he smiled in my face, and was moistened with my tears, I made him pass through the fire, or pierced him with the sacrificial knife,—because I blindly thought it was the will of heaven. Oh! if I had known that God was love,—and that ‘as a father pitieth his own children, so is the Lord merciful to them that fear him’—if I had known that he requires no sacrifice but to believe the tidings of free forgiveness ‘without money and without price’, and to live a life of peace and purity and gratitude to heaven.—If I had heard that joyful sound, I should have thought my days and nights too short to serve and

praise the God of my life, and of my salvation.—But my days and nights are over.—And now, O God! thy will be done—I submit to thy decree; but oh, remember, that I sinned in ignorance and unbelief!”

And shall we presume to limit the mercy of God? or to draw the line which shall circumscribe unbounded goodness? shall we say that the blood shed upon the cross cannot extend its efficacy, though uncovenanted, to a case like this? shall we say, that the soul, striving to the utmost of its power in the sphere where overruling providence has placed it, is doomed to endless, hopeless, misery? I will not say so, because I do not believe it. But, it is not my business to lay down doctrines here. It is enough for us to know, that “in God’s house are many mansions”—It is enough to know that God requireth “according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not”—It is enough for us to know, that “the Judge of all the earth will do right.”

But let us return to the bar of judgment, where we left, by the side of this heathen, *the lukewarm, nominal, christian*. Let us now hear *his* defence, or rather his sad confession, (for before the searcher of hearts all false colourings are vain.) “I was born in the bright day of Gospel truth; and in the purest light of undefiled religion, but I preferred darkness to light because my deeds were evil. I did not, like the untutored heathen, think that God was cruel or unkind, I was early taught that God was love; that his tender mercies were over all his works;—that he so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son to die for it, and to save it. I knew the sacred obligations by which I was bound to him, who bought me with his blood—I knew that I was pledged to him by special covenant; and that I had been signed with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter I should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil;

and to continue Christ's faithful soldier, and servant unto my life's end. From my infancy I learned, and repeated as the summary of my faith, that creed into whose articles angels desire to look, and which sets forth that Jesus Christ, the son of the eternal God, was conceived of the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. I knew that blessed being had died for me: I often heard the full detail of the pains he bore, and the agonies he endured, to rescue and to save me—I heard—but there was no response of gratitude—these sorrows and these sufferings never reached my heart. I knew that I lived upon his bounty, that I was carried in the arms of Providence; and that I was purchased with his blood,—but I met all the pleadings of his love with cold indifference, and held back from him with stern antipathy. Often and often did his ministers beseech me in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God: often did a gracious father entreat me by his messengers, and say, 'my son give me thy heart;'—but I either past these invitations over as mere empty breath or inwardly felt (if I did not openly confess) a hatred of them all—they were repulsive to my feelings, loathsome to my taste, repugnant to my inmost nature;—because that all within me was enmity against God."

This may appear strong colouring but I am convinced that I have not overdrawn the picture. Such, I am convinced, is the state of every one who refuses the mercies of the Gospel when they are freely offered to him. It needs not, in instituting a comparison between the nominal christian and the child of heathen darkness, to draw out the long catalogue of lesser sins, in which they both partake, but which are more exceeding sinful in the former, because committed in and against the light. No—the main point of difference is, that the heathen has not known God; but the unfaithful christian has both seen, and hated, both the Father and

the Son." He has committed that *crowning* sin which the other could not, by possibly have committed—he has, when invited, refused his heart to God.—And this I maintain, and by the simplest process of reasoning undertake to prove, is the weightiest charge which can lie against a soul. For if sin be the transgression of the law, then, in proportion to the importance of the law transgressed, is the magnitude of the sin. But the love of God is the prime law, the first and great commandment;—consequently, the withholding of the heart from God is the sin of sins, and *the great offence*. Thus it is, that it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah—than for such transgressors—and that, whatever may be the allotment of those who sin in ignorance; against the man who wilfully rejects a God revealed, will issue that terrible voice of most just judgment—"Go ye cursed into the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" Oh, my brethren, that I could indulge the hope that none amongst you are like-minded; that there are none of you who thus requite the mercies of your God! But if there be any upon whom the portrait which I have sketched may seem to cast its eyes, and to say, "Thou art the man"—in one material point, however, blessed be God, that resemblance does not hold; you are not now trembling at the bar of judgment: your day of grace has not yet expired, nor that night set in when no man can work. Oh, if you had once reached That undiscovered country, from whose bourne no traveller returns,' and found it to you a land of "Darkness, clouds, and thick darkness"—what heaven would you think it to hear, that there was still a door of mercy open. "How beautiful would be the feet of him that preached the Gospel of peace, and brought glad tidings of good things!"—But no such cheering accents could reach you there. Oh! what would you then give to be as you are at this moment! For you the great Intercessor pleads on

high. "Now is the acceptable time, now is the day of salvation." If fear will not drive you, oh, let the love of Christ constrain you. Let his mercies draw you; let his sorrows find a passage to your hearts. You are assembled on a work of mercy; and surely God approves it—"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Oh, let that promise be abundantly fulfilled this day!—repent and believe the Gospel." Oh, if there be any benefactors of the institution for which I am to plead, who are still unreconciled to God, may they return to him this day, and, with the wanderers whom they would bring home, become sheep of the same pasture, and be made with them "One fold, under one Shepherd!" You are, my brethren, as I said before, assembled at the call of mercy; and once more, have I to plead the cause of repentant sinners. Another year has revolved since I addressed you in their behalf; a year in which the grave has opened to receive her dead in numbers awfully exceeding those who, in the average of preceding years, have paid that debt which all must pay, and bowed before that sentence which hath "Passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."—"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust,"—this still small voice has left its solemn sound in the ears of many; friend after friend has departed:—"Who hath not lost a friend?" a father, mother, husband, wife, child, or brother; or one perhaps, bound to our hearts by bonds still closer than those of blood? Amongst the souls who have gone this year into the invisible world, are some to whom I made my last appeal. Of the inmates of this house one has died giving full evidence that she had laid hold upon the hope set before her in the Gospel. But of those who could find no shelter in such a house of mercy, and who, unable to buffet "The pitiless storm," have gone down to rise no more, none but God can tell. In what varied forms of misery;—in what scenes of vice and wretchedness;

what vain supplications they addressed to those around them for some pity upon a broken heart; how, and where, and upon what thorny pillow they laid down their drooping heads to die—is known to God alone. Cut off in early youth—blighted and blasted in the spring of life—no parent to soothe the bed of sorrow—no kind hand to apply its gentle pressure to the seat of pain, or to moisten their parched and burning lips—no minister of grace to speak of him who came to seek and save the lost—without rod or staff to comfort them, they entered the valley of the shadow of death—But oh! let us not say that all was lost; for who can know what communion the departing spirit may hold with God? When all the organs of human intercourse have ceased to play; who can tell us what possibilities of reconciliation still are left?—what capabilities of re-union with the Father of Spirits the immortal principle may still retain? Who can say what an Almighty Saviour can effect?—what miracles of salvation he can work upon a soul in the very article of death, and on the threshold of eternity? Nor let this be called a vain and fruitless speculation. To my knowledge it has given comfort to not a few, who mourned for departed friends whom they had fondly loved, but of whose conversion they had no clear or convincing evidence. If any, on the other hand, would pronounce it dangerous, I answer, that it can be dangerous to those alone who would turn God's mercies into poison. Let such then learn, that there is an antidote for that poison, and which well befits so desperate a case. The antidote is this,—*Whoever defers his repentance, on a cold calculation that he will find mercy at the last, will assuredly be disappointed.*

Under the solemn impression that the whole human family will one day be assembled before the judgment-seat of God; and that *there* an account must be rendered, how far we have or have not, according to our several ability, endea-

voured to rescue souls from death—and that before us will be assembled the very objects for whom your compassion is at this moment supplicated, I cannot, perhaps, better discharge the trust confided to me, than by laying before you some particulars of one who passed at a tender age thro' deep and troubled waters; and would, to all human appearance have utterly perished, had she not found shelter in a house of mercy. The facts of this case were made known to me since I last addressed this congregation, through a friend who was himself an important actor in the scene, which was brought to its happy issue but a few months ago. I shall lay the whole before you as nearly as I can, in his own words—the words of “an Israelite, indeed, in whom there is no guile.”

The young person was left an orphan at the tenderest age, and was brought up nominally a Roman Catholic, but with scarcely any education, saving that some seeds of moral rectitude were, by what hand I know not, sown in her heart. She was, when almost a child, engaged as a servant in a family in middle life, who soon found her principles to be such that, amongst other proofs of confidence, they entrusted her with their keys. As part of her business she was in the habit of waiting at table—and hence commenced her trials and misfortunes.

A relation of the mistress of the house happened to come there on a visit, and introduced a young military officer, who, having a considerable command of money, contrived to render it convenient to that base family to cultivate his acquaintance. The fact is, that from the first he was so attracted by the appearance of the young attendant, then under sixteen years of age, that he laid himself out to accomplish her ruin. To the disgrace of the family, his lavish praises of her, instead of being discouraged, were laughed at, and made the constant topic of merriment while she was waiting at table—for all his arts could not gain him an opportunity

of speaking to her in private.) In fact enough was said before the assembled family, to make her avoid and loathe his presence. The necessary time of the officer's departure now arrived, and he rose very early of a dark winter's morning, and after breakfast, at which the young maid-servant attended, a carriage drove to the door. She was sent to bring down his luggage; and while endeavouring to lift it into the carriage, for it was very heavy, the officer and his friend forced her in, and in a moment the vehicle was in motion, and she, against her will, was carried to the barracks of a town considerably distant, where his regiment was stationed. Here she found herself a prisoner under lock and key. Endeavours to escape were vain. No bribe nor lure was spared that could soften her resentment and win her affections: but tho' unable to extricate herself nothing could surmount the horror which her circumstances inspired. Ten months elapsed in which she had a dangerous illness; and was watched throughout it with every anxiety that the tenderest husband could evince. Upon her recovery, she obtained permission, after much entreaty, to revisit her native town, on a promise of returning. Here she found the heart of every former friend steeled against her: and even the family who had by their strange and most improper conduct led to her ruin, amongst her bitterest foes. No one would receive, or cherish, or pity her; and after some time, impelled by actual want, she went back to scenes from which her inmost soul recoiled.

There her conscience gave her no rest: and in a very few days, she escaped (being again watched with the same vigilance as before) out of a window; and, taking with her all the valuables she had received as presents, again resolved to try whether she could find shelter in the only spot of earth besides, where she had one that knew her. There she got into an obscure lodging; where no single friend nor acquaintance would own her,

employ her, or acknowledge her. One by one she sold every article of value she possessed;—and when all were gone and utter want stared her in the face, her mind was held in suspense between the only possible alternatives that seemed to offer;—either to put an end to her existence, or to return to her destroyer. After many conflicts, she resolved on the former: and several times went to the brink of the river to cast herself in—but, as my friend expresses it, the Lord had his poor lost sheep in view, and put into her mind such inconceivable horrors of thus rushing into his presence, that she was mercifully restrained.—On the other hand, Satan so placed before her the comforts which she would be mistress of, if she returned to the only home which was ready to receive her, that she resolved on doing so.—It was, at this awful crisis of her history, that going on some occasion to a neighbouring house she saw a gentleman engaged in reading to the family. She stepped aside for fear of interrupting, into an adjoining room, and for the first time, heard the glad tidings of salvation; and thought, such was her own simple expression, “that if that blessed Saviour would look on such a sinner as she was, he would save her from further infamy, and feed her as he feeds the ravens.”—Her desperate purpose was at once relinquished—but only for the present.—In a few days want came upon her like an armed man, and the horrors of destitution gat hold upon her; and at this moment meeting one of the emissaries of the officer, whom he employed to look out for her, and to make her the most tempting promises; her principle gave way and she consented to return. As she was proceeding through the streets, to arrange matters finally for her departure, she saw on the pillar of the church gate a notice that a clergyman of the established church mission would preach that evening: God put it into her heart to attend: his discourse came home with power to her conscience: she thought, as

she told my friend, that every word was directed personally to herself:—all her plans were again changed: she had derived new strength—and consolations before unknown, reached her soul. On the following Sunday evening she went for the first time to church; and there the service and the sermon so affected her that she waited on the clergyman who had preached, and told him of all her troubles. He at once entered into her case; relieved her present wants; and on her earnest solicitation, procured for her a promise of admittance into a house of refuge. While matters were thus situated this faithful minister was obliged from the state of his health to leave home, and the last act he performed before he took his departure was to transfer his interesting charge to the care of my friend. “And never shall I forget,” says he, “the gratitude with which she heard that this means of deliverance was opened to her.—On the morning of her departure to Dublin, when taking leave of my wife, she seized her hand with a convulsive motion; and placing it between both of hers and washing it with her tears, she knelt down and prayed to God for her, declaring that she could not look on her as a common human being, for she had pitied her and felt for her, when all the rest of her sex had scorned her.”

And now, my brethren, let this affecting exhibition plead with you for those whose misfortunes, whose wrongs and miseries are best known to God. Who, that walks abroad thro’ the streets of this great city, when the sun no longer shines, and when sin and vice come forth under the shadow of the night, as in their connatural element, can but feel mingled horror and compassion, at the triumph of the prince of darkness over the image of God, once stamped upon the immortal soul!—Amongst those who fill our streets with shame, and blasphemy, and riot, are many whose hidden sorrows and bleeding hearts are strangely contrasted with the uproarious scenes around. Memory still

points to peaceful, pure, and happy days. Imagination paints, with all the vividness of actual life, the well-known scenes of home—the haunts of childhood—the “Ways of pleasantness, and paths of peace,” in which a mother led their infant steps, or in which a father poured his simple lessons of instruction o’er their opening minds. But these are to them mere gilded dreams—the shadows of things that were—the fleeting images of the past. These scenes they can revisit but in thought—thoughts embittered by the conviction that parents, friends, and home, are lost to them for ever. It is not, my brethren, for hardened criminals I plead; I plead for those bowed down by sorrow; for humbled souls, burdened

hearts, and contrite spirits; I plead for the young, the friendless—for those who, of the whole human race, are most miserable—for their’s is the sad pre-eminence in wretchedness—that *the vices which they now abhor, are their only means of living.* “How shall we do this great wickedness, and sin against God,” is the cry which they raise to heaven, and to you. Will you then refuse to hear it? Will you not, by the largeness of your contributions, open wide these doors of mercy? Will you not enable these burdened souls to lay down their sorrows at their Saviour’s feet? Upon you, under God, it depends this day, whether life or death, whether heaven or hell, is to be their portion for ever!

The following interesting letter was read in the Sermon preached for the Sunday School Society, by the Rev. James Kelly, which was inserted in our last number.

“Some time ago, two of our Sunday School girls, who had never attended any other school, were apprenticed to a Roman-Catholic dress-maker who had a daughter learning her trade along with them: the school lessons were committed to memory, and made the subject of conversation while the girls sat at work—when their trade was learned they separated. This year, the Roman Catholic girl was seized with a rapid consumption, her former companions visited her, and to their great delight they found that she had imbibed, through their instrumentality, most clear and scriptural views of the way of salvation—the Priests visited every day, but with *meekness and decision* she left no doubt on their minds, on what her hopes were placed. One of them said, on seeing her

suffer severely, “well, what you endure patiently *now* will make what you suffer hereafter easy;” O sir, said she, “how can you say so? when Jesus suffered for me and made it a *finished* work?” “why do you contradict his Reverence, my dear?” said the father, “because father,” said she, “I cannot go down to the grave with a lie in my right hand.” A book was sent to her which recommended the invocation of saints, and the adoration of the Virgin Mary; she desired it to be taken away, and the person who sent it to be told that she had an assurance “that Christ who lived to make intercession for him,” that he was able to save to the uttermost—she died after a short illness.

See Return of Ballyshannon S. S.

CONVERSION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-STREET, DUBLIN,
BY THE REV. WALTER GEO. HARMAN, A.M.

(Senior Curate of Athboy, Diocese of Meath.)

JOHN v. 5—6.

“ And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole. ?”

At the time to which this portion of the sacred narrative refers, the Lord Jesus Christ was in Jerusalem, attending the celebration of “ a feast of the Jews”—probably their most solemn feast—the Passover ; and while there he employed himself in performing those works, which were, in part, the appointed signs by which the expectant Church was to know that her promised Lord had appeared—namely, works of benevolence and mercy to the bodies and souls of helpless sinful man. There was at Jerusalem, as we learn from the Evangelist, “ a pool called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda,” (that is the house of mercy) whose waters were gifted with wondrous healing properties ; for it was so ordained by Him whose ways are inscrutable, and “ who ordereth all things according to the counsel of his own will,” “ that an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water ; whosoever then first, after the troubling of the water, stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.” Such being the case, it is probable that many of the suffering sons and daughters of humanity anxiously awaited the heavenly visitant’s descent, and eagerly desired to avail themselves of the healing virtues of the stream : and accordingly we read, that upon the occasion to which this Chapter refers, there was “ a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.” Amongst this

afflicted multitude, was one man whose case appears to have been particularly distressed—for a *lengthened* period he had been a martyr to bodily helplessness, “ he had an infirmity thirty and eight years”—his was a case which at once excited the pity of the compassionate Jesus—he saw the helpless sufferer lie, “ and knew that he had been a long time in that case, he saith unto him, wilt thou be made whole ?”—the poor man understood not the import of the inquiry, he knew not in whose presence he lay—that he who addressed him was the “ Lord of all power and might,” who, by speaking a word, could restore his decayed strength, and impart vigor to his long enfeebled limbs, as easily as he first formed man from the dust of the ground, bade the light burst forth in splendor upon the darkened deep, and called forth a fair creation from “ chaos, dark and void :”—for healing, he looked not to instrumentality other than that of Bethesda’s stream—nor did he desire any greater act of mercy than to be helped into the pool ; and accordingly his reply was, “ Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool, but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.” Jesus saith unto him, “ rise, take up thy bed and walk,”—and as the Lord of life spake, power accompanied his gracious life-giving word, “ immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed and walked.”

Such, my dear brethren, is the account given by the Evangelist of this mighty work of Jesus. But, wondrous though it doubtless was, and calculated to excite the unbounded astonishment of the beholders, and to impress them with the conviction that Jesus was "the Christ of God;" a wonder greater still is affected so often as the power of Jehovah is displayed in the conversion of man from sin to holiness—so often as they, who from their mother's womb, are afflicted with the deadly paralysis of sin, are healed by the word of Jesus, and they being made whole, are enabled to walk in the ways of the Lord. Therefore in directing your attention to this confessedly great work, I would not consider it merely as a proof of the Messiaship of Christ—though it is a striking one—nor merely as an instance of that boundless compassion and pity, that infinite power and immeasurable love which characterized the every act of Jesus—though it is a signal one—but bearing in mind that the wonders performed by him in the world of *nature*, were emblematical of what he is still performing in the world of *grace*—and that the bodily diseases which he compassionately healed, when, robed in the likeness of sinful flesh he trod this earth, were typical of the spiritual maladies which cleave to man, and which he is able and willing to freely heal—I would desire to make a *practical* application of the subject; to lead you to compare your own case with that of the poor sufferer; to lead each individual here present, to search and examine, whether *he* does not, also, labour under "an infirmity," whether he knows the Physician who can, who *alone* can, and who will heal him; and whether he has come unto him in order that he may be made whole.

And Oh! brethren, there is not one amongst you, careless though he be of these things—there is not one amongst you, proud and self righteous though be the spirit which is in him—there breathes not on earth the son of sinning Adam, who is not afflicted with a grievous deadly infirmity—not indeed that which preys upon and destroys the frail perishable body, and afterwards has no more that it can do—this were, comparatively, of trivial import indeed—but yours is a malady which affects the soul, "man's better and enduring part,"—that soul

which shall exist throughout countless ages, even through "eternity's unending days,"—long after the now corruptible body shall have mouldered in the dust, yea, after earth, and all things earthly shall have been dissolved, and whose existence must be one of infinite bliss or torment, according as the disease has or has not been, in this life, healed.

But, universal in its prevalence, and destructive in its effects though this disease be, what numbers are there, and even they "most foully stained," who know not their wasting ill! while few are conscious of its malignancy, its pestilential, its deadly power. Yea, the great mass of man, speak and act and live, as if there were no unsoundness, no uncleanness, no sinfulness in them; as if the declarations of God's unerring word, which proclaim their vileness, were but fables, but idle tales, to which no credit is due. And what *are* the declarations of that word with respect to man's nature, with respect to the state of the human heart in the sight of God? do not the sacred penmen, writing as they all did under the immediate inspiration of the omniscient, searching, eternal Spirit, unite in describing that nature as *fearfully*, awfully depraved, as *totally* corrupt—that heart, as the seat of every thing polluting, as "deceitful above all things, and *desperately wicked*?"

Let us, dear Brethren, with prayer, that the Spirit of power would bring them home to our souls, and deeply fix them there—let us take a few of the many passages in the sacred volume which loudly proclaim these fearful truths. Not many generations had passed away after the world's creation, when that, which its all-wise Maker had pronounced to be very good, became bad, corrupt and stained and deformed by sin; for, as Moses writes, Gen. vi. 5. "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Look to a later testimony to the wide, the universal spread of sin: "There is no man" said Solomon, in that beautiful and affecting, solemn and spiritual prayer which his heart poured forth before the Lord's throne, upon the occasion of the dedication of the Temple, "There is *no* man that sinneth not," and Eccles. vii. 20. "there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not."—David too declares of himself,

and the declaration is truly of *universal* application, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me,"—and O what a deplorable picture does he present of the depravity of man, when he describes God as looking "down from Heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any who did understand and seek after God!" And what did Jehovah's all seeing eye behold? what was the result of the heavenly inquiry?—Oh hear it thou self righteous man, and be humble in the dust:—hear it thou impenitent sinner, and tremble at thy state, and let the prospect of thine impending doom cause thee to prostrate thyself in self despair before thy God and cry aloud for mercy:—hear it thou fool, long hardened in iniquity, and be assured that the day of wrath unutterable shall quickly dawn, when an avenging God shall recompense thee according to thy deeds:—and thou penitent sinner, whose feet did stray till grace led them to the heavenly road, hear it, and let thine heart swell with gratitude for that pardoning mercy which has been extended to thee, and that redeeming love which has been experienced by thee—hear it, and at the foot of Jesus' cross, ever adore thy Redeemer's name, and ever magnify that grace which snatched thee from merited destruction! "They are *all* gone out of the way, they are *altogether* become abominable, there is *none* that doeth good, no, *not one*." Psalms.

Think you that the description which the Lord gives, by the mouth of his Prophet Isaiah, of the wickedness of his rebellious people, Israel, whom he had nourished and brought up as children, is applicable only to the people of that olden time? Ah, no, Brethren, the professing Israel of the present day are but *too* like unto their false predecessors, though they profess to be the people of the most High, they too are "a sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters, they too "provoke the Holy one to anger," they too, "go away backward," and "from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it."

Did we need further proofs, after these accumulated, express declarations of Scripture, we should find the Lord Jesus drawing aside the frail, flimsy, veil, where-with the self righteous may endeavour to

hide his deformity, and displaying him as he is in truth, a poor wretched and naked guilty sinner: we should find Paul proving that "all have sinned," that "the carnal mind is enmity against God, and is not subject to the law of God," that "in the flesh dwelleth no good thing," that even in believers are remains of that corruption which has overspread the world; that the carnal principle within them wages an unceasing warfare with the spiritual, prompting them to the evil they would not, and preventing them doing the good they would. We should find the holy John declaring that "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,"—yea, "if we say we have not sinned,"—we are guilty of that which might well provoke the mighty God to put forth his arm of power and crush to the dust the rebel worm that durst insult him—"If we say we have not sinned, we make *God a liar!*"

It is needless, dear friends, to multiply quotations from Scripture upon this subject—the sum of the matter is, that however blind and insensible we be to our state, we are *all* corrupt and depraved, we are all unclean in sight of the pure and Holy Jehovah—the plague spot is upon the souls of us all. You may say, brethren, to what purpose are these declarations of Scripture adduced? we don't pretend to perfection, or plead exemption from sinfulness, we *are* sinners. Ah! brethren, I know that the most depraved, most hardened reprobate will make this confession with his lips, and plead guilty to the charge which the Scriptures incessantly reiterate, and press again and again upon all mankind without exception, from the infant just now born in his hereditary corruption, to the hoary head just bending into the grave, loaded with the weight of accumulated actual transgressions; but Oh! let me ask, do you know how *malignant* how *deadly* a thing sin is? Let me remind you, that the consequences of being a sinner are far more serious than many appear to regard; for be assured, that unpardoned sin bears with it a retribution exceeding fearful—yes, "know, that for all this, God will bring thee into judgment," you shall stand before the dread tribunal of Christ—of him whom you now so lightly regard, whose will you account it so slight a matter to disobey, and then shall your every work and word, and secret thought be brought to light.

And what shall be the issue of that judgment, so strict and searching? *condemnation*,! for remember, out of your own mouth you stand condemned, you confess you have broken some part of the holy, just and good law of God—what then? the declaration of that God is this, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in *one* point, he is guilty of *all*,” and again it is written, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the Book of the law to do them,”—you confess you have sinned, you dare not otherwise—what then is the fearful consequence? “the wages of sin is *death*,” “the soul that sinneth, it shall *die*.”

Is it not then, brethren, a dangerous thing to continue in sin? Is not the doom of the unpardoned soul an awful one? Is not the day of account a solemn, fearful, eventful day? That day, sinner, approaches; your endless state shall then be determined, finally and irrevocably determined—mourning and weeping in outer darkness—torment in the ever burning flame—shall be the unpardoned sinner's fearful portion! Do these announcements sound harshly in your ears? believe them not, if, upon searching for yourselves, you do not find them to be the declarations of Him who cannot err. Knowing them to be so, we dare not hold back from proclaiming them, however grating they be, from warning you how “fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God,” for he is “a mighty God and terrible,” how dangerous to provoke his vengeance, for he is “*a consuming fire*!” And Oh! will you, sinner, rest under the certainty that eternal death shall be your portion, if your spiritual maladies be not healed? will you contentedly rest beneath God's withering curse—the blighting breath of his displeasure? does it give you no pang? does it strike no terror to your soul to be assured that you shall be banished *for ever* from the presence of God, and dwell in infinite torment with the wicked one and his accursed spirits “in the blackness of darkness *for ever*?”

And here, brethren, let me remind you, that the archdeceiver—your soul's enemy—will endeavour to blind you to your ruin—will seek to destroy you with his hellish counsels—he will lead you to *rainily* measure yourselves by others, and to take occasion of presumptuous confidence, because you do “not walk so disorderly,”

or run so madly a career of riot as others run—he will suggest (for his design is to persuade man to believe that God is *not* the God of *truth*—and thus did he first “bring sin into the world with all its woe”)—he will suggest, that God, though he has so promised, is too merciful to consign myriads of immortal beings to destruction! Ah brethren, because multitudes—tens of thousands are ripening for destruction, it is no reason that God will not put in the avenging sickle and cut them down *ALL*,—silence the deceiver, as the Lord Jesus did, by an appeal to the written word—by an “*It is written*”.

Yes, for an answer to this his delusive suggestion, look to any of the exterminating judgments with which a guilty world has at any time been scourged—and you will find that the *saved* have always borne a very small proportion indeed to the *condemned*. Take, for instance, the case of the deluged world:—the wicked antediluvians probably flattered themselves with the same false reasoning as that with which you are now deceiving yourselves; and when they heard the heaven commissioned preacher proclaim that God would bring a flood upon the earth, and overthrow its wicked inhabitants, they said, doubtless, that he was *too merciful* to doom such multitudes to death—and when they saw Noah, “moved with holy fear”, and, obedient to the voice of his God, “preparing the ark for the saving of his house,” they mocked at the idea of *one family only* being preserved alive, while all mankind besides should perish; but alas! too late did they awaken to a sense of their madness—of their folly—their unbelief—they too late learned that “God is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent”—they were taught by experience—bitter, *dearly bought experience*—that what God hath said, that shall he do, what he hath promised, he will make good; for the threatened flood assuredly did come, and swept away *every* soul “that moved upon the face of the earth—and Noah only remained alive, and they who were with him in the ark.”

Was it, think you, any consolation to the drowning wretches, that their companions in guilt were companions in destruction also?—that not a *few*, but *multitudes* perished in the overwhelming water? that to groan echoed groan—and that sounds of universal wail grated on the ear? Oh!

my dear brethren, learn I beseech you, instruction from this—a solitary instance among the many which we could adduce from the sacred volume to testify that the sinner shall not go unpunished, but that the Lord will be true to his threatenings and promises—be assured that “the wicked shall be turned into hell, and *all* the people that forget God”—that the burning pit is wide enough to contain every unpardoned soul;—and think you that the pains of them who shall be tormented therein shall be alleviated, or the flames of that pit be less scorching, because not a *few* but *many* souls shall be there?

Oh, forfeit not then your eternal peace, destroy not your immortal souls, *Fit* hasten, flee, “escape for your life”—we know that if you see not your ruin, you will never seek the remedy, and sure refuge provided for the ruined soul; if you be insensible to your strengthless condition, you will never betake yourselves to the strong hold for strength—therefore, and as the Scriptures continually preach to sinners the terrors of the Lord, in order to awaken, to convince, to alarm them, and cast them prostrate in self despair, we press upon you this Scripture truth, that you are utterly ruined—so ruined that nothing but infinite power, but infinite grace can save you from eternal destruction. But think not, dear friends, that we would have you to sink in despair,

“Without one cheerful beam of
Or spark of glimmering day.”

Think not that we come to torment you before your time, saying that you are sinners, and therefore doomed to eternal death, without the possibility of escape—ah no brethren, for while we are bound to declare unto you heavy tidings, we are privileged too, as were the heavenly heralds of old to “declare unto you good tidings of great joy; for that unto you is born a Saviour who is Christ the Lord:” while we are bound to declare that your case is indeed dangerous, past remedy if the cure be not timely applied, we have also—praise to mercy!—to cheer you with the glad announcement that it is not desperate, if the remedy be now sought; for know, poor sinner, whoever thou art, who hast this night entered this house of God—know that there is one who can “forgive all thine iniquities, and heal all thy diseases, and redeem thy life from destruction—” even Jesus the soul’s physician, the sinner’s friend—he stands now by

you, he sees how “long you have laboured under your infirmity”—he compassionates your miserable case—he lovingly asks you, as he did the poor sufferer, of whom we have been reading, “*wilt thou be made whole*”?—and oh, will you not joyfully accept his gracious invitation? will you not put your wasted souls under his care? will you not have your “wounds and bruises and putrifying sores” closed and bound up, and mollified with ointment? Oh, slight not the gracious offer, but flee at once to Jesus, that you may have health for your souls; all other physicians are of “no value” they are but “forgers of lies”; and though you submit yourselves to their care, and spend upon them all your substance, you shall be “nothing better, but rather worse”—for *none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good*. Come then, stained and polluted though you be, and wash in that precious “fountain, opened for sin and for uncleanness”—“come ye weary and heavy laden, and Christ shall give you rest”—come ye who have broken the law of God, and are therefore under his wrath and exposed to the curse—come to Christ for deliverance, for “he hath delivered you from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for you;” yes, sinner, “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”—with a *present and everlasting* salvation: you shall have life, and peace, and pardon, and joy unspeakable, and “when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory,” and have an eternal portion in that blissful rest which remaineth for the people of God.

And here, brethren, I would warn you against the deceitful wiles with which the enemy of souls will seek to discourage you from fleeing unto Jesus: he will suggest that your sins have been of long continuance and that Jesus will not receive, but despise and reject you—oh, brethren, heed him not—of *long continuance!* Had not the man of whom we read, laboured under his infirmity thirty and eight years? but that was no bar to the power of the Lord; for he spake the word, and “immediately the man was made whole.”—Be ye sure that in healing spiritual maladies, the power of Jesus is equally omnipotent; and though your diseases have long cleaved unto you, yea, even from your youth up, he is able and willing to heal them all. Not the right-

eous sinner Jesus came to call—that which was lost he came to seek and to save—from all sin his blood cleanseth, and “though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

There is one other consideration which I do desire to press upon you most earnestly, and that is, the necessity of seeking relief *at once*. It was ordained by God, that at a stated time only—at “*a certain season*,” the pool of Bethesda had any healing power; and unless the sufferers had availed themselves of that “*certain season*,” the waters could not effect their cure; and just so may it be with some of you who now hear my voice, and lightly regard the message which I announce unto you from my God. This may be your appointed season—the last occasion upon which the gracious invitation to come to Jesus and be healed shall be made unto you. And will you refuse—madly refuse to close—at *once to close* with the invitation? Refuse it now, and God may give you over to a reprobate mind! Refuse it now, and the Spirit, grieved, may be withdrawn for ever! Refuse it now, and God may “*swear in his wrath, that you shall never enter into his rest.*” O then be no longer “*faithless but believing*”—be not doubtful, be not slothful while the life of your soul is at stake, but

“Come ye sinners, poor and wretched,
This is your accepted hour,
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, love, and power—
He is able, he is willing,—
Doubt no more.”

But, while I address those who have hitherto remained insensible to their danger—and though I know that the Gospel trumpet *has long* been, and is, *continually* sounded in this temple of the Lord; yet it is to be believed that there are many in this, as well as all other congregations of professing Christians, who still know not “*the joyful sound*,”—and to whom the ambassador of God is *not* “*the saviour of life unto life*,”) while, I say, I address those who have never groaned beneath this weight of guilt, and beseech them, by the love of Christ, who willetth not their death, to come unto him that they may have eternal life—I would address a few *practical* observations to those who have come unto him, and to whom Jesus is precious. Oh, brethren in the Lord! truly blessed is your state, your “*miquit;*

all forgiven, your diseases all healed,” your lives redeemed from destruction; no longer are ye rebels against God—but his dear children by faith in Jesus Christ: you have been “*delivered from the power of darkness, translated into the kingdom of God’s dear Son, and made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.*” Coloss. i. 12, 13. Yes, “*being justified by faith, you have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Rom. v. 1. a peace which the world can neither give nor deprive you of, a peace unpurchaseable—a sweet and precious peace—a peace which passeth understanding.

But lest there should be any deception upon a subject of incalculable moment, one involving your eternal interests—let me ask *you* in this congregation who profess to be the people of Christ, who call yourselves by the high, and glorious, and honourable title of “*the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty*”—Are you walking, mindful of your high and heavenly parentage? Are you living as becometh the children of the holy king of Zion? Are there, in fine, to be found in you those marks which characterise the real followers of Jesus, whereby they who know the Lord may be evidently distinguished from them who know him not with a *saving knowledge*, who love him not with a *grateful, heartfelt* love?

It would be easy, dear friends, to bring before you *more popular, more exciting* subjects—but though popular and though exciting subjects, less suitable to the wants of the soul, far less calculated to arouse the slumbering sinner, or edify the quickened saint, and therefore, when permitted in the providence of God, to address this highly privileged congregation as an Ambassador for Christ, I bring before you (as I am accustomed to do before the flock to whom I minister,) the *simple, plain, and even elementary* truths of the Gospel of the grace of God, and “*know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*”

There is abroad in the so called *religious world*, an anxious but wild and rash pursuit after novelties in religion. Many there are who content not themselves with the high privilege of being permitted to slake their thirst and refresh their parched spirit at the pure and healthful “*fountain of living waters*,” but seek after what may, momentarily, be more

grateful to the depraved taste, but which, assuredly, can never satisfy the immortal soul's desire: the pure bread of life is forsaken or poisoned by adulteration of man's device; and Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is clearly revealed as the only foundation upon which the soul's hope can be based, is forgotten in the wild attempts of vain men to be wise above what is written, to attain unto knowledge hidden in the councils of God, and far beyond the grasp of human intellect.

Established opinions are disregarded and despised, as if because they have been long established: and opinions embraced, whose chief recommendation appears to be, that they were unheard in times past, or if heard, heard but to be stigmatized as irrational by those master spirits who were burning and shining lights in the age which gave them birth, and who were instruments in the hand of God, of cleansing his Church from the foul stains with which her beauty had been long deformed. Established forms and institutions also are, in this day of innovation, objects of fierce assault; that pure portion of the Church of Christ to which it is our privilege to belong, which has been for centuries the grand bulwark of the protestant faith, and which, built upon the rock of ages, was cemented by the blood of her martyred reformers, is singled out as the mark for peculiar vengeance. Her pure formularies, her liturgies, breathing, as they do in their every line, the sweet spirit of God's own blessed book, are denounced as papal and antichristian by many, once her members, but now separatists from her communion: she is branded as the "Babylon" in the Apocalypse, the hold of evil spirits, and the cage of what is unclean and hateful; and to those who still worship in her temples, and value the abundant means of grace which she affords her children, is addressed, by men who vainly expect a pure and perfect and spotless visible church under this dispensation, the awful exhortation, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues." To this age, in fact, may not inaptly be applied the nervous language of one who was a bright ornament to the era in which he lived, and an able champion of the true faith—*"an age of more brain than heart—and one that hath almost lost piety in the chase of some litigious truths."*

Oh! it is indeed to be feared that there abound, in number fearfully great, in the professedly Christian Church of this day, those who are forward in their profession, but unsubdued in heart—who hear the word gladly, and clearly understand the theory of the Gospel, while destitute of the root of the spiritual principle, of its life, of its growth, of its fruitfulness. But thus let me exhort you in the words of the Apostle, to "examine *your-selves*, whether you be in the faith—to prove your *own selves*," lest your minds be blinded by the god of this world—lest lulled by him in fatal slumber, you depart hence in a false delusive peace, and awake in another world to terror—lest you approach the judgment seat in presumptuous confidence, and be consigned to endless despair. And as we spoke of the necessity of self-examination, the necessity of instituting a strict, solemn, and searching inquiry into the state of your hearts in the sight of God—let me ask you, my beloved friends, in the spirit of one whose "heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved,"—have you unreservedly resigned yourselves to the guidance and direction of the Lord Jesus Christ? Have you given your heart *wholly* to him? Do you stedfastly resist your triple foe, the world, the flesh, and the devil? Are you dead to the world while living in it—dead to its cares, its pleasures, and allurements? Have you crucified, or are you through divine grace daily crucifying the flesh, with its affections and lusts? Can you with sincerity of heart appeal to Jesus and say with his erring but restored disciple, "*Lord thou knowest that I love thee?*" John xxi. 17; or with the saint of old. Psalm lxxiii. 25. "Whom have I in heaven but *thee*, and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee?"

Oh, how the heart of the infirm man must have throbbled with delight, and thrilled with gratitude, when he so unexpectedly found his long enfeebled limbs restored to strength, at the bidding of Jesus! but how unspeakably great, how ardent should be your gratitude and love to your sin-pardoning Lord, remembering, that when lost, he in mercy sought you; when wandering, he in love reclaimed you; when dead in trespasses and sin, his Spirit of grace quickened you, made you who were afar off, nigh by his blood—you who were "strangers and foreigners, fellow citizens

with the saints and of the household of God!" Oh brethren in Christ, what shall you—what can you "render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards you?"

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present *far too small*,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my heart, my life, my all!"

And now, a word in conclusion, before, dear friends, we part, not, it may be, to again ever stand in the same relation as we at this moment do, as preacher and hearers—not, it may be, again to meet until the great and glorious resurrection morn. I would remind you of the exhortation which the Lord gave unto the man whom he had healed. John v. 14. "Afterwards Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, behold, thou art made whole, go and sin no more."

In the name of my Lord, I would repeat the command to every individual present; I would tell the sinner to beware of pursuing his mad career, lest God, the mighty and terrible, wearied with his continued rebellion, should no longer forbear, but should draw his "glittering sword." I would tell him that it is at the peril of his soul's immortal life, he continues to obstinately provoke the Mighty One to vengeance; that the day is fast approaching, when the *now despised*, but *then mighty* Lord Jesus, shall be "revealed from heaven with the angels of his power, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. i. 7—9. But that he may not sink in dark

despair, I would tell him that that Jesus now is ready to receive him, and invites him to come to him for pardon, life and peace—that the Lord never spurned the suppliant who humbly sued for mercy; but if, despite of offered pardon, if, despite of gracious invitations, he continues still to wander and rebel, and "will not come that he may have eternal life"—I must solemnly assure him that *death eternal* is his inevitable doom; and the misery of the unseen world, to which he is rapidly hastening, will be intensely aggravated—its torments ten thousand fold increased, by the *bitter, harassing, agonizing* reflection, that he was the *SLAYER OF HIS OWN SOUL!*

And you, beloved friends, who have been healed by Jesus, remember by what constraining motives you are bound to "sin no more." Oh, dare you, can you, *will* you sin, when you remember how hateful, how abominable it is in the sight of the Father who "loved you with an everlasting love, yea, who so dearly loved you as to give his only Son for your redemption!" "Be ye then followers of God, as dear children." Let your walk and conversation be as cometh saints. As the devices of Satan are ensnaring, and as the flesh is weak—"pray without ceasing," that you may be strengthened and upheld, and established by divine grace. As the glory of your Lord is concerned in your walk, "abstain from all *appearance* of evil," lest his enemies take occasion to blaspheme that worthy name by which you are called:—and "the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God, your whole spirit, soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." Amen.

In answer to applications made to us, we feel happy at being enabled, through the kindness of the preacher, to promise in an early number, a Sermon, preached by the Rev. R. S. Brooke, in the Episcopal Chapel, Baggot-street, Dublin, on Tuesday, the 7th inst.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—
“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXVII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 1, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. W. B. KIRKPATRICK.

REV. RICHARD S. BROOKE.

REV. T. GREGG.

CHILDREN TO BE EDUCATED, NOT ONLY IN THE TRUTH, BUT FOR ITS
DIFFUSION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE SCOTS' CHURCH, MARY'S-ABBEY, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, MARCH 5, 1837, IN AID OF THE SCHOOLS CONNECTED WITH THAT PLACE OF WORSHIP,

BY THE REV. W. B. KIRKPATRICK.

MATT. XIII. 33.

“ Another parable spake he unto them ; the kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.”

This parable is susceptible of a two-fold application. It describes the progressive influence of the truth of God in the heart of man *within*, and also in the world *without*. It describes the power of truth in the heart. As the leaven works in the mass with which it is mingled, so does the Gospel—the great instrument whereby man is brought to know, love and obey the King of heaven—work in the heart which receives and lays it up. Leaven works *strongly* and irresistibly ; so does the word, which is quick and powerful, operate on the thoughts, feelings, speech, conduct ; on the whole inward and outward character of the believer. Leaven works *silently*, unheard and unseen ; so does the Gospel secretly diffuse its ener-

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getic influence through the soul, undiscerned, save by Him whose instrument it is to fulfil the purposes of his grace. Leaven works *permanently*, imparting qualities which remain fixed in the substance which it penetrates. So does divine truth abide in the heart to which it has obtained an effectual entrance. No emblem, therefore, as it thus appears, can be more appropriate or striking, whereby to delineate the transforming, noiseless, gradual, and lasting change accomplished by the Gospel in the heart of man.

But this emblem of leaven is also finely expressive of the progress of the kingdom of God in the world, especially during the times of our Lord and his

H

Apostles. Look at the extraordinary effects produced by the preaching of the Gospel within the space of half a century after it was first promulgated. The Apostles were but few in number. They were a little leaven hid in the mass of mankind; yet thousands upon thousands yielded to the wisdom and spirit by which they spake; received the truth into their hearts; and were transformed into new creatures. The kingdom of God came unaccompanied by the pomp and equipage of human learning or eloquence or authority; nevertheless the whole civilized world was quickly made to feel and acknowledge its sway. Still, strange to say, with this bright example held up for the encouragement of all succeeding generations of the Church, and with the commandments and promises of the Saviour to cheer on its members in the diffusion of the truth, the Gospel is even now, at the distance of eighteen centuries, comparatively unfelt and unknown. The world is far from being leavened yet.

The object of the remarks which follow will be to show that this leavening of the world with truth, in obedience to the commandment, and with a view to the glory of God, is the great end to be proposed in the intellectual, moral, and spiritual education of the young. This is the end which we seek to pursue in the schools which are this day recommended to your sympathy and support;—and it is only so far as we make this our aim, that we consider ourselves entitled to claim the aid of Christian benevolence.

I shall submit what I have to say, in a series of consecutive propositions; and may the Lord give testimony to the word of his grace.

I.—IT IS A POSITION WHICH WILL NOT BE CONTROVERTED BY ANY ONE WHO READS AND BELIEVES THE BIBLE, THAT THE WHOLE WORLD IS TO BE LEAVENED BY THE FAITH OF GOD.

God has promised to bestow this blessing on the world. Psalm, cxvi. 27, 28—“All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations, shall worship before thee; for the kingdom is the Lord’s, and he is the governor among the nations.” He has made ample provision for it, in the life and death of his only begotten Son. 1 John iv. 14—“And we have seen, and do testify, that the Father sent the Son

to be the Saviour of the world’—He has taught us to pray for this; “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.” He has instructed us, not only to pray, but to live and labour for this sublime object: Psalm, lxxv. 42. “God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us. That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.”

It is interesting and important to observe the universality of the language employed in the Bible to set forth the purposes of divine mercy towards our fallen race:—“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life”—Again, the Saviour declares, John, xii. 32—“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw *all men* unto me”—Again, in the same Gospel, John, xvi. 7—“When he (the Spirit) is come, he will reprove *the world* of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment;” again:—the commission to the Apostles was, Mark, xvi. 15, “Go ye into *all the world*, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Again, the promise by which this command is supported, is this; Matt. xxviii. 20. “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!” Every statement on this subject leads us to contemplate nothing less than the leavening of the whole world with the imperishable truths of the Gospel. We are uniformly taught to drink into the spirit of him who directed his eye of pity, and his heart of love to the whole human race; and who in the language of intense and unextinguishable compassion, as well as of sovereign and supreme authority, said, Isa. xlv. 22.—“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.”

II.—THE BIBLE, WHICH CONTAINS THIS HEAVENLY TRUTH, IS ADMIRABLY FITTED FOR UNIVERSAL DIFFUSION.

The peculiar qualities by which the word of truth is thus recommended are sufficiently obvious. I shall only glance at some of the more prominent.

I.—*The Bible is of Divine authority*, “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” It is of immense importance to be able to say to him in whose hands we place the Bible; “This is God’s Book.” We thus prepare him for hearing and obeying. Other books are the result of

human wisdom ; they are liable to error ; they have not authority. We may deprive ourselves of much profit or pleasure in not perusing them : but we do not necessarily incur guilt. But we must hear the message of God at our peril. True this message may be heard, and disregarded : but who is there that does not perceive the immeasurable superiority possessed by the Bible over every other book, in announcing itself to be from God, and therefore entitled to the prompt, unhesitating obedience of all to whom it is addressed ?

2.—*The Bible speaks to the heart of man.* It lays bare the workings of the innermost affections : it shows man his selfishness, his worldliness, his ungodliness. It points out to him the fearful extent of depravity within him, and about him ; and reveals the mode by which this depravity may be subdued, and at length utterly exterminated. It teaches man what he is ; declares what he ought to be ; convinces him of the necessity of an entire change of character, and directs him to the great agent, whereby alone this transformation can be accomplished. The Bible has a self-evidencing power accompanying its statement, which the conscience of the inquiring sinner is unable to resist : so that like Paul, he is forced to exclaim, “ Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do ? ”

(3.) *The Bible prescribes to man his duty in every possible station and relation in which he can be placed.* Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, ministers and people, rulers and subjects, are instructed how to please God, and to profit themselves and one another throughout all the changing scenes and chequered history of life. No situation is so high as to be above the authoritative influence of God’s word ; no situation so low, to which it does not stoop, like the Saviour whom it reveals, in order to apply its healing, ennobling, and purifying power.

(4.) *The Bible is a bond of union.* It not only prescribes to individuals their individual duty to God and to one another ; but it binds them as one holy and inseparable brotherhood in the presence of the common Father and Lord of all. It is indeed the only bond by which union can be established. Man is naturally a wilful being, and loves his own will supremely. He is also a worldly

being, and seeks to gratify himself out of the meagre and perishing enjoyments which the world is able to afford. But all men cannot thus do their own will, nor find their own pleasure out of this poverty-stricken world. Hence they are prone to live “ in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another : ” but the Bible draws them away from their natural selfishness and worldliness to set their affections upon God, who alone is able to supply all their wants, and to gratify all their desires ; who is an all-sufficient and everlasting portion to each and to all who put their trust in him ; and in whom every one of his creatures has room to pursue his own enjoyment through eternity, without ever diminishing or infringing on the happiness of any other member of that innumerable company with whom he is associated.

(5.) Once more :—*the Bible inspires and fills the heart with hope.* It declares emphatically and repeatedly, that the earth on which we dwell, so long defiled and disgraced by sin, shall at length shake off its pollutions ; that “ the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ ; ” that all the revolutions of empires, and all the conquests of warriors, and all the counsels of statesmen are effectually working for the fulfilment of this grand event. The believer of the Bible is thus made acquainted with the gracious purposes of God towards the human race ; he learns that it is his privilege to be instrumental in their accomplishment, and he is thus prepared with animation and energy to take his part in urging on the kingdom of God, till all the deserts and wild places of the earth shall resound with the song of thanksgiving to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Let any one calmly and deliberately reflect on those elements of power which attach to the Bible, that it is of Divine authority, that it appeals to the conscience, purifies the heart, and gives it a right direction ; that it teaches man his social duty in every conceivable relation of life, that it binds him by ties of brotherly union to the human family as well as of filial love to his Father in heaven, and that it inspires him with the assured hope that all people, nations and languages shall serve God, and that he himself shall be instrumental in the accomplishment of this great enterprise. Let

any one, I say, reflect on these attributes of Divine truth contained in the Scriptures, and he must be compelled to declare that the Bible, and the Bible alone, contains the quickening and transforming energy, whereby the kingdom of God, like leaven, is destined to overspread the earth.

III. LITTLE HAS YET BEEN DONE FOR LEAVENING THE WORLD WITH TRUTH.

Within the period of a few years after the command was given, "go ye into all the world," a mighty effort was made towards its fulfilment. The limits of the greatest empire of the ancient world were visited by the labours of the primitive disciples. But alas! the love of God's people soon began to wax cold; the world stole away their hearts from the Lord; the Saviour was forgotten; his Gospel was set aside; the commandments of men were substituted for the doctrines of God—the Church fell asleep, and Satan reigned on earth unmolested. Even now, notwithstanding the labours of individual witnesses for the cause of truth—of witnesses raised up in the darkest periods of the history of the Church, and in uninterrupted succession, who "overcame by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony;"—notwithstanding the impulse given to truth by the Reformation, when the powerful voice of Luther was responded to from every quarter of Europe; and notwithstanding the new-born energies of the Church in these latter times, unequalled since the days of the Apostles;—still, if we take into account not only Jews, Mahomedans and Pagans, but also those nominal Christians, who are fast bound in the arms of superstition, or "who hold the truth in unrighteousness," or who are straying, without compass or chart, on the dreary wilds of infidelity—still it is not too high an estimate to affirm, that at this moment, nine-tenths of the human race have no just apprehensions of the character and government of God, and of the way of salvation through Jesus Christ.

IV. SOMETHING HAS BEEN DONE FOR THE LEAVENING OF THE WORLD WITH TRUTH.

Little, indeed, has been done, when compared with the length of time which has elapsed since the commission was given to the disciples to evangelize the world; but much, when we consider the

brief period within which the missionary efforts of Protestant churches are comprized. Who would have ventured to predict forty years ago, that within that space, the Bible should be published in one hundred and sixty different dialects—that a great portion of the heathen world should be explored—that hundreds of missionaries would go forth from Christian countries, and thousands of native teachers be raised up in Pagan lands for the spread of the Gospel—that printing presses should be set up—that millions of tracts should be circulated—that myriads of heathen children should be instructed in the knowledge of God? Who would have ventured to predict that so many benevolent plans would have been concerted, so many agencies set at work, so much knowledge gained, so much experience acquired, so much conscience awakened, so much prayer called forth, so much hope stirred up? Who would have ventured to predict that the temples of idolatry should begin to moulder—its altars to be forsaken, its priests to be despised—and idolatry itself to grow wearisome to its votaries—to wax old and ready to vanish away?—Yet these are all facts—facts confirmed by disinterested and innumerable witnesses, all indicating that the great Captain of our salvation is now marshalling his hosts for the spiritual conquest of the world; all urging us to "be strong; to fear not, for God is with us; to say to the North, give up, and to the South, keep not back; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth."

V.—BUT WHY HAS NOT MORE BEEN DONE FOR THE LEAVENING OF THE WORLD WITH TRUTH?

The answer to this question is not very difficult of discovery. The reason is: not only has the world no relish for truth, for "it loves darkness rather than light, because its deeds are evil;"—not only is there a great enemy of truth, the father of lies, and the prince and god of this world, who is labouring to uphold and perpetuate his dominion of error and of sin—but chiefly, because the church has never yet been fully awakened to her duty of bearing the testimony of truth into the country and camp of idolatry and infidelity. The opposition of men and of devils would avail nothing if the people of God commenced their work in good earnest,—if, bound together with one

heart like the primitive disciples, they felt it to be as much their duty to disseminate the truth to others as to receive it for themselves; if they felt, and acted upon the conviction that truth is, in fact, to be as leaven, an operative, energetic, diffusive principle, spreading its influence from heart to heart; from family to family; from nation to nation; until a great voice out of heaven should be heard, saying—“Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he shall dwell with them; and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

The whole creation has been groaning and travailing in pain until now—and why? not because there is no balm in Gilead—not because there is no physician there—no; but because God’s professing people have been hoarding up this precious balm in their own habitations, and could spare none, to apply to the bleeding souls of their perishing fellow men;—because they have kept this physician to themselves, and permitted the world around them to live or die as it might. The church, that is to say, the individual members of the church, lay as well as clerical, have been consulting their own ease, or interests, or occupations in the world, instead of ministering to the necessities of perishing men. And the various communities of the church have been too often engaged in petty skirmishes among themselves, quarrelling like spoiled children, over the abundance of their delicacies, instead of striving together with one mind for the faith of the Gospel.

It seems never yet to have been fully understood by the church, that all its members are bound to be “fellow-helpers of the truth.” The command of our Lord, “go ye into all the world” implies far more than meets the ear. It was addressed, not to the apostles only; for they did not live to fulfil the precept; but also to their successors, generation after generation till the work should be done. Neither is this command addressed only to those who are more specially appointed to the office of pastors and teachers; but also to the whole community of the church. For, how can men preach, except they be sent? or how can they teach except they be supported? This command is binding on all who are qualified to take a prominent part in the removal of ignorance and sin; and on all who can aid in sending these labourers

forth to their work, and in supporting them, while engaged in it. It is addressed to all, ministers and people; male and female, old and young, rich and poor—to all who have substance to give, or influence to use, or hearts to feel and to pray for their fellow-creatures sitting in darkness, and in the region and shadow of death. If any one of you my hearers, can plead an exemption from the command of Christ, then so may I—so may all. But the supposition is not to be entertained for a moment. Exempted we cannot be—no matter how humble our station, or how secular our business, or how poor our talents, or how dull our hope of success—exempted we cannot be from subjection to him who hath redeemed us with his blood; who is king in Zion; and who hath all power given unto him in heaven and on earth.

But this leads me to consider.

VI.—HOW SHALL WE PREPARE TO DO MORE THAN HAS YET BEEN DONE FOR LEAVENING THE WORLD WITH TRUTH?

I answer;—by training up the rising generation, with this express object in view. If it be our duty and privilege to give the vigour and experience of our riper years to the cause of Christ, and to the good of our fellow-men, then is it equally our duty to make preparation for the most effective performance of this duty. The young are the heritage of the Lord. They are given to be sons and daughters of Almighty God. They also are bought with a price. They are as immediately in the presence of God, as much indebted to his grace, as dependant on his bounty, and as liable to be suddenly called to an account of their stewardship as their seniors. Further, they are quite as capable as those of more mature age of learning to serve Christ; unembarrassed as they are by the cares of the world; their minds elastic, their affections warm; their bodies flexible to the mould of circumstances. Nay, they are special objects of the Saviour’s invitations; and may therefore expect a peculiar blessing on their labours in his service.

Observe: the point on which I am now insisting is not simply the duty of instructing the young in the fear of God, and in obedience to his requirements, in order to attain their own personal salvation from the power as well as the curse of sin. I am not now pressing the duty of family religion; but the duty of training the

young to be instruments for the diffusion of truth, whatever be the talents which God has given them, or in whatever calling they are destined to move. I urge the duty of educating the young, not all of them to be ministers or missionaries, (for all are not gifted and designated by the Holy Ghost for this high office) but of educating them, whatever be their destined calling, in those motives and principles of action which influence the movements and exertions of the devoted minister at home, or missionary abroad. We are commanded to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness," to be fellow-workers under God, and with God; to adopt all means, the most effective which lie within our reach, for this great work. Now what means are so effective as the education of the young, of those who are to be the men and women by whom we shall be succeeded, to whose trust the evangelisation of the world shall soon be committed, as it is now committed unto us? What means so effective, under God, as the education of the young for this express object? In what other method shall we leave behind us such vigorous and well constructed machinery for urging on the work when we are gone; or how shall we impress our own minds more deeply with its importance and grandeur, than by training others for its performance? But further we assert that,

VII.—NEVER WILL THE CHURCH MAKE ANY VERY DECISIVE AND SUCCESSFUL EFFORT FOR THE LEAVENING OF THE WORLD WITH TRUTH, NEVER WILL SHE PROVE FAITHFUL TO THE TRUST REPOSED IN HER; UNTIL EVERY CHILD UNDER HER GUARDIANSHIP, BE EDUCATED WITH A VIEW TO THIS NOBLE AND ALL COMMANDING OBJECT.

Contemplate for a moment the manner and spirit with which the work of God is now carried on by the church, and can you be surprised at the meagre and insignificant results? *Here* you perceive one solitary individual devoting himself wholly to the cause of God, and going out as a missionary to the distant regions of idolatry. *There* you behold another, who feels it indeed to be his duty to remain in his own country, but who labours as exclusively and as earnestly for the conversion of the heathen at home, as does the former for the conversion of the heathen abroad. *There* again is a third, who is obliged to attend to the duties of a secular occupa-

tion, but who contrives notwithstanding to save many an hour for the service of God. These are, all of them, no doubt, active, faithful, and perhaps successful labourers. But then how few in number—how deficient in knowledge, how inferior in boldness of design, and in vigour of execution, as compared with those who have been trained to the work of diffusing truth from their earliest years, and who are stimulated by the holy competition of like minded associates? At present it generally happens, that before the follower of Christ has resolved to make any considerable sacrifices for his Lord; to go out, for example, as missionary to the heathen; or at least before he is fully entered on the field of action—before he has mastered the opposition of worldly relatives, and what is still more difficult, the expostulations of religious friends—before he is allowed quietly to take his own course; he has arrived at years of maturity—his bodily constitution is formed—his mental character is formed also—his habits are fixed—his journey is far advanced towards the grave.

But how amazingly different would be the aspect of the Church; how much more commanding her attitude, how immeasurably superior her influence on the world, if Christians, who have the management of the young, would train them up for the evangelizing of the world? There would of course, be many mortifying disappointments;—for the heart of man, whether young or old, is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. But still, how various and how vast the benefits which must inevitably result from such a procedure? The true object of life would thus be widely and seriously contemplated, and clearly understood. The requisite means for ensuring the object would thus be put in operation, and made to bear upon the end proposed. Resources would be collected. Difficulties would be foreseen, and preparation made to meet them. Kindred minds would be excited to increased activity by conversation on the subject. Emulation would be kindled; plans would be concerted; openings of usefulness discovered. And thus, when the time of action should arrive, there would spring forth a holy band of veterans in experience, although comparatively children in years, long-trained, and well disciplined, to the help of the Lord

against the mighty. Let but this principle come into operation in the education of the young; and the wave of righteousness and peace shall roll rapidly over the earth.—The dawn of the long expected Millennium will be speedily at hand.

VIII. LET ME URGE PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF YOUTH, TO PERFORM THE DUTY WHICH HAS NOW BEEN POINTED OUT TO THEM.

You know that God has purposed that the world shall be leavened with truth, and that the church is the instrument in his hand for undertaking this great enterprise; you know that little has yet been done towards its completion, and that much remains to be done;—you have now heard by what mode this work may be undertaken with the hope of incomparably greater success than the church has ever yet experienced—professing Christians are you prepared to adopt it? I need not remind you of the extent and force of obligation by which you are bound to pursue this work. I need not remind you of the love of God, the example of Christ, the promises of the Holy Ghost, the guilt and misery of a dying world, the reckoning to come at the day of judgment. Nor need I on the other hand remind you of the unaccountable and inexcusable indifference shown to these high motives by those who bear the name, and profess to love the service of our glorious Redeemer.

Listen to the language, and mark the conduct of the vast multitude of those who declare themselves followers of the Lord, in assigning the future destination of the children committed to their care. ‘This child must be put to a profession—that other placed at business—a third must be ready for a situation expected under government—a fourth must be sent abroad,—but in all these deliberations there is little or no reference to the immortal souls of the children whose destinies are thus marked out; nor any consideration of the mode in which they may most effectually promote the welfare of their fellow-creatures. In these times we are constantly hearing that every department of human industry is overstocked; and that many individuals in every profession, and in every trade are out of employment. Should a vacancy occur in any situation of business or emolument, the path to its attainment is instantly blocked up by innumerable competitors. No expense is spared by

the rival candidates, of time, labour, anxiety—perhaps not even of honour or of truth. Thus are we all bustling and scrambling for some trifling post of honour or of profit, on this little favoured spot of earth—while there are spiritual wastes stretching away, almost from our own doors to the extremities of the world, inhabited by hundreds of millions of our fellow-creatures living without the Gospel, without medicine, without commerce, without agriculture, without arts, without science;—destitute of any acquirement which can minister to their solid comfort while here, or prepare them for glory hereafter. Fathers! Mothers! Guardians of Youth! when will you begin to teach your children to live no longer to themselves, but unto God? When will you try to impress upon them, that he who in the humblest station, and with the most moderate abilities, does, in that station and with those abilities, exercise self-denial for the Gospel’s sake, and wage war with the lingering corruptions of his nature, and at the same time seeks to imbue his associates with his own spirit, and to impress them by his own example; is, in the elements of moral and spiritual greatness, richer and nobler than all the mere statesmen or conquerors who have played their brilliant parts before the gaze of admiring thousands since the world began? When will you learn and teach that the highest rank which this world has in its power to bestow on its votaries, is immeasurably below that of the lowly servant of God, whose work is the diffusion of truth; whose motive is the love of Christ; whose end is everlasting life?

IX.—DELAY NOT TO COMMENCE AT ONCE, IN THE SPIRIT OF FAITH AND LOVE, THE WORK OF IMPELLING THE TRUTH BEYOND YOU.

Do you ask me how is this to be done? I answer, first “give your own selves to the Lord,” and thus will you be prepared with vigour and success, to labour for the advancement of the kingdom of God around you. Next consider your individual relations. Are you a parent? The head of a family? A Sabbath-school teacher? A member of a Christian Church? Consider how you stand, and what are your resources of time, knowledge, property, or other talents, which you may diligently expend and improve for the good of your fellow-creatures, and for the glory of God.

Try to be ever urging the truth beyond you. It was not given you to hoard up, but to diffuse, free as the air you breathe, or the light from heaven. You are at no loss for an interesting and important field of labour. There are millions of your own countrymen who are in need of instruction;—who are almost as ignorant of the vital truths of Christianity as the idolaters of Hindostan or of the South Seas. You have no occasion to travel out of your own city for objects of Christian benevolence. There are thousands of the young in the streets and lanes around your own habitations, who are perishing for lack of knowledge—say not, it is vain to make the attempt: brethren, have you ever tried? are you prepared to go before the judgment seat, and say, you have laboured and prayed for success in this great work, but have not succeeded? Can the Lord testify of you, as he testified of Mary, when he said, “she hath done what she could?”

Brethren, there must be more *devotedness* to Christ in the Church. He hath done all for you. Let the love of your crucified Saviour constrain you to do what you can for him.

There must be more *faith* in the Church. If Christians will be honored in promoting the kingdom of their Lord, they must offer up the prayer of faith, resting simply on the word of God, and the work of Christ, regardless of the calculations of human wisdom or expediency. Nothing great or noble shall ever be achieved till we drink more largely into the spirit of those ancient believers, “who, through faith, subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.”

There must be more *love* in the Church. We want more love to Christ, that we may no longer stand halting between two opinions, nor look back with lingering affection on the pleasures of the world which we profess to have renounced. We want more love to souls; that we may not be so easily dispirited and overborne by the difficulties to be encountered in subduing them to the obedience of the faith. We want more love to one another, that our hands may be strengthened and the reproaches of enemies put to silence;—that the various sections of the Christian Church may be like the tribes of ancient Israel encamped round the ark of the

covenant, each bearing its own name, and displaying its own standard, yet all ready to spring forward and present one dense consolidated phalanx, against the enemies of truth and of God.

Beloved friends, the work is before you. Souls are perishing—time is flying—eternity is close at hand—you will soon be in the presence of the Judge—“Work while it is day: the night cometh when no man can work!”

X. FINALLY YOU ARE NOW INVITED TO GIVE A PRACTICAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE TRUTH OF THE PRINCIPLES WHICH HAVE BEEN JUST LAID DOWN.

We ask you to contribute to the support of four schools in connexion with this Church, in each of which are daily taught the scriptures of truth, and their application to the duties and trials of life. Two of these schools have been long established and are well known. They afford a good English education to the children of persons of respectable character, but of moderate means. The schools are held in different houses, one for boys, the other for girls, conducted by a male and female teacher respectively. They are superintended by a committee, through whose recommendation children are admitted into the schools, and they are visited at different periods of every week by the two officiating clergymen. The boarding school system has been given up in these establishments. The children are lodged and boarded, (if such aid be necessary,) in the houses of their parents, or in the residences of industrious creditable persons in the same station of life. They are thus early made acquainted with the duties and difficulties of the sphere in which they are destined to move; they are trained to habits of self-denial; and they acquire that practical knowledge which fits them for entering with ease and readiness into the details of their after occupations.

The comparative effects of the system at present pursued in these two schools, and of the charity-school system which was relinquished about ten years ago, are well stated in the following extracts taken from the first volume of the Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry.

Extract from the statement made by the Rev. William Lee, after his visitation of the Charter Schools in 1819.

“In the Charter (Boarding) Schools, all social and family affections are dried

up. Children once received into them are, as it were, the children, the brothers, the sisters, the relatives of nobody! They have no vacation; they know not the feeling of home—and hence it is, primarily, whatever concomitant causes there may be, that they are so frequently stunted in body, mind, and heart.”

The opinion of the Commissioners is thus stated :

“We are convinced, that if 1000 children, educated in Charter Schools, were to be compared with an equal number who had remained in the apparently wretched cabins inhabited by their parents, but who had attended orderly and well-regulated Day Schools, it would be found not only that the latter had passed their years of instruction far more happily to themselves, but that, when arrived at the age of manhood, they would, upon a general average be, in every respect, more valuable and better-instructed members of society; they would have improved in knowledge, under circumstances which would have strengthened and confirmed their connexion with all those to whom they must naturally look for protection and assistance—and would enter upon life with their affections awakened, their principles confirmed, and their character raised by the reliance they would have learned to place in their own exertions, and in the practice they would have acquired of controlling and conducting themselves.

“It is very different in the instance of a boy let loose from a Charter School, who has lived in a state of existence entirely artificial. All his wants having been supplied by the care of others, he has become peevish, fretful, and impatient, if not supplied according to rule. His expectations have been unduly raised as to his own future prospects, through the habits of indolence and apathy which have appeared to us peculiarly to characterise these children, rendering them altogether unsuited to the active, patient, persevering exertions, which are necessary to their success in life.”

But further: in accordance with the principles laid down in the previous re-

marks, the Committee have opened two new schools in Beresford-street. It had long been a source of regret, that, located in the borders of one of the most benighted districts of the city, we were as a Church, doing so little for its moral and spiritual improvement. An experiment has at length been made, and has succeeded beyond our most sanguine expectations. In the schools which have been established in this district, and for which a favourable site has been obtained, there are one hundred children on the lists, two thirds of whom are Roman Catholics; and about seventy of these are in daily attendance. Two highly competent teachers have been provided; and the schools are under the frequent inspection of the Committee and of other members of the congregation who take an interest in their prosperity. A Sunday-school has, also, been opened, with an average attendance of between fifty and sixty children. They seem to take the utmost pleasure in receiving instruction; and although some of them have been removed by the interference of their spiritual teachers, they have almost invariably returned. Indeed, there can be no doubt, that had we funds to enlarge our school-rooms, and agents to visit the families in the neighbourhood, the number of pupils might be indefinitely increased.

Under these encouraging circumstances, the Committee appeal with confidence to the Christian benevolence of the congregation now assembled. They call on their fellow members of the Church to respond with gratitude and joy to the gracious call of God's providence, and to follow up the movement which has been so auspiciously commenced by the liberality of their contributions on the present occasion. They respectfully, but urgently, invite their friends who have visited them to-day from other congregations, to express their warm-hearted sympathy in favour of this and every similar effort made for the cause of truth, for the good of our fellow-creatures, for the kingdom of our Saviour, and for the glory of our God. And may the Lord bless the giver and the gift.—Amen.

“ CHRIST THE LAMB OF GOD.”

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH, BAGGOT-STREET, DUBLIN,

ON TUESDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1837,

BY THE REV. RICHARD S. BROOKE, A. M.

(Minister of the Kingstown Episcopal Mariner's Church.)

JOHN i. 29.

“ Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

THESE are the words of John the Baptist, spoken by him under the influence of that Holy Ghost, with which he was filled “ even from his mother's womb.” Now, it is worthy of remark, that John here does not appear to know Jesus after the flesh, though his near relative *in the flesh*: the human tie seems to have been lost in the apprehension of his divine glory; sense was absorbed in spirit, sight in faith, and he could say, with the apostle Paul, “ henceforth know I no man after the flesh; yea, though I have known Christ after the flesh, yet henceforth know I him no more.”

It is likewise worth pausing to consider the nature and burden of John's preaching, as shown to us in the context. There is a class of people who contend, that John preached up works as a previous qualification for the reception of Christ, because he said, “ Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand:” but they confuse the outward reformation of life and conversation (which is a *consequent* on the Spirit's work) with the work of grace itself: “ They do err, not knowing the Scriptures.” Now let us see what was it that John *did* preach—Jesus, and Jesus only—Jesus the everlasting Saviour—(see 15th verse) Jesus the all fulness of God—the incarnate grace of God—the embodied truth of God—the embosomed child of God—the only begotten Son of God—the declarer and revealer of the glory of God (see verses 16, 17, 18.) and anointed by the Spirit of God to bless and baptize—(verses 32, 33). *These* were the subjects of his sermons, and *this* was the glorious view which filled his

mind while, looking on Jesus as he walked, he said, “ Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

Dear friends, are you fond of sights?—outward sights of wonder, or novelty, or beauty—sights to please the eye—to enchant, to amaze, to excite? or do your thoughts and imaginings range after inward sights and visions of the mind? do you survey, with an eye of desire, the golden path of wealth, the lofty hills of ambition, the excitement of party politics, the sunny bubbles of pleasure, or the ten thousand idols which self gilds and sets up to be worshipped in the heart? Oh! turn ye on this morning of this solemn season from these perishable vanities to see and to serve the living God—turn ye from these dumb idols of dust, and see and behold *this* sight—say to your soul, in the spirit and words of Moses, “ I will now turn aside and see this great sight!”—“ put your shoes from off your feet, for this is holy ground,” and “ behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!”

Here is a sight of joy, and a sight of sorrow; here is a sight of wonder and a sight of woe; here is a sight of shame and a sight of glory. A sight of *joy*—that upon *Him*, “ who bears up the pillars of heaven” *our* iniquities should all be laid; a sight of *sorrow*—that God's dear Lamb should die so dark a death; a sight of *wonder*—that the Lamb and the Shepherd, the offerer and the offered, the priest and the victim, should be *one*, and that one, Christ; a sight of *woe*—for the Lamb is “ as if it had been slain,” and all who pass by in faith must see that

“never was there any sorrow like unto his sorrow;” a sight of *shame*—for the glorious God-man—the blessed Immanuel—“Lord over all, God blessed for ever” was shamefully entreated, and “hid not his face from shame and spitting,” but for our sake “endured the cross despising the shame;” and a sight of *glory*—for the Lamb which was led to the slaughter is now in the midst of the throne leading and feeding his redeemed:—Oh, may we give him glory on earth, as they do in heaven—may we take up their anthem and echo their amen, as, harping on their harps they ascribe “salvation to our God that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb.” “Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!”

The text before us expresses three things. 1st,—a pointing to Christ, “*Behold.*” 2dly,—a name of Christ, “*The Lamb of God.*” 3dly,—a work of Christ, “*That taketh away the sin of the world.*” Let us consider these three things; may the word be delivered in simplicity, and may it profit, “being mixed with faith in those who hear it,” for Jesus’ sake.—Amen.

I. “**BEHOLD.**” Here is faith pointing to Jesus. We can imagine these words spoken in heaven, and the angels desiring “to look into these things;” we can imagine these words heard in hell, and the devils, like the Prophet Balaam “beholding but *not nigh* :” but alas, upon earth how few point, and how few behold! The rich man points to his wealth, and takes up his parable and says, “*Behold*, I am increased with goods and have need of nothing,” “soul take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.” The young man points to his pleasures, and says, “*Behold* I have decked my bed with covering, I have perfumed it with myrrh,” I will take my fill of enjoyment till morning. The Pharisee points to himself, and says, “*Behold* I sit as a queen and a lady,” “I have made my nest on high, my tower and city reach unto heaven; stand off I am holier than thou; and “God I thank thee I am not as other men.” These are the words of the many; but the few who belong to Christ point to a different object—not to self, for alas! self is with them an empty vessel, and they find nothing but dissatisfaction there:—not to wealth, for they know it is but gilded dust:—not to pleasures, for they have learned that “The end of these things is death”:—

but, like John, they point to Jesus, and cry, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world:” here is my stay, my Shepherd, and my Saviour,—here is my Rock, my Root, and my rest, my song, and my strength—“O Lord, I will praise thee, for though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me.”

II. A NAME OF CHRIST—“**THE LAMB OF GOD.**” Dear friends, where shall we behold him? If the Lord has not opened the eyes of your souls to behold him as such in the glass of faith; open your Bibles with me this morning, and you will see him running all through it like a golden thread; and the Spirit pointing at him, in the Spirit’s Book, as “The Lamb of God.” View him in this light in the Patriarchal days, in the sacrifice of Abel, offered in faith, and which God had respect unto, because he had “Respect unto his covenant.” Abel brought of the firstlings, and *best* of his flock;—oh, doubtless the Lamb of God was in the patriarch’s eyes, “chief among ten thousand and altogether lovely.”

View him under the law as the Paschal Lamb, roast with fire to denote the lingering intensity of his sufferings, and his blood sprinkled on the Israelites’ door posts as a shield from the destroying angel. Oh! if the blood of Christ our passover be sprinkled on your hearts, dear friends, neither the holy sword of God’s justice, or the fiery darts of the wicked one, shall harm a hair of your heads. View him in the xxiii. Psalm—surely it is Christ who speaks here, as a Lamb to his Shepherd Father; surely it is Messiah, the anointed Son, who says to Jehovah, the anointing Father, in the 5th verse,—“Thou anointest my head with oil.”—View him in the 53d chapter of the Prophet Isaiah, “As a Lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers.” View him in the Gospels, in the words of my text; view him in the Epistles, as God’s Lamb, without spot or blemish, by whose precious blood his elect are redeemed,—1 Peter, i. 19, and lastly, in the Apocalypse, view him as the Lamb of God, “Who alone had power to take the Book and break the seals”—“A Lamb having seven horns and seven eyes”—standing on Mount Zion—living, and reigning, and loving, amongst his redeemed. And mark, too, he is the “Lamb of God”—he belonged to God;

he was *God's Lamb*, because *God's property was in him*. He was *God's Son*,—"This is my beloved Son, hear him." He was *God's Servant*, not in nature, but in office—"Behold my servant, whom I uphold." He was *God's angel*—"Behold I will send my angel before thee; beware of him, and obey his voice, for he will not pardon thy transgressions." He was *God's Prophet*—"A prophet will the Lord your God raise up unto you, from among thy Brethren, to him shall you hearken." He was *God's messenger*, "and the Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to the Temple, even the messenger of the covenant."

He was *God's Lamb*, because *God's name was in him*. To this gives the Prophet Isaiah witness—"His name shall be called the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father"—and again, "His name shall be called Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us." He was *God's Lamb*, because *God's love was in him*. He was his only begotten—his elect and precious, brought up with him, and daily his delight. The great Father had bent him over that embosomed son with a kindling countenance and looks of radiant love, as, for myriads of years, he lay in his Divine bosom, and the outgoings of his Almighty heart had been to him from everlasting. God loved, and loves him as he never loved created being. He is the only one of God's sons whom God loves for *his own sake*—and of him, "The first-born among many brethren," God can alone always say, "I am well pleased." From the deep fountain of love in God's breast, goes forth a tide to each and all of his adopted children; but alas, how small a stream flows back from man's dry and desert nature! But when the tide of Jehovah's love sets in to Jesus, and when the fountain of Jesus' love flows back to Jehovah, like two deep and clear rivers they meet, and mingle, and flow together along the channel of eternity, "Making glad with their streams the city of God"—fertilizing and refreshing the heavenly paradise, and diffusing beauty and blessing throughout the unbounded range of time, creation, and space.

● He was *God's Lamb*, because *God's power was in him*; he was but a Lamb, the weakest and meekest of creatures, yet as such, he fought and conquered the devouring lion and the ravenous wolf; he

was a dying Lamb, yet divine strength working through human weakness triumphed, and trod under foot the utmost power of hell. In that dark and woful hour, the hands which seemed so helplessly nailed to the cross were not idle—with the one he seized upon his own dear people, he took them, he drew them out of many waters, he held them aloft in the eye of heaven, he presented them to God—while with the other he smote Satan, he cast him down, he bruised his head and spoiled his power—while in the words of his own prophet of old he might have exclaimed "oh, my soul, thou hast trodden down strength!" Thus was Jesus *God's Lamb*, because *God's property—God's name, God's love and God's power* were all in him: oh, then behold him as such:—but methinks I hear some of you say, "we cannot, we want inward sight, we want faith:" oh remember "faith is the gift of God:" "ask and you shall receive." Come like blind Bartimæus, and sit on the highway of the ordinances—tarry till the angel comes down to stir the pool: till Jesus passeth by; then cry to him—spring to him, casting off the rags of your creature righteousness, say unto him "Jesus, master, have mercy—" "Lord that I may receive my sight:" and doubt but he will stand and say to you "receive thy sight," "I will, be thou clean;" and then, like the poor man in John's gospel, you can say, surveying your past state and your present, "one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

III. Let us consider **A WORK OF CHRIST**, in these words, "**THAT TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.**" Now, what is sin? It is but a little word, and consists but of three letters, yet there are a thousand opinions in this world concerning its meaning. Let us leave man then, and go to God and God's word for its definition. The Holy Spirit says "sin is the transgression of the law"—now what is the law? there are many opinions about the force and obligation of this term also—some think if they are enabled to keep the outward letter of the commandment in some degree square with their own conscience, that they are doers of the law; but they forget that our Saviour proves in his sermon on the mount, that each commandment may be considered but as a title—heading or contents of a long dark chapter of iniquity

flowing from what that commandment prohibits: others suppose the law to be our duty to our neighbour; this is the natural view every unconverted man takes of it.—The first table is by the general consent of mankind cancelled or put in abeyance, and if we are only sufficiently mindful of our neighbour's comfort, and our own interest, and the happiness of both, as not to kill, steal or tell lies &c. we pay little regard to the *first and greatest* commandment of the law, "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength." But believers being taught by God, have due and right conceptions of what the law is; and while as a justifying agent to bring a sinner to God, they see its utter inefficacy; they perceive its usefulness as a standard of action and a rule of life; they see it as it is, holy, just, and pure, and good, the work and creation of a God, holy, just and pure and good; they see it exceeding broad; they see its high exactions, its deep requirements, the length of its spirituality, the breadth of its holiness: and seeing it thus brought home to their conscience in the hands of the Spirit, like a vast magnifying glass, in which all their faults and failings, their omissions, neglects, and backslidings are represented in their just and faithful proportions—"for by the law is the knowledge of sin—" oh what have they to do but to fling themselves in the dust of self degradation at the foot of Jesus's cross, and cry "who can tell how oft he offendeth, oh, cleanse thou me from my *secret* faults—" "my sins are so many, that I am not able to look up—" "woe is me," "my leanness, my leanness," "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

Now, dear brethren, God hates sin; he says of it, "oh! do not this abominable thing which I hate." How then are all those sins which lie as thick on the earth as sands in the river, or leaves in the woods at autumn, to be taken away? my text gives the answer "Behold the Lamb of God—" for it is he "that takes away the sins of the world."

First, he takes them away from the *sinner's heart*: from those fountains of life and love, which he opened in his bleeding body, flows forth a stream for sin and for uncleanness: oh! let us wait by that fountain side in humble faith—Jesus himself will come to lift us in, and

"Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
Take all our sin away."

Secondly—He takes away our sins from *God's Book*. He blots out the handwriting of ordinances, by pouring his blood over the page; he tears out the leaf on which our faults and our follies stood enrolled, in letters of living fire—and he proclaims that—"There is *no* condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus."

Thirdly—He takes away our sins from *God's bar*. They will never witness against us there; there will be a cloud of witnesses against the *impenitent* sinner; the men of Sodom, the men of Nineveh, the queen of the South will rise up and condemn this generation,—nay, the very sins which had been their boon companions *here*, will turn their enemies and accusers *there*, and clinging fast to the flesh which had nourished them in its bosom, will be changed into serpents of fire, to bite and gnaw them, body and soul, through the eternity of hell. But God's dear people—their sins will never rise against them, their master has washed them away, and in his strength they have been crucifying and mortifying them while here; they have been dying to them daily; and now having awaked up after the likeness of Jesus, they have the *full* experience of the power of that promise, of which they had many blessed foretastes here. "Sin shall not have dominion over you."

Fourthly. He takes our sins away from *God's sight*. Sin is hell-born, and God is of too pure eyes to behold iniquity, and though the sins of his people have been graven with a diamond, though they had reached unto heaven, mountain high; yet the crimson flood of the Saviour's blood prevails above their highest tops; they sink and are lost in those waters of love—God looks upon the face of his anointed, and for *his* sake casts all his people's sins behind his back.

Fifthly—He takes away our sins *to his cross*. He nails their accusation there; there he sets up another writing and superscription, a challenge to hell, a comfort to his people, a joy to the whole earth; like his own superscription, it is written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin, that Jew and Gentile, Greek and Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free, and all the ends of the world might read it, and the writing runs thus:—"who is he

that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again." "Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth."

Sixthly—He took our sins away to his grave. He bore them on his bowed head when dying, and dying, they died also; they were buried in his burial, and entombed in his tomb; and when he rose, he left them in his grave. He buried his dead out of his sight, he stood up—he went up—from before his dead, and left the sepulchre no trophy but its burst seal, and death no spoils but his broken sting.

Again, this word "taketh away," may be rendered *beareth*. God says in the 53d Isaiah, "my righteous servant shall bear their iniquities;" and again, "surely he has borne our sins," &c. Now the word thus interpreted refers to the ordinance of the scape-goat detailed in the 16th chapter of Leviticus, 21, 22, where we find Aaron confessing over and putting upon the head of the goat all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and "the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities into a land of separation, (see margin.) Thus did Christ, the devoted victim, bear his people's sins away into the land of forgiveness and separation; so that "when the iniquity of the house of Israel shall be sought for, there is none, and the sins of Judah they shall not be found," and every rejoicing child of God may cry and sing, "bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, for as far as the East is from the West, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Psalms, ciii. 12. Again, this word "taketh away," may be rendered *lifteth*—the term implying a weight, and such a weight, that if the smallest portion of it could have been separated from the mass, and put on the head of the aggregate Church since the dawn of time to the last trump, it would have crushed them down to the lowest cavern of hell: but Christ, the Lamb of God, lifted this heavy load of sin—he lifted the curse off the earth—the subjection to vanity off the creature—he lifted the curse of the holy law off man's heart and head—he lifted the dreadful weight of God's righteous wrath against sin off his own people; he lifted these dismal loads, and sustained them on his dying body. He did not stand under them—he *hung* under them, and they bruised and galled him sorely;

"the archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him," but his spirit rose above them all, till God's wrath came down on the surety-Saviour, and then his spirit sank. Satan could only bruise his *heel*, and our sins but bowed his *head*, but when his Father's wrath came down, that bruised his *spirit*, and pierced his soul, and broke his heart, as he uttered his "Eli, Eli, lama Sabachthani!" and crying with a loud voice, gave up the ghost.

And again and lastly, this word "taketh away," is in the original Greek the present participle, and denotes a present act, ever going on for sinners. Christ was *once* offered, and by "his *one* offering has perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Thus the sacrifice was *one*, and *once* offered *actually*, but *virtually* and *applicatory*, it is ever going on, and made available to his people. Still are his wounds streaming, his tender hands, his sacred feet, his loving heart and side, still pouring forth blood, that his Spirit may take of it, warm and uncongealed, and sprinkle his redeemed with it. Yes, the taking away is and will be a present act, whether we view him as our High Priest, offering and offered on this side of the veil, or as our High Priest, living and pleading beyond the veil—taking out purchased pardons day after day, and ever living to make intercession.

Dear friends, I must draw towards a conclusion—but not till I first make an appeal to your consciences on the words you have heard so often to-day. Oh! are your sins taken away? Oh, the deep, the awful, the vital importance of that question! "know ye not the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" have ye not read that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord"? do ye not understand that "except a man be born again, he shall not enter the kingdom of God"? do ye expect to go into heaven without being washed in Jesus' blood? If you have such a hope, then Christ died in vain for you, and you are an infidel in regard of him. Do you hope to reach heaven without being clothed upon with Jesus' righteousness? Do you think to be present at the wedding, and yet sworn to wear the wedding garment? Oh! if under Moses' darker dispensation, the leper was excluded from the society of his fellow worms for seven days, of how much longer exclu-

sion from the presence of God, will he be thought worthy who is tainted to the core of his spirit, with the scab and the stain of the leprosy of sin? Surely it will be an everlasting exclusion: how could such an one find a place among the pure, the holy, the shining ones who stand round the throne, and worship the Lamb in white robes—washed and glistening.

I beseech you, then, by the tender mercies of God, in his dear Lamb,—by all that Saviour bore—by all he took away—by all he has lifted off, and is lifting off—by his agony and bloody sweat, and anguish for your sins—by his cross and passion for your sakes—by his precious death and burial, and his glorious resurrection and ascension—by his love to your souls—his loyalty to your cause—his life for your redemption, and his death for your life,—I beseech you by all these, as I besought you at first,—“Oh turn aside and see this great sight,”—look and live, survey and be saved—and “Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world!”—He will frame you and fit you for heaven—he has blood to wash you—he has righteousness to adorn you—he has a Book to be a lamp to your feet—he has a Spirit to teach and convince—and he has an everflowing fountain of faith to enable you to apprehend, to appropriate, and to love these things.

But perhaps some may object, and say, oh! my sins are so great, and so dark, I have drawn iniquity as it were with a cart rope, and shaken a clenched hand against high heaven,—I have gone on sinning against light and against conscience,—my heart is a cage of unclean birds, and as hard as the nether millstone, surely there is no salvation for me? Dear friends, consider and look to the words of the text and be comforted. “Behold the lamb of God that *taketh away* the sins of the world.” He will *take your sins away*. Oh, “suffer ye thus far”—unless he takes them away, they will take you away for ever from his presence; if your heart were an Augean stable, with the collected abominations of years lying in heaps through it, the sacred tide of Jesus’ blood flowing over it, would take it all away. Oh, remember “his blood cleanseth from *all sin*,” and be comforted, yea, be comforted.

Perhaps another may object and say—

though I am kept from gross sin, yet I feel I am so deeply entangled in the world, its business, its excitement, or its perishable vanities, that I feel I can have no interest in this message:—Dear friend, consider the words of this text—It is *indeed* a message of mercy for *your* case. Be your temptations from the world ever so strong, your entanglements ever so perplexed, your case ever so peculiar, Oh take comfort, behold him “who taketh away the sins of *the world*”—behold him who has said, “be of good cheer, I have overcome *the world*.”

Here again some timid child of God may say, I want assurance, and cannot conquer my fears, for “day and night his hand is heavy upon me,” and he runneth on me with the thick bosses of his buckler;—dear friend, consider the text, and “be strong, yea, be strong,” behold the *Lamb*—he is gentle—he will not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, or despise your day of small things—in all your affliction he is afflicted, remember “you have not an high priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of your infirmities; go in, therefore, boldly to the throne of grace by the new and living way, and lay hold on the mercy seat—the touch will put strength in you.”

Dear brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, let us look aside from all these earthly objects and feelings—from the world—from wickedness—from ourselves; and rising over them on faith’s strong wings, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.” We read in the context how John saw Jesus “coming unto him;” this has been your blessed experience also—you have seen him coming unto you by the Spirit—he has knocked at the door of your hearts and you have let him in. You may see also, in the context, how John “looked at him as he walked.” Oh, let this be your blessed experience also—lift up your eyes in faith above the smoke and stir of this dim earth, and behold him as he *now* walks on the “sapphire pavement with, as it were, the body of heaven in its brightness”—dear believer, you will see greater sights than these, when you will see him eye to eye, and face to face—when the Lord will bring his kingdom, and gather his saints together, and set up his throne in Jerusalem, and shine forth out of Mount Sion, the beauty of holi-

ness—the joy of the whole earth :—Oh ! cry to your God to hasten that glorious time—say, “ even so Lord Jesus, come quickly !” and as on this earth in the first sweet emotions of awaked love and experienced peace and pardon from your God, you cried to your soul and said, “ Oh my soul behold the Lamb of God that taketh away your sin and the sin of the world”—So in that blessed time when you awake from the dust and sing,

with the image of Christ in your glorified body and the superscription of his love on your brow, you will join those voices which ten thousand times ten thousand peal around his throne, crying, “ Worthy is the Lamb that was slain—Blessing, and honour and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”—Amen.

“ THERE THEY CRUCIFIED HIM !”—LUKE XXIII 33.

Draw near my soul and see this wonder,
 'Tis thy God who bleeds for thee ;
 Behold him like a vile offender,
 Hanging on the blood-stain'd tree.

Look now into his wounded temples,
 See what a depth the thorns tore ;
 His weary head hangs down, and mingles
 Tears, with clotted crimson gore.

Yet, oh ! adorable Redeemer,
 Thy beauty *then* is fairest shown ;
 These tears—this blood has been the giver
 Of my peace, my joy, my crown.

Then *love* my soul this dying Saviour,
 See his arms extended wide,
 To bring thee to his Father's favour,
 Purchas'd by his streaming side.

W. M.

Another name has been added to the catalogue of mortality—another taken from the little band of faithful Christians who stood together in their Master's name, and, following his example, “ went about doing good.” It is with heart-felt sorrow we allude to the decease of the REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE of St. Patrick's Cathedral, who, since our last publication, has been called to his rest. It may truly be said, that in him society has sustained a loss. He was a man, amiable in all the relations of private life, and in his public character as a minister of Christ, zealous, modest, and unassuming—as it has been well observed by his friend and brother in the ministry, the Rev. Thomas Gregg, (whose address at his interment we publish with the aid of a supplement) “ His voice was not heard in the streets.” But “ his praise was in the Gospel throughout all the churches :” his was the true wisdom ; his aim was to “ win souls,” to “ spend and be spent” for his Divine Master. Throughout the impoverished Deanery his exertions were unceasing, in seeking out the flock committed to his charge, and bringing them to, or establishing them in, the fold of the good Shepherd—“ Behold he is buried in peace ; his name liveth for ever.”

. The church itself being insufficient to accommodate the large concourse of persons who attended the Funeral, the address was delivered in the great aisle.

AN ADDRESS,

DELIVERED IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN,

On the Occasion of the Interment of the Reverend Robert Maguire,

BY THE REV. THOMAS GREGG, A. M.

NEVER in my whole life did I appear before any congregation under the peculiar feelings which oppress me on the present occasion. Never was I called upon more unexpectedly to address an assembly. And I do feel, my dear friends, that I not only need your best and kindest attention, but your most earnest and fervent prayers to Almighty God for me and for yourselves, that I may be enabled to speak as I ought to speak, and you to hear as you ought to hear.

May God Almighty, who has given the promise of assistance to those who speak in his name, fulfil that promise to his unworthy servant; and may that God, who has promised that his word shall not return unto him void, bless it to your precious souls for Christ Jesus' sake.

It is now some years since a small band of young men in College were drawn together by the providence of God. They formed themselves into a little Society, for the reading and prayerful study of the Holy Scriptures, with a view to the ministry which each held before him. Six of them met in an upper room, often before the sun rose in the morning, to spread the word of God before them, and to spread their hearts before the God of that word, that they might be enabled, under the divine blessing, to be "workmen, that needed not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Of these, one is labouring in England, four in different parts of Ireland; another has now the privilege of addressing you—and *the other is in glory*. Our departed friend was the first of the band who was called into eternity, and "blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

Blessed be the name of our Covenant God, we do not speak of our departed friend in any terms of doubt or apprehension. We speak "in sure and certain hope," not only of "*the* resurrection to eternal life," but of *his* "resurrection to eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." We can call around us many witnesses; we can call witnesses from earth; and were our voice to reach into the regions of the blessed, witnesses could be called from heaven, that he "shines among the wise as the brightness of the firmament, and having turned many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever."

May I not affirm, brethren, that there are many present mourning round his bier this day, whose hearts respond to every word I utter? and are there not many in this immediate neighbourhood, who, from age and infirmity, are unable to join in this last sad tribute of respectful love, who could bring all their intercourse with him as a note and comment on that word, as applied to him: "blessed are the dead, and their works do follow them."

But how shall I address the Schools connected with this Deanery? Did not my heart swell almost to bursting this day, as I hastened from another scene of death to the place from which his body was taken, and met the long range of weeping children, each sobbing out their own sorrow, as though they had lost a parent, brother, friend,—as though all their affections was centered in him whose loss they deplored! How could I keep my heart from weeping tears of sadness and sorrow, when I saw those children, hand in hand, and heart in heart,—all bewailing the loss of their

common friend and benefactor, and weeping as though all their joys were to be buried in his grave! Keep your tears, my children! or if there be tears, let them be rather tears of sorrow—ah! I intended tears of joy, but tears of sorrow will be uppermost—tears of sorrow will flow. But it is no sin to sorrow, "groaning is not grumbling," my children, "and though we sorrow, it is not as others who have no hope;" for if we believe that Jesus "died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." Little did I think, my children, when with you I spent one of the happiest evenings that has ever fallen to my lot in this world of sorrow; when at the close of the last summer, we met in the large room adjoining, to partake of a feast provided for the little ones; and when we were all in the enjoyment of every thing that the God of mercy and love could pour down upon us, and amongst the blessings, the society of our friend,—little did we think, I say, that we should so soon be called to our present meeting. When he, with one whom God may comfort, walked at your head around these aisles, when all united in one heart and one voice in a hymn of praise to God; little did we think that within these walls should so soon again be heard the voice of one who then addressed you, and who is now almost choked with sorrow, while he endeavours to give out the feelings of his heart. Can you ever forget, my children, how you walked around these walls, with your kind benefactor at your head, and made the place ring with the words of the hymn,

"When I can read my title clear,
To mansions in the skies,
I bid farewell to every fear,
And dry my weeping eyes."

Ah! my children, they were not words of mere morality you were taught to sing; they were words of the deepest vital Christianity: and we thought that never did this place re-echo with sounds so sweet and heavenly as the hymns of praise and thanksgiving which then went up before the Lord. I remember his remarking to me upon that occasion, surrounded by those who loved him as they were loved by him, "Is not this a happy foretaste of the meeting above? Is not this a happy earnest of the praises

we shall sing in heaven?" I cannot forget his being so moved by the enjoyment of his dear young people around him, that he felt, he said, as though he could pass from these aisles to the courts above, and sing the praises of the Redeemer for ever and ever. By a partiality which has been continued on the present occasion, I was then selected to address the happy, happy company. I remember he was particularly struck at the manner in which we attempted to connect the feast on earth with the feast in heaven. And oh, my friends, if he could now look down from the courts above, and observe the place where it was his meat and his drink to prepare those committed to his care for the everlasting feast, would he not trace the connection between our meeting on earth and our meeting in heaven? Should not the consideration of these things, my friends, turn our sorrow unto joy? Can we now sorrow as others who have no hope? must we not now turn our hearts and minds to the place where true joys are to be found, where, with his God and Saviour, he is in happiness and glory?

"Where he shall see his face,
And never, never, sin;
And from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

My friends, this address is the effusion of my heart; I cannot but pour it out; I knew him long, I loved him dearly, I esteemed him above most of those in whose friendship the providence of God gave me reason to delight; and I am to be borne with, if, called on suddenly and unexpectedly, I go along with those feelings which I observe around me. Oh, my friends, when I call to remembrance what I saw and heard in the place where you are now standing; the sweet affection with which he was greeted by all his youthful company, as he went in and out amongst them, calling them by their names, in imitation of the good Shepherd; taking them by the hand, as eye met eye, and heart met heart; is it to be wondered at, if my feelings should flow along with theirs, while they but join in the general sorrow?

But let us not forget that the Schools were but part of the means he had set on foot for the benefit of his dear people. He had his adult class every Sabbath, before he appeared in the public congr-

gation—his *Christian Fellowship Society* every Monday—his *Lecture* every Tuesday—his *Dorcas Society*, his *Lending Library* and his *Loan* every Wednesday—his *Missionary Meeting* the first Thursday in the month—his *Temperance Meeting* the third Friday, and his visitings were not confined to Saturday. Truly in the evidence of his faith, he could show that “pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”

Nor let us for a moment forget his end and aim in all his labours. Was it to be spoken of, was it to be thought of? far from it. I never saw that man working for his Master, that I did not think of the words “his voice was not heard in the streets.” In all that humility, and shrinking from observation, with which he was distinguished, I pray God, that all his brother ministers may take a part, (and especially his unworthy brother who is now speaking of him,) and follow him as he followed Christ. His object was not observation, not admiration,—he shrunk from it all, he hid himself from it all; he wished to do good in secret, to perform services of blessing as it were by stealth: his object was, was it not? to bring the children to Christ—to bring all to Christ. Yes, the longing of his heart, and the endeavour of his life, was to draw you close to the cross of Calvary; to bring you under the droppings of the Saviour’s blood, that you might have the stains of guilt and sin put away from your souls, and under the influence of the divine Spirit, to have you “made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.” No man was more distinguished for the excellence of his morality and the purity of his life, yet he abhorred himself in dust and ashes before the Lord, and, as he often told me, he looked to be saved as the thief on the cross, purely, simply, solely, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that none could save but Christ, that there was no pardon for the guilty, except in Christ; and accordingly, his continued object was to bring all to Christ; and in the various hymns he selected for the purpose of his schools and meetings, was not Christ the beginning the middle, and the end? Was not everything, he said and did, in accordance with the words of Scripture, “other foundation

can no man lay, “than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ?” He “counted all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord.” He knew he had done nothing for his children—nothing for his people, if they stopped short of coming to Christ, that,

“None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good.”

He felt the preciousness of that Saviour to his own soul: he knew that he was “able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him:” and the desire of his heart, and the labour of his life was to bring young and old to the foot of the cross. This was the charm of his life. That for which I admire him above all things was, the love he had himself for the Saviour of sinners, and his anxious endeavour to lead all, “high and low, rich and poor, one with another,” to the same cross where he had himself obtained mercy and salvation, and through which he is now singing, “To him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, amen.”

But now, as time warns me to conclude, let me turn to his dear young people, and entreat of them to show their love to the memory of their departed minister, by proceeding in the same track which he was enabled to mark out for them. You cannot, my children, show your respect for him, your love for him, so happily and forcibly, as by proceeding in the same path of holy love and affection in which, he was desirous to lead you. I entreat of you, my dear young people, by being diligent in the use of these means, which by the providence of God, he was enabled to set before you, by being careful in attending to the instruction to be afforded you by his successor; (and oh! that Elisha’s mantle may fall upon him) that you will at once show your love to him who is gone, and the effect his loving care has had upon you. And you who were in the habit of attending his weekly meetings, whose hands have been pressed in his affectionate grasp, as he went in and out among you, I entreat of you to show your love and respect, and affectionate remembrance, by following in the same path, which, by the blessing of God, you were enabled to follow under his superintendance. If you wish to show respect to him, show it

by following his counsels : if you want to show your love to him, show it, in aiming after these things that will bring you to the same place where he is gone before. Thanks be unto God, those who are united in Christ, death cannot separate them : it may for a moment, and but for a moment, and then there is a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Other ties were made in earth for earth, and shall perish with earth ; but this tie was made in heaven, for heaven, and shall last while heaven's king endureth. Oh then, let us seek to be united with the same Saviour with whom he was united—one with Christ, and Christ with us ; let us be all one in Christ Jesus ; and so, when earth and the things of earth shall have passed away for ever, when "the heavens shall be rolled away like a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat," then shall we meet in happiness and holiness everlasting. Oh, my children, my friends, my fellow sinners ! in this sinful, sorrowing world, what is *meeting* but another name for *parting* ? but if united with Christ, parting is but another name for meeting, for meeting where God himself shall wipe away all tears from our eyes. Oh ! if we would see our departed friend again, and be with him for ever, let us remember that it must be by coming to Christ, by being grafted into Christ, and abiding in Christ. Oh, that my dear and respected brethren in the ministry may take a lesson and a blessing from the mournful event that has assembled us here this day ! Oh, that the little band who took sweet counsel with him, may receive a special blessing ! Is it not a call to all of us minis-

ters to "work while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work ?" Does it not say to us, "In the morning, sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand ?" May I entreat of you, dear friends, one and all, ministers and people, young and old, all who bear love to him whom we are so soon to follow, that you would seek to turn this solemn event to your spiritual good. Let your hearts flow out in prayer to the Lord, that in Christ Jesus you may receive the full pardon of all your transgressions, and receive of the influence of his Holy Spirit ; that when the summons comes to call you out of this world, "you may have your loins girt and your lights burning as those who wait for their Lord." May the death of one be the life of many, and may it be found, through the overruling grace and providence of God, that his servant, whom he has taken away, may have done more in his death than he could in his life ! May it be so blessed and sanctified to every one concerned, that they may have reason to say, "it was good for them to have been afflicted ;" and "when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, death is swallowed up in victory : O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ?" "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

 We feel pleasure in announcing to our Subscribers, that our next number will contain a Sermon, preached in St. Peter's Church, Dublin, on Good Friday, by the Rev. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, and one preached in Powerscourt Church, on Easter day, by the Rev. ROBERT J. MCGHEE.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—
“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXVIII.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN.

REV. ROBERT J. M'GHEE.

THE DIVINE ORIGIN OF SACRIFICE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN SAINT PETER'S CHURCH, DUBLIN, ON GOOD FRIDAY,
24th MARCH, 1837.

BY THE REV. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, A. M.

Rector of Killyman, &c. &c.

HEBREWS, ix. part of 22d verse.

“ Without shedding of blood is no remission.”

This truth was so fully acknowledged and exemplified, not only in the Mosaic ritual, but in the various superstitions also by which, in ancient times, true religion was counterfeited, that it might have been graven and set up over every form of worship which prevailed on earth, as its most appropriate inscription.

However numerous and conflicting the differences by which religious systems were discriminated from each other, and all superstitions from truth, there was one doctrine which all concurred in receiving,—the doctrine which affirmed the necessity of animal sacrifice. And thus, amidst many conflicting discrepancies and incoherencies, there was one principle of correspondency and uniformity found in

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the universal adoption of an observance, of which it could hardly be rash to pronounce that it could not have been a deduction from processes of unassisted reason, that it was not enjoined by the necessity, of man's being or condition, and that it was not accommodated to the ordinary instincts of our nature. Whence, then, had this rite its origin; and how did it become invested with such high authority? It was set, by Divine appointment, centre of that system which God disposed for his chosen people; it exercised, if not dominion, commanding influence over all the variety of superstition by which the whole earth was overspread. What was its origin? Whence came it endowed with so great authority? Surprising as it

I

may naturally seem to all who are unacquainted with the controversy to which these questions have given rise, they have been met by two opposite answers; and men, deservedly classed amongst those who are accounted wise and prudent, have not hesitated to advance an opinion and to defend it, that the rite of sacrifice was of human origin, and invention; and that, because of its universal adoption on earth, a merciful and benign Creator, employing, as it were, a human language, to discourse of better things than it could ordinarily supply, admitted it into his pure and undefiled religion, and placed it among the prefigurations of that great atonement for sin.

I need not repeat to you the opposite answer; it is, I believe, that which you have adopted as your own, not from the persuasion that the origin of the type could affect prejudicially the doctrine of the substantial verity it typified; but, because we believe that the Scripture, with all necessary plainness, makes known to us the great truth, that the type, which especially foreshowed the death upon the cross, was of the same Divine appointment and institution with the sacrifice it prefigured.

This can be briefly shown. The first acts of worship of which we find record in Scripture, were oblations presented by the two earliest born of mankind. We are told what the nature of the oblation was; one, fruits of the earth, the other, firstlings of the flock. The expostulation which God condescended to address to the rejected worshipper, has also been written for our learning—"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" I omit the latter part of the verse—it is that which has more especially engaged and rewarded the attention of the wise and pious—and apply myself to that portion of the expression which has been less carefully regarded.

This was the language addressed by the Almighty to Cain, when his worship was rejected. Is it necessary for us to inquire or to pronounce, that the expression, "if thou doest well" bears reference, not to the past life of Cain, but to that rite respecting which it was immediately pronounced, which was, at least, the occasion of its being uttered? It has been said by some, that Cain's former life prejudiced that offering. I never can for an instant suppose, that such an explanation

should be accounted satisfactory. We have not so learned God,—we have not so learned man,—as to receive it. Let it be supposed, that the former life of Cain was passed in iniquity;—if, at that hour, when he came to worship before the Lord, it was his earnest desire to "turn from his wickedness, and live," can we imagine, that God, whose especial characteristic it is that "he willeth not the death of a sinner," would, because of former trespasses, have rejected the offering, and cast the worshipper back on his ungodliness? No, assuredly, no. And on the other hand, when we look to the acceptance of Abel's offering, we have not so learned what is in man as to think, that the most blameless of human beings could, at any hour, present himself before God, refer to the life he had previously led, and plead that life as giving him a title to have his worship then accepted. Thus, then, whether we look at man, or at the notice God has been pleased to give us of himself, we cannot for an instant seriously entertain the notion, that it was the past life either of Cain or Abel which produced the judgment pronounced on their respective offerings. It follows then, that it was some irregularity in the mind or act of Cain that occasioned the displeasure, in consequence of which he was rejected; and it follows from this, by a natural inference, that, before the worshippers presented themselves at the place where the Lord would receive them, there was a rule which both might have known—a law which both should have obeyed; and because Cain rejected, in consequence of some irregularity of mind or act in the sacrifice he offered, that law of which he should have knowledge, and because Abel was found heedful of it,—God rejected the offering of Cain, and accepted that of Abel.

This inference would follow even if we had no further information from Scripture. But on so important a point, God has not left us dependant on an inference, but has given us the *full assurance* of the truth of which we have been speaking. We have that assurance given us in St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews: he says, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain,"—"by faith Abel offered." What does this teach? It teaches distinctly that his offering was not an invention of human reason. It

was not an offering in obedience to the instinct of his nature, or a voluntary confession of sin and weakness, not the contrivance of reason, *it was the offering of faith*—"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Faith implies a *preceding* revelation, and to say, that by faith Abel offered, is to say, that in obedience to a revelation with which faith made him acquainted, Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice; it is to say, that he did not mix up his faith with any suggestions of his own reason or instincts; it is to say, that he had received a revelation from God, and that he did not take counsel with flesh and blood, how that revelation was to be obeyed. Thus we find a distinct assertion, that the offering of Abel was made in obedience to revelation.

We have now one or two points to speak of regarding the character of that oblation,—whether the offering was of an expiatory character; for the same parties who dispute the divine origin of sacrifice, dispute also its expiatory character, and say, that this character was given first in the time of the Mosaic dispensation. Now, we have to inquire, whether this is the truth. They quote a passage from Leviticus, as that one on which they rest their proof, that sacrifice received its expiatory character at the time of the Jewish covenant, Leviticus, 17 chap. 11th verse, "For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." They advance this as a proof, that in the power or quality assigned to sacrifices, the service of the temple is essentially distinguished, and contra-distinguished from the oblations of the preceding time.—This verse is said to state a new doctrine, a doctrine of which we find no positive information, nor any probable vestige in the primeval religion. Such is the opinion pronounced by a very eminent man, that the doctrine declared in Leviticus, respecting the atoning efficacy of blood, is new—that there is no vestige of it to be found in the earlier dispensations.—Now, keep the words of Leviticus before your memory; and, I would beseech you, to ask yourselves, is there any thing in that expression which you would consider as giving a new doctrine? Is it not all retrospective? Is not the Most High discoursing of what he had previously

given?—is he not discoursing of the quality with which the blood of the animals shed on the altar had been already endowed. To my mind, nothing appears more clear than that that passage is of a retrospective application, that it is historical. Observe, God had made a provisional covenant with man; he appointed that the rainbow should be a sign of the covenant, and how does he speak? "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud."

There you can clearly see, that a new attribute or quality is bestowed on that which God makes, in that instance, the sign of his covenant; but here, there is nothing of the kind; all has respect to something pre-existing, to a quality with which that blood had been already endowed—to a grace which the Godhead had previously given it.

This would be the fact if we considered the passage in itself only. But take it in connexion with the context, and the meaning is more evident, and the conclusion still more evident, 17th chap. 10th verse—"And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood, I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls; for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore, I said unto the children of Israel, "No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood."

The words which are quoted by those who impugn the divine origin of sacrifices, are now put in their proper position. You cannot but perceive that they do not furnish any additional matter, but merely the reason why a certain law has been enacted, and why that law has been sanctioned by the severest punishment. God speaks of his having made a law, prohibiting the use of blood; he adds to that law the penalty of death as the consequence of transgression; and he assigns as a reason for both—for the prohibition as well as the penalty—that the blood maketh atonement for sin, and that he

hath given it on the altar, to make atonement for sin. I need not remind you that the *cause* of any thing must exist before its *consequence*; the prohibition and penalty are pronounced, because the blood had been endued with power to make atonement; therefore an expiatory character had been conferred on blood, previously, not only to the penalty, but to the *prohibition* also. But when do we hear first of the prohibition? Not in the Levitical law; we hear it pronounced on the very first day when the voice of God broke out on a world recovered from the deluge; and, as the earliest records of Scripture attests God's acceptance of Abel's worship, the earliest records of the world recovered from the flood, shows us God's acceptance of Noah's worship; and, upon that occasion, the prohibition was given, that man should not taste of blood. Previously, this was not necessary; permission had not been given to man to make the flesh of animals his food; therefore, the prohibition to abstain from blood was not necessary. But, so soon as permission is given, the necessary prohibition accompanies it. And why?—the passage in Leviticus explains, and tells us, the blood makes atonement. It is quite clear from *facts*, that the expiatory nature of animal sacrifices was not *superadded* at the time of the Mosaic ritual, but was *previously inherent* on the constitution of the sacrifice, and communicated by *God himself*. We have, then, in proof of the Divine origin of sacrifice, first, the assurance contained in the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews, "By faith, Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain"—next, we have the words of Leviticus, explaining the prohibition, and pronouncing that the prohibition was given because the blood maketh atonement. And thus, all is consistent in the rites and ceremonies of the patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, not only by their being types of the same great fulfilment, but also by their having the same origin.

Nor is this harmonious concord observable in the preparatory systems only. It is completed in the solemnities of the Christian dispensation. Sacraments are with us—the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is with us—what sacrifice was in earlier dispensations, a memorial of the blood-shedding of our Lord. Now, if you look to the law given to us respecting that adorable sacrament, and if you look

to the law given to the Jews respecting the blood shed in sacrifice, you will say, at first, that there is an apparent and palpable contradiction; but, when you have closely and faithfully examined, you will find that that apparent contradiction is, in truth, an explanation, and that it shows a perfect consistency and harmony between the two dispensations. For instance, the law respecting blood, given to the Jews, was, that no man should taste of it; the reason for the prohibition was, because the blood was shed for the remission of sins, and the penalty for violating this law was death—"The soul that tasteth blood shall die." Now look to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and say, what is its commandment? A commandment not that we shall abstain from blood, but that we shall drink blood; the reason assigned for the commandment is, that the blood is given for the remission of sins, and the reward for obedience to this command, is the reward of eternal life.

Here, then, you perceive, there is an apparent opposition, complete in all its parts, between the law given to the Jews and the law given to us; that the laws are opposite, the commandments of the law seem opposite, and the reason for the commandment would seem to forbid its being changed; in the one case, we have the penalty of death for *tasting*, and in the other, the doom of death for *not* tasting the blood shed for the remission of sins.

Now, how is this? The explanation is perfectly natural and easy, the same instruction is given in two different forms. "We who were sometimes afar off, are brought nigh by the blood of Christ," and as our Lord spoke to them that were without in parables, but to those who were admitted to be his disciples, he gave to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, so was there a commandment given to the Jewish people, by which the same truth—not, indeed, in the same degree, but the same truth in character, was conveyed to them under a totally different form of representation. We who have the sacrifice upon the cross to contemplate, never can be at a loss to understand the meaning of the terms spoken to us. We take them with St. Augustine to signify, that we should spiritually dwell on the thoughts of Christ crucified, and take into our souls the precious benefits

of his blood-shedding : but to those who dwelt afar off, to whom the light of the Gospel was remote, and in a dark place, such instruction in such a form could not be communicated. How is it then given? By a form and ceremonial which render blood awful to the senses—by a command to abstain, and by the penalty of death visited on those who violate the prohibition. A sacred horror was diffused over that which makes atonement for sin; it was protected from the vulgarizing influence of habit and coarse uses; it was invested with mystery; and by the very same prohibition through which there was a severance made between the blood and bodily participation, that which was shed for the atonement of sins was recommended to the Spirit, and was endued with power to suggest topics of a salutary and mortifying meditation.

And why is it that these things are recommended to us, that our souls and thoughts should dwell upon them? For this reason; God would not only be “just, but the justifier of them that believe in Jesus,” he would be merciful and just, faithful to his promise, to pardon our sins, and just to his eternal decrees, that he would deliver us from the power of sin. Need I say to you, it is a case in which wisdom is taxed to the uttermost here in earth,—to grant pardon so as that it shall not stimulate to crime. If the laws of the country in which we live were to be so administered, that every criminal who supplicated grace should at once receive it, it need not be said, that anarchy would soon be spread over the entire land. And if, on the other hand, the rigour of strict justice were always to be enforced, law itself would occasion horror. Now, what would you consider wisdom, where pardon was vouchsafed? Would you not say that pardon was well granted, when it was so bestowed as that it caused the offender to hate his crime, even at the time when he was giving thanks for remission of punishment. This is remission of sin set forth in the Gospel of Christ, in which the same spectacle which communicates to faith an assurance of the Divine pardon, conveys also a sense of the enormity of that sin for which so mighty atonement had been demanded. This is a point on which we cannot be insensible to the wisdom of the Divine Being, in so making mercy and truth to meet each other; wisdom be-

comes justified of all her children; and even we can discern in that mystery, into which angels desire to look, a special accommodation to our nature and condition. We cannot ascend to the height of understanding, why the blood shed upon the cross should be accepted and offered as the propitiation for our offences; but it is utterly impossible that we can reflect on such a sacrifice, and not feel its power to cleanse from impure affections, to break the thralldom of sin, and to render its disguises ineffectual. Under the influence of this Christian dispensation our iniquities are no longer submitted to the sentence of a corrupted judge. We might be disposed to think lightly of sin,—of that in which we were born, of that in the practice of which we had grown up; but when we look to its consequences, and see sin condemned in the sacrifice upon the cross, it can no longer hope by any disguises to deceive us. None can be insensible, who reflect seriously, of the value of a test like this. It is surely of the utmost moment, in the discipline of man, to provide, that, whenever the thought of sin is presented to his mind, the thought of its consequences should immediately follow. The natural unchanged man, while he is tempted to sin, has his danger increased by the rapidity by which associations, which still further provoke him, hasten to aid the cause of evil: the man whose better principles have been educated under a similar difficulty, is sustained by the promptitude by which the warning thought of the wages of sin is sent to break the force of temptation. How much is it to be desired, that the associations of sinful nature should be interrupted, and that associations of grace should be rendered more rapidly operative. To this most desirable end, the sacrifice of Christ conduces, as every reflecting mind must acknowledge. While the blood is poured forth to be a propitiation before God, Christ commends to man the chalice of this blood, to strengthen the associations of wisdom, and to break the power of sinful affection. Who has reflected and will not acknowledge that this is true? however incapable of comprehending the mysteries hidden with God, he can fully understand, and in his own conscience feel, that the thought of the death and passion of Christ has power to cause the temper of his soul to be sub-

duced, and to cause the thoughts and temptations of evil to cease from troubling him.

God speaks to us, in many of his communications, according to the analogy of man: and by judging of the doctrines, according to this analogy, we have power to understand to edification. There may be something in every doctrine communicated to a finite creature, that exceeds his power to apprehend. Do not suppose the subject can be injured by an humble illustration. You are all familiar with the story of that Sicilian monarch, who introduced his slave into a banquet hall, and placed him at a table, where there was all to tempt his appetite, and then suspended a sword by a thin fibre above his head. You know that a man so circumstanced, unless he could become desperately hardened against consequences, or was rendered, by intemperance, thoughtless of his state, could not, with the knowledge of the peril above him, surrender himself to the allurements of the banquet. Now suppose the circumstances of the story, in all respects similar, except as to the conclusion,—suppose the slave to sit at that table, and to give himself up to the indulgence of his appetites, totally unconcerned and ignorant indeed of the danger in which he was placed; suppose him made acquainted with his imminent peril, when in the same moment he hears the cry of terror caused by the descending sword, and sees the dainties on the table profusely covered with the blood—suppose him, in that moment, to learn that a friend, faithful in death, had interposed between him and swift destruction, and that he was permitted to live, only because the sword that was descending to smite him had been sheathed in the breast of his faithful guardian! Now, I would ask of you, whether you think it is in man to delight himself in the dainties in which this blood has been poured? I speak of man even in his sins,—form to yourselves a judgment of any man, and ask yourselves, if he had not become utterly hardened by habits of evil, whether it was possible for him to delight himself longer in these festivities which had been so fearfully interrupted? No, supposing him to have the feelings of a man, he could not. His great object would be to do honour to the memory of the friend who had, at such a sacrifice saved him.

He might be saved under other circumstances. His friend might have pointed out to him his danger, showed him the sword, showed him the precarious tissue by which it was suspended above his head; he would be thankful for the warning; but his thankfulness would never have the effect of introducing into his heart a sense of mortification and abasement. He would be grateful for such a service, but it would not alter so the temper of his mind, as to guard it against pernicious allurements. There is no difficulty in applying this illustration. He who is brought to the feast of the senses, sits where there is before him temptation and excess, above him, death. Suppose a man who is thus circumstanced, made acquainted with the sacrifice with which his soul was purchased and his life saved. If he were told, if a voice had pronounced that all who solicited God's favour should be pardoned; he would be thankful for the grace; but it might only stimulate him anew to enjoyments, from which, he would think, he could turn away at any time and solicit mercy. But, when he is told of the manner in which he has been saved, of the enormity of sin, the price of the sacrifice at which remission was purchased, then does he not stand in the condition of a man who felt himself delivered by the sacrifice of that which is the dearest thing that this world can give—a faithful friend?

I know that in a moment, the heart and mind does not at once assent to the propriety of this comparison, and yet the judgment can give no reason or assign any cause why it does not. It is true, and this is probably the cause of our misapprehension, that, in contemplating the *majesty* of our blessed Lord, we frequently become unconscious of his *afflictions*: we see him, “the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth,” “of power and great glory;” and although we are told of his sufferings here below, yet the thought of his majesty so indisposes us to meditation on what he endured, that we are not duly sensible of his afflictions.

In the contemplation that Christ was of a *divine* nature, we forget that he took *our* nature upon him, with all its tenderness, all its weaknesses, that he “was in all points tempted, like as we are, yet without sin;” this we too much forget, or put away from us! and therefore, there has

been a most benign accommodation provided for us in the Scripture; in which, in the minute relation of our Lord's sufferings, and in the careful selection of topics in which his sufferings are to be set forth, even the common sympathies of our human being are awakened, and engaged in salutary contemplation. Read for yourselves, with such thoughts as these to govern you, the narrative of our blessed Saviour's death—of him who, the Scriptures tell us, was not one who was unmindful of the scorn, or above the insults that frequently assailed him; not one who was steeled by insensibility against them. He was the gentlest of human beings—compassionating our sorrows, and taking the burden of our griefs and sins upon him, with a sense of woe such as it is not in the heart of man to experience, or understand. Read of him, as the Scriptures tell you, when “He steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,”—and think, for an instant, of the power of that word *steadfastly*. Is it not, as if you were taught that the array of all his sufferings was spread before him undisguised, and that he looked on the appalling vision with a full sensibility of all the sorrows that threatened him, *but without faltering!* Read of him on that fearful night, when he was burthened with a sense of sorrow such as we never can understand—when he said to his disciples, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, tarry ye here, and watch with me,”—at a time when they were protected from witnessing the intensity of his sufferings by sorrow, which had on them the effect of oblivion; when they slept for sorrow, Gethsemane witnessed the agonies of the Lord, and heard the voice of his earnest supplication, and felt its flowers awfully dashed with other dews than those which the night season yieldeth. This was, according to the judgment of man, the beginning of sorrows; then the enemy was at hand, and “the son of man was betrayed into the hands of sinners,” and betrayed *by a disciple, with a kiss!*

Then was he led away amidst an insulting populace, and then did the king of earth and heaven—the judge of all men—stand as a culprit, a criminal, arraigned before the tribunal of a timid, unrighteous judge,—then was mercy denied to the merciful Saviour of the world!—then did he turn his cheek to the smiter; and rude man, unrebuked by

the mild dignity of his forbearance, smote Jesus with the palms of their hands, and spat upon him, and despitefully used him and entreated him—then was that revolting comparison made, and fearfully completed in the dread rejection, “Not this man but Barabbas!” Then were stripes ignominiously inflicted on him, and royal robes flung upon him in mockery; and torments and sharp thorns cruelly wreathed round his lacerated brows. And why was this? Why did he go forth, bending beneath the weight of his cross, and dying upon it? To save man from his sins.—For this he lived a life of sorrow, and died an ignominious death—for this did he hang on the cross, a spectacle to heaven, and a spectacle to earth—pleading his merits with the Father in that prayer, “Forgive them, for they know not what they do.” Pleading the merits of his love, so proved for man, and calling upon him to behold and see “If there was any sorrow like unto his sorrow, with which the Lord hath afflicted him.” Can we, shall we go by the way, uninfluenced by this application—“Behold, and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow?” Has it no effect on *you*? What was the effect of this spectacle on nature? Did it not wrap the heavens in blackness?—Was not the veil of the temple rent in twain from the top to the bottom? Did not the hard rocks shiver? Was not this huge globe of earth shaken with a mighty convulsion? Were not the still realms of death disordered—did not its brazen portals shiver, and send out into the haunts of man its ghastly inhabitants?—And is it only on man the sacrifice shall be ineffectual? Is it that sin binds the heart more straitly than the sepulchre and death? Is the breast of man colder or more obdurate than the earth, or the senseless marble? You see how nature testified to the sacrifice that was exhibited to it,—is it only man that is insensible? It cannot be!—fallen as we are, we cannot meditate humbly on the death and passion of our blessed Lord without being touched by a sense of sorrow for the sufferings which our sins have caused, and with a sense of compunction for the sins that have occasioned them; nor again, is our nature of such a kind, as that the remembrance of these sorrows may not be instrumental in influencing us. We know that, at many a time, we cannot look at the sight of human blood, without expe-

riencing a shudder and faintness. We know, many know, that the remembrance of a dim chamber, where a friend is languishing in pain, if brought to the mind, even in the scene of the highest festivity, has had the effect of changing the temper of the soul, and clouding it with sorrow. Have we not read the story of him who, in the full flush of youth and vanity, was, by the aspect of a disfigured human corpse, arrested in his career of iniquity, and rushing away from all the excitements with which the world would detain him, was brought to bury his mortified affections within the silence of what we might call an anticipated sepulchre!

"It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting;" this is the sorrow that will rebuke all the vanities of life, and will admit of no consolation but that which comes down from heaven.

If the hope of eternal life were given, accompanied by joyous memorials, the effect of this joy would be disturbing; it would excite the senses, increase their power, render inoperative the counsels of faith, and say to the wisest counsels it can give, "Do they not speak parables?" But when the promise of eternal life is heralded to us, as it is, by memorials of sorrow, and distress, and pain; when it comes with a guardian austerity, with so mournful memorials of sin, with so affecting an exhibition accompanying the pardon, with so awakening a monition of danger, it finds the temper of the soul subdued and solemn, it finds the tumult of the passions stilled, and sheds the promise of eternal life, into a heart in which a disposition has been wrought to "bring forth fruit with patience."

Will you not then, beloved, resolve to make this doctrine and the sacrifice we commemorate this day, your constant and honest study? Do not suppose that it must be inoperative, because you have sometimes turned your thoughts to it and they have wandered from it? We have the promise of Christ himself, "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Here he makes no distinction, he intimates to us that the power of that sacrifice may be felt by all who will have it lifted up amongst them.

I do therefore beseech you, that you will let that sacrifice and thought of Christ dying on the cross be lifted up in your souls; make to yourselves a resolution, and though you may sometimes violate it, sometimes forget it,—day after day, bring yourselves seriously to consider, how you have kept it, that in every circumstance of life and being, you may bethink you of the sacrifice for sin. Whenever strongly tempted and excited by the ambitions of life,—*remember the cross of Christ*; whenever strongly tempted by the stimulus of sinful passion—*remember the cross of Christ*; whenever you are awakened to a thought that your life is passing on in iniquity and apathy,—*remember the cross of Christ*. The ambitions of this world will droop before it. The stimulus of sinful passion will lose its force rebuked before it;—and if you are indifferent and dead, contemplate the sorrows that Christ endured, and have hope that he will awaken feeling and life within your hearts. Thus in all trials, let *the cross of Christ* be lifted up; and fight under that conquering banner the good fight, of which the victory is faith.

THE RESURRECTION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN POWERSCOURT CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON EASTER SUNDAY, 26th MARCH, 1837,

BY THE REV. ROBERT J. M'GHEE, A. M.

Sc. &c.

PHILIPPIANS iii. part of the 10th verse.

“The power of his resurrection.”

It is not, my dear friends, with the intention of detaching these words from their context, that I have selected them for your consideration to-day. On the contrary, the relation which they have to that context, and the important position which they occupy in it, require that they be emphatically impressed upon your attention. And, before I call you to consider the words themselves, I would beg you to refer to the context in which you find them. You perceive in this passage of Scripture, the Apostle Paul is giving an account of his own experience; he gives an account of himself before his conversion, of the change that took place in his mind at the time of his conversion, and the state of earnest anxious anticipation of his soul at the time that he wrote this epistle. After enumerating the peculiar features of his own character as a Pharisee, he adds “But what things were gain to me, these I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things; and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith.” He sets before us the hope that he has—the renunciation of his own righteousness,—of all dependence on himself, and the confidence he had in the righteousness of Christ, that he should stand in it complete and accepted before God. And the peculiar feature of the passage is this, his expres-

sion of dissatisfaction at his present state and attainments; and his desire and pursuit after something higher than he had yet attained unto, “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”

Now, did he not know this before? Had he not written his epistle to the Romans four years before he wrote this epistle to the Philippians? Read that epistle. Open the 8th chapter of that epistle. See his expression of confidence in Christ there. He says, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.” “I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” See the confidence with which he speaks here. Did he not know when he wrote this epistle, the power of the resurrection of Christ? Had he not written the first epistle to the Corinthians five years before he wrote this epistle? yet, what does he say there of the resurrection of Christ? Has he not embodied the plenitude of inspiration, and more than the energy of human eloquence in the 15th chapter, where he speaks of the resurrection of the Lord, and reasons on it, and asserts the resurrection of all the human race in Christ? Did he not know the power of the resurrection of Christ? Was he not himself

the most prominent witness of that resurrection of all those whom God had chosen to be the bearers of his revelation to mankind on the subject? What does he mean then by saying, he wants to "know him and the power of his resurrection?"

It is to call your attention to this, that I detach these words from the context. If we considered them in relation to the context, they would lead us to consider the experience and character of the Apostle Paul. But I wish to call your attention to the meaning of the words themselves. And, surely, if it was needful for Paul to desire to know "the power of his resurrection," whatever he means by that; it is not for us to sit down in self-complacent ignorance on such an important subject,—we should desire to know it.

We are called upon, this day, to commemorate the resurrection of Christ,—and it is a subject well calculated to command our attention. I know, my friends, it is not in me or in you to communicate or derive profit from any consideration of God's eternal truth, upon this subject; we could but receive a blessing, if Paul himself were standing here from that God who gives the increase. May the Spirit of the living God be present with us this day. May his holy word be accompanied with demonstration of that Spirit and of power to your heart and to mine, that we "may know Him and the power of his resurrection!"

The ordinary opinions of nominal Christians on this subject are comprehended in two points—the fact of the resurrection of Christ from the dead—and the pledge that that gives us of our own resurrection: both these are necessarily included in the meaning of the Apostle's words,—but the meaning of these words extends very far beyond it. Now I will entreat you, my dear friends, simply to ask yourselves, whether you believe or understand any thing more of the resurrection of Christ, or connected with the resurrection, than these two things? you believe most certainly that Christ rose from the dead; and you believe, no doubt, as certainly, on the record of God, that you yourselves shall rise from the dead—that "there shall be a resurrection of the just and the unjust." The infidel rejects and despises both these facts, he slights the resurrection of Christ as a fable, and as to his own resurrection, he despises it too:

annihilation,—that is his hope, his desire: he lives without God, he hates the thought of God, he desires to escape, even from the thought of that God, in expectation of annihilation like the beasts that perish.

Now the nominal Christian prides himself on believing these facts; he is struck with horror at rejecting the testimony of Divine revelation, as to the resurrection of Christ and his own; but let me ask this question, How do you connect the word *power*, with your belief of these facts? I am sure, there is not one in this Church who does not believe both,—the fact of the resurrection of Christ—that fact on which the whole Christian religion is built, and your own resurrection. But let me ask you, my dear friends, what power has the belief of these facts over you? Do you feel it has any? It has none, and can have none. What power can it have over the sinner who believes, that one has risen from the dead who is to come in judgment to summon him to his tribunal, to give an account of the deeds done in the body, and that he himself is to rise from his grave, and stand naked before the bar of that eternal Judge? It has power to bring him into bondage—but it has no power to deliver him. It has power to afflict his soul with apprehension—but it has no power to give him peace. It has power to arm death with a sting—but it has no power to disarm him. It has power so overspread the thought of a tribunal of judgment with clouds of darkness and horror—but it has no power to dispel them, or make him fit to meet his God.

I appeal to your consciences—and I do beseech you, my dear friends, consider these things—I appeal to your consciences for the truth of this. You do believe, but if you do not rest on the Gospel of Christ, you fly from the reality of the very thing you believe. Religion is and must be a gloomy and melancholy subject to you. The thought of death and judgment is and must be a subject from which you shrink with horror. You cannot, indeed, shut your ears to the voice of God, speaking these truths in his revelation; but you fly from that voice amidst the scenes and occupations of this passing world; like your fallen forefather, you hear the voice of God in the garden, and in your conscious nakedness, you fly to hide among the vanities of the present world, as he fled to hide among the trees of the garden—"I heard thy voice in the

garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."

What, then, is the power of the resurrection of Christ—what is the meaning of it—wherein does it consist—how are we to know it, to understand it, to feel it? There are three points, my dear friends, that are included in this,—these two, of which we have spoken, namely, the fact of the resurrection of Christ, and the fact of our own resurrection; and another in which the power of his resurrection consists, namely, the eternal life which the members of Christ—all who believe in him—possess, identified with the resurrection of their risen head. He has risen, they have risen with him: he has life, they have life with him—a life which is their actual present possession—a life which it is their privilege to enjoy by faith, and in which the power of the resurrection of Christ alone can consist. Now I will entreat your attention just to consider this. Eternal death is the wages of sin; eternal life is the reward of righteousness: we have all incurred the penalty; we have all forfeited the reward; Christ, the surety of sinners, manifested in the flesh, has paid the penalty, has earned the reward; the eternal God has given the infinity of Godhead to all his acts in a human body; he dies in the flesh—that is adequate to the penalty of eternal death in those who have incurred that penalty at the judgment seat of their God:—he dies,—and all who trust in him are dead with him, they are accounted as dead with him: He lives, "he is alive for evermore," all who trust in him are alive in him, and counted alive in him for ever before God: they are dead for all eternity with him in his death; they are alive for all eternity in his life; they have suffered eternal death, paid for them in their Surety; they possess eternal life, secured to them in their Surety. This life is a life possessed, enjoyed—the life in which the power of the resurrection of Christ consists.

Let me entreat your attention to the scriptural testimony on this subject. I shall confine myself almost exclusively to the services of the day—the Anthem before the Collect, the Epistle and Gospel of the day; refer to these passages in your Bibles, and consider the meaning of the words. You have often come to Church on an Easter Sunday, and gone through the services; let me ask you,

soberly, before the Searcher of hearts, to consider the simple fact; Have you ever investigated the meaning of the words you use? Open the sixth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, (these verses are selected for the Anthem before the Collect,) the ninth to eleventh verses, "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." Consider these words; they state the fact, that "Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more;" they state the fact, that he died once for all unto sin; that he liveth again unto God; here is the important point for your consideration, "likewise, reckon ye also yourselves, to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In like manner as Christ has died unto sin, reckon you yourselves to be dead unto sin. Now I believe the vast majority of persons who read and hear this passage, understand it in this sense—they say, "well, indeed, that is certainly an enviable state of mind to be in, to be dead to sin; if I was in that state of mind, I should have a good hope; but I don't find myself at all dead to sin, I don't know what the experience of these good persons must be that feel themselves dead to sin; I am sure I am not one of them; I hope I may be so, I shall strive to be so." Then resolutions are formed, promises are made, ordinances resorted to, the Bible, perhaps, read, prayers, week's preparation, churches, sacraments attended to;—many an effort made; many a struggle made by the poor soul to attain this enviable state of being dead to sin:—But dead to sin they never feel themselves; alive they are to the workings of sin in their own hearts; they live on in these efforts, and they die: they live without hope, and they die, perhaps, in despair! Now, I beseech you, mark this point; "Likewise," attend to that word,—in like manner as Christ died unto sin, "reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin;"—How did Christ die unto sin? Did he die to the feelings and corruptions of sin which you feel in your own heart? Most certainly not, for a simple reason, he never experienced them,—he was "a Lamb without blemish and without spot." Did he die to the struggles of sin against righteousness which you feel within you? Most cer-

tainly not; for there were no strugglings of sin in that heart, which was without blemish and without spot before God.

How, then, did he die to sin? He did not die to its indwelling, to its corruption, to its strugglings? he never experienced them;—they had no place in his heart; How, then, did he die to sin? *He died unto its penalty*, once for all—for ever: he bore its penalty, he finished its penalty; he endured all that eternal justice could exact from him as a penalty for the violation of the holy law; he died, he bowed his head,—“it is finished,” the penalty is paid, once for all—for ever. “Likewise reckon ye also yourselves, to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” He does not say, feel yourselves, experience yourselves dead to sin, but *reckon* yourselves to be so. Observe, *the position in which the believer is placed is a position in which God reckons him and places him.* He reckons him as one with that Saviour who became surety for him—reckons him, as having paid the penalty which his Surety paid for him, as being identified with that surety in the payment of that penalty; and the surety not only paid the penalty, but earned the reward of righteousness; and God reckons the sinner who trusts in that surety as having paid the penalty and earned the reward in him; and therefore he reckons him dead with Christ, and also alive with him. He is dead, there is no more penalty to be exacted for his sins, than was exacted from the dead Christ when taken down from the cross and laid in the garden. Christ is alive and moreover, “he is alive for evermore, and has the keys of death and hell:”—the believer, therefore, is reckoned by God to be alive with him and in him; the life of Christ is his life, “because I live, ye shall live also.” Now he says, “Reckon yourselves,” believe that to be your state which God pronounces to be your state, believe yourselves to enjoy that privilege which God gives you as your privilege, believe yourselves to have that blessing which God bestows on you as a blessing—“The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Let me entreat you, again, to consider the Epistle of this day, taken from Col. iii. Look first to the second chapter, ninth verse. “In him,” in Christ, “dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and you are complete in him;” mark

now, believers are in him, and are accounted complete in him, “who is the head of all principalities and powers; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” My dear friends, do let me entreat you just to consider that; let me entreat you, for God’s sake, for your own sake, your peace, your hope, your salvation’s sake, to consider the blessing there set before you. If God were to throw open the folding doors of heaven, and say, come up here, sinner, and receive eternal life; what could he say more than in those words, if you would attend to the plain, simple meaning they convey? He says to those who believe in Christ, that they are complete in him, in righteousness complete, he having paid the penalty due to their transgressions—you are “buried with him by baptism.” You will find the meaning of these words fully illustrated and explained in the sixth of Romans: I cannot enter fully into it now, you can examine it for yourselves, you are “buried with him by baptism unto death”—you are baptised into Christ, you profess to believe in Christ, to look to Christ, to rest on Christ, and you are considered as dead with Christ;—“buried with him by baptism unto death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so, we also should walk in newness of life.” You have received a new life, eternal life, eternal salvation in Christ. So it is said in the Epistle quoted before, Col. ii. “Buried with him by baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God who hath raised him from the dead.” He is not speaking here of the future resurrection of the body, he is speaking of our present state; “you are risen with him;” then he explains that,—he has “quicken you together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.”

Now, just consider, if all trespasses are completely taken away, if we are accounted free from all sin, and as having performed all righteousness before God,—if we are accounted so, have we not the reward of eternal life? Is not heaven necessarily open to us? Take a person without sin who has performed all God’s

commands, or who has paid the penalty to divine justice for all transgressions, and surely, he deserves eternal life. Now the whole reasoning of the Apostle is, that this is the case of every believer in Christ; they have fulfilled all righteousness, paid the penalty of all sin,—eternal life *is* theirs,—it is their gift secured to them in their covenant head, Christ Jesus.

I referred you to Col. ii. that you might compare it with the opening passage of the 3rd chapter, “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God.” If that is your position, if you are accounted to have eternal life; then, as certain as Christ rose from the dead, and has ascended to glory, so certainly has he secured your eternal life, and you are accounted risen with him already; and already ascended to glory. God has reckoned you so, and you are so; “If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead;” now do look at that expression—“ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.”

To whom was he writing thus? surely, he is not speaking of temporal death;—the persons to whom he wrote this were alive and reading his epistle. Yet he says, ye are dead! How were they dead? they reckoned themselves dead to sin; they reckoned as if they had paid the penalty of eternal death in Christ; the eternal God had laid down for them, the life he had taken in the flesh—and in him, their penalty was paid for ever, “ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God—” what life? Not that *bodily* life which they enjoyed, that you and I enjoy—the life we have in common with the beasts that perish; not that life, but the life of the *immortal soul*, *that life that never dies*; “your life is hid with Christ,” it is an unseen life, it is with Christ in heaven, “when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also, appear with him in glory:” *when Christ shall appear, you shall appear with him in glory.* He is your life, your head, your salvation; when he cometh in his glory, you shall burst from your graves, and your bodies shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body; you shall appear with him in glory, and be with him for ever! So, in the 2nd of Ephesians, he uses the

same words, “God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, *hath* quickened us together with Christ, and *hath* raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus.” God contemplates his church—that is, every poor sinner who looks to Christ, God contemplates that sinner as already saved with Christ, and lifted up with him in heavenly places—one with him through all eternity: “he *has* raised us up together and made us *sit* together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” There are various other passages of Scripture that speak of the present salvation which is given to man, John iii. 16, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” “he that believeth on him is not condemned.” Now do consider that, “is not condemned;” it is not, *shall not* be condemned, but *is* not condemned. It is not, that if you know not the Gospel, if you are looking to some vague, indefinite idea of a trial to take place and a sentence to be passed at the last day, of which you know nothing more than the poet puts into the lips of the heathen, that “a wide, unbounded prospect lies before you,” but “shadows, clouds and darkness rest upon it,” but it is a *present* gift—a gift given to you to know, to receive, to enjoy, to rejoice in: “he that believeth on the Son *is* not condemned,” the sentence is passed, away from him, God pronounces him justified. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:” compare this with the first epistle of John, you see, how perfectly they agree, “this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, he that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son, hath not life.”

Consider, there is a *present* blessing, a *present* consolation, a *present* peace, a *present* enjoyment greater than all the world can bestow to every sinner who rests on Christ. Oh, my friends! is it nothing to have our sins cancelled? to have a Saviour to whom we can turn as to a friend, and say, “Thou art my strong hold, whereunto I may continually

resort?" Is it nothing to have that God, who knows the heart, as a friend into whose bosom we can pour the secrets of that heart, the anxieties of that heart, the sins of that heart, the sorrows and cares and afflictions of that heart, which we would hide with such anxiety from the eyes of our fellow-sinners? Is it nothing to have a friend in God into whose bosom we can pour these things, and know that he has forgiven all our trespasses, blotted out all our guilt, and borne our sins in his own body, on the tree?

If you just consider, for a moment, you will, perhaps, understand the meaning of the Apostle, when he says, he desires to know, "the power of his resurrection." All the blessings which I have attempted to touch on, (and which cannot be numbered,) as flowing from Christ to the sinner, all come, and must come *alone* through faith. We don't see these things, they are not objects of our senses, they are not before our eyes; we don't hear them, they don't enter into our hearts by the avenues of our ears.—they come to us, on the authority of God, through faith. We must believe these things to be true, as sure as the word of God is true, if we believe in God.

But the world, the flesh and the devil, all the evils with which we are surrounded, and all the things of time and sense, and these hearts of unbelief, and sin which dwell continually within us, unchanging and unchangeable to the very last, these and all the evils that surround us are continually warring against the truth of God, and against our confidence in that truth; therefore though, it were an Apostle, he requires continually to know more and more of the solid hope that is secured to him by the word of his God, he must say to God, "Lord increase my faith;" for it is exactly in direct proportion as we are persuaded of these truths, as we *know* and rest on them as truths, that we shall be able to live above the world, to enjoy peace in our consciences with God, or have any power whatever against the corruptions that rage within, and surround us without.

That is the power of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ,—the power of faith, the power of that blessed hope which is secured to all God's people, in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then all these facts—the three facts of which I have spoken, connected with the resurrection, come with power to the

soul. The fact of Christ's resurrection comes with power when we know the blessing of that resurrection. We look at him as a *dead propitiation*, but when we look to his resurrection, we behold him a *living priest*:—we look to the cross, and see him *dead*,—the atonement—"it is finished;" we look to his resurrection, and behold him, the *risen advocate*, for, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins." We look to him as a *dead surety*, who has undertaken our debt and paid it; we behold him a *risen Saviour*, who "ever liveth to make intercession for all who come to God by him," who is "exalted to give repentance and remission of sins." We look at him, as a *dead man*—"the man Christ Jesus," dying as a man dies, pouring out his blood on the cross; and we behold him a *risen God*. "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore." "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." He is "head over all things to his Church;" and to those who believe in him, the eternal God is their refuge, their hope, their salvation, their friend, their Saviour, their pardoner, their surety, their Redeemer—the judge that is to come in glory to sit in judgment on the world: this then will be their song, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad in his salvation!"

So the fact of our own resurrection comes with power to us. Instead of trembling at the very thought of a resurrection from the dead, instead of trembling at the thought of meeting God in judgment, instead of longing for annihilation, and wishing that their immortality was exchanged with the beasts that perish, it is the privilege of those who know the salvation of Christ, to rejoice in the prospect of death and judgment: though nature shrinks from the convulsive agony, from the confines of the grave, and from the worm and corruption; faith rises above it all and says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another," my Redeemer, my refuge, my hope! "Oh grave, where is thy victory, Oh death, where is thy sting!"

So, it comes with power, not only for *ourselves*, but for *others*. It is this blessed hope that enables us in bereavements and trials to lift up our heads with joy, when we know, that those who are gone, are gone to Christ; when we know, that though they are hidden from our sight, they are with him who wipeth away all tears from their eyes for ever: when we know this, we can sit by the dying bed, we can see the dying struggle, we can hear the sound of "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust," and we can lift up our eyes to him who has taken away the sting of death, and say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

And, is it nothing to have the power of the resurrection of Christ taking away the sting of death, from ourselves and those who are dear to us? Is it not this that the Apostle desires us to look to, "that we be not sorry as those without hope for them that sleep in Christ, for, if we believe, that Jesus died and rose again, even so, those that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him."

Is there not, then, a power, in the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ, to give peace and consolation to the sinner in this world? As long as we are living without the knowledge of our sin being blotted out in the blood of Christ, without finding Christ a refuge in our heart—we must be living under the power of the world, or our own sin; there is no other power, given by God to man, that can draw man to his God but the power of the Gospel of Christ. All the terrors, all the judgments, all the apprehensions that ever could be conjured up before the sinner's heart by

the power of man, yea, of God himself will never, never turn the sinner to his God. If he passed under the flashings and thunders of Sinai, he would build a calf at the foot of it in spite of all its terrors. But when he is brought to the foot of the cross, to know his Lord and Saviour—when his heart is drawn with the cords of eternal love,—when he sees his sins cancelled, and the hope of eternal life spread before him,—when he sees the glorious, distant prospect of that "city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God,"—then he can lift his heart, or God lifts his heart, above the passing, perishing vanities of this life, which are but for a moment; he knows they must pass away; he therefore looks for, and hastens to that city which hath foundations, he looks for the glorious appearing of his Saviour and his God!

Oh, that you, that I, may know the power of his resurrection—Oh that we may understand it! Let me entreat you beloved friends—ye who know the Gospel, to consider how little you know about it compared with what you ought to know. And oh! ye who know not that blessed refuge, do let me entreat you to examine these passages of Scripture, and try whether these things are so.

And may the blessing of God rest upon you, may the blessing of God rest on his word. May the power of the resurrection of Christ be brought home to your souls and to my soul, and enable us to live to our God, and to die to him! And when we all shall rise from the grave, Oh! may we be found at the right hand of the Lord our Redeemer. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

A Christian minister must labour; he is accountable for this labour, but, thank God, not so for his success. He is responsible for the use of his time, his talents, his temper, and every other gift God has bestowed upon him—his awful duty is to preach to souls tottering on the verge of hell, ready to drop into eternal flames,—as a preacher, he should ever have before the eye of his mind hell's unquenchable fire, and heaven's undying glories. His watchword should be **THE**

CROSS OF CHRIST, his motto those words of Paul, "lest having preached to others, I myself should be a castaway"—the *subjects* of his preaching, are subjects which employed the counsels of Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, from all eternity; the *objects* of his preaching are those for whom Christ died, for whose justification the Son of the Highest was born and bled, for whose salvation, even the eternal God became "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief."

REV. WILLIAM HOWELS.

EXPERIENCE.

"I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Psalm xxxvii, 25.

The Autumn sear is on my cheek,
The Winter hoar is on my brow;
And many a year of pain I've pass'd,
From childhood until now.—

I've seen the blossom in its prime—
The fruit before its fall;
The leafless tree, the wither'd flow'r—
I've seen and lov'd them all.

But years have come and gone—and they
Have come so oft since then,
Methinks I now can pass them by,
As cold as other men.

And I had once my boyhood's dream
Of painless sorrow—careless care,
And friends to love me—where are they?
Their places answer—where?

And standing now, as 'twere upon
The brink of time, I pause a span,
To tell the tale of wisdom to
My fellow mortal—man.

I've sat within the gilded hall—
And mirth and music revell'd there;
I've knelt where sinners seek their God—
Where nought was heard but prayer:—

And I have seen the rich ones laid
Within their narrow bed:
I've heard the cry of bitter want—
And given their children bread;—

But never have I seen the man
Or boy, who early sought the throne
Of God, and wept for *others'* fate—
Condemn'd to weep his own.

S. A. W.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER,

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXIX.

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. CHARLES BRIDGES.

REV. CHARLES BRIDGES.

A SERMON,

PREACHED ON BEHALF OF THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, UPPER BAGGOT-STREET, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 16TH APRIL, 1837,

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRIDGES, A. M.

Of Stowmarket, Suffolk.

ISAIAH lxii—1.

“ For Zion’s sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.”

WHAT a standing miracle is the preservation of every child of God, with such a heart as he has, living in such a world, encompassed with such danger, conflicting with such mighty powers of earth and hell! The secret of his preservation is this,—there is an almighty work going on in his behalf, before the throne above—“ I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.” Now what is the preservation of one member of the Church, to the preservation of the Church herself?—when she is oppressed, he undertakes for her.

Here, brethren, you have an exhibition

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set before you in the text. Here is the great, and glorious, and faithful patron of his Church, standing, as it were, in the presence of God, on behalf of his Church, and avowing his faithful purpose—that he “ will not, for Zion’s sake, hold his peace, and, for Jerusalem’s sake, not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.” It is obvious, that it is the head of the Church that is speaking in the text; you hear him speaking, a verse or two after, in a character which you cannot mistake—“ I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O

K

Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace, day nor night ;" and so it is very striking in this text, to mark the connexion of this chapter with the chapter before it, where you hear the same divine person speaking, showing forth his ministry on earth—"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek ; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." In my text, you hear him declaring his equally important, faithful, and mighty ministry in heaven, and assuring his people, and proclaiming to his Father, that he shall never rest, as long as a child of God—a member of the family of God—is unadmitted into the family above. Brethren, how interesting and important it is for each and every one of us to have our eyes fixed on our adorable head. Where do we get any light, or comfort, any peace, or any joy, or any upholding of faith, and covering from danger, except the eye of faith is directed to him ? Oh may that blessed Spirit, whose office it is to glorify him, glorify him before us this day.

Now, then, in further endeavouring to open this subject to you, we shall just separate it into these three parts:—First—*The blessing of the Gospel for your own souls.* Secondly—*The extension of its blessing throughout the earth.* And thirdly—*The sure and certain foundation we have to look for that extension.*

First of all, we begin at home. We speak of **THE BLESSING OF THE GOSPEL AS APPLIED TO YOUR OWN SOULS.**

Brethren, I feel that as a minister of the Gospel I have a message unto you : I look upon you as dying sinners, with never-dying souls ; feeling deeply, and desirous to feel more deeply, for the perishing state of the heathen, I yet know, that the heathen need not the Gospel more than you and I do—and therefore, just let us endeavour, in this deep view

of our responsibility, and in this spirit of the message of the Gospel, to mark these two blessings, as including all beside that are set before us in the text—righteousness, and salvation. *Righteousness.*—There is the ground, the only ground, the sure, eternal ground of our acceptance before God. *Salvation.*—There is the rich, unsearchable, present, and eternal blessing, consequent upon that acceptance. In the first place, the text leads us to consider *righteousness*—and what is it ? Why, it is the whole work of a living and dying Saviour ; it is what he did, and what he suffered, standing in the sinner's place, in the character of the sinner's surety—doing the sinner's work—enduring the sinner's curse. If you want to look at the full revelation of this, turn to the epistle to the Romans, see how fully it is developed before you there. The Apostle commences, at the opening of his epistle, by telling you simply this,—“The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth ;” but then he shows how, and why it is so : “for,” adds he, “therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith.” And then, going on with his epistle, after having shown to you the universal need both to Jew and Gentile, of this righteousness, he describes fully what it is,—“the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all that believe.” That “God has sent forth his son to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.”

Now, brethren, if this be the righteousness of God, why, then, it must be a perfect work ; it must be a work of infinite value, and infinite merit ; it must be a work, therefore, that fully sweeps away all occasion of unbelief, all ground of doubt, all foundation for fear ; and it thus rises, for the vilest of the vile, a sure foundation of hope. What ! are we to be desponding for our sinfulness, when

God has raised such a foundation as this? Why, it is a garment that clothes the unworthy sinner from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, so that it is not he, but Christ, that is seen when he comes to God; so true is it, even though told by a wicked mouth, "he has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither has he seen perverseness in Israel."

Oh, brethren, it is a wondrous truth, it is the truth of God—that a poor sinner, humbled, and covered as he is in his own sight with sin, may stand before God, covered with Christ, and *as the Son of God himself!* Why, I never should have dared to make such a bold assertion as this, if the Apostle had not given it to my hand, where he tells us, "ye are complete in Christ!" What could he have said more? And again, "we are made the righteousness of God in him."

Now then again, let us mark the other blessing that is spoken of in the text—*salvation*. What a word it is—what a wonderful word! it has infinite meaning in it. Why, beloved brethren, if I were to shut up my book this moment, and send you away with this, as my text and my sermon, you would have enough to ponder over all your life long. Oh, poor, careless sinner! what might it be to thy poor soul, if you would but ponder and pray only for five minutes on this wondrous word! Will you go home and try? will you ask for the Divine Spirit to teach and apply? It would be to thy soul as life from the dead. Why, what is this word? and how are words to tell the fullness of its meaning? It includes the whole gift of the eternal mercies of God. It includes the whole gift of forgiveness, as well as all the gifts and blessings connected with it; a new nature, a growing likeness to God, adoption into the family of God, fellowship with God the Father, Son, and Spirit, the entire exercise of oneness with him now, and the hope of a glorious fellowship with him hereafter. It includes all that God could give and all that the sinner could need; all that our

souls could receive now, and all that heaven will perfect hereafter; so that, the very word fills heaven with eternal hallelujahs of praise; and so would it earth, if earth did but know its value.

However, we must dwell on this subject a little farther, for several important reasons. First, because it is *our commission*, and *our joyful commission too*, to set it out freely and fully before you all. I know full well that God has a special people, I know that he has an unchanging purpose of love to that people: but this does not fetter the extent of my commission. My Master's command is, to "preach the Gospel to every creature," and therefore I don't preach to the elect of God, as if I could mark them out by name; but I preach it to a world of perishing sinners; and I leave it to the sovereignty and richness of the grace of God to mark his own people. I know full well that there is nothing but freeness unbounded in the invitations of the Gospel; whosoever will come, may come; and if he does come, whoever he be, or whoever he has been, he will "in no wise be cast out." Therefore, whenever one sees an awakened desire for the precious Saviour and his precious blessings, such a desire as sends you first to prayer, and then to your Bible, such a desire as forms gradually new tastes and habits in the soul, there is at once the seal of the work of God, and the seal of the completion of that work; for sure enough, you may be "confident of this very thing, that he who has begun the good work in you will continue it to the day of Christ."

Again, I dwell on this word once more, because the blessing of salvation is *the only spring of comfort* for the poor sinner's heart. Ah, brethren! the heathen are without comfort, because they are without salvation. As I remember, one of them told one of our missionaries, "how glad should I be to lie down and die, if I were sure that there was no hereafter:"—there is the hopelessness of thoughtful idolatry on the brink of eternity. And then, look

again at the comfort it gives the poor heathen who tastes it with you. A North American Indian, when she was following her child to the grave, gave vent to this expression, "what should I do without the Gospel? I joy in the midst of my sorrow; my child has gone to Christ, and he has now a softer pillow to rest upon than I could ever have given him." Ah, brethren, what are all the comforts of the world compared with this? They only enter the ear, this enters the heart; they are like the withering plants of the desert, "the wind passeth over them, and they are gone," they droop and die:—but here is the fountain of God, here is the flowing of the river of life. Brethren, look at what it is, and then, cease not to wonder at its power. Here is sin taken away; and you know when sin is gone, sorrow is gone, the sting is gone, the burden is gone, and all the pangs of a guilty conscience that strike and wound the heart, are gone with it. This is an abiding comfort,—as I remember once being struck with the conversation of two Mongolians, who were comparing their former religion with the Gospel; they said, "the farther we went into our own religion, the farther we were away from rest: but, how sweet are the words of Jesus!" And truly, my beloved friends, sweet are the words of Jesus. Were there ever such breathings of love as came from the Saviour's lips, when he said, "come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest?" You may be assured then of this, that all that glorious elevation of life, all that gives comfort in sorrow, hope in death, and all that opens the prospect of glory, is the joy of God's salvation.

Well, then, once more I dwell upon it, for this reason, that as it is the only spring of comfort, so it is *the only principle of holiness*. Brethren, there are no fruits of the Spirit which grow upon heathen grounds. There are no fruits of the Spirit that grow in the unconverted natural heart; holiness does not come *before* the Gospel, but *follows*

the reception of it; it is not the *cause*, but the *fruit* of the reception of the Gospel. It is Christ received by faith; it is the soul brought into a living union with the Divine Saviour, being made one with him in his holy nature; and therefore now, being married to another, bringing forth fruit unto God. I just put it to your consciences, Are you ignorant of the Saviour? are you destitute of saving spiritual knowledge of the Saviour? is your religion more than a mere form? does it separate your heart from the world? does it consecrate you to the service of God? does it win you from what you used to love and cherish, and does it foster in your tastes the things of God? You know it does not. You know that without the life within, religion can never be any better than the varnish of a whited sepulchre, where all within is full of uncleanness. Oh, brethren, you that are without Christ; you are worshipping with us, but you are only the mixed multitude worshipping in the outer court of the temple; you are not, what I pray God you may be, spiritual Christians, that enter into the holiest of all. When you know the way by the blood of Christ, you can enter in, and we shall all worship together our adorable Saviour in spirit and in truth. But, dear brethren, there is no such thing as spiritual worship, without the heart being enlightened by faith, and illumined by the Spirit of God. Here is the Gospel; tell me what fault you can find with it; tell me, where it is wanting; tell me, is there a better righteousness for you than the righteousness of Christ, or a better, more stable salvation for you than the salvation of the Gospel?

Let us, in the next place, mark, **THE EXTENSION OF THIS BLESSING THROUGHOUT THE EARTH**. It is evident that it is in the promise of God that it shall be so, because *it is made the subject of the persevering intercession of Christ*. "For Zion's sake, I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness,

and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Now, you know, my friends, that it is not so yet as it will be. How is it with you? with yourselves, your families, your congregations? Is there not abundant evidence, that righteousness has not gone forth as brightness, and that salvation is not yet as a lamp that burneth? Look again over the world.—Look at the whole continent nearest to us; Europe; there the Gospel is ignominiously prostrated before the man of sin, or subject to degrading and dishonouring will-worship. Or if there be in some places, a little light, how dim does it burn in the socket, how little is it "like a lamp that burneth?" And then, look again, passing your eye over the world: what does one see but a frightful spectacle of a world apostatized from God, and living in the wicked one? So that it is plain, I need add no more to prove, that it is not fulfilled yet, but it is equally plain that it shall be. Look to the word of prophesy, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it;" and see again, "all the ends of the world shall see the salvation of God." Just as the sun goeth his rounds from one part of the earth to another, and "there is nothing hid" as the Psalmist beautifully observes, "from the heat thereof," so will this glorious Sun of righteousness go along his path from one end of the earth to the other, as it is said, "from one end of the earth to the other shall incense be offered to the Lord, and a pure offering," and so brethren, the Church of God, as bearing within her this blessing, shall be as a lamp that burneth, it shall be a light-house to lighten a shipwrecked world.

Now, just suppose, what is the world without it. We hear some charitable people say, that the heathen need but little of God. Their views of God are views that have never been revealed in the Bible, and are the offspring of the reasoning of the puny worm, man. It is

just as if heaven was a house for all—a place with many doors, that we enter in at one, and the heathen at others; or as if God might be pleased with a variety of religions, just as we are with a variety of flowers. Now, you know, all this marks the mind that reasons for a moment, but has never been humbled, and never bowed to the testimony of God. All that I know of this deep and awful subject—which is little enough—I know from the testimony of God. I see not there one word that beams a ray of hope on their eternal state: I hear the word of God telling me of their *state*—that they are "without hope;" of their *responsibility*—that they are "without excuse;" of their *condemnation*—that they "perish without law." Brethren, whatever my proud heart may reason against the testimony of God, it must be our duty to bow with implicit faith to this awful doctrine. How can you or I understand the Scripture testimony, and leave the heathen alone, when you remember from that word, that the Saviour has a people, and that by the preaching of his word, he will gain that people? so that what have we to do but to pledge ourselves, that "for Zion's sake, we will not hold our peace, and for Jerusalem's sake, we will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth."

Now let me just add, briefly, in the last place, **THE GROUND OF OUR ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE EXTENSION OF THIS BLESSING.** What can be stronger than this is? It is the grace of the intercession of the Son of God. Oh, what a foundation for our faith—what a quickening encouragement to our exertions, what an entire security against our disappointments! true enough, the work of redemption was *finished* when "he bowed his head and gave up the ghost;" but ever since that time till now, and from the present till the grand consummation, the application of the work will be going on; and though it is now

nearly two thousand years since he hung upon Calvary's cross, yet not a moment since that period has he been less intensely occupied and less effectually employed for his church, than when "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree." Look at the ground of our encouragement? take an illustration of it. Look at that beautiful history of wrestling Jacob:—he wanted a blessing and determined to have it: "I will not let thee go except thou bless me; and he blessed him there." Now if God was so gracious to his wrestling *servant*, how much more to his wrestling *beloved Son*? if Jacob received a blessing by persevering prayer, how much more the Son of God? and when you remember especially, that this blessing is the very covenant between God and his dear Son, "ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession?" Now then, here you have the Son of God asking, perseveringly asking—and, therefore, who can doubt the result? So, brethren, we are not dealing in uncertain speculations, when we are entering, as the instruments of God, on the great, magnificent work of evangelizing the world; we have God's own promise and word, we have the Saviour's all-prevailing intercession; and so we go on to the work, "thank God, and take courage."

Now, then, a short application of this subject. Oh, never forget your own personal concern in this matter. I dare not ask you to think of the heathen, before I pleaded with you to think about your own souls. Here is hope and salvation; receive it, and you mount to heaven—reject it, and you sink in hell! Brethren, there is no other alternative for you, it is all you want—it is perfect as it came from the hand of God, though it is too often marred by the proud reason of man. Here it is, free—not absurdly free, to force it on those who have no heart for it, but free enough to invite you all, and to remove all hinderances in your way. Here

it is, full to supply every want—here it is, secured by the promise and oath of God.

Oh, think, my beloved fellow-sinners, what a prize is set before you here!—what a free-gift of the God of love!—what a loss to those who are dead,—what great mercy for those who are quickened! Oh, wait and pray, lie at the foot of the cross: oh! if you get there you can never perish; if you cannot come as you want, why, come as you can.

Then, I say to those of you who know these blessings, live upon them, remember they are not your profession, but they are your portion, your life, and your joy, as it is said—"The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him: behold, God is my salvation, I shall trust, and not be afraid." Brethren, your faith may faint, but it never shall fail: it never would faint, if it was not that your eye is turned away from the object of faith, and then light is turned into darkness.

And when you enjoy the blessings, oh, show forth the power of them; for, beloved friends, I would tell you, what a trust is vested in you!—the greatest, the most important trust that ever could be vested in man, and that is, the manifestation of your Saviour's glory. The world knows nothing of Christ, except as they see it reflected in you. Oh, then, let it be your care, in the recollection of responsibility, to shed forth, as a mirror, the perfections of your Saviour, setting them out in all your daily profession, in all the various graces of a saved sinner—holiness, humility, love, devotedness to the service of your God. Remember, brethren—and it ought to be an awful, awakening, and constraining thought to you—that every inconsistency of temper is a blot upon your mirror, that hinders and obscures the reflection of the Saviour's glory! Think, what an injury you are doing to the world, what dishonor you are casting on your Saviour! You are looking for his coming, are you not?—when "he shall be glorified in his saints.

and admired in all them that believe." But oh, take care that he is glorified *now*, and admired *now*, in his saints.

I would add just one word more, as the last point—*Impart these blessings to the world*. I feel that you and I hold them on our individual responsibility;—that we enjoy them ourselves that we may communicate them to the world; just, you know, as it is said, "In blessing I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing;" and so let this be your obligation—your Saviour binds it upon you—your privileges bind it upon you—your Church binds it upon you—the plain and simple word of God binds it upon you. Here, then, is a Christian mission, as an appointed and acceptable means, for "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Here is THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY as an appointed means in your own body; here is a Scriptural Church, engaged in a Scriptural work: and therefore, what remains, but, that knowing what the promise of your God is, what the work of your Saviour is, what the encouragement

of the promises are, you should give unto this work, "not grudgingly, or of necessity;" but liberally, and joyfully, give your property, talents, and influence, as a sacrifice to God.

Brethren, I need add but one more text, to quicken you in this work. Now, at this moment, when you and I are engaged in pleading for, and considering this work, in this house, our dear Head is above, actually employed in the same work—engaged in the same cause! Oh, what a dignity does this give to this great work—what an identity does it give to us, in our union with our Saviour, to have fellowship with him, to be one with him; for while he thus declares his office in heaven—"For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace: and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth," so he charges it on you and on me—"Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

DUTY OF INSTRUCTING THE HEATHEN.

—000—

Let your charity begin at home, but do not let it end there. Do good to your family and connexions, and, if you please, to your party; but, after that, look abroad. Look at the universal Church, and, forget-

ting its divisions, be a Catholic Christian. Look at your country, and be a patriot—look at the nations of the earth, and be a philanthropist.

REV. H. MARTYN.

A SERMON,

PREACHED FOR THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-STREET, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY EVENING, 16TH APRIL, 1837,

BY THE REV. CHARLES BRIDGES, A. M.

Of Stowmarket, Suffolk.

MATT. x.—part of 8th verse.

“Freely ye have received, freely give.”

THIS, my dear brethren, was the command of our Saviour to his disciples—and, so far as we profess ourselves to be his disciples, we may look upon it as his command to us. The command was simply this, to communicate to their fellow-sinners what they had received from him; and to remember that the manner in which he had dealt with them was to be the pattern and spring of the manner in which they were to deal with their fellow-sinners. He had given to them *freely*, and they were to give to their fellow-sinners *freely*—“Freely ye have received, freely give.”

Brethren, I cannot conceive language more deeply concerned in your own real peace, your usefulness, your living for God, and for eternity, than to have this command written, not with pen and ink, but by the Spirit of the living God, upon the fleshly tablets of your heart. Oh, may God write these words upon our hearts—may the almighty power of his Spirit be with us, and in us all!

Observe, the text divides itself simply into *two parts*—in bringing before us *a very profitable recollection*, and *a very constraining obligation*.

I. IT BRINGS BEFORE US A VERY PROFITABLE RECOLLECTION. You observe, it all turns on this point,—Have we freely received? or, perhaps, we should rather

move the previous question,—Have we received *at all*? For, when I look round on this immense mass of living immortals before me, I cannot but put the question with great solemnity, and affectionate earnestness of mind, Have you yet received any thing from Christ? Oh, if you were as willing to receive as he is to give, how rich and happy would you be. You know, people don't think of receiving till they feel a want; and perhaps, there are many of you who never felt your want—your real, infinite want, of what the Saviour has to give you, and without which, you will be left a perishing sinner, in eternal ruin. None but the perishing will ever come to Christ: none but those who feel their want will ever listen to his invitation, or prize the refuge he has provided for their souls. It requires the power of the Spirit of God to work on each, and bring us to life and feeling.

Then I just go on, supposing we have, as I hope many of us have received—*how* have we received?—have we not *freely* received? Can we connect what we have received with any good, with any fitness, any merit, or deservings of our own? If not, then *freely* we have received. Now let us endeavour to bring this before you. In the first place, *look at your own personal salvation*, think, what an infinite extent of obligation is

here! It is no less than this,—Jehovah has pledged every perfection of his Godhead for your full, perfect, and eternal happiness! Look at his inexhaustible, unfailing grace. Look how it is poured out in an unceasing stream—how it has removed all hinderances—even a hinderance that seemed insurmountable—the rebellion of our own hearts! Look at his dear Son, offering his own work of obedience, and suffering, and death?—engaging all his tender love, his wise government, for the directing, and keeping and covering, and guiding his people? Look again to the blessed Spirit in the unwearied exercise of his office, “taking of the things of Christ, and showing them to us,”—“working in us to will and to do of his good pleasure!” Why, brethren, when we see all this—the three Divine persons concentrating their power, interest, and love in our salvation—is it not indeed free? What a work must this be—what grace must this be, wholly without and infinitely beyond any desert of ours?

Only think, all this might, power, and love, is to pluck a brand out of the fire, and to raise that brand from hell, to be fixed in the dominions above, and there to shine as the sun, in the kingdom of our Father! Oh, does not the recollection of this lay us low in the dust, and then, mount us up to heaven? Does it not claim, when we come to think of it, the whole love of our heart? See, how free we have received this grace—now, let us look again—think a little—how our Father, and God, and Saviour, has indulged us with the privilege of promoting his glory. Brethren, you know I might call it an *obligation*, but I choose to call it a *privilege*: because, while it has all the force of an obligation, it has all the joy of a privilege. I ask you, are you ever more happy, than when you have laid yourselves out for the Saviour's cause? Think of it, as a privilege—he might have employed other instruments, or he might have used none: but he gave to *you* and *me* this privilege. Mark,

I speak of it in connexion with obligation—because, while a privilege, without an obligation, would very likely make you careless—an obligation without a privilege would keep you in chains and bondage. But you see, here is the glory and freedom of the Gospel: it has made them one; turned our duties into our privileges, and linked our privileges with our obligations. Now, then, brethren, I say again, look at this—see how it might have been! You might have been “kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation,”—and yet you might, at the same time, have been debarred from the high honor and privilege of being permitted to labour for the glory of Christ. You might, for instance, have been shut up in a monastery, and be there occupied only with the conflicts of your own corruptions, or the selfish contemplation of your own happiness, and never have had your heart enlarged at seeing what God was doing in the earth, and never have had your heart filled with the joy and privilege of being permitted to take part in it. I ask you, would not that have been a grievous loss to you?—and, therefore, you see how we ought to acknowledge it as a free gift of God's sovereign mercy, that he does permit, and put in our way, opportunities of being employed by him.

Think, then, brethren, what it is that is committed to you; think, that you, yourselves are not only made wise unto salvation, but you have, besides, that blessed privilege of bringing poor sinners to the Lord. And you see, how wonderfully wise is this, that the happiness of every member of the body is increased by contributing to the increase of the body: so that, you are not only enriched with all blessings, in your own souls, but you are enriched with all bountifulness to supply the wants of others. We see, in every point of view, nothing but free, and gracious, and sovereign mercy.

Think now, for instance, of the abundance of the grace given to you for this purpose. Take, for instance, your high

calling : " You are a chosen generation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." There, you observe, you are chosen of God, that you might be a blessing to man ; that is, by the exercise of every Christian grace, you should reflect the image and glory of your God to a world that knows it not. Oh, see here the happy power of electing love ; how mighty its influence, how rich its blessing in directing and constraining us to an entire and self denying consecration to him !

Then again, look not only at the grace given to you, but look at the treasures that are set before you. Whatever your sphere may be, whether large or small, brethren, it is a cheering thing—I am glad to tell you, I am glad to encourage you by telling it to you—that there is no one of you will stand up as a witness for Christ, without some fruit in your own soul, and some blessing to the Church of God. You may not, perhaps, see it clearly, but the day will reveal it ; and you may depend upon it, the more simple you are in your desire, and the more humble in your walk, and the more patient in your waiting, the more you will honour him, and he will honour you. But perhaps you may think lightly of doing so little, and say, what can it be worth ? Ah, brethren, there is infinite moment in doing even the least thing for God : and I would say to you, you could not have done it at all, if there had not been the infinite power of God to enable you to do it. If God in all his might and power, had not given you the way and means to do it, you never would have done it. Oh, there is not a single thing connected with the eternal purposes of God, with the completeness of the work of Christ, the efficacy of his offering, the virtue of his blood, the prevalence of his intercession, but what concurs in invigorating and prospering that little effort that you have been enabled to make for

God ; so that you see its magnitude, its dignity, its effectiveness may be seen by the power of God working in you.

Now it is part of your high calling and high privilege, and special mercy, that you should acknowledge from day to day, if you have had the means and the opportunity of standing up for God. Just mark again the amount of opportunity that the good and kind providence of your God has put in your way, in indulging yourselves and being honoured by him in labouring for him. I, for instance, only look at this great city,—oh, how much there is to be done by every one of you ! I am sure, there is no one standing here " idle in the market place, because no one has hired him. :"—not one of you, who, if you would go to your minister, would not find something to do for your Saviour. And look again at the multitude of religious societies among you ; what a sphere there is for you there : to counsel and advise, and actively engage in the enlargement of the usefulness of this great machinery of the work of God. And when you look again to the multitude of poor sinners about you living in such darkness and blindness, and sin, and neglect of God, there is no one of you but may well bind the command on you, " Be instant in season and out of season." Now, then, if you want to have any thing to do, if you want to have a larger enjoyment of this high privilege—oh, go to God and pray for a larger heart, for a heart more and more conformed to your own dear Master and Saviour ; for a heart that really feels more yearning for the perishing state of your fellow-sinners, and more sympathies for the miseries of the world, where every man is a brother, and every woman a sister perishing in sin.

Brethren, see here what is to be done. You say, it is very hard. Oh, it is very hard indeed, where there is no love of Christ. Where there is no love of Christ, there will be no love for your fellow-sin-

ners ; and then, it is very hard to give up your time, your substance, and your influence to the service of God. When your mind is occupied with the things of the world, it is very hard indeed, to work for Christ. But what right have you to the name of Christian any more than the heathen, if you are not seeking the kingdom of God in the widest and largest sense, before your own interests and your own work ;—what right have you to the name of Christian? Why, do not some of you know, that if you are in a spiritual state of mind, if you are walking with Christ, you find it to be a special refreshment to have the name of Christ upon your lips, and to go, carrying that name to any poor fellow-sinner that you can? Is there not a fragrance in that name? as it is said, "it is as the ointment poured forth:" is there not every thing to remind you of Christ, to draw you to the contemplation of Christ? Is it not full of milk and honey to your soul? But when you are indolent in the work of the Lord, it is because there is a backsliding heart, which hinders your close and spiritual walk with him. I just put these things before you, in order that you may clearly see what is the relation in which you stand—what mercy you have received in your own souls : and what a mercy it is not only to be the subjects of grace, but to be the almoners of grace to your fellow-men. And now, "freely you have received" all this mercy : dear brethren, I hope when you are told now, to do something for Christ ; when your dear ministers call you to be more active in the service of Christ ; I hope you will not tell them, you can't afford time ; I hope you wont tell them that you are tired with the little you do, and therefore you had rather not be asked about it. See how it is connected with your own personal salvation, how it is an acknowledgment of the privileges of his Gospel, and how you ought to be on your knees in praise and thanksgiving that you have freely received

when you did not deserve it, and were indulged with the privilege of working for God.

You see then, it is a profitable recollection. Is it not very profitable, and do you not think that if you kept it more in your mind, that it would deepen the work of God in your own souls? That it would enlarge your views of the love of God, and enlarge your heart in love to man?

Here is salvation,—“freely ye have received.” Now mark, in the second place, THE CONSTRAINING OBLIGATION—“*freely give.*” Just think what you have to give, and then, how you are to give it. It simply tells you this, you are to give as it has been given to you—you have received *freely*, and therefore you are to give *freely* : it just comes to this plain and practical point, “beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” But then, here comes the question—what have you got to give? Perhaps there are some who may think they have nothing to give.—Ah, friends, nothing to give ! I know “there are differences of administrations,” but you know, while some have five talents, others ten, and others two, all have one ; and therefore we shall soon find, when we come to enter into detail, that there is not one among you who has not something to give, and not one among you who ought not to feel the privilege freely to give. However, one must take care in speaking, to speak in the right order ; the first thing you have to do is, to give *your own selves* to the Lord. Brethren, I would take nothing from you, except you give your hearts to the Lord. Every thing is worthless comparatively, if this be not the first gift. Look to 2nd Corinthians, 8th chapter, where the Apostle is speaking of the Macedonians, who, when they were very poor, gave very richly, and we are told too, how and in what order they gave, they “first gave their own selves unto God, and unto us by the will of God !”

That is the order, first, give your own-selves unto God. Brethren, you that love the world, and are living in ungodliness, or in unconversion, or self-righteousness, or whatever it may be, I tell you, that you have given yourselves to another master and, therefore, you have nothing to offer now, or give to the Lord. But, my dear friends, is it not a tremendously awful thing, that you have got an account to give to the Lord, of all that he has given to you: yet all the account will be, that you wasted it in sin, that you scattered it in pleasure, or wholly cast it from you? Oh, poor sinner, if you have no heart to come to your dear Saviour, you are in a state of death and ruin; oh, if you did but feel for yourselves as we feel for you!—"what will you do in the end thereof?" If you would but think, what are the wages of your present ways, and what the wretchedness of being thrown out at the last!—Your dear Saviour hung on the cross, and from that cross he seems to speak to you—"Sinner, did I suffer all this for you, and are these my returns? What! this unfaithfulness, and rebellion, and ingratitude—are these my returns! Oh, when will you turn and look on me, whom your sins have pierced, and mourn?"

But again, I would remind you to give yourselves to the Lord, and would just ask, is there not one among this great congregation who has love enough in his heart to the Saviour, and a perishing world, to answer this call of God, "whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"—Beloved, I ask this question with an intensity of feeling, and anxiety, and interest, and concern, that I know not how to tell you. I would ask again, is there a Christian mother here, who rejoices in the will of God, that he has given her an Isaac to lay upon his altar?

With regard to giving yourselves to the Lord, I would say, that he does expect you, as he has opened your graves to give yourselves to his work. But I would tell you, at the same time, that my

heart would weep within me, if I could suppose that any thing I should say, concerning your working for God, should divert you from attending to your own souls. I never feel more need for a close and watchful walk with God, than when I am employed in active service. Oh, it is a subtle device of Satan; our religion is never more in danger, than when engaged in the *business* of religion, however actively; and except we are watching unto prayer, we may mistake exterior excitement for the spiritual refreshment of the soul. And, therefore, brethren, I entreat you to weigh this well. It is good for you to be in earnest, and devoted to the work of the Lord; but take care that your zeal be of the right kind; that it flows from heart-religion, and is not put in the place of it; for if it is, it is an awful delusion; you are touching, as it were, the work, and defiling it with your touch; you are not embracing it; you have an outward connexion with it, but no real union; you have no identity of interest with it, either in its present early, or its last and ultimate success.—So, brethren, let this be the first gift that you lay on the altar, "give your own-selves to the Lord," and then, in the next place, give your influence. Now I would not have the danger that I have just been speaking of, bring upon you the unbelief and cowardice of Jonah, to turn away from the work of God. Whatever you do, or to whatever you are appointed, be sure that your whole heart and influence is for the Lord. Remember you hold the Gospel upon the terms of diffusing and spreading it: it is your privilege to enjoy it, but it is also your privilege to communicate it; and remember, that if you are unfaithful, you will have to answer for it both to God and to man, if you hide this talent in a napkin, instead of trading with it for the service of God.

Brethren, I would call to your attention, that the means of blessing your fellow-sinners throughout the whole world

are set before you this very night. Are you ready to give of your money, and your influence, and your prayers, to this wide expansion of the truth? Have you, however, begun with this exercise of employing your influence in your own particular sphere—in your different churches? Do you love your minister? Do you want your ministers to be a blessing to you? Why, then, you must work with them, and work for them. Do not give yourselves up to the indolent notion, that they are to do every thing, and you are to sit still, and read your Bible. No, brethren, they have much to expect from you,—your example,—your active usefulness in whatever sphere you may be placed. I charge you with the solemn responsibility of lightening their burdens, if you do not want them to sink under them. None but ministers know what the trials of ministers are—what need they have to be upheld by their dear, praying, and working people.—Now, how grievously are you failing in your obligations, if you suffer *them* to work, without having every exercise of your mind and thought occupied, how you may work with them and for them.

Look at the instruction of the young. What a work that is! See, if your sphere cannot be extended: what a work it is! There is the rising hope, you know, of your beloved Church,—how it deepens, in anxiety, from year to year!—how little your ministers can do, without your help and assistance. Well, then, looking into the bosom of your churches, how you ought to feel! What a special claim of interest is on you here! Some of you have seen, and known, and felt how a mother lavishes every look, and tone, and motion, on her dear, darling babe: Oh, dear fathers and mothers in the Lord, do you take pattern from that—nourish the dear babes in your Churches—allure them to this spiritual food—nourish them by your counsel and your prayers: when struggling for life in the weakness of infancy, with all the powers

of the world from which they have just escaped, and hardly escaped, oh, do yearn over them, pray for them with a special prayer; watch your opportunity of giving them a tender welcome to your Saviour; follow your dear Shepherd, and gather these lambs into your arms, and carry them in your bosom. You know not what a blessing you may bring to your Church; how you may increase the sphere and influence of your minister, and how you may be honoured by your God.

And so, brethren, I might mark one thing, and another, but the chief thing is, that you are alive on this matter; that it be on your mind, and on your conscience; that you may be living in the active exercise of laying yourselves out for God, and for his Church. If it is so, I need not tell you of the multitude of channels (and this is a main stream of joy to you, and a blessing to your Church,) that are set out before you. Keep only one thing before you—*your Saviour's example*.—Oh, how instructive, and how quickening! How his whole soul was in the work of winning souls! Look at that beautiful story of his sitting down, wearied with his journey, by Jacob's well, and asking for a drink of water. Ah! he did not thirst for the water, but he thirsted for the soul of that poor sinner before him; and when he had drawn her into his arms he forgot his own thirst and wants, and asked for water no more. And you know that when inquiry was made—has he any thing to eat after his journey?—he could tell his disciples, “I have meat to eat that ye know not of;”—“My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”—“Go ye and do likewise.” If you love him, be like him, and he will bless you.

Now, then, another great point as it regards *what you shall give*—give, in the next place, *your substance*. Brethren, I bring before you this night, **THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY**. Do you feel that you can give grudgingly when you

have freely received? I put it to every loving heart among you, I put it to every conscience, if you feel that you are grudging what you give, is it not a proof that you don't know what or how you have received, or whether you have received at all? Keep the love of your dear Saviour before you;—that will melt down all your selfishness, open your heart; and when an opportunity is presented to you this evening of contributing, you will not count it a tax on your pocket, but a privilege to yourselves.

There is one thing more I have to say, brethren, give us your *prayers*. Here is an offering surely with which you who love the Lord are all ready. Oh remember, there is not a breath of prayer can ever be lost; and therefore you are proceeding here in sure and certain hope that you shall find a blessing. Oh, then, give us your prayers: begin to pray first yourself, then you will have a largeness of desire, and you will pray for your household; and then your prayer will get larger, and extend to the congregation; and then this feeling will widen on every side, and the whole church will be one in prayer. Oh! what a church will that be! Brethren, remember, this is what it must be. Unless you know something of this richness of the spirit in prayer, you are straitened in your own bowels. I am firmly assured myself, that the spirit of prayer without a missionary spirit, is a very straitened spirit indeed: you do not grasp the promises of your God, the covenant of your God, and the full extent of that covenant and prospect

widening before you; you don't grasp the full confidence of God in prayer; and you lose all sympathy for the Church of God, and the joyful anticipation of the triumph of the children of God in prayer, and you are "straitened, not in God, but in your own bowels." I tell you, that you must rise to a higher missionary standard, and then you will rise to a higher standard of personal privilege, of richness of enjoyment of spiritual blessings; you will live on higher grounds, you will have nobler and greater thoughts—you will live for Christ in the widest extent of the word.

And this, brethren, is the spirit of prayer, which I pray God most abundantly to pour out upon you all.

Oh, I would not leave you without giving you something distinct to go home with, and lay, and bring before God. I do not want you to think of the preacher or the sermon, but to go home and think of your own soul, of your Saviour, and the work of God; I want you to go home with the humbling inquiry, how freely have I received, and how little have I given? I want you to go home with the anxious inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" I want you to go home with one thought of consecration, "here am I, send me." And then, beloved, you will go home as a congregation of missionaries; you will be missionaries in your closets, in your families, in your churches—in the world. Thus the Church will be a church of missionaries, and God will enlarge your sphere of usefulness abundantly.

A FAMILY PORTRAIT.

1 JOHN ii.—12, 13.

“ I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known Him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.”

THE figures composing this group cannot be mistaken—they evidently represent members of the same family, related by the closest ties of consanguinity, but exhibiting considerable disparity of age, together with other well-defined lines of characteristic distinction. They are the creation of a master mind; and a master hand has given them to the canvass. We here behold a child, almost in the first stage of infancy—a young warrior, in the bloom and vigour of manhood—and a hoary-headed sage, crowned with years, and all the tranquil honors of senility.—Let us transfer a hasty sketch of each, to our Christian portfolio.

The infant has evidently been but a short time summoned from the chaos of sin, darkness, and death, into the birth of a new creation. The pain of disengagement from the womb of corruption has been only just succeeded by the exhilarating consciousness of life eternal. The eye is partially unclosed; but even yet the light, though passing through a medium judiciously arranged for the purpose, is too novel to be freely admitted, and the organ occasionally retires into its original darkness, though plainly unwilling to forfeit for a moment the enjoyment of its new acquisition. But why that restless anxiety, disturbing the placidity of the infant brow, and setting every limb in motion? It is not disease, for

the ruddy glow of health rests upon every feature. The babe, too, sends forth a feeble, but earnest cry,—a new instinct has been called into existence—a new want is expressed, it is for “the sincere milk of the word:”—without it the infant suffers, languishes, and dies. Will it be denied?—will the earnest appeal of want and helplessness be disregarded, or those eyes, upturned in love and filial confidence, plead in vain? Ah! no—there is a beam of heavenly light descending from above, it is the parental smile of welcome, and encouragement, for the new pledge of an eternal betrothment. In that smile, oblivion of every former anguish, every sin-travailing pain is announced, and, under its influence, the endearing acknowledgments of filial relationship shall presently burst in rapture, from the lips of the confiding child—inexhaustible fountains of health and refreshment shall be opened, and every new-born taste supplied. The first accents of the infant lips shall be—“ Abba, Father!”

The figure which next engages our notice presents a remarkable contrast to this. It recites, with stirring interest to the eye, the history of a life ready to be closed. It is the last chapter of a volume filled with the most striking events, and awakening the liveliest emotions in its perusal—the last gleam of a setting sun over the tranquil bosom of an

evening sea—a patriarch pausing in his heavenward flight to drop his mantle of dear bought experience—to tell his painful story and be gone. He has fought the good fight—he has kept the faith—he has finished his course. What a meek and holy dignity in that eye, which seems to penetrate the azure vault above, and rest upon the crown of righteousness—his crown, which awaits him there! But oh, what persecutions, what mockings and cruel scourgings have bowed his head and wrung his frame, ere this stage of his earthly pilgrimage was reached, none may know; but as he rested not from toil or shrunk not from conflict, we doubt not, many a dark seal, many a blood red subscription bears his impress, and his evidence to the testimony of Jesus. There is a readiness to depart expressed in every look and attitude, which, but for nature's resignation of her empire, and the complete enthronement of grace might well be called premature, for nature's fires yet irradiate his brow, though they play around snows long settled there. But the battle is won, the laurels are at hand, and the seraphs above are rehearsing a new hymn of praise to the Most High—selecting the theme of their pæan from the book of life, where are recorded the exploits of the Christian Hero. Soon as

the heavenly chords awake on his ear earth's last fetters drop from around him—and he talks with Jesus!

In the portrait of the young and ardent soldier of the cross, there is much to animate, much to console the Christian. The celestial radiance of heaven's approving smile, brightly reflected from the breastplate of the advancing warrior—his assured tread and dauntless carriage, bespeak the triumph of his glorious cause: but there is a meek shadowing of the fires that kindle in his downcast eye, which, in a language more eloquent than words proclaim,—“Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name, O Lord, be the praise.” As he advances nearer to the light with which his armour brightens, with one hand he lifts the helmet from his elevated brow, and with the other lowers his shining blade in solemn salutation of Him, under whose banner he has fought and conquered:—his firm, yet self-denying attitude—his martial bearing—the high resolve seated on his bared forehead—all mark the hero,—while the spirit of sublime resignation harmonizing every feature into a tone of calm devotion—determine his attachment to the standard of the Prince of peace.

S. A. W.

Having devoted the present Number to the interests of THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY, we have given reports of *two* Sermons, preached in Dublin on its behalf, by the REV. CHARLES BRIDGES. And we shall feel most happy to insert, in future numbers, any communications with which we may be favoured, calculated to promote the interests and objects of this Society.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXX.

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. HUGH STOWELL.

REV. CHARLES MAYNE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-STREET, DUBLIN,

ON TUESDAY EVENING, 11TH APRIL, 1837,

ON BEHALF OF “ THE SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIANITY AMONG
THE JEWS.”

BY THE REV. HUGH STOWELL, A. M.

Of Christ Church, Manchester.

PSALMS ci.—part of 1st verse.

“ I will sing of mercy and judgment.”

THE song of the sweet Psalmist of Israel is peculiar to this world. In heaven they cannot sing of judgment, because there is no transgression there to be punished: in hell they cannot sing of mercy, for there, no Days-man has been found:—in one, love reigns in all its splendour—in the other, wrath reigns in all its darkness. But it is in this mysterious world, and among the inhabitants of earth, that mercy and judgment meet together, in the ministry and dispensations of God to the human race. It is needful that we should ever keep both before our minds: for if we look only to mercy, we shall be led to presume; if we look only to judgment, we shall be led to despair: but

when we consider both judgment and mercy, then “ shall we have grace whereby to serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, because our God is a consuming fire;” and yet, to serve him with holy joy and gladness of spirit, because “ God is love;”—“ the God of grace, and of all consolation.” The subject is one in itself of intrinsic interest, and it is one specially interesting in reference to that most interesting people, to whom I would draw, by the help of God, your sympathies and affections this evening.

Our simple subject then is, THE CONJUNCTION OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT IN THE DEALINGS OF GOD WITH MAN. And

may the Spirit of God bless his own word, "to strengthen such as do stand, to comfort and help the weak hearted, to raise up them that fall, and to beat down Satan under our feet."

Time was, when neither mercy nor judgment had a place in the earth. Man, while unfallen, stood in his own integrity; he had not provoked God, wherefore there was no judgment; he did not require or seek mercy, and therefore compassion had not been shown towards him; but complacency God felt towards his offspring—he looked and saw his own image reflected on the soul of man, and he loved his image there. But bright as it was—blessed as was this happy state of our race, soon sin came in, and death followed in its train—and then judgment first appeared among the sons of men: judgment, arrayed in fearful majesty, appeared, when the voice of the Lord arrested the shrinking culprit, and said—"Cursed is the ground for thy sake," "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." And that simple sentence has taken effect on all generations from Adam to the present hour; and sorrow, and sin, and death have, generation after generation, been companions in the life of man, all from the transgression of one command—the test of human obedience, and the hinge of human destiny below.

But was judgment only visited on man? No, thanks be to God, the God of all grace and consolation, mercy followed close on the steps of judgment; and scarcely had the thunders of the voice of one yet died away on the ear of the trembling culprits, until the still small voice of mercy was heard saying—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." Thus first in paradise might fallen man begin the sweet song to which the Psalmist here tunes his harp, and say, even as "with lingering steps and slow," from paradise he took his way, "My song shall be of mercy and judgment."

And if we pass on with the race of man, it is not long till again we have a

fearful manifestation of righteous judgment. Man "begat a son in his own image, after his likeness," and he begat a son, in the same fallen similitude; and as man multiplied, iniquity multiplied, till the whole earth had corrupted its way, and God, looking abroad on its inhabitants, beheld that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually:"—and the great God was so filled with righteous indignation, that he spared not the work of his own hands, but resolved to write on the ruins of a wretched world, how "fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God!" And then it was that God wrought a thing that may well make the ears of every one that heareth it to tingle; the gates and doors of the heavens above were opened, and the great depths from beneath broken up; and the flood from below, and from above, meeting together, inwrapped the world in one wide desolation, and the billows of the flood, as they rolled over the lower creation, oh, with what a voice did they proclaim, that God is a just and holy God, that the sin of the sinner will find him out, that there is judgment with him, that he is terrible in judgment!

But is mercy lost amidst the deluge? Is there no rainbow that girds that dark cloud, and tells us that God has not forgotten to be gracious? There is, behold on the surface of the wide waters, there is seen something like a little speck afar off; as it approaches, we discern it to be an ark of mercy, and in that ark are preserved the only family that God found just before him,—just, as far as man can be just, just in the righteousness of a future Saviour. God himself planned the ark, gave time for that ark to be constructed, locked the door on that favored family, and it was not till that ark was complete, and all its precious freight was safe, that God allowed the deluge to spread abroad; and the same flood that overwhelmed the ungodly, bore the ark of peace and promise, in safety on its

wide waters. Brethren, Noah, as he stood on Mount Ararat, and looked abroad upon the desolation of the surrounding world, had cause to take up the song of the Psalmist, and with somewhat of a depressed heart, as he descended from the mountain, he could say, "My song shall be of mercy and judgment."

If we trace on the history of the world, we come, ere long, to another most stupendous display of judgment mingled with mercy. We come to those fearfully depraved cities of the plain, that had so polluted and defiled themselves, that God would not visit them after the ordinary manner of his righteous vengeance, but did a new thing,—“he rained down fire and brimstone from the Lord out of heaven,” and carried them “quick into the pit.” Oh, the fearful cry that rose as they went down to endless perdition—how fearfully did it tell of the judgment of God! But is there no trace or vestige of mercy amidst that frightful overthrow? There is;—we see one family with angels as their guide, speeding their steps to a city of safety, and “the angels, as they lingered, laid hands on them, God being gracious to them,” and hastened forward their lingering footsteps, for God said,—“I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither.” If, then, the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrhah seem, to the present day, to set forth the just vengeance of God, the rescue of Lot, though he had tempted God in entering the city of Zoar, shows that God delights in mercy, and that judgment is his strange work. If there is ruin for his foes, there is grace for his friends, and he will save the righteous in the day of peril.

And then we are brought to the history of that deeply interesting nation, whose whole history may be summed up in one epitome—an incessant illustration of mercy and judgment. In the outset, their patriarch father furnishes us with a striking instance of mercy and judgment; for when Israel, the parent of the tribes of the Lord, was led to depart from strict

honesty and truth, and sought to obtain that blessing, which God would have given him in the path of truth, by falsehood and wrong, and was induced to deceive his poor aged parent, and deceive him with a base and heartless lie, God visited on Jacob, though he was his son and servant, his transgression; for, so far is God from sparing the sins of his people, that “the time is come when judgment begins at the house of God”—“the righteous scarcely are saved,” their souls shall not perish, but their sins shall not go unpunished: “You only have I known” says Jehovah to his people, “among the nations of the earth, therefore will I punish your sins:”—and so it was with Jacob. As he had deceived his poor, aged father, his children deceived him; as he did not regard the sorrow of his father’s heart, or his brother’s bitter grief—because it was his falsehood that brought that grief upon his brother: though God would doubtless have effected his purposes in some other way, yet the immediate cause of his brother’s grief was the perfidy he suffered from him—and thus God agonized and wrung afterwards the heart of the aged father: when his own dear child was wrung from his embrace, he said, “Me have you bereaved of my children, all these things are against me.” He could sing of judgment; he could tell of breach upon breach, and wound upon wound he suffered, because he was verily guilty. But did God forget mercy to his servant? Witness the grey-headed patriarch, as he bows his head on his bed; listen to the testimony of his dying breath, “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.” As he lays his trembling hands on the heads of the sons of his favourite, Joseph, he says, “The God before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me, bless the lads:”—mercy brightened the closing scene of the patriarch; mercy rejoiced against judgment, and judgment was swallowed up in grace. And if we trace

the people of God through all their wanderings in the wilderness, what a continual series do we find of mercy mingling with judgment, and judgment again darkening mercy. We find that now they rebel, and the wrath of God goes forth in part—and we find the mediator—the type of the *great* Mediator, standing “between the living and the dead, and the plague is stayed.” We see events in their history telling of judgment, and telling of mercy—mercy, through a mediator that stands between God and man—the Days-man that can lay his hand on them both, and so make peace.

We find, too, as the people of God came to the borders of the promised land that, on account of their murmuring and rebellion against God, he justly left them to perish in the wilderness, and that whole generation found a sepulchre in the desert. And thus judgment was fearfully written on their graves; but God allowed the offspring of these people to enter the land of promise, he thought upon Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he allowed not one jot or tittle of the promises to fall to the ground; and surely as they came out of the desert, and entered the land, and found God fighting their battles, and putting them in possession of a land they had not cultivated, and vineyards that they had not planted, and houses they had not builded, they could take up the song of the sweet Psalmist and say, “I will sing of mercy and judgment.”

And if we take the sweet Psalmist himself, we find that no man could more truly, from the experience of his heart and life, sing, “My song shall be of mercy and judgment.” David, though a man after God’s own heart, fearfully fell, and fearfully did he suffer for that fall; in that one matter of the wife of Uriah, he brought alike blood and shame upon his own soul, and gave occasion to the adversaries to rejoice; and therefore God vindicated his holiness, while he maintained his mercy; and the latter days of David were one series of judgment upon

judgment. He was driven from his place and kingdom by his own unnatural child, on whom he had set his heart; that child was smitten down with all his sins upon his head—and this wrung the aged father’s heart to cry, “Oh my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!” Bitter indeed was his song of judgment in that hour of paternal agony, as his spirit yearned over his perished child, perished without hope and without opportunity to cry for mercy. But was David left to judgment unmitigated with mercy? Did not mercy crown the whole, and shine brightly on his dying hour? Look at his dying testimony, “although my house be not so with God”—there was judgment darkening his evening scene—“yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire.” There was mercy quieting every fear, silencing every murmur, brightening the dark valley, bidding his soul depart in peace. The sweet singer of Israel, the son of Jesse, could with his dying breath, “sing of mercy and judgment.”

Brethren, trace the after history of the favoured people of God. Oh, what judgments came upon them, when they provoked God to sell them into the hands of their enemies! Now they cry to him, and he pitieth them in their affliction; now they provoke him, and he sells them into the hands of their enemies; and yet when from the land of their captivity, they sent up their supplications to God, “he made them that led them away captive to pity them.” We remember, that after seventy years of dismal banishment, he brought them to their country, rebuilt their city, and restored their temple. And when judgment came on them to the uttermost, when they filled up the measure of their iniquity, by shedding the blood of the Son of God, when this fearful crime was added to all their other guilt, and they invoked upon

them—"his blood be on us, and upon our children"—Oh! then, judgment indeed had its tremendous, and fearful, and full display. In their after history, (and you need not be told, brethren, that there was such an unparalleled development of the depth of Divine wrath against sin, as the world shall never witness till time shall be no longer,) you will remember how that fated city became the scene of every wretchedness and woe: without, encompassed with armies, and within, rent with faction;—how the signs in the heavens above, and how the fearful portents from the earth beneath, affrighted and appalled them;—how the famine consumed and the sword desolated, until myriads found a sepulchre within its walls; how they were driven to such an extremity of want and woe, that the dainty mother partook of the child of her womb, —how they were afterwards visited by such a fearful carnage, that there were no graves to bury them; and they were carried away captive to the ends of the earth, so that there was no nation in which they were not to be found; they were sold into the bitterest bondage; and you know how they have since, through long, long ages of sorrow and woe, been "a byword and a hissing, the offscouring and scoffing" of the world: how they have found every where foes, and no where friends;—how they have been trampled on by despotism, and outraged by popular fury; how they have no resting place for the sole of their foot, and no fixed habitation;—how every where, they have carried, written on their brows, the terrible judgment of God! You know that that mistrustful look, and fearful and timid aspect, and trembling step, and a brow furrowed with grief, and a wandering eye, and a fearfully haggard countenance, tell, wherever you meet an outcast wanderer of Israel, *that the judgment of God is upon him*—that the blood of Jesus cries for vengeance to heaven!

But in this dark and fearful display of

judgment to Israel, was there no ray of mercy to relieve the darkness? was there no morning star, the harbinger of their future redemption and salvation? Yes, there was an election according to grace in that nation, ripe for vengeance. There was a faithful people; and God led out his faithful people, before he allowed the city to be encompassed with the victorious army. While there was ruin for the foes of God, there was redemption and security for his friends. He made a broad wall of distinction between them, for their protection, because they were his. And, my brethren, we are bold to say, that ever since, God has a people from among the Jews, though it is as the gleanings of the vintage, as a few leaves on the outer branches; there have been some first fruits,—the pledges of the future harvest. And look to the bare fact and circumstance, that God has continued them amidst all vicissitudes and changes; while man would exterminate them, they have multiplied instead of being exterminated; and though he has cut down the vine which he brought out of Egypt, and shorn it of its branches, and stripped it of its beauty, and reduced it to a stump, "both with bars and iron," yet God preserves it, that it may again "take root downward, and bear fruit upward," that she (the nation) may "send out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river;" when he shall "return to visit his vine, and the vineyard which his right hand has planted, and the branch he made so strong for himself."

At the present moment, there is every reason to believe that the Jewish nation is more in number than it was in the day of the meridian of its glory, when the land flowed with milk and honey, when the mountains waved with cedars, and the valleys blushed with vines; there is every reason to believe that the multitude of the desolate mother's children are greater than were the multitude of mothers in the day of her mirth and bridal attire and glory. What does this prove? That

God has not forgotten his people, has not cast them off, that they are "dear for the Father's sake," that mercy still waits in store for them. Judgment has had its long and dreary night, only broken by a few stars. There is a bright morning drawing near, and mercy shall rejoice against judgment; and all their sorrows and judgments shall be forgotten in the triumph of their latter day: and the land shall share in their mercy, put off her sterility, and put on her beauty and brightness again; God will bless them, the earth shall yield her increase, and the land shall be rich and flow with milk.

Hitherto we have seen mercy and judgment mingling in the history of man. Let me now draw your minds to the most stupendous manifestation of mercy mingled with judgment that this world ever witnessed, that the universe ever beheld, that manifestation of it that shall to all ages be the theme of endless investigation, and the subject of a ceaseless song; into which angels desire to look, and in which they read more of the moral attributes and glory of the Deity than in all the intricacies of Providence or the works of creation.—Need I remind you of *God incarnate!*—the incarnation, life, suffering, and death of Christ! It was here that judgment had its most tremendous display: all the ruin of our race, all the judgments that ever fell on man, all the torments of the lost through eternity, are not to be compared, as displaying the judgment of God with his anger against his only begotten Son, when "he made him to be sin for us," when he gave up his soul an offering for sin, awoke his sword against him that was his fellow, and smote the shepherd of the flock; when he himself became the afflieter of the Son of his love: "it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he put him to grief." Dwell for a little on the infinite agony of God in our nature, and see how tremendous is the judgment of God! For oh, how infinite the justice that demanded such a sacrifice! how infinite the mercy that provided

it! But to see the depths of the Saviour's sufferings, we must not look merely at the external circumstances,—the scourging, the nails, the cross, the spear—these may strike the senses: but we must *lift the mantle of manhood*, and gaze on the infinite depth of the sorrows of his soul, if we would know the judgment of God in all its length and breadth, and depth and height. Oh, the judgment of God against sin, when laid on the Son of his love!—that that Son should have to say, "now is my soul troubled,"—that he should become "troubled even unto death," that he should be "very heavy and sore amazed,"—that he should pray, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me,"—that he should say, "Oh, my Father, if it be possible, take this cup away from me;" and that, being in an agony, he should "pray more earnestly, so that his sweat should be as great drops of blood falling down to the ground!" Oh, the judgment of God against sin, even when laid on his own beloved Son! that he should allow vile hands to take him, and nail him to the accursed tree, and make him a spectacle to men and angels, and that he should hide from him in the day of his deepest anguish, the light of his face, and that the Saviour should cry out, "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!" Brethren, we may talk of the blood that flowed from his hands, and side, and feet, but oh, think of the emotion of his infinite mind, under the sense of the burden of the sin of the world, in that last awful cry. Oh! it echoed with a voice that darkened the sun, and shook the earth, and opened the graves, and showed how terrible was the judgment of God! "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" "If these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?"

But, brethren, if *justice* had its infinite display in the cross, how much more, *mercy*? "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our

sins;" "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And what can we more say? "The height and length and breadth and depth of that love passeth knowledge." Ah, "God so loved the world that he spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up for us all," and that justice might be vindicated while mercy was manifested, he laid on him the sins of us all. Oh, the depth of the mercy of God; that that blessed Son turned not back from the hour of agony, and from the cup of bitterness,—that he said, "the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" What sustained him through the whole? What upheld him as he trod the wine-press of wrath alone? What led him to go as a conqueror rather than as a victim to the city where he was about to fulfil his passion? What led him with desire to desire to eat the Passover with them before he suffered? What led him to be straitened till baptised with a baptism of blood? All testified the infinite mercy of God.

Brethren, when you would learn how fearful is the judgment, and how blessed is the mercy of God, go to Gethsemane, go to Calvary,—there ponder and meditate till your heart is, on the one hand, overwhelmed with the majesty of Divine judgment, and, on the other hand, melted with the love and riches of Divine grace.

Beloved brethren, to bring home this subject nearer to ourselves—may not every child of God, from first to last, through his varied path, sing, "my song shall be of mercy and judgment?" In the very vestibule of our Christian course, the song is of judgment. God wounds that he may heal; and bruises that he may bind up. When smitten with the thought of sin, the soul seeks solitude, like Peter; he is pressed and pricked to the heart, as they were who cried out, "men and brethren, what shall we do?" He is

affrighted often with the sense of his danger, like the jailor at Philippi, when he came trembling and asked, "what must I do to be saved?" and then the penitent sings of judgment. But oh, how soon has he "beauty given for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness," and God "takes him up out of the miry clay, and out of the horrible pit, and puts a new song into his mouth," and he sings of mercy as well as of judgment. And through his after life, daily has he mercy to sustain, and judgment to guard. We are chastened for our sin; but still, though we suffer, we are not left to despair, though chastened, we feel it is a Father's hand that holds the rod, a Father's wisdom that guides it. How clearly may we trace on the bitterest cup, the prints of a Father's fingers? How distinctly, in the loudest storm, can we hear the voice of our Saviour amidst the winds and waves, saying, "it is I, be not afraid!" Brethren, there are no sorrows so deep, but there is somewhat of solace in them; no cup so bitter, but there are some drops of mercy still in it. If we are children of God, there still is, in the darkest night, something to support and cheer us; and we may still sing, "my song shall be of mercy and judgment." Yea, how often does God beautifully temper one judgment with a corresponding mercy; we hear tidings of evil to-day, to-morrow cheering tidings to sustain us: to-day the heaven is dark with clouds, to-morrow the clouds may have passed away, "heaviness may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning:" we may "sow in tears, but reap in joy;" if we "go on our way weeping, bearing precious seed, we shall doubtless come again with joy, bringing our sheaves with us." In the history of our hearts and lives, as well as in the history of the world, we may continually sing of mercy and judgment. We now feel distress, and fear, and doubt: "within are fears; without, fightings," but, ere long, some

precious promise is brought home to the heart, or some secret influence of the Spirit passes on our minds, the light of Divine joy returns to us, and we rejoice in the God of our salvation; and though for a season we may hang our harps on the willows, we will take these harps again, and string them to praise. Look to the inspired Psalmist; he began often on the chords of mourning,—he ended on the chord of thanksgiving; before he rises from his knees, his prayer is lost in praise, yea, though bowed down in sorrow and sighing, he continues at the mercy seat till sorrow and sighing are lost in the strains of rejoicing and triumphant joy:—"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart." Even in this world, the Christian, if he has sorrows, his sorrows are all his Saviour's, his joys are all his own, that strangers intermeddle not with; his sorrows have a sweetness in them, unknown to a desponding and ungodly world. May I not appeal to the heart of many, can you not sing from experience, "my song shall be of mercy and judgment?" and has it not been good for you that judgment was mingled with mercy, and mercy with judgment? and have you not found, that when you were in danger of sleeping on your knees, and slumbering at your posts, judgment aroused you? Have you not been in danger of feeling "my judgment is passed over from my God;" but if you waited on God again, you "renewed your strength, you mounted on wings as eagles, you walked and were not weary, you ran and did not faint;" your God lifted his candle upon your head, and caused the joy of his Spirit to fill your breast, and you could sing of mercy and judgment?

Let me plead with those who know not the mercy of God, and who remain undisturbed by his judgments. My dear fellow-immortals, let me conjure you to remember, that there is a world where judgment is all alone—in hell there is everlasting night, no star to cheer it, no

mercy-seat inviting you to prayer, no mediator by whom to draw near to God, no overtures of reconciliation, no ambassador of peace, no strivings of conscience, no warnings of the Spirit, no entreaties to be saved. Oh, no, but "the worm that never dies," "the blackness of darkness for ever,"—*despair that knows no hope!* Let me conjure you to flee from the judgment to the mercy of God, to flee to that Saviour in whom mercy and judgment meet together; lay hold on his cross, meet him as a *Saviour* before you meet him as a *Judge*, find him on *Calvary*, before you find him on *the great white throne*; for how will you stand his judgment, except you have found his mercy? Oh that God would inspire the heart of any sinner here, who has presumed on the mercy of God, to tremble at his judgment, and to remember that judgment must have its work, and vengeance must have its satisfaction, in the surety or the sinner: and therefore, either God must see the blood of the Lamb on your consciences, or else the destroying angel of his grace must take you to prison, till you pay the uttermost farthing, which you will never do, and you must remain there for ever and ever. Oh, that God would lead you to tremble at the thought of abusing his kindness, and trifling with his long suffering; for, "if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

Christian brethren, are you looking at judgment till you despair of mercy? Are you saying, there is no hope for me in God? Do you feel your transgression is so great, you cannot believe that any one so great a sinner as you ever found acceptance with God? We do not say, make light of your sins, you cannot esteem them heavier than they are; but we say, make not heavier of your sins than you make of your Saviour; your sins are *finite*, your Saviour is *infinite*. Look with one eye on *your guilt*, that you may be humbled before the judgment of God; look with the other to *the*

cross, that you may rejoice in the mercy of God. However great your sins, greater is the Divine compassion; however deep the die of the guilt of your sins, "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." Oh, take up, then, the song of the text, for mercy is satisfied, and justice is satisfied in the propitiation of the Son of God: and let me exhort you to show mercy as you have obtained mercy; and to show it pre-eminently to that people for whom I this night plead.

Let me remind you, that the Jewish people have had the history of a great portion of the world enrolled in their own peculiar nation; and does not this stamp a sacredness upon them, and give them a claim upon our respect and sympathy, and love and gratitude, such as I wonder the Church of Christ can have felt so indifferent to, and Christians regard with such obduracy of heart? Let us remember, "he that showeth no mercy shall have judgment without mercy:" and surely we shall not be consulting the will of our heavenly Father, if we bruise those whom he has bruised: but we shall be consulting the will of our Saviour and our God, if we love to try and present to them the "balm that is in Gilead, and the physician that is there," to tell them that the blood they shed can cleanse them from the guilt of having shed it, that as it has been upon their soul hitherto as a curse, it may be upon them for a blessing to eternal life. Here is the gracious and good purpose I set before you on the present occasion. This Institution is the only Institution in our favoured land that seeks the welfare of Israel, as its specific and great object; and I do think that no Institution has a more prominent claim on us as men and as Christians. In every point of view, how deep is our debt to Israel? Under God, we owe to Israel whatever we have of wealth, of liberty, of righteous laws; *for we owe all to Christianity, and we owe Christianity to the Jewish people.* We owe them more than this,—we owe them

whatever we have of the promises or the precepts, the means of grace or the hope of glory: we owe to them *the Saviour* that redeemed us; he was of the house of Israel; *The prophets* that foretold the mercies we enjoy, and gave the warnings that illustrate to us the dealings of God with man—we owe to them *the Apostles* that preached to us "the unsearchable riches of Christ:"—*all were Israelites.* And we entreat you, by their remembrance, by the obligations you owe to them, to repay to their posterity the long, long debt accumulating on us: and let me conjure you that you give the Jew a prominent place in your affections, your sympathies, and your prayers; for a prominent place he has in the purposes and promises of God, and a prominent place he will have in that glorious time when "the fulness of the Gentiles shall be brought in," and "the earth shall see the salvation of God." May you show mercy as you have found mercy, and bear in mind that striking and emphatic passage where St. Paul says, "these have now not believed, that through your mercy, they may obtain mercy,"—how manifestly the mercy to the Gentiles is here made the channel of mercy to the Jews. Instead of waiting for miracles and preternatural interposition, we are bound to show mercy, as the channel through which he will show mercy to his people.

And let me remind you, there will be one infinite display of mercy and judgment,—that which the universe will behold,—God will come to judgment; Christ is coming in triumph to receive his people home, and to execute vengeance on his foes! In that fearful day for which all other days were made, when the heavens shall flee away before his face—when the dead, small and great, shall stand before his throne, and the judgment shall be set and the books opened—when all the human race shall be assembled together, and "he shall separate them, the one from the other,

as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats ;"—Oh, then, when he shall say to the multitude which no man can number, which shall be on his right hand, "Come, ye blessed children of my Father, receive the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world,"—when he shall lead them, clothed with white robes and crowns on their heads—when he shall lead them, a number without number, more than the sands on the sea shore innumerable, when he shall lead them, washed in his blood from every spot and defilement, and perfectly in his own image both in body and soul, into the mansions prepared for them, to the fountains of living waters, where God shall wipe away all tears from all eyes,—Oh, what a song will rise like the voice of many waters or mighty thunderings to the Lamb who washed them and redeemed them, and made them kings and priests unto God!—here is mercy that will shine on for ever, and be ever brightening as it shines.

But, brethren, how fearful the contrast!—there are a multitude on his left who would not have him to reign over them, who despised his mercy, and challenged his judgment: and hear their doom:—to them he will say, "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!" and oh! at that fearful sentence, that multitude shall pass away and enter that dark abode, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend up for ever! How terrible to the whole universe this manifestation of the just judgment of God! *And heaven for eternity, and hell for eternity, will show forth mercy and judgment.*

Beloved brethren,—Oh, that we in that awful day may be found in him in whom mercy and judgment meet, in whom God is just, and the justifier of the sinner, in whom our righteousness is complete, and our eternal happiness secured. AMEN.

THE DEATH OF JACOB.

It is said of Jacob, that "the time drew near that he must die;" and he drew near the time with as much joy as the time drew near to him with speed. For we find him speaking of his own approaching death with as much ease and complacency as if he was only setting out on a journey of pleasure.

Holy Jacob was fully satisfied as to the safety of his soul. He knew that his name was written in the book of life, and that his salvation was settled in the eternal covenant of grace and redemption. He had a blessed conviction that the Son of God, whose human nature was to descend from his loins in the tribe of Judah, had undertaken to atone for his sin, and to clothe him, by imputation, with a perfect righteousness.

"Israel said unto Joseph, behold now I die." He perceived the symptoms of approaching dissolution; and the pros-

pect conduced not to alarm his fears, nor to rivet him closer to the world, but operated like the shining of the sun, or the breathing of a zephyr on a flower. It expanded his hope, enlarged his desire for heaven, and diffused the fragrance of his faith on all within the sphere of his conversation. What grandeur and vivacity of genius must Jacob retain, even in that hour when strength and genius fail, to be able to convey his ideas in such august terms, and in a flow of such highly poetic imagery, as he does in the 49th chapter of Genesis. Who that reads this chapter would imagine that elevated strains like these, strains which would have done honour to the muse of Homer, warbled from the lips of a dying man; of a man, too, labouring under the utmost bodily decays of age, and over whose head no fewer than one hundred and forty-seven years had passed? **TORLADY.**

APPEAL FOR THE FEMALE ORPHAN HOUSE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1837,

BY THE REV. CHARLES MAYNE, A. M.

Rector of Kilmastulla, and Vicar General of the Diocese of Cashel.

JOHN 4, 34.

“ Jesus saith unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.”

HE who is described in Scripture as a sinner from the beginning, and the great adversary and enemy of mankind is, in three different parts of St. John's Gospel, called by our blessed Lord, “ the prince of this world.” And the disciple whom Jesus loved, speaking of those whom the Lord had redeemed, says, “ and we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.” This language, so frequently used by our Lord and his apostles, must be familiar to the ear of those who are conversant with the Scriptures ; and, as it is no doubt intended, so it would seem well calculated to arrest the attention of all who may happen to hear it, and to induce them, if any thing could, to enter on an examination of the startling propositions thus announced. That the implacable enemy and tempter of the human race is the prince of this world ; and that so large a portion of the children of men is obedient to him, that the Scriptures of truth, the word of that God who cannot lie, designate this portion of mankind as—the world. It is surely equally important to those who read their Bibles, and to those who have these solemn matters brought but occasionally before them in the house of God, to stop for a little time and to inquire, how can those things be ? The consideration is well fitted to alarm and awaken those who have lived on, the willing subjects of the

God of this world. But let us not be cast down ; he that is for us is stronger than he that is against us, and the same Lord who has attributed this temporal sovereignty to the accuser of his brethren, has also said, “ now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out.” Yes, the branch that was to grow out of the roots of Jesse has come forth, and they who are willing to range themselves under the banner that he has unfurled, will go forth conquering and to conquer. It is then an undeniable truth, authenticated by the seal of God's word, that the children of God, the brethren of the Lord Jesus, are not of the world, even as he was not of the world. And this holds before us the awful warning, that the great mass of mankind, unquestionably marked out by being called the world, is still “ sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death,”—while it teaches us, that those who are reconciled to God, who are enabled to address him as their Father, by becoming the brethren of Jesus Christ, dying with him to sin, and rising with him to newness of life, are freed from bondage to Satan, from fellowship with the children of this world, and are enabled, as a chosen generation, and a peculiar people, to walk in holiness, and to “ show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.” Surely it is

a most blessed hope, nay assurance, which the Scriptures have set before us, that from all the pollutions of the world, a way of escape is freely offered through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. That the narrow path which conducts to the gate of heaven is clearly marked out, and that a guide is furnished for us, acquainted with all the intricacies of the way, and on whose fidelity, we can rely. In the single verse which I have read to you, this guide is presented, and in these few words the road is described, by which we must walk—"Jesus saith unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." I am aware how subtle the natural depravity of the human heart is, and how ingenious, in devising excuses to extricate men from admitting the necessity of taking up the cross daily: how prompt it is to magnify the Divine nature, and the fulness of that grace which rested on the Lord, in order to prove that his example could not be proposed to us, as one that we were literally bound to follow. Let me offer the words of St. John, as an unanswerable reply to all that can be urged upon this subject. Having stated, as the foundation on which all must be built, that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins, he adds,— "And hereby we do know, that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk even as he walked."— And what a beautiful, instructive, and comprehensive picture of the life of God in the soul of man, does the passage of Scripture I have set before you hold out, as exemplified in the conduct of Jesus Christ, our guide and example? Wearied with a toilsome journey, he sat by Jacob's well, while his disciples went to buy some food. A wretched woman, dead in trespasses and sins, came to draw water at the well where our Lord rested; he gladly laid hold on the opportunity thus presented, of saving a soul from destruction. While thus engaged, his disciples returned and prayed him to eat; wholly absorbed

by his labour of love, he said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Entangled, as they still were, with the contemplation of earthly things, the disciples did not comprehend the Lord's meaning, and began to inquire whether any one had brought him food to eat.— Then Jesus said plainly to them, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." In his human and mediatorial capacity, Jesus was the Father's servant, and the work assigned to him was to reveal, in a more perfect manner, the will of God, and to save mankind by his own obedience unto death. In this work he engaged with such fervent affection, with such indefatigable diligence, and with such undaunted resolution, as to bring home to the minds of his disciples the prophetic description recorded of him, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." Can any of us persuade ourselves that affection less fervent, that diligence less indefatigable, that resolution less undaunted, can be required, to attain the object we profess to have in view, namely, to "work out our salvation, with fear and trembling," because, as the Apostle warns us, "It is God which worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure?" Here every temptation to exalt the creature is taken away—every good and perfect gift is acknowledged to come from above, while gratitude for the blessings of redeeming love (a gratitude which will ever be co-extensive with the sense we attain to of the pollution from which we have been cleansed,) leads the servant of God to an entire dedication of himself and all that he has, to the service of him "Who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, to the end, that all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Yes, rely upon it, this is true, not only of the sinner who washed the Lord's feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, but of every sinner who has existed, who lives now, who shall yet

walk upon the earth among the redeemed of the Lord ; where there is an adequate conception of the guilt from which they have been freed, they will love much.—Have we any such sense of the mercy of God in Jesus Christ? Do we feel that our sins have been many? Have we any comfortable sense that they have been forgiven?—do we attest this by the universality of our devotion to God? If so, the tongue, giving utterance to the fulness of the heart, will say with Jesus, “ My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work : ”—and can we have any doubt what the will of God is, and what the work is that he would have finished ?

If we can hesitate about either, let us look to the Saviour's walk through life, and we shall perceive him constantly engaged in doing good to the bodies and the souls of men. Let us then look round on the world in which we live, and say, whether the misery and destitution under which such numbers suffer, and the spiritual darkness in which so many wander, does not place before us work which demands our labour ; and whether we may not as assuredly gather from the Word of God, that the Lord would have his servants to engage in it, as Paul did, when the vision appeared to him by night, and the man of Macedonia prayed him, saying, “ Come over into Macedonia, and help us ? ” Indeed, my friends, the earth is so covered with those who are ready to perish for lack of food, and for lack of knowledge, that the apparent hopelessness of alleviating those evils in any sensible degree, represses the energy of some, and is used as an excuse by others, for not engaging in what the coldness of their faith persuades them to believe is an insurmountable task. It was not thus that Jesus felt, when the wretched Samaritan woman presented herself before him at Jacob's well. He saw her, indeed, confirmed in habits of long-indulged sin, the conscience seared, and the heart as hard as a piece of the nether mill-stone. But he knew that it was the will of God that

sinners should be saved, and that the work he had to finish was to preach the Gospel, to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation ; he accordingly engaged in this seemingly hopeless task, with a zeal which enabled him to say—“ My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.” I trust I am this day surrounded by many brethren of the Lord Jesus—by many who are like-minded, who feel that it is not merely their duty, but their privilege, to be workers together with him ; and having tasted, in their own persons, that the Lord is gracious, are now zealous in showing how great things God hath done unto them, and thus, “ let their light shine before men, that they may see their good works, (for this single purpose the fruit of gratitude and love,) that men may glorify their father, which is in heaven,” whom they announce as the author and finisher of every good work. And I would ask, if the principle which I have laid down at the commencement of this discourse, that the whole world lieth in wickedness, that those who have not heard and embraced the Word of Life are necessarily walking in the valley of the shadow of death, of eternal death,—if this principle be clearly revealed in Scripture, and is therefore true, I would ask, how can men be more manifestly engaged in doing the will of God, and finishing his work, than when they are labouring to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, and beseeching wretched wandering sinners, in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God? And among the various paths of Christian duty which present themselves—among the numerous claims of suffering humanity which assail the heart, which can be more plainly leading to the narrow gate which openeth into heaven, and which can urge its petition with more irresistible urgency than that which I am commissioned to lay before you this day—the supplication of the orphan, that you would stretch forth your hand to shield her from the perils which surround, and to alleviate some portion of that misery to which the inscrutable

providence of God has exposed her? It would, I feel persuaded, be something worse than a mere waste of time, to enter into any lengthened detail of the amount or nature of this misery, or the fearful character of those perils. Let me only recal to the minds of any parents who may hear me, the anxieties which fill their breasts, when they reflect on the temporal and spiritual difficulties which surround their children—the labours they undergo, the plans they devise, the precautions they accumulate to save those who are so dear to them from the anticipated evils which threaten misery to the body here, and, still worse, endless misery to the soul hereafter. Let me recal to their minds the prayers which, with unwearied perseverance, they address night and morning to God, that he would prosper their endeavours, that he would bless the means they are so industriously using, that their children may enjoy health and competence in this world, and be accepted in the beloved, at the great day of account.

If you attend with careful diligence to these efforts, and believe that they tend to the happiness of your offspring, can you avoid feeling for the situation of those who are thrown upon the charity of the world, to supply the care, and the attention, and to offer up those prayers which you feel to be so important to your children? If the zeal with which you seek to provide for their wants, for their comforts—a zeal which we find still continues to burn in the parental heart, unquenched, unabated, by the frowardness, by the ingratitude, which sometimes are the only returns made—an untiring zeal, which can be expected from no other source but that inexhaustible well-spring of parental fondness, which the God of nature seems to have planted in the hearts of all animals—if the orphan be necessarily deprived of the benefits which flow to children from the exercise of this parental zeal, then, I ask, can parents be regardless of the case of those who must suffer the total want of it? But I appeal not alone to the hearts of parents, *the orphan's*

cry should reach all hearts. By every Christian heart it should be entertained, not merely on the grounds of humanity, but of express and positive duty.

To the state of lamentable desertion which I have described, the orphan has been reduced by the immediate hand of God. Yet he ceases not to be their Father; and David has spoken of the guardianship which he exercises over them in language which, we know, has soothed the wounds, and calmed the palpitations of many an orphan's heart.

Speaking, as the Spirit gave him utterance, he says, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." And how, my friends, does God stretch forth his parental protection over those forsaken ones?—even by the instrumentality of your Christian benevolence and bounty. Indeed, I see not how it can be disputed, that children so circumstanced are thrown, by the act of God, upon the public care; and are, both by those principles which bind society together, and still more, by simple Christian principle, entitled to the protection and watchful care of the community. For in whatever way our particular views of what is called political economy may lead us to regard the question of the mode or manner of affording or distributing charitable relief, on this particular subject, I should think, there could exist no difference of opinion: you neither increase the number of orphans, nor deteriorate their character, by the assistance you afford.

But, I am ready to admit, that the several classes to whom I have appealed, on behalf of those poor orphans, have not merely a right, but that it is indeed their duty to examine carefully, and to be fully satisfied in their own minds, that the guardians of this charity, to whom the bounty of individuals, and the public bounty is committed, exercise the trust confided to them with zeal and discretion—conferring at once a benefit upon the children themselves, and the country which has adopted them. The philan-

thropic philosopher may, perhaps, be satisfied with demanding, that the care and education bestowed upon those children of the state, may procure for them what one of the wisest of the heathen satirists has called the best gift we can pray for, namely, "a sound mind, in a sound body." Now, I am enabled to state, that so far as this is attainable by our exertions, it is bestowed upon them. Their health of body is carefully attended to, by the due regard paid to proper food, clothing, and exercise, and by abstaining from the imposition of such tasks as might prove hurtful to the youthful frame; and I rejoice at being able to state, as a proof that those exertions have been successful, that only one death has taken place in the house during the last year.— Though here I must remind you, that the preservation of health, and the rearing up a sound body, in this particular establishment, is obviously attended with peculiar difficulties, arising from the very nature of its inmates. They are, alas! orphans—and the seeds of those diseases which have, at such an early age, deprived them of both parents, may be expected to lurk in their system, and we cannot, therefore, be surprised if the worm, in the bud of youth, should here frequently exhibit itself. And hence the call upon you, to extend to these youthful sufferers such a healthful and judicious course of education, as may strengthen their weak frames, and fit them to encounter the struggle of life, should be the more readily responded to.

With regard to the remainder of the blessing—"a sound mind,"—all those precautions are taken, which long and anxious observation of the world, of its snares, and of its vanities, can suggest.— and here the precept of the Apostle has been faithfully observed, in which he says, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat." In our establishment, the bread of idleness is not eaten; I am informed that the amount annually produced by needle-

work averages £400. Yet the girls are not wholly occupied in sedentary employments, but they are also trained as servants, for different departments, to as great an extent as is possible in an establishment of the kind. Indeed, the whole domestic work of the house is done by the girls, under the immediate superintendence of one salaried servant. The literary instruction is confined to reading, writing, and accounts, so far as is suitable for the rank in life for which they are intended. But my dependence this day for a liberal contribution to this house of refuge for the deserted and the shorn lamb, rests upon the hope I entertain, that there are many here "whose meat it is to do the will of God, and to finish his work;" and they will desire to be informed whether what they necessarily consider to be the one thing needful is attended to. I am enabled to state, that as this establishment was originally undertaken in the fear and love of God, and in a simple reliance upon his support and fostering care, so it has ever since, and to the present hour it continues to be conducted by those who happily have had the management of it, upon the principles established by our Lord himself, "Take no thought saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be clothed, but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." I speak of this from my own knowledge. As chaplain to the Orphan House, I knew intimately what the working of the system was, and I enjoyed the privilege of friendship and familiar intercourse with the leading and most influential governors of the charity. There were among them those whose meat and drink it truly was, "to do the will of him that sent them, and to finish his work." Twenty years have now rolled away since I ceased to have any official connexion with this Institution; but my intimacy with those under whose direction it remained, continued to subsist, and at times, and those times were not few, when, from the altered state of public

opinion, and the changes which were taking place in various public charities, the governors had painful forebodings as to what might be the result, with regard to the establishment under their care.— At those times, they intermitted nothing of their usual diligent exertions for the prosperity of the Institution. They forgot not that their heavenly Father knew that they had need of all those things. They sought him, and his righteousness, and full of hope and faith, they believed that necessary things would be added unto them. I do not mention this to magnify the creature, nor to use this as a place for sounding forth the praise of man; but to set before you the spirit which filled the breasts of those who guided and governed the whole. While, then, the wants of the body were duly attended to, the religious instruction of the young people was looked to as the first and most important object. The chaplain devotes himself assiduously to the training up those children in the way they should go, and he informs me, that he is personally cognizant of many most satisfactory instances of young persons from the Orphan House, turning out useful members of society—and this agrees with all my experience of the establishment. Indeed, the demand for young women brought up in the house continues, as it did twenty years ago, to produce occasional inconvenience, by taking away so large a proportion of the elder girls. The establishment is arranged for the reception of 160 orphans, and I wish to impress upon your minds what I conceive to be a very important feature of this Institution, the wide extent of its sphere of usefulness, which embraces the whole kingdom; come from what quarter they may, provided the rules of the house be complied with, the destitute orphan is assured of shelter here. While

youth presses, and till strength of body, and the imparted strength of Christ shall enable them to proceed on their pilgrimage, they are clothed, fed, and lodged, and prayer is continually made, that the efforts used to make them children of God, and to keep them separate from that world which lieth in wickedness may be blessed. One other thing I would also impress upon you. I recollect there was formerly an impression upon the public mind, that the amount collected here for this charity was of little moment, because the government was supposed to be engaged to supply any deficiency. Let me, then, distinctly state, that the funds of this Institution are derived from subscriptions, the needle-work of the girls, collections in the chapel, and from the annual sermon—the government undertaking to give a grant equal in amount to the proceeds from all these sources. You perceive, then, that the smallest addition to the contribution here is of importance. And now, what can I say more? What need can I have to say more to those who enter this Church with the belief, that like the Son of God, so they were sent upon the earth, not to do their own will, but the will of him that sent them?—Wearied with toil, and exhausted with hunger, the Lord forgot all when a sinner presented herself before him, for to save that which was lost, was his meat and drink. Is it, my friends, a work less desirable to engage in, to save from the world those who are not yet polluted by it. We have presented this day before you, more than 150 orphans, and not only orphans, but female orphans. Oh, consider from what complicated misery your exertions may protect them. And may he who said, "it is more blessed to give than to receive," open your hearts to respond liberally to their appeal.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXXI.

SATURDAY, MAY 27, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. T. D. GREGG, A. M.

REV. HENRY WOODWARD, A. M.

ON THE MELCHIZEDEKEAN PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN SWIFT'S-ALLEY FREE CHURCH, DUBLIN, ON SUNDAY, 30TH APRIL, 1837.

BY THE REV. T. D. GREGG, A. M.

(Minister of the Church.)

PSALMS, CX. 4.

“ The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.”

THE Psalm from which the text is taken is a very extraordinary one, but important and interesting. It is entitled a Psalm of David; but I think it highly probable that if it were read over by an infidel, he would be likely to conclude that this title was a wrong one. He would be likely to say, the psalm is evidently a poetic composition, conceived in a high strain of eulogy, abounding in the Eastern forms of speech, and addressed, perhaps, by some of his courtiers to king David, after he had, by the turns of favourable fortune been raised to the throne of Israel. This king, he would say, affected a character of great piety—took considerable pains in regulating the temple services, so that

he was regarded by his people almost as much in the light of a priest as of a king. Nevertheless he earned the character of a great monarch and distinguished warrior also, by the prowess wherewith he crushed his enemies beneath his feet, and controuled his turbulent subjects. To this prosperous monarch would the infidel say, his flattering courtiers approached with awe, and in the language of poetry, ascribed his eminence to the immediate interference of the Lord himself, saying, that God had set him at his right hand in power, and would certainly make him superior to every foe. If we read the psalm with this view of it in our minds, we shall see that the language of it would afford a colour to such an interpretation.

"The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth. The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath. He shall judge among the heathen, he shall fill the places with the dead bodies; he shall wound the heads over many countries. He shall drink of the brook in the way: therefore shall he lift up the head."

You perceive that the language of this sacred composition seems much to accord with the hypothesis that I have laid down. To this hypothesis, however, there is a most valid objection, and that objection is, that God forbids it to be entertained. Christ is recorded in no less than three of the Gospels to have declared that the psalm was a prophesy of the Messiah, written by David. "How doth David," saith he, "in spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Here an unerring testimony stamps the psalm with a prophetic character, attributing it to David himself. This would be decisive with the true Christian. He would with child-like simplicity abandon his own imaginations, and suffer himself to be led by Scripture.

I would urge upon you, my dear brethren, the importance of this humble state of mind. It is presumption to pretend to be wise above what is written—it were madness to affect a wisdom that opposed the oracles of God. Then are we in the true road to sound knowledge, where every thought is brought into subjection to the obedience of Christ.

A short time back, having read over

the psalm, the idea that I first brought before you struck my mind very forcibly. This idea seemed to make many of its obscurities plain. However, a little consideration compelled me to see that the interpretation was at variance with Scripture. Had I held to the interpretation, notwithstanding this, I should have done wrong; but I instantly rejected it with the feeling, "let God be true, and every man a liar," although there are difficulties about the psalm, Scripturally considered, I shall prefer, if need be, to be foiled by those difficulties, than to embrace a mode of solving them that is at variance with Scriptural truth. On coming to this conclusion, I again read over the psalm with a greater intensity of attention than I had hitherto done, and in so doing I experienced much light on the subject—it seemed opened to me with a degree of clearness, such as I had not previously perceived it with.

You will excuse me, I trust, for mentioning these few particulars. They illustrate, in a way which I hope may not be unprofitable, the position which I above laid down, to wit, the importance of an instant and humble submission to the plain dictates of Scripture. Instead, then, of simply confining your attention to the remarkable verse which I have read as my text, I shall make the whole psalm the subject of consideration. May the Lord bless it to our souls.

I. "*The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.*"

Remember, then, that from the time in which our first parents fell, down to the very period of the coming of Christ, (not to say afterwards among the unbelieving Jews,) the promise of a Saviour to restore mankind to the privileges which they enjoyed before the fall, was the great subject of consideration of all the righteous. The mysterious promise was "the seed of the woman shall bruise the

serpent's head." (Gen. iii.) Mark!—"the seed"—the offspring of the woman. It was a virgin that should conceive and bear the son—"the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," i. e. shall destroy the power of Satan—deliver men from the curse and wrath of God, and restore them to a condition of peace and blessedness. How numerous must have been the conjectures that the patriarchs before Abraham formed of the long promised seed. And when the promise was renewed to Abraham with somewhat of greater fulness, and lodged in his family, springing from his son Isaac, the long expected child of promise, whose birth had something of the nature of a miracle; and when it was afterwards again and again renewed to Isaac and Jācob with all those accompaniments of a preternatural sort which could give force and interest to it, with what earnestness must the whole nation of the Israelites have looked forward for the arrival of their divinely promised king. When compared with all the inhabitants of the earth, they were but as a handful—a little flock placed in a corner of the world, almost overlooked by the crowd of the busy contenders for earthly supremacy who were around them. Yet were they assured by the infallible word of God himself that there should arise among them a Being of surpassing power—a king whose sway should be universal, who should not merely exercise an undisputed power over the territory of Judea, but to whom the Lord should "give the heathen as an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as a possession;" in whose foreseen approach the prophets triumphed with an exultation so boundless that language seemed scanty in the expression of it—"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah ix.) "Rejoice, rejoice greatly, O daughter of

Zion! behold, thy king cometh." (Zech. ix.) "Cry aloud and shout thou inhabitant of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." (Isaiah xii.) Just in proportion to the strength of faith of the believing Israelite, would be the joyfulness of the anticipations with which he looked forward to the glories of Messiah's reign.

How earnestly must the faithful David have dwelt upon these thoughts. He found himself surrounded by a rebellious and a stiff-necked people—ever prone to revolt against his authority. During the time that he avoided the tyrannical oppressions of Saul, how hard did he find it to keep together the little band, of whom the Lord had made him the leader. Afterwards how stubborn and disobedient did he find his subjects to be—driven as an exile, he flies before the face of Absalom, thwarted, opposed, resisted, and set at nought on divers occasions; he groaned at the contemplation of human depravity; and in the forestretchings of believing hope, he dwelt upon the contrast which the triumphant reign of Messiah should present to the turbulent commotions of his own time. Then "the sword should be beaten into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook, the lion should lie down with the lamb, the leopard should sport with the kid, they should not hurt nor destroy in the holy mountain of the Lord." (Isaiah xi.) "All nations should pay him tribute—all people should do him service." "The Gentiles should come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising." It was in the contemplation of such thoughts that he seems to have been inspired at the time of writing the psalm before us. In the sense of his own weakness and insufficiency—in the foretasted triumphs of the desired of all nations, the Spirit of the Lord descending upon him gives utterance to his holy feelings, saying, "the Lord said unto my Lord," (i. e. to Messiah; the King.) "sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine

enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion: rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Under this glorious king, resistance would be in vain; the Lord, himself would contend for his people—his irresistible power should crush the foe, and awe into subjection the most fierce and hostile.

You will perceive that the passage before us clearly argues that the Messiah was to be in some astonishing way God himself. He is called *adonai* in the text, a name here evidently belonging to the Lord. In the Hebrew, the verse sounds "Jehovah said unto Adonai, sit thou on my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." Here, then, I say, it was distinctly implied that Christ was to be God, a circumstance strongly insisted on by our blessed Lord himself.

II. "*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth.*"

My people are rebellious, said David, again and again have they risen up against me—with blood-thirsty violence they have sought after my life to destroy it. Had the Lord not been on my side, they would have prevailed against me. These sons of Zeruiah are too strong for me. The sons of Belial are as thorns, the man that toucheth them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear. I have been obliged, reflected he, to compel my people by force, but thy people, O Messiah, thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning.

Thy people shall be willing—they shall render to thee a free service, a voluntary reverence. Thy people shall be willing, *How?* In the beauties of holiness. Thy people shall be willing, *when?* in the day of thy power. *When* again? From the womb of the morning. Here, then, you perceive, are three notes, 1st, a note of the manner, and 2d, two notes of time.

Thy people shall be willing in the beauties of holiness. They shall know that

there is no power but of God—that thy power is of God. They shall serve thee, then, not for wrath, but for conscience sake—they shall serve thee, not as servants but as sons. They shall serve thee in the lowly spirit of genuine holiness,—the language of their hearts being, "Lord, what wouldest thou have us to do." Their belief in thee shall work by love—their labour for thee shall be emphatically called the labour of love.

Mark here, my brethren, how beautifully there is brought before us the absolute necessity of a change of heart, of a new birth unto righteousness. "We love him because he first loved us," and that love never is experienced until Christ is revealed to our souls by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. Remember, there must be a change of heart—"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Remember, and remember again, that it is not sufficient to be baptized by water unto repentance. This certainly is part of Christ's office, but it was an office the honour of which may be said to have been shared in by others. John baptized with water, but did he not testify to its insufficiency? Did he not say, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost?" Now, my brethren, here is a baptism that Jesus shares the honour of with no one. We his ministers baptize with water, he himself alone baptizes with the Holy Ghost.

Solemnly, my brethren, I ask you, have *ye* been so baptized? Have *you* experienced, that Christianity is to your soul the power of God unto salvation? In a word, has God himself made known to you that your iniquities are pardoned? Momentous question! I testify unto you, that it is your privilege to be able to know that your iniquities are indeed pardoned, your transgressions covered—that you have received at the Lord's hand double for all your sins.

Are you troubled—are you uneasy—

are you bowed down as by a weight upon your heart,—do you go mourning all the day long—do you say, would God I had not sinned—I have lost my peace—happiness has fled—there is nought for me but sorrow? Mark, I tell you, there is a cure for your misery. Your sin may be pardoned—your peace may flow as a river. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

“*Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.*” Here is the first note of time. The day of Christ’s power may be taken, first, spiritually, and next, literally. Spiritually considered, it would mean any time in which he exerted his spiritual influence. For example, when he opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the things spoken by Paul and Barnabas—when by the manifestation of his power he humbled unto faith the persecuting Saul—or when at any time he has made the word of his servants mighty to the pulling down of the strong holds of Satan, any such occasion might be called the day of Christ’s power. When Christ works, who can let him.

“As Jesus was walking by the sea of Galilee, he saw two brethren, Simon and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers; and he saith unto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed him”—*It was the day of his power.* “And going on thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them, and they left all and followed him”—*It was the day of his power.* On another time, “he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom. And he saith unto him, follow me. And he arose and followed him”—*It was the day of his power.* This morning he says to you by his minister “follow me.” Is there any that feel the vanity of the things of time, the vexation of the pursuit of sin—the misery connected with a devotion to those things

that perish in the using—any that feel that if happiness be to be found, it must be found in obedience to the commands of Jesus? My brethren, if you feel this with power, may you be made willing, may this moment be a turning point in your existence. Walk with God.

But the day of Christ’s power may refer more especially to that latter period, when the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea—when the Spirit of the Lord shall be poured out on all flesh. Then will all his people, without exception, render to him a willing obedience. There will be then no hesitation, do doubt, no resistance rendered to the Spirit of grace, but one heart, and one soul will characterize the people of God. In that day of Christ’s power, his people will indeed be willing.

Thy people shall be willing—*when?* In the second place, I answer, *from the womb of the morning*, i. e. from the dawning of the day; from that moment in which the morning seems to have given birth to the day; when the sun, breaking forth from the chambers of the east, first gilds with his glorious radiance the distant horizon—from that time thy people shall be willing.

Now, my brethren, apply this spiritually. Christ is called “the sun of righteousness.” He rises “with healing on his wings.” The Gentiles are said to “come to his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising.” When did the sun of righteousness, then, arise upon the earth? When did he bring the life and immortality which were hid beneath the darkness of the law—when did he bring them to light? Did he not bring them to light by the Gospel which he preached when he was among us? Now the Gospel day dawned upon the world, when Christ first was born in Bethlehem, of Judea. That was as it were, the morning of a glorious day, which then broke upon mankind. Oh, how earnestly was its approach expected! Did not the first-fruits of the *Gentiles*

on that morning show their willingness to subject themselves to the sway of their mighty king. They saw the young child, as he lay in the manger of the stable of the inn—they fell down and worshipped him—they opened their treasures—they presented unto him gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. How earnestly was the dawn of the morning of that day looked for by the expecting *Jews*?—yea, they watched for it, as those that watch for the morning. Here is a figure which God himself supplies us with: Conceive a ship-wrecked mariner—the tempest has howled—the billows have run “mountains high,”—the ship has foundered—a loosened plank, amid his sinking companions, has saved him from a watery grave:—the slowly returning day finds him cheerless and solitary, amid the world of waters dark and deep, still angry with the commotion of the storm:—he hopes that an humble signal, scarce at the elevation of his arm’s length, may attract the notice of some friendly eye—his hopes are buried in the shades of night—“hungry and thirsty, his soul fainteth in him.” My brethren, with what anxious desire does this outcast mariner watch for the morning?

Or go to the sick bed. The wretched victim of disease, in lingering pain, groans for that relief which skilful aid may afford—aid not to be hoped for till returning day. How does such a soul, filled with tossings to and fro—with what earnest longings, with what painful anticipations does it watch for the tedious approaches of the dawn?

Now the sacred writer says, in the language of inspiration, “My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning, I say, more than they that watch for the morning.” So did all the faithful of Israel wait—so did they long—so did they pant for the dawns of the day of grace. Aged women departed not from the temple night or day, but, with unintermitted supplications, and with continual fasting, they looked for the re-

demption of Israel. And when, in the morning of his existence, the babe was brought into the temple, that they might do unto him according unto the law, how did holy rapture swell the bosoms of the faithful?—they were willing, yea, they were more than willing, they were filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory! It had been revealed unto the holy Simeon that he should not see death, before that he had seen the Lord’s Christ. He came, by the Spirit, into the temple. Overcome with gratitude, we may suppose that tears of joy ran down his furrowed cheeks—he took him up in his arms—he blessed God and said, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a *light to lighten* the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.” The day of the power of the Lord then began to be—from the dawn of it the people of the Lord were willing—verily it was a day which might well move the children of men! “The morning stars seemed to sing together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” The heavenly choir wended their way to favoured earth, and such a chorus was heard, as had not been sung from the fall,—“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men!” From the birth of Christ, my brethren, his power began to be exerted in a more marked way upon the children of men, and it has ever since been put forth with more or less energy.

Thus may we understand, that the Spirit put into the lips of David language descriptive of the early commencement of the working of Messiah’s power.

III. “*Thou hast the dew of thy youth.*”

Here the Psalmist again seems to have been led into reflection. I am now, said he, an old man, and stricken in years; no longer does the vigour of manhood give decision to my counsels, nor enable me to add prompt execution to my purposes; and I find, that the best regulations of my former years fail in procuring that

obedience that I want power to enforce. Adonijah rises up against me—Joab resists my will—the priests of the altar themselves render me not that service which religion should teach them to be duty.—I find, alas, that gratitude has but little effect with those who perceive that they may be disobedient with impunity. Here he might have said, here is the constant accompaniment of frail, feeble, earthly government—But, oh blessed Christ!—thou long-expected Messiah, in thy case the weakness of old age will never relax the vigour of thy authority: from everlasting to everlasting thou art king.—Unending youth is thy attribute alone—exalted as king for ever, thou hast the dew of never-fading youth.

My brethren, is not this so—does not the Messiah, placed at the right hand of God, enjoy all power in heaven and in earth? Are not his energies in as active exercise now, as they were when first he took possession of the mediatorial throne? Here, then, is an interpretation of this passage, calculated, I think, to lead us to a more accurate knowledge of the Lord, and of his Christ. Time prevents me from referring to another translation of a clause of these verses, which is given in our Bibles.

IV. The Psalmist proceeds—“*The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.*” The language here used would seem to me to imply a reference to something long past. He does not say, “The Lord doth swear, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek,”—but he says, in the past tense, “The Lord *hath* sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.”—He seems, I say, to refer to some promise made by the Lord with respect to the Messiah in past times, of such very great importance, that it was confirmed with a solemn oath, and a declaration of inflexible determination to adhere to it. That this promise was one of vast importance, can-

not be doubted. The reference to it here, and during the course of three chapters in the epistle to the Hebrews, evidently implies that it was a matter of great weight and moment.

Yet, I confess that I never felt satisfied either with the explanations of the commentators, or with my own views of the matter, heretofore. That Melchizedek presented bread and wine to Abraham, and that Christ, by offering bread and wine to his people, in the Lord's Supper, is a priest, in the presentation of similar oblations with Melchizedek, taken in connexion with the coincidence of the name, seems to me too small a matter to be the scope of so weighty a promise. I suspected that this promise was intended to be in some occult way, a description of the chiefest glory of Messiah's reign.

You know that Melchizedek was the king of Salem, a town, as we have reason to believe, not far from the cities of the plain. The word “Salem” means *peace*. The name “Melchizedek,” again, is compounded of two Hebrew words, “Melchi,” which means, *a king*, and “zedek,” which means *righteousness*—so that the name means, *king of righteousness*. You are aware that, after the conquest of the four kings, as Abraham was returning, having delivered his brother Lot, that Melchizedek met him. Let us imagine Abraham marching on with the trophies of war—victorious in the lovely vale in which these cities were built, as he draws nigh to Salem he beholds, in the distance, coming forth to meet him, a venerable and majestic figure, at the head of a long train of followers, who appear to regard their leader with awe: they are clad in white robes, the emblem of purity; and palms are in their hands, the emblems of peace. Suddenly the hymn of praise to God, bursts upon the ear of the patriarch Abraham—his soul is ravished with delight. What venerable character is this? he asks—who are those citizens, so happy in their leader?—who is this leader, so honoured by his followers?—what town

is it which they inhabit? The town is peace, is the reply; the majesty before you is Melchizedek, the priest of the Most High God; these are his happy subjects; all that you see results from the influence of pure and undefiled religion. The patriarch falls down in reverence, awe-struck by a veneration that he never felt before—influenced by a Spirit that he knows to be from on high, he presents to him the tenth of the spoils, as his just right, and, with heart thankful for the contemplation of the beauty of holiness, he enters Salem.—All is peace; every thing indicates industry, holiness, and felicity. With one voice, all declare that Melchizedek was the instrument of the blessing. He gives the glory to God alone. Happy king!—happy people! exclaims the father of the faithful—oh, what a heaven should earth be, if every town was a Salem, and every king a Melchizedek! Solemnized in his mind with such an interview, he revolves on many things. He has had ocular demonstration of THE PATH TO UNIVERSAL HAPPINESS,—but where is the Melchizedek to bring it about? A prince is promised to my race. My brethren, can you not conceive, that on such an occasion it may have been, that a voice from the excellent glory gave certainty to his conjectures? When can we suppose that he would, with so much delight, have heard the declaration of the text attached to the promise to his family, “By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, that in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed, that he shall be a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek”—to wit, a king and a priest to spread the knowledge of the glory of the Lord over the earth, even as the waters cover the sea, to make the world a universal Salem, of which he should be the glorious king, and Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem, a glorious city in the land of Melchizedek, the heavenly capital. In effect, my brethren, view the blessed Jesus as appointed of God to bring about, in the world at large,

that state of things, the principle of which was exhibited in Salem, and we see an admirable force in the passage before us. “The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.”

Here, then, you see, my brethren, that this passage carries us at once to the very scope and design of the entire Gospel, which is to bless mankind in general.—You see, our mind is at once carried to the latter day glory, the universal spread of the Gospel, and the everlasting triumphs of our King.

The Psalm concludes with an intimation of those judgments which are to precede the final establishment of Messiah's kingdom, and alludes to the spiritual influence of the Holy Ghost in a manner which, if time would permit it, would be edifying to enlarge upon. But I hasten to my conclusion, which I shall couch in the form of a few observations.

1. *You have heard that it was the fall of our first parent that rendered a Saviour necessary.*

Be this truth impressed upon your souls. There are millions of worlds around us, with many of them we may, perhaps, have nothing to do at present. There are three that God has spoken to us of. 1st. The world of glory where himself resides, where holy angels render a holy service, enjoying felicity that will be endless. 2. The world of woe, within which rebel spirits who hate God vent their enmity in rage and cursing, and endure tortures in outer darkness, and a lake of fire, which are hopeless. Awful doom! despair of deliverance throughout eternity—unutterable anguish—without God for ever! 3. A world of trial, where spirits, immortal spirits, are placed, to determine whether they will embrace a salvation accomplished by the Son of God, and live for ever, or be cast into that outer darkness, where their worm shall never die, and the fire never shall be quenched.—My brethren, these immortal spirits are ye.—Remember, in one sense, ye shall never

die. Flatter not thyself, oh trembling infidel—flatter not thyself with the sweets of annihilation—flatter not thyself with a world of silence and forgetfulness—imagine not that thou wilt obtain the object that thou aimest at—eternal nothingness. No; when a thousand years have rolled over our heads, there is not an individual in this assembly who may not remember the mercy which this morning is offered, whether it be rejected or accepted. My brethren, live ye must, in heaven or hell. The decision of this moment may determine your position for everlasting.—I now announce to you that “the blood of Jesus Christ his son, cleanseth us from all sin,”—it is not now too late—it is not yet too late—“Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation,”—oh, then, be wise *now*, or ye may never be so.

In order to salvation, there is necessary—

1. *Repentance.* This frequently goes by the name of conviction of sin. It is a deep sense of uneasiness at the recollection of unworthiness—a lively apprehension of the consequences, and an earnest desire to escape them. It is wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, and springs from the operation of his word.

2. *Justification, i. e.* The pardon of the past, and the gift of a righteousness which is so complete, that the Christian appears in it without spot or blemish.—These benefits are made known to the soul by the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven, conferring a peace which passeth understanding. Justification is the result of simple faith,—“By grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.”

But 3. Observe, true faith is ever accompanied by this saving influence—The Holy Ghost vouchsafed to the believer, sanctifies the soul and body, making the believer the temple of the Holy Ghost, and causing him to stand forth as a light to the world, a living evidence to the power of holiness. The believer works

the works of God, and yet is ever humbled at a sense of his short comings and unworthiness. Dwell, my brethren, I humbly beseech you, on these important truths. I tell you, that true Christianity is a vital principle in the soul; it is the Spirit of God, witnessing to the spirit of the believer, that he is the child of God. God himself makes known to him that he hath adopted him into his family—that he will be safely kept amid the troubles of life, and at length made a possessor of a glorious mansion in the skies, where, “in his presence, there is fulness of joy, and, at his right hand, pleasures for evermore”

II. *Dwell upon the nature of Christianity, as exhibited to us in the text I have chosen.* Remember that Christ is a high priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek. Remember that the universal spread of Christianity, and its perfect influence, would remove all the evils of society. Whence spring all those evils?—evidently from the influences of our fallen nature. Sin hath entered into the world, and death by sin. Hence wars, and fightings, envy, hatred, and malice—pride, oppression, and cruelty; drunkenness, revellings, and extravagance; poverty, destitution, rapacity, and violence; disease, and pain; orphanhood, widowhood, and wretchedness of every description—all these evils, and every other evil in the world, spring from the depravities of an unregenerated nature:—sin builds every gaol—sin whets every sword—sin charges every cannon—sin gives its deadly energies to the lightnings of the heaven—it bellows in the thunder—it rocks the mountains in the earthquake—it weaves every shroud—it drives every nail into every coffin—it is the one single, simple origin of all the ills that flesh partakes of. If there were no sin, we should have no pride or haughtiness amongst those in high estate—no discontentment nor repining amongst the opposite class—no avarice, parsimony, or oppression, on the part of the rich—no ground for complaint on the part of the poor,—mankind

would constitute a community of brothers; universal tranquillity, happiness, and joy would abound. Now, my brethren, as Christ hath pointed out to us the cure for human misery, so he lives to apply it: He is exalted to be a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek—to be a king of righteousness to a universe of peace. The subject, in fact, teaches us the true path to national happiness.

Collect from what I have said, another most important truth—a truth which stands related to the former as its opposite. Christ's religion blesses, dignifies, adorns human nature, and removes all the evils connected with our fallen condition. It is God's best boon to man; and just in proportion as we should feel grateful for the gift, in that proportion should we be moved with a holy indignation against the enemy that would withhold, corrupt, or pervert it. I ask you, Christian people, is there not such an enemy amongst us? Look at our beloved country, which nature seems to have intended for the garden of God, changed into an Acedama—a field of blood. Look at the very neighbourhood in which Providence hath cast our lot—the very centre, we may say, of this populous city—and what do we see? We see something like blackened desolation all around us. The very houses look as if they had undergone the action of consuming flame—“Verily wickedness burneth as fire.”—Enter into those habitations, and what do you find?—every variety of human misery—thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-creatures, yea, of our fellow-countrymen, devoid of the comforts of existence, removed from any thing like a certainty of the supply of their ordinary and pressing wants. Think you, my brethren, that such are the fruits of Christ's religion—of those precious, blessed, joyful tidings which the Son of God himself took our nature upon him to make known unto us? Which angels exultingly proclaimed to be about to be the source of unspeakable felicity to man-

kind? I beseech of you to contemplate the heart-rending miseries of our country, and to ask yourselves, are these the fruits of Christianity? God forbid! the fruits they are of popery—a system of APOSTASY from God, the blight and the blast, the canker worm and the palmer worm of every country where it exists. Show me one single Popish country under heaven which is not compelled to drink of the same bitter cup that Ireland is draining to the dregs—one single Popish country that is not miserable and degraded, and I may then, perhaps, hesitate as to the source of our calamities. Now, as the prevalence of Christ's holy religion in a country makes that country a Salem—a land of peace, and happiness, of dignity and power, so does the prevalence of Popery in any country render it a reproach for the opposite attributes—weakness, wretchedness, and tumult. I can speak from experience on these subjects:—For ten years have I resided in the land of Protestantism and happiness, highly-favoured England. Most earnestly have I desired, however, to be allowed the privilege which I now enjoy, of labouring in, and for Ireland—of lifting up my voice in this my native land, and native city, for Christ and his truth, and against antichrist, hypocrisy, and lies.—May the Lord furnish me with strength; courage, and wisdom, to accomplish this important object—and you also, beloved, to be faithful fellow-witnesses with me, and the ministers of God.

My brethren, you who are so much concerned about the interests of the nation—you have seen the true way to bless it. Make but the Gospel to abound—let Christ be but established amongst us, after the order of Melchizedek,—“Then will the nation rejoice and be glad, the mountains will leap like rams, and the little hills like lambs, and all the trees of the wood will sing for joy.”—Time allows me but to touch upon a point which might occupy volumes. I bring it before you as a reflecting people,

for your consideration. Study it, I beseech you ; and be assured that you are best furthering the happiness of your generation, when you are endeavouring to

advance the glory of God. To him, in the unity of the Trinity, be rendered, through Christ Jesus, blessing and praise, for evermore.—Amen.

—000—

2 KINGS, xx. 6.

“ I will add unto thy days fifteen years.”

The circumstance of Hezekiah, at the time when this miracle was wrought, and the prolongation of his life, may suggest to us an improvement of the whole subject. We are admonished to prepare for that state to which we are all hastening. The life of this good prince was protracted, but it was only for a season—*he died at last*. This is the end of all flesh ; and let us seriously lay it to heart. Has God restored us from sickness again and again ? Let us not, therefore, presume upon life. What is it but a reprieve for a few years ? The suspended interval dwindles into a point. Year succeeds year, and we regard it not. While we anticipate the approaching moment, it has even past us. Sickness, infirmity, age, in our own persons, unite with the dissolution of our connexions, to apprize us that we are “ strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”—While we loiter, a voice from heaven cries, “ Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest.” “ A house, not made

with hands,” raises its turrets at the end of our pilgrimage. The spirits of the Prophets, the Apostles, and our fathers, already inherit it ; they wait to receive us, they long for our arrival, they prepare to “ cry unto us that our warfare is accomplished.” Already some of the enjoyments of life melt into distance, and fall into the shades of the prolonged perspective. Yet a little season, and the fading visions of time shall float in broken images before our closing eyes. The sun dips below the horizon—the shadows of the evening descend around us—the mist has thickened upon our connexions—many of our friends have gone before, and left us to the approach of night alone—the voice of our departed years returns upon us in solemn admonitions—the voice of God calls us home—let us no longer delay. Earth recedes—time vanishes—eternity is at hand—“ Arise, let us go hence.”

DR. CALLYER.

—00—

BROKEN PRAYERS.

I should rather spill twenty prayers, than not pray at all ; let my broken words go up to heaven ; when they come up into the great angel's golden censer, that

compassionate Advocate will put together my broken prayers, and perfume them. Words are but accidents of prayer.

RUTHERFORD.

JOY ON CONVERSION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH, DUBLIN,

ON FRIDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1837,

BY THE REV. HENRY WOODWARD, A. M.

Rector of Fethard.

ACTS, viii. 39.

"And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more : and he went on his way rejoicing."

IF we look back a few verses, we find Philip engaged at Samaria, in the exercise of a most animating and encouraging ministry. "Philip," we are told, "went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did ; for unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out of many that were possessed with them ; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And there was great joy in that city."

Thus we find Philip surrounded with every circumstance that could most cheer and animate him in his ministry. But suddenly he is called to leave it, and to go to a most discouraging place, a place to which he was a stranger, in which no prospect appeared to open for his usefulness, or the exercise of his ministry,—
"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, arise and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem, unto Gaza, which is desert." And often will the Christian find, that just perhaps at the very moment when he thinks that an encouraging field of usefulness is open to him, will the call of providence come and order him off, and seem to say, that God no longer requires or wants his services ; under these circumstances, we are very apt to be discouraged—to say, what can we do in the Lord's cause in such a place, and under such circumstances as these ? But this is all want of faith—want of that entire reliance which we ought to place on God, of that full satisfaction of mind, and repose of

heart, on the consideration that it is not our will, but God's, which should regulate us in such matters. We find, on this call being made, that "Philip arose and went ; and behold a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot, read Esais the prophet."—
We find, in this desert, a new and unexpected call to usefulness arrived ; we find, in fact, that an encouragement was given and an opening made, not only for the conversion of an important individual, but for bringing a whole country to the knowledge of Christ. The person with whom Philip was privileged to hold intercourse on this occasion, was a man high in authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians ; this man had come to worship at the feast. Whether he was, as some suppose, a proselyte of righteousness, or whether he was a proselyte of the gate, or whether the knowledge of the true religion had been derived to him and others of his countrymen from the time that the queen of the south visited Solomon, and been by him instructed in its doctrines, we are not told ; at all events, it is certain that he was a worshipper of the living and true God, and that he came up particularly to Jerusalem for that purpose ; and he was now returning, sitting in his chariot, reading the prophet Esaias. The part of the prophet he was immediately reading was the 53d chapter—"He was led as a sheep to the slaughter ; and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth ;—

in his humiliation his judgment was taken away, and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth."—This is the chapter which converted the celebrated Lord Rochester—this is the chapter which has been the instrument of bringing thousands and tens of thousands of souls to the knowledge of God, and to the foot of the cross—this is the chapter at which we cannot but stand in astonishment, when we know, by experience, that men are able to read it, and still to hold back their hearts from their Saviour. We could not, if we had not experience of it, conceive it possible, that men could believe that this is a true prophecy of the Saviour, that he underwent all this suffering and indignity, and laid down his life for their sakes—that they can, in a certain sense I say, believe this—and yet withhold their hearts from him who laid down his life freely to save them. This was the passage which this eunuch was reading, when returning to his own country; and when in the very act of reading, the Spirit called upon Philip to draw near and hear; he asked the eunuch whether he understood this passage, the other answered and said, "How can I, except some one should guide me?" "I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?" He thought it would have appeared to any candid and considerate mind, that though he were a human being—a mere creature that underwent such indignity, and waded through such deep waters of suffering for our sakes, he would be entitled to the best affections of our hearts; but when "Philip opened his mouth, and began and preached unto him *Jesus*," and told him that the sufferer was the Son of the Most High God, that he had descended from the regions of blessedness, and from the throne of his glory, to wade through this suffering, and bear these indignities for his sake, he could no longer hold out, he was converted on the spot. When these extremes were brought before him; when he was showed by Philip, that that Being who called the world into existence—that said "Let there be light, and there was light,"—"Before whom the seraphim veil their faces, and to whom angels and archangels sing, holy, holy, holy"—when he found that he was the person that was "led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth," he instantly, and upon

the very spot, yielded his heart at once, without parley or reserve:—all former prejudices fled away like chaff before the wind, and he was ready at once to take upon him the yoke of that Saviour; and, in the face of all opposition, in the face of every terror, in the prospect of the world's frown, when he returned to his own country, no sooner did he see the means of his taking that yoke by the profession of baptism, than he says, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? and Philip said, if thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." "Philip said, if thou believest with all thine *heart*;"—yes, it is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;" and such is the nature of the record that God hath given of his Son, that if we believe at all in a saving manner, it must be with *all the heart*: the truths are of such a kind, the revelation is of such a nature, that if we believe at all, it must be with the entire affections of the heart. So that it may be said, that a man who does not love with all his heart does not believe, that is, he does not believe in the *scriptural* sense of faith; he may have an historical faith, a conviction of the mere natural understanding; he may believe in the sense in which the world in general believes, that is, the matter flits, like a kind of dream unrealized and unsubstantial before the mind: but to believe in such a sense as realizes the object, that leaves a man as fully convinced of the certainty of these truths as he is of the existence of the objects around him—such a faith must come home to the heart and convert the soul. So that there is no such thing as believing without being converted; the very act of belief must do it, because the object which is revealed to the soul is of such a nature, that if the eyes of the understanding are once opened to see that object, we are so constituted, such is the nature of that heart and feeling that God hath given us, that if we believe in the truth of that revelation, if that object stands out before us in the light of reality, and in all the certainty of convincing truth, *faith cannot be inoperative*, it must act on the heart, it must purify, it must save the soul.—And therefore Philip said, "If thou believest *with all thine heart*, thou mayest"—that is, the sign will be suitable to the thing signified, you may be baptized, be-

cause you will have the reality of that for which baptism stands as a sign. If you believe with all your heart, you are in a state of salvation, a child of God, you are impregnated with a principle of immortal life, and, therefore, you may receive that sign which signifies that "old things have passed away, that all things have become new," and that "You who were darkness, are now light in the Lord."

He answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," that is, I believe, that the Being who died for me has been able to offer a full atonement for all my sins, because I believe that that sufferer who was led as a sheep to the slaughter was no less than a Being in indissoluble union with God, so that his sufferings were impregnated with the infinity of God's nature, and, therefore, that he offered up an expiatory sacrifice, available for the pardon of the sins of the whole world—a sacrifice that could counterbalance the demerit of sin against an infinite law, and against an infinitely holy God:—and I believe and feel, that that same Being that died to offer an atonement for my sins, has the power of converting my soul; I believe it, because I now perceive and feel within me, that there is an omnipotent power in Christ crucified to come home to the heart, to wither away the very roots of sin within me, to cleanse the impurity of my corrupted nature, to turn that which was as a cage of unclean birds into a house of prayer—in other words—to *affect a present salvation*, by which we become inwardly devoted, and radically changed from the influence of sin to a state of that holiness which is a preparation for heaven, the commencement of the life to which it leads—that holiness, "without which no man shall see the Lord."

"And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch—and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing."

Let us consider for a moment the position in which this remarkable person stood at this moment. Philip, who had been the instrument of his conversion—Philip, who had been the means of leading him to the knowledge of the Saviour—Philip, to whom he felt

that peculiar and sacred affection which a man feels to another who has been blessed as an instrument of bringing him to happiness and God;—this friend—*this friend for eternity*—this friend, to whom he was united by bonds dearer than the dearest ties of nature, instead of being left to guide his early steps in the way of grace, to assist him in all the weaknesses that the babe in Christ experiences, was, by a miraculous interposition of overruling providence, suddenly wrapped out of his sight, and he was left *alone*, to return to his own country, and to announce to them there, the change that had taken place; that he had embraced that religion, which, if the knowledge of it had reached them at all, had been heard of only as of a sect against which all spoke—a despised and persecuted sect or small flock in the midst of a despising and hostile world. This fact he was going to announce to the people of his own country; all this he was to face, and all this he was to undergo without any adviser, without any friend to support him or to offer consolation to him—all this was before him; and did he, like the prophet, cry out, "my father, my father, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof?" Did he bemoan himself of his loss? did he say, what shall I do, the friend I naturally looked to as my guide is fled from me, I have no one to turn to, no one to consult with? Did he abandon himself to grief, to melancholy, or despair? No, he felt that God was with him, and he therefore "went on his way *rejoicing*." He had already experienced the Gospel to be the power of God unto salvation; (for God can communicate himself in a manner that none who have not had experience can imagine or conceive,) new scenes had opened to his soul, a blissful immortality was revealed to him, he could look up, and by faith, see his Saviour pleading for him at the right hand of God: all these truths were new to him; they had come to him with all the power of novelty, they were fresh, the impression had just been made, he was in his *first love*; and therefore, though in the face of difficulty and danger that must have appalled him, if he had only his own natural resources to rely on, he goes forth and faces all, *rejoicing!*

Oh, my beloved friends! how often, when we are separated, whether by some long and necessary removal, or by death

itself, how often, I say, are we disposed to hang down our heads and say, as for this world, it is closed entirely upon us. When the celebrated Dr. Beatty came to take a view of his beloved child, who lay dead on his bed, he turned away and said, "now I have done with the world forever," thus shewing how his heart responded to all the tenderest cords of nature. Notwithstanding, this was very different indeed, from the state of this Eunuch described here, he was able to part, perhaps, with the dearest friend he had on earth, though he had just known him, and he was enabled to go "on his way rejoicing."

If, indeed, we were parted from friends, never to meet again, we might well hang down our heads in sorrow: for I am not one of those who take that mystical view of religion which would make it appear that the whole mind is so absorbed in the idea that it loses all its tender sympathies, and that it is incapable of being drawn to any other object,—I believe the matter to be altogether different from this,—I believe that the love of God is not an absorption in simple deity, a losing of ourselves in the inscrutable essence of God; I believe it is rather God's blessed nature communicated to the heart, so that we feel some portion of that love which brought down the blessed Saviour from heaven, which was so far from being centred in himself as the source and fountain of all blessedness, that it led him forth to visit this far distant, dark, and degraded planet, leaving thousands of millions of happy spirits, happy worlds perhaps, that he might look after this strayed sheep, and bring it back on his shoulders *rejoicing*. So I do believe—that religion does not absorb the mind in God, but it communicates to it a Godlike nature by which we "rejoice with those that do rejoice and weep with them that weep;" we love friends with far more tenderness than we ever loved them before, because we now love God's image in them, and feel—and *feel*, I say, because it is indescribable, that we are united by ties and cords which eternity can never sever.—And I do say, that our nature is so constituted as not to live in an ideal world which has no existence, but to live in this universe of which God is the author and contriver, that we have no resource, nay, that divine grace can supply no means whereby to live out of the system in which God has placed

us. And therefore, I say, my beloved, if we were to part with friends for ever, we would be incapable of consolation, because, as I said before, all our sensibilities, our feelings, our whole nature is tender hearted. We are not to live in an ideal, mystical, abstracted system of our own conjecturing, but in this inhabited world, teeming with hearts around us, and calculated and fitted and intended to draw our hearts in ten thousand channels: if, therefore, we have friends separated from us for a time, we may, as far as it respects them, go on our way rejoicing, because that every year we live brings us nearer and nearer to a happy meeting again.

Do I address any mourners or children of sorrow here—I say then, why should you grieve like those who have no hope? Don't you believe that "Jesus died and rose again?" Well, then, believe also, for you are assured on the same testimony, that "those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him." Yes, you will see them again just as they were, only gloriously spiritualized, and impregnated with immortality: you shall see the same face you often looked on—only beautified, and become in a certain sense we are told, like angels. Yes, my beloved friends and brethren, if we lay hold on the mercy of the Gospel, "our lot has fallen to us in pleasant ground, yea, we have a goodly heritage," there is an eternity of blessedness before us, there is a state of never-ending joy, a region of pure delight, where no tears are shed or sorrow felt. This happy land lies in prospect before us, and none are shut out from it, all are invited, the Lord Jesus Christ has "opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers." This blessed country, this happy land is yours, if you will believe. Christ has done his part, all is ready, the feast of blessedness is prepared "the bride says, come, and the Spirit says, come, and Christ says, come," "come unto me ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," come unto him all ye that find this a weary world, all that sigh and lift up their hearts in expectation of that blessedness that I speak of, come to him, and he will put into your heart the blessed assurance—the conviction of these things, the effect of which on the mind passes all understanding.

Come, and lay down all your sorrows and all your miseries and all your sins; come to him that loves you better than

you love yourselves—come to him that so felt for you that he shed his precious blood to save you, come to him, believe on him, throw all your care upon him, trust him for your salvation, and then, set out on the road that leads to eternal life. You may turn your back on all the miseries of this passing world, and set your face toward that blessed land, that sweet and perfect country, those

green pastures, those rivers of life—that heavenly Canaan which the Saviour has purchased for you.

And oh, may "neither life, nor death, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers," oh, may no power on earth or in hell be able to keep you back, and turn your vessel out of that course which will lead to the land of eternal peace!

AMEN.

•• The above Sermon, though published with the full consent and approval of the Rev preacher, has not, from want of time on his part, undergone his revision.

MATT. VII. 24—27.

Lo! upon the failing sands
The *worldling* toils away;
There his tott'ring mansion stands,
Devoted to decay.
When the storm of death descends,
Pangs and terrors round him dash,
Then his frail foundation rends,
And sinks with horrid crash.

On a Rock the *Christian* builds,
Storm and tempest proof;
Light, from heaven descending—gilds
His consecrated roof.
When the law's dire thunders roll,
When its searching lightnings fly—
Underneath *his* peaceful soul
The eternal arms lie.

Let us build on *Jesus* then,
Rock that will endure;
Disallow'd indeed of men,
But tried of God, and sure!
Unbelief can never see
Wisdom in the Cross to save:
Christ, our Rock! we lean on thee,
And triumph o'er the grave!

C. F. S.

Roebuck.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXXII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. B. JOHNSTON, A. M.

REV. R. MAGUIRE, A. M.

REV. WM. HARE, A. M.

FREE GRACE, THE CONSTRAINING MOTIVE OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, MAY 28, 1837,

BY THE REV. BERESFORD JOHNSTON, A. M.,

(Rector of Tullow.)

MATTHEW x. part of 8th verse.

“ Freely ye have received, freely give.”

MEN and Brethren, I present myself before you on this, the Lord's day—first, to carry forward my privilege of setting forth the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of our glorious Lord, Christ, and the fulness of that grace which *in* him is treasured up, and *from* him poured forth on his willing people; and secondly, the Spirit being my helper, to bring that Gospel to bear upon the cause, spiritual and temporal, of Institutions formed for purposes of the highest and most unmingled benevolence, the *Sabbath School*, and *The Dorcas Association*, now in operation in this important district of this important city. I may say, that the reception of the former necessarily implies, that there will be an interest about the latter; for I consider, that when I preach Christ, and the fulness of his grace, I

preach him as the head of his dear, believing people, who are given unto him of God the Father, through sanctification of the Lord the Spirit, and that they, therefore, as his members, and, in him, are made partakers of his mind, and that, under the influence of the constraining motive of having freely received at his hands, they need but a look from him, as to where their love to him may be exercised, and forthwith will manifest their readiness as “freely as they have received, so freely to give.” And surely, if there is one way which more than another calls forth the energies of a heart which has received of the earnest of the Spirit, whose work is to take of the precious things of our glorious Christ, and show them to the awakened sinner, it is when Christ reminds that individual, “other sheep I

have, which I must also bring,"—Go to the lost sheep; tell them the kingdom of heaven is at hand: apply that Word which you yourself have received, with power; apply it *instrumentally* in my service, "heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give." May the Lord the Spirit direct my heart this day into the love of God, and touch my lips, as it were, with a live coal from the altar, that I may speak, to the glory of Jehovah, and the praise of his grace, and that my words may be "the words of the wise, as goads, and as nails, fastened by masters of assemblies, which are given from one Shepherd."—Eccles. xii. 11.

The words of the text are, as you know, those of our glorious Lord Jesus to his Apostles, when sending them forth on a mission of mercy to the many destitute of the district around them. They formed the concluding memento of his directions as far as related to the spirit and motive by which they should exercise their Master's entrusted gifts; and the words carry along with them a force, to which it is very difficult for any exposition to do justice. I dislike all affectation of learning in the pulpit, for I am sure, that when we endeavour to entice, in the words of man's wisdom, we, in so far, depart from the simplicity of Christ; but, I must be permitted to remark, that the term translated "*freely*," falls, according to our general acceptance of it, very far short of the force conveyed in the original—the same term is rendered more approaching to its fullness in John xv. 25, where our Divine Redeemer says, "They hated me *without a cause*." The *motive*, then, of the Lord's dealings with his people, viz. love for them in Christ, *independent of any cause found in them*, and the motive which must, and, I may add, will always constrain those who are his people, in working for him who worketh in them, is here beautifully urged on them, for their perpetual consideration. It is as if Jesus had said to his Apostles, somewhat in the language of Moses to the Israelites, concerning their temporal blessings—(Deut. ix. 6,—Understand, therefore, and bear in mind, that the privileges which you enjoy, are not given to you for any righteousness of your own; it is not that in you any cause was seen which entitled you to these things in preference to others, but ye have received these things *because God hath set his love upon you*; or as Paul, speaking of *spiritual blessings* bestowed upon the

Church of God, would express it—(2 Timothy, i. 8, 9,)—Ye are "partakers, according to the power of God, who hath saved you, and called you with a holy calling, not according to your works, but according to his own purpose and grace"—In your work of love, therefore, remember this: let it never for a moment escape your mind—wherever you turn your steps you will find those between whom and you "there is no difference" but that which arises from grace. Do not be looking for qualifications in others which were not found in yourselves; nor require conditions in others for a share of these blessings which were bestowed on you freely and without any pre-existing cause discovered in you. You were gone astray, I freely sought you; you were lost, I found you; "you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you"—all that you should desire to know is, that they to whom I send you are also gone astray—are also lost; and as you have been made partakers, freely, of my grace, go forth for me; spread my table—display my feast of fat things—offer, without money or price, the water of life, and the bread of life. Wherever you find the wretched, and the miserable, and the poor, and the blind, and the naked,—display the "gold tried in the fire, that the poor may be rich, and white raiment, that he may be clothed, and eye-salve, that he may anoint his eyes, and that he may see,"—depart, and once more remember, "freely ye have received, freely give."

In discoursing further on these words, I desire to consider them as even extending beyond the directions given to the Apostles, and as bearing strongly upon us who profess to be built upon their foundation, "Jesus himself being the chief corner stone." I desire to assume, that all whom I see around me are those whom Peter calls "a peculiar people, who where once not a people, but now are the people of God." "If," as the same Apostle says, "the Spirit of glory, and of God, resteth on you," I know that every word which tends to promote the kingdom of the glorious Redeemer, will be like "the nail driven in the sure place:" and if, Brethren, there are here those who are yet strangers to that work of grace by which Jesus is formed in his people the hope of glory, and who are, therefore, strangers to the blessed privileges of doing good for his sake, still it is a hopeful thing to see such, suffering themselves to be brought under the ministry of that Word,

which may, under the Lord's grace, become a goad, so that they may, like the careless ones of old, be pricked in their heart, and cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"—and that, by the power of the Spirit, and not by any power of the preacher, they may be brought to look on that Jesus, whom, by their sins and their follies, they are now piercing, and "mourn for him as one that mourneth for his son, and be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."—Zech. xii. 10.

"Freely ye have received,"—how much is implied in this!—it pre-supposes emptiness, and emptiness is that which cannot supply itself. We are recipients, and, as such, it must be, that we are vessels having nothing in ourselves, and, moreover, that we can have nothing, except it is poured into us from a source altogether independent of us:—And allow me to ask you, Brethren, what is there that you and I have not received, either in the way of providence or of grace? To pass over the gift of life, and the measuring out from the fountain of life every hair's-breadth of our existence, which even reason, independent of revelation, tells us is derived to us, let me ask, to what do you attribute your situation in this world, to which the situation of hundreds of millions of the same flesh and blood cannot admit of one moment's comparison? Why is it that you are not located in desert lands, and uncultivated wastes, where the soft hand of civilization has not smoothed away even the most rugged features of wild and unmitigated barbarism? Who, in this respect, has made you to differ from others, and allows you to rest, each in his proper station, under his own vine, and his own fig-tree? There can be but one answer, The Sovereign Lord, Jehovah—"He," who, as an awakening heathen confessed, "doeth according to his own will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say, What doest thou?" Surely you are vessels receiving from the fountain—surely, "as an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings,—so the Lord alone hath led you, He maketh you to ride upon the high places of the earth, and he maketh you to suck honey out of the rock, butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and kidneys of wheat, and thou dost drink the pure blood of the grape."—(Deut. xxxii.) But if

we stand above unnumbered millions in the dispensation of gifts providential, what shall we say as to the cause of our ranking above those unnumbered millions in the outpourings upon us of the glorious gifts of grace? Why is it that we are placed in the land of Bible truth and Gospel tidings? Why is it that that, which was by nature a waste and howling wilderness, rejoices, and blossoms with the flowers of heaven?—and that the brier, and that the thorn, are fast giving place to the beauties and the fragrance of him, who announces himself to his bride the Church as "the Rose of Sharon, and the Lily of the valley?" Here again there is but one answer—it is, *because the Lord hath set his love upon us*—"not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost," that, "being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." But let me go farther: if I address you this day, not only as a portion of the visible Church of Christ, but as those who are really of the fruits of the travail of his soul—if in Jesus, who is the mercy of all mercies, you have found all that the heart ought to desire, and all that can satisfy its longings—if out of his fulness you have received grace for grace, and that the word of salvation has reached you, not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance, —why I address those who will delight in tracing every portion of the blessing to its proper source—who will silence every rising thought of distinction by the conviction—"Of his own will begat he us, with the word of truth,"—and will confess, that as it is only to those who receive him, that he giveth power to become the sons of God, so this very receiving him is the result of their being "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

Men, and Brethren, have ye received Jesus? do you know his glorious Person, fairer than the children of men, with lips full of grace? have you received the Spirit which is of God, that you might know the things which are freely given to you of God?—hath God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shined into your hearts giving you the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ? whence do these mercies flow? surely from the fountain opened up in the covenant love

of our Jehovah—from which are filled the empty vessels of his people: whence come the water of life and the pools on the thirsty soil? Ah Sirs, it is because “he hath come down upon you like rain on the mown grass, and as showers that water the earth,” Psal. lxxii. 6. “all your fresh springs are in Jesus.” And what are the riches of his love? speak ye blessed of the Lord—are they not justification from your guilt—redemption through his blood—is he not your wisdom, your peace, your righteousness? Vessels of mercy! you have received a new heart, new affections: your motives are from heaven: you are new creatures quickened according to his power; adopted children sanctified from sin; “having your conversation in heaven,” “not your own, but bought with a price,” and all this, saith Jesus, ye have received without any cause in yourselves; all therefore must be of grace: like the lilies of the field which toil not, neither spin to obtain their rich fragrance and beautiful tinge—the God of nature freely bestows both; so on his people he freely bestows the riches of his grace, and the beauties of his holiness—“yea” saith he, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness have I drawn thee”—yes, here is the source of your salvation, however wide and however far it flows, here the river rises, and take what stream of it you please, it will lead you up to this spring head; *the free and undeserved favour of God.* Nay brethren, of those also who are receiving at the hand of the Lord innumerable blessings, and yet who in return only cause him to serve with their sins, and weary him with the wickedness, is there not even to them a great manifestation of gracious long suffering, while they are fast filling up the measure of their iniquity? I have often thought, if persons of this complexion could stop and pause over their awful situation—if after the midnight revel, or visiting the haunts of licentiousness, the wretched victim on awakening to the morning light, could put the question to himself, and say “wherefore is it that the Lord hath spared me to this hour, and that the dawn of a new day opens upon me? can this forbearance be ascribed to any other cause than the Lord’s free long suffering? can it be anything but his sovereign mercy that maketh his sun to rise on the evil, as well as on the just, and that by this very long-suffering, he would fain lead my heart to repentance and ac-

knowledgment of the truth that I might be saved?”

“Freely ye have received.” Such was the motive which the author and finisher of salvation urged on those whom he was sending forth, and though perhaps at the moment they did not fully enter into all that was implied in that word *freely*, we may be sure that when the Lord the Spirit taught them all things, that the conviction of their being themselves vessels of mercy urged them as freely to make known the unsearchable riches of Jesus, wherever the opportunity offered; and so will it be with us—“I love him because he first loved me,” will never cease to urge its constraining influence; not only will the body soul and spirit be presented a lively sacrifice unto God, not only will there be a willing hatred of sin, and a willing contempt for the follies and vanities of a world which bears on it the stamp of apostacy from God, but more, there will be a fulfilment of that new commandment “love one another:” “by this,” says the apostle, “we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.”

And this leads me more especially to seek, the Lord being my director, to bring this gospel motive to bear upon the immediate objects to which our attention as children of our heavenly father is this day solicited.” Men and brethren, hearken and may the Lord of the Church grant that ye may not hear in vain. This is I believe the seventh year since the stream of love has been set forth in this important district of your city, dividing itself into several channels, yet, each flowing to mingle its waters with the glorious ocean from which it sprung. The two branches for which I at present specially plead, are, the SABBATH SCHOOL, the most glorious instrument for bringing immortal souls by nature alienated from the life of God by reason of the ignorance which is in them, to the knowledge of a covenant Jehovah, whom to know is life eternal; and secondly a DORCAS ASSOCIATION, whose very title is sufficient to suggest to every reader of the book of life, the objects which it desires to embrace.

I mentioned this district—it is one, Brethren, of which the votaries of fashion know but little, and care less, in which the gay and the thoughtless feel themselves by no means concerned, but whose wants, both temporal and spiritual, are rising up with strong cries unto the ears of that Lord to whom these gay and

their stewardship. But blessed, for ever blessed be the name of him, to whom even the ravens of the valley cry not in vain—he hath made a people “willing in the day of his power,” and by the exertion of a few, who, I believe, have little personal connection with this district, except the strongest of all connections—the spirit of Christian philanthropy—the Lord’s work has been set on foot; and when we consider how that work has prospered in their hands, we cannot help exclaiming in their own scriptural phraseology, “What hath the Lord wrought?”

And here I must be permitted for a moment to revert to a point to which I desire to allude with all the delicacy, and yet, I trust, with due glorifying of the Lord in his mysterious dispensations which such a topic requires. Since last the cause of the institutions of this Deanery were advocated from this place, it has pleased the Lord to remove, I may say from their superintendence, the instrument whom he most honoured in the carrying them forward to their present state of advancement.* The place of him, who, while on earth, watched over their interests, and identified himself with their wants, now knows him no more, and those with whom he was associated, whether as a true yoke-fellow in the cause of Christian philanthropy, or as a minister of the grace which is in Jesus, do indeed deplore the removal of a zealous, unwearied servant of his Lord, and a guardian, instant in season and out of season, of the wants of every individual within the district committed to his charge—allow me to assure you, as a proof of the value which he attached to these institutions, that even the weight of overwhelming disease, and the prospect of impending dissolution, damped not his solicitude for the beloved objects for which he had laboured. And the reason is a very simple one; he felt that the cause of Christ’s little ones is the cause of Christ himself—he felt that freely he had received, and that the last moment of his life should be freely given to him in whom he had found “redemption through Christ’s blood, even the forgiveness of his sins.” His last act was preparing a statement of the institutions for which I this day stand before you. Men and brethren, the Lord hath called him to his rest, and we trust that many a redeemed soul, to whom he was the instrument for conveying the words of eternal life, will in due time

join him before the throne of the Lamb, and stand there his joy and crown of rejoicing. But, dear friends, we must not stand gazing after the removal of the Lord’s servants; they are with him, and blessed be his name for all those who fall asleep in Jesus. We are still in time, and while we have time, let us hasten on the Lord’s precious work. Our brother is dead—but even in death he speaketh to those who survive and saith to us who are alive and remain, “freely ye have received, freely give,” to all, but “especially unto them that are of the household of faith.”

Men and brethren, ye who love the Lord, do not your hearts burn within you when ye hear of the glorious outpourings of Jehovah’s covenant mercies in distant lands?—when you learn that idolatry and superstition are bowing their heads before the standard of the cross? And yet, how many families within less than a few minutes’ walk of this place, are deeply sunk in a state of practical heathenism, and are living as wide asunder from the Gospel, and all its ordinances, as if the whole salvation scheme were but a cunningly devised fable? Alas, how true is it that not only is there no knowledge, but that if a converted heathen were for the first time to visit the districts of our thickly crowded self-called Christian cities, he would find that they stand as much in need of a mission for the promulgation of a revealed Gospel, as do his own barren and barbarous shores? It has been well and truly remarked by an eminent writer of the present day, that “there is an utter diversity between the article of Christian instruction, and the articles of ordinary merchandize—for the latter there is a demand to which men are naturally and originally urged by hunger or thirst, or other physical sensations and appetites of their constitution—but for the former there is no spiritual appetite: it is just as necessary to create a spiritual hunger, as to afford spiritual refreshment; and so from the very first, we find that, for the spread of Christianity in the world, there had to be, not an itinerancy on the part of inquirers, but a busy, active, and extended itinerancy on the part of those who love the Lord, for the promotion of his truth.” In the force of these sentiments experience daily confirms me, and when we think of the valuable life with which the streets and lanes of our districts actually teem, and when we

* The late Rev. Robert Maguire.

think of the immortal souls, who as they are found in the hour of death, will so continue throughout the countless ages of eternity—oh, how can we say that we are vessels that have received, and are receiving out of the fulness of God, when, for want of exertion in his cause who loved us, we do not seek to convert one sinner from his ways, and thus to save a soul alive, and be the instrument for covering his multitude of sins!

Brethren, we often hear of what are called the pursuits of a noble ambition—oh! what ambition is there which has for its object any thing comparable to the pulling down the strong holds of the kingdom of Satan, and to the being instrumental in adding one trophy to the glories of the Saviour's crown! Oh! it would be well if we were not only fully impressed, but vehemently urged forward in our intercourse with our fellow-men, by the conviction that the circumstances which now form the walls of partition between one rank and another, are merely adventitious circumstances, and which do not in the least affect the grand consideration of there being an essential badge of similarity which ought to excite the universal sympathy of one for the other, viz. *our universal guilt*. It would be well to consider, and act accordingly, that we may take the veriest child of want, that we may select an individual in all that squalid wretchedness, from contact with which the favoured child of wealth and delicacy would shrink, and yet that beneath all the ragged gear of poverty there lies a mind and an intellect, perhaps far superior to his own, and that possibly all that is required is to bring to bear on that mind and that intellect the riches of the wisdom and of the love of God, as revealed in Jesus the Saviour, in order to make that humanly wretched individual richer than the richest, and more an object of real estimation than the veriest monarch clothed in all the gorgeousness of earthly splendour. And when one thinks of the interminable mine of moral ore that exists, pregnant with materials so rich, and that all that is necessary is the purifying fire of the Holy Spirit, working through the word by his might, to purge away all the tin and take away all the dross, and to mould the metal in Christ, as vessels fit for the house of him who is King of kings,—when, I say, we know this, and that, moreover, by the using of another figure, by the sowing and watering of the seed of the word of salvation,

a moral transformation may be expected even in the very haunts of vice and spiritual barrenness, and a glorious harvest reaped to the praise and glory of Him whose husbandry is his Church—I do maintain, that they who feel that they themselves have freely received, will, in the enlightening of the souls of the Lord's poor of the earth, behold an object for real ambition to aspire after, in comparison of which, all earthly schemes sink into less than nothingness.

Brethren, the work of grace has been begun here in this our poor, impoverished, and too long neglected district: and we feel in the spirit of faith, a sober assurance that the Lord, "who hath begun the good work, will perform it unto the end." But when the Lord works in his people, his people work for the Lord, and let me tell you, that the evidence of minds made willing will be manifested as regards the institution of this portion of our metropolis. From its peculiar circumstances, it is thrown altogether upon resources, derived from the free-will offerings of those, whose hearts having been directed into the love of God and into the furtherance of the Saviour's kingdom, are continually prompted to say, as did Esther of old, "How can I endure to see the evil that is coming on my people, or how can I endure to witness the destruction of my kindred?"

Men and brethren, to say that I expect great things from you would be presumption, but I tell you, that the Lord expects great things from you. Methinks a voice calls unto you from the abodes of bodily wretchedness and spiritual destitution: "Come over to us, and help us!" and oh! let not that voice call in vain, but assuredly gather that the Lord hath called you to carry forward the work.

Oh, may there be more love, more diligence, more being instant in the work of God. Difficulties we have; difficulties we must expect; but let "Jehovah Sira!" be our watchword; while we have in our hands such an instrument as the Gospel of Jesus." All adverse circumstances seem light to those who believe. We do think, and every day confirms the conviction, that the Lord hath much people in this city: and when we see our temples filled and our lecture-rooms crowded by inquirers after the word of life, it must suggest to us that it is the Lord's doing, and

that in dealing out that bread to the hungry, we are only fulfilling the desire of him who willet not that one little one should perish.

Men and brethren, can I say more? Yes, one parting word: there is one thing needful, more needful than money,—prayers, we entreat the fellowship of your prayers. Silver and gold you may have none—but you may have greater and better things, freely given to you of God—the superaboundings of his grace. I am sure that a greater blessing will attend the lending of a mite unto the Lord, accompanied with fervent, effectual prayers for the dew of his grace thereon, than the mere casting in out of an abundance, where the love of our glorious Lord Christ dwelleth not. With your offerings this day pour out your supplications for every thing connected with the advancement of the Redeemer's glory, the dissemination of the pure word of God, the instruction of the rising generation, the diffusion of know-

ledge through the dark places of the earth, the alleviation of human misery—these are the objects which we advocate; and we do trust that the institutions now in progress in this district will prove efficient instruments in ministering, under the gracious and sovereign guidance of him who is head over all things to his church, towards accomplishing the number of his elect, and hastening his kingdom. And when the magnitude of the object, and the urgency of the need are contemplated, I am sure, “if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, any fellowship of the Spirit,” (whereby ye have tasted of the grace of that Gospel which we desire to diffuse,) “if any bowels of mercies” for the salvation of souls, ye will in this respect, fulfil my joy, to give as becometh them who bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Acts xx. 35.

We feel a melancholy pleasure in giving insertion to the following Sermon of the late Rev. ROBERT MAGUIRE, which has been kindly forwarded to us. It forms the best memento of the man.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL, DUBLIN,

BY THE LATE REV. ROBERT MAGUIRE, A. M.

JUDGES viii. 4.

“Faint, yet pursuing.”

Our text refers to a great battle in the plain of Moreh, in which Gideon, the servant of the Lord, with but three hundred men, routed and dispersed the whole host of the Midianites and Amalekites, though they “lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude, and their camels were without number as the sands of the sea-side for multitude.” Determined to profit by his victory, he followed them incessantly with his little band, though the men were already so fatigued with the toil of that well-fought day, that

their strength was almost wholly exhausted. “And Gideon came to Jordan and passed over, he and the three hundred men that were with him, “faint yet pursuing them.”

I mean not to refer to the context any farther, but to make use of these words as affording a description of a peculiar part of Christian experience, and exhibiting in this view some very useful instruction.

The experience of the Christian which is marked by the words that I have read

to you may be described under these two heads.

I. *The difficulties and hardships of his way make him faint.*

yet

II. *The principle of faith still keeps him pursuing.*

I. THE DIFFICULTIES AND HARSHIPS OF THE CHRISTIAN'S WAY SOMETIMES MAKE HIM FAINT. The flock of Christ, and the younger part of it especially, are often to be warned, that if, in giving themselves to the services of the Lord Jesus Christ, they look for perpetual peace and pleasure, for smooth paths and uninterrupted progress, they will in all probability be much disappointed. They must rather be warned to expect trials, to prepare for opposition and hinderances, to count the cost, and to take up their cross in following Christ. Religion may be compared to a race, a wrestling, and a warfare. These representations of the Scriptures teach us to look for a variety of trial and difficulty; and in encountering the opposition which surrounds him on all sides, the Christian often faints and is enfeebled through dismay.

I. *He is buffeted by the world.* Though usually the Christian passes, upon the whole, with more quietness through the world than others, and, all things being taken into the account, has infinitely more of real happiness and comfort; yet many, especially at their first outset in religion, have much hostility to contend with in maintaining their course. They live amongst men of perverse minds and lying lips who would hinder them by every possible means. Nay, even from professors themselves the Christian is sometimes wont to meet with much vexation and pain through their inconsistencies, their ingratitude, or the mistakes he had made respecting their real character: till through the fault of individuals he is perhaps almost disposed to become disgusted with religion itself, or to despair of ever finding any thing that is real. Thus he meets with many things from others which at times hinder and obstruct his way, distract his mind, unsettle his faith, and make him ready to faint in his Christian course.

2. *He meets also with many a source of trouble in himself.* He reflects upon the enormity of his past transgressions, and is distressed by the violence of remaining depravity. He knows his sins to be so

many and so great; he feels his heart to be so cold and unbelieving; he has made so little progress; gained so few victories over himself; appears so much in his own view as if he had gone back rather than forward since he believed; that he is tempted almost to think the case to be utterly hopeless, and so to give it up in despair. The cause of this is that the increase of humility keeps pace with the increase of holiness. Deeper views of his own vileness accompany all his growth in grace; and the more he has attained to, the more he still finds remaining to be done. As the traveller on his journey sees hill after hill rising before him, as he ascends the summit of each; so the Christian discovers greater measures of holiness to which he has still to reach forth and press onward: and as the one, wearied and fatigued by the length of the way, is ready to think that nothing is done, so the other is ready to stand and brood over his own difficulties, and deny the evidences of grace in his soul. He is too ready to exclaim, "oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me!" without adding, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

3. In addition to these things, *he is tempted by Satan.* The enemy of his soul is neither unconcerned nor inactive. He watches his opportunity and fosters the suggestions of unbelief and despondency. As a spirit, though a fallen one, he has access to our souls, and besets them with many temptations. Of every unholy desire, of every unchristian temper, as it first rises in the heart, he is the immediate abettor; he fans the flame, provides fuel for the fire, labours to bring it to a head, and exults in the mischief he has created. And sometimes in these seasons the Christian is so sensible of the presence, and power of Satanic influence, that he stands afraid of himself, and horror-struck with what is passing within him. Even the Captain of salvation, the great Redeemer himself, was violently exposed to his assaults in the days of human nature; even "*he suffered being tempted,*" and but for his divine and supernatural assistance, the poor distressed believer would be utterly overwhelmed, and borne down by the force of temptation. What, therefore, with the hatred and oppression of the world which Satan increases; what with the views of his own sinfulness which also he aggravates

and colours still more highly; and what with the additional temptations which he actually exciteth; the humble soul is often sorely oppressed, his spirit fails within him, and he is almost driven to despair.

4. Further, *he is often disappointed of his hopes and expectations.* Perhaps, like David, his house may not be so with God as he could wish it to be, his outward circumstances trying, his children not sources of comfort, but of grief; or various worldly cares and troubles may oppress him. Perhaps, which is a more common cause of discouragement, the state of his mind may be uncomfortable and gloomy. He looked for liberty but behold bondage; for light, but there is only darkness. He hears some of his fellow Christians rejoicing in the Lord, and perceives that they enjoy a calm and settled peace. He fancies that all others are equally happy. But he sees little in himself to afford him hope. He is oppressed with doubt and fears respecting his own interest in the blessing of salvation. He cannot look upon the state of his soul with any degree of confidence or joy. His harp hangs upon the willows, while those of others are sounding the praises of redeeming love. He seems to feel no spiritual supports, no inward consolations, no encouragement to help him on his way, no heavenly food to strengthen and support his soul. He walks in darkness and has no light, and all within him and around him seems joyless and almost hopeless.

Under these and other trials and difficulties, the Christian often faints: he is ready to give over the contest, to throw up his profession; and thinking it impossible that he should ever be saved, to lie down in despair. Not that each one is subject to all those trials at one and the same time. Some are more severely assaulted by one of them, and some by others, and in different seasons of his experience the same believer will be differently harrassed: at one time also his trials will bear upon him with greater force than another. But the experience described is by no means an unusual one. In its principal points and general features it is acknowledged by many; and he who has ever been quite exempt from it, has either been privileged above the common lot of the children of God, or, which is far more probable, is an entire

stranger to any real and saving work of grace upon his soul.

II. *THOUGH THE DIFFICULTIES AND TRIALS OF HIS WAY MAKE THE CHRISTIAN FAINT, YET THE PRINCIPLE OF FAITH STILL KEEPS HIM PURSUING.*

If he be, indeed, a real Christian, and born again of God, he has an unction from the Holy One, and that unction abideth in him, and through it he abides in Christ. The Spirit of God is present with him, and supplies him with certain motives and feelings which ensure his perseverance.

1. *A strong sense of duty is impressed upon his thoughts, and impels him still to hold on his way.* He knows that it is right to serve the Lord; and God has commanded him to live in his fear. He determines within himself that every commanded duty shall be faithfully regarded; and if he cannot do these things with that spirit of love and adoption which he desires to possess, he will yet desire to do them—because they are commanded. Though I am beset, he will say, with many temptations, distressed by many trials, yet let me still keep persevering, and aim at what is right even tho' I find no personal comfort in it. This motive, though it may not be attended with the most lively emotions, is yet steady, uniform, and constant in its influence. It maintains its purpose from day to day. It is watchful and persevering, and stands the test of all trials. It remains firm and unshaken, and enables the fainting believer to keep pursuing.

2. *A fear of consequences also operates.* Should the christian give up his pursuit what will ensue? will he thereby become happier than he is now? will all his trials cease, and his present distress be immediately succeeded by calm content and peace of mind? he knows that it will not be thus. He feels that greater apprehensions will then arise: that he shall then look upon himself as a backslider and an apostate? he is conscious that thus he should be sinning against God: he would not sin and he dreads the thought of an accusing conscience. He can expect nothing in drawing back from God, but that the Holy Spirit should be grieved; and he fears lest he should then fall into gross sin, lose every impression of religion from his soul, and thus become miserable indeed. He feels therefore, that in throwing off the service of God he should

change not for the better but for the worse; and that in the present state, uncomfortable tho' it be, he is not so unhappy as he should thus become. And this also serves to prevent his departure from God.

In this experience you see what ought to be your own conduct; and here I would particularly address myself to those to whom the above description especially applies.

True, I dare say, it is, that from outward vexations or inward discouragements, or both united, your heart is sometimes much cast down. Without are fightings, and within are fears; and the combined force of these is almost too great for your faith and patience; yet still hold out and persevere. However violent the attack may be, and even though Satan too, as an armed man, assault you, yet never, oh never give up your shield. Still maintain your course. "Hold fast the profession of your faith, steadfast without wavering." "Fight the good fight of faith." Consider how many and how powerful are the Scriptures which afford you *encouragement*. "To him that overcometh," saith the Lord, "will I grant to sit down with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in his throne."—"He that shall endure to the end, the same shall be saved."—"Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." "For yet a little while and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

Recollect also, that the greatest helps are promised; and that all the attributes of God, his justice, faithfulness, truth, and mercy, are engaged to aid and strengthen you. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength." "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk, and not faint." Wait for the fulfilment of this gracious promise, and depend upon his faithful word. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God; I will

strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." Animated by the assurances of these encouraging Scriptures, and strong in the strength supplied by the God who dictated them, persevere in your course, trusting in the power of his holy Spirit, and fervently praying that to you his promise may apply and be fulfilled—"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Rely upon him in all your need, and you will find, that when you are weak, then you are strong yea, that you can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth you.

Consider, also, that there are other Scriptures on this subject, which are calculated to alarm your fears. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.—Remember Lot's wife."

Let these sayings, my brethren, sink down into your ears, that you may be deterred from even the thought of deserting his service. "Hold fast therefore the beginning of your confidence, steadfast unto the end."

But, I fear that there are many who are entire strangers to every thing like the experience which has been described. I speak to such as have never fainted under any part of the spiritual conflict nor ever pursued the paths of holiness. You alas have never yet been convinced of your depravity and danger, never have been seriously concerned for the safety of your soul, never have renounced the world and Satan, and therefore have had no opposition from them. You are secure in your sins, at ease and unconcerned.

May God awaken you, and teach you what it is to be a Christian indeed, and give you a knowledge of Christ Jesus. This your present unregenerate state is truly awful. We pity and pray for you. May God in mercy give you the dispositions, and desires, hopes, fears, joys, sorrows, comforts, and full experience, of the children of his grace; that being one with them, in character and in spirit, you may have a portion in their future inheritance, and glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—Amen.

THE PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE FREE CHURCH, GREAT CHARLES-STREET, DUBLIN,

BY THE REV. WM. HARE, A. M.

(Minister of Carysford Chapel, B. Rock.)

MATT. XXV. 1—12.

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.” &c.

In the context of this passage our Lord has sounded a note of alarm which, could we make it echo in the ears of a slumbering world, could scarcely fail to break that fatal spell with which the power of darkness has bound its deluded votaries. He has announced the coming of a day, such as never yet has dawned upon the creation of God—a day which shall be illumined, not like the common days of ancient time, by the gradual rising of heaven's greater orb, but by the sudden and unlooked for manifestation of the Son of man himself, “who shall appear in his own glory and in the glory of his Father and of his holy angels.” To that day we find a constant reference in Scripture. It is to it that the apostle Paul adverts in the close of the fourth chapter of his first epistle to the Thessalonians, where he says, “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven, with the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain, unto the coming of the Lord, shall be caught up together with him in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” And again, (chap. i. of 2 Thess,) “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from

the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” 6—10. This second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in glory has been the object of the Church's anticipations, and most earnest desire, since the introduction of the present dispensation, as his coming in humiliation was the object of its expectation from the period of the first promise given in Eden. And why should it be thought incredible that Jesus should come in glory? Did he not dwell among the habitations of men *once*, and why should he not appear among them *again*? Did he not come once in the humble form of a *servant*, and why should he not appear in the character of a *King*? Did he not traverse the earth in sorrow and humiliation, and why should he not ride through the heavens in the chariot of his power; and in his “bright descending car,” alight upon the Mount of Olives, which the prints of his feet have already consecrated? Yes, he will come—and with what a different result from that which attended his first appearance! When first he came, the angel which announced his advent was sent to bid this world rejoice, but when he comes again, he shall bid the world weep. For he shall come to vindicate the honour of his righteous government,—and to avenge the cause of injured truth and of mercy, neglected and despised—he shall come to detect the formalist and to unmask the hypocrite—to tread in the wine-press of his wrath the enemies of his Gospel, and to pour

out upon all who fear not God the viols of his indignation.

And let it not be supposed, my brethren, that we have no concern with that "day of dread and dark despair," because that ere its dawn, we may be numbered among the dead. Delusive hope! The voice of the Lord shall break into the dark and silent grave, and awake the slumbering dead; and they that sleep in the dust shall arise, some to shine like the stars and like the sun in the kingdom of their Father, and some to be covered with everlasting shame, and tormented with everlasting remorse. All shall experience, either immediately or remotely, the power of the Saviour's coming.

In that day, "the kingdom of heaven shall be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." In this parable there is an evident allusion to the Jewish custom of celebrating the nuptials of great and distinguished personages. On such occasions it was usual for the bride, after the nuptial ceremony was concluded, to be conducted home to the house of the bridegroom, with great pomp and splendour, according to the wealth and dignity of the parties engaged. They were attended by a procession composed of their relatives and friends, who were attired in a suitable costume, which was provided at the expense of the bridegroom. Many thousands of such dresses were frequently distributed at the weddings of persons of distinction, besides other presents to a very considerable amount. Sometimes, also, in order to contribute to the beauty and brilliancy of the procession, it took place at a late hour of the evening, when it became necessary for each individual to bear a torch or lamp, which imparted to the whole scene a degree of splendour that cannot easily be described. The festivity of the day was generally closed by an entertainment at the bridegroom's house. Our Lord supposes a case of this kind.—The procession is delayed until midnight—ten virgins, provided with lamps which the lateness of the hour rendered necessary, wait with the intention of falling in with the procession as it approaches its destination. Some of them had made an inadequate provision, they had provided lamps indeed, but had taken no oil in their vessels, so that, should the procession be delayed, they had not means to replenish their lamps.

It tarries so long that they are overcome with weariness; and when the noise of the approaching train awakes them from their slumbers, those who had only a temporary supply of oil, find their lamps extinguished. They are unable to mingle with the train for want of light, and while they hasten to rectify their sad mistake, the procession draws to its close. The festivities commence, the doors are shut, and the foolish virgins, when they arrive, find to their sorrow and amazement, that they are too late—they are not recognized as belonging to the party, and are denied admittance.

The general import of the parable is obvious—it points to the second coming of the Lord Jesus as an event which shall at the same time be awful and joyous. The splendour of the procession denotes the grandeur of the event—the hour of midnight its solemnity—the marriage feast, the bliss prepared for the friends of Jesus—the virgins those who profess to look for his coming—of these some shall be prepared to meet him; others who are making no provision for his coming, while the means of religious improvement are afforded them, shall awake at last to disappointment and exclusion. Such is the general import of the parable, but we must examine it more minutely, and endeavour seriously to lay it to heart, by applying it to our individual character.

"There were ten virgins, five of them were wise—five of them were foolish." By these, it is evident, professors of religion are intended, for they are said to have gone out to meet the bridegroom. There is no reason to suppose that this division of them into two parties, equal in number, was intended to intimate the proportion which shall be found to exist in the day of Christ's coming between true and nominal Christians. This would be an unsafe conclusion. One thing, however, it does imply, which is of great importance for us to know, namely, that among all those who shall have borne the name of Christian, there shall be found in the day of great account, two classes, and *only* two. Whatever distinctions may have existed in the world—however men may have differed in respect to rank and wealth, to moral character and moral attainments, however they may have been called well disposed or ill disposed, or really devout, there shall be but two

classes recognized on that day,—real and nominal professors—Christians and the unbelievers. There shall be no central ground to stand upon—they shall either be admitted into the kingdom of heaven, or the door shall for ever be shut against them.

“Five of them were wise, and five were foolish.” Five of them were wise—wise in the truest sense of the word, wise in the estimation of the God of wisdom, tho’ perhaps despised as fools by the men of this world, for “the wisdom of God is foolishness with men.” True wisdom consists in aiming at the noblest ends by the most effectual and most proper means. But what can be a nobler, a better, or a more important end for an immortal being to aim at than happiness—the happiness of the soul—the happiness of eternity—happiness consisting in the love and enjoyment of God? herein consisted their wisdom—they believed that eternity was more important than time—the favor of God than the favor of man—the happiness of holiness than the pleasures of sin—heaven than earth: and they made their election accordingly. They chose eternity—Jehovah’s favor—the pleasures of holiness—the joys of heaven—these they determined to seek after—these to make the object of their pursuit. They believed that true religion was the way to happiness in time and in eternity—true religion which consists not in a name, a form—a mere profession, but in having the understanding enlightened by the Spirit of God, and made acquainted with the character of God—the heart touched and softened, and changed, and the life reformed and regulated: true religion which has Christ in the heart for life—for peace—for joy—for strength, Christ in the eye for imitation—true religion which not only speaks but acts, true religion which has the unction from the Holy One, supplying it in all its operations—which denies itself, takes up its cross and follows Christ, despising shame and reproach and contempt and calumny for the sake of Christ. This is wisdom—this is to have a lamp, and to have oil in the vessel; and the lamp that burns with such oil as this, will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day of eternity.

“Five of them were foolish.” In many respects they resembled the wise virgins, they were virgins—they had lamps, burning lamps, and were in ex-

pectation of the bridegroom—yet they were foolish, unconverted, unchanged in heart—unsupplied by the Spirit of grace. “They had a name to live and were dead,” a form of Godliness without the power of it. This is a subject of deep personal importance to every one of us. In the great day of examination there shall be found many who have made a brilliant profession—have been in their generation “a light to them that were in darkness, guides to the blind, teachers of babes, instructors of the foolish,” many who have obtained a reputation for religion among the religious, and have received the imputation of methodism and enthusiasm from the irreligious and profane, who after all, shall appear to have had but lamps, which while they were consuming shone, and gave light, but went out amid the vapours of the grave if not before, and left the soul in utter darkness. Many shall be found to have been mere hypocrites who took up a profession of serious religion for no other purpose than that of imposing on the world, and of advancing their temporal interests—characters most like the devil—most guilty among the guilty, and for whom is prepared the hottest place in hell, doomed to the heaviest weight of woe, and to be most damned among the damned. Some shall be found to have glided almost insensibly into hypocrisy. Impressed with some serious providence perhaps, they have given some attention to religion, have adopted some serious notions—or under the influence of highly excited feelings have engaged in works of usefulness, and have incorporated themselves into what is called the religious world. Soon however the excitement of their feelings vanishes—they discover the hollowness of their profession—the unsoundness of their principles—unbelief takes the place of enthusiasm—but interest, or fear of appearing inconsistent, or some other bye object, induces them to retain their religious profession—and thus having set out sincerely, they end in becoming most finished hypocrites: this perhaps is the origin of hypocrisy in most cases. But let it not be supposed that hypocrites are the only class of persons included under the general name of foolish virgins. Formality entitles a man to this name. There are many whose religion consists in a mere outward form of piety—a formal attendance on the external ceremonies

of religion—in all which, they are very sincere; they think they are doing what is very right, and they think they are doing it most acceptably, but neither their mind nor their heart is engaged in the business, and consequently, however fair their appearance may be—however virgin-like they may be, however brightly their lamps may shine, they have no oil, and will, eventually, be left in the blackness of darkness for ever. But greater than all these is self-deceiving speculation. A man of a strong and enlightened mind does often reason and speculate on the subject of religion: he forms schemes of doctrine, which very nearly approach to the truth, he entertains an opinion that they may be true, and this opinion by a kind of mental legerdemain, he substitutes in the place of real faith, and thus he persuades himself and others that he is a Christian; but such a one, too, is no better than the foolish virgins—he has a lamp, but no oil. O, yes, my brethren, true religion is a very different thing from what the world imagines it to be, it implies a change—a radical change of mind—a radical change of heart, a radical change of character—a thinking rightly, feeling rightly, and acting rightly in reference to God; a life of faith in the son of God; religion in the heart as well as in the head.

“They all slumbered and slept.” The unwise and wise—that the unwise should have slumbered and slept, is a matter of no surprise, it is what might be expected from their character; but that the wise should have slumbered, appears wonderful indeed, and some in order to account for the circumstance have supposed the sleep here spoken of to mean the sleep of death, but, on this supposition, the confession of the foolish virgins on awakening—their astonishment at finding that their lamps were extinguished—their inquiries about having them replenished, would have been inconsistent, for their spirits would have already experienced in the invisible world, the bitterness of a condemned state, and they must have already known that to them the door was for ever closed. It seems rather to intimate that they had fallen into a drowsy and sleepy state, in reference to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ in his glory, into which, however strange it may appear, the church has at different times relapsed. We have reason to believe that the time of our Lord's coming will be a time of great and in-

creased ungodliness in the world, and of great sleepiness and lukewarmness in the church—“as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be in the days of the Son of man:” in the days of Noah they were “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage,” completely wrapped up in sensuality and worldly mindedness, until the deluge came upon them—and *destroyed them all*: and about the time of the coming of the Lord, many profane and unbelieving scoffers will say “where is the promise of his coming?” inasmuch that even the church itself will begin to spiritualize the accounts of his coming, and say that he will only come in providence and not in person. They will be in a great measure put off their guard and cease to look out for it as a thing near at hand.

But “at midnight there was a cry made, behold the bridegroom cometh!” Awful intimation!—most awful alarm!—what a tremendous voice was that, rendered more tremendous still by the darkness and stillness of the midnight! It was at midnight that the destroying angel “went forth through the land of Egypt, and smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast—when there was a great cry in all the land of Egypt, for there was not a house in which there was not one dead.” It was at midnight that the angel of death, spreading his deadly wings upon the blast, smote, with the breath of his lips, the embattled host of Zennacherib, and

“The might of the Gentile, unsmeared by the sword,

“Melted like snow in the glance of the Lord.”

And who can describe or imagine the horrors of those nights. How infinitely greater shall be the horrors of that day—the *midnight of time!*—when the voice shall be heard from heaven, “behold, the bridegroom cometh!”—when the angel, mighty, and strong, and glorious, and terrible, shall stand upon the earth, and upon the sea, and lifting his hand to heaven, shall swear that there shall be time no longer! But the kingdom of eternity shall come in. “Then shall the righteous be glad and rejoice—the heavens also shall rejoice, and the earth shall be glad, the sea shall roar, and the fulness thereof, the field shall rejoice, and all that is therein, and all the trees of the wood shall rejoice before the Lord, for he cometh,

—for he cometh to judge the earth; he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with equity." But consternation, and astonishment, and confusion of face shall seize upon the unrighteous. Their joy shall be turned into mourning,—their gladness into sorrow of heart,—“the new wine shall mourn,—the vine shall languish,—all the merry-hearted shall sigh,—the mirth of the tabrets shall cease,—the joy of the harp shall cease—they shall drink no more wine with a song,—strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it,—the cities of confusion shall be broken down,—every house shall be shut up, that no man may come therein; all joy shall be darkened, and the mirth of all lands shall mourn: in these cities shall be left desolation, and their gates shall be smitten with destruction.” All the ungodly shall weep, and and lament—the hypocrite, detected in his infernal devices, shall lament and mourn—the formalist, stripped of his vain show of religion, shall weep and mourn; the infidel, confounded in all his speculations by this one voice, shall lament and mourn; all the unprepared of every rank and class shall lament and mourn—“for the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he shall be brought low—and upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures; and the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man shall be made low, and they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth,”—they shall mourn and lament.

And when the foolish virgins saw that that their lamps were gone out, and that they had no oil, they came to the wise and said, “give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out;” but they said, “not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather and buy for yourselves.” In that day “every man shall bear his own burden.” No one shall be able to contribute towards the salvation of another. It will avail nothing to have travelled through life’s dark vale,

in company with the righteous, or to have been otherwise connected with them;—the believing husband shall not be able to save the unbelieving wife—nor the believing wife the unbelieving husband;—the believing father shall not be able to save his unbelieving children—nor the believing children their unbelieving parent. Supererogation shall be found but a broken reed to lean upon. They went to buy, but it was too late. Time was, when they might have procured oil, and milk, and wine, in abundance, “without money, and without price,”—but that day of grace was gone past, and when they returned from their fruitless search, they found that “the door was shut.” The bridegroom and his blessed company had entered in, and the door was shut; the righteous were shut in, everlastingly secure from all intrusion—the ungodly were shut out in outer and everlasting darkness. Still they made one last effort. They cried, they wept, they supplicated, they impertuned,—they said, “Lord, Lord, open unto us?”—but all in vain; it was too late—*the door was shut*, never, never to be opened more.—*The door of heaven was shut* to secure the righteous against all intrusion. It was shut against sin, sorrow, death—against all vain and profane persons. *The door of mercy was shut*—that door which the strong arm of Jesus had opened;—that door, on the portals of which were written, in letters of love, “whosoever will, let him come and enter in.” That door into which they were entreated to enter by ministers and friends, by prophets and apostles, by judgments and providences—that door was shut. *The door of hope was shut*—self-delusion was annihilated—hope died in every breast, and all their groundless expectations perished. As when a man dreams of safety and happiness, of sumptuous feasts, and all manner of joys most dear to his heart, but, on awakening, finds himself loaded with chains, and immured in the horrors of a dungeon,—so shall it be in that day—the foolish, self-deluded multitude, who have said “peace, peace, when there was no peace,” shall find swift and inevitable destruction. *The door of hell was shut*, for the expression implies not only exclusion but punishment. They shall be shut up in that prison of darkness, horror, and despair, which excludes every thing that is desirable, and shuts up with

the captive all that is fearful—where there is no redemption, no release—"whose walls are damnation, and its gates woe."

Such shall be the kingdom of God, when the Son of Man comes—and, my brethren, begin not to say within yourselves, "the Lord delayeth his coming,"—the signs of his coming are not yet appearing,—we surely shall be no more before that day arrives. "Be not deceived,"—"the day of the Lord shall come as a thief in the night"—and the very attitude of the world seems to portend some great and momentous change; but even suppose that that day should not come in this generation, or for many generations, yet there is an event which must come to all, and may come soon—yea, may come now, which shall as effectually determine our everlasting state as the appearing of the Lord. The event I mean is "death." "It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment." Throughout the whole night of this world the angel of death is commissioned to go forth into the world, smiting not the first-born only, but all the children of men. He spares no rank—no condition of men; with an impartial stroke he smites the towered palace of the king, and the mean cottage of the peasant. He has already entered the houses of our neighbours. He may be in our neighbourhood still—he may be hovering over some of our houses—he may be hovering over mine—or your's—or your's—or your's. God only knows who in that house is marked out for destruction. We might conjecture, the oldest, the weakest, the sickliest—the most warned—it may be the youngest, the healthiest, the robustest, the most unsuspecting. It may be a believer—a real Christian; then happy he, whoever he may be. It may be a formalist, an unthinking person, or one who deceives himself with vain hopes: the eye of the dread angel may this moment be fixed upon him—the arrow may be drawn from the quiver—it may be laid to the bow, and the bow may be bent to a circle by the strong arm of the messenger of death and he may be waiting—waiting for what? Till that sinner shall once more have heard of mercy and of judgment—of all that is alarming, and all that is inviting and winning in eternity. Oh, should he

pass into eternity, unawakened, unconvinced, unpardoned, unsaved, how awful his condition! He has perhaps persuaded himself that he is a real Christian; his friends, equally deluded, have poured into his ear the consolations of the Gospel, which, alas, belonged not to him.—His minister, administering to him unwarily the Lord's Supper, may distil the last drop into his cup of delusion, and, under the influence of this fatal mixture, he may perhaps, dream, on the brink of eternity,—dream of peace, of safety, and of happiness in the world unseen,—but he is awakened by the call of death,—he passes into the world of spirits, and finds, to his everlasting confusion, that he has been building upon the sand. Oh, how is he confounded by the sights of woe which he beholds!—he looks for the sunshine of heaven, and, far as his eye can see, he meets nothing but the darkness of hell. He listens for the welcome of angels—he hears but the wailing of the damned; and weeping, and lamentations, and gnashing of teeth are heard, instead of the praises of the redeemed, and the seraphim's song. And while he looks around, he thinks a thought of remorse and anguish—"Is it possible that I, who lived a life so decent—that read the Bible—went to church—received the sacrament—was so reputed for religion and benevolence, am condemned to everlasting woe!" Oh, my brethren! "be not deceived; God is not mocked." He cannot be imposed upon; no counterfeit of faith, no counterfeit of religion will be recognized by him as true. He looks into the heart—the conviction of sin which he regards is a heart-conviction; the faith which he regards is a heart-faith; the repentance which he regards is a heart-repentance; the renunciation of self which he requires is a heart-renunciation; the love which he requires is a heart-love; the obedience which he requires is a heart-obedience. With him the purest words—yea, the purest actions go for nothing if they come not from a heart uninfluenced by his word and grace. Well, then, the door of heaven is open now; the door of mercy is open now; the door of hope is open now—"The Spirit and the bride say, come—and let him that is athirst come," and enter in and live for ever.

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXXIII.

SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. JOHN NEWMAN LOMBARD.

REV. SAMUEL MADDEN

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS, CORK,

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 11th, 1837,

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE REV. DR. QUARRY,

BY THE REV. JOHN NEWMAN LOMBARD, A. M.

Rector.

St. Luke, ii. chap. 29th and 30th verses.

“ Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.”

THERE are some, my brethren, who, though even obliged to confess that they are candidates for an eternal world, are altogether careless of religion, and reckless of their souls—and who “ make even a mock at sin.” And surely their state is lamentable in the extreme, when God’s word has told us, that “ the wages of sin is death.” There is another class who have, perhaps, admiring views of the greatness of God, as it is displayed in the works of creation, but who have no conception of that spiritual worship which is spoken of by the Lord, when he says, that “ the true worshippers of God worship him in spirit and in truth.” But there is a third class, who have an experimental knowledge and experience of the glorious Gospel of the Son of God; those, my friends, only are holy, those only are happy, in their pilgrimage through this wilderness world. And such was the experience of the aged believer who is brought before us in the passage with which our text stands in connexion, concerning whom we would desire to address you this day, in the strength of the Lord our God, and in dependence on the powerful operation of God the Holy Spirit, who alone can enable the minister to speak, or the people to hear, with spiritual profit to their souls. And oh, may Simeon’s God embrace each of us, as really in the arms of his mercy, as Simeon of old took the infant Saviour in his arms when he gave thanks in the temple of the Lord!

VOL. II.

O

I. We will bring before you a BRIEF SKETCH OF SIMEON'S CHARACTER. He was eminently a servant of God. Now, there is much contained in this description—a servant of God; it means one who acknowledges God in all his ways; it means one who desires to have God in all his thoughts; who has, by the grace of God, received the Gospel remedy of God's providing. It means one who desires to die unto sin, to live unto God, and to "glorify his Saviour with his body, soul, and spirit, which are his." And the reverse of this is the character of the man of this world. His views, his hopes, his affections go no higher than earth, and he neither fears God nor regards man. We find that the outline given us in the sacred records of the aged Simeon, is full and satisfactory, though it may be brief. We find in the 25th verse he is described thus—he "was just and devout;" which seems to imply that he had reference to both the tables of the law of God, as it regards our service to God, and our duty to our neighbour,—that he was just towards man and devout towards God. We find likewise that he was a temple-worshipper; in other words, while he poured out his soul in private prayer before God as a devout servant of the Lord, he likewise was one who frequented the public worship of God, showing that he felt as the Apostle Paul felt, that it would be wrong not to join ourselves together with the Lord's people, and to remember that we should "not forget the assembling of ourselves together" in the name of the Lord. We read likewise in the 27th verse, that "he came by the Spirit into the temple,"—and this shows us, my friends, that he was not a mere *formal* worshipper; he came by the leading and teaching of God's Spirit into the temple: and oh my brethren, this is what all and each of us want, and which we should desire to experience more than we have yet experienced—namely, to come to the temple of God, in the Spirit; to worship God in the Spirit; to offer up our prayers to

God in the Spirit; to hear what the minister of God has to say as regards our souls, in dependence on the Spirit; not to come to the temple of God for mere excitement; nay, not even to come because it is right so to do, as it regards compliance with customary form, but to come, as it is spoken of the aged Simeon—to "come in the Spirit into the temple" of the Lord, to have no other object in view, notwithstanding all our frailties and infirmities, but to worship our "God in spirit and in truth!" And if this were the case, my friends, every portion of the service of God would have its due weight with us—one portion of it would not be esteemed above another, but we should, especially if we had right views of God, if we would raise one portion above another, we should estimate higher, not that which proceeds from man, but that which offers spiritual worship to God. And if this were the case, we should not hear so many observations of those who come to the house of God, and who appear to have something else in view besides the glory of the great Redeemer's name;—we should not hear observations of such persons being careless of this portion of God's service, another of that portion, and appearing as if they had no other object in view, than to come to hear a mere human instrument, which is the least portion of the service of God, except as the great head of the church blesses what he says to the souls of poor perishing sinners. And let us observe, in passing, that the most manifest expression of indignation, which the holy, harmless, meek Saviour ever exhibited in our world, was towards those who profaned the temple of God. Yea, the infidel cavils of the Sadducees, the formal, hypocritical worship of the Pharisees, did not bring forth such an expression of indignation from the Son of God, as did those who profaned the temple, when he overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and said, "*My house shall be called a house of prayer.*"

Oh my brethren, we would endeavour to solemnize your minds now, and on every occasion when you enter the temple of God, and remind you that God's house is not only a house for preaching the word of God, but that God's house is especially "a house of prayer."

We read likewise that Simeon was "waiting for the consolation of Israel."—There was a general expectation among the Jews, of the Messiah at this time, though they made this sad and great mistake—they expected a temporal prince to come *in glory*, instead of a Saviour to come *in humiliation*, to make an offering for the sins of his people. To the Jewish people he was not *then* a consolation, for they set at nought and crucified the Lord of glory; but he will *yet* be "the glory of his people Israel," even the glory of his literal people Israel, when "the veil of unbelief shall be taken from off their eyes," and when they shall hail the Saviour as all their "salvation, and all their desire."—But *now* he is the consolation of all the spiritual Israel of God even in their earthly pilgrimage here below, "for he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." He is consolation now to all God's believing people, because his blood speaketh mercy, pardon, and peace, to the believing soul; he is their consolation, because his righteousness speaks justification to the poor sinner who has no righteousness of his own before God; he is their consolation, because he speaks fulness—"for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." He speaks fulness to the empty soul, who needs in every step of his pilgrimage to be supplied with fresh grace to enable him to resist the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Yes, he is the consolation of his people, for the rays of the Sun of Righteousness speak peace to the mourning soul—yea,

in that portion of Christian experience termed the hidings of God's countenance, he is the consolation of God's people, and they are enabled to see perfection in him, a willingness and ability to save, even when they themselves are mourning over the plague of their own hearts. Hence the Spirit speaks comfort to the believer's soul. And much absence of comfort, we are assured, arises in the minds of those who desire to seek the Lord, from not seeking it in God's appointed way, in not seeking it by earnest, faithful, and believing prayer, in not seeking the operation, the inward operation of God's Holy Spirit upon their hearts, to make known unto them with power the truth of God's word, for it was the Son of God who has called the Holy Ghost the Comforter of his Church.

And if, brethren, his first coming, even in humiliation, when he was born in a stable, and laid in a manger, and when he was "despised and rejected of men," if this first coming was a consolation to Simeon, the aged servant of God, how great is that consolation which is presented to the believer's soul, who is now not only able to look back upon the offering made on Calvary's cross, to atone for his sins, and to the perfect righteousness effected there, in which he can alone stand before God, but who has likewise the consolation of being enabled to look to his second advent, when he shall come a second time, "*without a sin offering*, to salvation," "in his glory, and the glory of his Father and his holy angels;" and when he shall establish a tribunal and a throne upon a renovated world, from which sin shall be banished, and where "all shall know the Lord, from the least to the greatest," and when alone "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea."

Simeon also was a man of faith,—“it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, till he had seen the Lord's Christ.” He believed that word, he waited for its ful-

filment, and he saw it fulfilled in due time. And just so the Holy Ghost works now upon the believer's mind:—the Word of God is presented by the Spirit of God to the believer's soul, a promise is presented by the Spirit of God before it, with all the authority and sanction of the Godhead, and by faith he lays hold on that promise, the Spirit of God applies it to his soul, and he waits for its fulfilment, as Simeon waited for the fulfilment of that foretold to him; he waits on the Lord, and he is as sure that that promise shall be fulfilled in his season, as he is that God, who is true, has made it.

II. We would draw your attention to SIMEON'S EXPERIENCE. We read, he saw God's salvation; he saw him whom the Jews had set at naught and crucified, and he acknowledged him as God's salvation, —strictly as God's salvation, and he is strictly so—God the Father is not presented to us in Scripture as an austere, implacable judge, who thirsts for the perdition of ungodly men, for in the word of the living God the Father is represented as love—"God is love." He is represented as the first, primary, moving cause of the salvation of his people, and we must consider Christ Jesus the God-man that is presented before us in the Scripture as God's salvation, as Simeon acknowledges him to be,—“Mine eyes have seen *thy* salvation.” He is God's salvation, because “commissioned by God the Father for that purpose, because he was accepted by him in that capacity, and because he was proclaimed by him for that end.” “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” He was accepted by God in that capacity, for it was proclaimed by a voice from heaven, “this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.” It was proclaimed by him for that end—for when the commission was given to his Apostles, it was that they were to go forth

to preach the Gospel, and baptize all nations, in the name of *the Father*, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—And his experience was, not only that he saw God's salvation, but that he *felt* God's salvation in his own soul; and this is evidenced in this one particular, his willingness to depart, and go into the presence of his God—for once having seen and embraced the consolation of Israel, his desire was altogether gratified, and he was willing to depart, whenever the Lord his God should call him: and this is the effect, my brethren, which a believing reception of the Gospel has on the believer's soul; it gives him a willingness to depart, whenever the Lord may call him. And let me just direct your attention to the word “depart,” which is used in this portion of God's word; it is an expressive term, it means not only a person going from one place to another, but it means, that that person has been unloosed from some bonds that tied him to his former place. In this sense it is used in other portions of God's word, as in the 15th chapter of St. Luke's Gospel, 12th verse, where our Lord, we read, healed a woman, bound with a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and where he said unto her, “thou art loosed from thine infirmity.” It is the same word which is used here by Simeon—he was about to be unloosed from those bonds which tied him to the world, and so it will be with God's people likewise; they will feel themselves at the approach of that call which the Lord shall make, not only willing to depart and go from one state of existence to another, but they will feel that they are loosed from those bands that tied them to the world, they will feel their souls liberated from the bondage of corruptible flesh; and though family ties may cause a temporary regret, when they cast a human look on those to whom their affections are united, yet it will only be the temporary feeling which a bride may experience on leaving her father's roof, when she has accepted the

person of her choice. She may shed a passing tear at leaving those she loved in her Father's home, but she is still willing to cast her lot with him who is the object of her love. So it is with those who are made "willing in the day of God's power;" they may feel a passing, transitory regret on leaving those whom they love in the flesh, or love in the Lord; and yet, the soul is so overpowered with the view of redeeming love, that they are glad and willing to "depart," and be with Christ, the Saviour of their souls.

Need we, my friends, (having thus considered the character and experience of Simeon of old,) need we direct your attention to the similarity of character and experience of him for whom our city mourns. This was the character and experience of, and this was the passage of God's word used by, that eminent servant of the Lord who has been pleased to call him to rest from his labours; for when he heard, and it was told him by his own desire, that he was near his end, and when this solemn announcement was made to him at his own particular request, the only effect it had on that sanctified spirit was thus expressed, "*you shall see how a Christian man should die;*" and then he solemnly used that expression of God's word, which we have taken as our text, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." And forcible was his observation on this occasion, namely, that when once the Lord's will was known, there should be "no conferring with flesh and blood;" when any thing appears to be in suspense and doubt, and we know not what the Lord's will is, there may be some excuse for forming and having a desire of our own, in humble dependance on God's Spirit for the teaching of his word; but when the Lord makes known plainly what his will is, then, said he, we have nothing more to do with human wishes and feelings, our desire should be to bow

before the Lord, and gladly to depart when the Lord shall call.

But it may be said, my brethren, "why revert to a painful subject such as this, why revert to it now, when ample opportunity has been already presented for speaking of this eminent servant of the Lord?" We answer simply thus, because we would feel that the cold hand of spiritual death were stamped on this pulpit, if a voice was not raised therein to testify our gratitude to the Lord, for having raised up such an eminent instrument of his own providing for the promotion of the knowledge of his holy will. But we confess that we feel it to be a difficult subject, from the difficulty of doing justice to the character of such a man. And let me impress upon you, my dear friends, that I do it not for the purpose of eulogising a mere human instrument, but for the purpose of acknowledging the power of the grace of God, who was pleased to appoint such an instrument for carrying on the purposes of his own will; and it is to God and to God alone, we desire to ascribe all the praise and all the glory. We once had a distressing duty in this place to perform, (about two years since,) in bearing testimony to another eminent servant of God, whom he, in his mysterious providence, was pleased to remove, we mean the honoured chaplain of the Foundling Hospital, one to whom my own soul was knit, giving some idea of what was felt between Jonathan and David, whose souls were "knit together" in the bonds of love; but except for the strong and warm affection that subsisted between us, which was almost overpowering to me at the time, I felt not the task so hard as I feel the present one; for though with unaffected humility I would say, that I felt that instrument to be in many respects far my superior, yet there was not that great distance between us as there is between me and him for whom, I say, our city now so universally mourns. I could survey his character, if I may so speak, by looking

along a horizontal line; but I am obliged to survey the subject of our present grief, by looking up a perpendicular line; and it would require, if I may use the expression, a species of spiritual trigonometry, which I confess I do not possess, to measure the height and distance of the instrument we are now mourning over—removed as he was, so far above the level of ordinary men. But concerning what I am about to say regarding him, I desire not to speak of him now, more than as an instrument in the hand of God for prosecuting the Saviour's work; I desire not to call forth any mere human feeling; I am aware that that may be called forth without having any glory reflected to God; I desire to speak of him as an instrument of God's providing, for whom we should feel grateful to God. I desire not to bring before you any of his domestic relations in his own private family where he was so tenderly beloved, but to speak of him as the standard bearer in the Church of God, for dethroning the kingdom of Satan and preaching the glad tidings of the everlasting Gospel. And what was he? *He was an eminent servant of God*, he was one who was "waiting for the consolation of Israel." What was he? *He was one who was valiant for the truth*: and to take any thing like an adequate view of his character, many amongst us must look to our younger days, when this eminent servant of God bore *almost alone*, as it regards our Church and our city, "the burden and heat of the day;" when evangelical religion had not got such a footing, had not become so fashionable in the world as at this present day: when he was obliged to preach the humiliating doctrines of the Gospel, to hold up the Saviour as the only source of salvation, to enforce the necessity of non-conformity to the world, and living to the glory of God, *almost alone*; while he became the Wickliffe of our Church, and the leading torch of the Gospel truth. And see how the Lord overruled the opposition he experienced

to his own glory, "He made even his enemies to be at peace with him;" and this was seen, if in no other way, by that powerful testimony which was borne by all classes and professions, when his honoured remains were consigned to their kindred dust.

What was he? *He was the learned foe of infidelity*. He was able to grasp with that mighty monster, he was enabled to tear away the false sophistry with which the truth of God is assailed, and he was enabled to present, in bright relief, "the truth as it is in Jesus." What was he? *He was a Scriptural enemy of superstition*. For, when he was called into the lists of controversy, many there are, and many, we believe, here present, whose remembrance can testify, that he was able to show forth the truth of God, to contrast it with error, and to point faithfully and with power to "the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." We will say once more, What was he? *He was the mild and sober-minded reprover of fanatical enthusiasm*; whose scriptural, fervent, chastened piety illustrated the Church he loved; he took the straight and happy medium between coldness on the one hand and mere excited human impulse on the other. And oh, what experience on this head did he evidence when called to depart out of this corruptible world! Like Simeon, he was sustained by the revelation of God, his whole soul seemed to be occupied with the revelation of God, his conversation was deeply imbued with all the precious truths of God's word, and especially such portions as these, Psalms, cxvi. 15. "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." Oh, how few are they who know this in their own experience, "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" *precious*, because it cost the *precious* blood of the incarnate God, to redeem man's soul. And another portion of God's word which sustained him amidst much bodily suffering was this—

(Rev. xx. 6.) "blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Yes, his mind was drawn to bear fully and forcibly on the prophetic part of Scripture, and he saw clearly presented to his mind in that word the joyful experience and happy privilege of all God's believing people, who, through the grace of God shall have accepted the offer of salvation, that "the dead in Christ shall rise first;" and he looked forward to the joy and happiness of that blessedness, spoken of in God's word concerning those who have part in "the first resurrection."

And when it was supposed that he was altogether insensible, and that his natural strength was altogether prostrate, what a testimony did he bear of his devotedness to the service of God! his mourning family heard him say in a suppressed tone, "O Lord my God, thou knowest the hearts of all, thou knowest that I have no desire to be raised up from this bed of sickness for the sake of my family, but for this end, that I may preach more and more 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.'" I casually put my hand on what I feel to be a valuable document, and in part of a letter which I received from this eminent servant of God on parochial business, I find his last words to be, "my voice is nearly useless for the purpose I desire chiefly to employ it in." My dear brethren, how happy would our experience be, if we were enabled thus to say, that we desire not to live except to promote the glory of God, and that the chief exercise of our voice should be, not, it is true, to preach as ordained ministers, (for this is not the post of all,) but to use our voice, not in conversing on the mere frivolous, trifling follies of the day, but using it for the glorious purpose of telling what great things the Lord hath done for the poor sinner's soul.

And oh, my friends, what a testimony did this eminent servant of God give to the Liturgy of our Church! He who was so gifted in mind, so cultivated in intellect, he who had copiousness of ex-

pression on every subject, whether scientific, or classical, or religious, he who was enabled in social worship and in public meetings to raise and to direct the souls of others in prayer to the throne of grace, mark the testimony that he afforded to the liturgy of our Church! Though he was thus gifted and thus copious in expression, yet in his last moments it was in the formulary of our church that he most frequently poured forth his aspirations to the God he loved. We desire not to overrate human compositions of any kind; for we deem it to be a mark of a distempered soul, when it is violently opposed to extempore prayer on the one hand, or to a fixed form of devotion on the other,—but we say, my friends, when such experience as this is placed before us, the experience of one of years, of human learning, of deep piety, how should it put to shame the senseless, we might almost say impious opposition to that scriptural liturgy, of those who assert that the use of it was grieving God the Holy Ghost!

My brethren, if one who was taught of God, and who was such an eminent instrument in the hands of God for teaching others in the way they should go; if such an one who has been the means of converting hundreds, yea, we might say thousands to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, found comfort and solace in casting his spiritual experience in the formularies of our Church, oh let them well examine themselves who lightly speak evil of them.

It may be interesting to some of you to know what portions of the book of Common Prayer were used by him, or rather used by the Spirit of God operating on his mind, in his special prayer to God, which I confess come with more sanctifying power to my own soul, when I know they were used by him. We will draw your attention to a few of them as they were intimated to me by one who, beyond us all, is deeply afflicted by his loss, one whose observation from the commence-

ment of his illness, led him to remark, that it would be almost impossible to say the actual portions of God's Word, or the Book of Common Prayer he took most delight in, his whole soul seemed so imbued with both. But two or three of these portions of the Book of Common Prayer I would now bring before you. One is that prayer towards the close of the Litany with which you are all familiarly acquainted, and I trust that many who hear these portions may be led to humble themselves more before the throne of grace, and to seek for God's Spirit to enable them to pray in Spirit and in truth.

"Oh God, merciful Father, that despisest not the sighing of a contrite heart, nor the desire of such as be sorrowful; mercifully assist our prayers which we make before thee in all our troubles and adversities whensoever they oppress us; and graciously hear us, that those evils, which the craft and subtlety of the devil or man worketh against us be brought to nought, and by the providence of thy goodness they may be dispersed: that we thy servants, being hurt by no persecutions, may evermore give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Another prayer which occupied his mind much, dear friends, and which is not so familiar to a general congregation, and we grieve to think why it is not, is part of the communion service, it is part of that beautiful, spirit-breathing portion of our Church service, when the Lord's people meet at the Lord's table, and there desire to commemorate the love of a dying and risen Saviour; and we would just say to those on whose ears these words may this day strike as a foreign language—Oh, brethren, examine yourselves why they are so, and how it is that the last dying command of the Son of God has been neglected by you, perhaps up to this present hour? And while we would be far from desiring to see the ungodly, or profane, or worldly-minded,

or formalist approach to the table of the Lord, we would say, it should cause in them deep self-examination to ascertain, why it is, and how it is, that they have so long neglected the dying injunctions of the Son of God? Let it be impressed on your minds more and more, that you are placed in this dilemma while you remain in an unconverted state, that you must either approach the table of the Lord unconverted, "and draw nigh with your lips while your hearts are far from him," or live in wilful disobedience to the command of the Lord our God. This was the portion of the communion service, which seemed deeply to impress his heart, "Lift up your hearts. We lift them up unto the Lord. Let us give thanks unto our Lord God. It is meet and right so to do."

"It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, Almighty, everlasting God."

We would bring another portion of this beautiful liturgy before you to show how it sustained the soul, as an instrument in the hand of God of this departing servant of God; when he was drawing nigh his end and scarcely able to give utterance by words to his feelings, he asked his beloved child—and oh, what a painful struggle it was!—to pray beside him in these words, (it is a commendatory prayer for a sick person on the eve of departure, perhaps some of you may have heard it.) "Oh, Almighty God, with whom do live the spirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and after they are delivered from their earthly prisons, we humbly commit the soul of this thy servant, our dear brother into thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; most humbly beseeching thee, that it may be precious in thy sight. Wash it, we pray thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted in the midst

of this miserable and naughty world, through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before thee; and teach us who survive, in this and other like spectacles of mortality, to see how frail and uncertain our own condition is, and so to number our days, that we may seriously apply our hearts to that holy and heavenly wisdom whilst we live here, which may in the end bring us to life everlasting, through the merits of Jesus Christ, thine only Son, our Lord."

There is only one more which I would bring before your notice ere I close; it is that portion which must be familiar to us all, (in the burial service.) "In the midst of life we are in death; of whom may we seek for succour but to thee, O Lord, who, for our sins, art justly displeased."

And now, in conclusion, I would say, while we deplore the loss of this eminent servant of God, let us likewise not forget the blessing which the Lord our God has conferred upon us even in him. We must remember with thankfulness and gratitude to God, that the Lord was pleased to spare him during a long ministry, that, for more than thirty years, the Lord enabled him to preach the full, free, and everlasting salvation of the Son of God, and by the power of the grace of God to convert such numbers to "the truth as it is in Jesus:" and we think that we should consider that great and eminently gifted man as a loan which was granted to us for a long season by the tender mercies of our God; and as the Lord has been pleased to take him, we should bow before him in humility, saying, "thy will, O Lord, not ours, be done"

Another cause of thankfulness concern-

ing him is this, that it pleased the Lord not to take him away suddenly from among us; for we think, if the Lord had done so, it would come like a thunderbolt on the Church of God in this city. But the Lord was pleased to deal mercifully in respect to him; to lay him by for a time, and then again to raise him up to speak in the Lord's name for a short period, then to remove him again to the chamber of sickness, to give him a season for more private meditation and prayer, till at length he was pleased to call him to his eternal rest.

And another cause of thankfulness is this, that the Lord has graciously been pleased to cause a revival in our Church, and to raise up many, though not of equal power in natural gifts, whose hearts are set to preach the same Gospel, and live to the honor and glory of their great Saviour's name; and we think, my brethren, that it should be a cause of thanksgiving to us; that, when he has removed such a father in Israel, he has left behind him many engaged in heart in this work, and desirous to follow his footsteps in preaching the Gospel for the conversion of sinners, the edification of the Church, and the glory of the Lord our God.

And oh, my dear friends, may the Lord impress you all with a deep sense of the value of that sustaining power which alone enabled him to have death robbed of its sting; and when you depart from this house, and when you are departing finally from your families, when you are departing into the valley of the shadow of death, when you have presented before your minds the awful realities of an eternal world, may the Lord grant that you may be able to depart in peace, according to God's word, and may your eyes see his salvation!

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. CANICE, KILKENNY,

BY THE REV. SAMUEL MADDEN, A. M.

TITUS, ii. 13.

“ Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.”

It cannot require many words nor any laboured argument to prove to readers of the Word of God, that it is the Christian's privilege, and should be his delight, to look forward to the hope set before him in the Gospel. Here apostolic practice, as well as apostolic precept, should be taken as a guide to the feet, and a light to the footsteps; and having made ourselves acquainted with those things, to the enjoyment of which holy and heaven-taught men of old looked forward; we should follow in their steps, and “hope unto the end” for the same blessings which they hoped for.

Now if we examine the apostolic epistles, we shall find that their inspired writers did unceasingly and steadily fix their hopes on future good things, and long earnestly for the time when hope should cease, being swallowed up by enjoyment. These holy men rejoiced in this, that they had “an *Advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” (1 John, ii. 1.) for they felt that they needed his advocacy. They rejoiced also in this, that he who was their advocate, was also “the *propitiation* for their sins.” (v. 6.) They gloried in Jesus *the crucified one*, knowing and being assured that “he was delivered up for their offences,” and that his “blood cleanseth from all sin.” They rejoiced in a *risen and an ascended Jesus*, knowing that “he rose again for their

justification,” and that he ascended up on high, “there to appear in the presence of God for them.” They rejoiced in all the comforts shed abroad in their hearts, by the indwelling, and by the witnessing of the Holy Spirit—but they ceased not here—they looked *onward*; they still hoped and longed for something more; yea, they hoped “for the grace that should be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ,” and they “looked for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, even their Saviour, Jesus Christ.” They knew and they felt that they were strangers and sojourners in this world; but they knew also that they were citizens of “that heavenly city, which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God:” and knowing that “flesh and blood,” fallen and sinful humanity, “could not inherit” that kingdom, they longed for *the second coming* of the Saviour, who should then “change their vile bodies that they should be like his own glorious body,” and lead them to their blessed mansions, “with everlasting joy upon their heads.”

My brethren, why should not we look forward to that hope to which these men of God looked? Why should not we hope for the same things for which they hoped? Has Gospel truth changed since then? or does the word speak to us in different accents from those which it

addressed to them? Certainly not. He who saved them is preached to us. The Spirit who dwelt in them is as free to us. The same hopes which cheered them are held forth to us: and it is as truly our duty, as it was theirs, to examine into the nature of these prospects which God hath mercifully made known to his Church. Did they anticipate the second coming of the Son of man? Did they look for his appearing and his kingdom? Did they offer up such prayers as this, "even so come quickly, Lord Jesus?" Difficult, nay impossible would it be to show that Christians in this our day should shut their eyes to these prospects, or cease to long for the same blessings. I would therefore, brethren, desire to put you in mind of these things and to direct your attention to the second coming of the Saviour, in humble hope that it may please him whose ambassador I am, to make me an instrument whereby to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is brought before us most prominently in the text. The apostle had been enumerating some of the various lessons which were taught by the Gospel of the grace of God. His words are "for the grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." These are the practical effects which flow from a true reception of the Gospel. But the apostle stops not with these. That Gospel tells you what to *hope for*, as well as what to *do*; and teaches not only to live godly in this world, but further, to live constantly "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." To this hope the Apostle looked—to this hope the Gospel teaches us to look, and therefore, as a minister of the Gospel, to this I would now direct you.

First, then, I would remark that *the Lord Jesus Christ is to come again*. He

who was once born of a virgin and cradled in a manger—He who went about doing good, and healing all that was oppressed—He who died on Calvary, and was buried in the tomb of Joseph, he who arose on the third day, and afterwards ascended into heaven,—he shall visit this earth again, he shall descend from heaven, and shall stand upon this earth at the latter day (Job.) The Lord is now above the heavens—he hath entered into the most holy place, "there to appear in the presence of God," as the advocate of his people. He hath taken his seat, and is enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high. But he will leave that glory—he will come forth from his place, and again descend from his throne in the heavens to visit our world. "That same Jesus" whom the Apostles beheld taken up into heaven "shall so come in like manner as they saw him go into heaven;" (Acts i. 2.) for "when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord," then shall he "send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." (Acts iii. 19, 20.) And therefore, knowing that thus it should be, the saints of old, who, even while on earth, had their "conversation in heaven," looked for the coming of the Lord Jesus from heaven; being fully assured that "Christ, who was once offered to bear the sins of many, should appear to them that look for him, the second time, without sin, unto salvation." (Heb. ix. 28.) They "hoped unto the end for the grace that should be brought to them at the revelation of Jesus Christ," (1 Pet. i. 13.) confident that "yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. x. 37.)

Yes, Jesus will come again, "and every eye shall see him." There is a day approaching when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of heaven shall be shaken, and *then* shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and *then* shall all the tribes of the earth

mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory ;" (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30.) even as he himself testified to his own disciples, and before the high priest. He hath gone "into a far country, to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." (Luke, xix. 12. He hath gone "to prepare a place for his people, but he will come again to take them to himself." (John xiv.)

But our text does not merely teach that Jesus shall come again ; it also gives the character of his coming. It speaks of "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." His first coming was lowly, his second coming shall be glorious. When he first appeared on earth, he was "despised and rejected;" when next he comes, he shall appear as "the King of kings."

To this character of the second advent frequent reference is made in the Scriptures. Thus our Lord himself describes his appearing as being "in power and great glory;" that he shall not then be a poor, despised, and unattended man, for he shall come in his "own glory and all the holy angels with him." He shall not then enter the world almost unnoticed, for the sun, and moon, and stars, and all the host of heaven shall be veiled at his approach, "when he cometh to shake terribly the earth." They shall give tidings that the Lord cometh, and their bright shining shall become darkness before him. Then also shall he be accompanied with myriads of those angels who are God's "ministering spirits," and who stand around the throne ; and with these shall be associated his peculiar treasure, the redeemed from the earth, even as "Enoch, the seventh from Adam prophesied, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints;" (Jude, xiv.) These legions of angels, these thousands of saints, shall give glory to the advent of the Lord. But this is not all his glory, this is not the full display of majesty which shall then be made.

Jesus himself shall appear in glory and in power.

At his first appearing as the Son of man he laid aside his glory, and divested himself of all the ensigns of his power. Though he had before appeared to Moses and to the Israelites as "the glory of the Lord," "like unto the devouring flame," yet when he came in flesh, to transact the business of man's redemptions, he then veiled his glory in our humanity, and laid aside the manifestations of his godhead, that he might come "in the form of a servant and in the likeness of man." But even then he gave some intimations, and exhibited some foreshowings of that glory, in which he will appear when he comes the second time : for having taken with him Peter and James and John into a high mountain apart to pray, he was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun. (Matt. xvii. 1, 2.) On that occasion he took upon him for a little while that appearance and that glory, in which, before the days of his flesh, he had appeared to his people, and in which he will appear again at his second coming. He then appeared in majesty. Though as a man, yet as a glorified man, and as the God-man : so that Peter testifies that on that occasion he was an "eye-witness of his majesty." (2 Pet. i. 16.) and John, referring to the same event, saith, "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." (John i. 14.) Christ then appeared in his glory to his three disciples, and to them alone—no other inhabitant of earth beheld him. They alone of living men were favoured with this vision, and two of the departed saints enjoyed it also. But "the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together," (Isaiah xl. 5.) This shall be when Jesus comes again : then shall he "appear in his glory." (Ps. cii. 16.) Then shall he take to himself his great power—then shall he manifest all his glory. He shall indeed appear as the God-man : but the manhood

shall not then veil his glory, or hide his power. The manhood itself shall be glorified, and Jesus shall descend from heaven in all the majesty and splendor of the great God, the King of kings, and Lord of Lords.

Thirdly, I would remark, that "the Apostle speaks of this glorious appearing of the Lord as a *"blessed hope."* He does not treat it as a matter of mere speculation—he does not think it so far removed from him as to be a subject of little interest to him—no, he calls it an *hope*, yea, more than this, a *"blessed hope:"* yea, he is emphatic, and calls it *"that blessed hope,"* as if it was that to which he turned with peculiar delight, and on which his hopes rested with most anxious desire. And, my brethren, well might the Apostle speak so of the appearing of the Son of Man—well might he turn to it as to a *"blessed hope;"* for the day of that appearing shall be a day, *the day of joy*, and unmixed gladness to the saints of God; for then shall they arise from the grave, and then shall they be made partakers of the glory of their Lord.

It is at the Lord's appearing that the saints shall be raised. Paul expected it no sooner, but knowing that it should then take place, looked for the Saviour from heaven, who should change their vile bodies, and make them like to his own glorious body. He knew, that when the Lord should descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God, then the dead in Christ should arise. He believed that they who are Christ's should be raised at his coming; that then the trumpet should sound—the voice of the Lord should be heard calling to his sleeping saints, "awake and sing, ye that sleep in the dust,"—that at that voice they that heard it should come forth—that then "the dead should be raised incorruptible," and should sing the triumphant song, "O death where is thy sting—O grave where is thy victory, thanks be to God, who giveth us the

victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ:" and because he believed these things, he anxiously hoped for the day of the Lord's appearing. The resurrection of the body was not by him esteemed a thing of so little importance as to engage but few of his thoughts, or excite but languid hopes—neither was death the object, or the time of death the day of his desire. He longed for resurrection, he desired "to be clothed upon with his house from heaven." But these things are not caused by death; the soul is then unclothed, not clothed upon; the body is then slain, not raised, it is then turned to corruption, not clad in glory. He therefore looked beyond death—yea, with the eye of faith he passed beyond the state succeeding death, wherein soul and body shall be separate; he beheld, afar off, the coming of his Lord, and he longed for it, knowing that *then* his body should be raised; that *then* the unnatural separation caused by death should cease; that *then* his vile body should be made like unto the risen and glorious body of his blessed Saviour.—Job too looked for the same hope. This holy man weighed down by his afflictions, and knowing that at death he should enter upon rest, though not upon full enjoyment, or perfect glory, exclaimed—"O, that thou would'st hide me in the grave, that thou would'st keep me secret until thy wrath be past: that thou would'st appoint me a set time, and *remember me.*" Job xiv. 13. So he prayed—but he ceases; he asks himself, (v. 14,) "If a man die, shall he live again?"—and then, strong in the confidence of faith, that when the "Redeemer should stand upon the earth, at the latter day," he also should stand with him, he is content to die, and thus escape his misery but still expresses his hope in the resurrection. He saith, "all the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee,—thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." He knew, that as the grass which is blighted by the wintry blast comes forth in fresh

and luxuriant beauty at the returning spring, so should it be with him at that day when the Lord should call him, having remembered the work of his own hands. He was therefore "willing to be absent from the body,"—he was satisfied to wait, all the days of his appointed time, separate from his body, and at rest; but he looked for the time when his *change* would come—when the Lord should call him to arise from the dust, and when that body which was sown in weakness, should be raised in power. "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."—(Job xix. 25, 26.)

Connected with the resurrection of the body is the glory and full joy of the saints. That they shall be happy when they leave the body—that, in their separated state, while spirit and body are asunder, their spirits shall be at rest, and in a state of enjoyment, is beyond doubt. But be their happiness and enjoyment what they may, they shall not attain to their "*perfect* consummation and bliss, both in body and soul," till the resurrection; and, therefore, till the coming of the Lord from heaven: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." (John, xvii. 24)—so prayed the Lord. He desired that his people might be with him, and that, being with him, they might behold, and participate in his glory. But when shall this be? That it *shall* be, we doubt not, for the Lord wills it—but when shall it be? Hear what he saith elsewhere: "I go to prepare a place for you, and *I will come again*, and receive you to myself: that where I am there ye may be also." When he comes again, *then* will he receive his people to himself—then shall they be with him, and, as it is when they are with him that they shall behold and participate in his glory, their sight of, and participation in his glory, takes not place till he comes. "When Christ, who

is our life, shall appear, *then* shall ye also appear with him in glory," saith Paul, (Col. iii. 4;) and again the same Apostle, when nigh to entering upon the rest after death, saith, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me *at that day*." (2 Tim. iv. 8.) At what day?—had he mentioned any particular day? Yes; he had a moment before spoken of the day of the Lord's appearing; to that day he looks forward as the day when he shall be crowned. Nor does he confine this hope to himself; for he says, that the crown of righteousness shall be given in that day not to him alone, "but also to all them that love his," even the Lord's, "appearing." Peter also exhorted the persons to whom he addressed his first epistle, to be patient under tribulation, and to remember that though, if need be, they suffered many afflictions, yet that all should end well, for that "the trial of their faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, should be found unto praise, and honour, and glory." (1 Peter, i. 7.) And when shall this be? He adds, "at the appearing of Jesus Christ;" and therefore he exhorts them further, "to gird up the loins of their minds, to be sober, and to hope to the end for the grace that should be brought to them at the *revelation* of Jesus Christ."

I might add many more testimonies, but trust, that these few will suffice to show to you, my brethren, that the Apostle spake well, when he called the appearing of the great God our Saviour, a "blessed hope." O, it is a blessed hope—a hope which can cheer the soul of the pilgrim, while traversing the wilderness of the world—a hope more precious than rubies, and to which all things that can be mentioned are not to be compared. We shall not occupy the tomb for ever—our bodies, the companions of our pilgrimage, shall not be held for ever in the bondage of death, in the territory of the enemy.—no, they shall arise. The Lord watcheth

them, and in the day of his appearing, "when he gathereth up his jewels," (Mal. 3, 17.) he will remember the work of his own hands. He will call, and we shall arise. But more glorious will that day be to those of his people who shall be alive at the Lord's coming. "Behold I show you a mystery," saith Paul, "we shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed." "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." And again he saith, "the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them"—and this shall take place when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven." Here then is further reason why the saints of God should long for, and pray for, the Lord's coming; for if they are alive, then they shall be privileged to escape death—they shall be at once changed, even as were Enoch and Elias, the servants of the Lord.

Brethren, is the coming of the Lord a blessed hope to you—is it *the* hope—that to which your souls delight to turn, and the glories of which your faith anticipates? Are you looking for it, are you longing for it? Can you join in the beloved disciple's prayer, "come quickly Lord Jesus?" Oh my friends, none but the saints of God—his separated people, can thus rejoice, thus hope, or thus pray. None but those who know Jesus as the Saviour, the Justifier, the Redeemer, can wish to see him come as "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." To all others his coming will bring misery—to those it will bring glory. Seek then to know him as your Saviour, that you may be glad

when he cometh as your King. He is now willing and able to save you. He can present you blameless before the throne of God. He can justify you even as he is just. His merits can secure for you full pardon and acceptance. Turn then to him, "for why should you die," why should you perish, why should you be lost, while a remedy and a sure one, is at hand. He who is to come in glory, once came in meanness—he who is to come as the great God-man, once came to be a sacrifice for our sins. He "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity." He bled for us that he might cleanse us from all sin. He "died for our offences, he arose for our justification." He ascended into the presence of God, our high priest, to intercede for us: and being there, "he is able to save us to the uttermost." And what saith he? "He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Give credit to his testimony—believe his word—repose with confidence on his promises—for he that hath faith—he that believeth, shall be saved. Let Jesus be your hope—let him be your rock—cast all your care, and lean with all your might upon him—live in faith, looking for his coming; and then, in the day of "his appearing, and his kingdom," you shall lift up your heads with joy, and join with the redeemed in saying "Lo! this is our God, we have *waited* for him, and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have *waited* for him; we will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation."

GRATITUDE.

—oo—

When the full heart in rapturous pride,
 Feels all its wonted joys renew'd,
 Each bounding pulse of pleasure's tide,
 Beats high, in throbs of *gratitude*.

The hand, outstretch'd to give relief—
 The eye, with pity's tear bedew'd,
 The voice that soothes our bitterest grief,
 Is recompens'd by *gratitude*.

The friend, that in a world of woe
 Would wish our love of sin subdued,
 Who, hand in hand, would with us go,
 Towards heaven—deserves our *gratitude*.

Who heals the wounded spirit, where,
 'Mid shafts of death, and seas of blood,
 The sinner sinks, in sad despair,—
 Should he not claim our *gratitude*?

But HE who gave his own heart's core,
 And died by hands of sinners rude,
 Took all of sin we ever bore—
 Shall HE not have our *gratitude*?

J. R.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, JULY 8, 1837.

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REV. JAMES MORGAN,

REV. DR. BAILLIE.

SECRET DEVOTION.

NOTES OF

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, FISHERWICK-PLACE,

BELFAST.

ON SUNDAY, JUNE 25, 1837,

BY THE REV. JAMES MORGAN.

MARK i. 35.

“ And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”

IN the conduct of Christ, recorded in this passage, we have a delightful example of secret devotion. The language is peculiarly striking and emphatic, “ *In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*” The design of so much force being put into the language, obviously is, to fix our attention on this part of our Lord’s conduct, and to recommend it to our imitation. And in directing your attention to it at the present time, I will endeavour, in the first place, to explain, from this conduct of our Lord, an exercise of secret devotion, and then, in the second place,

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to enforce the practice of secret devotion by a consideration of its benefits. May God be pleased to assist us in speaking and hearing, and may he impart to us the mind, and conform us to the practice of Christ!

I. TO EXPLAIN AN EXERCISE OF SECRET DEVOTION. It is little we know of the private life of Christ. Till he attained his thirtieth year, and entered on his public ministry, the notices of his life are remarkably few and brief. At first sight this may appear to be somewhat strange, but further reflection fully justifies it. *In silence there is often much eloquence, and much instruction*, and it is so in the pre-

P

sent instance; for the biographers of Christ, by the silence they have usually adopted, in recording the early and private life of Christ, have taught youth an instructive lesson on the propriety of modesty; and they have, at the same time, showed us, that the private life of any individual is not, without good reason, to be dragged forward before public observation. At the same time, while it thus appeared good to the Holy Spirit, in a great measure to conceal from us the private life of Christ, yet enough is made known to acquaint us with his character. Both prior to entering on his public ministry, and subsequent to that time, the curtain is sometimes lifted up, and we see him in his private retirement: and how is he occupied there? Usually we find him in secret devotion. Notices of his conduct in this respect are remarkably short, but they are very emphatic; and with a view to impress it somewhat on your attention, let me invite you to read with me a notice or two of this kind, both because of its applicability to the subject in hand, as well as that we may learn to observe the incidental notices of God's word, and gather from them lessons of instruction. Look into the Gospel of Luke, 6th chap. 12 verse—"It came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." This notice we may be apt to read over without observation, but when we come to look at it, how much is implied in it! "He went out into a mountain"—into the deep recesses of the mountain—he went there for prayer,—“he continued all night,” without intermission, “in prayer to God.” Again, in Luke, xxi. 37, we read, “And in the day time he was teaching in the temple, and at night he went out and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives.” Here we have an account of his day, and a reference to his night; you are not told how he spent it, but you are at no loss to conjecture. It is added, in Luke xvii. 39—“He came out, and went, as he was

went, to the Mount of Olives.” One other notice you find in the Gospel by John, vi. 15—“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.” The contrast is striking,—the people desiring to drag him into all the notoriety of a king, but he, choosing to “depart into a mountain himself alone.” In connexion with these, read the text—“In the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.” There can be no inference more obvious than this, that Christ was given to secret devotion. At present, however, we are to confine our attention to that particular exercise of it recorded in the text, and my object will be specially to mark the prominent features of this exercise, and to learn from them, as we go along, how best to conduct an exercise of secret devotion.

I. With this view, the *first* thing that arrests our attention is *the occasion* on which our Lord betakes himself to this exercise of secret devotion. You learn, from the context, what that occasion was. In the 21st verse you read—“They went into Capernaum, and straightway, on the Sabbath day, he entered into the Synagogue and taught, and they were astonished at his doctrine—for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the Scribes.” Observe, he did not cease with teaching,—it is added, “There was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, saying, let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the holy one of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy peace and come out of him; and when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.” These were his exercises in the synagogue, but they did not end there; in the sequel you find, that out of doors he continued

his labours, 29th verse—"And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John: but Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her; and he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them. And at evening, when the sun did set," (still continuing his labours,) "they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils; and all the city was gathered together at the door; and he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils, and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him." Then follows the text, "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." You observe the connection,—after a day of laborious occupation in the public exercises of religion, he sought an opportunity for the exercise of secret devotion:—It brings before us the private and public exercises of religion in a most interesting and profitable connection; it shows us, that while one duty is done, the other is not to be left undone: it teaches us, that our engagement in public duty is no reason for our neglect of private duties; nay, that it is when we have been engaged in the public exercises of religion, we most need the private exercises of devotion. And there are many reasons for this. It is in private that the impressions of the public ordinances must be maintained on the mind. The mind is naturally subject to relapse, and just as its excitement is great, the relapse is apt to correspond to it; it is only in private devotion, that the freshness of the spirit gained in public is to be maintained. Besides, this is a time of peculiar temptation. You will recollect, that it was after our Lord had been baptized, and the Spirit descended on him, he had to encounter the forty day's temptation in

the wilderness. You will recollect, that it was after Paul was caught up into the third heavens, he had to meet the messenger from Satan to buffet him. And if the Christian in his public exercises, has attained to high enjoyment, every stratagem will be used by Satan to rob him of his treasure. Besides, it is necessary that we follow our public services with secret exercises, that we may bring the former to the test. In public we are apt to be excited, but feelings that are excited may be deceitful, and every wise man will test the feelings he had in public, in the secret exercises of devotion in the presence of God *alone*. This was the occasion of our Lord's devotional exercises, and my hearers must see at once that nothing can be more worthy or deserving of our attention and imitation than his conduct, following up the public exercises of religion on the Sabbath day, with the secret exercises of devotion.

2. The next circumstance in this exercise that attracts our attention is *the time that our Lord was pleased to choose for it*. "In the morning," says the Evangelist, "rising up a great while before day:"—The narrative is very simple, but exceedingly instructive. A fact is declared, and when we come to meditate on that fact, it suggests a great variety of thoughts. An action is declared which necessarily implies the existence of many principles, and the exercise of many feelings. "In the morning, rising up a great while before day!" Do we not at once think of our Lord's *self-denial*? It is very frequently mentioned of him in his history, that he rose early; thus John says, "Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives, and early in the morning, he came again into the temple; and the people came to him from every quarter, and he sat down and taught them." Believe me, it was not without reason that our Lord did so. The morning is favourable to devotion, our minds are not yet disturbed by the cares and business of the day, there is a

sweetness and freshness in the air of the morning, well calculated to promote devotional feelings and help devotional exercises: our Lord knew it, and he took advantage of the morning for the exercise of devotion: and then, bear in mind, the circumstances under which he had done so, he had spent the preceding day in laborious public duty, he had laid himself down on his bed for a season of short repose; but scarcely had he done so, than he has risen up again for the exercise of devotion. It has often struck me, brethren, in reflecting on the history of Christ, how ready he was at all times to meet every duty, no matter at what time he was called upon, he discovers no impatience, he never appears disturbed by any thing or person. Nicodemus, for example, came to him "by night," we have no account of our Lord considering it an intrusion, there is no postponing of the conversation till morning, he is ready to meet him then, he sits down with him and begins deliberately to instruct him. Oh, what lessons do we learn hence,—what self-denial! what anxiety to give to God the best of his services! and what a view of the importance of the habit of devotional exercises. It was for this he denied himself, it was for this he was up and doing, it was for this he gave the best of his time and services to God. Oh, brethren, how are we reprovèd by such conduct? Who amongst us denies himself for the exercise of secret devotion? Nay, the very time that God has given us for that purpose, many of us refuse to take. Witness the Sabbath day; God has set it apart for the express purpose of devotion. How many are there that waste its mornings in unnecessary and useless sleep, and abridge its evenings in similar indulgence. Not only will they not give of their own time to God for the exercise of secret devotion, but the very time that God in his providence has given them, they refuse to take. Instead of making all things give place to devotion, they will make

the exercise of devotion give place to all things. Let there only be the smallest earthly business, and it is counted a sufficient reason for neglecting, or hurrying, or shortening our secret devotions. Oh, let all such mark the conduct of Christ on this occasion, and let me entreat them to remember the time he chooses for the exercise of devotion, "in the morning, a great while before day."

3. There is still a third circumstance that naturally occurs to be noticed in this exercise of our Lord, *The place he sought for it.* "He went out and departed into a solitary place." The design of his conduct is obvious; it was that he might avoid every thing that could hinder his devotions, and that he might take advantage of every thing that would help them. For this purpose, he left the habitations of men, that their voices might be unheard by him, and that his voice might rise unheard by them to his heavenly Father. For this purpose he sought the solitude, he conversed with God in silence, he viewed the works of his hands as aids of his devotion. Think of him reading such a passage as that in the 19th Psalm, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handy-work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge, there is no speech nor language, their voice is not heard, their line is gone out throughout all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Think of the Saviour, under the expanse of an eastern sky thus engaged, and you may form some idea of his exercise, when it is said of him, "he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

Brethren, let me recommend to you the literal imitation of this conduct of Christ. Obey that command, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." Do more, seek betimes the solitude of nature, realize there the presence of *God alone*: try to feel yourselves *alone* in his presence, and enter into fellowship with

him. But alas, what reason have we to fear that too many shun such a secret exercise as this.—They have no objection to the religious activities of life, they take even delight in these, the busy committee, the warming and animating prayer meeting, the crowded anniversary, in these are their delight. Nor think, my brethren, we blame such exercises as these; far from it.—Our Lord was much in the temple, much in public, but he knew when to be there, and when not to be there: he spent his day in the temple, he made large demands on the night for the exercise of secret devotion. And if no man ever equalled him in the laborious occupations of the day, no man was ever like him in the secret devotion of the night. What an example for us to imitate, recollect the record that is given of him, “he went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”

4. The last circumstance which it occurs to us to notice, is *the exercise itself*; “And there prayed.” What ideas can we attach to this exercise, *there prayed!* The words are few, but the sentiment is weighty,—Christ, as man, needed to pray. We can conceive of Adam in innocence praying; in his prayer he would praise God, he would thank God, he would supplicate God for such things as he needed: but especially our Lord needed prayer, as being the subject of *sinless* infirmity, he was subject to cold and hunger, to fatigue and weariness, and therefore, these wants pressing on him, he needed to pray to his heavenly Father. But above all, we contemplate Christ praying in the capacity of Mediator. In that capacity, he bore upon his breast the load of his Church before God. There were times when he was manifestly oppressed with that load. Remember his agony in the garden, “being in an agony, he prayed the more earnestly, and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” And oh, what ideas can the mind attach to such a passage as that in Hebrews, “who

in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up supplications and prayers with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him, and was heard in that he feared:” And yet, brethren, all these supplications, all these exercises related to himself, to his own personal exercise; but when we come to think of him praying for the Church, what an exercise must he have had then? Read at your leisure his intercessory prayer in the 17th chapter of John’s Gospel, how he commits his Church to God, seeks for it every blessing it stands in need of, uses every argument that could prevail with God:—In short, in this exercise of secret devotion, our Lord is discovered bringing before his heavenly Father all that concerns himself and all that concerns his Church; he teaches us in our secret devotions to bring before the notice of our heavenly Father whatever respects us individually, and whatever respects the general interests of religion. This is the principle set before us in our Lord’s example; but I would wish to take it up more particularly and suggest a few things specially to which I desire you would attend in conducting the exercise of secret devotion. And the first thing, brethren, that we ought to engage in is *self-examination*. Jehovah’s language by Haggai you may recollect, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways,” our life ought to pass in review before us, we ought to look at it as in the presence of God; and if you would make this exercise to tell, if you would make it practically and personally useful you must confine your self-examination to a limited period. Take up the last week, the last day, the last year—call up your conduct during that period, and examine it in the sight of God. I have no doubt but that one design of God’s providence in causing these seasons and times was to induce a habit of self-examination. Let that examination be conducted in the spirit and with the prayer of David, “Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and

know my thoughts ; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—And I need not tell you that it will be a profitable exercise.

With self-examination let there be associated deep and devout *meditation*. And here, as before, it is necessary that you fix on a particular topic of meditation. We suppose that you sit down for the exercise of secret devotion at the close of the day, a very fitting subject is the providence that God has exercised towards you throughout it—You think of providence, and what a peculiar view the Bible gives you of it—The providence of the world is in the hand of Christ, "God has given him to be head over all things to the church"—No event befel you that day, but it came to you through Christ. Only think then, on the events of the day in the light of the Mediator's providence, and what a theme does it furnish of devout meditation ! Are you sitting down at the close of the week for an exercise of secret devotion ? The sabbath, very naturally, presses on your attention, its endearing associations are before your mind, the resurrection of Christ, the death of Christ, the life of Christ, the birth of Christ, the pre-existence of Christ, his eternal glory. Or again it is at the close of a year, and how naturally will there come before you other thoughts suitable to such a period ? Or it is when you are about to eat the Lord's Supper. What an interesting thought ! Bread and wine,—the incarnation of the Son of God. Broken bread, and poured out wine,—the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Bread eaten and wine drunk,—salvation by faith. All this done by the people of God unitedly,—the duties, claims, obligations, privileges of brotherly love. I need not say, what an exercise this would prove, how it would nourish the soul unto eternal life.

To these exercises of self-examination and meditation, fervent and earnest prayer must be added. By self-examination, you ascertain your *wants* ; by meditation you ascertain the provision made to meet

them ; by prayer, you are to unite these two things. In the exercise of meditation you are led to say, "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," and then you make the application of that discovery, saying, "out of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace."

To complete the exercise, enter into a determination of future and better obedience. Oh, how did Christ come out from his solitude ! with what purposes to do the will of his heavenly Father ! how may we suppose him to say, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work : And just so it is in this instance ; coming out of your solitude, out of your secret devotion, you are better prepared, and more resolved to do the will of God on earth, even as it is done in heaven.

I cannot conclude this part of the subject without suggesting to you, the propriety, in your secret devotions, of reducing your thoughts to writing : the practice has prevailed, among those who have been most careful to watch their hearts with diligence, and to observe the dealings of God towards them, to keep a diary of their lives and experiences. It indeed has been the practice of the best of God's servants. It takes little time, but it answers many valuable ends, and I conclude this part of my subject, by suggesting for your consideration and adoption such a practice.

II. I AM TO ENFORCE THE DUTY OF SECRET DEVOTION BY A CONSIDERATION OF ITS BENEFITS. The benefits are very many and various, but I will at present confine myself to these three, its tendency to promote godliness, comfort and usefulness.

I. In the first place then I would say, *secret devotion has a tendency to promote godliness*. Godliness is a great peculiarity of the true servant of God. It means, that every thing he does has respect to God. The godly man adopts

for his principle, "whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." The worldly man often does what is excellent, amiable and praiseworthy, and yet he is not a partaker of godliness. Men may do what is right, and not do it out of any respect to the character, or will, or authority of God. But godliness is that great principle, which causes us to do every thing out of respect to God. Thus it is the great peculiarity of the true servant of God;—and how is that cultivated by secret devotion. Public ordinances are good and necessary, christian conversation is pleasant and profitable; by them our knowledge is advanced, our love animated, and our zeal is excited, but secret devotion is essential to godliness. Is it fitted to promote it, because it brings us into contact with God, it leads us to examine our motives, as in his sight:—the eye of man is shut out, the observation of society is removed;—we are looking at ourselves and our conduct as God looks at it, and we may discover whether the good things we do arise merely from respect to man or respect to God. Thus it comes to pass, that secret devotion, above all things, produces simplicity and godly sincerity: it makes man simple in his life, sincere in his motives, it forms him into the gentleness of a little child.—In short, we would say devotion is the very nursery of godliness. As therefore you would attain to godliness, see that you abound in secret devotion.

2. But in the next place, *secret devotion is most favourable to the comfort of the mind.* This sentiment is very strikingly exemplified in the book of psalms; you will observe a large number of the psalms commence in the very lowest depression of mind; and they usually end in the very highest elevation of spirit: You have a delightful example of that in the 130th psalm. There the writer begins, saying, "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee O Lord," and you follow him on from the language of conviction, through the language of prayer, and confession,

and faith, and hope, and encouragement, until at last you find him concluding, in the language of the most joyous assurance, "He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Nothing can be more natural than the progress of the mind, in such an exercise, and it shows the tendency of devotion to produce true comfort of heart. You will perceive, that this is most reasonable. Devotion soothes the mind—the very withdrawal from society is apt to do so; it elevates the mind, by the subjects with which it exercises it; it subdues the mind, and produces equanimity of temper. Can we conceive any thing so calculated to produce strong and solid comfort as secret devotion.—And do you not generally find, that the man who is much in public, but little in his closet, has no joy in religion? He may be able to lead crowds, who listen to his eloquence with the utmost delight; while yet he is without peace of mind, without comfort of soul, without joy in the Holy Ghost. And if you want to know the reason, you may readily discover, he is too little in his closet, and too neglectful of secret devotion.

3. In the last place, *secret devotion is most favourable to usefulness.* The great secret of usefulness among men is a spirit of piety toward God. It were very easy to show you how true this sentiment is, show me a man who is largely occupied with the exercises of secret devotion, and you find him always in the spirit of doing good. Now this is all that man needs; as for opportunities, they are at hand, he has never to go to look for them, they offer themselves to him every day and every hour, in every person he meets and every action he performs, in every change of life and every circumstance of God's providence. There are numerous opportunities of usefulness, all that is wanting is a heart to be useful. Now just think of a man of God, rising in the morning, a great while before day, and having his own mind chastened in the exercise of secret devotion, and then, going out in the

business of life, there will be little there that he will not seize on as an opportunity of usefulness. In the very manner in which he speaks to every one he meets, in the very way he discharges every duty to which he is called, his spirit is as it ought to be, and therefore the man is walking up and down in society, scattering blessings "on the right hand and on the left." On the other hand, suppose him to have neglected the exercises of secret devotion, he comes out into society with a ruffled temper, with a dissatisfied spirit, finding fault with every body, with every thing, dissatisfied with all, because dissatisfied with himself, neglecting opportunities, doing nothing as it ought to be done, losing the opportunity that God in his providence gives him. Again, look at the spirit in which such a man conducts himself towards others. The spirit of the man of God is a spirit of humility. Think of the language of the cxxvi. Psalm, "he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him—" the man that goes forth in genuine humility and true modesty, and attempts his work, not in the spirit of intrusion or interference, but simply in the strength of God, is the man who in the end will be successful. It is not only the spirit which he cherishes towards man, but that which he cherishes towards God, that insures success. Towards man, his spirit is modest and humble, towards God it is the spirit of dependance. And then you observe in him, great steadfastness. He has been with God in the morning in the exercise of secret devotion, and therefore though he may meet with difficulty during the day, he is not to be stumbled by it; it may retard him, it may distress him, but he knows too well what he was to expect, to be overcome, he acts on that principle assured of its justice, "therefore be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." Brethren, believe me that there never

was a truer sentiment than this, that secret devotion is the great principle of usefulness in the world: you see it remarkably exemplified in the character of our Lord and in the history of the apostles, in the history of the reformers of every age. It is well known that men most before the public eye, most in public life, men the instruments of the greatest changes, were men of extraordinary prayer. It was so in the instance of Luther, he was a man given to prayer; and though he appeared before the eye of the world as though he gave no time to private exercise, he prayed in private as though he never appeared before the world: he declared that he learned more by prayer than by all the study of his life, and as it was with him, so it is at the present hour. Never imagine that any person can succeed in being useful who neglects to cultivate his own soul. It was a grievous complaint "they have made me a keeper of the vineyard of others, but my own vineyard have I not kept." Recollect the example of Christ, an example in every respect worthy of our attention and meditation—"In the morning rising up a great while before day, he went out and departed into a solitary place and there prayed."

May I hope, brethren, that you have come to the house of God, this day, from the exercise of secret devotion? Did you rise early, or did you spend this Sabbath morning in sleep? Did you rise as early this morning as you did yesterday? Brethren, I do wish to say to you, while there is nothing of superstition in religion, nothing of formality, if a man who can be up and doing at his earthly business, will not be up and doing in the service of God, let him fear that he does not brand himself as a hypocrite in God's sight. The Sabbath is a day of *rest*, not a day of idleness; the Sabbath is a day in which the body is to rest from the cares of the world, and there is no rest so good for man, for his body, for his soul, as an engagement in religious services. It is the testimony of some of the most intel-

ligent physicians of the age, that there is no fest of the Sabbath so good for man's body as the very rest that God has appointed, that is engagement in religious exercises. In every thing it will be found, that right reason accords with the allotments of God's word. Brethren, let us remember that we should not spend a Sabbath morning in sleep, when we would not spend a morning of a week day in like manner. May I hope that you have this day addressed yourselves to secret exercises, that you have come up to God's house to see him in his sanctuary? If not, be admonished, and determine not to act so again. And then let me say to you, follow up the public exercises of this day with secret services. If you do not they will not serve you as might be expected; is not this a time that we should wait on our solemn feast with a peculiar feeling? In what a state has it pleased God to cast society? How many are suffering in embarrassment on the one hand, and want on the other, while not a few lie on beds of sickness and death. We ought to be thankful that we are here,

thankful that we are spared, that we have God's house; that in any respect, in any measure, God bestows on us of the good things of this life. Oh, let us learn the lessons he is teaching us in his Providence? This providence is importunately seconding the demands of his word, and though some of you may be called to suffer, be assured it is not done in wrath, it is done in mercy. The afflictions of society may be blessings in disguise, "When God's judgments are in the earth the inhabitants of the world shall learn righteousness." What signifies judgment, if righteousness is learned; whatever our trials may be, they are not to be mentioned, if only they be the means, by God's blessing, of producing and promoting righteousness. Remember what Paul says, "Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." God grant that it may be so, and may we especially learn the lesson of the text, the necessity, the advantage, the privilege, the duty of secret devotion. Amen.

THE VIRTUES OF THE IRRELIGIOUS AN AGGRAVATION OF THEIR GUILT.

If the virtues and accomplishments of nature are at all to be admitted into the controversy between God and man, instead of forming any abatement upon the enormity of our guilt, they stamp upon it the reproach of a still deeper and more determined ingratitude. Let us conceive it possible for a moment that the beautiful personifications of Scripture were all realized; that the trees of the forest clapped their hands unto God, and that the isles were glad at his presence; that the little hills shouted on every side, and the valleys, covered over with corn, sent forth their notes of rejoicing; that the sun and the moon praised him, and the stars of light joined in solemn adoration; that the voice of glory to God was heard from every mountain, and from every waterfall; and that all nature, animated throughout, by the consciousness of a pervading and presiding Deity, burst into one loud and universal song of gratulation. Would not a strain of greater loftiness be heard to ascend from those regions where

the all-working God had left the traces of his own immensity, than from the tamer and humbler scenery of an ordinary landscape? Would not you look for a gladder acclamation from the fertile field than from the arid waste, where no character of grandeur made up for the barrenness that was around you? Would not the goodly tree, compassed about with the glories of its summer foliage, lift up an anthem of louder gratitude than the lowly shrub that grew beneath it? Would not the flower, from whose leaves every hue of loveliness was reflected, send forth a sweeter rapture than the russet weed, which never drew the eye of any admiring passenger? And in a word, wherever you saw the towering eminences of nature, or the garniture of her more rich and beautiful endowments, would it not be there that you looked for the deepest tones of devotion, or there for the tenderest and most exquisite of its melodies?

DR. CHALMERS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF SAINT MARY, KILKENNY,

ON SUNDAY, APRIL 30, 1837,

BY THE REV. DR. BAILLIE,

Master of Kilkenny College.

HEB. IX. 27, 28.

“As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”

BRETHREN, it was a noble and solemn declaration of the apostle Paul, when writing to a primitive church, which he had planted and established in the true faith, thus to address them, “When I came unto you, declaring the testimony of God, I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” For what theme is there which a minister of the everlasting Gospel, an ambassador of Jesus Christ, can so appropriately select for contemplation?—What subject should the people more willingly give ear to, than salvation through the blood of the everlasting covenant, seeing that the testimony of Holy Writ is this, “sin is the transgression of the law,” and of sin, “the whole world is guilty before God?” In this one sweeping sentence, therefore, is the whole human race included, Jew or Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free, Indian or African, preacher or hearers, all, all are born in sin, and children of wrath; and until that sin be expiated, until that wrath ceases to abide on them, they are obnoxious to the curse of God’s broken law; and everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, remains

as their inevitable portion. To persons so situated, the Gospel should, therefore, be indeed “glad tidings of great joy,” as it sets before them not only the means of escaping the blackness of everlasting darkness and the endurance of unutterable woe, but also at the same time reveals to them the way to the “heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God where they will find assembled an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first born, God the judge of all, the spirits of just men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.” Truly, my brethren, it is amazing to observe with what apathy men will listen to such a theme as this! I conclude that it was from observation of this circumstance, that a certain author was once induced to compose a book which he entitled “*A world without souls.*” “If a planet had a soul and a power of choice; and if by wandering from its bright path, it incurred the same perplexities and difficulties and dangers that man did when he strayed from God—and if the laws which directed its motions, were addressed to its mind, and not, as impulses, to its material substance—its natural inquiry, after having suffered so much

misery in consequence of having left its course, would be 'How shall I regain my orbit of peace and glory?' The answer to such a question, proposed under such circumstances, would evidently be, 'Keep your eye and your thoughts steadily fixed on that bright luminary, to whose generous influences you owe so many blessings.—Your order, your splendour, your fertility—all proceed from your relation to him. When that relation is infringed, these blessings disappear. Your experience tells you this. Retrace then your steps, by recalling to your grateful remembrance, his rich and liberal kindness. This grateful and dependant affection is the golden chain which binds you to your orbit of peace and of glory.'—(*Erskine on internal evidence*, 205.) Now thus we would address man labouring under the woful consequences of his apostasy from God. Time was, when the voice of thine almighty and beneficent Creator proposed this work to the united Godhead, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness," and the Lord God formed thee of the dust of the ground, and breathed into thy nostrils the breath of life, and thou didst thereby become "a living soul," and he pronounced thee in common with all the works of his creation "very good." Thou didst then, for a time, enjoy sweet converse with him; thy God was thy light and thy glory, and no planet ever moved more steadily around the material Sun, restrained in its orbit by the mighty power of his attraction, than thou didst move in the path of duty around the Sun of Righteousness, drawn by the sweet and constraining influence of the "love of God." And the Lord God thus addressed thee, "of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Notwithstanding this commandment, this prohibition, this warning, thou didst eat thereof; and thus,

"by one man's disobedience, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in that all have sinned." But wouldest thou desire, O sinner, again to be restored to thine original position? Wouldest thou seek to have the sweet influence of the love of God again kindled in thy heart? Hear what the word of eternal truth declares for thy comfort; hear what the ministry of reconciliation speaks to thy troubled soul, "As by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."

The passage which I have selected for our contemplation, and I trust, my brethren, under the teaching and guidance of God's good Spirit for our mutual edification may be naturally and profitably considered under 3 heads:—

1st. *As containing an announcement of an awful and important fact, viz. "that it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."*

2dly. *An analogy or comparison of the death of Christ, with this fact is instituted in the words "so Christ was once offered," accompanied with a statement of the object for which he was so offered, viz. "to bear the sins of many."*

3dly. *A most precious promise is given of his second coming and its consequences to his faithful people, in these words, "to them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation."*

Upon each of these heads I propose to offer a few observations in humble dependance on the Divine Being that they may conduce to your spiritual welfare, knowing that even though a "Paul were to plant, or an Apollos to water, it is God only that can give the increase."

I. "IT IS APPOINTED UNTO MEN ONCE TO DIE." My brethren, where is it so appointed? turn I pray you, to Gen. iii. 19.

and there you will read the Almighty decree, "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." We are told that the ancient Romans used to intimate the permanency of their decrees by causing them to be engraved on plates of brass and nailed up in their forum. We read of "the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not," and yet Roman, Median and Persian laws have all passed away! But how different are the decrees of the Most High! Here is a decree announced, according to Chronologists 5841 years ago, and every hour, nay every minute is giving fresh evidence of its immutability. Cast your eyes around you, my brethren, and what do you behold, what but monuments of the dead? of how many thousands, or rather tens of thousands do the remains lie embedded in the grave yard that surrounds this edifice, mouldering and slumbering until the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God shall call to them to "arise and come to judgment!" The memorial of one, who in former days sounded forth the word of everlasting life from this pulpit meets your view, and you pass by the tombstones, nay, solemn mockery, the armorial bearings of many of the former members of this congregation,—truly brethren, one would have thought that the pomps and vanities of this wicked world were burthen enough upon the man while living, without having had them heaped over his mouldering corpse when dead. But these tablets and tombstones preach volumes—one says "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment;" another says "all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass." Another cries, "as the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away, so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more, he shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more." Job. vii. 9. Beside each other here are laid silvery-headed age, and playful childhood. Here lies the strong man who wrestled against death with energies which fever had

increased ten-fold—here rests the stripling who sunk imperceptibly beneath the lurking and insidious flame of consumption, and who fondly flattered himself with the expectation of a long, long life, until the voice of the messenger of death surprised him with the call "arise, come, the Master calleth for thee!" But wherefore multiply instances—100 years ago, and I know not how many years less I might safely say, the ministers and the congregation of this church, were collectively and individually diverse from the present; *and where are they now?* in *Eternity!* and in 100 years to come, in all human probability the very youngest member of the present congregation will be in eternity likewise. You and I, brethren, shall occupy the tombs, a race yet unborn shall occupy those seats, and a future minister standing in this pulpit shall lift up the warning voice, as I do this day, and shall cry "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

Tremendous as is the first part of this announcement, how much more tremendous, brethren, is the latter—"after this the judgment!" "Marvel not at this," saith Christ, "for the hour is coming in the which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth: they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment." Now mark the distinction well—some shall come forth unto the resurrection of life—some unto the resurrection of judgment. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance to us to ascertain who are the respective parties, and by what distinction the one arise to the resurrection of life, while the other arise to the resurrection of judgment or condemnation. Brethren, who shall decide this difficult, yet most important question for us? Shall the philosophers and moralists of our own, or former days be able to instruct us? Oh no, then should the blind be leaders of the blind, and we know the consequence. "To whom then

shall we go, but unto thee O Lord, for thou hast the words of eternal life." And what saith the blessed Jesus?—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my Word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, (*κρίσιν*, judgment,) but is passed from death unto life."—(John v. 24.) Here then is the whole counsel of God, as it regards our salvation. He that heareth, that is hearkeneth unto the word of Christ, who declared himself as "the way, the truth, and the life," and believeth on God who sent him to be the Saviour of sinners, he does not say, *shall* have, but he says *hath* (*ἔχει*,) eternal life, hath already entered on that blessed course. The Spirit, bearing witness with his spirit that he is the child of God, and as such he shall not rise to the resurrection of judgment; but even while in the body, "is passed from death unto life,"—from being dead in trespasses and sins, he passes unto a life of holiness and righteousness and peace; and from being judicially sealed unto condemnation in the counsels of God, he passes to reconciliation, pardon, and justification of life."

II. "CHRIST WAS ONCE OFFERED TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANY."

To set fully before you the argument of the Apostle upon this head, wherein he speaks of the one oblation of himself which Christ once offered, and wherein he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows, I should read to you in connexion with this 9th chapter of Hebrews, the 16th chapter of the book of Leviticus, wherein the ceremonial observances to which the Apostle alludes, are detailed at length—and I would strongly recommend the private reading and contemplation of these two chapters, in connexion with each other, by which you will clearly perceive the accuracy of the type and the anti-type. For the present, a summary must suffice. It was commanded to the people of Israel, that one day in each year, called "the day of atonement," they

should observe a strict and solemn fast, abstain from all work, and afflict their souls,"—(Lev. xxiii. 26—32,)—this was to be for an acknowledgment of national and individual sin.—(Vid. Horne from Hales, vol. 3, p. 314). "On this day only in the course of the year, was the High Priest permitted to enter the sanctuary, and not even then without due preparation, under pain of death, all others being excluded from the tabernacle during the whole ceremony. Previously to his entrance, he was to wash himself with water, and to put on the holy linen garments with the mitre, and to bring a young bullock into the outer sanctuary, and present it before the Lord to be a sin-offering for himself and his household, including the priests and Levites, and a ram also for a burnt offering. Next, he was to take two young goats, and present them before the Lord, at the door of the tabernacle, to be a sin-offering for the whole congregation of Israel, and a ram also, for a burnt-offering. He was then to cast lots upon the two goats, which of them should be sacrificed as a sin-offering to the Lord, and which should be let go as an escape goat into the wilderness. After this he was first to sacrifice the bullock as a sin-offering for himself and his household, and to take some of the blood into the inner sanctuary, bearing in his hand a censor with incense burning, kindled at the sacred fire on the altar, and to sprinkle the blood with his finger upon the mercy-seat and before it, seven times, to purify it from the pollution it might be supposed to have contracted from his sins and transgressions during the preceding year. He was then to sacrifice the allotted goat for the sins of the whole nation, and to enter the inner sanctuary a second time, and to sprinkle it with blood as before, to purify it from the pollution of the people's sins and transgressions of the foregoing year. He was next to bring the live goat, and lay both his hands upon its head, and confess over him all the iniquities, transgressions,

and sins of the children of Israel, putting them upon the head of the goat, and then to send him away by the hand of a fit person into the wilderness, to bear away all their iniquities to a land of separation where they should be remembered no more. After this atonement he was to put off his linen garments and leave them in the sanctuary, and put on his usual garments, and then to offer burnt offerings for himself and for the people at the evening sacrifice."

"Now the whole of this process was typical or prefigurative of the grand atonement to be made for the sins of the whole world by the Lord Jesus Christ, the *High Priest of our profession*—(Heb. iii. 1.)—and a remarkable analogy thereto may be traced in the course of our Lord's ministry. He began it with personal purification at his baptism, that he might 'fulfil all legal righteousness.' Immediately after his baptism, he was led, by the impulse of the Holy Spirit, into the wilderness, as the true scape-goat, who, as Isaiah saith, 'bore away our infirmities, and carried off our diseases.'—Before his crucifixion, he was afflicted, and 'his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,' when he was about to be made a sin-offering, like the allotted goat; and his sweat, as great drops of blood, falling to the ground, corresponded to the sprinkling of the mercy-seat. To prepare for the sacrifice of himself, he consecrated himself in prayer to God, and then prayed for his household, his Apostles and disciples, and all who, through their preaching, should believe in his name. He put off his garments at his crucifixion, when he became the sin-offering, and, as our spiritual High Priest, entered, once for all, into the most holy place, that is, heaven, there to present his sacrifice before God, and to make intercession for all his faithful followers.—Thus hath Christ died for our sins, and risen again for our justification—thus was he once offered, even upon the cross of Calvary, to bear the sins of many."

My brethren, are you trusting in him, and in his finished work, for your present and future salvation? Can you take up the language of the Apostle Paul and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, unto that day?" Are you ready to say, with Peter, "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for, (or in the stead of) the unjust, that he might bring us to God, who is now gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels, and authorities, and powers, being made subject unto him?" Well, brethren, whosoever is ready to acknowledge this, witnesseth a good profession. But beware that your faith does not end here. Beware that it contain no more than a lifeless profession. Nothing, assuredly, is easier for a man than to say, "I have faith." But what saith the Apostle?—"what doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works, can faith save him?—faith, if it hath not works is dead," (that is, is a dead faith,)—"being alone. Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith, and I have works. Show me thy faith, without thy works,"—(that is, if thou *canst* do so,)—"and I will show thee my faith by my works." And so, likewise, brethren, would we say unto you, "Is any a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you, (that is, with the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour,)—let him show, out of a good conversation, his works, with meekness of wisdom. Thou believest there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble. Wilt thou not know then, oh, vain man, that "Faith without works is dead,"—"for as the body without the Spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."—(Jas. ii. 26.)

III. TO THOSE WHO ARE LIVING A LIFE OF FAITH, AND LOOKING OUT FOR CHRIST, THE WORD OF PROMISE IS THAT "HE SHALL APPEAR THE SECOND TIME, WITHOUT SIN, UNTO SALVATION." The whole tenor and spirit of the Scriptures,

especially of the new Testament, bears testimony to the fact of Christ's second coming. The prophet Isaiah inquires, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" To which inquiry Messiah answers, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Again our Lord himself saith to his sorrowing disciples on the night in which he was betrayed, "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." And to pass by the testimony of the angels who appeared immediately after his ascension, and numerous other passages in the last chapter of the Bible, Rev. xxii. he emphatically declares three times, verses 7, 12, 20, to his servant John, "Behold I come quickly:" But in what manner shall he then appear? The Apostle answers, "without sin, unto salvation," that is, without making himself an offering for sin, as he did on the occasion of his first appearing, but coming in glory and in power, to put his faithful followers in full possession of that eternal salvation which he purchased for them with his own precious blood. For observe, it is only said, that he shall thus appear to those who are *looking for him*, who are in *humble, longing* expectation of his approach. Brethren, let me ask you are *you* looking out for Christ? Are you making preparations for his coming. Oh, I recollect a few years ago, when a King of England was expected over to visit this country, what expectation it excited in the minds of men, what preparations were made for his reception. The shores were covered with a dense mass of people, awaiting his approach, and every eye was strained to catch the first glimpse of the royal standard. And then what joy and what acclamations greeted his arrival. And yet, brethren, this was only the transitory visit of an earthly king, who could not remove one pang from your

body, nor wash away one sin from your soul. But when the King of kings shall appear, he will bring in his train a thousand years of bliss and an eternity of glory. But shall this be the portion of all? Ah no, brethren, with grief I am constrained to say, it will not. For what saith the word of God? "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that day." (2 Th. i. 7.) Then, sinner, prepare for his reception. Thou knowest not the hour of his approach. It is hidden from man, it is hidden from angels. It was unknown to the Son of man, as far as regarded his human nature. It is known only to God. Oh, what an important secret must that be which God withheld from his beloved Son! even the time of the second coming of Christ, that is, *the time of thy glorification*, or of *thy damnation*. Then choose this day, whom thou wilt serve, for this night, yea, this very night, thy soul may be required of thee. "Behold," saith Jesus, "I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work may be." Then shall saint and sinner each receive his portion; then will he render to every man according to his deeds. To them, who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: but unto them that are contentious, and that obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath, tribulation, and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile; for there is no respect of persons with God."

When the Lord had, with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, brought the children of Israel into the land which he swore unto their fathers he would give them for an inheritance, he commanded Moses to separate the people into two parts, and to place six of their tribes upon Mount Gerizim for a blessing, and the remaining six on Mount Ebal for a cursing, and that the Levites should pronounce unto the people with a loud voice the blessings that would attend their obedience, and the curses that would surely follow their disobedience, which blessings and cursings have all been most literally fulfilled, insomuch that the very people which, during their obedience under Solomon, were the wonder of all nations, are now reduced to be a "byeword and a hissing;" so, dear brethren, do we take our stand this day between Gerizim and Ebal. We set before you the promises and threatenings, temporal and eternal, of this holy Book. "As ambassadors of Christ, to whom is committed the ministry of reconciliation, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled

unto God." To those who seek the peace of God in and through Jesus Christ, the promises are all "yea and amen"—peace to the conscience and a sweet foretaste of that everlasting glory that shall be revealed at the second coming of Christ when he shall come to receive them unto himself, that where he is, there may they be also. But to him who still cherishes any besetting sin, by which he bars out his own approach unto God; to him who thus virtually cries, "not this man, but Barabbas," what have we to say but this, "hell hath enlarged herself for thy reception," and will assuredly be thy everlasting portion, unless through grace, thou dost flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold upon the hope which we are commanded to set before thee, even salvation through "Christ and him crucified."

May God give you all grace, my dear brethren, to devote yourselves unreservedly to the service of God your Saviour, that when "he shall appear the second time without sin unto salvation, you also may appear with him in glory." Amen.

A THOUGHT ON DEATH.

"Death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces,"—Jer. ix. 21.

The high and the mighty is smitten low;
And fearfully stamp'd on that marble brow
Is the seal of the spoiler—man's changeless
doom;—
For all that is earthly must find a tomb.

What avails it then that the earth is rife
With all that can yield to the pomp of life?—
That perishing man in his pride of clay
Is compass'd with honors that fade away?

To school us in wisdom,—that as the fall
Has scatter'd a blight and a curse on all,
So the fairest of earthly gifts may seem
In the light of heav'n but a fitting dream.

A voice from the dead to the living calls—
"Who builds on the sand, with his mansion
falls;
"Who flies to the flock with confiding wing
"Shall live for ever a prince and a king"

R. D.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXXV.

SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. HORACE TOWNSEND.

REV. WM. M'ILWAINE.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN DOUGLAS CHURCH, DIOCESE OF CORK,

ON SUNDAY, 2ND JULY, 1837,

BY THE REV. HORACE TOWNSEND, A. M.

Rector of Carrigaline.

II. SAMUEL, xii. 13, 14.

“ And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, the Lord also hath put away thy sin ; thou shalt not die.

“ Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die.”

THERE is a very encouraging passage in our Church's litany, “ We have heard with our ears, and our fathers have told us thy wonderful works in the time of old.” It is intended to remind the supplicating worshipper, of God's wisdom and goodness in his dealings and dispensations recorded in the Word, for our admonition. It is very much for this end that we should study the Old Testament—not merely to observe the diversities of human character and conduct there depicted, but rather to mark the mind and the ways of the God who dealt with those individuals. We live, it is true, in a different age, but we have to do with the

very same God ; and this stamps a wondrous value and glory upon the Bible. If there was not one picture of the heart and life of *man*, natural or renewed, drawn in that book, it would be still beyond estimation precious as unfolding to us the mind and the will of *God*.

With this remark before our minds, I would direct your attention to the passage I have read, and its context—not only to speak concerning David, the prominent human being in the narrative, but especially to observe the Lord's mind, as dealing with David in this melancholy and memorable transaction.

Confining ourselves to the portion

contained in my text, I would say, that we may behold in it our God, *convincing, pardoning, and chastening* a sinner.

Into the acknowledged enormity of David's transgression I need not enter—it is almost incredible, except to those who know something of the depths of depravity and deceitfulness which lie hid, and bide their time in the human heart; and it is unnatural, on any other principle than that of the absolute corruption of the soul by sin. If, as the Pelagians and others do vainly talk, man was good, except from habit and unfortunate passions, how could such a sin, in such a man, be reasonably accounted for?

But in looking here to the Lord *convincing* the sinner, we observe, that the impression which pierced most deeply was this—he had sinned against his God. In the 51st Psalm, also, which should be taken with the present passage as a fuller version of David's feelings, we perceive the same sentiment—"against thee, thee only have I sinned." Surely he did not forget or eventually extenuate the cruel and irreparable injury he had done to a faithful servant and a brave man. Surely he was conscious of his double crime in the matter of Uriah, yet in his confession he only says, I have sinned against *the Lord*. It is remarkable, too, that when Nathan wisely approached his conscience through a parable, and a counterpart of his sin was presented to him as done by another, it was the natural view of injury to the fellow-creature that struck his mind—"the man," he said, "shall surely die, because he had no pity." But now, when it opened upon his conscience and memory as his own act—when an overwhelming sense of his sin came upon his soul, as done by his very self, he appears to have for a moment lost sight of every other view or consequence in one fearful emotion, and to have been so fully penetrated by a view of his ingratitude and rebellion, that he could only utter, "I have sinned against the Lord."

In this we behold God convincing of

sin. The evil which he chiefly sees and chiefly marks in sin is that it is done against himself. Whether it interfere with human rights and happiness, or not, it interferes with the rights of Jehovah. Sin, however committed, is "a robbery of God," it not only transgresses his will but it withholds his due. If we keep back, and refuse or neglect to pay to an earthly sovereign the tribute which belongs to him, we are rightly deemed rebellious; if then we do not "render to God the things which are God's," we offend and wrong the King of kings. He demands our hearts, the constant, willing, and not grievous tribute of love, gratitude, a desire to please him, a reference to his will in all our ways. And unrenewed man pays none of these—he forgets God, he follows the desires of his own mind, and he says in his heart, "Tush, God will not require it."

But God will require it, for he does demand it, and the first of all his commandments is—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." When, too, the Spirit brings any sinner to a just sense of his state, his deepest conviction will be his plea of guilty upon this head, a plea which he penitently extends to all his actions, benevolent or injurious, "I have sinned against the Lord."

Besides, I would just remark, that the Lord condemned the sin of David as dishonoring him, and injuring his cause, and giving a wound to religion, by affording room for blasphemy to the enemies of the Lord. This peculiarly aggravates the sin of the backslider, who not only owes the rational tribute of obedience unto his Lord, but being bought with a price, and made a partaker of pardoning grace, he is doubly bound to glorify God with his body and his spirit, which are thus doubly his.

It is quite plain in this matter, that God hates and condemns sin, by whomsoever committed. He does not pass it over after the manner of men—it must be either absolutely pardoned, or abso-

lutely punished: in David's case he was pleased to do the former, but not as if he made light of it; on the contrary, he sent his messenger when the hour of grace arrived to cast the arrow of conviction into his heart; and then, when the awakened king, conscious of his abominable and inexcusable iniquity, was probably on the very brink of despair, and expecting the next moment would bring the sentence, consigning him to eternal shame and perdition, the prophet simply and immediately declared, "the Lord has put away thy sin, thou shalt not die." Here we must observe that "God's ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts." But as this particularly applies to my next head, I proceed to remark, that we behold here God *pardon*ing sin.

This appears particularly deserving of notice, as God's dealing with David may well be regarded as in the case of Paul, a pattern to those who should after believe upon him to life everlasting. It is plain that pardon was here bestowed as an act of God's free and royal grace; it was extended according to his will, at his own time, and in his appointed way—it was absolutely and immediately declared upon David's acknowledgment of his sin: the forgiveness of sin was evidently not in this case, *because of repentance*—it was not the result of that deep sorrow and continued reformation, which some suppose bring forgiveness as its reward—it was not of works in any sense. There was no time here for that balance to be struck between good and bad actions, upon the favourable turn of which many ignorantly rest their hopes and hush their fears. Nor was it a lessening of the evil of sin by a kind and easy God, who, like what is called a good-natured man, makes light of sin, because its indulgence has something kindred and congenial in his own bosom.

This pardoning mercy was none of these—it was an act of free grace, blotting out at once and for ever the trans-

gression. I need hardly remind you, my brethren, that this sin was not forgiven apart from Christ and the blood of the everlasting Covenant. He was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and though he did not appear until "the last time" to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, yet that great sacrifice was from the beginning accomplished in the purpose of God, and had therefore a cleansing power at all times to those who by faith lived unto God—though ancient believers might have themselves seen that atonement dimly, or even not at all, yet God saw it as clearly as upon Calvary, and was thereby *just*, while he justified those who believed his word and looked unto him for righteousness.

The way in which the Lord here forgave his guilty servant may appear to mere human reason as by no means the wisest; but to such a thought we may well reply, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." A deeper view would convince us that no other way could have so well displayed the attributes of Jehovah, or so secured the heartfelt humiliation and subsequent holiness of David. The Lord here manifested his mercy, and proved that his grace and compassion were infinite in exercise; reaching to sin of the deepest and darkest die—and this without lowering in the smallest degree his declaration of its evil and hatefulness in his sight. The very fact of its being immediately and absolutely pardoned, without any thing on the sinner's part that could at all deserve it, and at the very moment when to that sinner the Lord had most strongly presented its utter hatefulness, clearly proves this.—The Lord did it for his own name's sake, for the iniquity was great.

Again, this mode of forgiveness must have melted the soul of David into that union of self-loathing and gratitude, which constitutes genuine repentance, and gives hope and peace, without which there can be no willing obedience, while

the memory of the past would ever keep alive self-distrust and watchfulness. David's recorded words of repentance are very simple—but the real force of words entirely depends upon the feeling with which they are spoken—these have often meant little or nothing in a sinner's mouth. Saul and many others now and then have used them very lightly, for nothing is easier than to say "I have sinned against the Lord;"—but they might mean all that *could* be said: false feeling generally speaks fluently about itself, but the deepest emotions of the human mind are brief and simple in expression, words are big with meaning, when the heart is full; and I am convinced that when David's sin opened upon his soul with a full sense of, all its aggravating circumstances, he was so overwhelmed by the consciousness of all that he had done—its guilt and baseness and ingratitude and shame and cruelty and meanness both before man and God so flashed upon his mind from all its facts at once, that he was *silenced* as well as conscience stricken, and could only utter, "I have sinned against the Lord." Many of his Psalms, especially the 51st, may be fairly adduced in proof that this is no imaginary picture, but that "his soul was restored," and when "brought out of the horrible pit, a new song was put into his mouth, and his goings were established."

But we must briefly remark that the Lord in his dealing here with David, not only pardons the sinner, but *chastens* the restored penitent. Nathan had previously declared that the sword should not depart from his house, but that in domestic trouble his own sin should return upon him; and now he pronounced that, to mark the injury his fall had done to the cause of God, the child of his sinful affection should die. We are not to think from this, that any guilt still remained charged upon him before the Lord—no, for his sin was put away—but for his own good and for our admonition, he underwent this painful discipline—

towards him it was the salutary and loving chastisement of his heavenly Father, needed no doubt to temper the joy of his gracious restoration, and to impress humbling recollections upon his heart. It is not that there is any truth in the Romish figment partly grounded on this passage, namely, that though Jehovah may remit the eternal desert of sin, a temporal punishment yet remains due. The distinction is much more accordant with the priestly rule it is intended to support than with reason or Scripture—on the contrary it was *because* the sin was really and truly "put away" and David reconciled to his heavenly Father, that he was thus chastised for his good; while lying actually under the displeasure of the Lord, he was like unreconciled sinners "far off;" and "*let alone*," and this was his worst punishment; but when brought again near to the Lord, he was dealt with as a son, and for his profit deeply chastened. Surely we do see constantly in the providence of God, that monitory consequences follow many a sin long since repented of and pardoned; and many a Christian is similarly taught in his own experience, even when he rejoices in full assurance of pardon and peace, that it is an evil and a bitter thing to forsake the living God. How valuable are the lessons which these combined views of the dealings of God may teach us? we learn from them the end of the Lord, that he is pitiful and of tender mercy, and yet that our God is as a refiner's fire, and can both discover and purge away the dross. If we be children and heirs of the kingdom, we have to learn in one way or other these three things: we must be convinced, in deep unaffected sincerity, that we have sinned against the Lord—we must become grateful recipients of that free and full pardon which a believing heart sees and relies on in the Gospel promises—and we must be under that discipline which opens to us the working of our own hearts, while it moulds us by the hand of the Spirit after the Divine image.

I think this subject speaks a word to the careless or hardened sinner. Are you trying to hope as far as you think about it, that God will pass over your sins? Beware, they must be absolutely pardoned here, or absolutely punished hereafter. This is the only alternative. Remember too, that there will be no Nathan beyond the grave—no Saviour inviting the prodigal then and there—but now is the day of salvation. Do you say, I must, if so, wait until God shall send to me as he did to David, a message of grace which shall convert my soul? I would ask did you never hear such a message in the preached Gospel? Did you never hear your case and state described from the word of God? Did you never at such a time say in your heart, that suits me but too well—that is a picture of my soul that comes home to my conscience? My friend, you then had a prophet's message delivered to you from God,—oh, do not put it away from you, lest he swear in his wrath that you shall not enter into his rest.

There is much also here for the Christian to ponder on—he will reflect with joy and great consolation upon this gracious proof of the infinite mercy of the Lord,—to many a soul it has furnished a successful reply to the infected doubts of the tempter; but it unfolds an awful picture of the heart of man. Who can think of all the linked transgressions, that followed from a servant of God in an hour of idleness, allowing his eye to rest upon an object of temptation, and not fervently pray “cleanse thou me from my secret faults!” It will not be a slight motive to the Christian for watchfulness and prayer, that by *his* sin religion is wounded where alone she has no armour, for there she is exposed but to her friends. While we learn here that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, let us ever remember that our own strength is but weakness, and to trust in our own hearts, foolishness; for that God alone is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

* * * Another Sermon, by the REV. H. TOWNSEND will appear in a future number.
Also, a Sermon by the REV. E. G. CARR, of Limerick.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, BELFAST,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM McILWAINE, A. B.

Incumbent.

LUKE, xvi. part of verse 5.

“How much owest thou unto my Lord?”

To expend any length of time in examining the true intent of the parable from which the words of the text are taken would appear as unnecessary as to allude to any of those vain objections which ignorance and unbelief have dared to raise against itself and its Divine Author. The scope of this important portion of our Redeemer's instructions is given in verse 8, where it is asserted, that “the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light;”—words spoken assuredly not in approval of the maxims and carnal policy of this wicked world; but in order to send the disciples of Christ and the professing Church to the men of this world, as they are elsewhere sent for instruction to the heast of the field and the fowl of the air; that by their wisdom respecting the things of time, they, too, may be led to seek for and put into exercise a larger portion of the wisdom that cometh from above.

And if the professing Church generally are thus taught a lesson for imitation in the *wisdom* of the unjust steward, assuredly our portion especially of that Church may receive, by contrast, a lesson from another feature in his character, namely, his *unfaithfulness* to his Lord. Here the parable teaches, not indeed directly, but by implication and contrast, what should be the character of those

who are set over the household of God as his ministers and stewards. Well and fully does this latter appellation teach us what should be the character of such. A steward in every instance is one in whom is reposed much confidence, and hence, as the Lord himself declares, “it is required in *stewards* that a man should be *faithful*.” Our master's goods are commended to our care;—his word, his ordinances, yea, his *people* themselves, for “the Lord's heritage is his people.” And oh, beloved friends, we feel it, that the day is fast approaching when it shall be said to each one among us, “give an account of thy stewardship,”—it is our wisdom both for ourselves and for you, therefore, often to anticipate that day: and how may this be done? Not, assuredly, by imitating the conduct of the steward in the parable before us, by permitting each one of our Lord's creditors, while he thinks he is overreaching infinite wisdom to deceive and destroy his own soul: no, friends, thus alone can we save ourselves, and them that hear us, by faithfully insisting on the debt we owe to him, who then shall account with us, and saying to each individual to whom our message is addressed—“how much owest thou unto my Lord?”

This is the question, then, which now, as desiring to be faithful to my master, I bring with me into the midst of you,

friends, this morning. May God the Holy Spirit, enforce and apply the same, as I would endeavour to show, *first, the amount of the debt*; and *secondly, the payment which our heavenly Creditor demands.*

I. Then let me urge this question in order that each may have some adequate conception of THE AMOUNT OF OUR DEBT to infinite beneficence. And when I put the inquiry to each individual present, "how much owest *thou* unto my Lord?" is there one whose heart does not at once respond, "much, oh much, every way!" Were we to confine our investigation merely to a review of the Lord's *providential mercies*, how many living monuments of that mercy are now before me! How many now seated within this place of prayer, on whom are inscribed in unnumbered characters, the goodness of God in things temporal—in whose hands the cup of earthly prosperity is placed, filled to overflowing with the ingredients of health and prosperity, and peace, and all that constitutes what is called happiness and pursued as such! It is true, indeed, that these mercies fall, in the great majority of cases, as slighted and unacknowledged on the dead, cold, human heart, in its unrenewed and unbelieving state, as the fruitful shower on the barren waste of the wilderness; and that the Author and Giver of these good things is forced to appeal to the gratitude of the ox and the ass as condemning the thanklessness of his own professing people—yet are we, the stewards of the God of all goodness, bound again and again even on the score of providential mercies bestowed, to repeat the emphatic question of our text.

And if that question has thus a startling emphasis, though confined barely to the blessings of time, how infinitely greater its importance when urged on the ground of spiritual mercies? Yet, alas, for the hardness of the unregenerate heart!—if the former are received without thankfulness, and followed by no acknowledgment, so are these and their offers received without one feeling of gratitude,

often scorned and rejected with contempt. It is my earnest prayer, beloved friends, that the Lord would deliver each of us from guilt such as this; and therefore do I again urge home the question to each who hears me—"how much owest thou?" The sum of all God's spiritual mercies centres in Christ, who is in this, as in every other sense "all." To estimate then our debt aright; as seen through this medium, let us consider,

1. *What Christ has done for us.* Here let the Apostle be our guide, who in mentioning this Saviour does so in one short but comprehensive sentence—"Jesus— which delivered us from the wrath to come." 1 Thess. i. 10. Who can estimate fully the amount of debt under which this declaration places us to our great deliverer? To do so we should be able to enter into the meaning of that word—*wrath to come*; by faith we should be enabled to stand on the margin of that lake which burneth with fire for ever,—to take our position by the side of that deep, impassable, fixed gulf, lying by the Almighty's unchanging decree, between his redeemed and a lost eternity—to hear those unbroken wailings of woeful regret, those bitter out-pourings of deep despair, and see those sights of suffering depicted by the Holy Spirit for our awful consideration upon the dark ground of revelation. We must follow the same unerring guide into the distant ages of futurity, and when we have seen the last drops of the fearful shower, "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," fall on the devoted heads of those exposed to it, and the veil of everlasting oblivion drawn over their guilt and their punishment, as with "death and hell," they lie down in their last grave, "the lake of fire," which is the second death,—then, perhaps, do we in some measure enter fully into this deeply searching question—"how much owest *thou* unto thy Lord?"

Yet even on this head these considerations supply but a partial reply; they lead us to reflect on our deliverance: but we

are bound to do more—we should dwell on *the means of that deliverance*. It is true that a deep sense of our obligations to the Redeemer must follow any believing views of the salvation he has accomplished for us. The drowning man who has been rescued from the whelming waters by the hand of a strong deliverer, will feel intense gratitude to that deliverer spring up within his heart, although his rescue may have been effected by the latter while he stood himself firmly upon the shore, and extended the welcome rope or his own right hand, at little or no personal risk. But how is such a feeling of gratitude enhanced if his life be purchased at the imminent risk of his preserver? if he has left the shore of safety, and plunged into the water of untried depth, or buffeted against the dangerous surge, before he could restore the object of his commiseration to life and safety? Apply these considerations to *our Saviour*—our salvation.—*How*, beloved friends, was this effected? Oh, I beseech you, ask your hearts, have ye ever known, have ye ever realized and believed the truths which this consideration implies—*how* Jesus “delivered us from the wrath to come?” Go again by faith, to the Scriptures of truth, and answer this consideration in the midnight gloom of doleful, dark Gethsemane!—When the foot of Almighty vengeance trod down upon the suffering Saviour, in the wine-press of eternal wrath, until, along with the bloody sweat which issued from his distended pores, the cry of “Father, save me from this hour!” left his agonised lips.—Come once more to Golgotha, and hear that last, loud cry, issuing from the same lips now quivering with death—and although the sufferings of Messiah’s soul, as he thus cries, “Eloi, Eloi!” are wrapped in darkness far more impenetrable than that which hides his cross, still enough is known to faith to send home once more that inquiry with much increased emphasis. Yes, brethren, these were the *throes of his soul* (Isaiah, lvi. 11,) in giving us spiritual birth,

these were the mighty efforts of *our Deliverer*, when he plunged into the dark abyss of eternal woe, when *we* were sinking; this was his expiring cry, when, with the effort of Omnipotence, he flung us to the shore of salvation, and himself sank as a stone in our stead, in that water’s unknown depths. Oh, then, may I not again ask each here, who professes to believe these truths—“How much owest thou unto thy Lord?”

2. Again, let us consider, *what Christ is now doing for us*. And here, in like manner, the Apôstle of the Gentiles furnishes us with ample information in a short compass—“He ever liveth to make intercession for us.”—(Heb. vii. 25). This one testimony stamps the character of Christ and his love toward us, with an impress of inestimable preciousness; it shows his love to be an *enduring* one. How often has it happened, that the affections and feelings of childhood and youth, like the flower of the morning, lose their fragrance and very existence in the hour of more advanced age? The cares, and riches, and pleasures of life’s noon-season, like the torrid sun, scorch them and they die. He who was the bosom friend of our youth, before real life had made its distinctions, now raised above us by some of its high-sounding titles or perishing riches, is transformed from our loved and loving associate, into the distant and scarce-recognizing acquaintance. Not so with him of whom we now speak; Jesus was once with us as the man of sorrows, and now that he is raised “far above all principalities and powers,”—beyond angels and archangels and all the company of heaven—even there he remembers us: he, the true Joseph, recognizes and embraces each of his brethren, as they come into his presence, and proves, by his treatment of them, that he feels one with them now, as much as ever. Yea, it is the very business which occupies him in his risen and glorified existence, that he may learn and bless us. He *not only intercedes*, but

"*liveth to make intercession,*"—yea, *ever liveth* for this express purpose. Oh, the depth of the riches of this unchanging, eternal love! Dear brethren, think on these things, and once again, hear each for yourselves—"How much owest thou unto thy Lord?"

3. Once more faith teaches to know, and enables us to believe, *what Christ has promised to do for us*. In every point of view are faith and its opposite unlike. While the spirit of unbelief despises the salvation wrought out for us by Jesus, and contemns the same as now continued by him in behalf of his people at the mediatorial throne, so does it treat all those "exceeding great and precious promises," which, being "yea, and amen" to the believer, constitute his invaluable possession. Now all these connect themselves with the Saviour, for they are yea and amen *in him*. Faith is "the substance of things hoped for," as well as "the evidence of things not seen;" and while, through this heavenly medium, which not alone strengthens and extends, but restores from the blindness of nature our moral vision, we are enabled to look back and realize the scenes of Calvary and Gethsemane; and upward, to the mercy-seat, where pleads our risen Advocate; so also are we by the same enabled to look forward to that day, "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe." 2 Thes. i. 10. And oh, beloved friends, what glorious things connect themselves with that day!—the wing of the loftiest human imagination never attained with untired flight, to the thousandth part of that height of glory to which revelation leads us. It is faith, heaven-infused faith, alone, which can in any measure enable us to climb this mount of God! I ask you not, therefore, to imagine, to conceive, but *believe* what is revealed concerning those that are Christ's; believe that they shall awake each from their glorious rest; the soul, endued with high, and mighty, and new powers, and en-

larged capacities, coming thus from immediate contact, and communing with Deity, to re-inhabit "this vile body," then made a glorious body, even like to Him whom we shall then see as he is. Pass, by faith, brethren, into that region of glorious immortality upon which each of those "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" shall then enter; see them passing through the shining ranks of cherubim and seraphim, who part to admit them to that exalted station to which infinite and eternal love has called them; nor pausing, until they find themselves seated with their Emmanuel, on his throne, even as he overcame, and is seated with the Father on his throne. Can we believe of this in prospect?—it is unbelief to doubt it, for thus "it is written," and what Jehovah has promised is as certain as aught that he has performed. Believe, then, beloved friends, that these things are your's if ye be Christ's; and thus, realizing his promises, once again suffer me to appeal to each, and say, "how much owest thou unto thy Lord?"

Having thus attempted to state somewhat of that amount of debt which we owe to the Giver of all good, I would endeavour still further to urge upon you—

II. THE PAYMENT WHICH HE JUSTLY DEMANDS OF US. And brief and imperfect as have been the items of the account with which I have been enabled to present you, from that endless debt of love with which we are charged, surely enough has been stated, to lead us to expect that his demands on us should be neither few nor small; rather may we not at once conclude, that our debt is immeasurable, and say with the hymn—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love, so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all."

Would that this were indeed the language of each heart now present; then should we be the better prepared to receive the Lord's reasonable demands upon us, his debtors.

1. Hear, then, the first and chief command he lays upon us—" *This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ,* (1 John, iii. 23.) Oh what a proof is here of the loving-kindness of our God! having loved us with an everlasting love, and poured forth before us the inexhaustible riches of his grace, in the gifts of his own, his only Son, he comes to claim his due recompense at our hands, on whom this inestimable gift has been bestowed. And what is that recompense? Only that we believe—only, that by faith we stretch forth the hand, and lay hold of these, his inestimable benefits, and enrich ourselves for eternity. In accordance with this, is the language of the man after God's own heart; after having enumerated some of the Lord's mercies toward him, he is led to ask himself this question concerning the whole—"What shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits toward me?" And what is the reply—what sufficient acknowledgment can a spiritually thankful heart devise?—"I will *take* the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." So, beloved friends, we would, if enabled, spread out in your view the endless catalogue of all Jehovah's mercies, and having pressed upon you the amount of your debt for them, ask in his name, in return for all, only that you would make them your's. So boundless is the grace of God, offered and bestowed upon us in the Gospel of his Son, that the only reward he seeks from us in return is that we prove it to be exhaustless, by our drawing therefrom for time and for eternity,—the only recompense he demands is this, our reception of it by faith in his name, who is the procurer and bestower of all.

2. Having made this, his first and chief, and most merciful demand, our heavenly creditor, and we, his stewards, demand further of you, beloved friends, *unreserved obedience* to his blessed will. His language is, "Ye are not your own,

ye are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are his."—1 Col. vi. 19, 20. "Present your bodies a living sacrifice." Rom. xii. 1. Such expressions of Scripture as these, show us the true character of that obedience which God, as revealed in the Gospel of his Son, demands from us. Not that partial and reserved obedience which the world would render in their miserable and ever-unsuccessful effort to unite that of God and Belial. Were we, who stand and teach in the name of our Master, content to preach such a Gospel as this, it would be much more likely to find acceptance from many, but we durst not do so. Were we to act as the steward in the parable from which our text is taken, and compromise the debt which each owes to Jehovah, we might gain their sinful approbation, it is true, but it would be at the expense of trifling with their souls' welfare, as well as our own. Not so the Gospel, nor those who would be faithful as its messengers. We demand, in the name of our Master, the sacrifice of every sin, the overthrow of every idol, the surrendering of every talent to the service and glory of the Giver of them all. And this would we demand of you, brethren, not alone because we desire to be faithful to our Lord, but because we desire most earnestly your own happiness, in time as well as in eternity. Nothing yields more decisive proof, or clearer illustration, to a mind which is taught of God, of the loving-kindness and tender mercy which constitute the essence of Jehovah's character, than this very part of his revealed will. It is the one effort of Divine love to make its creatures happy: "God is love," is the revelation he has made of himself, and this is proved by all his dealings towards us. This truth is manifested, not barely in our being redeemed from endless misery, and restored to happiness inconceivably great and full of glory, as well as eternal in duration, but the way by which we are conducted to this

glorious eternity is itself happiness likewise, the most exalted and complete that our present state will admit. It is God's fixed and unalterable moral law, that holiness and happiness are inseparably connected: as much allied to each other as in the natural world are shadow and substance, or any cause with its corresponding effect. God is himself infinitely holy, therefore also eternally enjoying the plenitude of joy; and thus would he have us his creatures be, partaking of his nature, and sharing with him the consequent enjoyment.

What a deep view does this afford into the inexhaustible beneficence of Jehovah's character! We are indebted to him in an infinite amount, and in return he demands unreserved obedience to his revealed will; and while he receives this as an effort on our part to discharge our debt, (though it is alone by the influence of his Holy Spirit that any the least such effort can be made), he thus effectually provides for our own real enjoyment, as well our endless blessedness in eternity.

Thus, beloved friends, in endeavouring to fulfil the part of a faithful steward to

him who has sent me with his message to you, have I brought before you his just claims, as well as the return he demands from you. And are not, I would ask, his claims just, and is not the return most reasonable? It were needless to essay to enter into the extent of the former, for they are infinite, and I would trust and pray, that it is unnecessary to dwell upon the other; for full well do I know that the feeling of every heart in the least measure opened by Divine grace to receive this the message of God to us will be that of his servant already alluded to—"what reward shall I render unto the Lord, for all his benefits towards me!"—Would you, my brethren, avoid the stigma of irreconcilable enmity and unconquerable ingratitude towards that God who is love, be embraced in the arms of his mercy, seize his proffered salvation, and evermore yield him your unreserved obedience; so shall an eternity of happiness, while it infinitely increases the debt of love never to be paid, alone testify how much each redeemed sinner amongst us owes to his Lord.

—000—

MISCELLANEOUS.

"A CITIZEN OF NO MEAN CITY."

Cities are celebrated from having been the birth-places of great and illustrious men, whose names have added lustre to the page of history; of men who have defended their country's liberties, or died in their defence. Their very stones are precious, and in their very ruins there is grandeur. How glorious is the city of which the believer is a citizen!

It "hath foundations"—eternal foundations—its "builder and maker is God."

Where are the cities of antiquity, in which deeds of valour were once performed by their daring sons? Where the cities in which liberty burst forth in all its grandeur, and made despots tremble? They are gone—they live but in history, and even their brief records time may

soon obliterate. Where is even Jerusalem, the city of the great King, whose peace flowed as a river when righteousness exalted the nation? Alas, "her friends think upon her stones, and it pitieth them to see her in the dust." The spoiler has come and laid waste her palaces; and of her temple, how awfully is the prophecy fulfilled, "there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down!"

Is the believer's city thus formed to decay? Will revolving years lay its foundations in the dust, and destroy the expectations the believer forms? No, "her foundations are upon the holy hills," she will endure as long as God endures; eternity is her duration, the eternal One her founder. What is this city? Where is this enduring, peaceful rest to be found? The men of the world find it not: the philosophy of the world cannot discover it: the sages of antiquity knew it not: the great ones of the earth may despise it; but "God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit;" babes in Christ can find it, the righteous can enter into it and be safe. We need not say, "behold it is here, or behold it is there:"—Behold, it is within the believer's heart; for his citizenship is in heaven. Even while in the world, he is not a citizen of the world; his treasure is not here, neither is his heart here; both are stretched beyond the sky; both are in the keeping of "a faithful Creator;" he "knows whom he has believed, and is persuaded he is able to keep that which he has committed unto him."

Oh, how great is the *peace* of the believer! Though worldly cares and disappointments may harrass, (and the believer is not exempt from them;—though Satan may assail, and his temptations fall thick around him; (and he is not ignorant of his devices,) though the workings of his corrupt nature may strive for the mastery, and fierce sometimes may be the conflict, yet he looks still to the fulfilment of the gracious

promise, confident that it will never fail, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed upon thee, because he trusteth in thee." How can worldly cares have power greatly to distress him, when he is crucified to the world? How can Satan prevail against him when Jesus his Lord has conquered him, and will bruise him under his feet in due season? How can his evil nature gain ascendancy, when Christ has prayed for him that his faith should not fail? Heaviness may indeed endure for a night, but joy will assuredly come in the morning, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

How great is the *joy* of the believer! Though he may not be exempt from the common lot of all men, (nor can he ever expect it,) though, in his human lot, he may be "born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards," though death may invade his domestic circle, and wither the gourd under whose shade he delighted to repose, and "take away the desire of his eyes with a stroke,—yet he has a joy with which a stranger intermeddleth not." His consolations are not few nor small, he "reckons that his light afflictions which are but for a moment are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in him." If by death his beloved friends have been removed, he rests in the assurance that if they have fallen asleep in Jesus, they are not lost but gone before, and even in his sorrow, "he sorrows not as others who have no hope," he knows that they who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him, that he will meet them again in that blessed region where never more shall there be separation.

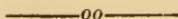
Why is joy so abundant in the believer? Because he joys in God, the source of all joy. "We joy in God," says the Apostle, "through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." If the joy of the believer had not its source in God, it would be like the joy of the world, short lived and fleeting.

but as God is its author, and he has given it to the believer for his portion, the believer can say, "Although the fig-tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the alive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." (Hab. iii. 17, 18.)

How great is *the believer's hope!* The hope of the world, what is it? An airy bubble that breaks ere it has well been formed:—a phantom that eludes the grasp of the pursuer. But the hope of the believer is a hope full of immortality, a hope that will not be disappointed, a hope which is based on the sure word of the promise of Jehovah, a hope that stretches beyond the things of time and sense, and realizes the objects which faith embraces.

Even in this life, the believer is a citizen of no mean city. He has peace with God, he has joy in God through his dear Saviour, he has hope in the promises of God, and he shall yet have the full enjoyment of that heavenly city where is universal love, because God, who is love, reigneth.—"Blessed are the people who are in such a case; yea, blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God." Oh, then, do they not "build too low who build below the skies?" May not "madman" be written on the forehead of him who slights and puts from him this blessed hope of eternal life? Well might Christ weep over the infatuation of Jerusalem,—well might Jeremiah exclaim, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes fountains of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!"

X.



THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS MAN.

Look, sinner, who withdrawest from Christ—look around thee, look within thee:—thou art not weary! I wait for thee. Search and research all thy being—what hast thou found? What is there that thou canst offer to God? Thy body is defiled, thy heart is with the world, thy soul has sinned. What hast thou then? Answer before God, who fills this place with his presence, what hast thou to give as the ransom of thy soul? Insensate as thou art! *it is gold, and gold tried by the fire of the sanctuary,* that thy God demands, and thou hast only an impure alloy, and all thy righteousnesses are as dross.

Behold now, whither tend all thy alterations, and all thy controversies with thy

Maker?—To thy own confusion; to demonstrate more clearly thy misery, thy absolute nakedness! Is it in this feeble condition that thou art come to wrestle with the angel? Is this all thy claim? Is this the refuge in which thou confidest? Are these the merits that must save thy soul?

Ah! hapless being, what will become of thee, if covered only with these? Where will be thy resource in the day of retribution, if thou hast only thyself for advocate; if thou be found in thine own righteousness; if thou hast but pollution to offer as a satisfaction for thy transgressions? It is easy for thee now, during the long suffering of God, to exalt thyself in the midst of thy equals; to lift up

thy forehead even to the heavens, and say with security, "my virtues, my honesty, my integrity; God is merciful." But you will not be always here below. Look only a few years before thee. Come: follow me to the throne of eternal justice, of him who searches the heart and the reins, and *who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity*; there I leave thee, with all thy works, with all thy purity, with all the arrogance of thy pretensions. Seest thou these heavens passing away with a great noise? this earth, and all that is therein, melting with fervent heat? Seest thou on the throne that Christ whom thou hast rejected; no longer meek and lowly of heart, but clothed with glory, and girded with strength and power, ready to exercise justice, and take vengeance on all who have not obeyed the Gospel? Seest thou the elect assembling from the four winds, the angels veiling themselves with their wings, and the saints casting their crowns at the feet of Him who liveth for ever and ever, and celebrating his law, whilst the rebellious are lamenting and smiting their breasts? Dost thou see, moreover, the accuser, Satan, who awaits thee before thy Judge? Now come forth—advance,—be not afraid. Dost thou not know that thou art just, that thou art upright, that thou art pure, that thou art honest? Have not men a thousand times repeated it? Why then grow pale? why this confusion—this alarm that takes possession of thy soul? And whence comes it, ye who are not Christians, that the bare supposition which you hear from the lips of frail man, causes your lips to tremble, and your hearts to fail? It is that the truth levels your pride and brings you to nothing: it is that the terrors of God seize upon you. You feel no assurance from the work of Immanuel, and eternal justice forces the avowal that all is lost.

Humble yourselves, then, ye whom the world regard as honest, but who reject Christ: break in pieces the hardness of

your heart, and your lamentable obstinacy. Child of Adam, prostrate thyself in the dust whence thou wast taken, and whither thou shalt return, and confess openly, in the presence of all, that thou art guilty, that the Lord will be found just in giving thee thy portion, in everlasting perdition, and that he cannot show thee favor until he cease to exist. Thus, then, I hear you exclaim, We are undone: we are reserved for damnation! Oh, how fearful is the wrath to come! Why was life granted us? Why did we not die ere yet we left the womb?

Answer them thyself, Gospel of Jesus! Law of mercy and grace, let thy beneficent voice be heard! Peace of heaven descend, and comfort these afflicted souls! Eternal light, disperse this sepulchral darkness which envelopes them! My Lord and my God, take compassion on thy creatures! Answer them! are they ruined without resource? "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," replies a voice of mercy. "The wages of sin is death, but where sin abounded grace did much more abound;" "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that all who believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Sing O heavens, and be joyful, O earth, and break forth into singing, O mountains:" "for unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given." "The Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." The morning star has risen; and those who "sat in darkness and in the shadow of death have seen its light." "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him: for the transgression of my people was he stricken." Thus, then, is the Divine justice satisfied. He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." O mercy! O love of God! sinner, contemplate Jesus on the cross, and adore!

REV. C. MALAN.

A NIGHT THOUGHT.

—oo—

GOD'S OVERRULING PROVIDENCE.

All nature is a volume, where the mind
 May read God's attributes, and meditate
 On all the wondrous gifts bestow'd on man.
 He who created all things, governs all.
 He who first breath'd on man the breath of life,
 And out of chaos rear'd the universe
 To bless His heritage, sustains that life,
 And portions all to their necessities.
 Oh, with what soothing pow'r does such a thought
 Steal on the mind, in midnight solitude,
 As gazing on the glories of the sky
 We trace the Author of this wondrous plan—
Our own preserving God! Let him who reads
 The star-lit firmament, and meditates
 Upon a scene, so still, so beautiful—
 Where nature reigns in peerless majesty—
 Think of *presiding Deity*, and feel
 That the omnipotent, omniscient God,
 Whose pow'r and wisdom are display'd therein,
 Is He who guides our being, guards our path,
 Watches our movements, and directs our ways,
 Provides us daily sustenance, and rules
 O'er all the varied incidents of life.

How far beyond the palling scenes of mirth
 Is such a contemplation?—earthly scenes
 Fade from the vision, and the Christian stands
 On holy ground;—the wilder passions cease,
 The mind is lull'd into a holy calm
 In unison with nature, and the soul
 Holds sweet communion with the Deity.
 Christian! if, compass'd with prosperity
 Thou dwellest on this thought,—remember Him
 Who thus hath bless'd thee in his providence,
 And glorify the Giver, in the gift.
 Christian! if suff'ring in adversity,

Oh, think of him who had not where to rest—
 The “man of sorrows,” and despis’d of men,
 “Who trod the wine-press of his Father’s wrath
 Alone,” to save a lost and guilty world;—
 And then, remember, ’tis a Father’s hand
 That chastens thee in his wise providence,
 To curb thy stubborn will, and mould thy heart
 After his image, that thou may’st be meet
 For thine inheritance beyond the skies.

Christian! when lying on the couch of pain—
 Perchance thy last—think of a Saviour God.
 Thou wert a rebel—mercy brought thee back;
 A sinner—Christ hath died to ransom thee.
 Review thy life, and tell, O dying saint!
 Of God’s o’erruling providence and care;
 And doubt not that the hand that led thee here
 Will guide thee onward through the untrod vale,
 Into the land of everlasting rest.
 A little while—and all thy sorrows cease,
 The earth recedes, and all creation fades.—
 Yet take one parting view, ere those fair scenes,
 Of mystic loveliness have passed away;—
 Look up, and mark in characters of light,
 “Wisdom and power,” stamped by Divinity
 On all his works—and fear not, but rejoice.
 “The mighty God” will crush his enemies,
 And lay them in the dust, but gather in
 His chosen people from the grave of time.
 For He who plann’d salvation from the first
 Will perfect all—and then his saints shall shine
 As stars upon the firmament, and God,
 The Saviour and Preserver of mankind,
 Shall reign in glory and in majesty,
 Sun to a new, unfading universe—
 The source and spring of never-ending life. R. D.

We feel happy to announce, for an early number, a Sermon by the REV. ROBERT DALEY,
 of Powerscourt.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XXXVI.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. ROBERT DALY.

REV. E. G. CARR.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN POWERSCOURT CHURCH, ON SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1836.

BY THE REV. ROBERT DALY, A. M.

Rector of Powerscourt.

LUKE vii. 41, 42.

“ There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty.”

“ And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?”

THIS was a parable spoken by our Lord on a very interesting occasion, in order to do that which is especially the Saviour's work, to rebuke a Pharisee, and to comfort a sinner. At v. 36, we read “ One of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house and sat down to meat.” Jesus never refused, “ He went to the Pharisee's house and sat down to meat.”

There was, we read, “ a woman in that city that was a sinner;” she heard that Jesus a Saviour sat at meat in the Pharisee's house. A sinner;—not in this respect different from all others, “ for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God”—but in this, different from

many in that city that she knew, she was a sinner—grieved that she was a sinner. There is the same similitude and difference in our days between sinners. This woman, a sinner,—convinced that she was a sinner, heard that Jesus—a Saviour was near at hand: her soul said, this is what I want—this is my benefactor, my helper, my friend; as one suddenly convinced of his dangerous illness would rejoice if he heard that there was near at hand, a kind, a skilful, a successful physician—one who had cured—who could cure many. She manifested her love and value in a way which some cold hearts might think enthusiastic; which, but faintly, after all, expressed her love

and gratitude. She "brought an alabaster-box of ointment and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment."

There was one dissatisfied;—his pride was hurt—his false notions of propriety violated:—"The Pharisee which had bidden him, spake within himself, saying, this man if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner."

It was the very language of his darkened heart, he hardly ventured to speak it out, but he said it "*within himself*,"—"she is a sinner." Thou blind Pharisee, who else should have come to a Saviour, but a sinner." "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "He came, not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." In how many of the present day is there the same spirit of the Pharisee?

How gently the Lord rebuked and instructed him, "Jesus answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on." Then our Lord spoke to him the words of the parable in my text. "There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?" He represents there, God as the creditor and all men his debtors, sinners under the character of debtors. This figure we find used in the Lord's Prayer, "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." He represents to the Pharisee that all are alike in this fact, that all are debtors, some owe more some owe less, but all are in debt, all on a par in respect of the fact of debt: just as in a debtors' prison, all alike in this respect, that all are debtors, some owing more, some less, but all in debt—so in this respect all human creatures stand

upon a par, that all are sinners; some may have sinned more, as to time, as to degree, but "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God—" in this respect there is no difference, the most decent, respectable, orderly, of the children of Adam, stands as to the fact that he hath sinned, tho' not as to the degree in which he hath sinned, on a level with the vilest wretch that ever disgraced human nature by his crimes.

How the pride of the Pharisee would have resisted this yet unanswerable fact! Could one debtor in a prison who owed but fifty pence, deny that he was on a par as to the fact of being a debtor with another who owed five hundred? But our Lord still further stated of both these debtors that "*they had nothing to pay*."—the man that owed the small sum could not discharge his debt no more than he that owed the large sum;—the burden lay upon him, and he could not get rid of it. And such the Lord would teach us is the case with all men, they are not only on a par in this respect that they have all sinned, but no sinner can ever make satisfaction for his sin, he can never discharge his debt—he is utterly helpless; as far as he is concerned, he must lie under the guilt of sin for ever; *once* a sinner, he is a guilty sinner *for ever*, and this without reference to the degree of his guilt: one man can as little discharge his little guilt, as another can his great guilt. "It costs more to redeem a soul, he must let that alone for ever." This is another point then on which the Lord would teach us that all men are on a par;—all stand upon the same ground—their inability to get rid of their guilt. These are two fearful humbling grounds of equality upon which all men stand, the fact of being all alike debtors, sinners;—the fact of having nothing to pay, no way in themselves to get rid of their guilt, and so escape from its consequences.

Suppose a man of benevolence and wealth was to visit a prison, filled with debtors, some of course of owing more, some less

—but all debtors, and all in jail because they had nothing to pay. Suppose one indebted in a large sum addressing himself to this friend of debtors, and in such a way as he best could, expressing himself grateful, deeply grateful to him for his condescension and kindness. Suppose another, owing a smaller sum, but as unable to pay that sum, as unable to deliver himself as his fellow-prisoner, to express his wonder that this friend of the debtors should allow his fellow-prisoner to approach him, saying with a sneer, he is a debtor. How absurd would sound such a remark, and how unmindful of his own situation must he be who made it? not more absurd than the remark of the Pharisee, not more absurd than if any of us should think that the fact of sin in any degree was a reason to prevent the merciful kindness of him who came into the world to save sinners.

Yet, is there not often this feeling in us?—one sinner setting himself up above another, forgetting how the fact of sin, and of being unable to help ourselves is common to us all. But how did the creditor deal with those two debtors?—not in the *best*, the *most gracious* way, but in the *ONLY* way in which either of them, or both of them could be freed from their debts—“he frankly forgave them both,” or, as the original might be translated, he dealt in the way of grace with them both. And it is evident, in no other way could they be made free. Had he held over them his demand, had he required his due; as they had nothing to pay, they must have continued for ever in debt, And here is another point upon which both debtors are again on a level. As they were on a par as to the fact of debt, as they were on a par as to their inability to pay, so they are on a par as being now debtors to grace, both equally freely forgiven. And this sets before us, not the *best*, the *most gracious*, but the *ONLY* way in which sinners, as all men are, helpless sinners, who can make no satisfaction for their sins, can be set free, can

obtain salvation, it is that God should freely forgive them, deal with them in free grace. And such is represented to be the character of the salvation of the Gospel, as, Romans iii. where the Apostle, after declaring that “there is no difference, that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” speaks of those that are saved being “justified *freely* by God’s grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.” The same word translated freely, is used, John xv. 25—“They hated me *without a cause*.”—That just as there was in Jesus no moving cause exciting the hatred of the Jews, but they hated him from a principle of hatred within their own bosom, so there is in a sinner nothing that is the cause moving God to justify him—he does it being moved to it by a principle of love, lying in his own gracious heart. As Eph. ii. “By grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.” As Isaiah lv.—“Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price.” This, again, shows us another point in which all Christians are on a level, all are alike debtors to grace, all are alike equally excluded from boasting, all prepared to sing the same song—“Salvation unto our God.”

Our Lord puts a question to the Pharisee, with regard to these debtors who had got their debts forgiven, not which of them had contributed most to his own deliverance, but having been delivered without money, which of them will love their gracious, merciful creditor most?—and “Simon answered, I suppose he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.”

A man’s love to a Saviour will be in consequence of his belief in him as one that freely forgives his sin, and its degree will be in proportion to the sense he has of the greatness of the sin that has been forgiven. *We are not forgiven because we love, but we love because we are for-*

given.—“ We love him, because he first loved us.” Jesus then “ turned to the woman,” and on this principle, laid down by the Pharisee himself, proceeded to account for the warm and vehemently expressed love of the woman, and the coldness of the Pharisee. He “ said unto Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet, but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss, but this woman, since the time that I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint, but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.” The Pharisee had showed every mark of coldness; the woman, every proof of affection and regard.—“ Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.” Her much love was the proof, as it was the effect of her many sins being forgiven.

What a word of grace, my brethren, we have here?—the Saviour himself states her sins to be many, and yet states them to be forgiven, in unison with his language by the Prophet Isaiah—“ Come, and let us reason together, though your sins were as scarlet, I will wash them white as snow.” “ I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions as a cloud, and as a thick cloud your sins,” “ the blood of Jesus cleanseth from all sin.” This he said speaking of her, but now he speaks to her—he would direct the comfort to her very heart—and mark, it is to a woman, of whom not only it is said at the beginning she was a sinner, a debtor, but now, a great sinner, a great debtor, one that owed the larger sum. “ Thy sins,” said Jesus to her, “ are forgiven,”—you are as free from having sin imputed to you, as the debtor that owed the five hundred pence, when frankly forgiven, was free from having a debt still in the book against him.

And let us remark, it is not said thy sins shall be forgiven, but thy sins are forgiven; the act of grace has taken

place, the hand-writing that was against you, has been blotted out. Yes, my Brethren, free and entire forgiveness is a blessing enjoyed at the present; the moment a sinner is united by faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, that moment are all his sins transferred to Christ: the Lord lays upon him all the believers iniquities; just as the moment a woman is married, all her debts are transferred to her husband, the law has no more demand upon her. This was what the apostle preached at Antioch, in Pisidia, as related in Acts 13, “ Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law.”

What a comfort to the soul of the poor woman that was a sinner, that knew she was a sinner, “ thy sins are forgiven !”

This is God’s language by his word, to every one that believeth in Jesus—thy sins are forgiven; this his language by this word to every believer in Jesus this day—thy sins are forgiven, they are laid upon Christ, they are taken from you—“ They that sat at meat with him began to say among themselves, who is this that forgiveth sins also.” Being ignorant of Jesus, they had no faith in him as one that could and would forgive sins—they had no idea of the blessedness he brought to a sinner, free, and perfect, and present forgiveness of sin.

Many in our day, are equally unbelieving, equally ignorant of the nature of Christ’s work of grace, they count it enthusiasm for a sinner believing on Jesus to express his assurance that his sins are forgiven, they consider that he encourages enthusiasm, who would have believers to expect as their present privilege, that their sins are forgiven; though John wrote to the very babes in Christ, those who had only just entered the holy family, “ I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you, for his name’s sake.” But Jesus would not allow the poor woman to be robbed of her peace,

her comfort, her assurance, by the sneers of unbelievers—he says again to the woman, “thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace,”—not thy faith *shall* save thee, but *hath* saved thee—hath now already joined you to the Saviour, and put you in possession of salvation.

Go on your journey in peace,—go, wherever that journey may lead, through life, through its troubles, its trials, through death, through the valley of the shadow of death—go wherever the hand of God may lead you—go in peace, at peace with God, and enjoying the happy sense of peace with God.

Those who do not know the grace of God, in truth would say, that this dealing of the Saviour with this sinner, would

give her licence to continue in sin—but far from it; if her sense of sin forgiven brought her to the Saviour's feet, to testify her gratitude and love, surely, the oft-repeated assurances of forgiveness would only make her still love him more, and “this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.” “The love of Christ constrains us to live no longer to ourselves, but to him who died for us, and rose again.” No, her heart was won to Christ by Christ's love to her, and out of the abundance of the heart will the mouth speak, and the whole man act. And so the very same act of grace which frankly forgives the debtor all his debt, secures on the surest grounds his service and obedience for the future.

MARK IV. 34. “When they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.” They left the place of hearing to be *alone* with Christ; and then the hidden meaning of his discourses with the multitude was repeated to them. If we would enjoy the same teaching of Christ by the Spirit, it will be found in the same way apart from even the assemblages of the saints, when we feel, and are enabled to realize Jesus present, and *alone* with us. Then, seated at his feet, we shall learn of him, and he will make us to understand hidden knowledge.

M^c.

The doctrines of Scripture, when faithfully preached, are like the acid which tests precious metals—when applied to spurious and adulterate metal, it creates a green and cankered surface—when dropped on genuine gold, it will leave no stain, and assist to brighten and cleanse it. So when the preacher applies the word to the hearts and consciences of his hearers, the unrenewed portion will naturally grow fretful and rebellious; while those who are born again, approve and apply those same truths rejected by the rest.

IBID.

THE DEITY, PERSONALITY AND IN-DWELLING OF THE SPIRIT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, LIMERICK,

ON WHITSUNDAY, 1837,

BY THE REV. E. G. CARR, A. M.

(Rector of St. Lawrence, and Second Chaplain.)

II. COR. VI. part of the 16th verse.

“ I will dwell in them and walk in them.”

We have a striking illustration of the wisdom of the framers of our Liturgy, in the obligation which they lay upon our Church's ministers, to bring before their congregations, at stated periods, the essential doctrines of the Bible. We know not of the omission of any great truth. Christ in all his fulness, and in all his experience—the infant Jesus—the man—the crucified—the risen and ascended—all find their places in the formularies of our church. The doctrine of the Spirit likewise finds the prominence to which the importance of the subject so justly entitles it; but which is but too frequently denied it in the teaching of our ministers. To this subject I would desire, with God's blessing and assistance, to draw your attention this morning; and may He whose office we desire to exalt, enlighten our understandings, and impress our hearts, that under his holy light, our souls may be suitably affected.

There is in the Church, a tendency to dishonour and neglect the Spirit—and there is in consequence coldness and formality prevalent. The spirit is the life of the Church, and yet the Church too much seeks life without him—practically at least, if not in profession—The Holy Ghost, we repeat it, is not honoured—

The Comforter—Sanctifier—Witness—is not honoured. He that unlocks the sanctuary, and introduces the believer into God's presence—He that shows the plans and purposes, the person and the love of Jesus and of God through him—He is forgotten or neglected. The Father is honoured, and the Son is glorified—but is it so with the Spirit? How is he characterized in the Church? Is not his Godhead forgotten? Is not his personality disputed or denied, or kept out of view? Do we not hear much of the Father's love—and much of the dying Jesus—but the love of the Spirit is a theme which dwells not in the hearts, nor upon the tongues of Christians; and if ever it breaks in upon the mind's eye, it is viewed as an intruder, which is received indeed, but so coldly as to permit not a permanent abode—as if the love of God were completed on the cross—as if his purposes of mercy had no development beyond what is contained in the death of Christ. Let us remember, when we speak of God's love, we limit not its manifestation to the work of one person, but of each person of the Trinity. We view the plans of mercy on the contrary as still gradually developing, like the sun in his course, ascending towards the meridian of that glorious day,

when the eternal purposes of the Triune shall be spread out before the ransomed Church, or it may be, the assembled universe of God. And if this view be correct, then we have now something superadded to the manifestation of love on Calvary—We have followed, and wondered as we went, the self-devoted victim to the cross—We have marked, and wondered as we marked, the trickling blood-sweat which the agony within pressed out through the pores of the man of sorrows brow—We have seen the mock coronation of the king of glory—and his real and inscrutable suffering—We have beheld him descending into death itself, (the last plague-stroke of the enemy inflicted)—and bowing down with the serenity which his boundless love asserted over the terrors of the grave—We have followed this herald of heaven's mercy, back into his Father's presence, freighted with trophies to enrich his Church,—but we have a still further proof, and a richer, of the love of God—heaven's treasure-house was not yet exhausted—The Spirit was yet to come. “THE promise” yet remained to be fulfilled—God's purpose from eternity was to give *himself*—It was the purpose of the Triune, and the purpose of each person. This was to be the property of the Church for ever. Amazing thought! yet true—Oh! can the Christian in the contemplation of such a birthright be tempted to indifference towards his Lord, by the tinsel allurements of a dying world? Impossible—let only the eye of faith be fixed on “the things that God has prepared for them that love him”—let him contemplate God himself as his inheritance, and then the glory of a thousand worlds united, would fade into obscurity, as the stars of night before the full grown light of day. We have remarked upon the neglect manifested towards the Holy Spirit in the Church, and we are at a loss to account for such neglect, except we refer the cause to the work which the Spirit is engaged in, that is, the unveiling the glories of God in Christ. Like the

sun which illumines the beauties of the universe, but refuses himself to be seen—so the Spirit in revealing the glories of the character of Jesus, would conceal his own. Shall we however forget either the majesty or the mercy which characterizes the Spirit's work, because he would fain be lost in the glories which he reveals? Nay, we will follow this heavenly guide, and whilst he uplifts the lid of that ark in which are deposited the covenant and the counsels of God, we will honour and adore him, as possessing equal glory with the Father and the Son, and equal love.

That we may be assisted in rendering our tribute of honour to God the Spirit, we shall endeavour briefly to vindicate his *Deity* and *Personality*. We do not enter upon proofs from the conviction or even the expectation that *either* will be denied, at least in words, but from the persuasion that both are *practically* denied; which sort of denial is the most disparaging to his glory. That this is but a fair statement, will appear to all who will recall to mind the mode of expression common in speaking of the Spirit. How frequently have we to mark expressions, even from believers, which prove that the dignity and Godhead of the third person is lost sight of? He is mentioned as an influence—a something that operates in a secondary character—as the light, more than the sun which causes the light—as a subordinate agent, whose operations were directed and controuled by a foreign impulse; and not as one who contained within himself the law of his gracious dealings with the Church. We assert the *independence* of the Spirit, as well as that of the Father and the Son: we deny that other necessity was imposed in order to his acting, than that which called forth the Father's love, or the self-sacrifice of the Saviour. God the Father could find only in his nature the law which called forth his pity for a ruined world—God the Son could acknowledge no demand from what was not contained within himself—and God the Spirit will not have his operations

referred to any extrinsic cause. He participated in the eternal council; and the plans and purposes which are gradually developing are indebted to the sovereignty of the Spirit, as well as to that of the Father and the Son for their accomplishment. To establish all this, it is only necessary to prove the Deity of the Spirit. This once established, all must follow which we have stated.

First, then we assert THE DEITY OF THE SPIRIT from positive declarations of Scripture; such as are contained in 2 Cor. iii. 17. "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" compared with, Exod. xxxiv. 34. "when Moses went in before the Lord, to speak with him, he took the vail off, until he came out," where the identity of the Spirit and Jehovah is clearly established. In the well known passage, Acts v. wherein Ananias is said to lie to the Holy Ghost and to God. In 1 Cor. vi. 19. where believers are said to be Temples of the Holy Ghost, compared with 2 Cor. vi. 16. where they are called Temples of God. Again the Apostolic commission was to baptize in the name of the Holy Ghost, as well as of the Father and the Son. The proof derivable from this last passage, will appear the more striking if we suppose the name of a saint or angel introduced in the place of the Holy Ghost.

Again, we are furnished with abundant proofs of his Deity from the attributes ascribed to him, such as omniscience—omnipotence—omnipresence—and lastly, by his works in creation, and in preservation. But who can doubt for a moment, (if any should entertain a doubt) that the Holy Ghost is very God, when we mention that the most difficult work accomplished by the power of Deity, and that which cost God most to perform, is executed through the agency of the Holy Spirit. "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God." If creation, in the production of a world, furnish an irrefragable proof of the power,

wisdom, and love, of the great producing cause; does not the work which cost the Creator all the power and wisdom and love of Heaven to complete, furnish a more convincing proof of the Deity of the Agent through which it is accomplished? We do not dwell however on this subject: we are not disposed to imagine there is a single individual who needs any formal proof upon a matter so plain, so important. We shall only notice in closing our remarks, an objection, or rather a difficulty which has been sometimes suggested on the subject. The Spirit, it is said, is never addressed in prayer in the Scriptures. Perhaps not *formally*, but *in effect* he is—for what is the apostolic benediction, 2 Cor. xiii. 14. if it be not in its nature a prayer? we know of no power in the Apostle to communicate the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of the Father, or the fellowship of the Holy Ghost; and we therefore naturally infer that what he could only receive for himself through the use of the means of prayer, he expected for others through the use of the same means. But though we adduce this passage as one calculated to overcome the difficulty, it seems obvious that it might be dispensed with; for if the Holy Ghost be God, upon what grounds is worship in general, or in particular to be denied him? And again we remark, that the objection urged with reference to *prayer*, may with as much consistency be referred to *praise*. Thus would God the Spirit be undeified—the name of Deity would be left, but nothing else, at least as far as regards the worship of the creature—we should call him God in our confessions and our creeds; but deny his Deity in our acts of worship. Such seems to be the result necessarily flowing out of the objection we have noticed. To have said thus much will be sufficient to show its fertility.

We proceed to offer a few observations on the PERSONALITY OF THE SPIRIT. A step which indeed would be needless, were

his Deity duly appreciated and understood; for what can be more absurd, than to attribute knowledge, and power, and love, and other characteristics to an *influence*? Establish the truth that the Holy Ghost is God, and you have left nothing undone towards the proof of his personality. Prove that the dispositions and operations of Deity are His, and personality necessarily blends with every thought conceived of the Spirit. It is strange why a matter so fully and so frequently stated in Scripture should be so much overlooked, not to say questioned. He is said to be "grieved," Ephes. iv. 30. To "intercede," Rom. viii. 26. To "search," 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11: and in John, xiv. 26, and Acts, x. 19, the acts of a person are described. And not to enumerate various other passages which would vindicate the same truth: we notice one in the last place, which seems strikingly conclusive on the subject: It is contained in Matt. xii. 31. "Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." Indeed to prove both the Deity and Personality, no other passage needed to be adduced, if we did not fear that lack, or apparent lack of evidence might lead to the conclusion, that such a truth was allowed to rest for proof upon a single text. In the passage before us, we have the sin against the Holy Ghost contrasted with sin against the Father and the Son: and whilst it is declared, that sin against the Father and the Son may be forgiven, it is as decidedly stated, that the sin against the Holy Ghost will not be forgiven. The inference is easy. If to commit a sin against the Holy Ghost be the greatest sin possible, then there can be no doubt of His Deity; provided the Father is God, or the Son God; for how could a transgression against an inferior being, be equal in crime to one against God, not to say of greater magnitude than sins committed against the Father and the Son? And with reference to the evidence borne by the passage, to

the personality of the Spirit, we need only ask the question, how can we conceive sin to be committed against an influence? We have, hence, both the Deity and Personality of the Spirit fully vindicated. But we have another idea suggested in the passage, which is but too well corroborated by experience—why, it may be asked, should a certain sin against the Holy Ghost be mentioned in connexion with a threat so appalling as that it never should be forgiven? Is it that one person of the Deity should be exalted above another? We cannot account for the circumstance, surely, on such a ground. We believe, and we are taught to believe, the majesty of the Trinity co-equal, and we dare not deny to one person the worship which we offer to another? What, then, shall we assign as the cause of this apparent preference? We do not dogmatize whilst we venture to assign the probable cause; we are not told why the sin against the Holy Ghost is mentioned under such a sanction, no more than what this sin consists in; but we remember that God ever warns his people most strongly against the sin to which at any time they are most liable, and in order to their avoiding it, he mentions it as that which will provoke His special displeasure. This view of God's dealings is illustrated in the history of the children of Israel, and elsewhere in Scripture. And it would seem that for this reason the sin against the Spirit is mentioned as it is. Does not experience testify to the Church's neglect of the Spirit? For a long period which followed the revival at the glorious reformation, the Spirit was banished not only from His due place in the worship, but even from the thoughts of professing Christians—and in latter days when God was pleased to raise up many witnesses to a purer creed and more scriptural hope, whilst many pulpits resounded with lucid expositions of the doctrine of justification by faith; the doctrine of the Spirit's nature and operations was little dwelt on. The Church seems now to

have been roused from her indifference, and we may expect the blessing of the Lord will be vouchsafed in larger measures than hitherto. For, just in the measure, not only that we exalt the standard of the cross, but the nature and necessity of the Spirit's operations, may we expect the blessing of God to follow. They who would do the one without the other, act pretty much as one who would guide his followers into some magnificent scenery by midnight, and ask them to admire its beauties. Let us ever remember that the glories of the person of Jesus are only to be seen and appreciated under the illuminating influence of the Spirit.

There seems another reason why God marks the sin against the Holy Ghost with His special displeasure; and in assigning this we would not be understood, no more than in the former, to pronounce authoritatively. "We speak as unto wise men, judge ye what we say." We regard the gift of the Spirit to the church as that which consummated the love of God.—After the gift of Jesus, there was but one promise to be fulfilled, which was, therefore, emphatically called "*the promise*" (Acts i. 4); or perhaps we may account for the expression, upon the ground of the value of the gift of the Spirit; the Spirit being elsewhere treated in Scripture as including every blessing and gift from God, as for instance in Luke xi. 13. where the Holy Spirit is treated as the essence of all heavenly blessings. The tide of God's love to man was not full till the Holy Spirit was given; His coming down after the ascension of Jesus, was the draining of the fountain of love in the heart of God, which out-flowed in the person of Jesus.

The sin against the Holy Ghost, therefore, is the sin committed against the fulness of God's love. Love aggravates the commission of evil; and love manifested to the utmost aggravates its character beyond hope of forgiveness, and this we conceive is the ground upon which rests the unpardonable nature of this sin.

To sin against the Holy Ghost is to reject the love of God put forth to its utmost limits—and we know that he who rejects the love of God in its fullest manifestation, is not to be brought under the influence of the Gospel from other motives. Love is the most influential principle, and to this principle, therefore, God addresses himself in the Gospel. It is the master-spring of Deity itself, and therefore *must* be the most powerful. If, then, what we have stated concerning the gift of the Spirit be correct; if He was truly the last grand manifestation of this principle, doubtless the contempt or rejection of such a boon must leave the sinner unpardonable. He unfit himself for any participation in Spiritual blessing, by rejecting the last effort of God to draw him to himself.

Time warns us that we have dwelt sufficiently on the Spirit's Deity and personality—more might be urged upon the subject, but enough has been stated, we hope, to arouse more serious consideration concerning it.

We proceed now to consider the matter more immediately connected with our text, THE INDWELLING OF THE SPIRIT IN THE HEARTS OF GOD'S PEOPLE. We enter not upon this without some apprehension. It is a glorious but a deep subject. To scan its heights, or sound its depths, would be a task more than adequate to the best efforts of most, if not of all, who have tasted the blessedness of the truth that God "*dwelleth not in temples made with hands,*" but in the hearts of His people. We therefore venture on it with diffidence, and should we fail in our attempts to open it, we shall be content if only such an interest be excited as may awaken dormant energies and enlist them in its investigation.

To say that a peculiar manifestation of the Spirit, is the property of the present dispensation, appears but to assert an axiom. Otherwise we shall be at a loss to discover meaning in the often repeated promise of the Spirit's special outpouring.

To say that the descent of the Spirit at the day of Pentecost, was a common manifestation, would be an assertion on which none could reasonably venture. We do not therefore delay to prove what needs no proof. We are not however quite so certain that what we have to assert with reference to His *gracious* influences will be so favourably received. It is this, that the gracious influences of the Holy Ghost were increased to the Church on that occasion, so as to bring it into connexion with new privileges and responsibility; these could not arise from miraculous manifestation, inasmuch as that almost immediately ceased, and has not been renewed; and in any case, would have formed but a small addition to existing privilege—miracles had attested the mission of Christ before, and the apostles themselves had wrought them previously to the Pentecostal. There was nothing, therefore, in the miracles of Pentecost, considered alone, which could be interpreted as a fulfilment of the promise that the Spirit should come after the ascension of Jesus. They were but the continuation of the power with which the apostles were previously invested by the Lord himself. Nor can we admit that the superior nature of the miraculous manifestations at Pentecost can provide a satisfactory reply to this statement. It must have been, therefore, something which was the property of the Church in every period after, and something superior to what was enjoyed before, which was promised by the Saviour as the effect of his conquests and return to the Father. And this seems to be placed beyond reach of controversy by the words of the promise itself, in John vii. 38, 39. "*He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.*" We have only to notice two particulars brought before us in this passage, in order to substantiate

what has been asserted. First—the Spirit was to be given to *them that believe*, ("he that believeth,") which makes the promise *general*, and not limited to those who received it at Pentecost; and Secondly—the thing promised was *future*, "should receive," or more literally, "were about to receive." We have hence then these two points established, that the gracious influences of the Spirit, and not his miraculous manifestations, were the subject of the Saviour's promise, (for the promise was to him that believeth,) and then, that the manifestation of the Spirit which was promised, was such as had not yet been enjoyed. We think, if language can be plain, and inferences plainly deduced, that both the statement of our Lord, and the deductions we have made, are as simple as they need be to convince a candid and enlightened mind.

Having thus far considered the nature of the great promise to the new dispensation, it remains that we endeavour to point out in what consists the superiority of privilege connected with it. And this we conceive to be simply a richer enjoyment of the power of God's Holy Spirit; in other words *his indwelling*. We are prepared for the objection, that the Spirit's operations were felt, and powerfully felt, before the day of Pentecost—we are prepared to be told that patriarchs and prophets spoke and acted under his gracious influence as well as his miraculous power—we deny it not—we know that "holy men of God spake in former times as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," and were themselves examples of his quickening and sanctifying power. But how does this disprove our statement? It only goes to establish that God's people at all times acted under the influence of God's Spirit; but does not prove that a *peculiar* manifestation of his power was not reserved for a particular era in the Church's history. It does not prove that the Spirit of God was given at all times in equal measure—nay, it could not prove it—for we find Christ himself declaring

that the descent of the Holy Ghost was to be the consequence of his ascension : and John accounts for the absence of the Spirit on the ground that "Jesus was not yet glorified." John vii. 39. "The Holy Ghost was not yet given." This language, literally interpreted, would go to say, that the Spirit had as yet no connexion with the church. We cannot however thus interpret it. The *relative* position of the Spirit to the Church, and not his *zeal* is evidently intended. That is, though the Spirit of God had from the beginning moved over the hearts of his people, and in some instances impelled them to speak what they did not themselves understand—I Pet. i. 11. yet, the time was yet future when his operations were to be more fully developed ; and the future manifestation was to exceed any former so much in glory, that *comparatively* the Spirit was said not yet to be given. His former manifestations were but as the drops which preceded the great shower of grace, connected with the Pentecostal outpouring. The Church's position with respect to out-pouring of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost perhaps might be fitly illustrated by its position with respect to Christ, previous to his coming. Doubtless the eye of faith saw, and rejoiced in the incarnate God making satisfaction for sin and bringing in everlasting righteousness ; but it saw him through clouds and shadows which more or less obscured the glory of his work—and thus the sun which was to throw light upon the wounds of Calvary was seen, but only in his morning twinklings ; as yet he had not risen above the horizon of promise, and the rays that he emitted were but the pledges of his ascension. In a word, the Church was not *in-dwelt* of the Spirit—This was a blessing peculiar to a future day—to our day—and this it is which constitutes the greatness of our privilege and responsibility. The Spirit in the old dispensation had a work to do, the same in *character*, as that he now carries on in the Church, but not the same in *measure*.

His messages of warning, instruction and consolation, were then conveyed to the Church ; but it was from a distance ; his dwelling place then was not fixed amongst men ; he could not come forth to *abide* till Jesus ascended, (John xiv. 16.) for it was settled in the purpose of heaven, that he was to proceed from the Father and the Son. Hence the indwelling of the Spirit seems peculiar to the new dispensation ; and seems exclusively confined to New Testament saints. Indeed, the nature of the Spirit's work shows that it could not be otherwise. His special work is to testify of Christ, to bear witness to his death and resurrection, and to baptize into both. As Jesus was the Father's witness, so the Spirit testifies to Christ. And it is remarkable that the doctrine of the resurrection was never prominently and fully preached save by Christ himself, till after the resurrection of Christ. This it was to which the Spirit had to testify ; and when Jesus entered into the holiest, the Spirit descended to abide as a witness for that fact to the Church, and through it to convey comfort to the hearts of God's people. A breach must be made in the heavens, by the breaker, before the heavenly dove could descend ; and through the breach made by the body of Jesus he has descended, and returns not. But more than this, it was the privilege of the Church at all times to enjoy God's presence. Abraham and all the patriarchs enjoyed it ; the church in the wilderness had God in the midst of them dwelling in a cloud ; and descending down the path of the Church's history, he dwelt amongst his people afterwards in the temple ; till the glory of the former temple was exceeded by that of the latter, by a fuller manifestation of Deity, in the person of Jesus. In him the Church advanced to nearer contact with God. Through him Deity was made accessible to all in a measure before unknown ; their eye saw, their ears heard, and their hands handled the word of life. (1 John i. 1.) It would be difficult to conceive,

were it left to us to conjecture, how such privilege could receive accession. We certainly could not venture to expect it in the way which the purpose of God had determined for its accomplishment—we wonder whilst we behold the condescension of God in dwelling amongst his people, though inaccessible to them; we wonder still more as we follow him in his descent from his throne, and see him assuming humanity, and becoming accessible to the vilest; but, we have still a greater wonder of condescension to admire:—He comes into nearer connexion with man; in the one case (to which we have alluded,) he dwelt amongst men, but refused familiarity in his connexion with them; in the other he dwelt amongst men and allowed it; but *nou* he dwells in men. This is the fulfilment of the promise, and the great distinguishing privilege of the new dispensation. That the indwelling of the Spirit is the peculiar privilege of this dispensation will appear from the language of Scripture in reference to the old and new respectively. We do not find it asserted (as far as I am conscious) any where that God dwelt in his people by his Spirit, before the day of Pentecost, and it is needless to add, that frequent mention is made of it, subsequently to that day. For instance, in Rom. viii. 9. 1 Cor. iii. 16. Eph. ii. 22. 2 Tim. i. 14. 1 John. iv. 12, 15, and 16. and many other passages which are known to you. To dwell longer on proofs of the Spirit's indwelling were unnecessary.

Let us now briefly consider some of the inferences necessarily flowing out of the truth.

And 1st. with regard to *the love of the Spirit*. Have we not in the fact of the Spirit's indwelling a striking proof of his love? and yet how much has the love of the Spirit been overlooked. We do not contrast the love of the Spirit with the love of the Son or of the Father. Scripture does not, because it could not contrast them—if they differ, it is only in degree of manifestation, but differ they cannot.

The work of the Spirit and of the Son furnish illustrations of the same principle, and are emanations of one mind—the mind of God; nor can we admit (what is often asserted) that difference must exist between the mind of the Son and of the Spirit, if their work do not contemplate a co-extensive field. The work of each person of the Trinity is not the manifestation of the mind of that person as distinguished from the mind of the other—but as illustrative of the mind of Trinity. But avoiding the contrast, may we not ask, with some suspicion, that we shall receive an affirmative reply, *has not the love of the Spirit been overlooked?* And should it be so? no, doubtless—if we love the Lord Jesus for having by his blood-bought victories, entered heaven for us, and for keeping possession in our name and nature; shall we not love the Spirit who keeps us for heaven? Christ has taken possession for us—the Spirit has taken possession of us—heaven is kept for us by the power of God, and we are kept for it by the same. 1 Pet. i. 5. God the Son is our surety, and God the Spirit is our safe-guide to glory. If we magnify the love of the Son who loved us and died for us—if, whilst we gaze on the accursed tree, we are lost in wonder at the triumph which love obtained over suffering—oh let us not forget the love of him who conducts us to Calvary, who opens the eye of faith to behold the invisible things of glory—who makes common cause with us, even as did the Son, “who helps our infirmities” and makes intercession within us “with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Let us adore the love of him who makes the tabernacle of dust his tenement, and leaves it not, under a thousand provocations to depart, till he leaves it in its bed of earth to sleep till the resurrection morning. Or if we consider the character of those in whom he condescends to dwell—even of the dearest children of God—be their attainments what they may, still their provocations are many—can they say they are

at all times under his exclusive influence? Is not a body of sin continually placing, even successful impediments in the way of their obedience, and yet the Spirit withdraws not his influences—his light is extinguished by some cloud of sin, but it shines forth again and subdues the darkness. How wonderful that God should thus come in contact with corruption! What must the love of that Spirit be, who is essential holiness; when he can make a permanent abode in a body of sin! Could we but see sin as angels see it; how should we wonder at this condescending love. But could we behold it with the eye of God, oh how much more should we magnify the riches of grace thus manifested! Must we not admire the love which overcomes the injuries done by man to man, and requites them by kindness—the love of the father who bears with the graceless returns of some favoured son, and loves and cherishes him as though he offended not? But the analogy does not convey any adequate view of the case we suppose it to illustrate. A son has a claim upon a father's love and pity, because he is his son; but where is our claim upon the Spirit's love? There is, too, a connexion arising from a common humanity, a common interest, and to some degree communion of spirit, but in the other case there is none. The Spirit loves us because it is his nature to love.—There is no law to direct or control His operations, but the law of his essence.—“God is love,” and therefore his kindness to the sons of men. We might argue from hence the Spirit's *patience*.

Could we see the infinite purity which belongs to His character and contrast it with our vileness, we could form a better estimate upon this subject. Could we enumerate the various provocations of the Church into one sum—could we tell up the amount of offences committed against the Spirit by all God's people who have enjoyed his influence, have felt his power, and have passed up to glory—would

man's arithmetic be equal to the calculation? Some new name should be found for the number to express the amount, except we called it by the unintelligible name of infinite. It is thus only we could form an idea of the Spirit's patience. Or were we to estimate the Spirit's *power*, perhaps we could not illustrate it better than by connecting it with his indwelling and its effects. We do not point to the *heavens* which God the Spirit has garnished with its spangling multitude of witnesses—nor to *man*, the most perfect pattern of the mechanism of the hand of Deity, nor to *Providence* in its vast and complicated machinery—but to the *believer*.—In him we behold the brightest manifestation of power—he is the object which attracts the eye of angels—the wonder of the sinless multitude who minister to his wants and weaknesses, and the object of wonder, it may be, to other worlds throughout eternity. Contemplate him, a poor frail bark launched forth on the ocean of time, to buffet the winds and waves of trial excited by the powers of hell and earth; see him, notwithstanding, outriding the storm, and even washed by the waves which threatened his destruction; how account for the fact? *God is there*. The elements are moderated by an invisible, but well known power; “God plants his footsteps in the sea, and rides upon the storm;” the Spirit of God is within, and though, like Jesus in the ship, he may seem at times forgetful of the fury of the elements around, he needs only to be awakened; and, as in creation, he moves over the face of the waters, subdues their excitement, and causes the full reflection of the sun to re-appear. But is there not a storm within, too often excited, though to the world unknown, the calming of which attests the Spirit's power? How is it that the boisterous elements of nature seem to have died into the calm almost of heaven itself, and received a fore-taste of the peace above? Who has quelled its turbulence? it is he who has said “I will dwell in them and walk in them.”

We might multiply illustrations of the power of the Spirit; we might trace the order in providence, as well as grace to his operation; we might show that "whatsoever things are true, honest, pure, lovely, and of good report," are but so many traces of his footsteps in the Church; and the reflection of his light—but time permits not. Let us remember, in conclusion, that where the Spirit dwells, there he *walks*. It was the Spirit's work in creation to give *life* and *order* to chaos—and this is his work in the Church. He gives life to those who were dead in sin, and order subdues the misrule of the natural mind. We remark further—that

his influence is *visible*—as motion is apparent to others as well as to ourselves, so the life of the Spirit is manifested by the believer's walk. It is also *habitual*; we must not conclude that we are the temples of the Lord from an occasional excitement of spirit—We may find much to excite even on religious subjects, without having the Spirit of God.

Enoch *walked* with God—that is, he lived in constant communion with God; and so must every son of God. Blessed are they who are thus God's habitation—blessed in time, to be more, unspeakably more, blessed in eternity.

—ooo—

MATTHEW viii. 16.

"When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils, and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick."

This passage, if compared with Mark i. 32. Luke iv. 38, 40. affords an instance of undesigned coincide which is worthy of remark: from these latter places we learn, that the events recorded took place on the Sabbath day—Jesus went from the synagogue to Peter's house. This accounts for why the people waited until evening, when the sun had set, to bring out their sick; it would have been counted unlawful on the Sabbath. It teaches us, too, how labouriously Jesus passed that day of rest,—no day of rest to him: first, the synagogue where, doubtless, he preached the Gospel of the kingdom—then the healing of Peter's wife's mother—and afterwards, when the sun-set brought rest to all, it brought to him only an increase of labour. Such may our Sabbath be also. May it be our rest, as well as meat and drink, to do thy will O Lord!

17th v. "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." These words do, doubtless,

refer to the bearing our infirmities and sicknesses in a spiritual sense—"Jesus bare our sins in his own body on the tree." This was real and positive endurance—vicarious suffering. But perhaps, even in removing the bodily sufferings of those here healed, there was some endurance on the part of our gracious Redeemer, seeing the afflicted multitude and being able, as he was, to feel for their pain.

Just as in the case of human sympathy, a tender-hearted person feels for the woes which he relieves or alleviates, may we not extend the same to the human heart of the Lord Jesus—though about to remove the woes, he felt for the sufferer. If it be so, how exquisitely sensitive must that heart have been! We have an instance somewhat illustrative of this in the case of the widow whose son Jesus raised to life—though about to dry her tears by this miracle, yet even in that short interim he could not endure to see them flow needlessly, and said—"weep not."

M^c.

NO RESPECT OF PERSONS WITH GOD.

HE whose death is as little regarded as the fall of a leaf in the forest, and he whose departure involves a nation in despair, are, in this view of the subject (by far the most important one,) upon a level. Before the presence of the great I AM, into which they both immediately enter, these distinctions vanish, and the true statement of the fact, on either supposition, is, that an immortal spirit has finished its earthly career,—has passed the barriers of the invisible world, to appear before its Maker, in order to receive that sentence which will fix its irrevocable doom, “according to the deeds done in the body.” On either supposition, an event has taken place which has no parallel in the revolutions of time, the consequences of which have not room to expand themselves within a narrower sphere than an endless duration. An event has occurred, the issues of which must ever baffle and elude all finite comprehension, by concealing themselves in the depth of that abyss of that eternity, which is the dwelling place of Deity, where there is sufficient space for the destiny of each among the innumerable millions of the human race to develop itself, and, without interference or confusion, to sustain and carry forward its separate infinity of interest.

REV. R. HALL.

HYMN.

A BLESSING ON THE PREACHED WORD.

Come, Holy Spirit! full of pow'r,
Descend, and seal this solemn hour;
Breathe thy best influence, gracious Lord,
And give new glory to thy word.

Jesus, Almighty Saviour! come,
And of each bosom make thy home,
There reign supremely and alone,
And cast each idol from thy throne.

Spirit of healing! breathe around,
Shed balm on every open wound,
Bind ev'ry mourner's broken heart,
And bid him hence in peace depart.

Come, Comforter—eternal Lord!
New light, new life, new love afford;
Though all unseen, aloud proclaim
The saving pow'r of Jesu's name.

M*.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. J. N. WOODROFFE.

REV. WILLIAM FOX.

THE OFFICES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN LOWER SHANDON CHURCH, CORK, ON JUNE 15th, 1837.

BY THE REV. J. N. WOODROFFE, A. M.

(Curate of Glanmire, CORK.)

JOHN xvi. 13.

“ Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth.”

WHAT is truth? was the inquiry of a Heathen, who neither cared for, nor loved it, and truth in the scriptural sense of the term, is no more the concern of the great body of mankind, than of Pilate who proposed the question. Folly came into the world by the entrance of sin, and is therefore called by the same name in the word of God. No wicked nor unregenerate man can be wise, in its high and scriptural meaning, for “the truth is not in him,” he “will not come to the light, because his deeds are evil,” he desires not an acquaintance with that which teaches him to deny himself, and be under another’s rule, for being “alienated from the life of God” in his mind, there is no affinity between its principles, and the bias of his will and passions. The existence and infatuation of this folly and error is not perhaps more

clearly discovered than in the proud imagination that the human mind can guide itself into truth, and render its powers capable of conformity to the will of God. An Apostle, even the most learned of them, educated at the feet of Gamaliel, the Jewish doctor of the law, humbly professes—“for I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing,” and yet how many cumbrous volumes have been written to prove man’s ability, to fix eternal truth in his mind, and by his own boasted energies to discover the depth of his natural corruptions, and, quickening his dead soul, place it on the path of rectitude! We must necessarily wave the consideration of the first entrance of falsehood into the universe of God, and satisfy ourselves with reference to the word of our Lord who declares, when speaking of Satan, “that he abode not

in the truth," from that moment he became the father of lies, and the avowed enemy of God. Becoming the first tempter to man he seduced him from the line of duty; and so deeply has his delusive poison sunk into our minds that it can only be ejected by the Spirit of truth, whose province it is to remove the false feelings that lurk within the breast, and whose "sufficiency" alone is capable of guiding us into its riches and comfort.

Our subject contains the simple proposition, that the Spirit is the guide into all truth. We shall consider, **FIRST**, the Holy Spirit under the office character he thus sustains. And **SECONDLY**, apply the subject;—and as we proceed, may He be present, "the author and giver of life" to conduct us into a profitable and practical consideration of the subject proposed. We stand like the prophet of old in the valley of vision:—may He, as the breath from the four winds, breathe upon each slain one here, that they may live.

I.—THE OFFICE CHARACTER WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT SUSTAINS, AS THE GUIDE INTO ALL TRUTH. In the first place he guides unto *essential truth*. Strictly speaking, truth is that which cannot be moved, which is unalterable and firm. Could it change, it would lose its nature; error only assumes mutability and variety, and yet after all its changes remains error still, it never can become truth which is perfect unity, and simplicity itself. In this high sense of the word, it is an attribute of God—He is truth in the abstract, and the fountain from which all truth flows. In Deut. xxxii. 4. we read this character ascribed by Moses to him, "He is a God of truth," or as it might be with equal justice, and more force translated, "God the truth." Christ applies the same title to himself, when he says, "I am the way, *the truth*, and the life." And again, we have the same attribute appropriated to the Spirit—"It is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is *truth*," or as it may be more faithfully rendered, "*the Spirit, the truth*." Thus we have the three persons of the ever blessed Trinity clothed in the same glorious attribute, and indeed, upon this very point of the Spirit's personality in the Godhead, and union in the divine essence, depends the proof of His ability to guide unto the truth; for thus the Apostle argues, "the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;

for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him, even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God," (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11.) His power therefore, efficaciously leads us unto the God of truth, and opens up to us the comfort which we may derive from that infinite and immutable attribute.

Secondly.—He is a guide into that revelation which essential truth has made of himself—a *guide into all the truth of the Gospel*. We shall view the text as primarily addressed to the converted, in the same light as it was originally spoken by Christ to his disciples before his removal; for as in the early part of his ministry we find him principally engaged in manifesting "the truth, and name" of the Father, to the multitude at large, so in the termination of it, do we find him principally engaged in revealing the agency and character of the Spirit to his disciples.

It may be said that the same office is ascribed to Christ, as we find it stated that "the day spring from on high, should arise to *guide* our feet into the way of peace." But the differences between the offices are clear and marked; for the original of the word to *guide* as it occurs in the Gospel of Luke, signifies "to direct by a right line," and agrees well with the character of our "forerunner," who laid down the path for us, and first walked in it himself. Indeed the very term for leader or forerunner is in the Hebrew formed from the same idea, being taken from the first letter of the Alphabet; for as it is the leading letter of all the rest, and precedes and draws on the entire train, so may the same term be well applied to Christ, who, speaking of himself says, "I am alpha and omega," "the beginning and the ending—" as if he would say "I have walked before you, I have showed you the path, and I will endure you with strength to follow me." But the word used for the Spirit is altogether different, signifying not so much one who marks down or points out the way, as one who acts as the *conductor* and *companion* in it, leading us along the path with comfort and complacency. And was it not exactly such a character, such a teacher and guide, the disciples required? Christ had marked out the way for them, he had laid down "line upon line, and precept upon precept," but he was now about to be removed from them; and to complete

his official part of the covenant of grace to be effected on earth and which he styles "the work which the Father had given him to do," he was now on the eve of finishing the ground-work of salvation for the redeemed, but it could not be finished in them, except by the mission of the Spirit, who should operate upon their minds, by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them in all their fullness and freshness. This great gift was therefore reserved to signalize the ascension of Jesus and to point to the prevalency of his intercession; so that, though his disciples might be bowed down in sorrow by the removal of his presence from them, and anticipate the violence of persecution which they had seen exhibited toward their Master, yet still they should have one who would preeminently bear the name of *Comforter*, and who, ever moving along the right path of duty, should be constantly present to conduct them through all its dangers with his counsel and solace.

We think it will help us much to understand our subject by reflecting, for a few moments, upon the mode of the Spirit's guidance as he taught the disciples, as we can thus more easily bring the subject to bear upon ourselves. The office of the Holy Ghost, relative to the Apostles, appears to be contained in three leading features, *First*, that "he should not speak of himself, but whatsoever he should hear, that he should speak," which seems to be equivalent to the expression, "he shall bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have spoken—" and how abundantly was this fulfilled, for, do we not constantly find the faithful and humble confession, that it was not until he was risen that the disciples understood these things. Could any persons be more unlike themselves in the points of knowledge, courage and faith, than were the Apostles before and after Christ's ascension? and what was it that made the difference? what was it which gathered the faculties of their minds—the affections of their hearts—and the energies of their persons; and then, having collected them, as it were, into one central point, made the once fearful disciples advance with intrepid step and lay the whole upon the altar of obedience? Let the amazing day of Pentecost afford the reply. Before that period their knowledge of Christ terminated in an earthly kingdom, and a temporal Messiahship; their

Jewish prejudices were strong, and their spiritual affections cold and dull, so that Christ had to abide them, even after his resurrection, with their want of faith, and darkness of spiritual perception, as he says in the out-burst of affectionate anxiety—"O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken." And even after the day of Pentecost, we find their knowledge progressively advancing, especially in the case of admitting the Gentiles into the Church: here their understandings and their memories were both alike defective; and it was not until vision after vision, nor until the Spirit had awakened the attention of the Church to send forth Barnabas and Paul for the work whereunto he had called them, and that work, we recollect, was to bear his name before the Gentiles, does it appear, that as a body, they clearly understood or remembered that Christ had other sheep beside those of the Jewish fold. But rapidly did the Holy Ghost arouse within them the recollection of spiritual things which lay dormant in their memories, and flashing upon their minds truths long forgotten or dimly understood, sent them forth, not with native powers or acquired learning to achieve a vast spiritual victory, but with the gifts of his own free and sovereign operation, so that one of them writes in behalf of himself and his ministerial brethren, "we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory.—1 Cor. ii. 7.

The office of the Spirit, in guiding the disciples into all truth, appears to consist, *Secondly*, in his showing them things to come; as in the last instance he led them into the remembrance of what was past and forgotten, so in this, he guided them into the truth of the future of time, by unfolding to them the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of Prophecy. Of this we have many examples, the Spirit speaketh expressly of the apostacy of the latter times, (1 Tim. iv. 1)—foretells the perilous period that shall come upon the Church—and warns us by his servant Peter, of the approaching day of the Lord. John "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day" when the womb of futurity was opened to his astonished gaze, and when he was directed to send a three-fold testimony to the Church, of the things which he had seen, the then present state

of the Asiatic Churches, and the things which should be hereafter. There was a suspension of the Spirit's operation in prophecy for a long interval, from the period of Malachi, to the appearance of Christ; then a few came forth, declaring the triumphs of the coming Saviour, and acted as harbingers and first fruits of that extensive out-pouring of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost. Nor need we envy this gift which they received; if they saw things to come in this world, we not only are benefitted by their writings, but with them discovering the future of the world to come, can rejoice in its approaching glory, and give our confirmatory "even so, Amen" to those things which the eye of the natural man has not seen, nor his ear heard, and which have not entered into his heart to conceive, but which he has revealed to us, and to all the Church of God by his Spirit.

The third province of this heavenly Teacher, relative to the Apostles, was his glorifying Christ. The very sending of the Spirit glorified the Saviour, as it proved the answer of his prayers, and the acceptance of his intercession: God the Father had repeatedly glorified him with a voice from heaven attesting "this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased," but this voice was misunderstood, some saying that an angel spake, others still more sceptically, that it only thundered, but this glorification by the Spirit was to be borne on earth unaccompanied by the thunder or the lightning, or the whirlwind, in the still small voice of the Spirit's inward witness guiding the disciples along the path of the Saviour's life, showing them that he was the truth and substance of every type and shadow, and that all that was great and glorious in the symbolic representations of the old testament dispensation was fulfilled by him in the truth and reality of the new; teaching them that if "the law was given by Moses, grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," and that they should behold greater glory than that of Sinai, divested of every darkened cloud and awful thunder. Nor was it only the unveiling of the Saviour's character as sketched in ancient prophecy by which the Spirit was to glorify him, but also by bringing home in personal application to each of them the Saviour's gracious work, for their advance and progress in holiness, thus glorifying Christ in them, so that

by the consistency of their walk, and by the illustration of the truth in their practice, the world might take notice that they had been with Jesus; and finally, by exhibiting to their minds the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, so that bringing out in all the richness and brilliancy of truth, he might exalt the Saviour before their view in the greatness of his spiritual conquests, and raising up the eye of faith, point to the glories of his future kingdom, when all judgment, authority and power, those things which the Father hath bestowed upon the Redeemer, "*because he is the Son of man,*" shall be seen in his person "when he comes to be admired in all them that believe," and to "reign among his ancients gloriously."

The office of the Spirit, as a guide, is the same to the believer now, as it was to the disciple of old. When the child of God is converted and placed upon the path that leads to glory, he does not at once pass into the fulness of the Gospel's marvelous light; the opinions which he entertains of the deceitful nature of sin, and the exceeding breadth of the commandment are often indefinite, and frequently incorrect; he stands, as it were, at the base of a mountain, around whose giant sides and towering summit clouds and darkness have deeply gathered, and through the fearful shade of which his feeble vision cannot penetrate; he stands on the shore of an ocean, across whose mighty billows he cannot pilot his half-wrecked bark, and the unsearchable depths of whose abyss, the line of his early reason cannot fathom; for true it is, that a dependence upon our earthly senses and powers, instead of helping, unquestionably obscures our mental vision, enfeebles our spiritual energies, unfits us for rapid and enlarged acquirements, and ever seeks to deplume us of those pinions on which alone we can soar in the boundless regions of truth. But here it is that the Spirit comes to guide the believer up this mountain path, and steer his bark for glory. How have we seen the uninstructed peasant, thus guided, converse deeply in communion with his Father in heaven, while we have witnessed men of mighty minds wandering in the dark, or walking in the light of the sparks of their own kindling! such a scene it was which once drew forth the Saviour's acclamation of praise "I thank thee, O Father, Lord

of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." When the Spirit is thus guiding the believer, he comes not with a new revelation no more than he did at the first moment of conversion. In all the progress of the Christian's after life he still unfolds the deep mysteries of grace which lie involved in the truth and testimony of Jesus. He enables his faith to overstep the narrow limits of his intellectual powers, and to overcome the weakness and hindrances resulting from his physical constitution. He comes not to whisper a mysterious secret, but taking of the things of Christ, he brings before the eye which he himself has opened, their important truths. The word of God is now read with a new light beaming on its pages, truths are discovered, which were often perused but unnoticed before, while, as the Spirit's illumination successively shines from page to page, there is a two-fold work going on, a recognition of the plan of redemption in its fulness and fitness, and an application of it to the believer's heart, as he feels that "Christ is made unto him, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption," he traces out the finished work of the Redeemer, and learns that through union with him, all are his. In the first moment of conversion, he received but few and distant glimpses of the attracting excellencies of Christ, but now he sees them more clearly and closely, and as he obtains a more definite conception of the glorious things of Jesus, they seem to settle more plainly before his mind, and draw out his affections towards them, he then apprehends the connexion between each promise and its accompanying precept—he learns the necessary union of justification and sanctification, and beholds the grand and amazing agreement of the attributes of God, in the salvation of Jesus. It has been said by a poet of our own, that

"He is a freeman, whom the truth makes free,"

and if there is any proof greater than another of this spiritual liberty, it is in the believer's increasing desire to be guided into the wide field of truth which lies before him in the Scripture, to be led into a deeper acquaintance with Christ's work and person, to obtain more accurate information with all that is invisible and eternal, and forgetting those things that

are behind, to press forward on the illuminated path which lies before him, until he arrives at that period and place where truth shall be learned under the full glory of eternal light, face to face and eye to eye.

We may here, not inappropriately, speak on the Spirit's work in bearing witness as to the truth of our own state by nature and by grace. We refer not to the first discoveries which the trembling sinner makes, when, being led to the cross, he sees himself plucked, by grace, as a brand from the burning; but to that necessary but most difficult of all acquirements, self-knowledge. Here the power which once guided must guide him still, showing him the reality of his own weakness, and making the depths of his corruptions appear more and more visible. And as this humbling work proceeds he leaves him not to mourn under a wounded spirit, but bearing witness to him that he is a child of God, strengthens his faith into full assurance, breathes over his soul the fragrant earnest of future bliss, and places him on the heaven-ward race, with a crown before, and the world behind him. Thus the Spirit makes him lean more undoubtingly upon the verity of God's promises, and discerning them as fulfilled in his own experience, enables him to see that every alternation of circumstances, whether sorrowful or joyous, forms but another and another step by which he is led into higher acquirements of the truth. Nor is the Spirit's only office as a guide unto the truth of doctrine and experience; He also leads the believer into all the truth of precept and practice, as being inseparably connected with the doctrines of the Gospel and the person of Christ. If the latter are as truth in the spring, He teaches him that the former are as truth in the stream. Some there are who think that practice is every thing, and that doctrine is only as the shell, but let all such remember, there is no getting at the kernel but through the shell, and that if it is injured, the fruit within will be unsound, and that the only legitimate foundation for consistent practice, is the profession of faithful and orthodox doctrines.

The Saviour, as a teacher, having laid down the rule by which we should walk, the Holy Spirit as a guide and companion directs and strengthens us to pursue it, by holding out the truth of the promise

and precept; we are therefore told that believers are "created anew in righteousness and true holiness," (Eph. iv. 24.) or as it might be better rendered "in the holiness of the truth," according to the Redeemer's prayer "sanctify them by thy truth, thy word is truth," and proving that as knowledge is progressive, and truth accumulated, there must be a corresponding advance in holiness. Take any of the truths of the Gospel, and observe the savour of practical holiness which ever accompanies them. Is the believer led to see his effectual calling, does he not read "for as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation and godliness?" (1 Pet. i. 15.) does he believe in the doctrine of election, does he not learn that God hath chosen us in Christ, "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love?" (Eph. i. 4.) Is he led into the doctrine of predestination unto life? Is he not taught that it is "unto the adoption of children" and that he should be "conformed unto the image of Christ?" (Rom. viii. 31.) does he see the removal of condemnation? does he not also learn "that there is no condemnation to those only who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit?" is he led into the fact of his resurrection with Jesus? is it not the exhortation of Scripture, "if ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God?" (Col. iii. 1.) Is he conducted into the royal law of liberty? does he not with it receive the exhortation "use not your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness? Is he instructed in the truth and promise of the Lord's coming? is there not the deep and searching question propounded for his consideration "what manner of persons should ye be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the Son of God?" (2 Pet. iii. 11.)

And lastly, if the Holy Ghost thus guides the believer into the holiness of all doctrinal truth, how does he also, in moments of temptation, of spiritual danger from within or without, flash the necessary precept before the eye, and wondrously guiding it to the appropriate text of admonition, darts it like a keen and irresistible arrow into the inmost soul, or sends it like that sharpest weapon, a two-edged sword all edge and point, into the thoughts and intents of the heart?

These are but a few thoughts on the wide subject of truth, into which the Spirit leads the believer, as he trains him up for glory.

We must now hasten to the second and last division of our subject.

THE APPLICATION OF IT TO OURSELVES, which for the sake of perspicuity we shall divide into two positions. *First*, that we *should* advance; and *Secondly*, that the believer *shall* advance.

There are many hindrances which instrumentally cause us to remain ignorant of all the truth. We plunge ourselves into a thousand errors, by trusting to our own fancied powers instead of leaning upon the tuition and guidance of the Spirit of wisdom. My own experience is, that I seldom sought the Spirit of God for the understanding of any passage but beyond my utmost wish I received it; and I am at the same time sure that the child is not more welcome to its parents knee than is the believer at the throne of grace, when, humbly confessing his own weakness, he sues for an increase of Spiritual light, through the Saviour's merits. What Christian, of any maturity, is there who feels not that constantly his spiritual eye is dimmed by a dependance upon his natural or acquired talents? who is it has advanced along the path of life, and knows not that a heart full of carnal lusts, a mind too often wavering in the pursuit of spiritual things, a world with all its deceitfulness of riches, and anxiety of cares, and Satan's temptation to apathy and supineness form a phalanx of powerful adversaries, to impede our progress? And here we cannot but notice a hindrance of a very serious character: allow me to ask you, are there any points of truth on which you feel doubtful, and which you have at the same time a repugnance to consider and inquire into? if there are, you effectually close the door against your spiritual progress; and the language of your soul, though you would scarcely venture to express it, is "O God I seek not thy Spirit to guide me into *all* truths, there are some that are needless, chilling, and too obscure." Now, surely, you cannot think it strange that the light of heaven should not beam upon your path, when you cherish such a Spirit of sceptical repining against any part of the revealed will of God.

Again, how many are there who bring their sentiments *to* the Scripture, instead of receiving truth *from* it, anxiously catching

at anything which may seem to favour their respective opinions, and thus turn, as far as they can, the Bible into a Babel of confusion, and make it speak all manner of languages at once; whereas it contains but one great tree of truth, the root of which is the God of truth, the several branches of which are the doctrines and precepts of his revelation, of which the Spirit of truth was the author, and the only expositor and guide. O, beloved friends, pray for his mighty energy; then you will find things instead of words; then you will perceive, not mere naked advice which may be used or not, but the energetic counsel and teaching of the Spirit of might, "filling you with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye may walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God," (Col. i. 9.) then you shall have his unction, whereby you may know all things, and have the experience of them poured in all solid and comfortable enjoyment into your hearts. We are situated in a world of error, where there are ten thousand attacks made upon our minds by the sophisms and fallacies of carnal men, our fleshy natures, and of evil spirits; pray therefore, O Christian, that the Holy Ghost, who alone can unravel these intricate mazes, may give you a right judgment in all things, and speed you prosperously in your advance, so that you may not be beguiled, as the Collosians, be bewitched as the Galatians into a disobedience of the truth, nor puffed-up with the spiritual pride of your attainments, like the Corinthians of old.

Lastly, we would beg of you to remember, that you *shall* advance, for God has said that "all his children *shall* be taught of him, and that great shall be the peace of his children." Is it not comfortable, dear Christian, whosoever thou art, who hast a title to that honoured name, to know that thou hast an infallible rule to go by, and infallible guide, to lead you? You have lost an earthly teacher,* but remember you cannot lose your *heavenly one*:—He ever liveth to perform his part in the covenant of grace, by guiding you to Jesus. Thou hast no mental powers of thine own, capable of

discovering the things of God, or even of exercising themselves on these things if discerned, the Holy Ghost alone can teach thee to profit; and fully are you convinced that were all the glorified spirits in heaven, with all the angels of God, to descend and unite their eloquence and wisdom together, they could not have translated thy soul from darkness into light—given thee a right understanding of the truth, nor led you through the intricate windings of your own heart. What an argument to your heart, O believer, is this conviction of the impotency of all created beings, for the divinity and glory of your sacred guide! He who has once taught you the way of truth, shall he not teach you to the end? who can pervert his counsels? Who can frustrate his designs? It is God who has drawn the plan, who can defeat its full execution? It is God the Holy Ghost who shall guide you into truth; who shall plunge you into the falseness of error, or into hell, the consequence of error? Will not the Lord, who guided his redeemed people from Egypt to his holy habitation, and led them by a pillar of fire, an emblem and type of the Spirit, bring you safely through all your wanderings, into everlasting rest? Fear not then, thou hast an all-wise guide, who has undertaken to instruct you in all truth, and bring you safely home:—without him all the angels of heaven could not guide thee, and with him God will make the rod of affliction, as well as the staff of support to lead and comfort you: he cannot deceive you, because he is *the truth*, he cannot forsake thee, for he has *promised*, he cannot be defeated as he is the *invincible* God, but leading you progressively from grace to glory, "Jehovah shall guide thee continually," (Isaiah, lviii. 11.)

And when he has thus conducted you, O tried and tempted believer, into another world, what wondrous visions of truth shall open before your refined and spiritual understanding! think you what it shall be to have every truth harmonized, every obscurity unveiled, the whole cabinet of grace unlocked to its most secret recesses, to be guided to the well-spring of eternal truth, and to understand the mystery of godliness! There the tree of knowledge, shall conceal no seducing serpent within its verdant foliage, nor shall the trial of

* Alluding to the death of the late and lamented Rev. Doctor Quarry.

its fruit infuse into our veins its deadly poison. It flourishes in an Eden liable to no invasion, and destined to be the scene of no fall, while on every leaf that clothes it, on every flower that adorns it, and on every cluster that enriches it, eternal truth is plainly stamped. It is this that will cause every eye to glisten, and every heart to beat with rapture, as it beholds the completion of all truth, and enjoys the consummation of all happiness.

Be cheered then, fainting soul, the knowledge of Jesus which has been already brought home to your heart, thou knowest is no phantom nor shadow, but, having proceeded from everlasting love, has conveyed with it real and eternal life. Are you not led more and more to prize "the words not which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," and may you not say with Manooh's wife, "If the Lord had been pleased to kill us, he would not have showed us these things?" in this you possess an earnest, that in due time you shall enjoy the fulness of truth in the source of it, God himself who shall here guide you unto death, and hereafter, receive you to glory.

We have an instance of the power of the Gospel in the useful life of our lamented brother in Christ, who occupied this pulpit for the last thirty years, during which period never was he obliged to retract any doctrinal statement that he made—and you his congregation well know that he preached the Gospel in simplicity and faithfulness, "not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God," and when he came to lie upon a bed of sickness, and having been apprized at his own request, by one of his family, of his approaching dissolution, he replied "now you shall see the power of the Gospel which I preached," and then repeating the words of Simeon, that aged servant of God, "Lord now leavest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation—" he breathed his last.

Humbly would I entreat of you, my brethren in the ministry, by whom I am

surrounded, to remember, and deeply would I have it infixed upon my own mind, that if we would preach the Gospel successfully, and die happily, if we would not leave to the awful solemnity of the death-chamber the then almost fruitless retraction of statements we have made, we must preach the Gospel purely and fearlessly, as he did, following him as he followed Christ. Sooner or later will one minister after another be cut off. The time must come when we shall have preached our last sermon, given our last exhortation, and lifted up our voice in our final warning. May we in time consider the responsible situation which we hold, and never, never, never, be "ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."

In conclusion, my friends, I beg of you to remember that a mere profession of truth will not do, you must be guided *into* it, not into a set of *notions* but into the *truth*. It was a just remark of that excellent servant of God, Philip Henry, that "a head full of vain and unprofitable notions, meeting with a heart full of pride and self-deceit, disposes a man to be an atheist." Without the spirit of truth you can know nothing as you ought to know, nor can you call Jesus Lord but by his holy operation. (1 Cor. i. 2, 3). As you retire from this place, individually put this question to yourselves—"Have I been led into the truth as it is in Jesus, do I love its purity, and live beneath its power?" And then, as this work of self-examination proceeds, forget not to unite with it the prayer, that these truths may not only fill your mind with information, but occupy your heart, so that you may increase in all knowledge and practice, and in your dying moments give an evidence and confirmation of their power. May the Divine Being, whose spiritual agency we have been considering, abundantly bless all who have heard the word.—Amen.

The above is one of a series delivered in Lower Shandon Church, Cork, by different Preachers. Others will appear in future numbers.

LOOKING UNTO JESUS, THE MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHURCH OF BALLINDERRY, DIOCESE OF CONNOR.

ON SUNDAY, 23rd JULY, 1837,

BY THE REV. WILLIAM FOX, A. B.

(Curate of the Parish.)

I JOHN III. 3.

“ Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself.”

THE Christian religion, my brethren, is a most holy religion; as its author is the infinite Jehovah, whose awful purity angels acknowledge by veiling their faces in his presence. Our divine faith comes from heaven—from the God of heaven, with a very solemn and glorious purpose; to restrain the desolating progress which sin is making on the earth; to snatch immortal spirits as brands from the everlasting burning; to wrest the prey from “the rulers of the darkness of this world;” to recal fallen man to a sense of the high and manifest claims which the Creator is entitled to assert on his affections and on his obedience; to make earth more like heaven, and less like hell; to enlarge the number of the blessed inhabitants of heaven; and to deliver many from adding to the multitude of the lost in hell.

How necessary that we should rightly understand this faith, whose object is so important; that we should clearly comprehend the nature of the change which the Most High God is carrying on and accomplishing in the characters of as many as he is adopting into his family; that we should fully discern the qualities of that holiness which is necessary to salvation; and have a clear perception of

the principles and motives of action by which a true believer is influenced.

You perceive from the declaration by the Holy Spirit, in the text, that no man is on the way to heaven who is not struggling against the power of his evil nature, and labouring to obtain deliverance from the bondage of sin; for the language is, “every man that hath this hope” of heaven in his breast, “purifieth himself.” Can any thing be more certain, awful as it is, than that the man who is *not* purifying himself, that is, who is *not* getting dominion over his sins, is on the way to hell? So it is, therefore, my dear friends, and may the blessed Spirit impress it on all hearts, that if we would be saved from the wrath to come, from the fire that shall not be quenched, we must enter on the severe duty of denying ourselves when sin in any form entices, and must contend against sin, in heart, and word, and action, taking up our cross daily.—I call not this an easy matter; I do not believe it an easy matter to wrestle from day to day against an antagonist so strong as indwelling sin; to wrestle against hearts “deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked;” it is enough to try a strong man’s powers; the weakest Christian indeed, while he feels his weakness, may hope to stand; the

strongest believer, should he try the conflict in self-confidence, if God do not interfere, will prove himself a Sampson shorn.

But, oh, how blessed! if, in the view of death, we were enabled, through the abundant mercy of the Lord, to adopt the triumphant, but not therefore self-righteous words of holy Paul, and with him most thankfully to cry:—"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." Beloved brethren, are your spirits stirred within you at those words? Let us die the death of righteous Paul, let our last end be like his!

We must be made holy before we can be saved; but yet the doctrine is not from heaven which would assert, that any *deserve* to be saved *because* they are holy; for "not by works of righteousness" which they have done, are God's children saved, but through his "mercy," and by the merits of his dear son; "not of works" indeed; for if by works, Christ is dishonoured, and "trodden under foot." Such manifestly, is the consequence of boasting, on the part of the poor sinner;—the Saviour is dishonoured; and the more the sinner boasts, the more is his Lord insulted.

No, beloved brethren, let no man deceive you with vain words, Christ opens not the kingdom of heaven to any who bring their own holiness as the purchase-price, but to those who grieve heartily that they have so much transgressed; who are deeply convinced that hell would be their fit portion; who are unfeignedly thankful that God has not spared his own Son, but freely given him to be an all-sufficient sacrifice for sin; who approach with meek hearts, offering the merits of Emmanuel, (our God who dwelt in flesh and suffered,) as their purchase-price;—to such is heaven

opened. It is such also who will labour to be holy; those who most love the Saviour, who most trust in him, and most abhor the thought of dependence on aught in themselves, aught of their own, will be those among the children of men who will be most unhappy under the power of sin, and most anxious to be free from it. See in our text, how it is *not* written, that every man who endeavours to do good, has a well-founded hope of heaven; but *it is* written, that the man who *first* obtains "this hope," through free and sovereign mercy, doth *afterward*, through love to him who freely forgave, and through the influence of other holy principles, labour to do good, to keep the commandments, to be pure in heart, and unspotted in life;—"he that hath this hope in him purifieth himself."

This rule is fundamental in the Christian doctrine:—holiness is not to be cultivated in the way of justification, for Christ must be our justifying righteousness; yet holiness must be cultivated if we would be saved, for God justifies none through the blood of the Lamb, whom he does not sanctify through the grace of the Spirit.

Let me occupy your thoughts for a time with an examination of some of the considerations which act upon a true believer's mind, and provoke him to good works. I have said that the hope of meriting salvation by his own righteousness, is a principle unknown to him; I have further said, that the man who is most anxious to be holy, is the man who is already in a state of safety, whose transgressions are forgiven, and his sins covered, by the blood of Jesus. But I would now dwell on the motives which do indeed urge such a man to exertion, when the self-righteous motive does not exist.

I.—In the first epistle of St. Peter, we find this exhortation given to the followers of Christ: "forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same

mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." Every true Christian's heart at once admits the force of the argument here: it may be stated thus in other words. Your Lord hath bought you with his blood; for you he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost in agony. Is not reflection on this sufficient to cause you to "suffer in the flesh," that is, to "cease from sin," by resisting the solicitation of all indwelling sin that struggles for indulgence? He was "wounded for your transgressions," himself "from sin clearly void, both in his flesh and spirit;" but through love which passeth all knowledge and all wonder, he submitted to all: Christian, that surely will not be loved by you, which caused the Son of God his agony; sin, which shed your Lord's blood, will surely not possess your heart; you are not now "your own," "you are bought with a price," and such a price! you must therefore labour to be as diligent in subduing your natural corruption, as your Redeemer was unwearied in accomplishing your salvation.

It is said of the saints, "they have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts:" (Gal. v. 24.) they have fastened their sins to the cross, by the "spiritual nails" of faith and love; their sins are not all dead, but they are dying; it is true that motions to sin are frequently felt by them, but these are either overcome, or if sin overcome, much remorse follows, and recourse is forthwith had to "the blood of sprinkling," that the conscience may have peace. They that are Christ's know that such lusts as anger, or envy, or uncharitableness; such words as offend against the law of love to God and to our neighbour; such actions as drunkenness, or dishonesty, or sabbath-breaking, or uncleanness; such frames of mind as savour of lukewarmness, or cold indifference, or unwatchfulness, or covetousness; all constitute modes of that sin which

made the Lord of glory die; and they who are taught of God will feel that to practice willingly and wilfully, any species of sin, is to despise the wounds of Christ, and to lightly esteem that all precious blood which was shed for their salvation.

II.—As the contemplation of the sufferings of Christ is set before us in the inspired word as a motive to holiness; so also a view by faith of his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to his glory, should have a similar effect. Thus it is written, that "like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life;" and again, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." (Rom. vi. 4; Col. iii. 1—3.) Do you all remember the words of the angel who sat at the door of the sepulchre, when "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary" came to see the sepulchre,—“He is not here; for he is risen, as he said; come see the place where the Lord lay?” Christians, could you have stood that day by the Saviour's tomb; had this occurred in your age, and have felt disposed to sin, while looking, in breathless silence, on the spot where the sacred body of the Son of God had been lying in the bands of death? Methinks, the words, "Come, see the place where the Lord lay," should be a more powerful exhortation to hate sin, than the thrice-repeated description of the punishment of the damned, which the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, gives in the Gospel, saying, that "to be cast into hell," is to be cast "into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." A terrific statement this, which should ring in the ears of every wilful sinner, and give him no rest in his sin; but O! more moving is the thought, that for us wretches, the Son of

the Highest, whose smile makes arch-angels happy, submitted to lie three days in the grave, as if he had been one of us, and frail and sinful as we!—

Go, stand by the grave of any deceased friend, and, as the first earth falls upon his coffin, inwardly indulge in the prospect of pursuing some sinful course: instinctively you shudder at the thought. Let the grave be receiving the mortal remains of a husband or wife, of a brother, or sister, or child; and instead of suffering the tear of sorrow to fall, or of encouraging the melancholy reflection on your loss, which is then becoming, (for when Lazarus died, "Jesus wept,") banish the solemn frame of spirit, and let wicked thoughts run riot through your mind: you answer, it were sufficient to make the dead start from his last resting-place, to reproach you for conduct so revolting.—

Go now to the grave of Jesus: Christians, is there such a friend as he? husband or wife, brother or sister, parent or child, they are strangers; "henceforth know we no man according to the flesh;" the heart is but large enough for the affection due to the Redeemer; and though we do love them, the love is as hatred, by reason of this love that excelleth. You are standing then at the tomb; "the linen clothes laid by themselves," without a voice, proclaim the prophecy fulfilled—"The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and *after three days rise again.*" (Mark viii. 31.) As you stand by the tomb, or reverently kneel, you each connect in your thoughts the Redeemer's previous sufferings, his agony and bloody sweat, his cross and passion, with this his precious death and burial; and patiently, with mingled sorrow and joy, meditating on the design and nature of all he did and suffered, you feel affection toward the Lord awakened in the breast, as earnest, as if you yourself were the only fallen creature in the whole creation, and that Christ loved *you*, and submitted to

all this *for you*; and so vivid is the sense which you acquire of your sinfulness in the sight of the righteous God, that you feel as if *your sins* caused all the Lord's suffering; and such love to him possesses you, the Holy Ghost being in your heart, that you are ready to cry, "My crucified and buried Lord, the body of sin I leave in thy grave; O help me to follow thee, and to live my resurrection-life!"

"*The Lord is risen;*" and Mary stands at the sepulchre, weeping, because "they have taken away the Lord, and she knows not where they have laid him;" the Saviour is near, but her eyes are holden that she does not know him; and though he speaks to her, saying, "Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?" she knows not "that it is Jesus," until one gracious word, the audible expression of infinite benevolence and love, strikes on her ear, and her heart catches the familiar sound, and, "she turns herself," and, with the feelings of the blessed woman who washed the Lord's feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, "she says unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master."

"*The Lord is risen;*" and while two of the disciples walk together, and reason concerning the eventful scene which Jerusalem had so recently witnessed, He of whom they spake with accents of sadness, draws near and goes with them, but as one unknown. They converse together on the theme which should be familiar to the thoughts of all—the history of him who "was rich and for our sakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich;" their walk is a sanctifying ordinance; the repast at the close of their journey, a sacrament; while they walk, the disciples hearken attentively to the stranger's words, and are conscious of a wondrous sympathy glowing within their breasts; but its true source they do not fully comprehend until, as they sit at meat, the mystery is revealed, and their "eyes are opened" to discern him whose power over their hearts they have both felt, and

who, though "vanishing out of their sight," is ever after present to the eye of faith.

"*The Lord is risen*;" and as in person, so in character, the same Jesus who spake as never man spake. Before he gave his life for his Father's glory and man's salvation, his words to his disciples were "let not your hearts be troubled;" and now he meets them with a "peace be unto you," and shows them his wounded hands and side, and they "were glad when they saw the Lord."—Before he was baptized with the baptism of unknown suffering about which he was so straitened till it was accomplished, he taught Thomas the path to life eternal in that memorable saying "I, (Jehovah Jesus,) am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me;" and now, he secures, by his amazing long-suffering and condescension, toward the disciple in his guilty unbelief, that he will walk in this way, constrained by the all-influential principle of love to a pardoning Saviour,—Before he drank to the lees from the wine-cup of the wrath of God, he warned a most faithful servant;—but who had yet to learn, (a lesson of difficult attainment!) how in spiritual things, mere human strength is weakness; how only the grace of Christ creates effectual strength;—that he would most shamefully deny his Lord; and when, in the hour of temptation, the sad prophecy was too completely fulfilled, the fallen disciple was delivered from the misery of a reprobate heart and apostate life, by a look which only the Son of God could give, so divine was the compassion which mingled with the reproach of that calm look; and now, fresh confirmation is added to the instruction before given when the Lord, by his thrice-repeated re-delegation to his servant of the office from which he fell, reminds him of his thrice-repeated denial of such a master; and Peter is *at length competent* to go with his Lord "to prison and to death," through a love which many waters of trial

cannot quench, neither floods drown, for that look has entered into his soul, and the words of mercy,—'feed my lambs,' feed my sheep,' are "graven with an iron pen and lead," (Job. xix. 24.) upon his heart for ever.

Brethren, these things are written for our instruction, "upon whom the ends of the world are come;" and if you will believe that the devoted love of Mary, and the admiring love of the two disciples, and the adoring love of Thomas, and the grateful love of Peter, and the reverential love of "the eleven," provided a sufficient impulse to obedience on the part of these, yea, a more powerful as a holier impulse than any self-righteous principle could produce; I call on you this day, and by the bowels of Christ beseech you, to seek after and attain like *constraining love*, from holy and believing contemplation on the incidents attendant on our Redeemer's glorious resurrection, as likewise from the other circumstances connected with it, its necessity, and its wondrous manifestation of the character of the blessed God, of his justice, power, mercy, and truth.

III.—You will admit, beloved, that "looking unto Jesus," in *his resurrection*, should persuade us to "follow holiness;" shall not looking to him in *his ascension*, have the same effect?—Accompany your risen Saviour to the Mount of Olives; behold him about to receive the reward of his voluntary humiliation, in being exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and in obtaining a name which is above every name; his last action is to bless his disciples; while he blesses, and while they adore, he is parted from them; the attending angels demand admission in his name,—("lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates,")—and reply to the challenge ("who is the King of Glory?") the heavens open, and the glorified Emmanuel assumes the sceptre of the universe, and holds the keys of hell and of death.

In his assumption of that glory which is doubly his right, as "being in the form

of God," and so long exposed to dishonour undeserved, has he lost the condescension and the tenderness of the meek and lowly Jesus? no: he is gone as Mediator for his people; ever living to make intercession for them; able to save them to the uttermost; a great high priest indeed, but an high-priest touched with a feeling of our infirmities.

Ah! could we "in heart and mind ascend" where he is, and "with him continually dwell;" could we, with a holy woman, say, "my head is in heaven, my heart is in heaven; it is but a few more steps, and I shall be there also;" this spiritual-mindedness, holy and pure, would make sin distasteful; what an excellent bishop (Leighton) asserts, would be proved true, that love to Christ, (and spiritual-mindedness, or the setting of the affections on the glory where Christ's presence is, conduces much to increase of love to Christ,) doth disentangle the heart from all its nets, as it did the disciples from theirs to follow Jesus; that call, which brought St. Matthew presently from his receipt of custom, giving power to reject the gains and receipts of former sinful pleasures, and to say, with Augustine, of things unholy, "how pleasant is it to want these pleasures!"

IV.—Lastly, dear brethren, I would mention as a motive for striving against sin in heart and life, that "this same Jesus, who is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The Lord Christ will appear again to be glorified in his saints, and to gather them together unto him, that, in co-heirship with the Saviour, they may dwell for ever, in possession of the inheritance "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." You remember how he said, (John xvii. 24.) "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." O that will be a wondrous day indeed, when "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump,"

the risen saints who slept in Jesus, and the saints who shall be alive at his appearing, shall find that they are "changed," their faces shining as the sun, their bodies like the Saviour's body: brethren, what a thrill of joy unspeakable, will be felt by the redeemed, when they hear their Saviour's voice inviting them to receive the kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world, and to follow him to the enjoyment of an "eternal weight of glory!"

Meditation on all this would surely sanctify; it is said, that all who love the Saviour's appearing, will receive a crown of righteousness, a place in heaven; but Christ is a holy Saviour, and heaven is a holy place, and into heaven nothing can enter that defileth; and they who love Christ and his appearing are well aware that the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, and that they must labour after conformity to him, purifying themselves even as he is pure, in order to be made like unto him in his eternal kingdom.

What then is the conclusion of the whole matter? That love to our adorable Redeemer is the pure and approved principle which must stimulate us to good works; that this love must be strengthened by "growing in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and that the stronger this ray from the sun of righteousness shines on the soul, the more will it "eat out the fire," (Abp. Leighton) of the old nature.

As therefore we pray, "By thine agony and bloody sweat; thy cross and passion; thy precious death and burial; thy glorious resurrection and ascension,—good Lord, deliver us;" so let the language of our hearts be, in dependence on divine grace, For these great evidences of thy love we will love thee, Lord, and loving will obey thee, endeavouring after perfect holiness in body, soul, and spirit! Let the perfections of the Saviour command our love, and ensure our obedience. His holiness; for he is "holy, harmless,

undefiled, and separate from sinners." His *love*; for "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." His *sympathy*; for "in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, and is touched with a feeling of their infirmities." His *humility*; for he "humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." His *faithfulness*; for "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto

the end." His *wisdom*; for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." His *power*; for "in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

Every man that hath a well-founded hope of heaven in his breast, purifieth himself, through love to the Saviour who loved him and gave himself for him; and if we die, strangers to the influence of this holy principle, it were better for us we had never been born.

MISCELLANEA.

NEW KNOWLEDGE AND JOY IN ETERNITY.—How often in reading sacred history, do we long for more minute details of the lives of the holy men, which are there presented to us? And if this be the case with regard to others, how much more ardently do we desire it in the case of him who is the subject of our meditations, (Jesus Christ). We cannot but feel, that every incident of his boyish days, every transaction of his youth, every word and sentence of his matured manhood would have been a treasure to the Christian, for which he would readily have sacrificed the brightest volumes of Roman oratory or Grecian song. But God's ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts; doubtless he has permitted all to be handed down to us, which the necessities of the Church required, and we must await another day and another place for more. What time has concealed, eternity perhaps will tell;

but eternity itself will not be long enough to disclose the infinity of a Saviour's perfections and of a Saviour's love. Still as it is permitted to the Christian to look forward even now, amidst the trials and troubles of earth, to that "rest which remaineth for the people of God," it cannot surely be wrong to anticipate those delightful moments, when, dwelling in the bowers of light, and seated, it may be, at the feet of the companions of our Lord's earthly pilgrimage, we may perhaps receive from their lips or even from the lips of that Lord himself, many a passage in his earthly history, full of interest and instruction and delight, which no pen has chronicled, but which shall rejoice our hearts and swell our praises into louder and louder anthems to the glory of "Him that sitteth upon the throne, and of the Lamb, for ever and ever."

BLUNT.

MATT. xxvii. 15.—"His blood be on us and on our children."—Compare this self-imprecation of the infuriated people of Israel with God's declared purposes regarding them. (Romans xi. 26.) "And so, all Israel shall be saved:"—how does the comparison magnify the sovereign grace and free mercy of our God! They

pray everlasting destruction upon themselves, and God takes the very words of their blasphemy and answers them by converting them into a prayer of blessing, by giving the answer as to such: for it shall be that my blood, applied to that man and their children, shall save them.

M^c.

ST. PAUL AT ATHENS.

THERE are, at this present moment, more than six hundred millions of the human race in the appalling situation of the men whom the Apostle describes as "without Christ in the world;" and the question is, with what feelings and what purposes a Christian would survey this vast and wretched portion of the family of man? Behold St. Paul at Athens. Think of the matchless splendour which blazed upon his view, as he rolled his eye round the enchanting panorama that encircled the hill of Mars. On the one hand, as he stood upon the summit of the rock, beneath the canopy of heaven, was spread a glorious prospect of mountains, islands, seas and skies; on the other, quite within his view, was the plane of Marathon, where the wrecks of former generations, and the tombs of departed heroes, mingled together in silent desolation. Behind him towered the lofty Acropolis, crowned with the pride of Grecian architecture. There, in the zenith of their splendour, and the perfection of their beauty, stood those peerless temples, the very fragments of which are viewed by modern travellers with an idolatry almost equal to that which reared them. Stretched along the plane below him, and reeling her head on the slope of the neighbouring hills, was Athens, mother of the arts and sciences, with her noble offspring sporting by her side. The Porch, the Lyceum, and the Grove, with the stations of departed sages, and the forms of their living disciples, were all presented to the Apostle's eye.

What mind, possessing the slightest pretensions to classic taste, can think of his situation amid such sublime and captivating scenery, without a momentary

rapture! Yet *there*, even *there*, did this accomplished scholar stand as insensible to all this grandeur, as if nothing was before him but the treeless turfless desert. Absorbed in the holy attractions of his own mind, *he* saw no charms, felt no fascinations, but, on the contrary, was pierced with the most poignant distress; and what was the cause? "He saw the city *wholly given to idolatry.*" To him it presented nothing but a magnificent mausoleum, decorated, it is true, with the richest productions of the Sculptor and the Architect, but still where the souls of men lay dead in trespasses and sins; while the dim light of philosophy that still glimmered in the schools, appeared but as the lamp of the sepulchre, shedding its pale and sickly ray around these gorgeous chambers of death.

What must have been his indignant grief at the dishonor done by idolatry to God; what his amazement at the weakness and folly of the human mind; what his abhorrence of human impiety; and what his compassion for human wretchedness, when such stately monuments of Pagan pomp and superstition had not the smallest possible effect in turning away his view from the guilt that raised them, or the misery which succeeded them? Ah! how many Christian travellers and divines, while occupying the same spots, though they saw not a thousandth part of what the Apostle saw, have had their whole mind so engrossed by scenes of earthly magnificence, as not to feel one sentiment of pity for the Pagans who formerly dwelt there, or the Mahometans who are the present proprietors of these venerable ruins.—

ANONYMOUS.

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OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. FIELDING OULD.

PROFESSOR DAVIDSON.

THE SUPERIOR PRIVILEGES OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF STILLORGAN, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, JULY 23, 1837,

FOR THE PAROCHIAL SUNDAY AND DAILY SCHOOLS,

BY THE REV. FIELDING OULD, A. M.,

(Incumbent of Christ Church, Liverpool.)

2 CORINTHIANS, iii. 18.

“ But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

I know of no subject, brethren, which can more appropriately occupy our attention upon an occasion when we are assembled to take measures for the extension to others of the same blessed privileges which we enjoy ourselves, than one which is calculated to bring before us these privileges, in all their diversified character, and in all their surpassing magnitude. There is not, perhaps, in the whole range of revelation, one text which more comprehensively sums up the privileges of God's children, under the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, than the text which I have just read. At the commencement of this chapter, the Apostle presents us with a very lively image, descriptive of the character of

genuine believers. He calls them “*epistles*” written by the Lord. In an epistle, or letter, it is necessary that there should be *paper*, a *pen* to write with, *ink* for the pen, an intelligent *writer*, something *written*, and a *destination* for the letter. In these living epistles, the *paper* that is used is “the fleshly tables of the heart,” the *pen* is the ministry, the *ink* is the Spirit of the Lord, the *writer* is the Lord himself, that which is *written* is “holiness to the Lord;” and the *destination* of the letter is—glory. It was usual, in the Apostles' days, for men to seek letters of recommendation from individuals of rank, or in authority, to persons whom it was desirable to influence. The Apostle asks,

“ Do we need these letters of recom-

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commendation?" No, we can produce specimens of our work, we can exhibit a cluster from the vineyards of Esheol, living letters of recommendation, living epistles, the tracery, the hand-writing of the living God. We can point you to the *drunkard* become sober, to the *unchaste* man made clean, to the *ignorant* man become enlightened, to the *lion* become a lamb, the *sinner* become a saint; and *these* are our letters of recommendation to the Churches: read in these the genuine character of the religion we teach, and learn from these to appreciate its value and to acknowledge its power. After the assertion, the Apostle goes on, in the sublime verses that follow, to institute a comparison between the ministration of the law, and that of the Gospel, with a view to show the superior privileges of Christians over the privileges of Jews. The *law* he calls by two severely stern appellations; he describes it as "a ministration of *death*," and as "a ministration of *condemnation*."—The *law*, in its rigid requirements, said, "do this, and thou shalt live,"—and "cursed is every one who doeth it not;" it contained within it no germ or principle of spiritual life; and, as opposed to this character of the law, the *Gospel* is called "the ministration of the *Spirit*"—the Spirit being the author and giver of spiritual life. The *law* suspended the sentence of condemnation over the heads of those who transgressed it; and as all men are transgressors, so all men are condemned. As opposed to this character of the law, the *Gospel* is declared to be a "ministration of *righteousness*;" for while the law *found* the sinner without righteousness, and *left* him without it, the Gospel finds man indeed without righteousness, but provides for his necessity the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is "unto all, and upon all them that believe." The Apostle then infers, in the verses that follow, the superior glory of the Gospel over the glory of the law, and then asserts the superior plainness of the Gospel, in comparison with the obscure clouds, types, shadows, and ceremonies of the law. "We use," he says at the 12th verse, "great plainness, or boldness of speech." Moses spoke to the people with a vail on his face; they had no eyes to behold the dazzling brightness which was reflected on his brow, in that season of mysterious

communion to which he was admitted with the Almighty, on Sinai. But we have no vail on our brow—we have a brightness and a lustre there that far surpass all the fires that lighted up the brow of Moses—and the darkness and the clouds and the terrors of Sinai are for ever withdrawn.

Yes, "we use great plainness of speech." Blessed be God! however the hand-writing of man may sometimes not be legible, the hand-writing of God is always plain so that "he who runs may read." Let the Lord only use the *pen* of the ministry, as David says, (Ps. xlv. 1,) "my tongue is the pen of a ready writer;"—let the Lord only use the poor, weak pen whom he now deigns to employ to write with that ineffaceable ink, the Spirit of the living God, upon the fleshy tables of any of your hearts, "holiness to the Lord"—and the most illiterate man will be able to peruse that record; he will be able to see that you are holy, he will know that you are pure, he will require no rigid demonstration to prove it to him; the living epistles are always easy to be read. For, as our blessed Lord "*spake* as never man spake," so he also *writes* as never man wrote.

The verse I have read contains a summary of the privileges of the children of God. It is as if the whole substance of this chapter had been condensed and concentrated into one verse; and we shall find, on an attentive consideration, that it presents to us these five things, first, *The object which believers alone behold*—"the glory of the Lord." Second, *The means whereby they behold it*—"in a glass." Third, *The manner of that beholding*—"with open face." Fourth, *The effect produced by their beholding it*,—"changed into the same image, from glory to glory," and Fifth, *The agent in accomplishing this change*—"the Spirit of the Lord."

Let us, as the Lord may graciously enable us, proceed to a brief consideration of these points, in connexion with the object in which we are this day more especially interested; and I pray the Lord to grant his heavenly blessing on what I may be permitted to speak, and you to hear.

I.—THE OBJECT WHICH BELIEVERS ALONE BEHOLD. The Apostle in the text declares, that all Christians behold the *glory of the Lord*. Now there is a glory of the Lord which ungodly men can see; but which they do not appreciate.

They can see the glory of God in *creation*, for the "heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork;" they can see something of his glory in the earthquake and the storm; they can hear it in the thunder, and perceive it in the lightning. The astronomer who investigates the mechanical structure of the heavens, can perceive something of the glory of the wondrous architecture; but though the poet has said, "the undevout astronomer is mad," we know it is a fact, that there have been astronomers who have come down from the mount of celestial observation, and declared themselves disbelievers in the existence of Jehovah! Men may also see something of the glory of God in *providence*—in that wonderful preservation which some men experience from the approach of imminent danger, and the vicissitudes and calamities to which others are subjected. None however of these is the "glory of the Lord" spoken of here; it is neither the glory of God in *creation* or *providence*. If you look into the chapter succeeding the one we are now considering, 4 ch. 6 v. you will obtain a clue to the meaning of St. Paul, "God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ;"—this is the view of God's glory, which believers have, they see the reflection of the glory of Jehovah on the face of the man Christ Jesus, and they find him invariably described in Scripture as the only emanation of this glory, on which man's eye can safely or comfortably rest:—for instance, in the 2nd chapter of 1 Cor. he is called expressly "the Lord of glory:" in the 4th chapter Isaiah, 2nd verse, "in that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious,"—in the margin it is "beauty and glory:" again, if you look to the 1st chapter Hebrews, 3rd verse, he is called "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person;" and in the 1st chapter John, 14th verse, the Evangelist tells us, that he and those who were with him on the mount "beheld his glory;" and St. James in the 2nd chapter of his epistle, calls the Lord by a peculiar name, "the glory," "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory"—or, as it is in the original—"the glory, with respect of persons." In

the 17th chapter John's Gospel, the heavens which he the Lord prepares for his people are called his glory, "I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold *my glory* which thou hast given me;" in the 13th chapter Luke, 17th verse, the words he speaks are called "*glorious words*," and in the 8th chapter Romans, the liberty he gives is called "a *glorious liberty*," in the 5th of Ephesians, his church is called "a *glorious church*," and in the 1st epistle to Timothy, 1st chapter and 11th verse, the Gospel of Christ is called a "*glorious Gospel*."

Now, my dear friends, that object which is presented to the eye of all the Lord's servants, on their first conversion to the knowledge of the truth, is the surpassing glory of God, exhibited, not in *creation*, not in *providence*, but in *redemption*. One of the most beautiful types we have in the old testament of this was the rainbow placed in the dark cloud; gradually it expands itself into a glorious arch, in which it seems desirous to embrace the world. The Lord Jesus Christ is the bow in the cloud of our humanity, a light from heaven reflected through the cloud of man's nature, for the eyes of mortals to gaze on; and we read in the 9th chap. of Genesis, that when God fixed his bow in the clouds, it is said, "I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth;" the Lord Jesus Christ being the bow in the cloud, God looks on his face, and the sinner looks upon him, for we are called to behold his glory, and the Saviour's words are, "look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." Now there is just one only point on which the eye of man can safely meet the eye of the God he has offended, and that point is the face of Jesus Christ. *There* is reconciliation, when the eye of God and the eye of the sinner can meet the face of Jesus Christ; not only does the sinner there behold the glory of the Lord in its most splendid and sufficient manifestation, but he meets the eye of God in peace, for God is reconciled to all whom he sees in his Son, and to none else; now, says the Apostle, "*we all*, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord"—It is the privilege of *us all* to behold this glory.

II.—THE MEANS WHEREBY THEY BEHOLD THIS GLORY. We are told, it is in a *glass*, in a looking glass. Now what is the looking glass or mirror in which we see reflected this glory? I say, 1st. *The Bible is the glass.* Here in the pages of this holy volume is mirrored forth for our inspection, the glory of the Lord. When an individual looks into a mirror, he sees his own image there: and as he examines the varied lineaments and features with which he has been endowed, if he be a pious man, he will glorify the Creator by whom he has been so fearfully and wonderfully made. When we look into the word of God, we see our own picture there drawn to the life, we see our character as sinners accurately delineated; and when infidels and sophists perplex the poor, as they are trying to do in the present day, and seek to cause them to reject the authority of Scripture, because they cannot through their deficiency in learning, prove it to be authentic and inspired,—the unlearned poor man, whom God has taught to understand his Bible, by the only effectual teaching of his Holy Spirit, will be at no loss for evidence to satisfy him that the book is divine. Will any one who looks into a looking glass, and sees his own picture there, endure to be required to *prove* that it is a glass? When he is asked for a demonstration, he says, Look there, do I not see my own features, do I not know them to be mine, and what further demonstration can be required? just so, when the poor man comes to the word of God, and sees set forth the character of his poor fallen nature, sees the very thoughts of his heart dissected and anatomized, as the master hand of God alone can do, and sees pictured before him that blessed Saviour specially suited to the condition of a being fallen as he feels himself,—when he finds these great truths mirrored to his view in the luminous pages of the Bible, you might as well tell that man “that God did not create the sun, as that he did not write the Bible!”

Brethren, this is the reason that we always earnestly contend for the presence of the Scripture in our schools; it is God’s glass wherein he will have men to behold *themselves*, and the *Saviour* he has provided for them. It is not right that any school should be without this glass, and why? because the grand object of all education is or ought to be, that

men may be trained to know themselves and to know their Saviour. The Bible has been well described as being “the commons of God’s people;” and while if any individual would seek to enclose a place that has been from immemorial time considered a *common*, the people would rise up against the attempt, and designate the perpetrator as a tyrant and an enemy to the people; so, when there are those who would circumscribe the Bible which is the spiritual common of all God’s people, it is right that the people should rise up and rebel against such an unholy enterprise, and contend that that book, which God has given to be a *glass* in which the poor sinner may see faithfully drawn his own picture and that of his gracious Saviour who is “the brightness of the Father’s glory and the express image of his person,” should continue to be free and unfettered for their own use, and that of their posterity to endless generations.

2. *The preached Gospel is another such glass.* When a man preaches the Gospel, his object should be to show men themselves. That man preaches not the Gospel who sends away his congregation satisfied with themselves. The faithful preaching of the Gospel always produces dissatisfaction, and always ought. Do we stand here to flatter you in your sins? No;—as we shall have to answer for it at the bar of divine justice, our duty is to apprise you that you are sinners; that you must turn away from your sins if you would be saved; that the punishment of sin is death, and that the essence of death is hell; and if there be any present who dislike these truths, who think they are exaggerated, who flatter themselves that they are safe while living in sin; if there be, we pity them and pray for them, but still we hold up the glass, we echo the statements of revelation, we “hold the mirror up to nature” in the truest sense; and the man who has come to God’s house of prayer, and who has seen himself described in the sermon as a poor wretch who at the very best deserves damnation, and who has heard of that adorable Saviour who has come down from the very heights of glory, and gone down to the very caverns of perdition, to pluck him as a brand from the burning, to justify and sanctify his soul that it may be fitted for the enjoyment of the society of God and his angels and the saints in light, that man, we say, is at least in the way of receiving

everlasting benefit to his soul; and at all events the fault is not *our own* but *his own*, if thro' the blessing of God upon his own appointed ordinance of preaching he be not sensibly advanced in the narrow road that leadeth unto life.

3. *Prayer is another glass.* The man who bows before the throne of grace, who humbles himself before God, who feels the vileness of his heart, and who seeks for salvation and acceptance in Christ;—that man has also seen, through the medium of this glass, the glory of the Lord; and as it was on mount Sinai, that the face of Moses shone with that peculiar brightness which the men of Israel could not bear to see, so it is on the mount of spiritual communion with God, that our faces shine with a brightness more enduring and more enduring: it is through the medium of prayer that the divine glory is most specially reflected on the soul. It is through the triple lenses of this sacred telescope—the studied *word*, the preached *Gospel*, and the fervent *prayer*, it is through the instrumentality of these three lenses of this glass, that man best beholds the glory of the Lord. When a new star appears in the distant heavens, men who are unaccustomed to the use of astronomic instruments cannot behold that star, but the man of science, provided with his peculiar but suitable apparatus, can behold it; and as he applies his well-directed instrument to the quarter of the heavens where the star appears, the whole field of view appears gloriously illuminated, and the heart expands with delight, as he exclaims “I see.” It is just so with this object, the glory of the Lord; the natural eye cannot discern it. But the natural man, the man of the world says, we are mad when we speak of these things; we are not surprised at this; “the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.” Therefore, if there be any here to day who have no eyes to behold the glory of the Lord in redemption, it is because the devil has blinded their eyes, or because they have never used God's provided apparatus for beholding it; it is because they have never looked through the triple lenses of this spiritual telescope, have never studied the *word of God*, never listened with attention and without prejudice to the *preached*

Gospel, never *prayed* God for Christ's sake to enable them to understand it. No wonder, therefore, that they are still in darkness. As we read in ancient days of a mathematician who was filled with such excessive joy at the first discovery of a long-studied problem, that he cried out in a sort of transport, “Eureka, Eureka,”—I have found it, I have found it; so the child of God when he, through the study of the word, and through the preached Gospel, and through the prayers he has addressed to the throne of grace, is enabled to see as in a glass, the bright morning star of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ, as his soul's Saviour, he is filled with fulness of rejoicing, and cries out with a joy surpassing the most enthusiastic raptures of Pythagorus, “I have found it, I have found it, praised be the Lord.”

III. Let us next observe, THE MANNER OF THEIR BEHOLDING IT: “with open face,” that is with *uncovered* face. The Apostle had been speaking of the veil that had been spread on the heart of the children of Israel when Moses was read; and he contrasts with that, the superior privileges of believers under the Gospel; that their face is not covered, there is no veil on them, they behold with open, with *uncovered* face. There are several things to cover the face of the natural man,—In the 4th ch. of this epistle, v. 4, the devil is represented as “blinding the minds of those that believe not;” their face is covered with a pall of blindness. We are told in other portions of scripture that the prejudices of a bad education blind men. The *Socinian* cannot see the glory of the Lord as a Saviour, because his face is covered with the veil of a bad education and a perverted reason. The *Romanist* also is unable to see the full glory of the Lord, because his face is covered with the darkness of the false teaching of a corrupt church. The *man of the world* also has the veil of slumber and carnal security over his eyes, so that he cannot see the glory of the Lord. But from God's children whom he teaches by his Spirit, this veil is removed; God removes the scales from their eyes as he removed the darkness from the blinded vision of Saul of Tarsus, through the instrumentality of Ananias. God says to them, “let there be light, and there is light,” and the very first day-spring that dawns on their eyes, when that work is wrought within them, is the glory of the

Lord as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. The Christian beholds the blessed Saviour, no longer with blinded eyes, as the devotee of error or as the man of the world; but with open face, with eagle gaze, he beholds the glory of the Lord as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ:—one of the most beautiful emblems in the whole book of God illustrating this subject is that image of the eagle to which the believer is so frequently compared throughout the range of scripture. It is supposed that in Deut. xxxii. 11. there is an allusion to what naturalists have said concerning the parent eagle. It is said that when she spreads abroad her wings, she takes her young ones on them and brings them gradually to the very strongest focus of the sun's rays, that she may accustom their eyes to bear that dazzling brightness; as the eye of the eagle is the only eye which God has created which is capable of gazing with undazzled vision on that glorious object: and when the parent eagle finds that her young are unable to bear the brightness of the sun-beam, it is said, that she dashes them from her wings as a spurious offspring, and concludes that they belong not to her brood. The Christian is as the eagle, he is himself accustomed to the brightness of the sun of righteousness, and he is anxious too, that in his own private teaching, as well as in the schools in which he has influence, the brightness of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ should be presented as they are able to bear it before the eyes of the little ones, that they may become accustomed to it, and not turn away from its brilliant glare, as does the man who has grown old in ignorance and sin, and who has eyes for any and every other object than the Lord Jesus Christ. The Christian remembers still farther, that there is a day coming—and it is not far off,—when every eye, whether able or not, must behold Him. Revelations i. 7. we read the appalling announcement, “behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” Oh, my dear friends, will not that be an appalling vision to behold? Will it not be an awful thing, that that should be the first light of the knowledge of the glory of Christ that will shine on your eyes, when he comes in the clouds of heaven to make his enemies his foot-

stool and when the sight of him shall cause an universal wailing among the sons of men! We read in the history of former days, of the terrible punishments to which criminals and malefactors were accustomed to be condemned, and which will strikingly illustrate that terrible view of Christ which the ungodly will be compelled to endure in the day of his second appearing.—We are told of certain criminals who were sentenced to have their eyelids cut off, and then suffer exposure to the vertical rays of a meridian sun, until, through excessive agony, they should in a few hours faint and die. This is something like the effect that will be produced on the ungodly by the sight of Christ hereafter; they have not been accustomed to look to him *now*, but they will be compelled to behold him *then*, when they would not! Whereas it is said, concerning the Lord's people then, that when the sign of the Son of Man shall appear in the heavens, they shall lift up their heads; they have been accustomed to look upon him with the eye of faith *before*, and they will have gladness of soul *then*, “they will lift up their heads with joy, for their redemption draweth nigh,” while on the other hand, the rocks and the mountains will be appealed to with a fruitless invocation, to pulverise the wicked rather than they should be spared to behold the terrible sight of a revealed, but rejected, despised, and hated Saviour.

I now desire to make a few observations on the next point.—IV. THE EFFECT PRODUCED BY THIS BEHOLDING OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD BY HIS SERVANTS UNDER THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION—“Changed into the same image from glory to glory.” This is a matter of which most men are prone to lose sight; this is a point connected with a serious error, into which the professing church has been accustomed to fall in all ages, and into which it has signally fallen in the day in which we live. It is forgotten that religion in the soul is a progressive thing: that it is not enough for a man to receive certain truths into his head, and to imagine, because he receives into his head these truths of which others are ignorant—or it may be, reject and refuse to believe—that therefore he is a Christian. It is very true there are certain truths which it is absolutely necessary that we should receive by

faith, the doctrine of the fall, of salvation to be obtained only through Christ, the necessity of regeneration and conversion through the agency of the Holy Spirit—these and such truths it is absolutely indispensable we should receive into our minds;—but it is not *faith*, it is not *knowledge* which separates men from devils,—*it is holiness*: devils *know*, and devils *believe*, but that which separates God's children from the denizens of hell is *holiness*; for devils are unholy: therefore, I would not that you should rest in the delusion that your having received the doctrines of the Gospel into your head, however clearly you may be enabled to apprehend them, is sufficient in itself: one step is taken when you have come to *know*, another when you have learned to *believe*; one important point is gained in your believing unto *justification*, but if you stop short here and do not attain the further point of *sanctification* which God has added to justification, (and “what God has joined together, let not man put asunder”) into heaven's gates you will never enter. See Romans, viii. 30. In this as in other texts, the progress of the believer is strikingly set forth:—“changed into the same image;” what is the image? it is the glory of the Lord, it is the Lord Jesus Christ who is the image of God's glory. The great business of religion is that we should become conformed to his image;—“as we have borne the image of the earthly, so should we also bear the image of the heavenly;” he tells us again “whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, *to be conformed to the image of his Son*”;—this is the very essence of christianity. Under the Jewish law, the essence of religion consisted in strictness of obedience to certain rites and ceremonies, but Christ abolished all this rigid ritual, and what did he substitute in its room? *the learning of a character*, and that character *his own*; and therefore all his people say, in the language of David, “I have set the Lord always before me, because he is on my right hand, therefore I shall not fall.” This is what the christian does, he sets the character of Christ before him, in all the beautiful lineaments in which it is set forth in the pages of Scripture, and he says, I will apply myself to learn that character, to study it, to be like Christ, to be conformed to his image, to ascertain what would Christ *do* under such and such circumstances, what

would Christ *say*, by what *spirit* would Christ be animated? and so, by having his eyes fixed on that image, he becomes gradually more and more like the image he delights to contemplate; as this text says, “beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are *changed into the same image* from glory to glory;” and as another text says, “when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” It is a delightful fact, that the more constantly and intently we study the character of our Lord, and keep our eyes fixed on that character, the more we grow in conformity or likeness to him, and this is the very essence of religion, to be like Christ. And what is the special *character* of this change? The text does not say it is from *grace* to *glory*, though that would be encouraging, but *from glory to glory*, intimating that the very smallest feature of Christ we acquire is a glorious thing, the very faintest moral lineament of the Lord stamped by the Holy Ghost on our souls is a glorious thing, and that the advance is not so much from *grace* to *glory* as from *glory* to *glory*! There are three things to be borne in mind concerning this change; it is a *progressive* change, a *complete* change, and it will be a *glorious* change. I will direct your attention to a scripture on each of these heads; 1st. *the progressive character of this change* is set forth in Philippians iii. 12. “Not as though we had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus; brethren I count not myself to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded.” Is not the advance of the racer progressive towards the goal? does not each step bring him nearer to the object of desire? such is the progress of God's Church collectively and individually towards conformity to the image of Christ. Like the Apostle he desires to be found in him; and every day's experience, and each successive dispensation of God's gracious discipline brings him nearer to the mark.

2. Now as to the complete character of the change we find it described in the epistle to the Ephesians iv. 20, "ye have not so learned Christ, if so be that you have heard him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus;"—the end of christianity being to learn Christ;—here is the complete character of that change, "that you put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." We can conceive an individual putting off an old and filthy garment, and putting on a new and beautiful one, and being pleasingly conscious of the change that was made in his outward man. What can be more complete than the change produced in a beggar when stripped of his rags, and invested with the gay splendor of royal adorning? We put off the "old man with the deceitful lusts," with all its indulgence of unhallowed passions and depraved propensities, and as to our privileges, we are kings, dressed in the regal mantle of holiness, and destined to sit on lofty thrones, for our Lord has expressly told us, by his apostle, that we are made "kings and priests unto God;" it is the splendid regalia of Jesus, the King of kings, that we wear, and we cannot but be conscious of the change which passes upon us when we become conformed to his image.

3. And then, it is a glorious change. David proves this, "they go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God," they go from one measure of strength to another. Solomon proves it, "the path of the just is like a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Can any language more strikingly express the glorious character of that great change which must pass on you if you are saved souls? and oh, that I may be the honored instrument of accomplishing that change in some of you this day.

V. Let me proceed to remind you, in the last place, of THE AGENT BY WHOM THIS CHANGE IS EFFECTED. The change is begun in regeneration, it is continued in that process which is called sanctification, and consummated finally in glory. In the verse preceding the text, the Apostle tells us, "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty;" and so we

are brought to this most important conclusion, that the only man who is a free man, is the holy man. We live in a day in which there is great talk about liberty, when there is a loud and clamorous assertion of the rights of man, political, social, and religious. This is a text which should be studied by all such, for it virtually asserts that there is slavery wherever there is ungodliness. There is no liberty which can be enjoyed, deserving of the name, unless that holy enfranchisement to which we are admitted by the Spirit of the Lord.

"He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
And all are slaves beside."

Give me the man, I care not how the state may surround him with its privileges, if he be only the slave of his lusts. Let him declaim as loudly as he may in favor of liberty, if he be one who is bound in the thralldom of the evil one, one who has habits and propensities long gratified, and which he cannot or will not give up; if he be a man who transgresses the law of the Sabbath, who habitually quaffs the poison cup of intoxication, who blasphemes the name of the Holy One, who neglects the worship of God, and that prayer without which all study and all teaching are worse than useless—I care not how that man is overloaded with favors and franchises, political or social,—he is a slave, because he is not a holy man. In proportion as he is an unholy man, he is in very thralldom. What then is to be done under these circumstances, for those whom we desire to serve? I call upon you to join in prayer, when this service is concluded, that God may pour out his Holy Spirit on such individuals as his providence may have brought here to-day, who are as yet under the dominion of sin, and who, though they worship with you, are not of you. And pray also for the children of these schools, that they may be enfranchised speedily with that spiritual liberty; that they may be what Christ calls "free indeed"—that they may be partakers of that glorious liberty of which all his people are partakers. And pray, above all things, that he may make you all better acquainted with that great Deliverer who can alone break the chains that bind you to the world, and who already stands with his "head white with the dew, and his locks as the drops of the

night," knocking at the door of your hearts, for a long-refused admission.— Oh, who among us can understand, or enter into the profound meaning of that affecting Scripture which represents the Lord Jesus Christ as knocking for admission at the door of human hearts! "Behold," says he, "I stand at the door and knock; if any one hear my voice, I will go in unto him and sup with him, and he with me." Yes, brethren, the Lord knocks at the door of our hearts in a variety of ways—by his *judgments*, by his *mercies*, by his *providence*, by his *ministers*, by his *Spirit*, by his *preached Gospel*—yes, the poor, weak words that have been sounded in your years this day, are another call which the Saviour pours into the ear of your souls, to open the door of your hearts, that have been too long closed against him, and to receive him formed within you, the hope of glory.

And now, dear friends, what shall I say to you on behalf of these schools, whose cause I have been requested to plead with you—these Daily and Sunday Schools, where upwards of two hundred children receive that instruction "which is able to make them wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus?" These children, doubtless, desire to know the Lord. I have never seen children in a Scriptural School yet, who were not more anxious to be instructed in *religion* than in any mere *literary* knowledge.— We read in the Scripture of a man who was small in stature, and when he desired to see Christ, he climbed up into a sycamore tree, that through its helpful agency, his eyes might be gladdened with the view of the passing Saviour. I have always been accustomed to look on a Scriptural School as Zaccheus looked on the sycamore-tree, as a means whereby those who are small in stature may be enabled to catch even a passing glimpse of the gracious Lord; and I desire that you should regard it in the same point of view. The Scriptural School gives them all help towards the attainment of the desired object; it assists them, and lifts them up on the branches of its diversified instructions, that they may see the blissful vision of the passing Lord. Our system of education is a truly liberal one, not liberal in the sense of latitudinarian, but liberal without compromise. Children of all religious denominations are invited to attend these schools, and are now present

together in this Church, while this service is going on; and while there is no direct interference with the religious peculiarities of any who have been brought up in a different profession from ourselves, the word of God is placed in the hands of all, the pages of Divine revelation are unfolded before the eyes of all; and let whosoever will gainsay or oppose, they are taught the truth—that there is salvation in Christ, and in him alone. There is a system of education which is fashionable in this day, with which these schools have nothing to do. We see a two-fold infamy stamped on the brow of that fashionable system. First, it gives a *literary education*, to those who refuse a Scriptural one,—and secondly, it refuses a *Scriptural education* to those who desire it. It is utterly impossible that there could be perpetrated by accountable men two greater crimes than these. This fashionable system *permits* Scriptural instruction, while it *commands* a literary; it commands and provides *the one*—it *generously* tolerates and *permits the other*. But in schools such as these for which we are interested to-day, the matter is reversed—*because God has reversed it*;—a literary education is *permitted* and approved, but a Scriptural education is *commanded* and *provided*—*because God commands and provides it*. "Train up a child in the way he should go,"—"bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord;" and thus says St. Paul to Timothy, "from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." Here is the authority under which we act; we command that which God commands, and permit that which he permits.

Now, dear friends, the question is, Do you take this view of the matter, and taking it, will you act on it, and acting on it, will you show your liberality by supporting these schools? You know they have no resources to look to but the liberality of God's children; no endowments can be received from the state, in the present day, without a compromise of principle. Receiving money from the public treasury on the terms on which alone it would be granted would be like the sin of Achan, it would be "touching the accursed thing." We might obtain silver and gold indeed from the national exchequer; but such silver and gold

would be purchased at too dear a price, when that price was the exclusion of the word of God from the ordinary instruction of the schools. This is a price which God's faithful servants are not prepared to pay; we are willing to submit to poverty in our schools—to destitution, rather than do it. We throw ourselves freely and unreservedly on the bounty of those who love our Lord, who love the Bible, who believe it to be the birthright of God's children, the Magna Charta of man's spiritual liberties. If we are poor in temporal things, we believe that the Lord will enrich us the more in spiritual things. If our exterior accommodation be not so excellent, if our masters and mistresses be not so well paid as the schools of the compromising, all these deficiencies will be more than counterbalanced by the unsearchable riches of Christ, vouchsafed in such liberal abundance, that there shall be no room to receive them. He who has all hearts and hands, and all the treasures of the earth at his disposal, knows how to bestow upon his saints all good things. Some man will say, when appealed to for such an object as this, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Why am I, who am a stranger, and only a visitor to this Church, called on to give my money for the support of these schools? Brethren, the best interests of our country are bound up with this cause; there is, humanly speaking, *no hope* for these lands, unless the great cause of Scriptural education shall make progress and prevail. The present generation are lost to the support of the great Institutions of the country, because our forefathers neglected to give them Scriptural instruction, and, in consequence, they are now the easy prey of the demagogue, and the tool of the infidel.

But the children brought up in these and similar institutions, are reared up in attachment to the word of God, and to the Church which has taught it to them; and they will not be found in unholy alliance with popery and Socinianism, for the destruction of the altar and the

throne. Let me beseech you, just to consider this; when the Lord calls upon his people on occasions such as this, to spend themselves and the wealth which he has given them, for purposes such as I have described; they are called upon, not merely for the discharge of one of the highest duties, but for the enjoyment of one of the highest privileges the servant of God on this earth can enjoy; for as Christians, it is our *privilege* always to be employed in labouring for the Lord. We are told, that the angels in heaven know no rest, day nor night; they are always engaged—some in waiting on his will, and others, in flying through the regions of space, in the cheerful performance of it. I remember having somewhere read, (and with this I shall conclude,) an anecdote of an illustrious Mahomedan of antiquity, which will happily illustrate our duty on the present occasion, and show us the spirit in which we should act. This man was engaged in a great battle, at the head of his army, and had performed prodigious feats of valor on a day of tremendous conflict, in the thickest of the fight. At the close of the evening, being nearly exhausted, and sinking with fatigue, he was exhorted to withdraw from the field, and lay himself down for a brief season of necessary repose. But he broke away from the earnest solicitations of his fellow-warriors, and just before dashing again into the ranks of war, while about to charge once more at the head of his columns on the advancing foe, he said, "Advise no rest, counsel no repose," and then he stretched forth his sabre, and, pointing to the earth, said, "this is the place for labour"—and then, pointing to his imaginary paradise, said, "*there* is the place for rest."

The sword we draw is the sword of the Spirit—the battle we fight is the battle of the Lord. Oh that we may have each of us grace to apply to ourselves the spirit of this brave Mahomedan's declaration, and feel that earth is the place for *labour*, and heaven the place for *rest*. —AMEN.

A SERMON,

PREACHED

BY THE REV. SAMUEL DAVIDSON,

(Professor of Biblical Criticism, in Belfast College.)

57th PSALM, 7th verse.

“ My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise.”

WHETHER we regard the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, or attend to the passing feelings of our bosoms, one truth must be admitted—that the mind is wayward and capricious in its desires. We do not mean now to inquire into the extent of the change which has passed upon its energies—neither shall we at present attempt to fix the limits of its unaided powers; but we feel convinced, that every one who reflects for a moment on the subject must acknowledge, that the thoughts are prone to roam abroad uncontrolled, and that even when we attempt to curb or repress them, they often bid defiance to our good purposes and intentions. Every thing around us bears the impress of time's changes upon it; testifying of the instability and uncertainty of all that is earthly; and, as if our mental nature partook of the characteristics of the bodies by which it is surrounded, it is restless in its movements, and unsettled in its plans. Now, it must surely be a matter of some importance to know by what means this wayward heart may be stayed from its wandering; and what objects are best calculated to give permanency and durability to its resolves. It must surely be interesting to ascertain the mode in which its desires may be satisfied, and its capriciousness confined within an appropriate sphere. And, blessed be the God of all grace, we are not left in ignorance of these things; we have his heavenly word for our direction, in which is recorded for our instruction and example the experience of his servants, and especially the experience of David, who,

having been placed in varied circumstances, and exposed to varied temptations and delivered from manifold dangers, might naturally be expected to have learned much wisdom, even apart from the inspiration of the Almighty. And when we hear this eminent servant of God exclaim in holy delight, “ My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise,” we ought to see that our feelings be similar to such as gave utterance to the expressions. When we hear him declare that the Holy Spirit had enstamped his seal upon his heart, by removing his heart's mutability, and attracting it to the cross of Christ, we ought to seek a correspondent change of our inward natures, that we may be privileged to address the Almighty in a similar manner.

Let us inquire into *the things which render the heart unfixed; the import of the expression, “ my heart is fixed; ” and the consequence of its being fixed.*

I. The heart, then, is unfixed, because it is naturally estranged from the Almighty. It loves not to dwell upon his character; it sees not his endearing love, as manifested in the Son, neither doth it discern the justice of his moral government, and the equity of his righteous administration. It may indeed be awakened to behold the terrors of the Lord, wherewith he is invested, when he arises to take vengeance on his enemies, or it may be occasionally compelled to feel the force of his truth; but when there is no sympathy excited—when there is no drawing forth of the

desires towards him as a father—when there is no spiritual apprehension of his mercy in Christ—when there is no melting of its hardness and its obduracy, so that the stream of inward penitence may gush forth, it is evident that it will be unstable as water tossed by the agitation of the wind. There is a perpetual restlessness within—a desire of novelty which prompts us to seek new sources of gratification, and of pleasure. As long as the soul knoweth not God, it searches after somewhat from which it may derive fancied happiness. The world will present a thousand charms to fascinate—it will point out many a path in which enjoyment seems to abound, and along which every thing appears to wear a gay and smiling aspect; and it will employ all arts and allurements to induce the belief that the highest felicity is at its disposal. It will point to wealth, to power, to carnal indulgence, as the handmaids of joy. But when these are tried—when wealth has been sought and acquired—when ambition has obtained a temporary gratification, and the senses have been indulged to the utmost, then it is found that the heart is as truly unsatisfied as ever, and that these were but *illusions*, calculated to deceive the unwary, and to disappoint the ardent. In fact, every thing around us tends to draw away the heart from God, and, consequently, to render it unstable; for it is just in proportion to its distance from the Supreme Being, that it will be found more or less fixed. The society of friends—the conversation of those with whom we are connected—the constant exposure to temptation—and the nature of the objects by which we are surrounded, do all tend to steal away the affections, and to keep them from being directed to the great Author of our existence. There is nothing, moreover, more destructive to the interests of the soul, than the habit of giving it an unrestrained indulgence in its evil thoughts and imaginings. When these are suffered to dwell on forbidden objects—when trains of impure ideas are allowed to pass through the mind, without even the least attempt to check their continuance, it is manifest that carnal desires obtain the ascendancy, and God is excluded from that supreme place he should hold in the affections. There is the more necessity of vigilance on this point, because of the capricious nature of thought, which darts

rapidly, and almost to us unconsciously, from one thing to another, leading us captive at its will. Whenever we would steadily direct our minds to the contemplation of the Supreme Being, or to meditation on the solemnities of religion, some evil suggestion is wont to cross the train of our reflection—some impure idea is presented to the mind by the tempter of souls, or by the agency of those invisible spirits who are ever employed in leading men astray from the path of duty. We cannot know the number or power of these unseen agents, but we learn from Scripture that such there are, and that such as we have said is their employment, and that they are under the superintendence of him who is styled the Devil. It is the constant object of these spiritual beings, to array the feelings against the Lord, and to perpetuate the hostility of the carnal mind against his government and his person. It becomes us, therefore, to be much on our guard against the encroachment of these subtle enemies, and to entreat our heavenly Father, that he would keep the avenues of the heart, so that it may not be stolen away by those deceitful objects which the world so often and so temptingly presents. The fact, too, that our nature is corrupt, and our mind naturally *carnal*, presents an additional motive to excite us to circumspection; for there is a continual warfare carried on against the well-being of the soul, by the disposition and tendency it is found to possess. The evil spirit of unbelief lurks within, and must be expelled, before Jesus and his mercy be apprehended by the sinner. While this remains, the heart cannot be stayed aright, because unbelief presents nothing which can serve for a substantial foundation. It may present those actions of the life that have tended to the good of others,—it may present the mercy of God, in sparing the sinner so long, as an earnest and a pledge that he will not punish him hereafter—it may point out the death and sufferings of the Redeemer, as sufficient data on which we may build our hopes for eternity, while repentance and faith are entirely overlooked, and consequently the character is unchanged and unsanctified; yet these will not suffice, just because they are not the appointed basis of a sinner's hopes. Believe me there are no arts which Satan does not try, that he may induce men to disbelieve the Gos-

pel; and while the materials over which he exercises an influence, are in themselves sinful, can we wonder that the heart should be rendered unstable as water, in regard to all that is holy in feeling, and devout in practice? Can we wonder that man should be disposed to run the round of pleasure and of dissipation, without ever arriving at that well-spring of life, where he may satisfy himself with pleasures suited to his spiritual nature? Thus the three great enemies of our souls, the world, the flesh, and the Devil, do constantly carry them from gratification to gratification, and from one indulgence to another, till they are effectually secured in the chains of sin, and bound in the fetters of iniquity. The reason of the unfixeness of the heart must therefore be the want of a foundation. If there be no basis for eternity, it will be like a house built on sand, unable to withstand the wintry storm and the raging flood. The great error in the conduct of men is this, that they seek a foundation *for the present life alone*, leaving the next entirely out of view. They may thus get an excellent foundation for a few fleeting years of their existence, and all their hopes may appear calm and steady and firm; but oh! how soon shall death diselose the vanity of "the wood and the hay and the stubble, when the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is." Just as the drunkard in the midst of his bacchanalian revels may imagine himself happy while seated in the company of his associates, and while the profane song and loud laugh salute the ear, but when morning comes, and the remembrance of his debauch arises in his mind with the soberness of returning reason, he feels the bitterness of the intoxicating eup and the poison it leaves behind in the conscience. So the man of the world who has engaged in the follies and tasted of the pleasures of sin, awakes to a sense of his disappointment when the hand of death presses upon him, and he is left to all the bitterness of despair. What then is the foundation which shall not fail in death—what is the rock on which the faith must be built in order to ensure its permanency and its steadfastness? It is the Lord Jesus Christ—God manifest in the flesh—Christ exhibited in our nature as the sin offering of his people, "for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid which is Jesus Christ."

This is the foundation on which every true Christian hitherto has reared the structure of his hopes and of his expectations; and while all others have melted away as snow before the sun-beams, this has remained sure to all the people of God. It has been tried from the commencement of the existence of our earth. In the infancy of time, when the first inhabitants of our globe were created, the Saviour was revealed; and throughout the successive periods of its duration down to the present time, and the successive generations of men by which it has been peopled, the announcement and manifestation of the Redeemer have been found to sustain the hopes and cheer the hearts and animate the bosoms of the servants of the most High. In the hour when every thing that is bright and beautiful in this beautiful world fades from the sight—when the fairy scenes that once delighted the imagination disappear, and all the dazzling splendor with which objects were invested is lost in darkness—when the season of youth's vigour and manhood's might has given place to the withering influence of age and decay, and the soul is stripped as it were of the external decoration that it wore—there is still to be found a safe haven of repose, and tho' in the hour of prosperity it may have been unheeded and undesired, yet in the midst of adversity it is remembered as the only means of safety and of peace. Well has atheism been denominated by the Spirit a bottomless pit, because he who acknowledges not the existence and providence of a great first cause, stands alone in the universe "fatherless and forsaken", without any one higher than himself to lean upon in the day of weakness, or to appeal to in the day of reproach. Hence he seeks and searches for something which he cannot find; and he is continually sinking downward, till at last his end be destruction. But he who believes in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; having his eyes opened to behold the love of the Father in the mission of the Son, and the condescension of the Son in all his sufferings and his acts, has one in whom he may safely confide in the hour of danger, and to whom he may have recourse in the time of trial. You know that there are seasons when the soul is surrounded by danger—when the avenues to the heart are guarded by watchful sentinels—when there appeareth no way of escape from

the enemy—no help at hand—it is more especially in such a crisis, that the necessity of one who can sympathize with us in our sorrows and deliver us from our dangers, will be felt and acknowledged. Such an one is Jesus, the friend, the advocate of sinners, who knoweth all their difficulties, and is ready to extricate them out of the same. With a God not revealed in our nature we could not have the same companionship, because of a being purely and perfectly spiritual we could form no just conceptions. Here, then, there is a foundation for the soul of the sinner—it is burthened with guilt, but Jesus died to atone—it is bowed down by the troubles and sorrows of humanity, but Jesus purchased a kingdom where sorrow and sighing shall be unknown—it is impure and polluted, but the blood of God's dear Son cleanseth from all sin—His salvation is perfectly adapted to the wants and necessities of all his fallen creatures—and when they accept of it as a free gift, the soul has cast anchor, so that it shall no more be tossed to and fro, but remain stayed and firm amid the storms and the billows that rage around. Such is the security in Jesus for the unstable and wayward heart, and such the rest and peace which it enjoys in the arms of his love.

II. We come now to consider the meaning of the phrase "my heart is fixed." Our explanation of this has been already in a great measure anticipated. We have already seen that the feelings of the mind are transient and mutable, ever varying, according to the objects by which sensations are excited, and participating of the changing hues of earthly scenes. We know, too, that the heart is averse to Christ—that it possesses a repulsiveness against his authority and his person, as though he were the most unlovely object on which it could be turned. It is in grace as in nature, wherein some bodies repel each other and unite not, so as to form a new substance. So there is no affinity between Christ and the sinful soul; and though "he be the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely," yet there is no attraction by which both may be joined together. Now, it is the work of the Holy Spirit to take away this aversion, this repugnance to the Holy Redeemer which the heart entertains, in order that he may appear just such a Saviour as we want, and that without him

we may, in reality, know that we are lost and undone for ever. It is the office of the Holy Ghost to give unto the sinner an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, that the believer may know that he has been plucked as a brand out of the burning. And it is only when the Spirit has thus sealed his deep impress on the heart, that man is truly enabled to say "my heart is fixed," it is only when he has taken of the things of Christ, and shown them unto the soul that its desires after earthly good are moderated, and the affections concentrated in God as the sole fountain of unalloyed happiness. When Jesus is formed in the believer the hope of glory—when he dwells in the soul by the power of his grace—when he takes up his abode with the children of men on earth, and when the Father has manifested his love in the taking away of sin through the application of Emmanuel's blood, man with all his weakness and his frailty can say "my heart is fixed;" till then his heart is like the earth when it first emerged from nothing, "without form and void"—a chaos with the shroud of nature's darkness upon it; but, as when the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters all became calm—the war of elements ceased at his omnipotent word, and earth appeared in the new-born vigour of youth; so, when the power of the Divine Spirit has breathed upon the heart, it is freed from the wild tumult of passion, and appears, in the light of God's countenance, a spot reclaimed and renovated by his grace. Who, then, can pronounce these words with truth? none save the man of God, who knows that his sins are forgiven—who knows that every record of iniquity against him has been taken away by the blood of Jesus; such only that can in sincerity employ the words as the genuine expression of the feelings of his bosom. And when his experience is such as that of the psalmist; when the love of Jesus has concentrated the affections of the soul in himself; when there is a true fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, think you that there will be no outward exhibition of the inward power of religion? think you that there will be no outbursting of that gladness which the soul inwardly feels? yes, verily, it is not the nature of the religion of Jesus to be contracted—it is diffusive in its tendency, and expansive in its character. When once it is begun, it continues to operate

and to spread abroad, till it embraces within its outspread arms the whole brotherhood of mankind.

III. We shall at present confine ourselves to the consideration of that effect which the Psalmist in the words before us declares it had upon his conduct—"I will sing and give praise." This is a consequence arising from the fixing of the heart by true religion, which is in general overlooked; yet it is of great importance and benefit. Similar is the expression of the Psalmist, in the 45th psalm, at the beginning, "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." When the heart has been touched with a sense of sin, when the penitent has discovered the greatness of the Saviour's love, and the vileness of his own character, he begins to speak of the things that touch the king—the eloquence receives a new outlet; a fresh energy is imparted unto the powers of the soul, and the tongue is the pen of a ready writer, bodying forth those sentiments which the bosom can no longer contain, respecting the grace and beauty of Sion's King and Sion's Redeemer. It will be found, that in proportion to the religion of a family, a Church, or a worshiping society, will be their psalmody; and according to the ebb or increase of devotion, so is the custom of singing the praises of God observed to prevail. Hence at the reformation, when the ignorance and superstition of ages were dissipated by the pure light of Gospel truth, we are informed, that sacred music, which had been almost discontinued, revived, and was cultivated by those eminent individuals that were the chief instruments in the hand of God of bringing about that great event. Luther was not merely a reformer, but an ardent lover of sacred music, and he is generally supposed to have composed the 100th psalm tune, unrivalled in beauty and solemnity. The heart is like some musical instrument whose chords are broken, and the voice of whose melody has become mute, till the hand of the mighty Master cometh over it, re-adjusting its parts, and teaching it to produce those notes of praise that lift the soul to its loftiest moods, or melt it into its softest forms. Wherever the love of God has not been shed abroad by the Holy Ghost, wherever Jesus dwells not in the heart—*there* all is

dark and unlovely; for there is no living principle to wake the soul to action in the service of God, neither is there any adequate cause to call forth the powers of the intellect or the gratitude of the heart, by the voice's utterance. Praise is the very expression of thanksgiving to the Father of mercies, for his bounties and his blessings—but how shall he who has been given over to his own waywardness, render a reasonable service to Almighty God? How shall he who has quitted the sphere of wise and safe expiation present unto the Supreme Being the offering of song? It is in the very nature of things impossible, and though the tongue may repeat the words of praise to the Almighty, yet, wherever there is not the accompaniment of the heart, wherever there is no outpouring of the feelings of the soul, and wherever the truth is disbelieved, unfelt, there is in reality no praise in the sight of him who searches the hearts, and tries the reins of the children of men; for the service is a solemn mockery. There is, my brethren, in this respect, a fearful aggravation of guilt, when the unbeliever takes into his lips the sacred themes of love and of grace and of joy, and to all around him appears as if he were a sincere and hearty worshipper of that Being who will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. We would not deter the timid from singing the praises of God in the family, or in the congregation, but we would impress upon all the necessity of having the soul attuned to the service, and prepared for the holy exercise, so that there may be the grateful oblation of a grateful heart to God Almighty. And what exercise can be more delightful, than to celebrate the praises of him who filleth the soul with his presence—it is the exercise of the highest seraph that adores and burns—it is the exercise of the spirits of the just made perfect—it is the loftiest employment of the renovated on earth, and when all worship shall have ceased, this shall continue for ever, pure and uninterrupted.

If then it be our wish to be assimilated as much as possible to the state into which we expect to be received hereafter—if we would inhale the freshness of the same salutary and spiritual atmosphere—if we would familiarize our minds with the contemplation of those heavenly themes which shall occupy the people of God in a future state, it will be our con-

stant aim and endeavour to attain to the experience of the psalmist, as recorded in the words of the text. Perhaps our thoughts may have been hitherto more given to other things than to religion; perhaps the soul, quitting this strong hold, may have indulged in the caprices and perversities of its fallen nature; perhaps we may have given license to our unrestrained and headlong propensities, while seeking after happiness in the pursuit of wealth, ease, pleasure, fame—if this be the case, our hearts are not fixed for the celebration of the glory of God, neither are they prepared for giving utterance to the lofty exclamations of his praise; they have tuned the notes of the world's mirth and the world's joy—they have been ready to inspire the song of the scorner or of the profane, but when the love of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is the theme, their cords are mute, and the voice of music is slumbering, till the Spirit of God touch the key note of heavenly melody, causing a glorious song to be heard from the full stringed harp of the soul. There is a dulness—a deadness in the service of God, there is a continual wandering of the thoughts even in the holiest exercises in which we are engaged; and in proportion as we keep our hearts fixed on the great themes of the Gospel, shall we be more or less spiritually minded, which is “life and peace.” Every one must have felt the truth of this in his own experience. Truly when we would do good, evil is present with us; when we would address ourselves unto the heavenly King, there is a backwardness of desire towards him; and in the hour of the spirit's secret communing with its God, when we would have no unhallowed thought intrude into the sanctuary of the soul, we are often forced to deplore the presence of many an unsanctified visitor.

Our joys and our fears—our hopes and our desires, savour too much of earth, and hence our lips are slow, and our hearts unwilling to sing the praises of God. The base lusts of the world have ruled over us, and there is a consequent want of spirituality and singleness of purpose. The carnal mind is enmity against God, how then can it worship him in spirit and in truth?

Know then, my brethren, the remedy—learn the antidote against the secret blight that would destroy every fair plant in the garden of the soul. Let your hearts be fixed by the Holy Ghost—let them be based in Jesus as a sure foundation—let them be built upon him as “mighty to save,” as strong to help, as omnipotent to deliver, as willing to receive unto the bosom of his love; and if the Spirit *continue* to keep them united to him, you shall sing and give praise to the God of your salvation, and your faith shall be in lively exercise working by love and purifying the heart. No doubt there will be times when sorrow may oppress the soul—when the force of temptation may overcome—when the wiles of the enemy may be successful—when settled purposes and pious resolutions may be shaken—when we may be given up for a period to our waywardness, yet the benignant mercy of God, ever ready to visit the afflicted, shall restore tranquillity and peace to the bosom. No doubt there will be seasons of the dominion of the evil one, yet when the soul crieth unto God in its perplexity—a new impulse shall be given to its energies, the Lord shall bestow his grace and his Spirit, and instead of lamentation there shall be joy—mourning shall be turned into gladness, and the believer shall again address his heavenly Father in the words of the psalmist, “my heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will sing and give praise.”—

Sermons by the Rev. HUGH McNEILL, of Liverpool; Rev. DR. COOKE, Belfast; Rev. HORACE TOWNSEND, Cork, &c. will appear in early numbers.

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OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. H. TOWNSEND.

REV. JOHN GRANT.

ON THE ESPECIAL NEED, AT THE PRESENT TIME, OF THE OUTPOURING OF THE
HOLY SPIRIT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN LOWER SHANDON CHURCH CORK,

ON THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 1837,

BY THE REV. HORACE TOWNSEND, A. M.,

(Rector of Carrigaline,)

I JOHN ii, 18 and 20.

“ Little children, it is the last time : and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists ; whereby we know that it is the last time.

“ But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.”

IF we survey the progress of religion hitherto, we cannot fail to observe, that it has always met with hindrance and opposition. This has been manifold in kind and degree, though always to be traced to one parent principle—it has ever had its origin in the unchanged averseness of man's fallen heart to the will of God. Our Saviour plainly intimated to his Apostles that the cause of truth and love would meet many adversaries in the world ; and when they, fully enlightened from above, went forth in his name, they both felt this themselves, and foresaw it for times to come. My text is a proof: St. John in it declares the acknowledged

belief of the church “ ye know that antichrist shall come,” and he states his own conviction that “ even now are there many antichrists.” Within and without the Church there then existed enemies ; some endeavouring to destroy by direct attack, others labouring to seduce by plausible perversion. But while the Apostle thus admits the church's danger, he points to her true defence—he reminds her, that she possessed a power ever new and vigorous, capable of detecting and overthrowing all the varying forms of evil—“ But ye have an unction from the Holy one, and ye know all things.”

I conceive, my brethren, that we may

well apply to the subject we are met this day to consider, namely our special need of the outpouring of the Spirit at the present time, the twofold statement of the Apostle in these verses—we too may say, “even now are there many antichrists;” our safety also lies in “the unction from the Holy one.”

I am conscious that this subject, though one that must be interesting and profitable, if rightly handled by a preacher, yet involves considerable difficulty, and danger of falling perhaps into the very error he seeks to condemn; for who will say that he is himself free from the errors which mark his time, and therefore competent to the delicate and difficult task of bringing them to a scriptural standard, and pronouncing a fair judgment upon the prevalent opinions of his own day. I arrogate to myself no such infallibility; but looking with you for the guidance of the great Teacher of whom I have to speak, I trust I may not “darken counsel by words without knowledge.”

It is my especial duty to direct your minds to that which peculiarly marks and concerns the present time; but as the characteristics of all successive generations have a family likeness, and spring from a common source, I must not entirely pass over what, on this subject, is common to all times—if it be indeed true that we do want the wholesome operations of the Divine Spirit, it is equally certain that His agency has been always needed—but, upon this latter point I shall very briefly touch.

In the first place, then, I would remind you, that fallen man always needs the life-giving operation of the Spirit, because he is *spiritually dead*; he is “alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him, because of the blindness of his heart.” (Ephes. iv. 18.) Ignorance has fast closed all the avenues to his heart, and folly and depravity inhabit the chambers within. Without the Spirit, man is fatally ignorant; he knows not the truth, and is unable, even if he were

willing, which he is not, to discover it. The twilight of his unaided reason discovers the realities which surround him but dimly and in part; he cannot penetrate with his unpurged eye the gloom in which the forms of truth, though discerned, are to him distorted and misplaced; while the beams of his natural conscience, too nearly resemble the lightning's occasional and fearful flash which occurs in the tempest, and reveals to the terrified mariner for a moment the rock or the abyss over which he hangs suspended, but gives no steady lustre to guide him into the calm and desired haven. Those “things of God” which contain all, that as immortal and sinful creatures are most precious to us, “knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.” Until God revealed them by the same Spirit, it “never entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God has prepared for those who love him.” Life and immortality, the forgiveness of sins, the restoration of the Divine image, a share in the inheritance of the saints in light, were in every sense far from man; he knew not where they were, nor did he know the way. Unrenewed man, we must remember, is “without strength” and without holiness; his mind is sensual, the crown which the purpose of the Trinity in creation (Gen. i. 26.) placed upon his head, is fallen from him and he tramples it beneath his feet—the sentence pronounced upon the tempter, has, in a spiritual sense, taken effect on his soul, “upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life—” being thus in the flesh, he can neither see nor please God, and has at all times equally required the operation of the Spirit to “restore his soul,” to acquaint him with eternal truth, and, by its instrumentality, to create him after the image of God in knowledge, righteousness and true holiness. The Christian also has had at all times to “fight the good fight of faith;” he has been always called to mortify the desires of the flesh and the mind, and to resist

the temptations of the world, and the Devil. Believers have, therefore, at all times, needed the power and grace of the self-same Spirit, to strengthen, and to humble, to guide, and to guard. And amidst all the varieties of time and place, there are few, if any, where instances might not be found, to prove the victorious grace of the Holy One in the sanctification of souls.

But I proceed to my chief purpose this day—THE APPLICATION OF OUR SUBJECT TO THE PRESENT TIME. I believe that the distinctive characters of the present age, both for good and evil, are very plainly marked, and in some leading points, not to be mistaken. Looking, then, upon our generation, and its religious state and prospects, I would describe it as *a time of knowledge, a time of excitement, and a time of opportunity*. I think that a few plain reflections, arising out of each of these, will abundantly convince us, that we do greatly need, and should fervently seek, the outpouring of the Spirit at the present day.

1st. *This is a time of knowledge*. I need not prove what all admit, and what is commonly hailed as the glory of our age, that in the language of prophecy, “many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased.” God forbid that we should regret this for a moment—the evils of ignorance have been too long, and too widely manifest in the world, not to rejoice that the light of knowledge is spreading; but I believe that the wise and the good will “rejoice with trembling.” It has ever been the tendency of man’s fallen mind, to turn that which is in itself good, to a cause of evil; and whatever is most powerful for good, when directed by truth and wisdom, is most mighty to evil, when in the hands of folly or falsehood. This remark, we think, strongly applies to human knowledge.

Knowledge undoubtedly “puffeth up.” It engenders pride, and chiefly when it is both superficial and extensive, flowing, as it may now be said to do, in a stream

both wide and shallow. I believe there is much wisdom in Lord Bacon’s remark, that “a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion,” The depth of which he speaks must at least humble, for it discovers ignorance; but the observation may well remind us of our need of the Spirit’s influence to correct the dangers of wide-spread, superficial knowledge. Nothing will keep humble the mind that knows a little of every thing,—which is a very common result of modern education,—but acquaintance with those Gospel doctrines which *search*, while they *purify* the heart.

At the present time we know, that instruction in the sciences, and improvement in the arts, is advanced and advancing. The ever-watchful enemy of man is not ignorant of this, and we believe, that as he sees his ancient prison-house of ignorance and superstition crumbling to decay, and the captives beginning to come out, he changes his device, and lauds and magnifies human knowledge, when he can no longer restrain it. There is a very dangerous delusion now prevalent, that literary education will reform the morals, and purify the heart; and this is the great panacea for public and private evils in the minds of many who certainly think that they are, and I believe intend to be, great philanthropists. If the diffusion of what they seem exclusively to consider “useful knowledge,” could make men happy and good, the community would indeed be highly favored. But, perhaps, some of these giants in human knowledge may be children in acquaintance with their own hearts, and with Scriptural truth. I believe that the modern ideas to which I now allude are founded on an unscriptural and flattering estimate of human nature,—for what can acquaintance with all intricacies of art, or information about all the varieties of the animal and vegetable world, do to make the heart good and happy, while it is neither at peace with its own indelible

accuser, nor with its God? Sad experience proves that light and love do not always go together; and without the love of God in the heart, existing as a practical principle of godliness, human knowledge is too weak to curb the passions, and is but a plaything or a tool in the hands of selfishness. We need, then, the diffusion of spiritual truth with our knowledge.— Without it, the finest feelings of the mind are “a light that leads astray.” And as far as the cultivation of knowledge in any class of society leads men to overlook the Bible, to feel its saving truths less needful and precious, to think that they can do without it, living or dying, so far they are ruinously deceiving themselves. I need not now impress upon you, that *national education*, to be a blessing, must be *religious*—and that *religious instruction*, to bear the test of spreading knowledge must be purely *scriptural*—and from these premises it necessarily follows, that public instruction, to prosper, must be based upon the Bible. The man of the world may think it a little thing to say, that upon such education alone can we expect the blessing of God; but surely it is not a little thing, for “there is no wisdom nor safety against the Lord.” We do then want, and should seek for, the gift of God’s Spirit, that our teachers, as well as our learners, may be taught of Him, and that the spread of knowledge may be a spread of truth—the truth that “maketh wise unto salvation;” which gives peace and consolation in time of trouble, and establishes a willing morality in the heart and life.

I would only further observe here, that I think we need the Spirit’s teaching, because of the very general cultivation at present of one particular branch of knowledge—I mean the study of the works of God in nature. This affords, like the world from whence it is drawn, many a delightful scene, many a curious and beautiful fact to gratify the student’s mind—and it is truly delightful and useful to look from nature up to nature’s God.

But there may be in it a very great temptation to think of the visible and material, to the exclusion of the invisible and spiritual world. There is often very little thought, or mental exercise in this constant reading about the wonders and productions of nature—it leads man away from himself, to other things which may amuse or even profit him, but with which he has comparatively little to do. The constant study of this knowledge may lead youth to be intelligent observers of what is external, but it is likely to give a disrelish for what is internal; and we do think there is considerable danger, that the books upon natural history, now so common, will have an unfavorable effect upon the *mind*, by accustoming it too much to studies which require no exertion, and indispose to those which do; and in religion, while a proper mixture of such information is most desirable, it is certainly injurious, if it at all take that leading place which should be given to the implanting and the developing of moral and religious principles. How needful, my brethren, then, is the work of the Spirit, to keep our minds to truth, and to impart to that truth a living power. How fervently should Christians solicit, at the throne of grace, for that energy which alone can make a day of knowledge to be a day of holiness—which, while it draws a thousand blessings from earth, brings down better from heaven.

2. I proceed next to remark: *The present is a time of excitement.* This observation is almost equally obvious as the former. There is excitement in every department of human exertion—political excitement sways multitudes and nations, and is no longer confined to statesmen—the zeal of scientific pursuit fills its votaries with enthusiasm, and time and talent are devotedly consecrated to its service. But it is to the religious world that the subject directs us—there too, there is excitement. Zeal and inquiry are there alive, forming a strong characteristic of our day, as compared

with most that have preceded it. That this awakening is desirable, and even glorious, we are bound gratefully to acknowledge; but there are dangers and evils connected with it, from the weakness and sinfulness of man. We do live in a very general revival of religion, and for this we are unfeignedly to bless God; but for this very reason we do peculiarly need the out-pouring of the Spirit of wisdom and truth. I can well imagine, that some thirty years ago, when vital religion was but little felt, and apathy and formality prevailed much in the Church, that a genuine Christian might exclaim, "Oh, let there only be a revival of godliness, let tame morality be exchanged for affectionate and faithful Gospel statements in the pulpit,—let the general spirit of slumber be but broken by the trumpet of truth, and all will be well." Alas! such an expectation would not sufficiently allow for the devices of Satan, or the deceitfulness of the heart. When the soul is spiritually awakened, there are certain dangers and temptations to which it is peculiarly liable. I believe history will prove, that at every revival of godliness, forms of misshapen error have started into being:—it was so, as my text implies, in Apostolic times; the Word then, had "free course, and was glorified;"—but tares sprang up with the wheat: some arose, denying the resurrection—others introduced damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them—(2nd Timothy, ii. 18—Jude iv.) At the Reformation also, some strange perversions of sound doctrine and extravagant opinions followed the blaze of Gospel-light, which then illumined the darkness of Christendom. Satan, thus devising to hinder, and, if possible, disgrace that ever-memorable triumph of truth and liberty. Again, in England, during the commonwealth, and amidst the Gospel-light which then undoubtedly shone, the enemy but too successfully cast disrepute upon the truth, by leading many astray into wild anticipations, or into dangerous

doctrines, subversive of practical godliness. I do not say, that in our time, there is an exact counterpart to all or any of these, but from them we may well expect, in our revival, similar devices of our wise, and ever-watchful enemy.—Must we not consider, my brethren, as a remarkable evidence of this, that most strange occurrence of our time, not yet come to its end—that melancholy perversion of the very doctrine before us, which has afforded so fair a mark for the shafts of ungodly ridicule, and filled with shame and sorrow every sound and sober mind. I do believe, that if some years ago, when the Gospel was beginning to spread among us, those who then hailed its rising were told, that many real Christians would so far depart from the spirit of a sound mind, as to proclaim to the world, that the convulsive, unmeaning jargon of nervous delirium was the actual voice of the wise and holy God, they would have regarded is as utterly incredible—they would admit that there might be ignorant imposters like Joanna Southcott; that there might arise glorious, but half-witted dreamers, like Behmen or Swedenburg; but that educated, godly men could embrace the absurdities of Irvingism, they would have hoped was beyond possibility. That this has been the case is as humiliating a proof of the frailty and fallibility of the human mind, as ever the world saw, and it does most loudly proclaim our urgent need of the Spirit of truth and soberness, that our zeal may be according to knowledge, and our love abound in all judgment. I need not, I trust, impress upon you that the religion of the Bible is "a reasonable service." She does not, if I may use the expression, leave common sense behind upon earth, while she soars upward to heaven, but rather combines all the powers of the understanding into the healthful exercise of a "right mind." We grant, that the impression made by the Apostle upon a worldly mind, was—"Thou art beside thyself." But we know, that even to his clouded reason, Pau

could unanswerably appeal, "I am not mad, but speak the words of truth and soberness."

There is also, I conceive, amidst the religious excitement of our time—a danger, less alarming though more common, I mean a thirst for *novelty*—an appetite for new views and new teachers, not to be satisfied by plain scriptural food. Many truly pious persons seem to want something more than this; they do not seem to be contented with free room to serve God quietly and devotedly "in the calling wherein they were called—" it is not enough for them, that they can hear constantly the faithful preaching of the word—that they may cultivate without any hindrance, except from their own hearts, private communion with God—that to the full extent of their talent they may go about doing good:—this does not suffice them, they must go deeper, and consequently it is to be feared that many who would be told by an Apostle to "worship God in the Spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus," while doing quietly their own business in ruling or guiding their own houses, are engaged discussing and deciding upon the constitution of Churches, the orders of the ministry, the fulfilment of prophecy, and various similar topics, that are exciting indeed, but to them little salutary, and under the idea of eminent holiness, too apt to lead their minds away from their plain and primary duties. We are not to forget also the sad evils of division in the Church, and party spirit which this causes. That separation, however in itself injurious to the cause of God and unscriptural, may be a clear duty, is certain—but it wants more to justify it than the changeable impulses of *every* scrupulous conscience—it is neither the spirit of wisdom or humility to do a certain evil for the sake of a very doubtful good. Surely it is not every conviction, taken up from partial views which probably I shall soon lay down as I have done others before, that will justify me in causing the great evil of separation; especially when these

views respect not the foundation of my peace or my holiness, are such as I shall not bestow a thought upon when I am dying, but rather matters non-essential, and requiring a patience and extent of investigation that I am neither able or willing to give? It is because I fear this spirit is abroad, that I would speak thus. We do greatly need the calm and true light which the Holy One sheds abroad in the heart obedient to the truth; this alone can temper party zeal in spiritual minds: and surely the true "unction from the Holy One" will ever lead us to "let our moderation be known unto all men" in the furtherance of party interests. There is much of the mind of the flesh in the disposition which engrosses our spiritual affections within our own sect, and leads us assiduously and constantly to labour in drawing christians from other bodies to our own. We may call our party "*the Church*," and fancy that its interests and those of Christianity are identical, but this is what all narrow minded enthusiasts have done before in all times, and only proves, within what a narrow circle, a spiritual mind may be brought to move. We do, I am sure all need that enlarged teaching of the Spirit, which ever draws the heart to those great, glorious, and undoubted truths into which all the children of God are led. Let us never fancy that our own system is so plainly true that all others ought, and will come over to it—it seems so plain, simply because it is the centre and circumference of our spiritual vision. true unity will never be thus attained; The fervour of spiritual feeling, however absorbing, must never be mistaken for "the wisdom pure and peaceable which comes from above." Let us not forget that there may be much of it, and of the accompanying religious language which often forms the pass-word of a close communion, much of separation, even to singularity, from the world, and all the while there may be much of self indulged, and little controuled, and great want of the regulation of mind, the humility of

thought, the largeness of heart, which constitutes true wisdom.

I have dwelt, my friends, from a sense of duty, upon this tendency among Christians which I believe is a mark of our times, and which appears to me to be contrary to the mind of Christ.

3. I proceed, now, briefly to observe, that we live in a *day of opportunity*. We have equal cause to be thankful and to feel responsible, because it is so. God has opened, at home and abroad, a great and effectual door for the friends of his cause and kingdom, though "there are many adversaries." Now, to enable each of us to obey the call thus given, and to serve our generation after the will of God, we need "the unction of the Holy One." Without the will and the strength which come from above, enlarged opportunity will only be increased condemnation; and without the energy of the Spirit, all human means and providential openings can do nothing. In the valley of vision, when the command went forth, there was a shaking of the dry bones; but it was a scene of confusion and death, until the prophet called upon the wind to breathe on the slain, and then "they lived and stood an exceeding great army." So must more than knowledge, even Scriptural knowledge, go forth to the work of the Lord; it is by the outpouring of the Spirit that souls and nations shall be regenerated; and to *all*, this is a day of opportunity; none are unable, if they be willing, to aid in the good work. Never before, certainly, was there a period when, from the variety of means engaged, and the principle of combination for their furtherance, such opportunity was offered to every one, to do something for the Lord. For this reason we need individually the strength of the Holy One, that we may "work the works of God." Without his quickening energy we will never say, "Lord what wouldest thou have me to do?" He alone can overcome the indolence which contents and deceives itself by good wishes; He alone can dis-

engage from worldliness, and stir us up to action and endeavour for the Lord. As a body, the Church of Christ wants the outpouring of the Spirit, that she may meet the demands now made on her both by God and man. The fields of missionary labour "are white unto the harvest, but the labourers are few." Many nations seem preparing to welcome the Gospel, and to stretch forth their hands unto God, and there only wants a revival of the spirit of the apostolic days, when "many willingly offered themselves" not "conferring with flesh and blood," to rend asunder "the veil that is spread over all nations."

Assuredly then, my beloved brethren, if there was ever a time when we should unitedly plead the promise of the Spirit at the throne of grace, it is the present. Our dangers and our privileges alike urge it, the church and the world equally demand it. On the giving of the Spirit, all that is dear to the Christian depends—does he desire that his own soul should be as "a watered garden," that "his leaf should not wither, and whatsoever he doeth it should prosper?" Let him seek for his own soul the unction of the Holy One."

Does he mourn over a world lying in the wicked one, and ardently long to behold the icy chains of Heathen delusion loosed, not torn asunder by the mighty waves of popular commotion or infidel knowledge, but melting under the silent transforming influence of the Sun of Righteousness? Oh let him pray that an Almighty arm may wield the Spirit's sword, and that the breath of the Lord may dispel the darkness and cause the true light to shine.

Does he, for the church's sake, anxiously wish to see divisions healed, defects remedied, and "the truth in love" felt and spoken?—he must look upward to the Father of Lights, for this "good and perfect gift."

Does the Christian feel the great importance of having teachers who shall

'rightly divide the word of truth,'—men who, like the faithful and honored servant of the Lord, that so long ministered in this place,* shall be sound in faith; wise, yet not compromising; zealous, but not rash; stating the truth in its proportion, as well as its clearness; preaching the law to prepare for the Gospel, and preaching the Gospel to establish the law?—he must pray the Lord of the harvest, to send forth *such* labourers into his harvest.

Oh, how desirable is it, that through united prayer these blessings should be largely granted—then indeed, we might hope for great things. We should no longer see Christian zeal spending its strength in dividing Churches and societies about tests and theories, weakening the good cause, offending weak brethren, and affording sad triumph to an ungodly world, far wiser in its own generation: but rather giving its whole force directly to the great work of doing good, in the strength, and after the example of Jesus; like him, with charity and calmness, yet with untiring devotedness, doing the will of God from the heart.—Then would our self-willed spirits be kept in the practical obscurity where alone they are useful, and our common Protestantism,

freed from her chief weakness, exemplifying the truth in its beauty, publishing it in its purity, would go forth to her bloodless victories, "fair as the sun, clear as the moon, and terrible as an army with banners."

Let the subject lead us, dear friends, first to look at home. Let us each, before the Lord, ask, in reference to these errors in act and spirit, which I have weakly, but honestly set before you—"Is it I?" Are we, as individuals, walking in the light of the Lord, rejoicing, not in the spiritual excitement which is the sickly offspring of exaggerated doctrines or heated fancy, but in the holy cheerfulness, the patient confidence, the sober elevation which springs from a heart touched by the pure and equable flame of true godliness? Are we "ready for every good word and work," "not seeking our own, but the profit of many that they may be saved?" May our consciences bear us witness that we are "thus minded; and if in any thing we be otherwise-minded, may God reveal even this to us;" and may we, "building ourselves up in our most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep ourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life."

* The Rev. Dr. Quarry.

A Sermon by the Rev. HENRY HARDY, of Dunballogue, forming another of the series preached in Cork, will appear in an early number.

THE TEACHING OF THE SPIRIT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN MONKSTOWN CHURCH, DIOCESE OF DUBLIN,

ON WHITSUNDAY, 14TH MAY, 1837,

BY THE REV. JOHN GRANT, A. M.

Curate of the Parish.

JOHN xiv. 25, 26.

“ These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you ; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”

THE history of man's redemption has its dark and bright passages ; it contains events of humiliation and of triumph, of suffering and of joy. The Christian, with the eye of faith, beholds his Lord and Saviour born into the world, and exposed to all the pains and inconvenience of childhood. After years of humble retirement, passed with his earthly parents, he sees him entering on his ministry, and in the very outset tempted by the evil spirit. He follows him through the few, yet eventful years of his public life, and witnesses the opposition and insults of his enemies, the fickleness and unbelief of his friends and disciples. He then accompanies the Saviour to the last scene of his sufferings and death, and beholds him in the garden of Gethsemane, before the tribunals of the chief priests, and Herod, and Pilate, and finally nailed to the cross—so far, all the events connected with man's redemption are gloomy and painful. But those were only the preparatory steps to the glory of Christ ; and all the events which follow proclaim his joy and triumph. The Christian beholds his Saviour crucified through weakness, yet living again by the power of God, rising triumphant from the grave, and returning victorious from the conquest of him who had conquered all things—Death. He next sees him ascending into heaven to assume his mediatorial kingdom—and on this day the

Church invites her members to commemorate the first fruits of his victory and ascension, in the performance of the gracious promise which he had made to his disciples—“ I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever,”—a promise no longer receiving its fulfilment in the extraordinary operations of the Holy Ghost (for with the necessity for miraculous gifts, the possession of them has ceased in the Church) but still receiving its fulfilment, as I trust many persons know from sweet experience, in his ordinary operations, in the conversion and sanctification of the heart, and in the abundant and gracious communications of peace and joy.

The operations of the Holy Ghost may be divided into two classes—the *extraordinary* and *ordinary*. The first includes the inspiration of the sacred writers, for, as St. Peter says, “ prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” To the same divine source the apostles and disciples of Christ were indebted for their acquaintance with divine knowledge. The Spirit taught them all things, enabled them to understand perfectly, and to communicate, without the least mixture of error, the great truths which concern the salvation of man ; and by his power they were enabled also to remember accurately

all the conversations which they had enjoyed with their Master.—“He shall bring all things,” says Christ, “to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Among the extraordinary operations of the Spirit, may be included the miracles which Christ wrought in his mediatorial office, and also the miraculous gifts which abounded in the early Christian Church. “for all these worked one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he pleased.”

In his ordinary operations, the Spirit may be viewed as a teacher, an advocate, and a comforter. By his power the truth is written on the fleshly tables of the heart, the will is brought into cheerful submission to the Divine will, and all the holy affections and desires of the child of God, his love, and fear, and hope, his sorrow for sin, and heavenly mindedness are implanted and sustained in the soul. The same Spirit helpeth also our infirmities, and he awakens in the heart its first anxiety about spiritual things; and from his influence proceed the fervent supplications and petitions of the renewed heart for pardon and grace, its humble and contrite acknowledgments of guilt, and the praises and thanksgivings which it offers to the Father of mercies. He is also the comforter of the children of God; from him they receive the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, “Abba, Father,” and he gives them “peace and joy in believing.” Time would not allow me to consider the operations of the Holy Ghost, in all his offices of teacher, advocate, and comforter; I shall therefore confine your attention to the first:—and may that Spirit, whose work we desire to describe, be present with us, and remain with us, and give us all to know, by the experience of our hearts, in what this heavenly teaching consists.

In the salvation of every sinner a two-fold work is performed—a work *for* him, and a work *in* him—a work by which he is pardoned, and a work by which he is sanctified—a work by which he is made the child of God, and a work by which the image of God in righteousness and true holiness is stamped upon his heart. St. Paul, in the first epistle to the Corinthians, 6th chapter, 11th verse, speaks of this two-fold work—“But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” And

you may remember that St. Peter, in the first epistle, 1st chapter, 2nd verse, describes the children of God, as “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.” The first part of this work is performed by Christ, by means of his meritorious death: the second, by the Holy Spirit, which the Saviour has obtained for his people—and both are absolutely requisite, and must concur in the salvation of every child of God. Without the first, there would not have been any ground of hope towards God for the sinner,—without the second, the sinner could not build on this foundation; without the first, the way to eternal life had not been opened,—without the latter, the sinner would not possess the meetness of heart which is required for the enjoyment of the inheritance of the saints in light. But when this two-fold work is accomplished, the sinner has all that is necessary for his salvation. Christ opens the way to eternal life, and the Spirit communicates faith in his blood, and thus brings the sinner to God, by the new and living way which the Saviour has opened; and by this faith the Spirit sanctifies the heart, implants in it holy affections and desires, and adorns the life with all those lovely graces and virtues, by which his heavenly Master is glorified, his own happiness advanced, and the believer has imparted to him that “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.” The work of the Spirit, in his office of a teacher, is to enlighten the mind with divine truth, to produce a sincere and heartfelt belief of the doctrines of revelation, to implant in the heart holy affections, to curb and control our passions and appetites, and to substitute for the works of the flesh the pleasant fruits of the Spirit—for injustice, fidelity; for excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, temperance; for envy, goodness; for passion, meekness; for pride, humility; for selfishness, kindness; for malice, love. It is thus that his work is described in Scripture. He opens the heart to receive the truth, to know the things which are freely given us of God. He leads the sheep of Christ in the paths of righteousness, and fills them with his fruit which is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth; in every temptation his grace is sufficient for them, he strengthens them mightily in

the inner man, and thus is present with them, and dwells in them, so that they grow up, as the Apostle has expressed it, into "temples of the Holy Ghost—habitations of God through the Spirit."

It will be useful to examine this work of the Spirit more particularly. Whatever correct and accurate information man possesses respecting the nature of the Divine Being, his will, the way of acceptance for sinners, and their future condition, is contained in the revelation given by the Holy Ghost. Now his first operation is, to write the truths of the Gospel upon the heart: until this is done, the sinner is unable to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. There is an *outward* teaching by the letter of Scripture, which leaves the heart uninfluenced, and cold and dead to spiritual things—there is besides this an *inward* teaching, which is spiritual and practical, and attended with impressions upon the heart, which are suitable to the truths which it receives. The law of the Lord "written upon the fleshly tables of the heart, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God," is, as David says, "perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." And when that principle of faith, which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," has been implanted in the heart—then the holy affections and desires and graces of the christian character will follow—"sanctify them" (says Christ) "through thy word, thy word is truth." The correct understanding of this subject is of much importance, because the fruit of the Spirit grows on the tree of faith; and it must be plain to the simplest comprehension, that before we may reasonably hope to gather the fruit, the tree must be planted. We say then, that the truth as it is in Jesus, received by the power of the Holy Ghost, is the source of all the graces of the christian character; and the whole range of divine truth is employed by the Spirit for this purpose; all its doctrines lend their aid to the formation of the Christian character—I must confine your attention to a few.

The first and principal truth of the Gospel is the doctrine of a crucified Saviour—the wonderful and most precious doctrine, that for us men, and for our salvation, the eternal Son of God

assumed the nature of man, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and by his death made a way of return for our lost world to the favour of its offended God; and that in consideration of his sacrifice, a full and free pardon of all their offences, and a sure title of eternal life is offered to all that believe—this is the great leading truth of the Gospel, an humbling, yet an exalting truth, which gives to the revelation which announces it, its character of "glad tidings." But to this truth, the heart offers a strong, and, unless to the Almighty Spirit, insurmountable resistance: pride "the strong man armed, keepeth his palace," and is not cast out until "a stronger than he cometh," even the Spirit of God, and makes room for the Saviour; and it may not be denied that this is an humbling, and therefore, to the natural man, offensive truth: it supposes man to be in a ruined condition, it makes no account of his rank or wealth, or talents, or natural amiability of disposition, or esteem in the eyes of his fellow men, but demands from him a full and unqualified admission of his lost state, and requires that he should come in and plead gently to the charge, and, in deep humility yet firm confidence, throw himself upon the mercy of God in Christ, fully persuaded of the life-giving power of his sacrifice, and desiring to obtain pardon, only because of its all-sufficient merit.—This is faith, and it is the work of the Holy Ghost, He convinces of sin, strips the sinner of all self-dependance, shows to him the extent and spirituality of the law, expels the unbelieving thought that God would not abide by the condition of his law—perfect obedience, causes the sinner to feel his wickedness, and the justice of God in his condemnation; and having thus humbled the heart, and prepared it for the glad and grateful reception of pardon, the same Spirit whispers to the alarmed soul, the sweet and gracious news of a Saviour, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and enables the sinner to trust to his power and love, and to rest his hope, with humble yet undoubting confidence upon the rock of ages, "the corner stone, elect, precious, laid in Zion," of which the truth of God has said, for the strong consolation of his people, "he that believeth on him shall not be ashamed." Again, the word of God speaks of a most

solemn account which all must render at the day of judgment of their lives, and the employment of the talents committed to their charge. This solemn scene, of which the natural man hears and reads without apprehension, and pursues his downward course of unbelief and wickedness, as if this life were to last for ever, or, after death there were no judgment, this most solemn, yet, much neglected truth, is brought home to the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, and obtains in it a fixed and permanent place, and exerts an awakening and restraining influence, and causes the believer daily to approach the throne of grace, "that he may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

There is one other truth I would notice, The promise of eternal life to the children of God. The natural man is blind to this glorious prospect, he cannot appreciate the value of this "pearl of great price;" he prefers the foolish and dying pursuits of this world, to the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away:" you may tell him of its value, but you may as well speak to the man born blind of the loveliness of nature, until the Spirit opens the eye of faith, and gives him to know the hope of his calling and the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints—*then*, and not till then, he understands the force and meaning of the words of Christ—"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"—*then*, he appreciates in some measure the value of the crown of righteousness, and amid many temptations and trials, runs with patience his Christian race, and "presses forward to the prize of his high calling in Christ Jesus." It is thus that faith imparts a reality and value in the estimation of the believer to divine things, making the doctrines of the Gospel to produce their proper and suitable impressions: and the truths of the Gospel received by faith, are the means which the Holy Ghost employs for communicating to the child of God the image of his Heavenly Father, his holy desires, good counsels, and just works. And mark the change which takes place in the sinner, when brought by grace to the knowledge of the truth; the direction of his will is now altered, formerly, his only care was to please himself, and being inclined to evil, he pleased himself with the indul-

gence of his sinful desires; but now the bent and bias of his will is to holiness; and though his heart be still corrupt, and though he be encompassed with infirmity, yet he finds in himself a decided inclination and a longing wish to live to the glory of his heavenly Father; with the Apostle, he must lament that he has "a law in his members warring against the law of his mind," that "the good which he would, he does not, and the evil which he would not, that he does," yet he does not lie down patiently under the power of his corrupt nature, he is not the contented servant of sin, the bent of his heart is to holiness, for this he strives, for this he prays, the aspiration of his heart is that of David, "Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!" and daily the petition ascends from a sincere and fervent spirit to the throne of grace, "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." His heart now melts with love to God, because he has believed the love which God has to him; he is humble, because he knows his lost state; resigned to the divine will, because all his trials come from his reconciled Father; he hates every false way, because sin is hateful to God whom he loves; he is patient under injuries, forgiving to the unkind, tender and compassionate to the afflicted and distressed, because he believes the love of God to him a wretched and justly condemned sinner; he is afraid to transgress, because of the solemn account which he must render at the last day; and he prefers the promise of eternal life, to all earthly pursuits and enjoyments, because the veil has been taken from his eyes, and he has learned to appreciate the value and glory and blessedness of the heavenly inheritance.

I trust you now understand the way in which the Holy Spirit produces the holy affections and desires and graces of the children of God. Faith is the tree on which this fruit grows—and by the continued exercise of faith, the Christian character acquires greater consistency, and a closer resemblance to the Divine image. My brethren, in such faith as we have described, and in these holy affections, the teaching of the Spirit consists. It is called in Scripture, "the renewing of the Holy Ghost, through sanctification," and if any desire to know, whether they have the Spirit of Christ, they should be referred for an answer to their hearts and

conduct. There are certain affections and desires, and actions, which are called the fruit of the Spirit; and where these may be found, though in some less matured, than in others, it may not be doubted that the heart is the temple of the Holy Ghost. But let us be sure that we have indeed the good fruit of the Spirit: self-deception is possible on this subject, and not unusual. Mere amiability of natural disposition, kindliness of conduct, and courteousness of manner, integrity of character, and a high sense of honor, when unaccompanied by faith and pious affections, such as love to God, a desire for his glory and heavenly mindedness, are the wild, though it may not be denied in some measure, pleasant fruits of the natural and unconverted heart. My Brethren, ignorance and superstition, by a pretence to efforts not to be expected, have sometimes caused the Infidel and nominal Christian to scoff at the doctrine of Divine influence. There are, however, holy affections, and lovely graces and virtues, such as have been described, which are Scriptural marks of the indwelling of the Spirit in our hearts; and if these may not be found, there is much occasion for alarm respecting our spiritual state, "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his," and if not Christ's, whose are we? Brethren, think of this—It is true that the Spirit's influence upon the mind and heart, is a mysterious and invisible work; and some, because unable to explain the mode of his operation have been disposed to deny it altogether. Now, let such persons reflect, that there is a circumstance in the natural world, of daily and familiar occurrence, which is equally mysterious, and yet may not be denied,—"The wind bloweth where it listeth,"—none can explain how it acts upon objects, but none can doubt of its influence, because we may observe its effects, when it moves the forest leaves, or moans through the ruined tower, or refreshes the burning cheek; or, arising in its might and fury, raises the mountain waves to heaven, and makes the heart of "them that go down to the sea in ships, and occupy their business in great waters" to tremble. And so it is with the influence of the Holy Spirit, that which it is important for us to know is well known, and surely we may be content to experience the gladdening and holy effects of his influence, although we are unable to

comprehend the way in which they are produced.

The various modes by which the Holy Spirit leads the unconverted to the knowledge of Christ is a subject of much importance, but one which requires more time for its due consideration than may be given to it at present. As he is the Almighty Spirit, all circumstances of time and place, all events are under his control, and may be employed as his infinite wisdom shall direct. "The vault of heaven with all its wonders, the beauties of created nature, the infant's cry, the wife's smile, the parent's grave, the bed of sickness, the sudden stroke of death, the voice of God's minister, the counsel of a friend, the reproof of an enemy, wrath and mercy, sorrow and joy, shame and hope, all thoughts, all passions, all delights, whatever stirs the mortal frame, may be vocal with God's Spirit; for there is not any thing in the mighty universe which he cannot mould into an instrument for his blessed purpose."

But chiefly he employs the word which he inspired, and there is much variety in his dealings with the unconverted. In some cases, he presents to the sinner the terrors of the Lord, and makes him to tremble for his future and eternal state; in others he shows the heart the vanity of this world, and the glory and excellence of the heavenly treasure, and thus awakens its hopes; and in both cases there may be a considerable period of doubt and fear, and much prayer before the sinner is brought to believe the love of God in Christ; and in other cases, he at once convinces the sinner of his guilt and danger, and reveals to him the love of Christ, and makes him at once to cast himself before his cross in deep humility, but firm confidence in the love and power of the Saviour, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" There is considerable variety in the way by which the Holy Spirit brings the unconverted to the knowledge of Christ; and therefore my unconverted hearers, when you find the Spirit knocking at your hearts, open to him at once, receive him gladly, and pray him to carry on and finish the good work, and even though you should not find him knocking at your hearts, though he should not awaken your fears or hopes, think not that you may sit idle, and continue without danger in the ways of ungodliness; ask and seek, and knock

by earnest prayer for the presence and teaching of the Holy Spirit. The teaching of the heart in all its stages, in its commencement and continuance is the work of the Spirit; from the first faint motions of spiritual life, through all the dangers and temptations of the world, to its consummation in the realms of everlasting happiness, all the honor should be ascribed to Him. How plainly this important truth is stated in the word of God; "no man can come unto me except the Father draw him;"—"it is written in the prophets they shall be all taught of God, every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." "It is God that worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure;" "being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform, or finish it, until the day of Jesus Christ." Another language by which the Spirit describes the change in the natural state of the sinner, declares his inability to commence, and if not to commence, we may not suppose to carry on the work of faith and holiness: it is called "a resurrection from the dead," "a new creation—" figuration language it is true, but language which means this, that a most important change must be made in the spiritual condition of the natural man, and that this change cannot be effected by himself.

Many present are aware, no doubt, that with respect to this as well as every other doctrine, our scriptural church holds fast to the authority of divine truth, and accordingly she teaches in the 10th article, "that the condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God, wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will." The same doctrine is maintained throughout her liturgy, as must be known to all familiar with it: and thus in opposition to the ancient heretics, and to those in the present day who agree with them in their principles, while they differ in name; she maintains the necessity of divine agency to commence and carry on the

work of sanctification, to inspire and nourish and maintain the spiritual life.

In stating thus distinctly the inability of man to convert or sanctify himself, my object is to induce you to seek for strength from the Spirit of God, in the use of the appointed means of grace; and to take you off from a dependance upon your own strength which will assuredly prove unequal to this great and all important work. If you seek the Spirit's grace, you will most certainly obtain it. The Gospel teaches you, that there is a state of grace, the opposite to your state by nature, to which all must attain who desire to have their portion in the kingdom of Christ. A change from ignorance to the knowledge of divine truth, from impurity to purity, from carnal mindedness to heavenly mindedness: and what the Bible points out as the attainment of a Christian, it cannot be doubted, that the God of the Bible will freely communicate; and therefore, though in you dwelleth no good thing, God can, and *will*, if you seek his assistance, "work in you to will and to do." Though you are ignorant, he can instruct you with heavenly wisdom; though the world abounds with temptations, you may trust securely to him who has promised, that "with the temptation he will make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it," and though the enemy of your souls be a strong man, be of good courage; children of God, you have in your Saviour a protection and guardian, who has wisdom to know your wants, and power to relieve them—and blessed be his name, love, unchangeable love for you, equal to his wisdom and power. Use faithfully and constantly the means which he has appointed for communicating his assistance—"be sober, be vigilant," "Let the word of God dwell in you richly in all wisdom," attend to self examination and meditation, "pray without ceasing," devoutly and constantly accept the invitation to the Lord's table—the divine life will thus be daily strengthened, you will grow in the knowledge and love of God, and there will be more steadiness in your christian walk, the resemblance to Christ will be closer. But beware how you grieve the Spirit, or resist his motions, beware how you neglect the means thro' which he communicates his assistance. In proportion as you are attentive to his directions, and diligent in the use of the

means, will be your progress in divine knowledge and holiness; if you are stubborn or neglect the means, the new man will languish; if you persist in your misconduct he will die; we would put it to christians to say, whether it is not their experience, that, when they are obedient to the suggestions of the Spirit, and diligent in the use of means of grace, faith is active and vigorous, and all their graces are flourishing; while on the other hand, when they have been stubborn, or when prayer and watchfulness and the study of the word have been neglected, do they not find, that faith grows weak, the heart becomes cold, earthly things acquire a stronger influence, and temptations are not resisted with their wonted firmness; nor is this strange, because the soul, not having its proper food—the Holy Spirit, naturally becomes weak and languishing.

My converted hearers, bless God for the free grace which has taught you to know the Saviour; wait upon the Lord, and seek a larger measure of the Spirit. Set before you a high standard of holiness, even the example of Christ. The Almighty Spirit offers himself to your acceptance; be not satisfied with low attainments in knowledge and holiness—look upward, and press forward; what strength of faith may we not hope to obtain; what fervor of love to have kindled; what evil tempers may we not hope to overcome by the power of the Holy Ghost! If you are ignorant and cold and weak, and inconsistent in your christian walk, the blame rests with yourselves. The promise of God is “open thy mouth wide and I will fill it,” “ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you;” “blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”

And you, my unconverted hearers, suffer a few words. Alas! that we should have any such to address, when the arms of Divine mercy are open to receive them, and the Saviour ready to intercede for them, and the Spirit ready to convert them. Perhaps some of you will be disposed to say, if this account of the teaching of the Holy Spirit be correct, it cannot be denied that we are without the Spirit; and Satan may then whisper, be not alarmed, something less than this is sufficient, the word of God does not mean all that you have heard; and some may be disposed to give heed to the tempter. As you love your deathless soul, by the hope of heaven, by the fear of hell, examine carefully, whether the account you have heard agrees with the word of God; if not, pursue your course of unbelief and sin, without fear of a future judgment; only remember the misery which sin may occasion to yourselves and others even in the present life. But if this account does agree with the word of God,—oh seek to be the subjects of the converting and sanctifying influence of the Blessed Spirit. In Him there is offered to you a gift of inestimable value; for he only can lead you to the fountain of the Saviour's blood, in which you may wash and be clean, He alone can stamp the image of God upon your souls.

My unconverted hearers, thoughtless as you are, you must die; much as you love the world and its sin and folly, the grave will separate you from them! would you awake in eternity in peace? would you meet the mighty and the just God, as a reconciler Father? remember, that “as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

THE GOSPEL FLIGHT.

The peaceful sound of Gospel truth displays its glorious light ;
 And Erin, o'er thy mountains wide, that truth now wings its flight :
 Oh ! happy are the people, Lord, that find in thee repose,
 Blessings, like rain, shall compass them before this life shall close.

Thy truth is like the silver star that shed its precious light
 Upon the shepherds as they sat and watch'd their flocks by night,
 Yea, like the heavenly dew that fell on Hermon's flow'ry plain,
 Or, manna in the wilderness, thy favor'd to sustain.

The fragrant breeze of rosy morn perfumes the summer gale,
 Far sweeter treasures to my soul, the Gospel truths reveal :—
 Methinks I hear that heav'nly sound float on the evening breeze,
 And with what raptur'd ear I catch its echo through the trees !

Oh ! I shall often happy feel to think those beams of light
 Have spread their silver wings abroad, diffusing calm delight ;
 Have prov'd a source by which we may a happy Canaan find,—
 For Christ's undying love prevail'd and bought it for mankind.

Oh, that those rays of heav'nly light shed forth their saving power,
 To snatch the sinner from his doom before the death-bed hour,
 Before the Saviour's pard'ning love for ever took its flight,
 Leaving no gleam of hope behind to cheer an endless night !

The Gospel truth shall be my theme while in this world I roam,
 And in this willing heart of mine, that sound shall find a home,
 Shall meet the fondest welcome there, shall all my griefs remove,
 To feel my sins shall be forgiv'n through Christ's unfading love.

O heav'nly star ! to me display thy rays divinely bright,
 And cheer me on my weary way before the close of night ;
 That ere I sleep in chilly death my hopes an issue find—
 To feel that to my longing soul the Saviour has prov'd kind.

ISABELLA.

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THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. ROBERT J. M'GHEE.

REV. HENRY HARDY.

SALVATION BY GRACE.

A LECTURE,

DELIVERED IN BRAY, ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1837,

BY THE REV. ROBERT J. M'GHEE, A. M.

&c. &c.

EPHESIANS ii. 8, 9, 10.

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

In the previous part of this chapter, as you recollect in our last lecture, the Apostle gives us a picture of man as he is by nature, and man as he is by grace. Man as he is by nature—*doubly dead*, the sentence of death passed upon his soul, the judgment of eternal death awaiting him; like a criminal under sentence, the moment of whose execution is uncertain, but whose final doom is certain, that unless reprieved, he must be executed. But not only is he dead in this sense,—the sentence of death passed upon his soul, but also he is dead as to all spiritual feeling; as the natural body is dead to all natural objects, so the soul of man who is dead in trespasses and sins is dead to all spiritual objects, as our blessed Lord says, John iii. 3, “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,”—not even see it. The Apostle gives us, too, a picture of man as he is by grace—*doubly quickened*, we may say,—as he is

doubly dead in trespasses and sins by nature, so he is alive in a two-fold sense by grace: for *first*, the sentence of eternal death is actually reversed—he is reprieved, he has received everlasting life, “he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,” John iii. 36, he *hath it*; so he is represented in this chapter as “*quickened together with Christ*,” “*raised up with Christ*,” “*made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*;” God has put him into that position, and God beholds him in that position,—one with his beloved Son. As his state by nature was a state of actual condemnation and death, so his state by grace is a state of actual deliverance and eternal life, he *hath* eternal life: as the Apostle says in the 6th chapter of Romans, “reckon yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” So again, secondly, he is not only alive in this sense, that he has eter-

nal life, and the sentence of death reversed; but he is *spiritually* alive, *spiritually* quickened, he has a spiritual sense, a spiritual perception and feeling of spiritual things. When he reads the denunciations of God's law against sin, he feels then the apprehensions of a sinner; when he hears the salvation of the glorious gospel of Christ, he feels the joy of the redeemed saint; and though these apprehensions and this spiritual joy are greater or less in different individuals, and in the same individuals at different times, yet all who are taught of God, who are really spiritually alive, have real spiritual senses; and you perceive the Apostle states the object which the Lord has in view in giving spiritual life to his Church,—“that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus,” verse 7. Because his grace, his mercy, his love, his faithfulness, his truth, are all glorified in the salvation of his redeemed people!

Then the Apostle, always anxious to impress upon the minds of the believers to whom he wrote the great fundamental principles of the Gospel of Christ, in the 8th verse, adds, “for by grace are ye saved,” as much as to say—forget not this—“by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.” You perceive how constantly this truth is brought before us throughout the Scriptures, especially throughout the apostolical epistles, that we are saved by grace; and it is brought so frequently before us for this simple reason, that we require to have it continually in our hearts. We require to have it impressed on us, so as not only to carry it in our memories as a written truth in God's word, but to have it impressed with power on our hearts by the teaching of the Holy Spirit;—because it is a truth which, however we are acquainted with theoretically, we are always ready practically to forget.

Self-righteousness and unbelief are two of the most powerful principles in the natural corrupt heart of man; the Apostle says, Gal. v. 17, “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.” There are no fleshly principles in the heart of man that do so struggle against the Spirit, and conflict against it as self-righteousness and unbelief:—the

pride of our own works, and disbelief of God's eternal truth; we are always forgetting our own characters, our guilt and vileness; we are forgetting the character of our transgressions and the character of our righteousness: we are forgetting the heinousness of sin, and the pollution of our holy things; and therefore we are always lifting up ourselves in the pride of our own hearts and against our God, and we are in the same way, distrusting, disbelieving the great salvation there is in Christ. Sin and unbelief are always acting and reacting on each other. Sin makes us afraid of God, and sin, from the sense of our own guilt and vileness, from the condemnation it brings on our consciences, makes us distrust and doubt; sin thus produces unbelief, and then unbelief—distrust of God's faithfulness and truth—withdrawing, as it does, our affections from our God, continually opens an avenue for sin and Satan to draw our hearts deeper and deeper into guilt; this is the state in various degrees of the soul of the believer; and if it were not for the sovereign grace of God which delivers him from this, he must perish: but “*by grace he is saved*,”—the same grace which called him at first out of his ignorance, darkness, and sin, of which the Apostle speaks when he says, verse 5, “God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ.” “By grace are ye saved.” This grace carries him on and keeps him to the last; he experiences here what grace is, that it is God's rich love and mercy to sinners when they are dead in trespasses and sins, quickening them with Christ, giving them spiritual life in Christ: he experiences God's grace in that way. Then it is this grace which delivers the soul from its sin and unbelief, brings it again to the foot of the cross, enables it to look unto Christ again for fresh pardoning love, fresh pardoning mercy, fresh trust, fresh confidence, and shows the believer the suitability of the Lord Jesus Christ to all his wants and necessities; that grace brings these fresh to the soul, and then fills the soul with love, and enables it again to run in the way of the Lord's commandments; as David says, “I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart,” Psalms, cxix. 32, were it not for

this grace which thus acts on the believer, he must perish, but it does so act on him. You observe how beautifully in the 23d Psalm, David speaks of the Lord's character as a shepherd, where he says, "he restoreth my soul," "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters, He restoreth my soul." The soul would faint continually by the way if the Lord did not restore it, but he restores it. And observe how the mercies of God are given to us in the *present tense* in Scriptures, "*he restoreth my soul,*" implying the continual acting of God's grace and love upon the soul of the sinner. Therefore the Apostle reminds believers continually of this truth, which we are so continually apt to forget,—“by grace are ye saved.” We require to have it impressed on our hearts every day, every hour, every moment, “by grace are ye saved.”

If we were to stop any moment, and just ask our own heart this question, now am I leaning, at this moment, on salvation by grace? if I am, why am I cast down? why have I any fear of death? if I were to die this moment, why fear, if I am leaning on Him who has taken away the sting of death? why fear judgment, if I were to die, if I am looking to Him who “was taken from prison and from judgment for sinners?” why feel apprehensions of sin upon my conscience, if my heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of the Lamb? If I am really leaning on salvation by grace, why then does sin cast me down as it does? If I am really leaning on salvation by grace, why is my soul so ready, as it were, to bargain with God, and as I feel myself falling into sin, to feel that I must amend and grow better, before I have the privilege of access to my Maker's throne? Do you not feel this? Do not you often feel it? I am sure I often do, and why? because of our unbelief, because we are not leaning by faith on the Son of God as we ought to do; for if we were, we should be going on our way rejoicing, triumphing over sin, and the world, and death, and hell, and “with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord.” 2 Cor. iii. 18. Therefore what need we have that this truth be impressed on our hearts, “by grace are ye saved?” what need we have to be exhorted, “stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made

us free and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage?” Gal. v. 1. What need have we that this truth be continually impressed on our hearts, because we are continually forgetting it?

Think then, my friends, what that grace is! It is totally irrespective of any good in us: the only thing that grows spontaneously in man is sin,—“this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” 1 Tim. i. 15, “they that are whole need not a physician but they that are sick,” saith the Lord; “I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” Matt. ix. 12, 13. the only object of a physician is the man who is sick and not the man who is in health; the only object of the Saviour is not man as a righteous being but man as a sinner. Now remember that,—recollect that the object of grace is man as a sinner; therefore see what encouragement there is for every poor sinner here to day to look unto Jesus! see what encouragement in that one word, “by grace are ye saved!” You may find your own heart, at this very moment bargaining, as it were, with God, on this very subject, because you say to yourselves, “oh well, but then I am a sinner in such and such a way.”—I do not know what your particular sin may be, perhaps your own conscience tells you; you find your heart clinging to some sin, to some iniquity that takes possession of you. There are no persons in the world who contemplate their own character, and think of themselves as sinners before God, who do not know, that there is some particular sin more deeply impressed on their consciences, and more peculiarly separating them from God: so that they think that if it were not for such and such blots in their character, they would have some hope. Now perhaps you feel at this very moment the working of that principle in your own heart: and when you hear that text proclaimed “by grace are ye saved,” unbelief is making some exceptions against yourselves on account of your own sin. Is it not so? Do you not feel, do you not know that it is so? If you do not now, perhaps you are not attending sufficiently to the truth set before you. But sometimes, when you do think seriously, and if you do seriously ask yourselves of your own acceptance, and how you are to be accepted, and

when you know it to be written, "by grace are ye saved," instead of instantly trusting in the Lord Jesus and rejoicing, instead of instantly coming to the throne of grace, with boldness, with confidence of access, because of the finished work of Immanuel, you say, "oh well, if it were not for so and so, then I could come, but I feel I am such and such a sinner." Then what need have you to know the good news of the Gospel, and to put that corrupt principle away from you which under the guise of humility destroys the hope of your soul, and conceals the monster, pride; for that is the grossest pride and the grossest self-righteousness, which I say, under the guise of humility destroys your soul. So, you perceive, all unconverted persons are forward to object, "*oh what a presumptuous thing it is for persons to say that they have a sure hope of salvation.*"—Why presumptuous? because they think that this implies that they consider themselves as good or at least superior to others. What does this show? it shows ignorance of their own hearts; the hope *they* have of going to heaven is, that they shall be good, that is, that they shall not be sinners, or at least not such sinners as others; they think, that this is the hope of every other person's heart, because it is the hope of their own. Because of their own blindness and ignorance they are looking to their own works to save their souls.

They pronounce, and justly, on their principles, that it is gross presumption for any one to say, I am sure of salvation. It would, indeed, be the grossest presumption, if man were saved by his works; and it were the grossest presumption on earth not only for them to say, they are sure of salvation, but it is just as gross presumption to say, they shall be ever saved on such a principle. For consider the case.—They believe that their good works are to be the means, or at least a co-operating means of their salvation; so they say, and justly too on this principle, it were presumption in an individual to express a confident hope or assurance of salvation. Why? because that would be a confident assurance that his works were of such a nature as to entitle him to appear in glory with his God. But then, what do these persons do? are they ever to be saved? yea, are they ever to have a confident hope of salvation? O yes,

they hope they shall—that is, then they hope to arrive at the very point which they now object to as gross presumption in me. It is gross presumption at any given moment for a man to say at that time, that he has this hope, but they expect this time is to arrive when they can say it themselves, that is, they really lean on the very presumption they deprecate; they put off their presumption, indeed, indefinitely, till they perish in their presumption and their ignorance at the last. Now think of this, consider this, try, whether it be not the principle of your own minds, and then again, come back to the Gospel of Christ, "by grace are ye saved." Now, if you be saved by grace, remember, that that salvation is freely proclaimed, and open to you: you are now called to come to the feet of Christ without doubt or fear, "for by grace are ye saved through faith;" observe here, that the Apostle takes away every possible ground of self-confidence and trust from the sinner's soul, "by grace are ye saved through faith." Oh then you say, we must believe; but mark that faith, "not of yourselves, it is the gift of God"—to believe is God's gift, to trust in Christ is God's gift, to look unto Christ is God's gift, every step of salvation from first to last is the gift of God; "not of works, lest any man should boast." If there were the least ground in the sinner himself, on which he could rest his hope of salvation, then surely the sinner that is saved must say to the sinner that is not saved, oh, I have done so and so, I have profited so and so, by such and such means, you have not,—I have believed, you have not,—I have repented, you have not,—I have turned to Christ, you have not,—I have been looking for Christ, you have not,—I am saved, you are not. Now there is no such thing in the Bible; "where is boasting?" It is excluded, saith the Apostle, Rom. iii. 27, the gates of heaven are shut on it for ever; no such thing enters the realms of glory, as a boasting sinner; every other kind of sinner in the world but a boasting sinner may; the vilest sinner on earth, no matter who or what he is, may; "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin," and he comes there as a redeemed sinner. But a boasting sinner never enters there, unless, indeed, in this sense, as we may say, that all other sinners do, that the blood of Christ has washed away his

Uproot and brought him, an humble criminal, to the foot of the cross; then indeed he comes, but he leaves his boasting behind him, he never takes it there, every crown is cast at the feet of Christ, and this is the song of the redeemed, "unto him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory for ever and ever, Amen." Rev. i. 5.

Oh then, "by grace are ye saved," think of that; no matter how vile you are, the glorious Gospel of Christ proclaims salvation freely unto you, "for by grace are ye saved;" and if you feel your own sin abounding, remember it is written, "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. v. 20, 21. Grace gives you righteousness, but it is not your own, it is the righteousness of Christ; grace gives you pardon, but it is not procured by yourselves, it is purchased by the blood of Christ; grace gives you salvation freely and fully; but it gives you salvation, not because you have done any thing for it, but because you have done nothing for it, *because you are sinners*. Now think of this, "by grace ye are saved:" oh dear fellow-sinners, think how full that grace is! there is no sinner so vile but the grace of God can pluck him as a brand from the burning. See how it plucked Manasseh from the streets of Jerusalem, that he had deluged with blood! See how it plucked David from his fall, Solomon from his idols, Peter from his apostacy! see how it plucked the thief on the cross from his blasphemy and mockery, yea, from the very jaws of hell! see how it plucked, on the day of Pentecost, those who had steeped their hands in the blood of the Lamb! see how it plucked them from death and hell, and enabled them to go on their way rejoicing, looking unto Jesus! Then that same grace proclaims to you and me, and gives to you and me salvation, freely, "without money and without price."

Think how great it is, how free it is, and how full it is—"All manner of sin and blasphemy, shall be forgiven unto men."—Matt. xii. 31. That is what we want—we want a full salvation, a free salvation, and an everlasting salvation:—

"the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."—Rom. xi. 29. See what the Lord Jesus Christ says of his sheep, John x. 28, 29, 30—"My sheep shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand; my father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. *I and my Father are one.*" How secure is the salvation, then, of the sheep of Christ!

Now, that which offends the natural man so much, is the very foundation of the believer's consolation. The natural man cannot bear to think that he must receive salvation as the vilest criminal, without any allowance, as he calls it, for any thing he does; he abhors the thought that he should be saved by free and sovereign grace. But the believer who feels his own want and sin, feels that if this were not the way of salvation, he never could be saved, for he knows, not only that he requires that free grace which brings salvation to his soul, in the first instance, but that he requires that same free grace to keep his soul every moment—"I the Lord do keep it, I will water it every moment," he saith. The believer requires this to keep him, and therefore the Apostle Peter says, speaking of believers, (I Peter, i. 5,) they are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation;"—they never could keep themselves, never; if it were not for the power of Christ, that keeps them, they must perish; but they are kept by his power, through faith, unto salvation.

Then observe, the Apostle meets an objection continually urged against salvation by grace. You know the objection, if salvation be by grace, to the utter exclusion of all works as the hope of the sinner's soul, then it matters not what we do. The Apostle meets and answers this objection in the epistle to the Romans;—he says, "We are slanderously reported, and some affirm that we say, let us do evil, that good may come."—Rom. iii. 8. And he says, anticipating this objection, as you know, in the 6th chapter, "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein." And in the 15th verse he says,—“What then, shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.” Here he meets the objection in a different way,

not in the way of argument, but in the way of doctrine; he says, you observe in the 10th verse—"We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." Now this is the very reverse of the opinion and belief of nominal Christians; they may say, and they do, many of them, say, "We can do no good without his assistance, we know we can do nothing of ourselves;" if you say to such, you can do nothing of yourselves, they will say, I know that I cannot; they seem to assent to the truth, while the thought of their heart is different. The truth you mean is not what they mean. You mean by saying, you can do nothing of yourself, that nothing you say, do, or think, will contribute to the salvation of your soul, that salvation is wrought out and finished by the Lord Jesus Christ for ever—that there is not a good thought, a good work, a good desire, which will bring salvation to the soul, but exclusively the finished work of Christ—that is what you mean by saying, you can do nothing of yourself. But when they say, I know I can do nothing, they mean this, I have not of my own natural force or power, sufficient resolution or will to do good as I ought to do, but through the assistance of the Holy Spirit, I hope I may be enabled to do good; that is, I hope I may change my life and become better—that is their view, they reverse the creed of the Apostle—the Apostle says, "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;"—but they reverse this and say, "we are created in good works unto Christ Jesus,"—instead of saying, "we are created in Christ Jesus, unto good works,"—the creed of nominal Christians is, "we are created in good works unto Christ Jesus." They think that Christ has performed a certain work, to help man's salvation; they tell you, that Christ died to save sinners on the cross, but that in order to become partakers of that salvation, they must, by the help of the Holy Spirit, perform such and such deeds, or live such and such a life, to entitle them to trust in him for salvation. The Gospel is directly the reverse, as opposite as light and darkness; that is, they must by grace be brought to Christ, and fully pardoned in him, and saved, in order that, by that means, they may produce fruit unto God.

"As the branch," says Christ, "cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me." You might just as well say, that the branch is created by the fruit into the vine, as that the sinner is created by good works unto Christ; you might as well say, that the branch, first bearing fruit, is taken and grafted into the vine, as that the sinner, doing good, is taken and grafted into Christ. No, he is taken and grafted into Christ as a sinner, and then he is brought to bear fruit: "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" called to Christ; washed in the blood of Christ; clothed by the righteousness of Christ; taught to lie at the feet of Christ; looking unto Christ as our Alpha and Omega, created in him; he is our refuge; we, having fled for refuge unto him, are created in him unto good works; serving him with good works because he *has* saved us, and not bribing him with good works, in order to induce him to save us. Do you see the difference?—the two things are as opposite as light and darkness in their character; and their different influences on the mind are as opposite as light and darkness. In the one case, in the view of the unconverted mind, there is no hope, there is no peace, there is no joy, there is no salvation, there is no fruit: in the other case, in the view of the converted sinner, there is pardon, peace, hope—the anchor of the soul; there is salvation, full and finished, and there is fruit unto God, through Christ our Lord.

If man gave the whole world, if he offered up the whole world, suppose he could, as one whole burnt-offering to God, without the love which the Gospel superinduces, he would be nothing; and with the love of Christ in his heart, "a cup of cold water given to a disciple, because he belongs to Christ, shall in no wise lose its reward;" for if a man were to offer up the whole world to obtain salvation, it would be a proof of one thing alone, ignorance and pride: but when the sinner gives a cup of cold water in the name of Christ, from love to the Lord Jesus Christ, it is a proof of this, that he knows Christ as a refuge for his soul, and loves the Lord that loved him, and gave himself for him. Do you understand the difference between these two principles?—they are as different, I repeat, as light and darkness: think of

this, "we are his workmanship,"—he provides a system of good works for his people; but he provides it on the principle of the Gospel, "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them." So it is said that he should "purify unto himself a peculiar people, *zealous of good works.*" Titus ii. 14. That is the first thing—and they are "purified unto him as a peculiar people," and then made "zealous of good works."

Now consider these things, think how very important they are: your whole salvation depends upon your knowledge of the truth;—"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."—Hos. iv. 6. If you do not *know* the truth, you cannot believe the truth, you cannot rejoice in

the truth, you cannot derive salvation from the truth, or instruction from the truth, or walk in the truth, or live in the truth, or die in the truth. You are walking in the law, living in the law, dying in the law, perishing in the law, if you do not know the truth—the Gospel of Christ. No matter what you know, if you know all the world, and do not know Christ, you know nothing yet as you ought to know. If you know Christ, it is no matter how little you know of the world, you have the hope, the joy, the peace of believing; "this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent." I shall conclude with the Apostle's words, "consider what I have said, and the Lord give you understanding in all things."—2d Tim. ii. 7.—Amen.

"THE HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER OF THE CHURCH."

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN LOWER SHANDON CHURCH, CORK, ON THURSDAY, JUNE 1st, 1837,

BY THE REV. HENRY HARDY, A. M.

(Curate of Dunbollogue, Diocese of Cork.)

ST. JOHN, xiv. 25, 26.

"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you,

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

The subject to which I would direct your careful regard is, "*the office of the Holy Ghost as the comforter of the Church.*" And with a view to its elucidation, there are three broad outlines which I propose to myself to follow, and shall accordingly consider the subject with reference to *the Historical fulfilment—the doctrine of Scripture—and the believer's experience.* But first let me remark on the use of the term, translated "comforter." The Holy Ghost is here

styled "the Comforter." The term *παράκλητος*, as here translated, is employed four times in the Gospel by St. John, and is found once in 1st Epist. John, 2d chapter, and 1st verse, where it is translated "Advocate:" and from its use in the Fathers and heathen writers, we attach to it the signification also of *Instructor, Teacher, Interpreter.* The verb *παρακαλεω* is found over an hundred times in the New Testament, and is translated *exhort, admonish, beseech, com-*

fort. The noun *παρακλησις* is translated *consolation*, *exhortation*. I mention this because I conceive, that they and the two kindred words, thus variously translated, throw light on the subject, for it appears from the above that the term *παρακλησις* wraps up within itself the nucleus of that *great doctrine* which I would impress upon you this day, namely, that the *comforts* of the Holy Ghost flow into the soul through the channel of the *exhortations*, the *instructions*, and the *advocacy* of the Holy Ghost—and that it is through being the *saving Teacher* of the Church, that the Holy Ghost becomes “*the Comforter*” of the Church.

This is the view advanced in the text by the Lord our Redeemer, where we learn that the Spirit fulfils his office of Comforter, by giving himself to the Church as *Teacher* and *Remembrancer*; the subject matter of such tuition and remembrance, being “the truth as it is in Jesus.”

Brethren, since the fall of man, two eventful dispensations have passed away from this world; we are living in the third: a fourth awaits us wherein God shall be all in all. In the first, the view given of Deity was more of an abstract character, whilst the prominent feature of the dispensation seemed to be that of Jehovah as a wise and benevolent Parent, overruling by his providence the course of worldly events, and rescuing from out the ruins of mankind a family of sons and daughters, with a view to some yet undeveloped plan in which divine wisdom and divine love were to co-operate for the recovery and regeneration of a lost world. In the second, the leading manifestation from above was that of God the Son—“God manifest in the flesh”—“the Daysman,” and “Restorer,” who was distinctly foreshown in the former by type and promise. The leading feature of the third or present lies in the manifestation of God the Spirit, in the abundant bestowment of his gifts and graces, whose blessed agency and its effects were distinctly foreshown in the two former: this, therefore, is emphatically *the dispensation of the Holy Ghost*. But inasmuch as God has had, *from the beginning*, a Church on earth, “called to be saints,” in prospect and by reason of the all-prevailing sacrifice, which in due time was to put away sin and bring the contrite sinner nigh to God; we are bound to believe,

(unless we throw ourselves upon a principle recognized neither by Scripture nor experience.) that *from the beginning*, the Holy Ghost has been applying measures of the truth to the hearts of God’s people, in prospect of that same acceptable sin offering which Jehovah Jesus was in due time to accomplish; and that thus he was *from the first*, in a measure, “*the Comforter of the Church*.”

We may observe also, that the great agency which the Spirit employed for the soul’s guidance into heavenly comfort was the implantation of that faith which is “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” The “things hoped for” may have been vague in expression and remote in fulfilment; “the things not seen,” may have been invested with a mysteriousness which the far-stretching eye of faith, as it strove to gaze down intervening centuries, could hardly penetrate: but by enabling the regards of the infant Church to dwell upon a blessed prospect, which, though obscurely intimated or sparingly revealed, was yet thankfully and joyfully fastened on by the soul; the Spirit did, even in this early stage of the world’s existence, become “the Comforter of the Church.”

Think of our *first parents*, sinners before God! degraded from their high and holy estate! clothed with shame and guilt! Observe them, as with the first tears ever wept, they take their sad and solitary way from Eden’s glorious precincts, and go abroad upon a wilderness world, bearing the curse! Are they left in their shame, helpless and hopeless? Oh no! already “mercy rejoices against judgment:” and oh, doubtless, *that prophecy*, which insured to the woman’s seed a future triumph over the adversary, must have sunk into their disconsolate and self-accusing hearts as a cheering promise.

Yes, brethren, *coeval with the fall* was the visitation of “the Comforter:” and scarce had sin entered into the world when the Comforter, as the Spirit of promise, lit up within the contrite sinner’s soul a flame of holy hope, inextinguishable by the deepest waters of trouble. Look at *Abraham*, the friend of God—what was the principal that enabled him to obey the call of the Most High, to get out from his country, his kindred, and his father’s house, and to go out, not knowing whither he went? *Reliance on the promise*,—it was the operation of the Spirit

revealing the character and purposes of God. What enabled him to face the wilderness—to sojourn as a pilgrim in a strange land, and patiently to endure? Faith in the promise, and the comfort experienced through the channel of the truth, yea, joy experienced through the spiritual discernment of the Divine purpose towards him; “for he rejoiced to see the day of Christ, and he saw it and was glad.”

In all his perils, wanderings, and trials, the promise was so sealed on his heart by the Holy Ghost, that, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise, he was no longer minded to return to the country whence he came out, but now desires a better country, that is, an heavenly. Again, look at Moses, brought up as he was in all the grandeur and luxury of the Egyptian court, why did he “refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt?” Because the Holy Ghost taught him the promise, for “he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” The holy Comforter pointed him to the promises of the God of Abraham—and the hope of the promise cheered him through the varied trials of life. Forty years of Egyptian splendour could not efface it—forty years in the solitudes of Midian did not extinguish it—forty years of arduous responsibility in Sinai’s wilderness served but to raise his longings and kindle his desires for its accomplishment; ’twas his heart’s continual prayer to God, “oh satisfy us early with thy mercy, that we may rejoice and be glad all our days,” “let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children,” and “let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us.” And though he died, not having received the promises, yet was he persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed himself a stranger and sojourner on the earth. Let us instance *David*—“the man after God’s own heart.” How do the Psalms overflow with the spirit of holy and heavenly comfort! comfort abounding through convictions of the truth—“I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies,” “this is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened

me,” “thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage.”—But it would be endless to quote; take up the 63d psalm, written in the wilderness, and oh, can you read it, without catching somewhat of the flame that burned upon the altar of David’s heart! In fact, the book of Psalms teems with expressions of blessed comfort, experienced through a Spirit-taught knowledge of God. And it seems to me, that the varied changes of circumstance through which Jehovah led David from the sheep-fold to the camp, from the camp to the palace, from the palace to the throne, and from the throne to the wilderness, tended sweetly to demonstrate to his experience the unlimited *suitability of the Spirit’s comforts* to every circumstance of life. The changeful ills, the multiplied trials, the manifold alternations from joy to sorrow, from destitution to prosperity, experienced by him, seemed but as the tuning of the instrument, wherefrom the Holy Ghost should draw for our comfort, also, those sacred and soul-cheering songs of Zion: in our being enabled to employ, in the way of appropriation, the praiseful and happy aspirations of Israel’s Psalmist; the Spirit that dwelt in him occupies our hearts, and fills us with holy emotions and heavenly joys. But when the work of Christ was completed—when he burst the bands of death, rose victorious from the grave, ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and entered within the vail as our great High Priest and Forerunner, then it was, by the abundant down-pouring of the Holy Ghost, that a measure of light and teaching was vouchsafed to the Church, which, having for its subject-matter, the person, work, offices, and promises of the risen and glorified Lord, became the basis of most blessed comfort; and then, *emphatically*, the Spirit became the Comforter of the Church.

Hitherto, like the preaching of the Baptist, the comforting operations of the Spirit were comparatively prospective and imperfect—and that gracious Agent might have nearly adopted the Saviour’s words, “there is a baptism wherewith *one* is to be baptized, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished.” But when the Father set his seal to the perfection of the Saviour’s work, by raising him from the dead, and causing him to sit in the heavenly places, at his own right hand of

majesty and power, the Spirit had there a mass of glorious *facts* with which to ply the Church, and thus, in a measure unparalleled before, became the "Comforter of the Church." What a change was wrought in Peter on the Pentecostal day! He who had denied his master, and crept like a coward into the judgment-hall—now stands forth, and face to face, charges the murderers of the Lord of glory with their tremendous guilt; and whilst he discloses to them the depths of their national apostacy, he unfolds the exhaustless mercies of their crucified Messiah. He whom the Saviour's humiliation had offended, and to whom the cross was a stumbling block, now preaches "Christ crucified, the wisdom of God and the power of God" unto salvation: and if we trace him in his Apostolic labour of love, by word, by example, and epistle, we see the unbelieving ignorance, the inconsiderate rashness, and the blind self-confidence which heretofore marked his character, yielding before the mild influence of the *Spirit of truth*, and gradually displaced by the patient faithfulness, the well-tempered zeal, the lowly self-distrust, the forgiving, forbearing, and long suffering charity, and the "joy unspeakable and full of glory" which fills the heart and furnishes the life of the genuine disciple of Christ. And after a life spent in the service of Christ, the venerable martyr fell asleep; love, stronger than death, in his heart, and its expression on his lips,— "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." What shall we say of Stephen, "full of the Holy Ghost!" Mark how he gazes upwards into heaven! its doors opened by a divine hand, and singles, from out the shining millions around the throne, the loved Saviour of his soul: heaven's own glory beaming upon his face: heaven's own joy gladdening his heart, while his merciless murderers are battering his poor frame: and oh, did not the Holy Ghost even beyond expectation prove himself here also the Comforter of the Church, by answering the Christ-like prayer which hung upon the protomartyr's dying lips, for the fruit of that prayer was *Saul of Tarsus*? And oh, think of him, once the persecutor, now, "the servant of Jesus Christ;" examine the records of his labours and sufferings for the truth's

sake; and judge if he had not in all his trials the comforts of the truth. Just take his own view of the matter, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body,"—as though the *suffering* was permitted for the purpose of occasioning and demonstrating the consolation—proving, that as the sufferings abounded, the consolations did much more abound. So that the Apostle might triumphantly appeal to his worn and shattered tabernacle on the one hand, and his rejoicing spirit on the other as a testimony that while *his body* bore "the marks of the Lord Jesus," in deep and acute sufferings for a crucified Saviour's sake; *his spirit*, by its holy joy, by its fresh and buoyant energy, proved that the Lord was living to fulfil the promise of the text. And when his work was done, and his days drawing to a close, we find him the inmate of a cold prison, at the approach of a rigorous winter, without a cloak to cover him, and deserted by almost all his friends—but no despondency—no repining—all is "joy in the Holy Ghost." 'Tis the same Paul who made the dungeon walls of Philippi ring with midnight thanksgivings; here, too, the venerable Apostle, full of God, and strongly anticipating an eternal weight of glory, exclaims in the deep raptures of spiritual joy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." But without dwelling further upon individual cases, we may remark, generally, that the Holy Ghost did amply fulfil his office as Comforter to the *primitive Church*; an assertion fully borne out by the brief but comprehensive notice of its condition, incidentally furnished in the Acts and Epistles; that condition embodying great outward suffering and greater inward joy. How satisfied should we be of the truth of this, could we but transport ourselves to that "upper room," and witness the little company of Christians, and hear them "singing hymns to Jesus as to God,"*

* Pliny, in his letter to Trajan, advances this charge against the Christians of his day.

comforting one another in their risen Saviour, and confirming one another in the truth.—Or follow them to the concealments of their cellars and their midnight worship, and observe, that while *without*, all was terror and oppression, tyranny and blood-shedding, the faggot, the sword, the cross, and the wild beast,—within, all was peace, “the peace that passeth understanding;”—*peace*, the *legacy* of their absent Lord: and therefore, “none of these things moved them, neither counted they their lives dear unto them, so that they might finish their course with joy.” Consider, too, how men’s souls must have been strengthened and refreshed in those times of awful peril, “by the assembling of themselves together,” at every risk, for participating in the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper, and in the *ἀγάπαι*, or post-communion feasts of Christian fellowship and love, where “they did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.” What joy would you see, even in their tribulations, could you accompany them to the martyr’s graves, and behold their *natalitia*, or *birth-day feasts*, in memory of the loved and faithful ones, not lost, but gone before! And having witnessed such scenes, would you not heartily confess, that they had, “in all times of their tribulation,” “the peace of God which passeth understanding,” “the joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

It was the comfort of the truth which enabled the tenants of the mountain fastnesses of southern France and Piedmont, to stand against one of the greatest and best appointed armies ever led into the field; and the overwhelming tide of persecution, which rolled over that seemingly devoted land, only purified their faith and confirmed their profession. Animated by strength from on high, though comparatively few, and altogether undisciplined, they often “turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” And while multitudes “were tempted and slain with the sword;” whilst “they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented,” whilst they “hid themselves in dens and caves of the earth, and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance;” they suffered for *the truth’s sake*; the truth was precious, the truth comforted them, the truth supplied them with that knowledge of Christ

which taught them to be “patient in tribulation and rejoicing in hope.”

Amongst us too, my brethren, the truth had its sufferings and its consolations: it had long been buried under the rubbish of accumulated heresies and frauds, and for ages had not seen the light on British soil. At intervals, indeed, both few and far between, a glimmer of the truth would show itself like a solitary star, whose lone and distant twinkling but serves to deepen the surrounding gloom. At length, however, with the energy of a spirit that had burst the tomb, pure and primitive Christianity was disenthralled from its prison house: with the fortunes of the Apostles, our venerated Reformers preached, were persecuted, and triumphed. Their sound went through the land like a mighty rushing wind—the flame of Pentecost was in their heart and on their lips. Persecutions, it is true, made fearful havoc amongst them,—the gold was refined in the hottest furnace of trial; blood was shed, of which the world was not worthy; the hoary head and the young heart were not spared. But the promise still held good—“I will pray the Father, and *he will give the Comforter.*” And that blessed Spirit strongly upheld them, by imparting the consolations of that truth which they fed upon in the gloom of their dungeons, and preached in the blaze of their funeral fires. Yes, persecution met them, “rejoicing that they were accounted worthy to suffer.” Yea, the truth itself rose with uncontrollable wing from the ashes in which it seemed to be consumed, and the consolations of the truth seemed to abound, by the very means taken to extinguish it. What abundant proof of this is supplied in the last days of the martyred Reformers of our Church; so steadfast in the faith, so fervent in spirit, so Christ-like in meekness, patience, and love; so joyful even in their keenest sufferings, that the fiery trial tended to display the impotence of the persecutor, the holy triumph of the persecuted. The wrath of man was made to praise God, and so abundant blessing to the Church was vouchsafed through the channel of its woes, that like Elijah the Tishbite, the martyrs bequeathed to their surviving brethren, a double portion of their spirit, from the chariots of fire in which they ascended to their everlasting rest.

But the office of the Comforter did not end here. The truth being once established in the land, the Church awoke to her high calling; the Spirit further fulfilled his office, by *bringing to her remembrance* what Christ had spoken in his word. She remembered her high commission, (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20,) and having herself experienced the precious comfort of the truth, she stood forth conspicuous amongst the nations of the earth, "holding forth the word of life."

View her accordingly, as she promotes among her own children the truth as it is in Jesus, teaching them to walk "in the fear of God and the comforts of the Holy Ghost;" disposing her ministers, gathering her congregations, planting her houses of worship, till not a valley, hill, or plain, but echoes sweetly to the Sabbath bell. In her comprehensive benevolence, considerate of body as well as soul; for poverty, providing food and shelter; for sickness, care, and kind relief; for helplessness, a quiet and secure asylum: ever ready to "succour, help, and comfort all that are in danger, necessity, and tribulation, to defend and provide for the fatherless children and widows, and all that are desolate and oppressed." Mark her also, as she sweeps wider and wider her successive circles of truth and charity: consecrating her massive erudition to the furtherance of the Saviour's glory, sending out the lamp of truth, even the translated word of life, to the dark and distant lands of heathenism: like the matrons of old, equipping and despatching the children of her own bosom upon a holy crusade against the powers of darkness, and depravity of man: armies of Christian soldiers! who for Christ's name sake laboured and fainted not: men who erected on the demolished altars and ruined temples of Paganism, monuments, not of harsh and sanguinary power, but like the pillars in the journeyings of Israel, sacred evidences, that there, God had blessed their labours and confirmed his holy covenant. Oh think how the Spirit has comforted her in the issue of her labours! and how she has reaped of what she has sown! If she has sown in blood and in tears; if she has had to wade through deep waters of tribulation; if, ever buffeted, hindered, and distracted by the combined assaults of the world, the flesh, and the devil, she has still laboured on, though ever so imperfectly,

to make known in all lands the riches of Christ Jesus, to the end that sinners might be saved and God be glorified;—has not God been with her, and blessed those labours, and brought into her fold almost "a multitude that no man can number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," causing her, like a mighty forest-tree, to extend her roots from continent to continent, till the dew of both hemispheres rests upon her branches, and the very antipodes of earth acknowledge her refreshing influence and dwell beneath her shade? In short, trace the footsteps of the Church from its earliest existence to the present time, and judge, how amply the Spirit fulfilled his office of Comforter, by being the "teacher," and "remembrancer" of the truth, and sealing that truth to the hearts of God's people in every age. Oh! we are indeed surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses," prophets, apostles, martyrs, saints, all bearing testimony to the consolations of the holy Ghost.

Now, brethren, you may have observed that all along I have spoken of comfort in connexion with the knowledge of God's character, and his purposes of grace: and this appears to be the doctrine of the Bible; for from what information Scripture supplies, we can clearly conclude, that the comfort of the Holy Ghost is a *rational* comfort, flowing from Scriptural teaching. Examine the words of the text, the consideration of which is alone sufficient to confirm the foregoing statement—or look at chapter xv. 26, where the Comforter is emphatically promised as "*the Spirit of the truth*," and as one who was to *testify of Christ*; the obvious conclusion to be drawn from which is, that if we look for the comforts of the Spirit, we must seek them through the faithful reception of the "truth as it is in Jesus." Observe also, in chap. xvi. 13, 14, the promise of this heavenly Comforter is introduced, his *character* described as "the Spirit of truth;" his office, "he will guide you into all truth," "show you things to come," "speak not of himself," but shall "glorify Christ" by receiving of his and showing them unto you. The comforts of the Spirit then, being based upon the truth of Christ, are made known to the believer, through conveyance of the experimental knowledge of the Saviour. Hence in one point of view, Christ also may be

styled a Comforter ; and accordingly in promising the Spirit, he speaks of him as "*another Comforter*," implying that *He* also is a Comforter, and so he is, as being the *bases* of comfort, for the Spirit acts his part as Comforter, by drawing the soul to Christ as the *ground* of comfort. Apart from the saving application of the work of Christ, what comfort can be ? Take him away, and what avails sorrow for sin ? Where is the ground for consolation ? *Faith* has nothing to rest on, *repentance* nothing to look to, *hope* nothing to realize ; yea, if there be no Saviour found, so far from knowing spiritual comfort, "we are of all men most miserable." Hence there is an essential union between the work of Christ and the consolations of the Spirit : to know the latter, the former must be savingly applied.

Do I find my soul sinking as I discover more and more of the latent corruption of my heart, and the exceeding malignity of sin ? The Spirit gives me a view of Christ, discloses something in his work—his all-satisfying atonement—his perfect righteousness, the fullness of his grace, the purposes of his love—that revives my drooping soul, and strengthens my feeble knees, and *this is the consolation of the truth*. Am I constrained daily to feel my helplessness, to acknowledge my changefulness, and to mourn my continual wanderings from the right way, and do I in distress and despondency betake myself in prayer to God ? The Spirit directs the eye of faith to Christ, and bids me to remember still, the perfection of his work, the power of his grace, the steadfastness of his promises, the sympathies of his heart, the immutability of his love ; and though I am forced to hate and abhor myself, I find peace, and assurance, and strength, when brought thus to lean more simply on the Saviour, and this is the consolation of the truth.

Does sorrow and bereavement beat upon my soul like the successive billows of a troubled sea ? The Spirit tells me, through the word, that in all my afflictions, the Saviour is afflicted, and assures me of his sympathy. He bids me "sorrow not as others who have no hope," and that those whom the Lord have taken, have entered into his rest "which is far better," and that all things shall work together for my good, and I receive it as a message of love from the God of all truth, and my soul is at peace ; this also

is the consolation of the Holy Ghost.

Am I a *backslider* ? have I dried up the first fountain of spiritual sorrows ? Have I forgotten my first love ? have I lost my relish for heavenly things, and gone back into a world which I once thought it sin to love ? when at length, like the poor foolish prodigal by the way side, I find myself wretched, deceived, forsaken, hungry and thirsty, and no man gave unto me—far from my Father's house ; oh, what blessed comfort to find that I have scarce lifted myself by the wayside, and said, under the influence of deep spiritual correction, "I will arise and go to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy Son,"—when the Father himself has already taken the road to meet me, and in all the yearning of his never-changing love, takes me back to his bosom and his home ; and deep thankfulness fills every channel of my heart, while I mourn that I should ever have left a parent so loving, a home so peaceful, and this is the comfort of the Spirit.

Thus, beloved, from whatever quarter the trial comes, from within, from without, from the world, the flesh or the devil, there is something in the view which the Spirit gives of Christ that breaks down unbelief, removes despondency, strengthens holiness and kindles love ; the temptation loses its edge, the power of sin is subdued, the rising murmur dies away, and we lie lowly and teachable at the foot of the cross. But there are various *means* by which the Spirit both directly and indirectly guides the soul into true comfort : let us instance what we commonly call "*the means of grace*." How often may we have come into the house of God, bringing with us the distractions, and cares, and troubles, and murmurings of that world, with which we have professedly parted at the door, to say nothing of trials more spiritual in their character, oppressing our hearts ; when the solemn services of the sanctuary steal upon our attention, or the affectionate appeal of the minister of God fixes our thoughts, and the Spirit applying them to our consciences, the world loses its momentary power : its cares are forgotten ; faith comes into exercise, resignation grows apace, hope enters the soul, and the language of our heart is, "it is good for us to be here." Like David, perhaps we were

envious, foolish, troubled. "until we went into the sanctuary," were invited to "cast all our care on Him who careth for us," and receiving a blessing, through the medium of the temple service, we "went on our way rejoicing." Let us instance the instrumentality of *godly ministers*, at once the teachers and examples of their flock. How great a blessing it is, to be placed under the ministering care of a godly man, *you*, brethren, have much reason to confess. I cannot but think so, when I call to mind that I stand in a place consecrated by the ministrations of one who for many a year, in faith and patience, held forth the word of life amongst you, led many to the saving knowledge of Christ, and confirmed and established more. Oh, is it not a blessing to have one over you to whom you can come with your troubles and trials, to receive his counsel, be strengthened by his prayers, and comforted by his godly conversation; to be built up through his knowledge, to be benefitted through his own spiritual trials and spiritual comfort. (2 Cor. i. 3—6.) to be guided onward to your everlasting rest! Again, there is *prayer* as a channel through which the Spirit conveys consolation. think what it is to have a throne of grace *ever* open, and a believer's supplication ever heard! Think what it is to have a sorrow weighing down the soul, which you cannot bring yourself to communicate to your nearest friend, for which you can solicit no sympathy—but there is *the throne of grace*, and there you can pour into the ear of your gracious Father, those secret and heart-corroding trials which you could not breathe to fellow-mortal. And see how the holy Comforter here too acts his loving office, in directing the aspirations, kindling the desires and strengthening the faith of the humble supplicant: for "the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered." Again, there are *indirect ways* by which the Spirit proves himself the believer's best friend, and truest Comforter. Thus, in *the school of daily experience*, and under the daily assaults of our ever-watchful enemies, what painful and humbling, but withal, what profitable lessons are we forced to learn!—how deeply distressing is the experience which he permits us

to acquire, through the medium of our own infirmities, and wilful inconsistencies!

Often and often, in the blind perverseness of our will, we turn to the right hand or to the left, and forsake the way of obedience and of peace, and then the Spirit, *through our own misdoings*, convinces us of the evil of sin, and the sad consequences to which a single deviation from the truth will lead. It is here he detects us to ourselves, he shows us the Father's estimate of sin, and convinces us, in the light of a crucified Saviour's love, of its exceeding malignity: 'tis here he proves *sin* to be the parent of *sorrow*, and embitters it to the soul. You have been learning, perhaps, my brother, in the school of sad and humiliating experience, how one sin leads to another, and that to misery: how carelessness leads to coldness—coldness to insensibility—and the end, *heaviness of soul*. 'Tis a wholesome discipline; for remember that the Spirit wounds but to heal, and brings low that he may lift up again: "blessed are they that so mourn, for they shall be comforted;" for thus he proves the need and preciousness of the Saviour, and by revealing him to the sin-burdened soul, in all his power, perfection, and love, he detaches that soul from sin, and guides back the wanderer to the green pastures and quiet waters of the Saviour's fold. Here, too, he teaches us to draw a *just estimate of ourselves*. Through many a bitter defeat, through much humiliating self-knowledge, by causing us to comprehend that slowly-learned truth, "I am nothing," does the Spirit draw us from self-dependence, and self-glorying, so ruinous to our peace, and bring us to cleave, with full purpose of heart, for all we want here or hereafter, to him "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Furthermore, under his especial teaching, (and it is only as he teaches that there is any real profit in the lesson,) we become convinced of the *worthlessness of the world*; we find, through much heart-sickness, and many bitter disappointments, that the world has nothing to satisfy, in health or in weakness, in poverty or in abundance, for death or for eternity; and having permitted us, for our good, to learn that it is full of thorns and briars, and that neither by its honors, riches, pleasures, or pur-

suits, can the deep capacities of the soul be filled,—this gentle and gracious teacher wins that soul from self and the world, points to the everlasting substance, “to the unsearchable riches of Christ,” and bids him set his affections on things above, not on things on earth. It is thus, my beloved, that by teaching the word, in the school of experience, we become learners of ourselves on the one hand, and of Christ on the other: we forsake self, we cleave to Christ,—we find “peace and joy in believing.” How frequently, when sorrow after sorrow, and cross after cross has tried the child of God, does this Holy Comforter, inviting us to the word, and causing its truths to rest upon the mind, like soft rain upon the new-mown grass, sustains faith, hope, and love, and bring forth in us the patience that waits for deliverance, and even the joy that rejoices in tribulation: especially when, as *the Spirit of adoption*, he impresses these truths upon our hearts, and enables us, with lowly, child-like confidence and gratitude to say, “this is the word of my Saviour and my friend; Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.” How comforting, then, is that word, how refreshing its promises, how constraining its precepts, how invigorating its doctrines! “This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me.”

Thus brethren, in the deep waters of trial, does the Spirit sanctify, and by sanctifying, *comfort* the Church of God: thus does he “allure her, bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.” Amidst scenes of trial, temptation, and sorrow, amidst prostrate idols and broken cisterns, amidst a sinking self, and a dying world, by the due application of *the truth* to the conscience, does the Spirit of God comfort the soul—the experience may be painful, but the end thereof is peace. Like Israel of old, the child of God, as he passes through the wilderness, will often have to taste the bitterness of Marah’s waters, but *not* like Israel does he murmur; for knowing that “it is good that a man should both hope, and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord,” he waits in faith; and many a time has he found after deep draughts of the bitter cup, that the next March has brought him to Elim, with its palms and fountains; and like the blessed Saviour, “he shall drink of the brook in

the way, therefore shall he *lift up his head*,”—lift it in grateful praise, holy hope, and heavenly joy.

The world knows nothing of the Comforter, for it refuses him as the Teacher and Sanctifier, and the children of God too often forfeit the comforts of the Holy Ghost, by seeking them out of the way of obedience and sanctification of the truth; for be assured that there is no separation admissible between “the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost.”

Christ is the Christian’s foundation and hope. Christ, revealed by the Spirit in all his suitable and saving grace, is the Christian’s comfort in time, for death, and throughout eternity. *Eternity!* yes, beloved, this crowns all—the Holy Ghost shall be “the Comforter of the Church” *throughout eternity!* conducting our glorified spirits through every mansion of our Father’s house, revealing to our enlarged conceptions more and more of the majesty, power, wisdom, and love of the covenant Godhead; pouring into every channel of our spiritualized capacities, an ever-deepening stream of Divine knowledge! “We shall know, even as we are known,”—“We shall see face to face,”—we shall stand at the throne—we shall drink at the fountain—oh, the bliss! the untold, the inconceivable harmonies of the world of glory! No language can reach them, no thought can compass them—conception itself is lost in the rising transcendancy of the “exceeding and eternal weight of glory!” But blessed be our God, though we cannot *define*, we may *believe*; though we cannot *comprehend*, we may *rejoice*; for even unto this are we invited, that “*believing* we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.”

The traveller who has scaled the summit of the Andes, and stands in their pure and cloudless atmosphere, can expatiate over an almost boundless horizon—he can behold the *full circle* of the rainbow in all its beauty and proportions, while the tenant of the valley is enveloped in mist and vapour. So, when the Christian pilgrim has attained the heights of the everlasting hills, that rainbow which to the eye of John, in Patmos, typified the covenant mercies of Jehovah, shall then be seen, in all the fulness of its splendour. Here dimness in part, and obscurity attends us, and we “now see

through a glass darkly." Here, through much ignorance, prejudice, unbelief, and infirmity, the Spirit leads us by a way we know not: but when the liberated soul shall enter on the blessedness of heaven, all shall be made plain: then shall we understand that "all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep his covenant and his testimonies," then shall we comprehend all the afflictive dispensations which met us in our earthly pilgrimage, were the agency of Divine love, causing us to press onward to our heavenly home, and the thought shall kindle praise to God. It was from the depths of the swollen Jordan that Israel provided materials for an altar of praiseful remembrance on Canaan's shore; even so, the very depths of Jordan—their greatest earthly trials, shall constitute an altar of everlasting thanksgiving, to the saints triumphant before the throne.

Oh, what a prospect to cheer us, in the darkness and sorrows of an evil world!—what a consummation!—what a joy! Life and death vanish before the faith and hope of this radiant scene. *Eternity!* awful eternity, with its height and its depth immeasurable, but stretches out as a limitless ocean of light, liberty, and love, on whose unruffled bosom the soul,

buffeted by the billows, harassed by the storms of this troublesome world, shall find everlasting repose.

Such, then, are the *operations*, such the *purposes* of the Holy Ghost, in respect of us: and oh, I beseech you, while much that I have said may be forgotten, to remember at least *this much*, that the comfort of the Spirit is only to be had through the hearty *reception of, and living upon* Christ our Lord. This is what we want: ordinances will not do; ministers will not do—we must look through ordinances, and through ministers to Christ himself, if we would obtain the desired blessing.

We want a Comforter, who can console us, when life, and all the things of life are passing from us—we want a Comforter who can be with us, when, having taken leave of all, we draw the curtain, turn on our pillow, and say, "I must now be alone with God." Empty notions will not do this, nor legal principles, nor sectarian zeal—nothing, nothing but *Christ*, revealed to the soul by the *Holy Ghost*, will comfort then, and give us peace at our latter end.

Oh! God, establish this truth in our hearts, and enable us to bring forth fruit by the same, for Jesu's sake.—Amen.

GENESIS i. 27.

Man was not made in the likeness of any creature that went before him, but in the likeness of his Creator; yet still between God and man there is an infinite distance. *Christ only is the express image of God's person*,—as the son of his Father, having the same nature. It is only some of God's honor that is put upon man. This honor, indeed, God

has put upon the body of man, that the Word was made flesh, the Son of God was clothed with a body like unto ours, and will shortly clothe ours with a glory like unto his. But it is the soul of man that especially bears God's image. The soul is a spirit, an intelligent, immortal spirit, an influencing, active spirit, herein resembling God, the Father of Spirits.

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“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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REV. W. R. LAWRENSEN.

REV. C. C. TOWNSEND

MEETNESS FOR HEAVEN.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE ASYLUM CHAPEL, LIMERICK, ON SUNDAY, 18th JUNE, 1837,

BY THE REV. R. RYLAND, A. M.

(Chancellor of WATERFORD.)

REVELATIONS XXI. 27.

“ And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”

WE owe it to the wisdom of God, that peculiar stress is laid on the perusal of this part of Scripture; that a special blessing is promised to those “ who read and to those who hear the words of this prophecy.”

Perhaps there is no book in the New Testament less frequently studied for personal comfort and edification; and if we except the labours of those who direct their attention to it, principally for the investigation of the prophecies it contains, we shall be surprised at the limited number who approach it with a desire to appropriate its promised blessings to themselves. The chapter from which the text is taken is, however, an exception to this general statement. Multitudes have received, and many continue to receive,

unspeakable satisfaction from a perusal of the glories it holds forth. Many an afflicted believer, many of the children of God, while undergoing great tribulation, have learned from this book that they “ would not alway live,” that to them to die would be gain, because it would be to “ be with Christ, which is far better.”

But though the exercised believer enjoys the spiritual beauties of this chapter, it is sad to observe how slow the many are to appreciate or even understand them. In truth, it is an effect of the imperfection of the spiritual sense, that man is more competent to understand sorrow than joy. All can comprehend the threatened miseries of hereafter; and though figuratively expressed by “ the

worm that never dies, and the fire that never shall be quenched," all can realize and apprehend the lot of the impenitent. It is not so with regard to heaven: the imagination is sluggish to search after its beauties: its promise is accepted, but not appropriated; and the mind willingly misapplies a passage of Scripture to excuse its own indisposition (1 Cor. ii. 9)—“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”

Yet there are some announcements connected with the blessedness of the righteous, so plain that none need be blind to them or mistake them (v. iii.)—“Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” (v. iv.)—“God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” (xxii. 5) “There shall be no night there.” The descriptions are general, but they are striking also; and though necessarily deficient in clearness to our obscured intellects, they are full of promises of glory and joy to the soul. But we read, it is said, of many, “they shall in no wise enter therein.” The truth of God stands as a bar to their approach, and eternity is the extent of their exclusion. But, who shall not enter? “Lord, is it I?” Shall we?

Let us shut up all vain inquiries by recurring to Scripture, and observing how God, who describes the glories of eternity, represents the characters of those who shall, and those who shall not, be participators of its joys.

“There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie.” Again, in the 8th verse, we have a more extended description of these characters. “The fearful and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore-

mongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars.”

The “*fearful*” are those who, conscious of sin and disobedience and ingratitude, distrust and fear God. I think I perceive a character of this description in the person of the apostle Peter before his conversion. As the people pressed upon Jesus to hear him, as he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, he entered into Simon Peter’s ship, and prayed him to thrust out a little from the land. Peter heard his Lord’s address, and though apparently not much influenced by it, yet hesitatingly yielded obedience to the Redeemer’s farther request—he let down the net; they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, and the net brake. The miracle convinced Peter of the authority of him whom he carried in his ship; and trembling under a sense of unworthiness, a feeling aggravated by the presence of him whom he knew to be of God, he fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, “depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.” Here we see the disease—distrust and fear of God: we observe the source from which it springs—sin; “I am a sinful man, O Lord.” And a little farther on we discover the remedy in the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;” he said unto Simon, “fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they left all and followed him.”

Fear springs from unbelief, from an ignorance of that God whose name is love, and of whom it was said, in the person of the Son, “this man receiveth sinners.” Another source of unbelief is sin—a preference of sin to God. We have two instances in the Gospel of St. Matthew of rejection of Christ, in consequence of this depraved state of mind. In one, at the conclusion of the 13th chapter, though our Lord’s teaching had created great astonishment in the minds of those who heard him, yet every salutary effect was destroyed by the recollection—“Is not this the carpenter’s son?” Pride

in their own power, and contempt for the low estate of Mary's son, became a bar to discipleship, and "they were offended in him." Again, in the 8th chapter, where Christ is recorded to have cast out devils, and suffered them to enter into a herd of swine, which ran down a steep place and perished in the waters, a love of this world's riches was the cause of rejecting the Gospel of the Messiah; and though the whole city came out to meet Jesus, "they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts." The two classes which we have now considered, may be regarded as doctrinally enemies of Christ. The next which present themselves are his practical opponents—the "*abominable*," including all that list of unrighteous enumerated in the 6th of 1 Corinthians—"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revellers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God." All transgressors, every transgression of every law—not wholesale offenders only—but whose sinness in one point is guilty of all. Sin—any sin—one single sin is the abominable thing which God hateth; and nothing defiled, spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, will be found at the last day in the person of those who will constitute the church of God. *Sorcerers* and *idolators*, as applied to those who are not involved in the grossness of heathen superstition, designate the followers of such men as we find spoken of in the book of Acts. In the 8th chapter Simon the sorcerer "gave out that himself was some great one." His sin consisted in attributing to man what belongs to God. In the 13th chapter, Elymas the sorcerer was accused by the apostle of "perverting the right way of the Lord." If to these we add "all *liars*"—that is, the promulgators of falsehood, in every shape and under every pretence, whether it be selfishness assuming a cloke to pilfer

one's purse, or, more under the guise of fashion, affecting a frame of mind to steal a good opinion, every deviation from truth, no matter what the motive, must be offensive to him whose name is "true."

My brethren, if with all our light, and all our knowledge, and all our improvement—for, be he who he may who lives in a Christian country, he must and does receive benefit from that revelation under which we live—if Christendom be guilty, what must be the state of the idolatrous heathen world!

I am not going to appeal to fancy or romance, but to history and to experience. I am not about to speak of nations of whom we know nothing, or next to nothing, but of those of whom we know a great deal; for example, of the ninety millions of fellow-subjects whom we have in India, of the 800,000 slaves—no, thank God, that national disgrace is in a great measure wiped away—800,000 helpless, exiled Africans, whom we have in our West India colonies. I shall refer entirely to universally acknowledged facts.

Murderers. Is that name too strong for those who, weary of their aged parents and other relatives, hurry them to the waters of the Ganges to die in its so called sacred stream? Is murder too harsh a name for a system where a mother, at the moment she gives birth to a child, and before her affections are too strongly fixed upon it, rushes in an agony of distress to immolate her infant, if it be not of that sex which she is directed to preserve?

Idolators. A fearfully comprehensive word. We do not usually value its importance, or consider why it has ever been peculiarly hateful to God.

We pray—"Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name." We desire to glorify that name, and to see it glorified. We love those that respect it, and would esteem any dishonour directed to God as if pointed at ourselves. Even in a worldly point of view we are disposed

to honor our earthly parents. We rejoice to hear their names spoken of with respect, we deprecate any disrespect to them; and if they are misrepresented, where is the man who would not stand up in their defence? "Oh, you do not know my father; he is incapable of the act which you attribute to him; see him and know him, and you will respect him as I do." Now, what is idolatry? "He heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak, which he strengtheneth for himself among the trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn; for he will take thereof and warm himself, yea, he kindleth it and baketh bread: the residue thereof he maketh a graven image; he falleth down thereto, and saith, Thou art my god."

Contemplate the imaginary characters of these idols. The idol Juggernaut claimed so much provision and dress for his indulgence—so many young women sacrificed to his service—so many human victims crushed beneath his ponderous wheels—and then exacts the homage of his votaries.—Thou art the great "I Am," "holy, just, and good."

Liars. The Hindoo religious books openly declare, if a lie tends to a man's own interest, it is the language of the gods. If a professed Christian lives ungodly, he sins against light, against his religion, against his conscience. A heathen is corrupted by his heart, and still more by the system of religion under which he lives.

Now hear what Scripture says of all such—sinners against light at home, and sinners in the abyss of idolatry in heathen lands, those whose transgressions are more refined among ourselves, or transgressors in all their disgusting deformities abroad—"they shall in no wise enter." No palliation, exception, or excuse. Strength of temptation will not excuse; example of others, however specious and frequent, will not justify; ignorance or want of thought will only aggravate: *not one, in*

any case or in any country, stained with sin, will ever enter into the kingdom of God. Who, then, shall enter in? who shall be saved? The text answers explicitly, "they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."

"Behold the Lamb of God!" Such was the description which John gave of Jesus Christ. It harmonised with the prophecy of Isaiah; it filled up the typical sacrifices of the temple; it is the foundation of the believer's hope. "Ye know," says the apostle Peter, "that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God."

The Lamb's book, figuratively speaking, is that record which contains the name of all Christ's people. He knows them all by name; he calls them individually; they know his voice and follow him, and he gives them everlasting life. It is called the book of life, because Christ came to save, not to destroy, and because he is himself life, and the author and source of life in others. "I am come," said he, "that ye might have life, and that ye might have it more abundantly." The names of all Christ's disciples are written in this book. This is the ground of their hope and the source of their joy. "Rejoice," said Jesus, addressing himself to some of them, "because your names are written in heaven." But how shall we know them? can we pry into that book? or must we wait for the day when the world will be assembled, when the dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and the books shall be opened? Alas! it may be then too late. No; Scripture afford us marks and tests by

which to discern those who are Christ's disciples: it is "not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, but he that doth the will of his Father which is in heaven."

In the chapter from which the text is taken, there are two descriptions given of those of whom the Almighty declares individually, "I will be his God, and he shall be my son. I will give to him that is athirst." What encouragement does this afford to all who in any degree desire to serve God—"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come to the waters;" "all things are ready;" "without money and without price?" Come just as you are, weary and heavy laden. God bids me tell you—"if any man will, let him take the waters of life freely." "I will give to him that is athirst." Blessed tidings to the fainting and desponding disciple! Fear not; God himself gave you the desire, and he will not leave it unsatisfied. The same God who called you out of Egypt, and allured you into the wilderness, will speak comfortably to you and keep you there. He has promised that you shall "want no manner of thing that is good," and "he will not leave you nor forsake you." He that overcometh shall inherit all things; for, "whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." But the heathen! what is to become of them? "How shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" What, then, is the inference? If you would have the heathen saved, send out missionaries to them.

Let me speak to you now as believers who profess to be guided by the Word of God, not led away by fanatical or enthusiastic notions, but proving all things by reason and Scripture, and "holding fast that which is good." You pray morning and night, "thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Now, if I know what enthusiasm

means, it signifies expecting an end, without reference to the means to attain it. An enthusiast desires something, and with open mouth looks to God for a miracle to accomplish it. I speak not of those cases where miracles are promised, but where the Almighty has afforded the means, and commands his servants to employ them. "Thy kingdom come!" "May the kingdoms of the heathen become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ!" I have offered up the prayer, and now I am waiting for God to accomplish by a miracle. But God has commanded to use human means—"Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." I cannot go myself, nor need you: others have done, and others are still ready to do so. Come over and help them.

You are not an enthusiast; you believe God acts by ordinary means. Take heed, lest if ye say "thy kingdom come, thy will be done," and do nothing to promote these objects, the Saviour may one day say, not woe unto you, enthusiasts; but, "woe unto you, Pharisees, hypocrites."

Thank God, our church, as a body, is not open to the reproach of indifference to the Saviour's last command—"Ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The established religion of this country possesses this mark of a Christian Church. The temporal dominion of our country extends to every quarter of the globe, but her spiritual influence is still more extended: from the rising to the setting the name of Christ is preached by the missionaries of Great Britain. It has been justly said, the sun never sets on the missionary efforts of our people.

I would not needlessly presuppose objections; but if such should be offered, let this be our reply—we endeavour to obey and glorify Christ. Should this not content our opponents, let us meet them with a reference to a simple Scripture fact—a woman pouring ointment

on the Redeemer's head. Some had indignation; their reasoning was enveloped in a mist of wrath: others condemned the waste; they reasoned like traffickers—the outlay was not compensated by the return: others spoke of the poor, as if charity, which begins at home, should end there too: others declared their objections below their breath; they murmured them out. Now, suppose those who take no part with us were to rail to the full. Let us take

Jesus' answer to the woman—"Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. Verily I say unto you, whosoever this Gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken for a memorial of her."

Alas! for that religion which leads us to disregard our Saviour's last command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature."

ON THE ABUSE AND USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL MARINER'S CHURCH, KINGSTOWN,

BY THE REV. W. R. LAWRENSON, A. M.

LUKE XI. 1-4.

"It came to pass, that as Jesus was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done as in heaven, so in earth; give us day by day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

In another place, the Saviour says, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth;" and yet how vast a proportion of those, that call themselves Christians, are not only strangers to the realities of spiritual communion, but are actually guilty of untruth in their approaches to the throne of grace,—uttering with the lips the accents of faith and love, to which the heart, and even the understanding, are at least indifferent. So far indeed from the consent of these being deemed essential to the efficacy of prayer, there are multitudes who worship God in an unknown tongue, adhering with superstitious reverence to the forms, and even the language, of bygone ages, and without

an idea of the sentiments of worship therein concealed. Our controversy, however, is with those who live in the full sunshine of gospel light, "who know his will, and approve things that are more excellent, which have the form of knowledge, and of truth in the law," Rom. ii. 18: and we would earnestly call to their remembrance that warning of St. Paul, Rom. xiv. 22, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth." And happy would it be for many whose consciences are at ease in Zion, if their prayers were merely useless, if they did not threaten actually to arise in judgment, their heaviest accusers before the throne of God.

This will be seen more clearly, if we

look to that model of perfect prayer which our blessed Saviour himself has dictated; and here, with heaven's own materials, how have our benefactor's kind intentions been overruled for evil? Ignorance, superstition, and careless formality have each in turn perverted the Lord's Prayer to their respective views, acknowledging its authority, adopting its expressions, and yet agreed in a total disregard of the spirit and meaning of those words which they affect so highly to reverence. Some utter mechanically the service of the lips, but for all the legitimate purposes of prayer the spirit is silent—the understanding unfruitful.—Others pray, indeed, in spirit; their understandings, and apparently their feelings are engaged with God; and yet they are not, in fact, speaking truth to him that searcheth the hearts; and would perhaps be confounded, if they awoke to the meaning of those petitions which daily they record in heaven.

This is peculiar to the works of God, that if you follow the examination of them into infinite space, or down, on the other hand, to the utmost point of minuteness, they are perfect still; and no where is this characteristic so clearly discernable as in his revealed word. The spirit of the rude barbarian, or of the man of literature and elegance, the careless, the proud, the penitent spirit, all see it different, and yet the same; and every soul of man must in his sober moments acknowledge that it speaks as closely and singly to his peculiar case, as if it contemplated no other state of conscience but his alone.

And thus is it also with the Lord's Prayer; it conveys the simple adoration of a child—it speaks the highest sentiments of a philosopher; "He that gathers little feels no lack, and he that has gathered much has nothing over." In itself it is perfect; and yet, since it is "evil for that man that eateth with offence," since "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," even this holy prayer will become a source of condemnation, when it proceedeth out of feigned lips, and when, so far from the heart consenting to its words, it is so completely at variance, as actually to condemn itself in that prayer which it alloweth.

I.—ON THE ERRONEOUS USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

1.—"*Our Father which art in Heaven.*" You commence by addressing Almighty

God as your Father; and here in the wide range of his independent kindness, you are preserved from error. He is indeed your Father, whether you be an adopted saint or a returning prodigal; though regardless, unthankful, you are still his child, and to the last moment of expiring hope, may look with confidence to a Father's love.

We will not here enter into the believer's views in this opening address, which give all the force of the covenant to the petitions which follow; but admitting the right of every human being to address him thus, we would merely repeat the prophet's expostulation, "If I be a father, where is my honour; if I be a master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. i 6. May he not say with truth, "I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me;" and has not your first effort of liberty been ever like the prodigal son, "to take that portion of goods that falleth to you, and to go into a far country," as estranged as possible from God and godliness?

2.—"*Hallowed be thy Name.*" Thus the provocation is made even more palpable; for having presented yourself to his notice, having declared your acknowledgment of him, as your Father in heaven, you proceed to express a wish, that his name should be hallowed; and within a short hour, perhaps, you may be found blaspheming that holy name, conceiving, and uttering from the heart, the sentiments of open wickedness, and speaking every word that may do hurt, O thou false tongue: and then, after a day of rebellion, as if to render the contempt more striking, you return at night to the throne of grace, repeating the self-same accents of loyalty and love. Independent of the open indignities, wherewith the name of God continually is blasphemed, there are an infinite variety of more subtle acts of disloyalty, more indirect insults, through all the shades of character and circumstance, down to the mere look of scorn, which tells as plainly as the boldest avowal, that you pay no homage to the King of Heaven: but, however unnoticed here, though perhaps forgotten, and passed away from your own mind, yet "for every idle word you shall give account;"—"by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned," and if there need an aggravation to the sin of

a guilty tongue, it will be, that daily it repeated those words of Christ, "Hallowed be thy name."

During all the years that you have offered this petition, it is more than probable that the name of God has remained unknown to you; that the revelation which he has given of his holy name, and therein of his holy character, has been entirely overlooked. Exod. xxxiv. 5. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty."

And this is the name of God which every day you acknowledge and approve; of one that will "by no means clear the guilty," that will nevertheless "forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin;" and though this be evidently a mystery, a contradiction which the cross of Jesus alone can explain or reconcile, yet heedlessly you reiterate the awful prayer, and entreat that that name may be hallowed, which in itself involves the necessity for your condemnation. The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, but how is this possible, whilst still in ignorance of the Being they adore; and again, the Saviour has plainly declared, that "no man knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son shall reveal him;" and here in the passage before us, we see the nature of the difficulty to which he probably refers. It is only when "taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us," the Spirit enables us to understand the mystery, how "mercy and truth can meet together, how righteousness and peace can kiss each other;" how "God can be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus;" how, in short, "he can forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin, and yet by no means clear the guilty." Otherwise than in Christ, the very name of God, the very attributes of essential deity, involve the sinner's ruin; and otherwise than in the faith and lively hope of the Gospel, the genuine expression of the heart of man will never be "Hallowed be thy name."

3.—"Thy Kingdom Come." Suppose

that your prayer were granted, that the great and terrible day of the Lord appeared, "that the heavens, being on fire, were dissolved, and the elements melted with fervent heat," would you be among those "who love his appearing?" 2 Tim. iv. 8. would you not rather be crying to the mountains to cover you, and to the earth to hide you from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb?" Rev. vi. 16.

And when we look on it in a spiritual sense, the inconsistency is even more obvious, so completely do your life and conduct belie the profession of your lips. He that is the friend of the world is the enemy of God, and cannot really desire the establishment of God's holy spiritual kingdom, in his own soul, or in that of others. There is another kingdom, under which every one of us is by nature born, and the carnal mind, is not only in its own spirit, enmity with God, Rom. viii. 7.; but it is the subject of another monarch, rendering homage and obedience to another prince, "the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." And this is no mere speculative theory, but an actual visible struggle, in which the adherents of the opposite powers are brought into frequent and open collision, so that it is impossible, really to desire the supremacy of one, whilst engaged with all your powers in the service of the other. The Lord has a mighty work going on in the world; at home, abroad, by every various instrumentality, his servants are engaged. Some personally in missionary labours, in the circulation of the Scriptures, in the instruction of youth: others in strengthening the hands of the builders, and "by the ministration of their service, supply the wants of the saints," identifying themselves thereby, as "fellow-helpers to the truth," since "as his part is that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that carrieth by the stuff." "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints and do minister." Heb. vi. 10.

And have you shared in the burden and heat of the day? The work has gone on, has prospered, has flourished gloriously; and it may be, that looking out on all the societies, and combined exertions that are going on in the world, candour would oblige you to confess that

hitherto you have had neither lot nor part in the matter. "He that gathereth not with me, scattereth," saith the Lord; and "to whom ye have yielded yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey," and it may be, that the coming of that kingdom, for which you offer up your daily supplication, may be the sealing of your "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."

4.—"Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." These words remind us of an awful fact, that God, the Creator's will, is, in his own world, no longer acknowledged; that another spirit now worketh in the children of disobedience; and that the very mind of man, as it is by nature formed, is, in its own constitution, enmity with God. Looking, then, by faith to a happier world, we pray that the same holy, sanctifying influence, which forms their blessedness, may shine in mercy on this benighted earth, and illumine our dark horizon with beams of heavenly grace; that the same power which moved on the face of the waters, and called forth light and harmony from the wild confusion of nature and its elements, would visit our hearts, and raise them up to hope and liberty; that the will, the judgment, the various powers of the mind, may all receive that healing from above which shall render them faithful ministers of their several functions,—no longer serving the interests of the world and flesh, no longer betraying our confidence where we most securely reposed it, but working effectually according to the light of truth, shall establish our heavenly Father's will as the law of our hearts; and eventually "bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

And looking now to the past or present features of your life, can you trace any visible influence, that this will has exercised over your more important actions and resolves? Has it governed your choice of a profession—of the society you prefer—of the opinions you support? Has Christ been called to your marriage,—has he been recognized in your daily walk and conversation?—in a word, you that daily pray, "thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," acknowledge that beyond the recognition conveyed in the words before us, the will of your heavenly King is little, if at all, remem-

bered. "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent," and in accordance with your prayer, have you sought out the means of grace, wherein he is wont to visit and bless his people. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," and it is whilst hearing, reading, speaking often one to another, that "the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord."

Thus the Ethiopian eunuch, returning homewards from the city of God, continued still to read and ponder on the words of Scripture. In the sacred domes of Jerusalem he had hoped and waited in vain, while the desert road of Gaza was the Spirit's chosen place: there the Lord blessed him, and sent him on his way rejoicing.

Again, "this is the will of God, even our sanctification," Thess. iv. 3.; and confess with candour, is this the object of your petitions? Are your unsanctified affections, your unsubdued tempers,—the body of this flesh still warring within you,—are these a grief, a burden, a source of continual regret? are these the bosom tyrants from whom you pray to be delivered? is your's indeed the genuine outpouring of the heart, "always labouring fervently in prayer," "that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God," Col. iv. 12.; then can you pray with sincerity, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

5.—"Give us this day our daily bread." A subject of practical tendency and continual recurrence now presents itself. We pray to the Lord, our Father, to give us our daily bread, as if it were from his hands we expected to receive it—as if our confidence were not already engaged in some other, perhaps entirely opposite, quarter. Like those of whom the prophet Habakkuk wrote, "they sacrifice to their net, and burn incense to their drag, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous," Hab. i. 16. And your talents, your merchandize, your yokes of oxen, perhaps a patron's smile,—these be thy Gods, O Israel; from these you expect your present supply, your future advancement; and the will of your heavenly Father is lightly esteemed, in comparison with the golden image which your own interest hath set up. No doubt these are instruments of prosperity, they are means whereby the Lord conveys his

bounty and abundance: but let experience, the domestic experience of what passes under your own eye, let that declare how little the instrument can do when the true benefactor's hand is withdrawn.—“One comes to a heap of twenty measures, and there are but ten; one comes to the press-fat to draw out fifty vessels, and there are but twenty.” Haggai ii. 16. Men labour painfully, rising up early, and late taking rest; sacrificing their domestic happiness, their health,—their immortal souls; and yet the sorest evils of poverty are never absent from their dwellings; whilst others, with far inferior resources, are evidently enjoying “the life that now is,” as well as the radiant hope of that which is to come; having the reality of the one, the sure earnest of the other; finding in their father's house bread enough and to spare, while the more favoured worldlying perisheth with hunger.

In looking prospectively on the scene before us, it must be confessed that the god of this world exerciseth a great patronage. “All these are mine, and to whomsoever I will, I give them,” he says; and you must choose, whether to receive your daily bread from his hand, or from your Father which is in heaven. “You cannot serve God and Mammon;” the devil and the world demand compliances, which can only be made at the sacrifice of your allegiance; they teach different maxims, their standard of right and wrong are altogether opposite; so that the things which are highly esteemed among men, are foolishness in the sight of God.

No doubt strong temptations will arise and established custom, or the example of others will be alleged as a precedent for your imitation; it may be, too, that the pressure of circumstances, the well-being of those that you love, will combine to influence your decision; but the fact will remain the same, under every disguise, that a compromise of principle is an abandonment of the service of God, from a preference of the daily bread you will eat in the devil's service.

6.—“*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*” We come now to a most dangerous and extraordinary infatuation. The Canaanite passed his children through the fire, under the idea of religion; but it is inconceivable, that enlightened men, professing a spiritual worship, should, day after day,

imprecate this tremendous condemnation on their souls—“*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*” They who never forgave an injury, who would count it mean, disgraceful, unworthy, to suffer with meekness, and seek no revenge, yet venture to pray, that with the same stern, unrelenting rigour they have dealt to others, the Lord should deal even so in judgment with themselves! As they resented the least encroachment, a slight, a mere look that offended them—as they exacted the uttermost farthing; with the same iron hand of severest justice they pray that the Lord should exact the law's utmost requirement when he pleads with them! They have found one of their fellow-servants that owed them an hundred pence, and they pray that as they “have taken him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest,” as deaf to all his entreaties, they have cast him into prison, or in some similar manner given full scope to their resentment, that even so their Lord and Master should deal with them concerning the ten thousand talents which they are conscious of being in his debt. Now, pause for a moment, ere you again record this sentence against self; for it is evident nothing can be further from your intention than that your conduct to others should in any degree form the standard of your heavenly Father's judgment. A moment's reflection would show, that if he were to grant your prayer, the result would be a terrible, a sure, and an immediate retribution for your trespasses, even as you are wont to exact from those that trespass against you. Look to your hearts at the present moment; you have not pardoned, and consequently remain yourself unpardoned before God; you treasure up resentment, and in like manner wrath must, in very faithfulness, be treasuring up for you, and your own lips continue to pronounce the awful sentence, which retains the sin of a whole life on your devoted soul.

7.—“*Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory.*” The remaining petitions of the Lord's prayer are closely connected together in a strong argumentative appeal to the covenant of grace in Christ Jesus; but as we are at present engaged with the erroneous use of this form of strong words, we must consent to regard the members separately

as independent sentences. Here you entreat the Lord, not to lead you into temptation, but to deliver you from evil; and yet no effort is visible on your part to avert the danger. You show no fear of the garment spotted with the flesh, no dislike to irreligious society, no fear of entering the resorts of sin and dissipation. Sin is infectious as the plague, and you cannot inhale its atmosphere without contamination; besides that, society is so constituted, that we are naturally and justly deemed a party in the actions and views of those with whom we associate.

If our ideas did not harmonize, if we did not take pleasure in the same objects, the bond of union would be at once dissolved; and remember, it would not depend on our inclination only, but if a man be but faithful, the world is ready enough to withdraw itself, and the immediate consequence, and therefore the first sure evidence of the Lord's having called us out of the world, would be, that the world hated us. "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord God Almighty." But instead of this, we double the folds of evil around us, labouring "to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof;" every appetite is tempted, every latent passion called forth and ministered unto. However various the tastes and habits, they are all provided with congenial allurements, and under a graceful, sumptuous, or offensive exterior, the inward work of evil is still the same. And look for a moment on the books, the theatres, the public journals, the daily conversation wherein your existence is passed; and after so much labour, and going to so much expense to bring temptation round you in every possible shape, can you attempt to pray with sincerity, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil?"

The word of God is very plain on this subject. The things that are in the world, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" these things are not of the Father, but are of the world: and there is no medium; "the friendship of the world is enmity with God, and he that will be the friend of the world is the enemy of God."—James iv. 4.

The conclusion of the Lord's prayer is called the Doxology, as if the Lord of truth would have taught an unmeaning repetition, as if, like the idolators of old, he would have them cry—"Thy God, O Dan, liveth, the manner of Bearsheba liveth;" or with them of Ephesus, cry for two hours—"Great is Diana of the Ephesians." No, this concluding passage is one of the very first importance; it is introduced as a reason, a motive for God's peculiar interference, and embodies a sound confession of Gospel faith, as the natural and appropriate conclusion to a believer's prayer.

The first and successful effort of the adversary was to conceal the message of peace in an unknown tongue; and when the awakening world revolted against this assumption, the same spirit prevailed in retaining an unknown or obsolete expression for some of the most precious truths of the Christian faith. What just reason could be alleged for retaining an ancient Saxon word that conveys absolutely no meaning to the understanding, instead of the simple, heartstirring title which the Lord himself bestowed. The word *Gospel* does not teach us to look for *Good News*, and was therefore suited to those perversions of truth which had no good news to declare. Again the word *grace* is exceedingly vague, and by no means suggests the idea of a *free gift*, which the Apostle intended. The whole train of his argument is consequently frustrated, and the mention of "the Gospel of the grace of God" excites none of those importunate inquiries which would inevitably follow from the expressive name, "*the good news of God's free gift.*"

And in the same manner is the cross of Christ withdrawn from the Lord's prayer; and though the conjunction "for" evidently implies that a reason is about to be adduced, that reference is made to what is gone before, and an argument about to be stated for claiming the Lord's peculiar interference, yet under the name of *Doxology*, or giving of glory, under pretence of showing especial reverence and adoration to the Most High, this precious confession is reduced to a feeble adulatory form, and drops from the lips unheeded—a mere tribute of respect.

The Sermon in continuation of this subject, on *the rightful use of the Lord's Prayer*, will appear in the next Number.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT THE MILITARY CHAPEL, BALLINCOLLIG, ON SUNDAY,
JUNE 26th, 1837,

BY THE REV. C. C. TOWNSEND, A.M.

(*Unask'd.*)

REVELATIONS iii. 20.

"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."

To estimate aright the real force and true beauty of these wonderful and most gracious words, we must take into consideration two things—*by* whom they were spoken, and *to* whom they are addressed. The context clearly shows that they are the words of him who "spake as never man spake," our glorified and ever blessed Redeemer, Jesus; as he here describes himself, "the faithful and true witness, the beginning," (that is, *not commencement*, but *origin*, or first cause,) "of the creation of God." From it we also learn, that they were addressed by him in *particular* to the church of Laodicea, but in *general* to all, whether churches or individuals, who, as to conduct, circumstances, and character, resemble the members of *that* church in being careless, lukewarm, worldly-minded or self-righteous professors of the religion of the Gospel, neither cold nor hot in their Christian faith and practice.

I would, my brethren, that they were in this sense applicable to none of us; but I fear, and as an upright minister of the Gospel of Christ I must express my deep apprehension that there may be those, even in this very congregation, who say, like the Laodiceans of old, "I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing;" not knowing, that in themselves they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked;" and therefore *deeply* in need of the Saviour's salutary advice and warning, "I counsel thee to buy of me." But *how* buy of him?—as his own prophet Isaiah so

emphatically tells us, "*without money and without price*;" "gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve that thou mayest see."

The mention of this beautiful verse of Isaiah brings to my recollection a circumstance that, as I have been told, occurred not very long ago, and which, I think, forcibly and affectingly illustrates the meaning both of the prophet Isaiah in the passage I have alluded to, and of our Lord in the passage before us. A clergyman in the south of Ireland, having a few officers quartered in a neighbouring town to dine with him, selected the 55th chapter of the prophet Isaiah, to read at evening family worship. One of the officers, a young man, appeared very attentive; and after the others had taken their leave, remained behind to ask an explanation of what seemed to him to imply an absolute contradiction—"buying *without money and without price*." The clergyman endeavoured to show him that it was figurative language, employed by the Holy Spirit to point out to us the nature of true faith, by which the sinner who believes in Jesus appropriates or makes the blessings of salvation his own, just as that which a man purchases becomes his own property when he has paid the price of it; with this difference, that spiritual blessings are bought, i. e. made our own, "*without money and without price*," inasmuch as we give, and

are required to give, no equivalent for them, "eternal life being the *gift* of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The young officer departed, but without apparently deriving much satisfaction, and the clergyman thought no more of it. In a few weeks, however, the regiment to which this young man was attached was ordered on foreign service, and scarcely had it reached the unhealthy climate of Jamaica, when he was seized with fever and died. One of his brother officers, writing to a friend in the neighbourhood of where they had been, shortly after, thus mentioned the circumstance: "You will be sorry to hear that poor _____ is no more. He was carried off by fever almost immediately on our arrival, and on his sick bed we could not make out what he was at, for he was continually saying, "now I understand the 55th of Isaiah. Oh, tell Mr. _____, now I know what it is to buy wine and milk without money and without price."

May we, too, my friends, when the solemn hour arrives, be enabled thus to rest by faith upon Jesus, saying, as I think we may fully believe this our brother could, from his own experience, say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

The present state of the several cities of Asia Minor, to which the solemn warnings contained in the 1st chapter of the book of Revelation are addressed, according to the account of some of our excellent missionaries who have recently visited them, agrees exactly with the respective addresses delivered to each in this book above seventeen centuries ago. Surely this is in itself a striking, as it is a standing, proof of the authenticity and Divine authority of the Bible; and surely it ought to be an instructive lesson to us to beware how we, either individually or nationally, trifle with or despise those inestimable blessings which others have thereby so awfully and so entirely forfeited. Oh, may we, both as a people and as individuals, be preserved from the guilt and danger either of casting aside our national Christianity, or of not giving earnest heed to the things we have every one of us heard; for "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The different addresses of him, who, in the figurative language of this inspired book, "holdeth the seven stars in his

right hand, and walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks," point out the then state of these interesting churches, the early seats of our common Christianity. Ephesus was fallen from its first love; Sardis had but a name to live; Smyrna and Philadelphia had "a little strength, and kept their Lord's word, and did not deny his name;" Laodicea was lukewarm—and now mark the coincidence; Ephesus, once the renowned capital of that part of the world, celebrated, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles, for its magnificent temple of the great goddess Diana, is a poor inconsiderable village, in which there are none who so much as bear the Christian name; Sardis, the once hopeful church and flourishing city, lies levelled to the dust; a few persons called Christians, indeed, are found residing in it, but these few are reduced to the most abject slavery, sunk in ignorance, and without either a single Christian church or minister remaining among them. Smyrna and Philadelphia, on the other hand, who are here commended, have maintained their existence as Christian churches, through every successive generation to the present day; and they have now in them a considerable body of persons who at least own the Christian name, if they do not adopt and follow the Christian's rule, "let every one that nameth the name of Christ, depart from iniquity;" persons who, it is to be hoped, will, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit on the preaching and circulation of God's most blessed word among them, through the agency of our Missionary and Bible Societies, be led daily more and more both to "know God, and to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." While Laodicea, that mighty city, whose very ruins show that it was once in a pre-eminent degree noble and magnificent, is not only destitute of a Christian church, but absolutely without a single human being inhabiting it—an awful monument of the justice and severity of him whose reproofs it disregarded, as well as an instance of the terrible truth of his words, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot: so then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Oh, should not this solemn fact bring home to the heart and conscience of every heedless, lukewarm, half-and-half pro-

fessor of the Christian name, the awful words of the Lord in the book of Proverbs—"Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh," &c.—Prov. i. 24, 30. If there be, then, in this congregation any who have hitherto turned a deaf ear to the kind invitations of their gracious Saviour, and disregarded equally the awful voice of an offended God, who have not as yet tasted the love nor chosen the fear of the Lord—how shall we address them better than in these solemn words, "Oh, that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" Oh, that they would but picture to themselves for a moment the utter shame and confusion of face which must cover every ungodly, careless, self-righteous, worldly-minded, unconverted, Laodicean professor of the Gospel; all who "honor God with their lips, while their hearts are far from him," at that hour when we shall, all of us, as we soon must, "appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad"?—2 Cor. v. 10.

But let us proceed to examine a little more minutely the passage before us. We see, in the first place, by the very commencing word, that it contains matter of the greatest importance, and worthy of our deepest attention. "*Behold,*" says the Saviour, "I stand at the door and knock." The form of introduction here employed is used in many parts of the sacred writings, and almost always to point out something important. "*Behold,*" says the apostle John, speaking of the believer's high privilege—adoption by grace, through faith, into the family of his heavenly Father, "what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." "Rejoice greatly," says the prophet Zachariah, speaking of the approaching and promised Messiah, "O daughter of Zion: *behold,* thy King cometh unto thee," &c.—Zec. ix. 9. "*Behold,*" says the Saviour himself, "I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be."—Rev. xxii. 12. It

is prefixed with peculiar energy and appropriateness to the words of my text, addressed as they are to those who might well have expected a very different message; and thus, containing as they do, so remarkable a proof of the Lord's condescending goodness and long-suffering mercy, together with so unspeakably gracious an encouragement to us all individually to avail ourselves of that mercy.

The language of the passage is evidently in a high degree figurative; but its spiritual meaning is, nevertheless, most beautifully plain, distinct, and simple. It is here stated that Christ, by his word and Spirit, comes to the door of the sinner's heart, knocks at it, and waits for admission. What do we learn from this? That the Saviour now addresses us in love; comes to us now in a way of mercy; and though our hearts, which stand wide open to the world, the devil, and the flesh, are shut against him by ignorance, pride, unbelief, the love of self, and the love of sin; he does not at once withdraw, but submits to many a repulse, and meets with many an unkind refusal, while he uses such means as are best calculated to arouse our attention to his gracious call—"Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Truly may it be said of the Lord that "he waiteth to be gracious." Even though some amongst us may have hitherto been "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," yea, may be even now "drinking in iniquity like water," forgetful alike of him who redeemed us, and of ourselves bought with the price of his precious blood, he does not at once cast us from him; but he is still, he is *now* waiting to be gracious, knocking at the door of our hearts, declaring to us our lost state, and mercifully counselling us, ere it be too late, to come and buy of him unsearchable riches, unfading robes of everlasting righteousness, and eye-salve, that heavenly unction of the Holy Spirit, which can render even the most unlearned in the wisdom of this world, "wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Lukewarmness and high confidence at the same time, are, one would think, strange companions, yet do they often go together, and were, it would appear, the principal features and glaring inconsistencies in the character of the Laodicean church—"I know thy works," says the Saviour, "that thou art neither

cold nor hot; yet thou sayest I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." My brethren, let us look around us, or rather let us look *within* us, and see whether these be not also, in an awful and alarming degree, to be found among ourselves. Are there none of us halting between two opinions? Are there none among us who mistake the ordinances and outward forms of religion for religion itself? Are there none of us whose only view of the spirit and power of Christianity is this, that they were baptized in their infancy, attend their church, and occasionally, perhaps, frequent the Lord's table? How few comparatively are there who do what all *must* do who would be saved, "seek *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness"—who seriously and resolutely flee from the wrath to come—who, instead of earthly treasures, choose decidedly that better part, which shall not be taken away from them? Are we all of us living by faith? Are there none of us who are still ignorant of what faith is, and of what it is to have a personal interest in Christ *by* faith? Do we all know, from experience, what regeneration by the Spirit of God and repentance unto life imply? Has the blood of Christ "purged our consciences from dead works to serve the living God"? Do we all enjoy peace with God? Are there none whose sins are still unpardoned; who, having never, in fact, been convinced of sin, have never fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them in the Gospel, and so never tasted the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows, the privileges and comforts, of vital and soul-saving religion? On such subjects you cannot but know that the word of God is most strikingly explicit and plain—"If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his:" "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature:" and again—"Examine yourselves whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves," &c.: "Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." But look at the latter part of the verse before us, and you will see how encouragingly and kindly the Saviour speaks, not alone to those who have been, and are "followers of God as dear children," though such, I trust and believe, there

are amongst us; but even to those who, though they have been calling him, "Lord, Lord," all their lives, have, like the Laodiceans, never yet in reality given him their hearts, or sought to do the will of their heavenly Father. "Behold," he says, "I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." Here is a rich and precious promise—an universal, or at least an unlimited invitation. Are any of you, my dear friends, really desirous to make it your own, and obtain the blessings here spoken of? Are there any among us this day willing and desirous to open the door of their hearts to the Saviour, and hear his voice of love speaking peace and mercy to their souls? Let such not trust in themselves, but earnestly beseech him to exert the power of his almighty grace, and break down all obstacles and impediments to his full admission into their hearts—"to take from them all ignorance, pride, hardness of heart, and contempt of his word, and so fetch them home to his flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true Israelites, and be made sheep of his fold, under the one great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, Christ Jesus." Then will he open the door of your hearts, and "come in to you, and sup with you, and you with him." He will fill you, that is, "with all joy and peace in believing;" he will impart to you all spiritual consolations, and cause you to abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost; yea, he will delight in you to do you good, enabling you to fight successfully under his banner, against the world, the devil, and the flesh; he will at length make you more than conquerors over every enemy, "working in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure;" he will carry on his own work of grace in your hearts, until he who in mercy began it, in the same union of grace and mercy brings it to the unspeakably glorious accomplishment and end he has himself described—"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

To you, then, my beloved brethren, who are in truth and seriousness candidates for glory, honor, and immortality; who are seeking "a better country, that is, heavenly;" who walk "not after observed

criticism,

but after the Spirit," and who feel the Spirit of your heavenly Father "witnessing with your spirit that you are the children of God:" to you, I say, remember what you once were, "children of wrath, even as others;" and ever bear in mind who it is that has made you to differ—has opened your naturally hard, proud, and selfish hearts—has given you the seeing eye, the hearing ear, and the understanding heart—and has thus called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." To you I need scarcely say, the new birth is no unintelligible mystery; for you have found it yourselves to be an actual and blessed reality; you can testify that "blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered," and that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,"—"What manner of persons, then, ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" Live up to your standard; "they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." Let this be your motto, "faith which worketh by love;" and while you rest simply on the word of God, and look for salvation only by promise, be sure that, through Divine grace "teaching and enabling you to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," you "cleanse yourselves from all

filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord." Remember this, that the grand secret of a holy life and a happy death is contained in these few words, "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith." Therefore, above all things, I say to you, keep close to Jesus; do as the poor girl did, who was asked on her dying bed what she thought of Jesus. "Jesus," she replied, "Jesus, I cleave to him as the limpets to the rocks." So, my beloved brethren, let it be your anxiety and constant care to lay hold of, and cleave unto, Jesus; and as the storms and billows of our sea-girt shores only cause the little creatures to which she so touchingly alluded, to adhere more closely to their native rocks; so will the changes and chances of this mortal life only unite you more firmly and surely to the rock of your salvation; and, resting with that "hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast," on Jesus, "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" you shall assuredly find his promise in every way made good—"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

ADVANTAGE OF AFFLICTIONS.

AFFLICTIONS are God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our heavenly rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and on the left, we should hardly keep the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it and turn out at it? When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness or other affliction reduce us? Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters; and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted I went

astray; but now have I kept thy word." Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!" Not only the green pastures and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the word and Spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the word hath easier entrance.

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REV. W. K. TATAM.

REV. W. R. LAWRENSON.

THE SECOND DEATH IMMORTAL:

A SERMON,

ON THE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT OF SIN,

BY THE REV. W. K. TATAM, M.A.

(Formerly Assistant Chaplain of Bethesda, Dublin, and now Incumbent of Immanuel Church, Oswaldtwale, Diocese of Chester).

REVELATIONS XX. 14.

“ And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”

It appears to be one of the peculiar judgments on the visible church in the present time, that God should permit a simultaneous revival of nearly all the principal heresies which, in former ages, have successively troubled and defiled it. Among them may be noticed the denial of the eternity of punishment. This is chiefly attempted to be proved by a critical perversion of some passages of Scripture, the meaning of which all faithful men have invariably agreed to be plain and obvious. God made man after his image and likeness; and in what way can man resemble God, except in having a soul inspired by God with immortality? The literal translation of the words in Genesis ii. 7, which describe the creation of man, is, that God “breathed into his nostrils the breath of *lives*,” implying that a plurality of vital principles were then imparted to the inanimate clay—the animal and the spiritual. It is assumed,

that when sin entered, and death by sin, the sentence (verse 17), “In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die,” not only subjected the body to mortality, but both soul and body to a suspension or annihilation of all life; not merely a temporary privation of vitality, but a total and eternal cessation of sense and feeling, if not of being; and by consequence, that when the utmost penalty of a righteous God is inflicted on the wicked, it will be by putting them beyond the possibility of suffering, by reducing them to their original nonentity; and then 2 Tim. i. 10, is referred to as a corroborative proof of this, where it is pretended to be asserted, that none escape the sentence of annihilation of all life, except those who believe in Christ, that by faith in him death is abolished, and the soul recovers its lost life and immortality. In this mode of reasoning may be observed a violation of the rules of sober criticism,

and a rejection of the principles of analogical argument. An arbitrary definition is given of death, as being alike applicable to soul and body, in which what is literal and figurative is grossly confounded; in short, it is taken for granted that death is everywhere used in Scripture to express annihilation of all life, when there is not a shadow of reason for such a supposition. That sense in which death is most commonly and easily understood when applied to the body, does not simply imply a cessation of life, but also a *separation* from the soul, the effect of which, from its material nature, must be a privation of sense—the soul, being created immaterial and immortal, cannot include in its death a privation of sense, but primarily consists in *separation* from God, as Paul, speaking of men actually living in the flesh, and by their souls animating their bodies, “*alienated from the life of God*” (Eph. iv. 18); “*without God*” (Eph. ii. 12); “*dead in sin*” (Eph. ii. 1); “*if one died for all, then were all dead*” (2 Cor. v. 14). James v. 20, has the expression, “*save a soul from death,*” which must mean the first or spiritual death; and the second, which is spiritual death eternized. Jude also has this remarkable expression, “*twice dead.*” 1 John v. 12—“*He that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;*” Christ is “*our life*”—to be without Christ for ever, is hell. If death be used to signify being without Christ in the world, eternal death may be used to signify being without Christ in the eternal world. The death, then, which Christ hath abolished, is either the death of the body, or the spiritual and second death, which hath no power over his people; and the life and immortality which he hath brought to light—that is, *made clear* through the Gospel—is either the fact that the body shall live after death, and the soul is immortal; or the life of God by his Spirit, in the work of regeneration, the commencement, even on earth, of an eternal life of joy and an immortality of blessedness, which were more obscurely intimated in the promises of the former dispensation. The resurrection of the bodies of the wicked would be without an adequate object, if it was not that their bodies being reunited to their souls, and thus being reanimated, they might be made capable of being “*judged for the deeds done in their bodies,*” and in them of suffering an immortality of misery. For

this it is that death and hades—the grave and the place of separate spirits—the bodies of one and the souls of the other, are cast into the lake of fire: this is the second death—eternal separation from God, from all that can be enjoyed in God, separation from his holiness and his happiness for ever and ever. But it may be said, this second death, or casting into the lake of fire, is only a strong figure to express the distinction of literal annihilation as to all life. But this is plainly contradicted, Rev. ii. 11, “*He that overcometh, shall not be hurt of the second death:*” an act that terminates all capacity for suffering, that reduces to eternal insensibility cannot be said to *hurt*. Still more plainly, Rev. xiv. 10, 11, “*They shall be tormented with fire and brimstone; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.*” Again, Rev. xx. 10, “*They, and the devil that deceived them, were cast into the lake of fire, where they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.*” Also in Rev. xxi. 8, the expression “*have their part in the lake,*” excludes the idea of annihilation of all life. And in the last chapter of Revelations, after the final judgment, we find the wicked, as well as the righteous, destined to preserve their character through everlasting years—“*He that is unjust, shall be unjust still; he that is filthy, shall be filthy still*”—one of the worst ingredients in their punishment.

Another argument is, that we find the same expression employed to designate the eternal duration of God applied to the happiness of the righteous and the misery of the damned; and not only so, but the latter are sometimes placed in such contra-position, that both must be finite or both infinite. In the Old Testament we find among other passages, Psalm ciii. 17, Jer. x. 10, Dan. xii. 7, Mic. v. 2, עוֹלָם, used to denote the eternal duration of God; and the very same word occurs in Dan. xii. 2, to denote the duration of the shame and contempt to which the wicked awake at the resurrection, contrasted with the everlasting life to which the righteous awake from the sleep of death. In the New Testament, Heb. xiii. 8, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας; and Rev. i. 18, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰῶνων are used to express Christ's eternal duration; and the same expression adopted as to the reward of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked. Matt. xxv. 46, “*everlasting*

punishment" is contrasted with "life eternal;" and the words "*going away*," exclude all ideas of annihilation of life; *change of place* being inconsistent with cessation of all vitality. The same may be noticed in the sentence (verse 41), "*Depart from me*"—separation from Christ—"ye cursed,"—annihilation of all life would be a blessing, not a curse, to the wicked—"into *everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*"—a prepared fire can never be wrested to mean annihilation of life.

In Mark iii. 29, we find the words "eternal damnation." In John iii. 15, perishing and everlasting life are contrasted. In John v. 24—29, two kinds of death are spoken of—temporal and spiritual; and two resurrections, of life and damnation.

In John viii. 51, Christ says, "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death," or see eternal death. To see eternal death, there must be a sense in which we can live for eternity. In Rom. ii. 7, 8, 9, "Glory, honour, immortality, eternal life," are contrasted with "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish."

In Rom. vi. 23, "The wages of sin is death"—death contrasted with eternal life—not merely corporeal death; the righteous undergo this—not spiritual death only; this is the state or effect, rather than the wages of sin—something opposed to eternal life, and that is the second death—being without God, without the Spirit of God, without the life of God for ever.

Mark ix. 48, the duration of their punishment is described—"Their worm dieth not"—literally, "endeth not"—*ὄν τελευτᾷ*—"and their fire is not quenched;" and if the fire is never quenched, and the worm dieth not, the burning and the torture must be without end; and, lest this undying worm and unquenchable fire should be taken only as strong metaphors to express annihilation of all life, this remarkable verse follows, "Every one shall be salted with fire"—as if it was one of the properties of this flame to prepare the soul and body for the eternal endurance of its torture, feeding itself with the very fuel on which it preys, burning without consuming. Awful image of an incorruptibility of wretchedness, and the immortality of the second death! giving some idea "how fearful a thing it is to fall into the hands of the living

God;" so that the happiness of the righteous consists not simply in eternal being, but in *well-being*; and the misery of the wicked, not in the loss of eternal being, but of *well-being*. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," both as respects the wicked and the righteous. After the resurrection, the first death hath no more power over the wicked than the righteous; its destruction, its abolition is effected by being cast into the lake of fire, which certainly cannot mean annihilation of life, as this would be a triumph to death, not a putting it under the feet of Christ. "The God who quickeneth *all things*," can quicken even death, as it were, for destruction: death can only be destroyed by a destruction that takes away from its victims the possibility of a privation of life; it can only be abolished by being for ever swallowed up of life, whether that life be happy or miserable.

We enter not into the inquiry whether the lake of fire is literally or figuratively descriptive of lingering torment, as this is nothing to the present question; but it is plain, we believe, that the far off region of outer darkness, where death and hades, or the bodies and souls of the wicked are cast, "all whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life," is not hushed in the silence and loneliness of utter extinction, but echoes night and day for ever with the dismal sounds of woe, "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth." Yet over this bottomless abyss of woe, even now the Son of God stands and pleads with his Father, "Deliver them from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom;" and still he turns to us, and with beseeching voice exclaims, "Why will ye die?" while he promises to all that believe and obey him his Holy Spirit, the very essence of that happy, glorious life, which is as the days of heaven, even as the days of God.

Thus we have endeavoured to show, that to attempt to prove from the Scriptures that the torments of the wicked are temporary, men must handle the word of God deceitfully, or wrest them to their own destruction. But let us further consider the necessary consequences of such a supposition.

First. *It robs the Deity of his attributes, and deprives him of the bright beams of his glorious majesty.* Can God be infinitely good, and yet satisfied, that those

who despised his goodness should merely sink into nothingness, after a temporary punishment totally disproportioned to the immensity of his nature? Can God be infinitely holy, and be content that creatures who have tarnished his holiness, should make compensation by a limited penalty, and then cease to suffer? Can God be infinitely just, eternally righteous, and yet be fully satisfied that those who have transgressed and broken his law, should make reparation by a few pangs of finite temporal suffering, immeasurably short of the magnitude of the injury and offence? Can God be almighty, and not able to vindicate his honor and glory in a way more adequate to the infinite excellency of his nature, than to deprive the wicked of the capability of glorifying him by their suffering for ever?—for however it may seem to us shrouded in impenetrable mystery—for “clouds and darkness are round about him, while righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne”—it is nevertheless the truth, that “the Lord hath made even the wicked for the day of evil,” and “knows how to reserve the unjust to the day of judgment to be punished;” and “it is a *righteous thing* with God, to recompense” (not annihilation of sense and suffering) but “*tribulation* to the wicked, taking vengeance upon them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with *everlasting destruction*”—Not annihilation of all life—it would be no punishment. In those days, “men shall seek for such a death, and shall not be able to find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.” And it is remarkable in Rev. xix., that the torment of the wicked is described as mingling with the song of the redeemed in heaven—“and again they said, Alleluia; and her smoke rose up for ever and ever. Amen. Alleluia.”

It may be asked too, why did not God spare the angels that sinned, and not cast them down to hell—could he not have annihilated them and spared them the sufferings of so many ages since they left their first estate, if there was any possible proportion between finite torment, and an offence against an infinite God? But he could not without ceasing to be infinitely good, holy, just and mighty; and in all their fallen and forlorn misery they stand trembling in the prospect of the aggravated torments which God has prepared

for them against the judgment of the great day; (2 Pet. ii. 4.) which is whatever is intended by the lake of fire, into which the devils, and death, and hades, or the bodies and souls of the wicked are cast; for the Lord says, it is into the same fire. This is the second death, to which even the angels that sinned are subject, on whom we have no account of a sentence of death having passed similar to that on the human sinner.

Secondly. *It detracts from, if not destroys, the atonement of the Son of God.* For surely if finite sufferings be a full, perfect, sufficient, satisfaction for the offended justice of God—there was no need of an infinite sufferer for a surety and substituted. If temporary punishment was an adequate compensation for offended holiness, there was no need that he should be a Redeemer, “whose goings forth were of old, from everlasting,” and who was the king of eternity—there was no need that he should bleed and die, whose deity gave to every pang, in intensity and duration, an infinite character, providing the insulted justice of heaven with a sacrifice that could satisfy its highest and holiest demands, and an expiation that could propitiate its most angry wrath. The salvation of the Son of God is great, because of the great wrath from which he saves—“the wrath to come:” and if this be but a temporary suffering—eventually a termination of all misery, an everlasting relief and refuge in the annihilation of life—God might have spared his dear Son his humiliation, his agonies, his death, as being more than equivalent: some inferior personage to the Lord of all would have sufficed; for what is the incarnation and death of Christ, but a stupendous contrivance of infinite wisdom, whereby God can be just and yet justify and save the sinner?—and is salvation after all only salvation from temporary wrath? Is this the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory?—Is this the redemption of the great Deliverer?—is it only from this he has bought in with the price of his blood, and is this the very uttermost to which he saves? Is it come to this! such an immense outlay of love—such a vast expenditure of mercy—such a glorious display of justice sheathing the sword of vengeance in the heart of God’s own Son—the man that was Jehovah’s fellow! was it for this he gave *himself* a ransom—all to save from a

few short years of misery and an eternity of nothingness? This would seem a prodigal waste of the riches of his glory: the wrath to come must be more than this—or Christ would not have spent his days on earth, as a man of sorrows, pouring forth a continuous cry of “lamentation, mourning, and woe!” there must be something more than this in the agonies of Jesus—in his bloody sweat exhausting the curse of God, and treading the wine-press of his wrath! something more than this in the contents of the bitter cup from which even *he* shrink back with horror! more than the apprehension of temporary wrath for sin, in his cry, “my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!” This was not superfluous suffering: the groans of Calvary proclaim the eternal torture of the damned—they solved this otherwise inexplicable mystery; for the Son of God, if we believe him to be equal with God, would never have shed tears and then blood on earth; if, beyond, far in the distance of eternity, he did not see with the eye of omniscience, the sufferings of the lost sinner running parallel with the longest line of God’s existence! Be it remembered, too, that Christ only bore the curse of the law, not the curse of the Gospel—and “if these things were done in the green tree, what will be done in the dry?”

Thirdly. *It gives a triumph to sin and Satan, in defeating the end and object of God in the creation of all things for his everlasting glory.* “All his works shall praise him,” even “the wrath of man shall praise him.” “The Lord hath made all things for himself, yea, even the wicked for the day of evil;” and “God, willing to *show his wrath, to make his power known*, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted for destruction;” and again “every knee shall bow to him, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.” Satan looked with malignant jealousy on the creation of man and this world, whose happiness seemed to be designed as a contrast to his own misery—and he thought to disappoint the Creator by marring his work which he pronounced to be “very good.” For this purpose he tempted man to sin by the same suggestion of disloyalty which overthrew himself—“ye shall be as Gods.” Sin having

entered, all the curses of an angry God followed in its train; “death reigned from Adam;” and Satan seemed for a time to triumph in the havoc which he caused in God’s fair creation: but “the Son of God was manifested to destroy him who had the power of death”—“to destroy the works of the devil,” to defeat the design; and God therefore owes it to himself—to his Son, to bring praise and glory out of the worst machinations of the powers of darkness, and compel such universal subjection, that God shall be all in all; accordingly “all his work shall praise him” as long as he has any perfections and attributes to exhibit, and these are inexhaustible. Devils and lost sinners are the works of his hands; but how shall *they* praise him—how shall *they* glorify him—if they are placed beyond the capability of exhibiting in their punishment any one of his glorious attributes? If “every knee shall bow to him, and if every tongue shall confess” to his glory—how can this be if every knee is powerless, and every tongue mute in eternal silence? And if God was “willing to show his wrath, and make known his power on the vessels of wrath,” how can he exhibit those attributes, except these vessels of wrath are so “fitted for destruction,” as to be everlasting monuments of his vengeance? It will take all eternity to display the justice of God, and develop the righteousness of his character in the punishment of sin: and it will take eternity at least for the condemned sinner to exhaust his wrath; for as the saints in heaven shall eternally magnify the mercy of God, so the wicked in hell shall eternally magnify his justice—like the bush from which he proclaimed his law, that seemed to be an emblem of its fiery terrors, burning without being consumed. But what a boast do those who deny this, put into the mouth of the great adversary of God—that after all these mighty works of creation and redemption, in which the entire wisdom and omnipotence of the Deity were displayed, God is compelled on account of sin introducing confusion, disorder, and desolation, to annihilate a vast majority of his rational and intelligent creatures, as though he was disappointed in his original purpose of calling them into existence, for his own glory! But oh! it cannot be, that “He whose throne is in the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth

over all," "who sitteth above the water floods, and reigneth king for ever," that He is unable to raise up his trampled authority and assert his eternal power and Godhead! It cannot be, that He whose domain is infinitude, and whose sceptre is omnipotence, is unable to punish his rebel subjects, and keep them under his government, without blotting them from creation! It supposes a weakness unworthy of Deity—it makes Satan stronger than God.

Lastly. *It takes away one of the principal sanctions from the law and the gospel—it entirely removes the terrors of the Lord, and turns all the most tremendous threatenings of divine wrath into the mere transitory paroxysms of creature fury.* And here we detect the antinomian spirit—the loose licentious principle that dictates and propounds this daring figment—a desire to suppress all that makes sin terrible to the soul, and stamps it as that abominable thing which God so hates, that he will find it a place somewhere, but only to bear the everlasting brand of his displeasure—a fond wish to stifle that secret which conscience whispers to every soul of eternal retribution. The threats of God's anger become idle words, impotent rage; and those terrors which are proposed as motives for obeying and reverencing him have no significance—"Fear not them (saith the Lord) who kill the body, and who after that have no more that they can do; but fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—What meaning is there in words if this destruction is annihilation of sense and feeling; for after the *death of the body* there is something more that can be done to hurt it?

"If judgment begin with the house of God, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God; and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? 1 Pet. iv. 17, 18. What can these interrogations mean, if "the end" be the end of punishment—and the place of appearance *nowhere*? "there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries." Heb. x. 26, 27. there is nothing so fearful in looking forward to a temporary suffering.

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy; of how much sorer

punishment shall he be thought worthy who hath trodden under foot the Son of God?" Heb. x. 29—something more than dying in the body without mercy, even dying in the soul as it were *by mercy*. What can this import if not something inconceivably and unspeakably horrible—that as eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor hath it entered into the heart to imagine the joys which God hath prepared for them that love him; so of the sorrows of the wicked—they must be felt to know any thing of their anguish; and the reason of this is, that as God is the author of the happiness of the redeemed, so he is the author of the misery of the condemned: "God himself is the avenger" "vengeance belongeth to me, I will repay, saith the Lord;" it is his absolute prerogative to challenge and appropriate vengeance to himself; for he alone can inflict a punishment worthy of himself, and consistent with his eternal and immutable justice; for hell is only the infinite justice of God put into active execution: it is his presence and glorious power that shall punish them with everlasting destruction—it is God himself who shall pour the full vials of his wrath into the vessels of wrath—it is "falling into the hands of the living God," who ever lives to avenge, and who, as long as he lives, will never permit his vengeance. Hell is kindled by God himself, "our God is a consuming fire," consuming but unexpiring. He who can save to the uttermost can damn to the uttermost; and when the great day of the wrath of the Lamb is come, and we shall all stand before the great white throne of the sin-avenging Judge of the world, it will be found that it were "better for that man that he had never been born," who will be cast into the prison "from which he shall in no-wise come out, till he has paid the uttermost farthing."

"Who knoweth, O Lord, the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear so shall thy wrath be." It is not merey—it is not clarity that staggers at this terrible majesty of God whose "judgments are a great deep"—it is unbelief questioning its reality, because it presents, like every other mystery of infinite wisdom, a profound and unfathomable abyss:—"the thunders of his power who can understand?"—"it is deeper than hell, what canst thou know?" "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom

and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

There is a solemnity of a most awful kind around the subject, which should preserve it from the flippant sophistry of ingenious criticism, and the daring profaneness of licentious infidelity. It is too solemn a theme for the perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds—for those who search the Scriptures not to find the plain and simple truth, but to extort, by a peculiar mode of interpretation, the most curious speculations and the most stimulating novelties. It is too solemn for those who, feeling the restraint of holiness too much for their unrenewed nature, would seek for some mitigation, if not of the strictness of the precepts of the Gospel, yet of the strictness of the penalty of disobedience to them. It is too solemn for those who, finding it their chief refuge to shut God out of his own world, if not out of existence altogether, eagerly grasp at the notion of ultimate annihilation of life, as most consistent with their desperate creed. It is even too solemn to be discussed by the true children of God—by those who, knowing something of the terrors of the Lord, persuade men—by those who, having been convinced in a measure by the Holy Spirit, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, look upon it as something heinous beyond all conception—that, springing from the one solitary offence of a single individual, has for thousands of generations filled the world with accumulated woe, with tears, and sighs, and deaths—that has dug a tophet of eternal fire for the perdition of ungodly men—but above all, has occasioned the tears, and sighs, and death of the Son of God! Oh! it is an appalling subject to be controverted by sinful creatures! We should fear, we should tremble, we should shudder, but not criticize, argue and dispute: we should adore, and not speculate—submit, and not blaspheme: we should feel as if the shadows of the unknown and eternal world were stretched out over ourselves—as if hell from beneath flashed sore upon us—as if we beheld the frown of the great and dreadful God, "who is angry with the wicked every day," and who, "if they will not turn, will whet his sword, and prepare the instruments of vengeance." We should pray for others and ourselves, that

we may never know, by experience, what it is "to lift up our eyes in hell, being in torments;" and under the abiding apprehension that God is a consuming fire, endeavour to "serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear." He is greatly to be feared, as he is to be loved; because there is forgiveness with him in his Son Jesus Christ; and in faith, fear, and love he is to be glorified by a life of holiness, through the deep teachings of the Spirit. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples;" and we can only cast out the fear that hath torment by an imitation of that perfect love of which Christ has left us so complete an example. The more we prayerfully study the glorious excellencies of the Redeemer's character and the dignity of his person, the more we shall discover in his life and death a discountenancing of sin, as an injury and outrage on his heavenly Father more than tantamount to an eternity of ever-during punishment. It shall never be said in hell what Christ uttered on the cross, "*It is finished.*" We shall see that if it required so precious a sacrifice to magnify the law and make it honourable, anything less than everlasting pains and penalties must leave that law diminished and dishonoured; for whatever underrates sin and its punishment, depreciates in value the atonement of the Son of God. "Christ suffered *once* for sin," and "*died to sin once*;" and this was a kind of ocular demonstration of the eternity of punishment; for the deity of Christ enabled him to sustain, in a moment of time, what the condemned creature must suffer throughout everlasting ages. Nor in these times of abounding iniquity, such antinomian laxity of practice, such false profession and frequent apostacy, should these daring corruptions of Scripture be propounded, overthrowing the faith of some, unsettling the minds of the weak, removing the fear of the Lord, and opening a floodgate for all manner of licentiousness, putting a premium on the indulgence of sin? There is already too much of the folly that makes a mock at sin, too little of the fear of hell, of God and his wrath, among the children of men; conscience is blunted; there is an astounding indifference to those realities, an almost total insensibility; the generality of mankind because "sentence against an evil work, is not speedily

executed, live as if "judgment lingered" and "damnation slumbered," as "if God were altogether such a one as themselves;" and that scoff of the last day is loudly reiterated, "Where is the promise of his coming?" But when they shall say, peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them as a woman in travail, and they shall not escape; as the apostle asks, "How can they escape who neglect so great salvation?" And can the extreme wrath of God, his utmost power to punish, be nothing more than annihilation of all life, when he addresses the wicked in such awful words as these—"I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish come upon you?" And can it be only from annihilation of life and sense that men shall "hide themselves in the dens

and rocks of the mountains, and say to the mountains and rocks, fall upon us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb?" From what do they flee to be crushed under falling rocks and mountains? Oh! there is a voice in all this that loudly cries in the ears of sinners, while it is called to-day, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

May the Holy Ghost, sent down from heaven, impress our minds with seriousness becoming so awful a subject, and shedding his grace upon us, enable us "to sanctify the Lord God in our hearts," to "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

ON THE ABUSE AND USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL MARINER'S CHURCH, KINGSTOWN.

BY THE REV. W. R. LAWRENSON, A.M.

PART II.

ON THE RIGHTFUL USE OF THE LORD'S PRAYER,

(In continuation from page 335).

WE are now to consider the Lord's prayer in another point of view; and will endeavour, according to the measure of grace, to show the meaning of the same passages from a *believer's* lips. They express more than at first sight meets the eye; they refer to events unknown except to himself and God; and through faith he is led to expect, that the words of his poor, feeble, stammering tongue arise to the Divine presence as golden phials full of odours from the altar of heaven. The Lord Jesus has so anticipated every thought,

embodied every wish, that the prayer which was once repeated as a lifeless form, appears now in every word replete with interest—the genuine outpouring of the heart to its Father that is in heaven.

1. *Our Father which art in heaven.* In the mouth of the child of God this opening address assumes a distinct and covenant character, no longer "Baali, my Lord," but "Ishi, my husband." Hosea ii. 16. "No longer called servants, but friends." John xv. 15. "No more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens

with the saints and of the household of God." Eph. ii. 19. He addresses the great Jehovah as his father, because that he "has received power to become one of the sons of God; born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John i. 12. "And because they are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. iv. 6. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Rom. viii. 16. And it is the natural expression of that Spirit of adoption to say with truth and meaning, "Our Father which art in heaven." If the new birth were merely a doctrinal speculation, then we might fear misconception on this subject; but when we have the testimony of the whole body of Christ's church, under different forms and denominations, not producing opinions, but facts—undeniable examples of the power of God's regenerating Spirit, though it have produced no greater effect than to enable a man to say, "whereas I was blind, now I see;" yet even this is so real, that the mind can be in no doubt as to whether it have experienced that secret influence. There are numberless delusive appearances which promise well for a time, "many that did run well," some even "that have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come," "who yet in time of trial fall away, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." The set was grafted, but it never took; it seemed for a time to live, adhering closely to the vine from the pressure of external causes, but the moment that influencing power is, in ever so small a degree, removed, nature resumes the ascendant, it separates and falls. "It had been better for them," says St. Peter, "not to have known the way of righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." The truth and faithfulness of God are called in question; his grace is blasphemed; and the weaker brethren are caused to stumble and fear, through the inconsistencies, the liberties, the

ultimate downfall of those whom they had regarded as Christians, but who have thus become manifest "that they were not all of Christ." "There are, it may be, so many kind of voices in the world," and independent of their intrinsic signification, they differ also according to the feelings of him whose ear they reach. A stranger's cry for succour is met with that conventional assistance, with that aid which man expects to receive from his fellow-creature in difficulty or distress. But a totally different feeling is awakened if it be the voice of your friend; without intending to attribute any want of feeling towards a stranger, yet your efforts, your anxiety, the very form of your countenance will be altered, and will indicate some secret power in that cry of sorrow, beyond the common feelings of our nature. But imagine, for a moment, that it is the voice of your child, the mournful, stifled sob of agony, the appeal of confidence and love—it may be indistinct, scarcely intelligible, so feeble as to reach no other ear; yet the parent's whole powers are instantaneously called forth—had he almighty power he would at once use it to burst through every obstacle and to afford relief.—*And our Father is almighty*; he says, that with him every hair of our head is numbered. How tenderly, then, will he sympathize with every affliction, feel for every trial, and watch over the temporal and eternal welfare of the beings of his grace? "Can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, saith the Lord—she may forget, yet will not I forget thee."

And thus it is, that with the confidence of a child the believer addresses Almighty God by the name of "Father," expecting a father's kindness and protection, and prepared, on the other hand, to submit to a father's chastening; knowing that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby." Heb. xii. 6, 11.

These opening words, then, are full of

meaning from a Christian's lips, and record his confidence in that covenant of grace and love, whereby he has been born again a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven; identifying himself, at the same time, with the whole body of Christ's church, of whom the Being he addresses is the common Father; and, knowing and comprehending also the mystery of his revealed name, he fears not to meet the requirements of essential holiness therein set forth, and to add the words, "Hallowed be thy name."

2. *Hallowed be thy name.* Let us recal the words which God himself has spoken, and which ought to be deeply imprinted in every Christian's memory—"The Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sins, and that will by no means clear the guilty." Exod. xxxiv. 6. This holy name, which "shuts man up unto the faith," which proclaims that it is part of the Divine nature by no means to clear the guilty, can never meet with full acknowledgment from the heart of man, otherwise than in Christ Jesus. In him God can be just, and yet the justifier of the ungodly; in him he can forgive iniquity, transgression and sin, and yet by no means clear the guilty; for Jesus "hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isaiah liii. 4, 5, 6. Hallowed for ever be that holy name, which contains within its recesses the hidden fountains of redeeming love, which acknowledges by anticipation the power of the great atonement, while it leaves none other name under heaven whereby we may be saved! And could a grateful heart speak lightly of that holy name? is there not a delicacy in love which would rather awaken jealousy of the least breath of dishonour to its adored King? In their days of ignorance men recklessly blaspheme; but when they live "as seeing him that is invisible," when they are blessed in the blessing of his children, when new hopes have engaged their affections a new kingdom

their loyalty and allegiance; as they have become identified with its joys, they are so also with its sorrows, and learn to sympathize with the body of Christ in its most distant members, to grieve "for the afflictions of Joseph," and so fill up some of "that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in their flesh, for his body's sake, which is the church." Col. i. 24. No longer "sitting in the seat of the scornful," they now can say, "For thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face." The world soon discovers the estrangement, and quickly pours out the phials of its wrath upon the revolter, so that "the man who but of late was himself a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, now becomes a proverb to them; they that sit in the gate speak against him, and he is the song of the drunkards." Hallowed be thy name, will be the *prayer* of his lips, and to hallow that beloved name will be the *business* of his life; and thus will the next petition of itself arise as a natural consequence, and he will pray with sincerity, "Thy kingdom come," because to him it is the crowning of his brightest prospects.

3. *Thy kingdom come.* In that day will his king be fully glorified; in that day will all enemies and blasphemers be put under his feet; and in that day will his faithful people enter with him into the joy of his kingdom. They love his appearing, because to them it is "the redemption of the purchased possession." The spirits of the martyred saints above say, "Lord, how long;" "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." "The Spirit and the bride say, come," and every believing heart responds with feeling, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."

And is it possible that one thus affected could rest satisfied with the bare expression of the lips? Could the faithful soldier remain inactive in the day of battle? He prays for the establishment of his Lord's kingdom, but he also devotes himself to the interests and engagements of it; he regards it as his privilege, his legitimate employment, to bear a part in all that is going on, as a worker together with God, as an instrument in his hand to impart to his fellow-sinners the riches of a Saviour's love. And whilst he labours

and prays for the extension of his Lord's visible kingdom, surely the same Spirit will awaken a corresponding zeal for the establishment of Christ's supremacy in his own heart and life? He that is anxious for distant conquests, he that prays and labours to send the word of life to the perishing heathen, will he tolerate an enemy in his own bosom, an unsanctified affection, an intolerant temper, any high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God? If, as our Lord says, the kingdom of heaven be within us, it is there the battle must be fought, it is there we must look for victories; and not only in the day of his appearing, but in the world, in his own circle, in his own heart, in each separate affection and thought, he will earnestly desire and pray, "Thy kingdom come."

4. *Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.* In strict accordance is the next petition, the natural homage of loyalty to its acknowledged king. In a world that lieth in the wicked one, in the body of this flesh, which is enmity with God, though perhaps thereby pronouncing sentence of desolation on something dear to him as a right hand or a right eye, the believer adds the petition, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Jer. xxxi. 31—33. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Jacob. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people." And in like manner the Psalmist testifies (Ps. cx. 3,) "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness." God's law is fulfilled in them and by them, but it is the obedience of the will, the consent of the inclinations, as it is done in heaven by the angelic hosts. And when we consider the natural estrangement of the human mind, a change like this must evidently be a gift from above, the work of God's sanctifying Spirit bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. And here is the struggle; the believer "delights in the law of God after the inward man; but he sees another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members." Rom. vii. 22, 23. And he naturally turns in his hour of need to that Divine power which

first made him to differ, to the same powerful hand which has upheld him thus far, and says with earnest entreaty and hope, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Is it the Lord's pleasure to try him in the furnace of affliction, to separate the ties of kindred, to destroy his gourd with some secret worm? Jona iv. 7. He will justify the ways of Providence, and say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Job xiii. 15. Recognizing a Father's correction, the faithful chastening hand of love in the severest disappointments, he will no longer feel impatient under them as arbitrary dispensations, but as forming part of a grand design of mercy, whereby the strength of God is made perfect in him, (2 Cor. xii. 9,) whereby "patience is working experience, and experience hope;" and "the very bones which God has broken rejoice," when "the peaceable fruits of righteousness" begin to show themselves in the soul which is "exercised thereby." Heb. xii. 11.

It is not enough that the spirit bows in silence to the Lord's dispensations; he asks not the submission of a slave, but the confidence of a child, an acquiescence, a sort of consenting to his will that it is good; and he that is made perfect in love will patiently wait the Lord's time, assured that he will make "all things work together for good to them that love him." Rom. viii. 28. Not only are his people willing, but in order to render the triumph of divine grace more strikingly conspicuous, in order to form a stronger contrast with the previous enmity of spirit, now they will to be willing; it is their prayer, their earnest desire, to be "made perfect and complete in all the will of God" (Col. iv. 12); to be enabled to say with St. Paul, "We have the mind of Christ." 1 Cor. ii. 16.

The will is a faculty beyond our jurisdiction; we may force and do it violence, but no degree of resolution can influence its inclinations, or cause the mind to delight in that which is offensive to its feelings. Other hopes and fears may be presented in such a light, that the thing we hated may become an object of desire; yet not for itself, but for the sake of some other independent advantage, for the avoidance of some more dreaded evil connected therewith; but these withdrawn, the previous dislike will again recover the ascendant, and show that the will remained

unchanged under all its disguises. But when the Spirit of God begins to take of the things of Christ, and show them to us, he wakens new hopes, he animates new affections, the heart itself is changed, and every rill that flows therefrom partakes of the altered impulse. This revolution of feeling will probably first discover itself in the manner St. Paul experienced—"That which I do, I allow not; for that which I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that I do."

From this time the course of evil flows on no longer tranquil, its continual recurrence occasioning continual regrets, at last connects the idea of sin and sorrow, and by the invariable pain which its recurrence occasions, alienates the will from the objects which once it loved; and now sin stands forth in its true character, and, in opposition to the will, attempts to tyrannize; and thus hatred and deep hostility are matured; and that feeling which St. Paul has so vividly expressed (Rom. vii. 24) a cry, as in days of old, when the murderer chained to the mouldering corpse of his victim, burst forth in despair, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" And here is the triumph of Divine grace—the full glorifying of Jesus Christ; when emptied of self and every other dependance, the anxious spirit turns to its strong hold, a prisoner of hope; it discovers that the salvation wrought on Calvary, was a full, a finished, and a perfect work; that in the riches of redeeming grace his every want is anticipated, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption"—all presented as a free gift in him (1 Cor. i. 30); and thus being made to "know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge," he falls down at the foot of the cross, and in adoring gratitude exclaims, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

5. *Give us this day our daily bread.* In immediate necessary connexion with this sentiment is the petition which follows, Give us this day our daily bread; the natural desire of the soul for that spiritual nourishment which comes down to it from above. As for the daily bread of the body, the believer hungers and thirsts after the manna of God's Holy Spirit—that divine power which is communicated to every, the humblest member of the body of Jesus Christ, circulating as the blood of life through the whole

system, nourishing every branch which has been united to that spiritual vine, and causing the wilderness and solitary place to bud forth and blossom as the rose. Like the manna of the wilderness, it cannot be laid up in store, but there must be a daily seeking, a continual sense and expression of dependance on the grace of Jesus, and a working out of our own salvation with fear and trembling, as conscious that it is not the effort of our own will, but that "it is God that worketh in us to will and to do after his good pleasure." Phil. ii. 12, 13.

If there be a new birth, it follows of necessity there must be a new existence, a hidden life, with its lights and shadows, its joys and sorrows, and the full exercise of all its powers, in communion with that spiritual world in which its hopes are centred. And it is from heaven that this life is nourished, at one time with milk, at another time with strong meat; and thus "going from strength to strength, before God appears every one of them in Zion." Any suspension of this daily bread, any clouding of the spiritual atmosphere, will therefore be at once perceived. The love of God no longer shed abroad in the heart, his presence and power no longer felt in prayer, the widowed spirit knows by a thousand bitter tokens that the heavenly husband has withdrawn himself, and is gone. Sol. Song v. 6, 7. And when the chastening is past, and she comes up again from the wilderness leaning on her beloved, (chap. viii. 5,) her prayer will be, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm;" "Give me day by day my daily bread" from above; and thus "building itself up in its holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost," the believing soul "keeps itself in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, unto eternal life." Jude 20, 21.

But if we look on this petition in a worldly point of view, it will equally follow as a necessary consequence on the petitions which have gone before. Having professed to resign himself to the will of God, to disclaim all adhesion to, and, of course, all expectations from the god of this world, the believer transfers his confidence to another object, to one "whose compassions fail not, but are new every morning" (Lam. iii. 22, 23); to one who has promised that "bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure" (Is. 33);

one "who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. viii. 32). "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrows with it." "Their rock is not as our rock, even our enemies themselves being judges (Deut. xxxii. 31); and it is an undoubted fact of every day experience, that "godliness is great gain;" it is "profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Tim. iv. 8); and if a man desired, merely from interested motives, to realize the greatest sum of human blessedness, it would be found in a life of faith, and of spiritual communion with God. The world deadens and closes up those feelings which are the seat of happiness; faith draws them out to their fullest capacity, and employs them on the sweetest subjects; love, joy and peace are awakened into life in those who before were "hateful, and hating one another" (Tit. iii. 3); and the ordinary experience of any candid observer is enough to prove that the Christian has chosen the better part even here; and if there is a God, if there is an hereafter, the contrast is tremendous.

6. *Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.* The first and most powerful characteristic of the Christian faith is the forgiveness of sins. Not an arbitrary act of authority, which were inconsistent with the holiness of the Divine Lawgiver, not by superseding or doing away the law, but by fulfilling it in such a manner as should rather "magnify and make it honourable," in such a manner that "God could be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth" on the offered atonement. The objects of this mercy had all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, nay, "by the deeds of the law could no flesh be justified" in his presence; "for the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: so then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." Rom. viii. 7, 8. The redemption, therefore, was free and perfect, worthy of that holy and benevolent Being in whose love it originated; and suited, on the other hand, to the helpless, ruined creatures whom it recalled to hope and happiness. Redemption is a legal act, expressly provided by the law of Moses, and together with the avenging

of blood, was the bounden obligation of the nearest relative. Under the general name of *göel*, these various duties are all comprehended, and deep dishonour, as well as legal guilt, was incurred by declining to fulfil "the kinsman's part." Levit. xxv. 25; Ruth iii. iv.

And under this character, and by this very name, the Lord Jesus makes himself known to us in the Old Testament; not merely as one that stands forward in compassion to deliver, but as exercising a legal right under the letter of the law; and in the man Jesus Christ, in God manifest in the flesh, the mystery is explained. He was born under the law, that he might redeem (i. e. act as *göel*) to them that are under the law. Gal. iv. 4, 5. "Because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part in the same" (Heb. ii. 14); and having been born under the law, having taken on himself our flesh, it is no longer optional, it has become legal righteousness to redeem his brethren. This was the miracle of grace and love that from the glories of heaven he bowed himself to the likeness of men; "he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 7, 8); thereby fulfilling the kinsman's part to the lost family of man. "The *Göel* shall come to Zion," says Isaiah, lix. 20. "I know," says Job, "that my *göel* liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Job xix. 25. And in our flesh he has stood, in our behalf he has made full satisfaction, and "by his stripes we are healed."

The law demanded blood, because "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," (Levit. xvii. 11), and "without shedding of blood there is no remission," and the "blood of Christ was through the eternal Spirit, offered without spot to God" (Heb. ix. 14). "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. i. 7); "and after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he sat down for ever at the right hand of God, having by that one offering perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb. x. 12—14.

But the law demanded perfect, unsinning obedience; and God "made him

to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 21); so that from henceforth "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" from henceforth he is "the Lord our righteousness," "in whom all the house of Israel are justified and shall glory."

But the law had yet another stern demand upon a guilty world; it had pronounced a curse upon transgressors, and "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; as it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13); or, as we read it, Deut. xxi. 23, "He that is hanged is accursed of God." But there was a deeper sorrow, a measure of suffering which the mind of man can scarcely attempt to estimate. It was no human feeling that bowed his spirit in the garden, but the weight of wrath due to a whole world of sinners, the curse of an offended God, pressed like lead upon his soul, and forced the words of anguish from his lips, the bloody sweat from his pores: this was the sting of death which seemed to absorb every feeling: the scourge, the mockery, the crown of thorns are barely mentioned, the cruel torture of the cross called forth no sound of agony; but the hidings of his Father's countenance wrung from him that bitter cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me!"

He said, "It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 38. And as the necessity, so the work of pardon is continuous, as our Lord plainly intimates, John xiii. 10—"He that is washed, needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Passing through a world of sin and corruption, the pilgrim of Zion cannot escape defiling his feet, and needs therefore a constant return to the blood of sprinkling. His perception of sin is more acute, his feelings are more jealous, more delicately alive to its presence and pollution. Though washed, though justified, though sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. vi. 11), he continues daily to feel his need, and daily to offer up his

prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us."

If the latter sentence be added as a condition, it might well cast a damp on the brightest faith. We none of us forgive as we hope to be forgiven; but it is the true expression of what passes in a feeling heart under the sense of God's free forgiveness, of his unchanging love; freely it receiveth, freely it gives; pardoned ourselves ten thousand talents, we would not dare to call to remembrance the hundred pence that our fellow-servant is indebted to us; but, drawing nigh as suppliants, venturing only to present ourselves before the throne of God through the cross of Jesus, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, we would not think of any reservation, but would say at once, "Forgive me my trespasses, as I now and here pronounce forgiveness on them that trespass against me;" or, as St. Luke more clearly expresses it, "Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." "When ye stand praying, forgive if ye have ought against any, that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses;" and the spirit that will not say, I forgive, at the time that it is itself beseeching forgiveness, is made thus to record its own just and deserved sentence. And conceive what an aggregate of domestic happiness might flow from the right understanding of this one passage, if twice in every day the subject of forgiveness were presented in this manner to all parties, if they felt that by their own free act they cut themselves off from their heavenly Father's love and that at any moment, at that very instant, if they chose, the whole cloud of separation might at once pass away, before a sincere repetition of the words, "forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." They would come forth with smiles from their closets, forgiving and forgiven; and the consciousness of an all-seeing eye, the salutary check of a daily blessing to themselves, coupled with a daily engagement of forbearance to others, would eventually win the proudest temper to gentleness and love.

7. *Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.* We come now to the concluding passage of the Lord's prayer, a suitable and strictly Scriptural accom-

paniment to the hope expressed in the foregoing petition. Forgiven, reconciled, the believer claims protection from his heavenly Father, against the powers of that world from which he has come forth. "Lead me," he prays, "lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from evil," for this reason, because "thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory."—thine is the kingdom for which I am contending, thine is the power in which alone I stand, and thine is the glory, if borne through thy grace to victory. While in bondage to Satan, the work of sin and death goes on comparatively unperceived, dead in sin, like the mouldering bones in the valley of vision (Ezek. xxxvii. 1), we are unconscious of the work of ruin, and can dream of righteousness, can imagine ourselves rich and in need of nothing, at the time when, of all others, we are peculiarly "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Rev. iii. 17. But let the vessel's head be turned against the stream, and immediately the current is felt, and the bark which glided down in pride and security, is tossed with violence, and obliged to confess its weakness. It is a bold rebellion to cast off our allegiance to the god of this world, to revolt from that "prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience"—the kingdom so long established in our hearts, so firmly and tyrannically paramount in the world. Oh! it is a wonderful exhibition of divine grace to see a trembling, sensual, unwilling soul brought out apparently by the natural working of its own mind and will, and becoming, eventually, a bold and faithful standard-bearer of the host of God!

And when, in after times, he looks back on the paths he has trodden, the evident tokens of design, through all the varying, perhaps conflicting, circumstances which have been made to work together for his soul's good, the conviction arises that it must be the Lord's work, that "the Lord was in that place, and he knew it not;" and since it is through him that "he has access into this grace wherein he stands," he therefore "rejoices in hope of the glory of God;" for he thus judges, as St. Paul says, Rom. v. 2, that "if when an enemy he was reconciled to God, by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, shall he be saved by his life." Never could there have been less to engage

love than in that first and darkest hour, when, "cast out and lying in his blood, God said unto him, live; yea, when thou wast in thy blood, I said unto thee, Live." Ezek. xvi. 6. Never could there be greater enmity, a more determined heart of unbelief, than that which divine grace has already subdued; and nothing future can at all compare with what is past, either in value or difficulty. The sanctification and glorious redemption of the soul is rather a fulfilment, a crowning of that work of grace, and cannot be placed in contrast with that first interposition, which gave heaven's richest treasure for dead and regardless enemies. Herein were divine power and love made manifest, in providing a ransom for a perishing world, and then in raising those "dry bones," and bringing them in faith and confidence to this great atonement. But, now that on Calvary the blood of Jesus has been poured out, now that awakening from the dream of death, one and another lays hold on the hope set before him, and no longer indifferent, but with strong prayers, with intensest feeling, takes refuge in that cross,—he that died for them when enemies, will he not, now that he liveth, will he not live to save them, to give protection and plenteous redemption to those whom he has purchased with his blood?

His is the kingdom, and his the power, and therefore they claim his succour. If they stood in their own strength,—if the desire after holiness, and the warfare against the world and flesh, had originated in their own will, then might they be referred to the same power to bear them harmless through temptation, to deliver them from evil; but when Jesus is all to them, "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," he that is author, is appealed to as the finisher of their faith," Heb. xii. 2, and "knowing whom they have believed, they are persuaded that he is able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day." 2 Tim. i. 12,

And his is the glory also. "This people have I created for myself, saith the Lord; they shall show forth my praise," and on that great day, in the day "when he makes up his jewels," "he will be glorified in his saints, and admired in them that believe." 2 Thess. i. 10

The first absorbing wish of the child of God is to contribute to the glory of

Jesus Christ. Far from attempting to exalt self, he will rather enlarge on humiliating subjects; that in his person, an additional instance may be displayed of the riches of the Saviour's love. However mortifying to flesh and blood, he can see the same mystery of grace in the most afflictive dispensations. The active laborious engagements of health, appear at first sight the most favoured sphere of christian duty; but experience shows him that the patient endurance of a bed of suffering affords a sweeter tribute of glory, a more unalloyed incense of praise, than any, the greatest exertions.

Self is so mixed up with all things wherein man bears an active part, that even with the best intentions, he is continually neutralizing the favourable impressions which he had laboured so anxiously to produce. But the silent testimony of a peaceful spirit, strong in faith, at the very time that the bodily strength perhaps is prostrate in weakness, and radiant with hope when passing through the dark portals of the grave,—this is convincing, this glorifies Jesus in the eyes of the greatest opposer, and the bruised reed is made the honoured instrument of the work of God, and bears away the crown of success, which talent, eloquence, or even painful self-denial had laboured for in vain.

This is the triumph of divine grace, when man is lost sight of and Jesus is everything, when he can say "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. ii. 20. He is Christ's workmanship, and though an heir of heaven, he is made to possess this "treasure in an earthen vessel, that the excellency of the power

may be of God and not of him." 2 Cor. iv. 7.

And he desires to have it so, to live only in Jesus Christ, and independent of him to know nothing. Is there glory? it is Christ's; and his faithful servant enters with him into the joy of his triumph; is there danger? is there shame and defeat?—it is not for himself he feels but for that name which has been named upon him, for that grace which made him to differ:—these may be compromised by his fall, but as for himself, acknowledging himself as the chief of sinners, emptied of self, and every human pretension, it were useless to add reproach where all is condemned already; but thine, he says, thine O Lord, is the shame of defeat; thine the glory of victory. "Will any care to break a leaf driven to and fro? will any pursue the dry stubble?" No, but thy holy name will be blasphemed, "the land whence thou broughtest us out will say, Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness; yet they are thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power, and by thy stretched out arm;" Deut. ix. 28, 29, and therefore for thy name's sake, for thy truth and faithfulness sake—"lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil."

Thus would the concluding passage of the Lord's prayer shine forth in peculiar meaning and lustre, embodying a genuine confession of Gospel faith, a sound and legitimate appeal to the covenant of grace, and a confession of the cross of Jesus, in its peculiar features of doctrine and hope, as distinct, as if the great atonement had been expressly in words acknowledged.

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OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

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ON SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22^D, 1837,

BY THE REV. ROBERT JESSOP, A. M.

Chaplain.

FIRST SERMON.

CHRIST, THE FATHER'S WITNESS.

ISAIAH LV. PART OF 4TH VERSE.

“ Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people.”

SOME of the most extravagant errors that have obtained amongst the professing people of God, may be traced to one of two causes—“ not paying due attention to the *terms* used by the sacred writers— or, taking such a partial view of one truth, as to exclude the consideration of others inseparably connected with, and dependant upon it. The passage I have just read might furnish a singular illustration of this.

Some, not seeing that the truth has been declared to us by one in the character of a *witness*, whose language therefore is that of *testimony*, and which can consequently be received only by *faith*, have been stumbled at the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith—whilst others, eagerly and pertinaciously holding that all truth is testimony, and that the Great Witness exemplified it in his life, and sealed his attachment to it in his death, yet overlook, (and because they *will*

overlook, deny) that he likewise fulfilled the character of “ Saviour,” and gave himself not only as an example, but “ a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,” and “ died, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.”

I trust, however, that the manner in which we have considered those passages that treat of the person, character, and work of the Lord Jesus Christ has been such as to guard against our natural proneness to fall into either of these errors; and that we are come to the examination of the subject now before us, having laid aside every prejudice that would militate against the reception of truth, and willing to follow, wherever the word of God may seem to lead us. And if the Lord has given you this preparation of heart, the seed sown shall spring up and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, one hundred fold, and you may plead the promise of him who bears with all

the ignorance and dulness of his disciples, "if in any thing ye be otherwise-minded, God shall reveal even this unto you,"—"I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye."

Trusting that you have sought for this, I shall proceed to examine those passages of Scripture which treat of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the character of a witness, and shall show—

1. *The qualifications which were requisite.* 2. *The truth to which he bore testimony.* And 3, *Offer some remarks on "the witness of the Spirit;" and its connection with the testimony of Christ.*

I. THE QUALIFICATIONS WHICH WERE REQUISITE. A witness is one who gives evidence, even at the expense of life. This has been so generally received as its meaning, that the original word "martyr" has been transferred to our own language, without any material alteration of its signification—not that every person who is willing to lay down his life, is therefore a *true* witness, but he cannot be a true witness without it.—There are many qualifications requisite beside this, and we shall now examine how far they were possessed by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the first place, he must have been an *eye-witness* of the things he related. He came to bear testimony to things of which the world at large were entirely ignorant, and concerning which he could derive no information, except by being intimately conversant with them. The yearnings of immortality had made some of the wise men of the world speculate largely, but in the midst of their speculations they were obliged to confess they had "intruded into those things they had not seen." "The ways of knowledge were not with them," and he who could form a fair estimate of the advantage of such wisdom in the discovery of truth, because he once possessed it, has left it upon record that "the world by wisdom knew not God"—"Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" But he who "came for a witness, to bear witness unto the truth," could say, "*I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world.*"—"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, *which is in the bosom of the Father,*

he hath declared him."—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen."—"No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down *from* heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven."—"I came down *from* heaven, not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God; he hath seen the Father." These, and many other passages which might be added, prove, that as an eye-witness he was competent to give evidence, and that this was an important and essential superiority he possessed over every, not only human, but created intelligence, may be inferred by its being repeated twice in the same verse in the Baptist's testimony to Christ, when contrasting him with every other witness, "He that cometh from heaven is above all—he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth—he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what *he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth.*"

But second: he might have possessed this and every other qualification without the willingness to communicate what he knew as an eye-witness. And herein is manifested the exceeding love of the three persons in the Trinity, towards man. The Father sets him forth as his gift to sinners—"Behold *I* have given him for a witness." The Son, when before his unjust judge, declares, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth." And he was "anointed with the Holy Ghost, and with power for this particular work. He whom God sent, speaketh the words of God, *for* God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." Oh, he is indeed willing to communicate all the secrets of his love—his tender, compassionate heart, is pained and grieved when any poor sinner refuses to come and hear, or hearing, goes away unmoved. May we prove we are of the truth, by hearing his voice.

But third: it is also required in a witness that he declare the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. In Proverbs, xiv. 5, we read, "a *faithful* witness will not lie;" and at the 25th verse of the same chapter, "a true witness delivereth souls." In Revelations, i. 5. we read—"Jesus Christ is the faithful witness;" and in the 3d chapter he calls himself "the amen, the faithful and true witness."

The two essentials required by Solomon, are therefore to be found in the Lord Jesus Christ, and they amount to this—first, that his testimony is entire truth ;—second, that it is a testimony the belief of which must save the soul. An attentive consideration of these points will prove the following statements to be correct : First, that “ Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any person that it should be believed as an article of faith.” Secondly, that the opinion held by so many, that natural religion will of itself be sufficient to lead the mind to God, and give him all the acquaintance with the character and will of his maker that is necessary, is both false and absurd,—false, because the testimony of Christ denies it—“ I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness” —“ He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” —Absurd, for had less been sufficient, there would have been no necessity for Christ to come down from heaven as a witness for the truth. Third, That as the Gospel is a testimony to be received by faith, it requires no previous course of preparation, though it makes the amplest provision for the walk and conversation, after it has been believed. The religion of Christ, as accommodated to the maxims and notions of the wise men of this world, is thus explained : that a man must amend his ways to give him a right to come to God—that he must cease to do evil, and learn to do well, before the belief of Christ’s testimony can bring any blessing to his soul ; that he must pass through some preparatory exercises of mind, as well as reformation of life, (the precise nature and limits of which they find it very difficult to determine,) in fine, something quite distinct and separate from simple faith in the Son of God, and the revelation he has given of his Father’s character, before a person is warranted to avow boldly, “ I believe the record that God hath given of his Son, and this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” “ I know in whom I have believed, and that he is faithful to keep that which I have committed unto that day.” ‘ Yes,’ it will be said, ‘ but a man must be made to feel

that he is a sinner, and the conscience quickened and alarmed’— True, but this is only an inducement to make him come, not a qualification to entitle him—*his sin*, and not his compunction—*his danger*, actual danger, not his sense of it, are his warrant, and whether he be in the intoxicated stupor of those who are *past feeling*—the insensibility of those who *will not feel*—the careless indifference of those who *sit at ease*—or the agonizing terrors of those awakened to *some* sense of their danger, he is *EQUALLY* entitled to come at once and come boldly to God through Christ for pardon, and to go in peace, believing a faithful God has kept his word in fully and freely bestowing it ; and to the latest hour of his life, though he may have walked long in holy fellowship with God, yea, upon the bed of death, his claim, title, and qualification remain the same, *I am a sinner, let me feel it or not*, and *as such* am invited to look unto the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. Looking at the Gospel in this point of view, a testimony to be believed as soon as it is declared to us, and upon the blessings of which we enter as soon as we thus believe it, at once refutes the doctrine of pre-requisites, which makes the salvation of the thief upon the cross, (in whom they are forced to confess there was no antecedent preparation,) an exception to the way in which God confers pardon and peace, and shows that every thing which keeps the sinner a single instant from the filial feeling which ought to subsist between him and his reconciled Father, is a refuge of lies which God will sweep away with the besom of destruction—a tissue of self-righteousness which must be disclaimed and disowned, a leaven of that pride and ignorance which must give place to the resistless sway of the Spirit, and the exhibition of the finished work of the Saviour.

But fourth: the above considerations furnish one answer out of many, to the common objection made to this statement of truth, viz. that every one believes, and yet it does not produce the effects said to flow from faith. The reply is obvious: 1. These effects can only flow from the Gospel, when received *as a testimony*. How is it that the world at large profess to believe the Gospel? It is as a thing which they have received from early education—what perhaps they cannot but revere and respect, because it

has been esteemed precious by many whom they love, and therefore only do they revere and respect it. The secret influence it exercises on society in general through those who really are governed and led by it, accounts for the kind of restraint it imposes on them, so that now it is as great a violation of the laws of good breeding in the world, to slight a person for being what they call a great saint, as it would be to trample on any law of worldly honour. But do those persons whose inconsistency is thus charged upon the insufficiency of simple faith to produce its promised results, really receive the truth as a testimony? Are they not satisfied with receiving it on the testimony of their parents, or their minister, or the world? Do they know that Christ is its faithful and true witness, and do they believe it—not as accommodated to the prejudices of the world and the partiality of the natural mind, which claims some indulgence in an offence, so as that it does not offend the world, or omission of duty if not serious in its consequences—but in all its length and breadth, not only as condescending pardon on the chief of sinners, but as also requiring “truth in the inward parts?”—a total renunciation of every thing incompatible with “the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free”—a mutual crucifixion of themselves and the world, and a consecration of all the powers to him who in his testimony declares, “*the truth shall make you free*?” Ye are debtors—debtors to that mercy which sought and found you—but “not debtors to the flesh to live after the flesh.”

And, in the second place, it is not asserted by any, that faith will produce these effects, except *while it is in operation*. Though the mind may have received the whole compass of revelation, and firmly embraced it yesterday, this will not suffice to make it conqueror over the temptations of to-day. Often, alas! (and to their shame be it spoken) the children of God are thrown off their guard, and when the Saviour appears, it is with the question, “*Where is your faith?*” It is absurd to suppose that any truth can influence the mind, except by being kept continually before it; but thus far we may safely affirm, that nothing can produce genuine holiness, except faith in the testimony given by the faithful and true witness to the character of God, and the work which he came down from

heaven to accomplish; and he who denies this, contradicts, in express terms, the language of the Apostle Paul, who says, 1 Thess. ii. 13. “For this cause also thank we God without ceasing; because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” Here is a distinct avowal, that because they did not receive the word, from the mere prejudices of education, or from deference to the customs of the age, or respect to him as an Apostle, but because it was the word or testimony of God, it did work effectually (i. e., did produce those ends for which it was the appointed means) in them who *were believing*.

And fifth, we can see from this, how it is the imperative duty of all who have heard it, to receive this testimony, and the justice of that sentence which declares, “he that believeth not shall be damned;” yea, further—for as he who receives it is already made partaker of the blessings of the Gospel, and possesses in embryo all those glories which shall be unfolded in eternity; even so, “he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,”—“He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him.” For he who believeth not, hath made God a liar—he has practically been saying that there is no hell to be avoided, or that it is not his merited portion—no heaven worth acceptance, or that it can be gained by some other means than those devised and revealed by God through the mouth of his faithful and true witness. A life of unbelief is one continued contradiction to those truths which are fixed on the most immutable basis, even the faithfulness of an unchangeable God; and revealed with a degree of clearness, that he who runs may read, and none can be blind but those who are wilfully so. And shall it be said, after taking this view of the offence, that the punishment exceeds the guilt? That a holy God is to be mocked in his invitations, insulted in his offers of mercy, his favor despised—the blood of Christ trampled on, the Spirit of Grace done despite to, and the testimony which was sent from heaven, charged with love to man, rejected to the latest hour of ex-

istence—and yet suppose that God will not visit for these things? Impossible: such a course would belie his own nature—cast dishonour on his Son—tarnish the glories which the death of that witness has made to shine forth, and perchance introduce defection amongst those, who, though now before the throne, yet may only be kept there by beholding that exhibition of his character, wherein he appears just in pardoning him who believes, and condemning him who believeth not.

Thus we have seen how the Lord Jesus Christ possessed every qualification for a witness; having himself been an eye-witness—willing to communicate what he knew—faithful and true in all his statements, and that hence it follows that his testimony must contain all needful truth: that natural religion is not sufficient—that as it is a testimony, it can be received only by faith, and no prerequisites are placed by God in the way of a sinner coming to him. That whilst this testimony is before the mind, it does work effectually in all those who believe, i. e., receive it on testimony; and that, as it came from God, it is the imperative duty of all who hear, to believe it, and that God is just in condemning those who believe not.

II. Let us now consider, WHAT THAT TRUTH WAS TO WHICH HE BORE TESTIMONY. "I am come," says he, "a light into the world, that whosoever followeth me should not walk in darkness, but have the light of life." By this he means to say, that all the world was lying in darkness and the shadow of death, "alienated from the life of God by the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their hearts;" and it was to strike at the root of every false religion, and every garbled form of his own, that he puts himself forth as the only witness, who, from his perfect acquaintance with what he spoke, was qualified to teach those truths which mankind had so perverted. For "the world by wisdom even knew not God"—they had "become vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened—professing themselves to be wise they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things; who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and

served the creature more than the Creator who is blessed for ever." Every one therefore, who followed them "walked in darkness, not knowing whither he went," and "stumbled because he had not the light." Even the Jews, whom God had chosen from all the people of the earth to make them the depositaries of true knowledge, had so debased themselves, had been so "mingled with the heathen and learned their works," so laden the tree of knowledge with the cumbersome errors they had grafted upon it, that it seemed to be decayed to the very roots; and though "through the scent of water it might bud and bring forth boughs like a plant," yet its appearance invited none to sit under its shadow and pluck its fruits. But the Lord Jesus Christ came to restore the true knowledge of God, and this he did by testifying, in the first place, to the character of the Father, that "*God is love.*" This was a truth of which the whole family of man, Jew as well as Gentile, was alike ignorant, with the exception of those few who were "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Not that every Jew did not pride himself highly on those distinguishing honors which seemed to mark his nation the peculiar favourite of heaven. It was, perhaps, always with pleasure he recollectéd that "to them were committed the oracles of God," "to them pertained the adoption and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises, whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came." But it was possible to indulge all these feelings and say, "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man," and be destitute of the knowledge of God; for, what says the Saviour?—"Ye say that he is your God, yet ye have not known him." And such is the case with every natural mind. The Gentile thought he could appease the anger of a Being whom he imagined to hate him, by giving the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul. The Jew hoped that the multitude of his services and sacrifices, the severity of the mortifications he inflicted on himself, would gain him favour and acceptance. The professing Christian of the present day; as soon as conscience is alarmed, and he begins in earnest to seek some means of escape from the wrath to come, exclaims,

"What shall I do to be saved?" I feel I have offended God, and that he is angry with me; vengeance pursues me, and wherewith shall I come before God? Yes, and further—the child of God, who has been quickened by the Spirit, and learns to view God in another character, yet feels that every sin he commits has a direct tendency to darken the view of the love of God; hence his backwardness in coming to a throne of grace to look for pardon after every offence; he fears there will be some unwillingness in God to receive him as fully and with the same cordiality, now that he has made so unworthy a return for such great mercy. He has forgotten, or the prejudices of his natural mind still rise up against the great and glorious truth that "*God is love.*" But how did the faithful and true witness reveal his Father's character? Not by saying, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand and seek after him; and finding that all were gone astray, and together become unprofitable, as saying, therefore I will reserve them unto the judgment of the great day, and then consign them to eternal punishment—No; far from it; but "God hath concluded them all in unbelief that he might have mercy upon all." Though they are sinners, yea, *because* they are sinners who destroy but cannot help themselves, therefore I the Lord will help them; "for God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" "turn ye, turn ye; for why will ye die?" And the witness could say, I am not the *purchaser*, but the *gift* of his love; the Father hath sent me, because he loves you already. Even now he is reconciled to you; be ye reconciled to him. He hath sent me to you, saying, "Behold my servant" whom I send amongst you, "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and give his life a ransom for many." "Behold, I have *given* him for a witness to the people." "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Oh! what a different view is this of the character of God, from that which is formed of it by the world! Here is nothing stern or repulsive, nothing calculated to add to the terrors of a mind already awakened to a sense of its danger, nothing

which would make it difficult, not to say impossible, for a poor sinner to satisfy his Maker, but a message which declares that this God is all we could wish him to be; already reconciled, having given the greatest proof of it he could; longing for the return of every lost soul; "waiting to be gracious;" "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Having thus borne testimony to the Father, he proceeds to bear testimony to himself. Of himself he testified that he was the promised Messiah, and that though man, he was also God. And here let me mention what seems remarkable, that in many of those passages in which he is proving himself to be the Christ, and sent from God, it is as an inference drawn from proofs or express declarations that he is *very God*.

In all probability he intended to intimate that the wants of man were so great that nothing but infinity could reach them—that the dishonour cast upon his character, and the injury his law had sustained by man's violation of it, were such as could be repaired, in the eyes of other created intelligences, by nothing short of the obedience of the lawgiver himself—that though he were God, yet there was nothing in him to inspire terror, for he was the very Being who, from the overflowings of love in his own heart, and at the express command of his Father, had left the glories of heaven to benefit them—and that he appeared amongst them as man that he might "bear the curse to sinners due"—in their nature yield a perfect obedience, for their sakes, to that law which they had broken—and become so intimately acquainted with all those modes of thought and feeling which were essentially human, as that, after he had ascended on high, he might still be conversant with all their griefs, anxieties, trials, and be able not only to sympathize with, but to succour, them. In treating upon this part of his testimony, I shall select those passages which prove his deity and humanity together.

You will observe that the humanity of our Lord was a point never questioned by the Jews. Amongst the Gentiles, who were accustomed to the common notion that heroes and other remarkable persons were enrolled amongst the gods, it was only in accordance with their commonly received opinions, that Paul and Barnabas were gods appearing in the likeness of

men. But the Jews were accustomed to see and believe that persons merely human had been so gifted by God as to be able to perform works super-human; prophets had raised the dead to life, caused iron to swim on the waters, cured the leprosy, gifted others with the power of seeing spiritual beings, and foretold with certainty events most contradictory to apparent probabilities. Amongst them, therefore, it was to his divinity chiefly he bore testimony.

In the fifth chapter of St. John, we read of the Lord's having performed a cure on the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda—"and therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath day," The answer of Jesus, in a very striking, yet strictly inferential manner, proved that he was God as well as man: "My Father worketh hitherto and I work"—"It is evident from the" answer of the Jews, that they understood this speech as intended to be a proof of his divinity. But how was it so? It appears to me capable of explanation in the following manner only—"My Father is as actively engaged in carrying on those operations necessary for upholding creation on the Sabbath day, as the other six days of the week. "He worketh hitherto" (i. e., on the Sabbath day) and none can question his right; and because we are one in essence, will, and design, whatsoever he has a right to do, I can claim for myself also; for he is "*my Father*," not only in the sense in which you can claim as such, but as one in our divine nature, for this is the Father's will, "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who hath sent him." The same truth is established by three other proofs in the same conversation, viz., the testimony of John: the miracles which he performed in the Father's name: and the witness of the Father in the voice from heaven, approving him as his beloved Son.

Again, in the last week of his ministry, (Matt. xxii. 41.) our Lord proposes to the Pharisees the question, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" The answer is immediately suggested to their minds, "The son of David." And in one sense this was true; but our Lord reminded them that David in spirit had called him "*Lord*,"—how then was he

his son? The drift of the argument is evident; He was to be David's son, and he could prove himself to be such, and as such, a man. But he was likewise David's Lord; he must, therefore, have existed before, and had the pre-eminence over him. But to have had this pre-existence, he must have been the Son of God; which so effectually established both the divine and human natures of the Saviour, that "no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions."

Again (in John x.) we find the Jews coming to Christ with this important question "how long dost thou make us to doubt? if thou be the Christ tell us plainly." He refers them to his miracles, and closes the comment he made on the inference, by plainly stating whether he were the Christ or not in the following words, "I and my Father are one." If, (as I think we cannot avoid doing) we are to take this summing up as an answer to the question proposed, it amounts to this, "I may seem to be mere man—yet I am the Christ—doubt it no longer—you ask me to answer you plainly and I do so, for I and my Father are one." That this was an express avowal of his Divinity, the conduct of the Jews most clearly shows, and our Lord again brings forward a passage from the Scriptures which they acknowledged, to prove his testimony. "I said, ye are Gods" "say ye of him whom the Father hath sent, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God." And here the proof is very plain—it is thus connected—your elders and kings to whom the word of God came in old times, were called gods, because in their authority and office they were typical of him who is really ruler of God's people Israel, and of whom it has been said to the cities of Judah "behold your God." If therefore it can be typically true of your elders that they are gods, from their resemblance to Messiah, the king of Israel, then Messiah the antitype must be truly and essential God; but I am Messiah—therefore "I and my Father are one."

I shall add no more proofs of the testimony which Christ bore to his being very God and very man, though the writings of the Evangelists furnish many others—those already mentioned may likewise serve to illustrate the fact, that it was the confession that Jesus Christ was

come in the flesh and at the same time was very God which was to distinguish the Spirit of God from that of Anti-Christ; and the reason why it was that the apostles always made the profession of Jesus Christ, being the Son of God, the criterion of admission into membership and fellowship with them—seeing that he who was very God was obliged, ere man could be saved, to take our nature upon him—sets forth in all its glory the character of God as just in requiring, and loving in bestowing such a sacrifice—and seeing that in our nature he kept the whole law, and bore the penalty which was denounced against every transgressor of it, gives the chief of sinners the fullest confidence in him—relieves him from an accusing conscience—brings him into a glorious liberty—associates him in affections and pursuits with him who in his nature now fills the throne of providence and grace, links his joys in time with an immortality of bliss, and invests him with the dignity of one whose citizenship is in heaven.

3rd. The Lord Jesus was a witness in declaring that it was the belief of his word, *received as a testimony*, which should bring salvation. This appears in a striking manner in the iii. c. of John, in his conversation with Nicodemus our Lord had set forth what was necessary in order to enter into his kingdom—It is evident that Nicodemus was not wholly unacquainted with his doctrine, for our Lord accuses him, “ye receive not our witness,”—and he asks the question “how can these things be?” and to this our Lord gives just the answer which proves the point before us—“it is strange that you should be ignorant and yet profess to teach them”—but the reason is obvious—these are truths which cannot be known except by testimony, and none can give testimony to them but one who has ascended into heaven—and no man hath ascended into heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven, and this is the testimony I bear, “that as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish but have everlasting life; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life—for God sent forth his Son into the world

to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.” Here the Lord Jesus declares the true character of God, that he is love—that he loves the world—that he so loves it as to give his only begotten Son to save it—that this is a truth which can only be known by being declared by a witness such as he is, faithful and true; and that this *will save and can only save* by being received as a testimony on the authority of him as a witness. For the words “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish,” not only imply that man must perish without a Saviour, but that he must perish without faith in his word *as a testimony*, and this point is what connects the commencement and conclusion of his answer to Nicodemus’s question “how can these things be,” they are a testimony, for “we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen,” and to produce its effect it must be received as such, “for whosoever believeth on him shall not perish.” It is therefore receiving the word of Christ *as a testimony* which honours the Son and makes him a “true witness who delivereth souls.”

How forcibly does this strike at the root of the unbelieving objections raised by the natural mind, against the truth of God. Let the truth be stated ever so simply—commended by all that would soften the lurking enmity of the carnal mind—pressed on the grounds of personal interest, as well as the benefits it could not fail to shed on all who come within the sphere of its influence, still the question will be raised, “How can these things be?” Oh! let it stifle every murmuring thought in your hearts, and silence every objection, that they are to be received *on testimony*—that you would know nothing of the truths themselves, not to say their effects, had they not been revealed by a faithful and true witness, and surely when these truths are so wonderful, you ought not to stumble at anything testified of their results. It is enough to know that God has said it—the witness who declares it, speaks only what he knows, testifies only what he has seen, receive it only on his word and authority, and it will work effectually in you who are believing—Take God’s word for it—look to the character in which Christ is here set forth, the difficulty is then at once cleared up, and—*these things can be.*

4th. Having now seen how he bears witness to the Father, to himself, and that his word, when received as a *testimony* on his authority, and not on that of man, brings salvation, we shall examine what he says of himself as being a king, and consequently having a kingdom in the world—Whether he has a kingdom or not in the world is a question we are competent to decide by our own observation of the characters we meet with in our passage through life—But if we can see no signs of it, we must suspend our judgments till we see what the end will be—If he has already established one, it will be an additional proof that he is a faithful and true witness. Now when examined by Pilate, the question was expressly put by him to Jesus, “Art thou a king then?” to which in the most unequivocal manner he replied, “Thou sayest that I am a king”—The nature of that kingdom he had as expressly borne testimony to—“My kingdom is not of this world; now is my kingdom not from hence.” It was to these words the Apostle Paul refers, (1 Tim. vi. 13.) when he says “Jesus Christ who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession.” It was an avowal of his divine nature, and the sovereignty of his power, for it was as much as to say, “Though I stand before you now, yet ‘thou couldest have no power at all over me, except it were given thee from above’—I am a king, and as such, must have my kingdom; to me every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall swear, for I must be ruler, in the midst of mine enemies—my kingdom shall be *in*, though not *of* this world, and though now is my kingdom not from hence, yet *hereafter* shall ye see the heavens opened and the Son of man, as Son of God, coming in the glory of the Father, and all his holy angels with him, for all power in heaven and earth shall be delegated to me, and at my name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and ever tongue confess that I am God to the glory of God the Father.”

But he bore testimony to this fact not only on his trial before Pilate (though this is called the good confession, because he immediately after sealed it with his blood), but in the whole of his public ministry. The parable of the grain of mustard seed showed its progress in the world, from the time when there were none

but a few poor fishermen to recommend it to observation, till it should cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. The householder who planted a vineyard and let it out to husbandmen, showed the opposition to, and rejection of it, by some, but the further reception of it by others, for his is the kingdom and the power and the glory for ever and ever; all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to him, and all the kindreds of the people worship before him; for he is king and shall be governor among the people.—And when we see what is going forward in the world can we not set to our seal that his is the testimony of a “faithful and true witness?” How many knees have bowed to and tongues confessed him on this day throughout our land? How has the chorus of praise attributing “glory and honour, and worship and power to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever,” drowned the maddened cry of those who would say, “crucify him, crucify him; we will not have this man to reign over us!” Even in heathen lands do we not hear from time to time of one and another asking the way to Sion, with their faces thitherwards, and saying, “where is he that is born king of the Jews, for we have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him?” Wherever the banner of the cross has been raised, do we not see that wind which bloweth where it listeth, gradually unfurling it, and displaying on its emblazoned shield, those glorious characters, “God is love”—see the proof of it, his own, his only Son has hung upon the accursed tree for you—You may be saved by it, for “him hath God exalted to his own right hand, to give repentance and remission of sins to all who believe on him”—“Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth—kiss the Son, and he will share his throne with you; or, bow before him and lick the dust, for he is, he must be king.”

III. I shall now proceed briefly to make a few remarks on THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT, and show what appear to me the meanings of that expression. While Christ was in the world he bore witness to the truth, but when he went hence to the Father, the Spirit was commissioned to lead into all truth those whom he left behind, and they, by his inspiration, have committed it to writing. The Holy

Scriptures are, therefore, the testimony of Christ, as it has been witnessed to us by the Spirit. Of this testimony, the whole world are ignorant by nature, and as soon as it is made known to them, the pride and carnal enmity of the unrenewed mind rises in opposition to it. It reveals truths so totally contrary to their views of the fancied goodness and *perfectibility* (if they will not say *perfection*) of human nature, so unmask the lurking wickedness and corruption of the heart, that they refuse it, even when brought before them on evidence the most incontrovertible. This opposition to the truth of God, it is the especial province of the Spirit of God to overcome, and the way in which he effects this is by "taking of things," *i. e.* *the testimony* "of Christ and showing them to us," and this he does in such a manner, as commends to us, as most lovely, what we before thought most hateful. It then is seen that all our previous enmity was from a wilful blindness to, ignorance of, and prejudice against him who was our best, our only Friend; by the exhibition of his character given to us in this testimony, these have been "taken out of the way, slain and nailed to his cross," and there has arisen, *in proportion as truth has been seen*, a perfect agreement between the testimony of the Spirit in the word, and the testimony of our spirits within us. But as these are things which flesh and blood cannot reveal to us, and "no man can call Jesus, Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," this witness within us, is the "witness of the Spirit." This fully shows the meaning of the Apostle John, when he says, (1 John v. 8.) "who is he that overcometh the world, but he that *believeth* (*i. e.* hath received *the testimony*) that Jesus is the Son of God? (*i. e.* calls Jesus, Lord,) and it is the Spirit that beareth witness," (*i. e.* so bears witness as to make us receive it) "because, the Spirit is truth," and therefore he sums up all in verse 10, by saying, "he that believeth on the Son of God, hath *the witness in himself*."

My reason for wishing this point to be clear in your minds is, because, many of the children of God are led into, and kept in a state of constant doubt and perplexity, as to their acceptance with God, from thinking that the only witness which the Spirit bears is to the life and conversation, forgetting that these *evidences*

can only flow from the *primary witness* which he bears to the testimony of Christ. If, therefore, the mind be tempted to doubt, it can arise from but one cause, though this one cause may be manifested in a thousand varieties, *viz.* the mind having lost its sense of agreement with the testimony of Christ, or not having been acquainted with *the whole* of that testimony, so that when any temptation arises, which that part of the testimony not yet perceived is calculated to meet and overcome, we are found weak and powerless and easily foiled for the want of it. In the same way, when we trace loss of comfort to falling into sin, want of the power of prayer, lukewarmness, want of watchfulness, indulging forbidden trains of thought, mixing too much with the spirit, as well as in the society of the world, levity or any thing that can come between God and the soul; it may all be seen to follow from this—the mind having lost its belief in the testimony of Christ, so that there is no longer a witness in our spirits corresponding to it. The testimony of Christ, that he is the best portion, and supreme happiness of the soul has been forgotten or obscured, when the world appeared in some inviting form—the evil of sin, its full consequences, and the great dishonor it brings on God's law, has been lost sight of, the great love of God in giving his Son, the fulness and freeness of the pardon he so richly bestowed, and the dignity of being a freeborn heir of glory, have all been lowered in our minds; or perhaps at some moment we have altogether let them slip, and that truth which worketh in us only *while we are believing* it, being set aside or become dim,—Satan makes us an easy prey, and not till we are in his fangs do we experimentally learn that sin must be misery to him who has once seen holiness to be happiness and God's favour to better than life.

This consideration will also show what it is so important to remember, the connection between soundness and clearness of doctrinal truth with consistency of life. It was an *obscuration*, and if so, a virtual denial of some part of the truth of Christ's testimony which was the cause of the first departure from God; if this be continued in, however the individual may for the sake of consistency with his former professions, talk loudly of the freeness and glory of God's grace, he contracts a legal

spirit; God is no longer regarded by him in his true character, or it would work as effectually in him as before, and at length the unhappy man falls back upon all those preconceived views, prejudices, and misconceptions which the enmity of the carnal mind, ever ready to spring up, even in the believer, can suggest to him. This indeed might be inferred from the truth of its converse; for as truly as inconsistency induces a legal spirit, so consistency leads to increase of light; and as long as any person, however small and indistinct his light, continues willing to do the will of God, he shall increasingly know more of the doctrine.

Are any of you then devoid of comfort? Whether you can trace it to any distinct cause or not, there is but one remedy, look to the testimony of Christ and believe it as such; correct all your false views by the declaration he has made, that God loves sinners—*sinners as such*. Behold what he hath done for them—he gave them himself; hear what he says of those who believe this testimony—they shall never perish. Believe then in the character thus given of God; it is the testimony of a “faithful witness who will not lie,” and of a “true witness which delivers souls,” and however you may mourn that you are not more conformed to the image of your Master, (and this you will ever have good reason to confess with shame and sorrow,) you will have no reason to doubt but that your person is accepted, and when he appears you shall be like him, and see him as he is.

And to those who thus receive the testimony of Christ on its own authority of him as its witness, the secondary witness of the Spirit is granted, and they are permitted to see that what they believe as the truth of God is really proved to be such, from the fruits it produces; some, from the naturally distrustful and suspicious constitution of their minds, others from their jealousy over themselves and a fear of indulging a false hope, where so great an interest is at stake, more, from that nervousness which will not let them see anything in its true colours, see least of these fruits, where they most abound;

but if a person is not satisfied of his safety without them, it is a clear proof that some part of the *primary* witness of the Spirit is obscured from his mind. *This in itself* is calculated to remove all doubt; there must be some strange misconception in the mind of that person who says he believes the whole of God’s testimony, which testimony declares that all who believe it are saved, because it is a testimony “which delivereth souls,” and yet continues in doubt, as to whether it saves *him*, though he does believe it. The supposition is an express contradiction in terms; it leads to one of two conclusions, either God’s testimony to Christ, as revealed by the Spirit, is not sufficient to give full comfort, and set the mind at ease; and in this case we cannot make it more than it is; or else we have not fully seen its glory, in which case our only remedy is to search more deeply into those Scriptures, which as the witness of the Spirit, testify of Christ, until we see in them that which releases us from all bondage fear, and introduces us to the glorious liberty of the children of God.

But instead of adopting such a plan, the too general way of Christians is to waste time in idle complaints at what they have not, than to set out with diligence in the use of means which will secure it. If we, when in such circumstances were more constantly looking for, and feeding on the fulness that is in Christ Jesus, rather than spending our time in unprofitable cries of “my leanness, my leanness,” we should soon learn the secret of true strength and happiness and security, and

“Our thankful voice would oft’ner be—

“Hear what the Lord hath done for me.”

And God is faithful and loving in withholding comfort from us till we are satisfied to take it on his testimony alone. For thus our life is made to be a life of faith. God is honoured by us when against hope, we believe in hope, and our comfort is built on a foundation which no unworthiness in ourselves can shake, for it is founded on the testimony of God’s approbation to the obedience of another, made over to us, when we believe on his name.

SECOND SERMON.

ISAIAH XLIV. part of verse 8.—“Ye are even my witnesses.”

IN speaking to you this morning, on the Lord Jesus Christ as a witness, I endeavoured to show you that the whole world having lost the knowledge of God, He was sent *from* above to declare to them what by wisdom they could never have discovered. That he possessed every qualification necessary for a witness, being intimately acquainted *from* eternity with those truths to which he bore testimony—that in the first place he declared the true character of God, that “God is love.” 2ndly,—That he bore witness to himself, as sent *from* God and equal with him, though clothed with humanity, that by his perfect obedience unto death in the room of sinners he might remove the curse to which they were exposed, vindicate the holiness of the law, and render the union of those attributes which, to finite minds, seemed impossible, without destroying the very nature of God, not only consonant with, but exalting to it.—3rd,—That his testimony must deliver souls; that being a testimony, it could be received only by faith.—4th,—That he bore witness to the progress in the world of that kingdom of which he declared he was born to be king, which in time should be established in the ends of the earth.

I then endeavoured to show that the natural enmity of the mind to these truths, was overcome only by the Spirit of God taking of that testimony of Christ, and presenting it in such a way as to disarm hostility.

I hope, and think, I made this point clear to you, and would desire you to keep it distinctly in mind, as I am now going to call your attention to a thing frequently confounded with it; *viz.*:—the witness, or *proof of genuineness*, which the Spirit gives to *his own work* by conforming the practice to the principles professed by the believer; and to put the question beyond the possibility of being mistaken, I shall introduce it in the following manner:—

The sinner, led by the Spirit of God, and using language which none but the Spirit of God could dictate, comes to Christ and says: “I receive as true the testimony you have borne to the Father,

yourself, your work—I claim nothing from myself—but I claim every thing from you.” The Saviour instantly, without a moment's delay, without the slightest reservation of any kind as to the future, says to the Spirit who has led him, “I receive this sinner for my child, by adoption and grace—lest he should be overlooked or mistaken, seal him with the seal of the Lamb in the forehead, the counterpart to the seal of the Spirit in his heart, whereby he has been sealed unto the day of redemption—take him back to the world, that all men may take knowledge of him that he has been with Jesus—lead him through it as one in it, though not of it—and prove the genuineness of your own work and the power of faith in my testimony by enabling him to reprove the world because of sin, and to say, in a way which none can contradict, “I am not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world.”

Here you will at once see that it is to the first and direct testimony of the Spirit to the Lord Jesus Christ the sinner is to look for comfort, in the first instance—that it is afterwards, when he has been received by Christ, sealed and handed over to the Spirit, the second, and so to speak, *reflected* witness is granted. And therefore, he who doubts the first, because he does not see in himself the second, must remember the way in which he received Christ and Christ him, at the beginning, and be quickened anew to faith in, and hope from, the witness of the Spirit to the testimony of Christ, before he can receive comfort from the witness of the Spirit to the genuineness of his own work, that in all things Christ may have the pre-eminence.

But all who are really the children of God have some evidence that they are his; some are so fearful of everything in themselves, that they can see nothing but what is defiled and polluted, and are in danger of denying the work of the Spirit, in the little he has done, in their self-condemnation. Some have such deep views of sin, and mourn so deeply its dominion, that they cannot see, how in the midst of all, God is gradually saving them from its

power. Some have such exalted views of what Christians *are*, instead of what they *ought to be*, that "comparing themselves among themselves they are not wise," and feeling how far they fall short of even this imperfect standard, despondency steals in, and the cheering view of instant salvation, on the reception of the testimony of Christ, is lost sight of. Whilst others, and they form a large class, are so bowed down by afflictive dispensations, and their minds so overcast by lowering clouds, which seem ready to burst upon them every moment, feeling keenly and bitterly the loss of some beloved object, and yet not feeling immediately that God, "the fulness of him that filleth all in all" is binding up the wound by supplying its place, and sympathizing in a sorrow intended for their good, "faint when they are rebuked of him," or perhaps steel their hearts against all comfort, from supposing it is only to be had at some future time, and attainable only by a few eminent Christians. And oh! would that we had more of the really good traits in some of these characters separated from their unhappy—mistake not the kindness which must also say *sinful*, adjuncts. They would be often a powerful check on much of what I fear, partakes of the nature of "confidence in the flesh." Do not suppose, because I dwell so much and frequently on the subject, I think every confidence is good. There are some of whom we must say, "*all your rejoicing is evil*," such "glorying is not good." But if your confidence be, that God and Christ are what the Spirit reveals them to be in the word, then rejoice, and rejoice always; for it is that humble and therefore strong, strong and therefore humble confidence which it is the privilege of every child to feel towards his parent, and which, when every refuge of lies is swept away, shall abide, for it is founded upon "the rock."

Having premised these observations I shall feel less danger of giving comfort where it was not intended, speaking peace where there was no peace, or withholding it where God would give it. If there be any self-satisfied, it will be the part of a true friend to show him his danger, under any circumstances, especially when an infallible remedy is at hand. If any are weak and timid, yet indulging some faint hope, let it cast them on the direct testimony of the Spirit to Christ, and take them off of themselves till they are satisfied

with Christ. If any can, as we go along, discern the work of the Spirit within them, let them rejoice in having a two-fold witness, give God the glory in having any, and take shame to themselves for having so little of that conformity, which the Spirit witnesses as the proof of the genuineness of his own work.

It is not going beyond what the word of God warrants, when we affirm that God has committed the keeping of his own character to his faithful and chosen upon earth. And it is one of the strongest arguments that can be furnished for the sanctification of believers, when we call on them to remember, that the people of the world may be very much influenced in their views of God, (certainly in their views of religion, as to its requirements and power.) by the exhibition of it they afford; "all men will walk every one in the name of his God," but "do you walk in the name of the Lord your God?" The world "knows not God"—"they like not to retain God in their knowledge," they view him as a harsh, severe master, imposing restraints upon everything in which they promise themselves happiness or pleasure. They know he is holy, and therefore conclude that he hates *sinners* well as *sin*, and believing that he hates them, of course they hate him. But do you so set forth his real character, as to correct this false, but universal opinion of him? Do you show his service to be perfect freedom? his commandments not to be grievous? his yoke easy, and his burden light? Is your heart so filled with his salvation, that your mouth is filled with his praise all the day long? Are you not only thankful, but do you "speak good of his name?" and do you tell them the reason you cannot help doing so is, because "the Lord is gracious, and his mercy everlasting," because the "merciful goodness of the Lord is ever more and more upon them that fear him?" In fine, whenever the world beholds you, is it constrained to say, 'here is one who possesses the secret of happiness, for meet him where I may, and let what will happen, he has a cheerfulness which shows he lives above the things of sense; let him lose what he may he is always talking of his gains; happy, without being light, composed, though susceptible of emotions, a man engaged in the business of life, providing for a family, beset by many things which to me are cares, yet neither influenced by the maxims of the world, nor harrassed

like me with anxieties.' I say, does your life thus witness to the character of God, as love? or can a worldly man sit at ease in your company time after time, quite sure that *from you* he will *hear* nothing contrary to his notion or estimate of the things, either of this world or the next, and *see* nothing which could rebuke his line of conduct as an ungrateful requital to the kindness and love of God our Saviour?" Oh! if such be the case, you are unfaithful, (I will not say altogether faithless) to your God. Shall the world be allowed to ring in our ears the praises of false gods, and to speak out of the abundance of the heart, whether it be science, politics, pleasures or follies; and the Christian be the only one obliged to seal his lips in the silence of the grave, and that not for the only reason which could plead his excuse, that words so far fall short as to seem a mockery of the intensity of his feelings, but because he is afraid—of what? "a man that shall die, and the son of man that shall be made as grass—and forgeteth"—whom? "the Lord his Maker"—and whom? Him "who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession," and then sealed it with his blood, "I am a king—to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth—every one that is of the truth heareth my words." And Christians, for the same end were you born, for the same cause were you sent into the world; bear witness to the truth—"Fear not continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy thee;" for God puts the question to silence every fear, "where is the fury of the oppressor?" And do you think you have found what God declares does not exist? exist so as to go beyond appointed bounds, which shall further the cause it was intended to injure?

And in the same way are you to bear witness to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ; you are privileged to extol him in the eyes of a world who from ignorance of his real character hate him: show them that this son of man who was lifted up, was lifted up to draw them to himself—that he is Son of God, and therefore "the great God *gave himself*"—show them that he has finished the work which was given him to do, and that "by the obedience of one, can many be made righteous," most "men will proclaim every man his own goodness, but

a faithful man, who can find?" one who will proclaim the goodness of the Saviour, the perfect obedience of the Saviour, the sacrifices, self-denials, insults, ill-treatments to which that Saviour submitted from love—yes—and the outpoured wrath and vengeance, the hidings of the Father's countenance under which weight of intolerable sorrow and suffering and woe he bowed his head, that he might redeem sinners from the curse of the law:—and with such a subject, and a heart professedly filled with and warmed by it, shall want of success discourage God's witness in giving his testimony? was "the Amen, the faithful and true Witness" discouraged because he had to lament "we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness?"—or when asked "how long dost thou make us to doubt? if thou be the Christ, tell us plainly," though he answered them, "I told you and ye believed not," did he refuse, or shrink from, or exhibit any unwillingness to give his testimony over and over? and shall the disciple expect better than his Master, or the servant than his Lord? It is enough for him to be as he; and who shall say he meets with more opposition and uses the same faithfulness and diligence as his Lord and Master.

I shall not take up your time any longer in going through those truths to which you are to testify:—they may be briefly summed up thus—you are to be witnesses to everything which you receive as testimony; but let me, for a little, call your attention to the manner in which you are to give your testimony—like the great witness you are to speak *boldly*—whether it be to Scribe or Pharisee or Herodian or obstinate hearers, still the truth is not to be cloked or halved, or concealed, because you will be opposed. To encourage you to this, remember you are going to speak God's word—therefore it must meet opposition. But it must for the same reason, finally prevail—therefore be not disheartened; and though there may be many who will not receive your word, yet you have this for your comfort "every one that is of the truth will hear your words," Christ's sheep will hear his voice; you may be blessed to one soul—perhaps to many—certainly to your own; for if the Son of peace be not there, your peace shall return again to you, and though by your means "Israel be not gathered, yet shall you be glorious in the

eyes of the Lord, and your God shall be your strength." Again you are to speak in *gentleness* and *meekness*—remember Christ Jesus, "learn of me for I am meek and lowly in heart," remember Paul's admonition to Timothy, "In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves, if peradventure God would give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth"—just for one moment when tempted to be proud and lifted up from your superior attainments, (or fancied superior attainments—) reflect, these poor unhappy persons are opposers from ignorance of what divine grace, not human learning has taught me—

"Did they, like me the Saviour know
Sure they would love him too!"

And oh! can a feeling of pride possess your mind, when you have before your eyes a soul going down into hell for want of true knowledge and discretion! is it not calculated to humble you to the dust, when you consider that in him you see but the counterpart of yourself? and if you will but pause for an instant to trace all the long-suffering and forbearance of God in leading your self-willed obstinate soul into the paths of peace, it will so deeply abase you, that whilst men cannot but in some degree fear your holy boldness, they will admire and love it the more, when they see it tempered with meekness and gentleness.

And again, the union of these qualities ensures authority: when "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for his sake," he puts honor on his word, though spoken "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling"—then we admit opposers into a view of the mainspring of all our actions, love to God, zeal for his glory, and a desire to rescue from the grasp of Satan those who are "taken captive by him at his will."

Again, though bold and zealous, we are to remember how God teaches his people, "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little," as he sees them able to bear it. We have much to learn ourselves, and we have been slow of heart—we are not, therefore, to expect that others will receive at once, and from our mouths, what we have been so slow of heart to believe, and we must often be satisfied, and thankful that we can leave it to the Great Teacher, to apply with power, by his own method of discipline and instruc-

tion, what we can only testify to as true.

But boldness, zeal, and gentleness will all be frequently of but little avail, if we are not unwearied—we must be instant in season and out of season; while ever Satan is active to make the world believe a lie, we must be vigilant, not sleeping in the night, lest the enemy come and sow tares among the wheat—we must likewise be "valiant for the truth upon the earth"—and temper zeal and boldness with gentleness and *prudence*.

Thus far, then, we may gain some knowledge of how we are to be witnesses of God in the world, by the testimony we bear to him with our lips. After all I have said on the nature of the Spirit bearing witness to the genuineness of his own work by the holiness of our lives, I shall add no more upon the necessity of a perfect conformity to the whole of God's revealed will, but direct your attention to another and most glorious view which this passage suggests.

We have hitherto seen how his people are *active* witnesses in the world for God—we now can look, for a few moments, at how they are his *passive* witnesses. The prophet had been led to see how every thing which the false gods of the heathen had held out to the expectation of the Jews had proved disappointments, and having proved them to be disappointments, they were afraid on the one hand to trust themselves any more to their enemies, and on the other, to trust themselves to God, since they had cast him off. But why, as it were, says God, be afraid to trust me? whom else can you trust? though you have often forsaken me, have I ever forsaken you? "all the gods of the heathen are but idols, but I the Lord, made the heavens" and though you have run after other gods, and therefore your sorrows have been multiplied, yet am I not willing to receive you again? are you not my witnesses, my only witnesses upon earth, and can I give you up? He had likewise, as is certain from his mention of Cyrus in the end of the chapter, foreseen the Babylonish captivity, and the force of the expression will then be thus seen—"I am going to carry you far away beyond Babylon, I must visit your iniquities with a rod, and your sin with scourges, but even when you sit down by the river of Babylon and weep, when you think of Zion, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth—though "Jerusalem remember in the days of her affliction

and of her miseries, all her pleasant things that she had in the days of old, when her people fell into the hand of her enemies, and none did help her; the adversaries saw her and did mock at her sabbaths," yet even then "*ye are my witnesses*"—this is no proof that I give you up—the same faithfulness that prospered is now humbling you, you are still the only people in whom my soul delighteth, who can testify for me that I am God and there is none else—the very fact of your being in affliction may furnish an argument, that since the God of love is true in his judgments he will be no less true in his promises; though all forsake thee, yet will "I never leave thee nor forsake thee," therefore fear ye not, neither be afraid, "*Ye are even my witnesses*;" you are about to be scattered far and wide—the loving correction of the rod is going to be superadded to all the evidences of my regard for you; but can you go anywhere without being my living witness? providences may be dark, dispensations lowering, every prospect be overcast, and clouds seem ready to burst in vengeance on your heads; but has anything happened to prove I do not love you now as formerly? that I do not love you for eternity? that I have cast away my people whom I foreknew? that I am now less than in the days of your forefathers, the God of love?

Oh! what an animating view is this to the child of God! oh! how does it transport us beyond "the dark valley of sorrow and care, to the land whence the radiance is given!" here I am stripped of everything, a wanderer in the wilderness, a stranger wherever I go, *but*—be I what I may, *I am a witness* to the truth of God; "in the world ye shall have tribulation," yet have I a God whom I know to be true—the belief of whose testimony gives hope to my soul—I can be a witness wherever I go, that "the Lord has loved me with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving kindness has he drawn me;" let providences appear to run ever so counter to his promises, *I am his witness still*, the mysteries of time shall be unfolded in eternity, and then shall it be seen that the witness I have borne on earth, however *apparently* contradictory to all my hopes, was "true and faithful"—that not a single

word I have said concerning God, not a message of love I delivered in his name, not a hope I have built on his promises, not a comfort I ever drew from his character, but what shall stand forth in bright and glowing colours, in attestation of the truth of my testimony that—God is love.

Oh! Christian, bear this witness of God; let nothing cast you down, for "why should you go heavily?" You are called on to defend the character of God, and it is in a certain, and no inconsiderable way staked on the way you pass through the world. Let it not, on your account be said that God is unfaithful; you have perhaps been brought into circumstances never anticipated, passed safely through trials you never expected to outlive, "here you are alive as it is this day," and can you, are you not witnesses for God?

And oh! in that last trial that awaits you, passing the dark valley of the shadow of death, and the swellings of Jordan, remember that the ark of God is passed over safely; Jesus is passed into the heavens leaving us to catch his parting words "where I am, there shall my servant be"—he loves you—he feels for you; but he calls on you even then to leave your dying testimony to those who survive you, that "God is faithful"—"God is love."

Christians, believers! there is not a time you despise his correction, faint under his rebuke, or break one of the least of his commandments, that you do not give God the lie, *perhaps* offend one of his little ones, or excite fresh prejudices against him in the world, and *certainly* lose a blessing you would otherwise obtain.

Oh! then return to your homes this blessed Sabbath evening, with the cheering, consoling thought—'I am beloved by Father, Son and Holy Ghost.' Now that the six days labor and intercourse with the world are about to commence, remember what Christ came down from heaven to bear witness to; that when he left the world, he trusted to your honor and faithfulness to take his place. The keeping of his character is to a great degree committed to you:—take heed in what light you present him to the world; beware lest he be traduced by you, and "wounded in the house of his friends"—Remember his words "*YE ARE EVEN MY WITNESSES.*"

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XLIV.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1837.

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REV. M. O'SULLIVAN.

REV. W. K. BURROUGHS.

[The following appeal on behalf of the DEAF AND DUMB INSTITUTION, CLAREMONT, is published specially with the view of interesting the public in its behalf. And we sincerely trust that the claims of the poor deaf mute, here so powerfully advocated, may meet with a prompt and cheerful response.]

APPEAL FOR THE DEAF AND DUMB.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE MOLYNEAUX ASYLUM CHAPEL, DUBLIN,

ON SUNDAY, Nov. 5th, 1837.

BY THE REV. MORTIMER O'SULLIVAN, D. D.

Rector of Killyman.

ST. MATTHEW, ix. part of 24th verse.

“ The maid is not dead, but sleepeth.”

WHEN our Lord had spoken these encouraging words, his hearers—the evangelist instructs us—“laughed him to scorn.” In vain, the words of the Lord spoke cheer and encouragement to them, when the present power of death made their hearts heavy. The maiden had not responded to the cries with which, in the first anguish of bereavement, she was supplicated to return; no movement—no flush of colouring, gave token that she heard these sounds of sorrow; the agony had been endured, and the change had passed upon her which separates visibly between the world and the departed; and words of cheer and comfort which seemed rebuked, as it were, by the still alienated aspect of the dead, served only to awake, in the hearts of the living,

new fountains of bitterness. These fountains were soon dried up, at the voice of Him whom living men laughed to scorn—the dead returned to life!—What a change in a brief few moments; when the Lord had spoken words of power, and the spirit of the damsel came again, and “she arose and walked!”—no marvel, that “the fame thereof went abroad into all that land.”

But what was the excellence of the miracle? was it the external change? was it that the paleness of a faded cheek kindled into bloom,—or that intelligence revisited a glazed eye,—or that the form that was dead arose and walked again with a power of voluntary motion?—Was this the excellence of the miracle? No, these external symptoms were but circumstances at-

tendant on the change. The true change consisted in this, that the sympathies of life were reawakened, father and child could hold again discourse of love; she was given to him with intellect and affections restored; but late, and, to the cries addressed to the form that death had smitten, there was no voice, nor any that answered:—and now, the assembled company behold the daughter—heart in her eyes, and blessings on her lips—assuring and comforting her astonished parents, and may see her unite with them in praise and thanksgiving. This was the change; it was restoration to life, not the mimicry of actions in which the power of life is manifested. Had there been a total absence of all such demonstration,—had the form remained still motionless on the couch, the eye closed, and the cheek pale,—and had it been given to the parent to know, that life and love were in the heart of his child, that she could receive his testimonies of affection, and, by some intelligible, although inexplicable mode of communication, reply to them; it is certain that even in this there would be much comfort, and he would acknowledge a mercy and a marvel. And if the change were *only* a change in external circumstances—if the form which rose and walked, and which looked like life, were possessed by an alienated spirit, a spirit without thought or affection—is it not perfectly clear that the father would have felt still desolate? that he would not feel as if his child, had been given back, but on the contrary, in the mimicry of life, which brought back many fond remembrances of his departed child, would have felt renewed perpetually within him, a sharp sense of bereavement? We have a means of judging in what sense the miracle would be most full of comfort to the rejoicing father. Imagine it performed (as in the case of the blind man) by two successive efforts—imagine the maiden commanded to rise and walk—and think that the parent who received her from the dead, found the

spirit which revisited her, a spirit of estrangement, without intellect, or affections; and that at his renewed solicitation, a new change took place, and there was inspired into her a feeling by which she was restored again to all the sympathies of life, and rendered capable of thought and love and devotion—would he not then, (oh! who would not!) regard this as a most momentous change? To animate the cold form with the power of life, is indeed, a great and marvellous work; but to inspire it with understanding and feeling—to breathe into it the breath of life, by which it becomes, not a living thing, but a *living soul*,—here is indeed a work in which the power of God is most benignantly conspicuous! Yes, brethren, this is a work in which the power of God has its most engaging and its sublimest manifestations: and this is the work,—hear it I implore you with thankful hearts,—this is the work in which he condescends to associate with himself, all who have faith and love towards him. In what place is it,—and on what an occasion—that we contemplate these instances of mercy in which Christ raised the dead? In what place?—What *was* the place? I will not detain you by describing it;—it is a place, where, in the most exalted sense, the blind receive their sight; and the occasion on which we meet is one which tells us, how the deaf hear, and the dumb speak; an occasion which we need not fear to pronounce is, in itself, a proclamation of greater marvels—when, in providing that the Gospel shall be preached unto those who *especially* are the poor, you may be considered as engaging in a work of no less moment, than raising the dead to life. For, what is it to live? He who is the resurrection and the life has told us, “this is life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” Herein is life,—the life which Christ besought for his redeemed. When he was on earth—a man of sorrows, and the hour of parting agony was at hand—he prayed to his Father who is in

heaven, that he would grant it: and now, his work of redemption finished, seated on the right hand of the majesty on high; shall I say he prays you—surely I may say he *privileges* you, to be associated with him in this great work?—to be instruments in preparing the way before him, and to be agents in imparting that knowledge which he has declared to be eternal life, and in delivering from the darkness of that ignorance which, if it be not dissipated, will deepen into eternal death. There is here a company of fifty children who have been born subject to the most grievous privations, of which we can have no conception; you cannot see the fifty; twenty-five have been withdrawn from this place; twenty-five boys remain; twenty-five females have been removed, that they might give place to so many friends who stand in the places they otherwise would have occupied. The Institution which they came to represent, loses the benefit of their speechless eloquence. May God grant that those who have taken the place of friends do not prove enemies! All who stand here to day incur a solemn responsibility,—we have been obliged to remove the most effectual form of entreaty we could employ to engage your compassion. May God put it into your hearts so to acquit yourselves, that the cause of the poor shall not suffer from your presence. Those 50 children are representatives of a larger number in the same helpless condition,—a number amounting to 185! 122 have already been taken into the schools from which these children were sent, and 63 are pronounced eligible candidates; but, with the exception of two alone, unless your bounty enable more to be taken in, poverty sternly forbids to receive them. Here are indeed cases strongly soliciting your compassion. In every instance, the parents are poor—very poor—and it seems to me exceedingly interesting, that, in several instances, out of their extreme destitution, they have undertaken to gather up some little store which should assist in providing for the

children, if admitted into the Institution—so persuaded are they of its many advantages. They will tax their already extreme poverty, that their children may not die for lack of knowledge; and poor parents, scarcely able to procure a scanty subsistence, are subscribing 1*l.* 2*l.* 3*l.* and in some instances 5*l.* for this purpose. The school is that of CLAREMONT—at once an honor and a reproach to our times; a *reproach*—that such an Institution, so blessed in its success, so needful in our country, so beneficent in its end and object, should be left dependant on the voluntary issues of private benevolence; that it has not been rendered a permanent and national establishment. At the same time, it is *consoling* to feel, that, having thus been cast on resources precarious and uncertain, they have been found, for so many years and to so great extent, available. The interest of the cause is calculated, no doubt, to awaken feelings of benevolence, to awaken them strongly; it is to raise up children, naturally unacquainted with any thoughts, feelings or sentiments that may not be common to them with the beasts that perish—to raise up children from such a state, into the privileges of human society. I say *naturally* incapable, because it is not for us to prescribe, or to imagine limits to the Divine benevolence; and we know not, but that in cases where human power cannot reach, and human agency must therefore be unavailable, God may impart, by means beyond our thought or imagination, that knowledge which vindicates the condition of man. But, although it may be a matter of comfort and hope, thus to imagine where we have no opportunity of acting; yet we cannot thus be released from a plain duty to which God has been pleased to call us. We cannot be thus released, because, in every instance in which it has been permitted benevolent men to explore the recesses of the mind of the deaf mute, they have found him physically, morally, and religiously depending on the knowledge which they have been privileged

with a power of imparting or communicating to him.

I congratulate you that these children whom you see, and the 366 whom they represent, have been reclaimed to the privileges of human life. To live a *human*, it is necessary to live a *social* life. Man was not formed for solitude—"It is not good for him to be alone."—Thus hath God spoken; and he has, as it were, declared the indissoluble connection which should subsist between animal and social existence—endowing the air by which we breathe the breath of life, with the properties by which also we enjoy the comforts and advantages of social intercourse. He has given us organs of speech, and power over them; he has so constituted the atmosphere which surrounds us, as to be obedient to the minutest movement in these flexible and delicate organs; and, by varied and far extended vibrations, to give notice of each change; and he has, to use a popular language, so formed the ear, as that it shall receive every such notice; shall discriminate between each of the nice and intricate communications thus addressed—converting them into articulate sounds, and transmit by them to the thinking principle, the intelligence which each and all have been commissioned to impart. Of the machinery thus Divinely provided, man has availed himself, and has rendered it conducive to the culture of the faculties and the communication of thought. Speech, or at least sound, is the medium through which both these processes are effected. The blandishments by which infancy is soothed and excited—the admonitions by which childhood and youth are disciplined and instructed—the knowledge of what is conventionally proper, graceful or unbecoming—of what is intrinsically right and wrong, of what is relatively good or evil; the understanding of what is our estate, and what the final purpose of our being—the exercises by which intellectual powers are developed, and moral sentiments educated, and religious

principles imparted—all that concerns us as affecting our present condition or our future—all that may be subject of knowledge or of faith, is conveyed to us primarily through the medium of that most subtle organization, and introduced into the mind by the hearing of the ear. He, then, to whom that sense is denied, is naturally excluded from the advantages of society. Amenable to its laws, he is debarred its benefits; the feelings of his infant days have not known the influence of voices in which there was love—the restraints and observances, to which he must accommodate the habits of his growing years, are not recommended to his reason by those explanations which so promptly mingle with our perceptions, and claim so instantaneous and so practical an acknowledgment of their sufficiency, that we are not competent to pronounce the importance of the aid they afford us—acquiring wrong impressions for which he suffers, but is not able to explain or to correct—the deaf mute stands in a relation to society which the disabilities of an alien, and even ignorance of all the conventional forms and contrivances, whether oral or symbolic, by which thoughts are communicated and intercourse maintained, but imperfectly represent to us. Such is the state from which 366 children have been rescued—not admitted as aliens to the privileges of citizenship, but raised from a sleep resembling death to the enjoyment and benefit of social existence. But there is a loftier and a more momentous sense in which human life is twofold, "Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He is, on the one hand, a creature of time—born of the earth—fed by the fruits of the earth, to be finally restored to the earth whence he was taken: he is on the other hand an heir of immortality, deriving life in a more especial manner from God, sustained by the word of God, and finally to be judged at the throne of God who came into the world to redeem him. As the eye sees man, he is an

organized living substance which will in time come to decay: mind apprehends, connected with this visible organization, an immaterial, thinking, principle—which, so far from perishing when the body dies, is then only to commence or regain its pure freedom of existence.

What imparts the activity of life to this immortal principle? we have already recited the answer—that knowledge which the Spirit of grace imparts—of God and our Lord Jesus Christ—knowledge of the Creator and the Redeemer which the Sanctifier communicates. Until this knowledge is imparted, the spiritual principle is not awake,—it lies entranced within its prison. What is the consequence? I do not mean the unseen, the unimaginable consequence for a hereafter—what is the consequence on earth? a life led in submission to influences and considerations derivable from present things—imbibing, where generous impulses prevail, a character and complexion imparted by the forms and judgments of the society in which it is passed, where honorable stimulants are waiting, governed, at their pleasure, by vicious or ignoble instincts—a life over which an enlightened conscience has no power, abandoned as it is, during the sleep of the spirit, to the guidance of the uncertain, generally erroneous, principles, or to the domination of the senses.

But, here, we are not met to bestow our thoughts on the condition generally of men destitute of saving knowledge. Of the great mass of men it may be said that, wisdom is near unto every one of them; the separation of God's sabbaths from days of secular employment—the solemnities with which all the leading incidents of life are made occasions to admonish of eternal things—even, we might add, the habits of society itself may serve to this good purpose; and one who has the faculties and who exercises the observation of man cannot possibly pass through life without being addressed, whether he

accept or despise them, by frequent remembrancers of God and holiness—frequent warnings of danger and frequent exhortations to seek, betimes, grace and mercy.

It is not so, naturally, with those for whom your benevolent assistance is now solicited. To the mass of men "faith cometh by hearing"—even to those who, through the silent study of God's word, have received that inestimable blessing—even of them it may be said, that "faith cometh by hearing;" for it is by hearing they have been enabled to interpret those mute signs in which they have received the glad tidings of salvation. But they whose interests for time and eternity are given in charge, as it were, to you, have experienced in the privation of one of the two noblest senses, if their wants are uncared for, the loss of what is the chief blessing bestowed by the other. Because they have been excluded from the realms of sound; because they have not entered through them into the realms of sight, the richest treasures in its wide domains have no interest for them; they are shut out, as it were, from the region of sight, because its entrance, sound, is closed against them. The garment in which Jehovah decketh himself does not reveal to them the Lord—light discloses to them, no doubt, the glories of creation; but they cannot interpret the characters in which it discourses of the great Author of all:—no! light may reveal to them what is beautiful—it may conduct to present advantage—they may admire it for its splendor, may bless it that it is useful—it may stimulate and guide to sin; but in all that appertains to eternal life, they are as the creatures that perish—"the darkness and the day to them are both alike."

Shall I congratulate you that at this moment, 122 thus lowly placed by nature are in process of being lifted up to the estate of human beings—not only to gaze on the light as beasts of the field, but with thoughts conformable to the

lofty and uplifted brow with which man has been endowed, in the blessed light which cheers them, to contemplate heaven? Shall I congratulate you on the many hundreds who, through the interposition of the schools for which we address you, have been thus restored to their place in the creation? If you are disposed to participate in this, it is, indeed, a subject of sincere and joyous congratulation:—I will not allow myself to distrust you.

It has pleased Almighty God to place before you the case of a large number of your fellow-creatures subjected to a privation, for which you know of, humanly speaking, but one remedy, that which you are solicited to provide. He has been graciously pleased to make known that remedy and to give you the most satisfactory assurance that it is effectual—you may assist in instructing the deaf mutes in the edifying and saving truths which are treasured in the region of light, and thus compensate to them the privations wherewith they have been afflicted by nature—Will you decline the privilege?

What is the condition, naturally, of the sufferers in whose behalf you are implored? Between them and you—between them and the knowledge which is eternal life, there is a great gulph fixed—they could not come unto you, those who would go from you to bring them that blessed knowledge could not. They were solitary, inaccessible. They are so no longer—He who made them, has made a way to them. You cannot pour in upon their ears a tide of sound, fraught with the riches of the Gospel; but you may convey to them all knowledge essential to their life and well being. Yes, he who originally made provision that truth should be eternal—who, having given to man a command, which though he cannot penetrate its mystery, he freely exercises, over that curious and delicate fabric, the organ of speech—he who has given to man this power, has bestowed immortality upon its works, by

committing them, if we may so speak, to the pure element of light, by disclosing characters which shall represent every, the minutest, change in that most flexible organization, and which shall serve as imperishable memorials of the thought springing in the unseen recesses of the mind, and of the sound in which this wealth of the spirit gushed forth into sensible existence. Yes, God who has provided for us all testimonies, that the productions of the spirit, like the spirit itself are immortal; who has taught us, that while the works of men's hands perish, and the place thereof know them no more, the works of their minds endure; that while "grass withereth, flower fadeth," earth itself and the expanse of the heavens pass away, thought and speech—unseen thought, fugitive speech—may be perpetuated. He has also provided that the loftiest and the most elevating thoughts, and all that is truly worthiest in the language which clothes them, may be imparted through the region of light to those afflicted poor who are debarred from access to knowledge, through the way in which it is ordinarily approachable.

It is not rash to affirm, that the provision thus made, and the knowledge that it has been made, renders the duty to profit by it, obvious and imperative. You are solicited in behalf of a large number of your poorer brethren afflicted by a calamity which excludes them from all knowledge of God. You are informed that there is a means providentially discovered, through which this saving knowledge can be imparted. Have you a doubt as to the duty which, in consequence, devolves on you? Had it pleased God that this medium of blessed communication remained still unknown, your duty would have been of a different character. Then it had been your part to soothe, so far as you had power, the miseries of your forlorn brethren; and as by reflection on their privations you felt the more sensibly your own advantages to labor and pray that your prosperity should be blessed and dedicated to its bountiful

Author. But when you are given to know that the deaf mute who has forcibly reminded you of your blessings, and to whom you have been imparting such good things as he was able to receive, has been rendered capable of receiving the most precious of all communications, is it not clear then that you have become subject to a higher duty? If you saw a solitary man, the survivor from a wreck, stand on the pinnacle of an inaccessible rock, in your sight, in your immediate neighbourhood, but yet apparently cut off from succour, separated by precipices which could not be scaled, and a devouring gulph whose violence no work of man's hand could endure, you would have a mournful office assigned to you.

But if, having done what was in your power, you beheld him swept from his place of refuge by the storm, or saw him, in a guilty impatience, or in the agony of intolerable anguish, cast his desperate life away, you could not, while you mourned, condemn yourself as having his blood upon your soul; but if it had been made known to you, that you could, without putting your life in peril, without submitting to any grave inconvenience, release him from his affliction—that though the waves of the sea raged against you, and the storm was loud and fierce, you could make through air a secure way, and could connect the rock, on which your brother was exposed, with the security in which it was God's will you yourself were standing—then would you be slow to make a way over the chasm of separation? or if you were heartlessly tardy, could you hold yourself unconcerned and guiltless, that he whom sea and storm had spared, perished, because you forsook him?

A nation has given the answer. Can you not all remember the emotion with which it was told amongst us, in late days, that British mariners were imprisoned in the fearful straits of a Northern winter. They had gone forth adventurously to discover a new passage for our fleets, and they were enclosed in desolate regions of ice,—

In the day when their horrid captivity was made known, but one voice was heard throughout the land—it was the voice of brothers crying out that they should be rescued, and none thought the expenditure of money could be too lavish; many precious lives were given to peril, and a whole nation was anxious and troubled, that the captives might be released and restored to their country and home. Such interest is felt where the animal life is in peril, where constraint and peril enclose the bodily members. Does it not reproach us?—at least does it not admonish us, to think of the zeal with which we should discharge the duty assigned us by Him who commits these mute suppliants to our care, and teaches how we may restore them to their place in the creation?

And, here, brethren, it is not unfitting to remind you, that the privilege you are now united to exercise, is one to which the circumstances of the times annex a more than ordinary serious responsibility. Do not be alarmed by this allusion, or apprehensive of the intrusion of a matter, alien to our proper concerns. I have never yet, and I trust I shall ever be equally guarded, profaned the pulpit by topics of political or party contention; but neither have I swerved from my course—and may God grant that I shall do so never, of declaring the whole duty of the congregation I addressed, because the circumstances which served to modify its nature or enhance its importance may have borne to some extent a political aspect. In this spirit, then, I would say to you, that the privilege you are called on to exercise—the privilege of providing that the word of God may be made known to sufferers dependant on your bounty, involves at this day a more than ordinary responsibility—Why? because the state has found it expedient or necessary to abandon the duty of providing such instruction. I do not disturb you with any attempt to argue the question whether this abandonment is right. Our

business is to learn how we ourselves should act; and I take notice of what the state has done, simply for the purpose of showing what it has in a more especial manner committed to our care; it *had made* grants from the public funds to schools in which the Bible was read, and *denied* grants to all others; it has changed its policy, and now *refuses* all grants to scriptural schools, while it *liberally endows* those in which the Bible is prohibited. I pass by altogether the arguments on which this system rests for its justification, or those by which it is impugned—because my object is not to show why that compromise which has caused scripture to be excluded from the national schools should be condemned, but to remind you what the compromise renders more especially your solemn duty.—While the national system of education is a system which excludes the Bible, the voluntary exertions of those who believe that all men ought to be instructed in the written word of God should be concentrated upon the work of scriptural education; and although I would not say that the ordinary and humbler charities of life should be disregarded, yet, I would say, that so long as the nation, as we call it, patronizes the schools which exclude the Bible, and holds itself separate from those where the Bible is taught—so long should the private endeavour of all who love God, compensate the evils of the national adoption and omission—so long should all christian men declare that, while the cause of scriptural education in any of its departments lacked support, its claims must have precedence of all others. Our condition at present is this, the state establishes and encourages a system of education in which the Bible is prohibited. It permits individuals to maintain schools where the Bible should be read. It taxes you for the maintenance of the one. It indulges you with permission to maintain the other. Profit by the permission—by doing so faithfully, we may obtain a blessing from God, to ensure to us for many years the privilege

we have not contemned or abused; and if a heavier calamity be, in mercy and chastisement, visited upon us, and the state, which has been led to change encouragement of scriptural instruction, into permission of it, shall become further constrained or persuaded to substitute for a reluctant toleration, what can be openly announced as prohibition—if, having erected a new system, into a rivalry to the teaching of God's word, a system dedicated to the Nation and not to God, a system which renders the attainment of instruction compatible with ignorance of the Bible,—if the state which has reared up this system shall, at a future day, be persuaded that it experiences disadvantage from the humble but incessant competition of scriptural schools, shall determine to release it from the inconvenience—if this day come, let us have acted so in the mean time, (it does not befit us prematurely to speculate on what our parts then may be;) but let us have so availed ourselves of the permission given to be employed in God's service, that when the dark hour comes, he will show us what is our duty. Let us show that no thought of sordid interest, no form of danger and difficulty, have had power to discourage or dissuade us from communicating, wherever ability is given us, the knowledge, or the means of acquiring it—which “maketh wise unto salvation.”

Brethren, will you not give, to the wants of the children in whose behalf you are solicited, the benefit of these considerations? 63 children, supplicating you, the parents and friends, at great sacrifices and inconvenience to themselves, imploring that their children receive the benefit of instruction, and of these the far greater portion exposed to almost inevitable rejection—63 children, deaf, dumb, poor! Oh! if the fragments were gathered up, of that expenditure which fitted out our voyages of discovery to seek a new passage to remote regions of the globe, and that expenditure which very properly sent out at the peril of new lives, to

extricate the daring mariners on whom calamity, had fallen, and were dedicated to the task of making a way by which knowledge could be imparted to these poor destitute,—how many hearts would sing for joy, and how many creatures would be rescued from a most ignoble captivity, and taken up into the privileges of human life! But let us not be slack to discharge our duty, because we think that the state is negligent; let us act in the spirit in which our Divine Master instructs us, and remember—that is our part, to go about “doing good.”

Let the state, send forth its fleets on voyages of discovery, let it, properly as it does, rear up its rivals to schools in which the Bible is not prohibited; but let us not suffer regret to be changed into repining, let us not offer our complaints as if they compensated indisposition to active good, and in everything except murmuring, show ourselves indifferent or supine. We have before us a case of plain duty—What excuse could you offer for neglecting it?

It has pleased God to place before you the claims of a large number of your brethren in greivous exclusion from the best privileges of your natural condition; and it has pleased him to instruct you, that you may make them partakers with you in your chiefest blessings. Is it a light matter to disregard such an opportunity, and reject such a claim? Is it *inconvenient* to you? would you speak of inconvenience when such interests are to suffer from it? Oh! if he who first gave himself in this country, to the work in which you are now privileged and invited to take a part, thought thus of *inconvenience*, how many a soul in darkness would remain still imprisoned and enslaved, which is now as the soul of a man? He was tempted by the blandishments of opening life, by views of professional advancement—but he was interested for the poor deaf mute;

and he has had the reward to see, that while disappointment and disaster have overtaken many a scheme more favoured by man's countenance and support, and looking less to the glory of God,—the Institution which he presented to his country, and over which he watched in years of difficulty and doubt, is now a claimant on you with the recorded testimony of twenty years of services to recommend it. Will you talk of *inconvenience*? think honestly of what you may suffer from your bounty—of what the excluded supplicants endure because you refuse to give—and then decide impartially. Before you determine, reflect upon this example, the last I shall propose to you—there was a day upon which the disciples of our Lord were found unable to release an afflicted child from the foul possession of a spirit deaf and dumb; their blessed Master delivered the possessed, and taught that the evil spirit was of a “kind which goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.” If you were in that group and received the power, would you refuse to exercise it because of the accompanying condition? Would you refuse to abide in prayer and without food through the lapse of a long day, if it were to end in the restoration of one that was afflicted with so grievous privations, to the privileges of hearing and speech? If there be one here who values souls and knowledge at so low a price, or who thinks so highly of his ease, I pray that his heart may be changed—and for those, for all here I trust I may say, who have a true feeling of the duty they owe to God and to their brother—I pray of you to remember, that God has given you all things needful to life; and when he commissions you to impart life itself to the poor destitute, you should not suffer any sordid purpose to chill the zeal with which you should hasten to discharge so blessed a privilege.

NO ALTERNATIVE BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ATHEISM.

LEARNING leaves a man precisely in the same state in which it found him, and will not raise him one hair's breadth above what he was by nature. Nothing can be more evident than that the law came from God—when he made man a reasonable creature; in consequence thereof he gave him a rule of action, he could give him no other consistent with his attributes.

Think you, that God's sovereignty can militate against his justice? certainly not. In justice then to man and to himself, God gave it; he gave it also in love; had he given any other, it would have been in hatred. Under the old dispensation, the Jews had a *Gospel law* and a *ceremonial Gospel*: under the christian dispensation, we have *the same law*, and a *real Gospel*; (for the law is evidently a covenant) insomuch as with fallen man there could be no covenant of works.—In obedience to this law, happiness consists; for the christian considers it happiness to obey the will of his God. The law was also given to convince of sin and to show a guilty world their need of a Mediator; to deny, therefore, the divine authority of the decalogue is to pour supreme contempt on the atonement,—it is in fact, absolute, downright atheism. In God, greatness and goodness are commensurate, beneficence and holiness; the law, like the essence of him from whom it emanates, exhibits every proof of God's sovereign goodness, and equally displays holiness and beneficence. It presents an absolute contrast to the Gospel in some respects,—

the Gospel is all love,—but denuncements of wrath on the disobedient are revealed in the law. The law knows no mercy, it requires angelic obedience, and as a rule it requires perfect conformity to the will of God. We are all, without exception, under this law, and it will crush to hell, all that rely on it alone for salvation. I beseech you to banish from your minds, what is commonly called *charity*, but which, otherwise translated, means, “enmity against God.” The law of God knows no charity, and is thus also contrasted with the Gospel. The law of nature may change, the law of God cannot; God's sovereignty may destroy nature, may uproot the mountains and the hills, and may totally annihilate the visible world; but it cannot destroy his law. It follows, therefore, by a necessary consequence that unless otherwise reconciled to God, eternal damnation awaits us.

The law is however involved in the Gospel, its requirements are and must ever be the same; it still requires perfect unerring obedience. Its thunders rolled from Mount Sinai to Calvary, where they burst on the head of the sinner's substitute, “the Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” Thus all doubt and uneasiness, are removed from the sinner's mind by the recollection that we are under a dispensation of mercy, where the sinner is justified by the righteousness of another.

HOWELS.

THE CHARACTER OF JOB, AND GOD'S DEALINGS WITH HIM.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN GRANGE SILOA CHURCH, DIOCESE OF LEIGHLIN,

BY THE REV. W. K. BURROUGHS, A. M.

CURATE.

JOB, XLII. 6.

“ Wherefore, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”

Who has not heard of the patience of Job—and yet by how few is his character and history made the subject of serious reflection and study? they are singularly instructive as exhibiting the dealings of God to man. The design of God to him was to bring him to repentance; for he unhappily thought that he needed no repentance; and until this was done, severe, but not too severe, punishments were inflicted on him. Let us then inquire into God's dealings with him for this end; but first, it may be useful to speak of his character. He was certainly a holy man; God speaks of him to Satan as “perfect and upright, one fearing God and eschewing evil.” Satan could not deny it, but insinuated that Job's conduct was governed by mere worldly considerations. His three friends heard him declare his innocency; and his speech in the 29, 30, and 31st chapters, beautifully and eloquently details the blamelessness of his life. One sentence describes his practice of a virtue more plainly inculcated in the Gospel, though very rarely practised by Christians; “weep with them that weep,” says the apostle,—and he could appeal to his own endeavours to fulfil the precept “Who is offended and I burn not?” not less forcible is the language of Job, “did not I weep for him that was in trouble? was not my soul grieved for the poor?” His friends did not question by one single fact that he did not speak truly of himself; all they could offer in reply was an insinuation of some secret wickedness,

which though he had hypocritically contrived to conceal it from the world, God would discover by the signal and very awful chastisements that he let fall upon him. Alas! how severely have the godly ever suffered from such insinuations—where men cannot prove evil against them, they will suppose it to exist, and whisper away their good name.

Prosperity usually corrupts the heart, and steels it against sympathy for others sufferings; but it had not this effect on Job, he was eminently prosperous, he had never himself tasted the bitterness of sorrow, yet he felt and wept for sorrow and suffering wherever he saw it, and freely bestowed of his riches and consolation to mitigate if he could not remove it; nevertheless he was not perfect, because no human being ever can be perfect: no actual transgression had been laid to his charge—no open outward guilt; but with all his lowliness and submission to the Divine will, and though his demeanour exhibited no pride to his fellow men, nor any undue haughtiness and assumption for the honours which all willingly paid to him, he yet was lifted up in his own heart—he was righteous in his own eyes, and would fain justify himself before God; and this he did though he believed in Christ and worshipped him as the Saviour of sinners. Sin is surely a deceitful thing when thus it could deceive such a man, and render the very knowledge he possessed of the atonement subservient to its success in deluding him. It was through this

delusion that Satan hoped for victory over him. At the period when the history commences to speak of him, he believed himself to be sinlessly perfect; there is no mention of his praying for forgiveness for *himself*, though it is carefully recorded that he did so for *his children*. One passage in the seventh chapter might be selected as contradicting this statement, where he says, "I have sinned, what shall I do unto thee O thou preserver of men? why dost thou not pardon my transgression and take away mine iniquity?" but it is evident that he was not serious in this, and his friend Bildad immediately reproved him for not seriously looking for pardon from God. His expressions mean no more than this, that if God would not withdraw his hand from him unless he confessed his sinfulness, he would do so under the condition that his death should immediately follow. Job was then sinlessly perfect in his own eyes; he admitted the necessity of an atonement even for himself, but not for himself *then*; for himself, before he loved Him, but not then, when he walked so perfectly before Him. In this opinion he is certainly not singular: some in our own days maintain that once we are washed in the blood of Christ we need not be washed in it again, not considering that we are continually sinning and so need the continual application of his blood. Job was self-righteous, but without any of that offensiveness which prevailed in the Pharisees. Let us now inquire how God brought him to see his error, and to abhor himself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Satan accused him of serving God for mere wordly considerations; but that if his substance were taken away he would curse him to his face, that is, he would openly deny him. To understand this we should remember that the heathen worshipped their idols on the condition of their blessing them with prosperity; and whenever their wishes were not gratified, instances were not infrequent of their defacing and breaking the idol into pieces in revenge. Jacob was evidently tinctured with this notion, when he poured the oil on the stone at Bethel, saying, that he would worship God, if God would keep and clothe him and bring him back to his father in safety. Here Satan said, that if Job's

prosperity were taken away, he would forsake the worship of God, and attach himself to some idol.

Satan was permitted to have power over every thing belonging to Job, save himself. He used the power with terrible cruelty, shewing how tyrannical a taskmaster the devil is. In one day he reduced him from being the richest and happiest man in the country, to the very poorest and most miserable. He did not spare his children, because, by their aid he might have been able in some degree to recover the loss of his wealth, and certainly to repel some of the aggressions which wicked and violent men were in those days in the habit of making on the weak and the defenceless; but he spared his wife, not to be a comfort to him in his distress, but that he might employ her to tempt him to forsake God.

When the evil tidings came, Job lost not his self-possession. He did not break out into murmuring; grieved to the heart he was, as who in such circumstances would not, but his grief was chastened by meek submission to the Divine will:—his affliction was not confined to the loss of all his wealth and children—Satan had prepared another scarcely less severe—he now ceased to be respected, even those whom his bounty fed instead of regarding his misfortunes with commiseration, reviled and ridiculed him; and he whose heart ever melted at the tale of human suffering became a bye-word and reproach, a jest and a laughing stock, to the vile and most worthless. He complained of the violence of the wicked men to the magistrates, but his complaints were received with contempt. He describes his distress of mind under those indignities, very pathetically—"My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me. They that dwell in my house, and my maids, count me for a stranger: I am an alien in their sight. I called my servant, and he gave me no answer, I entreated him with my mouth; my breath is strange to my wife; yea, young children despised me; I arose, and they spake against me. They that are younger than I, have me in derision, whose fathers I would have disdained to set with the dogs of my flock; I am their song and their bye-word. They abhor me, they flee far from me and spare not to spit in my face."—Under all this ill treatment he maintained his meek and holy character.

He spake not unadvisedly, with his lips though Satan left no means untried to provoke him to sin. How long this afflictive trial lasted is not said, but probably it continued for some years. This much is certain it did not work the conviction of his sinfulness on Job's mind; the purpose for which it was sent by God, and perhaps Satan's failure in tempting him to transgress might rather have confirmed him in his error. It is instructive to consider the very different purposes of God and Satan in this trial of Job.—Satan wished to detach him from the worship and service of God; and the Lord desired at once to magnify his own grace, and to draw Job in deeper humility and prostration of spirit to the feet of the Redeemer; and this being insufficient, the rod was again applied.

Satan obtained permission to subject him to still severer affliction, and prepared his wife to aid him in shaking his reliance on God. When she beheld his misery and agony and yet his meek and uncomplaining spirit, she began to think Jehovah not to be the true God, and she sarcastically asked how long he would continue to serve a God who rewarded him so badly. How mildly did he rebuke her, "Thou speakest as one of the foolish (or wicked idolatrous) women speaketh—What, shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?"

This seems a favorable time to examine what were Job's views of the Divine justice. Were we to use his words, we would intend them to convey, that, in as much as we have sinned against him, we must receive every afflictive visitation, however severe, as greatly milder than our sins deserve, and every blessing as utterly and entirely undeserved.—But Job did not mean this, he did not intend to confess himself a sinner, or that these visitations were the just rewards of his transgressions. His three friends reasoned in that way and sought to fix crime on him, from the awful character of his sufferings. They believed Job to be a hypocrite and to have been guilty of some secret crimes, otherwise the Lord would not have suffered so much evil to fall upon him. They erred in imputing wickedness to him; but it seems to have been the prevailing opinion of those times, that God would not suffer the righteous to fail, for the young Elihu who detected Job's true fault, says, that

but for it God would have removed him out of the strait into the broad place and that his table should have been full of fatness. The same seems to be taught by the expression "godliness hath the promise of the life that now is and that which is to come;" and if ever the godly are permitted to suffer; we may be assured the sufferings are necessary to correct faults which they have allowed to grow up unperceived and unresisted, and prevent them from being wholly Christ's. That the wicked are punished, and the righteous under the protection of God, Job did not deny; but he denied that God were unjust in allowing evil to befall the righteous; and this was one subject of difference between him and his friends. He seems to have believed that God as Creator had a right to use man his creature as it pleased him, and though his treatment of him were ever so severe, still there would be no injustice in it, however righteous the man so afflicted might be; and in reference to his own case, he did not complain that he was unjustly treated—he averred his innocence, he asserted the blamelessness of his life; and while he denied that his miseries were the due rewards of his iniquity, he readily acknowledged that God by right of his power as Creator was justified in sending them, and that he had no reason to complain—"shall we receive good at the hand of God and shall we not receive evil?" Is not this precisely the doctrine inculcated in the ninth of Romans, where Paul says "shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" and though this passage has been disputed as not being applicable to individuals, and much has been profanely said and written about God being unjust in doing this, and his being just in doing that; yet here there can be no controversy that the reasoning does not apply to individuals; for Job spoke of his own individual case, and submitted meekly to the Divine dispensations as just and right, because of the Creator's supreme power to order every thing after the counsel of his own will. That Job's reasoning was just, we are assured from God's approbation of it, and his condemnation of the opinions of his three friends, "ye have

not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job."

Perhaps we have dwelt too long on these circumstances of Job's life; but the book is difficult, from the general scope of the reasoning not being perceptible without some study. I now come to the more immediate consideration of the text—"I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

I. We learn from it **THE AWFUL CHARACTER OF SIN.**

Job was an eminently holy man; yet because he considered himself perfect, and would justify himself before God, Elihu feared not to class him with the most wicked of men, "what man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water? which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men; for he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himself in God." And again, in another place, "but thou has fulfilled the judgment of the wicked, justice and judgment take hold on thee."—so very early was it known, that "whoso offendeth in one point is guilty of all." Oh, how few reflect on this, and how awful the number who esteem themselves safe, because they are not apparently so wicked as their neighbours. Job did not say that he was righteous above others, nor that he was happy because he did commit fewer sins than his neighbour; but he said he felt peace because he did no sin; and yet for being wise of heart, for being proud of spirit, though his pride never offended one, nor hurted one sensitive feeling of even the weakest of his neighbours, he is called to his face "a wicked man," and as "walking with wicked men," yea, as one "drinking up scorning as water;" and now that he began to feel the convictions of divine truth, and to see where he erred, he did not deny the imputation, he admitted the fulness of his guilt. Oh, how astonished would any one of our people regard us if we were to tell him, that because he indulged in unbelief, and would compare himself with others, he is a most wicked man? I am sure he would begin to defend himself and to show that he is not so very bad, forgetting that every one who is not in Christ is adjudged a sinner.

II. We learn **THE PROFOUND SELF-ABASEMENT WHICH EVERY TRUE CHRISTIAN**

SHOULD FEEL.—"I abhor myself." The holy Job looking on his own heart was amazed at its deceitfulness and guilt for presuming to think itself free from sin, and he turned away in horror and disgust. Well would it be for mankind, if his had been the only heart that ever lifted up itself against God. Alas! we have all sinned in this, our hearts are almost always lifted up against him, and if we examine them closely we shall find them ever working to induce us to feel ourselves safe, not on the ground of Christ being the propitiation for our sins, but because of our own advances in the race, if we be converted, and if otherwise, for our almsdoings or some other work. We must learn to abhor ourselves for this; the feeling is offensive to God, it is the spirit of pride exalting itself against him; and if we truly love him we will regard it with dread and dismay. The pride of the human heart is loathsome to God: we must loathe it too, and loathe it for its working in ourselves.

Oh, let us beware how we suffer this spirit to grow in us; it will provoke him to chastise us, and that severely, if he loves us. May we learn from Job, or rather, as we have a better pattern, from Christ, to endure the chastisement meekly, and be it our care not to defeat by our obstinacy the intent of his visitations.

III.—We learn **THE DUTY OF REPENTANCE.** The expression in the text is "I repent in dust and ashes." In those early times, and in the warm climate of Arabia and Judea, severe grief and distress were accompanied by casting ashes and dust on the head, and tearing one's clothes, and sometimes too, by wearing sackcloth next the skin. These were the outward signs that persons were in great trouble, just as the wearing of black clothes and ornaments are now signs of mourning among us. The dust and ashes, therefore, are not necessary as accompanying repentance; our customs are different, and our true concern is now to see that we have the thing itself; it is the duty of all men to repent, every man needs repentance, and the best christian is he who is most sedulous to cultivate it in himself—we are hourly sinning, and therefore we need it hourly.

Repentance signifies a change of mind; but we are now about to consider some of its fruits, as they were manifested by Job, when by the enlightening

efficacy of Divine truth his mind was changed.

1st. We remark that *he was deeply humbled*. He felt that he was a sinner, and as such, notwithstanding his many virtues, deserving of eternal death; this humbled him under the mighty hand of God. Before, he was anxious to see God, and earnestly besought that God would withdraw his terrors from him, that he might meet him face to face and maintain his innocency before him; now, the prevailing conviction of his mind was, that his unworthiness could not dare to stand before God; he thought and felt as the publican in the temple when he said "God be merciful to me a sinner," therefore God accepted and justified him for Christ's sake, and the chastisement was withdrawn when the end designed by it was accomplished.

2ndly. *he felt that godly sorrow which is not to be repented of.*

There is a sorrow for sin which needs to be repented of, because it worketh death. It is a sorrow which regards the punishment of sin and not the sin itself, and may exist together with earnest love of sin. Thus the criminal sentenced by the laws is sorry because punishment is to follow his crime, though by no means sorry for the crime itself. In the same way, sin is often sorrowed for when everlasting wrath seems at hand; but sin is so far from being hated, that when, as he often does, God listens to the prayer for further time for repentance, and the fear of immediate punishment is taken away, the promises of amendment are forgotten, and sin is loved and pursued more eagerly than ever. But Job's sorrow was founded on hatred and dread of sin, because it offended God and is forbidden. He had indeed ever hated sin, but this his besetting sin he did not perceive, and when he did, he did truly hate it, and abhor himself for having indulged it.

3rdly.—*This sorrow was permanent.*—He never afterwards forgot his error; indeed it would be, humanly speaking, strange to us to think that he could, if we did not know the deceitful character of the human heart. He never afterwards presumed to think himself sinless: and we may believe him to have been as bright an example of humble and confiding faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, as his patience under suffering and his

meek submission to the Divine will were great and admirable. From the whole history we learn as regards God's government of the world and his dealings with us,

First.—THAT SATAN IS PERMITTED TO EXERCISE CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE ON OUR AFFAIRS.—He is the constant accuser of God's people before his throne, that he may obtain permission to go out against them; and for this end he is allowed to exercise great power. In one day, and almost at the same instant, he brought different and distant plundering tribes to fall upon Job's servants and cattle, and they stripped him of all his wealth; and while these calamities were being inflicted, he brought a whirlwind to beat upon the house in which Job's children were, and buried them in the ruins—ten young people cut off in the flower of their age, with many servants and perhaps others—and all, that Satan might try his power to seduce one man to forsake God! Whether they were servants of God we know not; like most young people, they probably looked forward to many years enjoyment of life, and thought little of eternity. Nor can we say why God permitted it, save that it seemed good in his sight; and he every day shows us that death carries off the young as well as the old.—It is surely an awful warning to parents to examine closely their own state, and to see that they walk with God, lest he should visit their children as he did Job's, to remind them of his power and their wickedness. It is no less a warning to the young, that they should endeavour, after godliness, for we know not the day nor the hour when we may be called to our account.

Secondly.—We learn WHAT CARE GOD TAKES TO MAGNIFY HIS OWN GRACE. If he exposed Job to severe and almost unheard of suffering, he supplied him also with grace and strength to endure it. The conclusion evidently glorified God; and we can not but believe that many in those times were edified by Job's meekness and patience, and that the heathen were obliged to own the superior blessedness of serving God. Job was an eminent man, he occupied a prominent station among his countrymen: very many must therefore have been witnesses of the circumstances of his trial; many also who heard of the dignity of Job must also have heard of the greatness of his misfortunes, and

this occasion be given to many thanksgivings unto God, for the wondrous extent of his mercies. Oh! let none of us esteem our own circumstances too private or insignificant to bring praise unto God. The very least and most trifling of them, are intended for this end: we know that not a hair of our heads can fall to the ground without his permission; and we ought to believe, that the various events of our lives are designed to bring some good to ourselves and others, and to give occasion for humble and adoring praise. Alas! how many of them do we suffer to pass by without taking improvement from them. May he grant that we shall be more careful to mark them in future.

Thirdly—We see that GOD DOES NOT WILLINGLY AFFLICT NOR GRIEVE THE CHILDREN OF MEN. And when he permits Satan or others to do it, the chastisement is necessary for our good. Now that we know the event, we cannot say that Job received one stroke too many or too severe. The devil would have proceeded to greater

length, but in each instance he was limited; in the first to Job's property and everything he held dear, his person being safe; in the second to Job's person, his life being preserved. Thus also is it with ourselves: the Lord suffers the destroyer to proceed only so far as is indispensable to our good; but in order to this, what an immensity of evil is he allowed to create! Oh! should not the knowledge of this, make us both humble and thankful?—humble, that our obstinacy and hardness of heart should require such severe methods to correct them; and thankful, that an enemy so vindictive and cruel has restraints put upon him. There is evil enough in the world as it is; and what wretchedness and misery would prevail in it if he were unrestrained, he is allowed occasionally to show. Besides he is so wakeful, "going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." The Lord grant us grace to avoid his paths; and may we ever be delivered from his power.

THE RELIGION OF NATURE.

You have heard a great deal of the religion of nature. Give me leave to tell you, there is no such thing; what is called the religion of nature, is nothing more than a dream of man's fancy. We could never know how to discern the moral perfections of Jehovah without a revelation. I cannot reprobate in terms sufficiently strong, what is commonly called the religion of nature and the religion of reason. I will tell you what it is:—it is one half of the Bible stolen from, and opposed to the other half. We could not, by the works of God, discover our duty to God, or, without a revelation, discover God at all. The

acorn may be sown and buried in the earth, but without the light and warmth of the sun, it can never vegetate or bud. Till revealed in his *word*, we can never behold God in his *works*; but when lighted and assisted by his revelation of himself all his works proclaim him. Speaking thus of the religion of nature, I do not contradict the apostle (Rom. i. 20) he was addressing those who had a revelation—a revelation which traditionally descended from the remotest ages, and when we see the works of nature, and possess any revelation, however obscured, those works proclaim God.

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REV. H. COOKE, D.D. LL.D.

REV. E. G. CARR, A.M.

NATIONAL CALAMITIES THE CONSEQUENCE OF NATIONAL SINS.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, MAY-STREET, BELFAST,
ON SUNDAY, JULY 15th, 1837,

BY THE REV. HENRY COOKE, D.D. LL.D.

Amos iii. part of 6th verse.

“ Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it ?”

WHEN we remember that God is holy, that “with him dwelleth no darkness at all;” when we remember that “he hateth sin, and cannot look upon iniquity”—we will then clearly understand, that the evil here spoken of is not *moral* evil—it is not sin: we will understand it more as the *suffering* of evil—in other words, that the word evil in our text is equivalent to the word *calamity*;—“Shall there be calamity in a city, and the Lord hath not done it”—hath not inflicted it? This is the proper meaning of the words of our text; and they do not, in any way, attribute to God the production of sin, which from his nature, it is impossible that he should produce; but the mere infliction of that penal or corrective evil which God may lay on a city or nation, for the purpose, on the one hand, of punishing it duly for sin, or, on the other, of correcting it and bringing it back to God.

With this view of our text, we may be permitted to observe, that the world is composed of good and evil;—of good, which was in it as it came from God; and of evil, that entered into it when it became infected with sin. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, so long as it stood God’s orchard in Paradise, so long it was, as the Sabbath now is to us, a sign and a seal, untouched and unbroken, between God and man: in the world there was then unmingled good. But the moment that the falsehood of Satan was believed in preference to the testimony of God, evil entered into the world, commingled itself with the good, obtruded itself into the place of the good, and made “the very good” to be turned into evil. And consequently in this world henceforward, while we have much that is *real* good and that is *imaginary* good, we have both real and imaginary good commingled with what is

evil; and it becomes a problem of no easy solution to tell, whether the one or the other doth generally predominate. And although we should be disposed generally to conclude, that good is predominant; and although, beyond all question, when the term of the world shall come to a final scene, evil shall be exterminated and good alone exist, and in a new heavens and a new earth, then will dwell unmingled righteousness; yet still there are hours and seasons in the history of our humanity, when we might, perchance, find it the most difficult of all attempts to persuade the suffering children of men, that the evil of the calamity was not greater than the good. When we consider that the world is compounded of good and evil, we will observe, that in consequence of the introduction of evil, there is one common mistake that we are all ready to fall into, when we enjoy uninterrupted and unmingled good—that is, we become prepared to attribute all the good we enjoy to ourselves. The possession of abundance closes the eye against that hand which, ever open, supplies abundance; the possession of health leads us to forget that it is the gift of God; the possession of worldly riches, we are led, either to attribute to our own industry, or frugality, or our own skill, or to what we have derived from a line of ancestry. Thus it is, that the possession of uninterrupted and comparatively unmingled worldly good, we are always ready to attribute to ourselves, and in the enjoyment of it we are always prepared to forget God. We see human nature exactly set forth in the king of Babylon; when he ascended his lofty palace and looked around him from the summit, he said in the pride of his heart, “Is not this great Babylon that I have builded?” Had he been engaged with his enemy, he would have called on his false gods, or, finding their insufficiency, he might be led to acknowledge the God of heaven, as the monarch of Babylon not unfrequently did; but now, when surrounded by peace and prosperity, by all the splendour of the city he had raised and ornamented, he looked upon it, and saw not God from whom his power came, and in whom he held it at the tenure of his will, but saw himself as the origin and director of all—“Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the

might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?” Now see human nature, not in its highest, but in its lowest grade,—trace it downward, from the mighty monarch of Babylon to the lowliest who are engaged in the everyday employments of the world, and you will find, that where employment is abundant, where remuneration abundant, there is an inclination to forget God, and attribute all to self.

It is therefore of great importance that we attend to some facts connected with human nature—that is, that while we are receiving good, we are always ready to trace it to ourselves, to give all the credit of it to ourselves, and perhaps to take largely all the enjoyment of it to ourselves; but the moment that evil is inflicted on us, our pride is alarmed by the injury to our feelings; and while we were receiving uninterrupted good from God, we were found looking to self only—the moment evil came on us, we were looking beyond self, and searching for some cause to which we are to attribute the evil we endure. In these circumstances you find, that some attribute the evil they endure merely to *chance*; you find a large number of the children of men never looking beyond a mere calculation of chances to account for the evils they endure; the world, they look upon, in all its history, as a chapter of accidents; the good fortune, the riches of one; the evil fortune, the misfortunes and the afflictions of another, they attribute to mere blind chance. Again, you will find numbers more philosophical and more considerate, numbers who have discovered that chance is nothing, that it is only “direction that we cannot see,” who consequently search for more philosophical causes than mere imaginary chance, and attribute them to something that they call *the general law of nature*. Or, perchance, if there be some more piously than philosophically inclined, they will attribute them to *nature's God*, but there stop short at these general laws which they conceive to form the movements of Providence; but the particular actings of these general laws they take entirely out of the hands of God, and only look to this secondary instrumentality by which, according to their ideas, the general laws impressed on the creation of God are found to operate. The consequence of this will be, that good

will be enjoyed, and self will be honoured; or if, perchance, nature, or the God of nature, be acknowledged, yet the secondary cause will be their own skill, or industry, or application, or some such other cause, that still leaves God out of his temple, and sets up humanity. Or, on the other hand, if evil be endured, it will be attributed to any cause but to God; for man is always predisposed to be an infidel,—naturally man is essentially infidel; and it is not until we are renewed in the spirit of our mind, that we are ever renewed in the power of faith. Now, here it is that the Spirit of God comes in as our instructor; and when we are compelled to look for the cause of evil or calamity, that Spirit at once tells us, that “if there be evil in a city, the Lord hath done it.”

If any evil is endured in the nation or individual—if it is found in the whole city, in the splendid streets where the rich dwell—if it be found in the extended marts of commerce where merchandize is continually exposing its wares, and accumulating its profits, or in the dark and dreary lanes into which misery and poverty retire to hide themselves—or if it be found in these wretched garrets, the last resort of unfriended humanity, where they are open to the winds and rains of heaven, and where the poor, all uncared for, *sleep, but rest not*; whether there be evil in one or another part of the city, or in the whole city—it is “*the Lord hath done it.*” If it be a calamity that knocks at the palace gate—the Lord hath led it on. If it be a calamity that has come down to the lowly and wretched habitation of poverty—the Lord hath been the visitor, and the Lord hath inflicted it. If it be a calamity that has come to the treasure of a nation, and closed up the fountains from which it was supplied,—that comes to the health of a nation, and lays its hundreds and its thousands on beds of pain,—the Lord hath done it. If it be a calamity that has sent famine into the land—it is the Lord hath done it; so that whatever may be the condition of the land, in sorrow and in suffering, the Spirit of God distinctly informs us—*it is the Lord hath sent it, it is the Lord hath done it.*

Now, in considering the lessons that may be drawn from these words, let us first consider “the evil in the city”—what are the general outlines of the evils of our day. Secondly, let us consider the

important lesson to be drawn from the fact, “the Lord hath done it;” and then the important conclusions which may be drawn (which are two in number) from these considerations, the mercy God exhibits in the infliction of calamity, and the remedy for all such infliction—the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ dwelling first in the individual’s heart, pervading then the breasts of father, mother, children, and servants; and then going abroad through the length and breadth of the land, till the kingdom becomes the kingdom of our God and of his Christ.

1. When we consider THE EVIL IN THE CITY, it cannot but strike any one that the first evil is the *commercial distress of the times in which we live.* We are exactly like Tyre of old; our chief city may be considered as the entering place of the pilotage of the world; commerce going out to all the ends of the earth, commerce returning with rich profits from every quarter of the world; so that there is not a wind that blows that is not wafting England’s commerce on its outward or homeward voyage. Look to our busy scenes of activity, and our great accumulation of manufactures, where all was hurry, and bustle, and energy, where the eyes of the master was superintending so many busy hands, and all appeared to hurry on to the completion of a mighty and profitable work, and yet how many are now idle! and look to the merchandize of the land that lieth unbought and unsought for, and consider the extended calamity consequent on this universal stagnation! As the stagnation of the heart in the body natural, threatens the destruction of the whole system; so, activity being paralyzed, the productions will be destroyed. Now this is not an overdrawn statement of what is the condition of the mercantile world. To what are we to attribute all this? Is not the common cry of many, “Oh, it is over trading, or a desire of one nation to monopolize the trade of the whole kingdom?” And are not men ready to attribute the evil in the city to any cause whatever but to the true cause—sin in the heart of man, and God putting his hand on that sin to punish it, or reform those who are the subjects of it? We are ready, in the infidelity of our nature, to attribute, frequently, the evils of our day to any cause but to the real cause. Our merchants may assemble, and the wisest

of them may descant wisely on the dangers of overtrading, and the variety of speculation; political economists may descant, wisely as they may, on the evil of carrying forward trade beyond the capability of capital,—all this may be done, and we may calculate the evils that arise from the creation of imaginary capital, not from the possession of the present but the speculation of the future, and these things may be exceedingly wise and exceedingly true—but what are they all? They all fail of leading men to the proper cause, they in reality are neither more nor less than veiling from the eyes of men the real cause of the evil in the city. These speculations of the wise men are just the production of second causes to hinder men from coming to the first cause; for the true cause is in the two things I have mentioned, the sinfulness of man hastening to be rich, and the justice and judgment of God laying the hand of his punishment on the sinfulness of man.

When we look a step farther, we find another evil in the city. We complain most grievously of the *extended want of employment* where employment *was* abundantly enjoyed; and in many parts of our own country there is a uniform want of employment unless in a few portions of the year. Political economists will gravely calculate the number of hands totally unemployed throughout parts of this kingdom, and discover many remedies for the evils, and many causes, without ever coming to the true cause or attempting a true remedy. The great evil in the city will be attributed to the want of commercial employment, to the overflow of population, to the momentary stagnation of trade—for the removal of which many are anxiously looking, and would to God, they were as anxiously praying—but in all these things there is just what I mentioned before, a looking to second causes without looking to the first. Why is there want of employment in these lands? Attribute it to the stagnation of trade,—what is the cause of that? the sin of the people and the judgment of God. Attribute it, in these lands, to an overflowing population;—what is the reason that employment does not hold pace with population? it is simply because the population are not educated in the knowledge of God, not educated in the principles of morality;

because the sword of the midnight assassin hinders strangers from setting down and settling in the land, and employing the overplus capital of another country in advancing the improvement of our own. Man will attribute the evil in the city to any cause but the one, the sin, the ignorance of the people, and the consequent judgment of God.

We cannot overlook another evil to be found in the city,—the comparative famine. Although want of bread is not so great an evil as the means to obtain it, yet still, to a poor man, this must amount to a comparative famine; and we know that in many parts of our sister land, the famine we have arrived at is absolute destitution, so as to call forth the abundant liberality so freely imparted in the more favoured part of the land to relieve the wants of the wretched in other portions. Still we must see here again, that men are disposed to attribute all to second causes, and not look to God. For some years past in this land, one single vegetable production, so largely depended on, has been a total failure. Who thought of God? There was no cause in nature that imagination could search after, or to which the philosophy of the time could afford a name, that was not assigned over and over again for that calamity,—the withering winds of heaven, and the burning sun, or the electrical condition of the air or the earth, and a variety of other causes—but God and his judgment on a sinful people was never discovered or never alleged by them. The philosophic eye of man is often like the natural eye, that can only see distinctly to certain distances, beyond that distance all is obscurity, clouds and darkness rest upon it. The philosophic eye of man can discover, with most acute vision, the second cause, but beyond that second cause, naught but the grace of God will lead any man; he can attribute the failure of the vegetable productions of the earth to the earth, to the frost, to the air; he can discover it in the animal productions of the earth that destroy the early bud, or to any other cause of a secondary nature; but poor blind philosophy can never discover *God*, and though in him she “lives and moves and has her being,” yet that *God* she cannot discover; yea, even when he executes his judgments in order to awaken her feelings. Thus we are ready to attribute

the famine to any second causes, without going up to God of whom it is said in our text, "shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?"

But the next evil in the city, we are ready to attribute to second cause is *the pestilence*. When is there a sabbath that there are not emblems of death exhibited, whether the emblems of death that mourn a king, or the emblems of death that mourn a subject? Yes, we are all reminded of death in the pestilence that stalketh about, stealing away daily our acquaintances and friends from our sight. We are specially reminded that the poor have largely suffered; in the town of our habitation they are suffering, the hospitals are full, and patients have called for accommodation that cannot be afforded. All this we have learned, and then, what is the conclusion? We trace this up to the want of nutritious food, to the anxiety of mind the poor must undergo when listening to their children's cries which they cannot hush, and looking at the tears which they cannot wipe away, when considering the want they cannot supply, and looking forward to that misery which poverty always brings along with it;—but we are not willing to look to the Lord who has done it, to the fact that the Lord is thus taxing our generosity and calling it into exercise. We are not willing to look at the fact, that the Lord, by surrounding our habitations with the signs of mortality, would tell us, that we may be ready, knowing not the hour when our Lord cometh. Thus it is, that here again there is evil in the city, and "the Lord hath done it;" and we ought to look beyond the introduction of disease by the want of food or insufficient food by which fever's ingress may be facilitated, we ought to look to the fact that *it is the Lord that hath done it*. In a thousand ways the nation deserves it, and in a thousand ways God will undoubtedly punish.

When we look to the evils in the city, it would be sinful to overlook one other evil, and that is, *the disunion of the land*. There was no evil in the city of Jerusalem that ever was equal to their own disunion, Ephraim vexing Judah, and Judah vexing Ephraim was worse than the Syrian and Babylonian combined. So long as the nation was united, she prospered and was mighty—the moment she was divided, she was weakened,

and in time conquered. Now, can we for a single moment overlook the fact that the great evil in the city that aggravates all our other evils, is, the disunion of counsel and affection that prevail through the land.

I refer not to this point more particularly, lest, any wise I should be misunderstood; but I would remind you, that as we find the counsel of Absalom, when he would have been king, was destroyed by one counsellor going in among his counsellors, and leading them into contradiction—so, our lands being disunited in the national counsels, we have received of that great calamity that thus afflicts us, and against which it becomes us to provide by looking to what is the real cause—our own sins. Whence come wars and tumults and fightings in nations or families? "Come they not from your lusts that war in your members?" I do attribute all our national disunion, whether among the legislature of our land, or among the people, to our national sin; for God in his mercy is able to take away all these disunions, and he will remedy all these evils the moment he has taught us, rich and poor, to repent of our own individual sins, and turn to the living God who alone is able to throw oil on the disturbed and stormy waters, and produce peace and a calm out of all our national disorder.

But again, we have called down the just and righteous judgment of God on our individual and national sins in *the Sabbath breaking* that prevails, and the national neglect of making the least attempt, energetically and conjointly to legislate on that subject,—a subject that is more important to the morals of our people than any other upon which a christian legislature could possibly be engaged. Let any one who desires to know what is the state of moral ruin that is going forward in this land by the breach of the Lord's day, let him go to the outlets of our town, view the continual outpouring of the population of the neighbouring villages, and let him, if he wants to see the miniature of hell on earth, hear the voices of drunkenness and revelry from a neighbouring tavern, loud and energetic; and let him then consider, that *there* is one great cause of our national depravity of morals, and let him see that *there* is one of the points at

which we must commence a spirit of wholesome and healthy legislation, if we would prevent the people from the suffering of these calamities that God has ever sent on a Sabbath-neglecting population.

II. THE IMPORTANT LESSON TO BE DRAWN FROM THE FACT, "THE LORD HATH DONE IT." If the Lord hath sent upon us the calamity of the stagnation of commerce, the want of employment for our artisans and mechanics, the famine or pestilence, and the disunion in the national counsel, what is it but a direct punishment on our individual or national sins? I believe there is no *individual* free from his share of this sin; I believe there is no *church* free from the share of this sin; I believe there are no *ministers* of the Gospel free from their share of this national sin; and therefore the infliction of calamity is a common punishment laid upon all. We, then, would do well to consider our sins in this view,—how soon might the arm of commerce be paralyzed! how soon might even the prospect of the harvest, by one night of frost, be blighted! how soon might the pestilence that stalks in the noonday, visit every habitation in the land—how might it prevail over the whole land, as it did the land of Egypt in the night of the removal of the children of Israel! and how soon might we find the spirit of disunion pass through the length and breadth of the land, till fearful rebellion itself might be let loose, that regarded not sex, or age, or rank, or character!—all these calamities we ought directly to look at as judgments which God did inflict on Israel, as judgments he has often inflicted on even these lands, and judgments consequently that we by national repentance ought always endeavour to avert. The prophet speaks thus expressly in the book of Isaiah, xiii. 11, and tells us of God's way of dealing—"I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity;" and in Amos iv. 6—"And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. And also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest: and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it

rained not, withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city to drink water, but they were not satisfied; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew; when your gardens, and your vineyards, and your fig trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured them; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have sent amongst you the pestilence, after the manner of Egypt: your young men have I slain with the sword, and have taken away your horses; and I have made the stink of your camps to come up unto your nostrils; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning; yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord. Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

But it is the object of God, by bringing calamity on us, to make us think of him. "In my distress," says the Psalmist, "I called upon God, and he heard me." I cannot well tell how it comes to pass, that when we are in health, and when a prosperous world carries us along with it, we forget God; but when the world goes against us, and we are laid on beds of sickness, we are compelled to look to God. The reason, perhaps, is, that when all refuge fails man, when all the amusement of the world fails him, then he feels that he has no refuge for his soul, but in God, and he is compelled, like a retreating army, to throw himself back on the only strong hold where he can expect defence and security. Well, it is a great mercy when the Lord sends affliction, if it makes a nation think of God. Oh, that we were able to cast off the philosophic spirit of the world that looks on second causes, and were able to look on God as the inflictor of every form of calamity we endure, that so our souls might be led to think of him! When God lays calamity upon us, we are led to examine into our own sins; the moment man thinks of God, he is compelled to think of himself;—why? because he is God's reflected image; and when man discovers that he is thus like unto God, that he is, as it were, like the shadow of the Almighty, it is impossible, if he keep his eye fixed on God, but

that he will revert to the image in himself, and ask the reason, why am I *like* God, and yet so *unlike* him? He discovers a likeness to God that cannot be doubted, but also an unlikeness that cannot be denied; and when the Lord lays on us calamity, and brings this truth home to the heart, one of its first effects is to lead us to examine into all our sins, and particularly when we are suffering from the effect of our own sins.

There is not a portion of this land that is not suffering from one sin—the neglect of *the education of the people*. What is the great cause of the multiplied calamities of the land, but that the people have not been taught to know God? And just at the very time when the nation was beginning to awake to some sense of education, then a blighting form of education is presented, forced on the land, the tendency of which is to deliver the children of Ireland, bound hand and foot, into the power of their spiritual rulers, with an impenetrable barrier placed between them and God's eternal word. This is an infliction on the Protestant churches, for the neglect of many glorious and blessed opportunities they enjoyed of educating the people; it is the righteous judgment that God is inflicting on us because of our past neglect; not for the purpose of perpetuating evil, but to make us examine ourselves, and acknowledge our sin, and repent us of the evil, by turning to the living God, and doing the duty which hitherto we have neglected, with the zeal and energy we have never yet put forth.

In the same way, the sin of *Sabbath-breaking*, which threatens to overwhelm all the remnants of piety in the land, and to carry off the youth of our country, the hope of our age—what is that calamity but the judgment of God because of our past neglect? And in the same way, what is the *drunkenness* of our land, which is, we know, an overflowing fault, which threatens to overwhelm and bear down all the landmarks of morality—what is it but the judgment of God sent on our legislature, that has fattened and grown rich on the growing vices of the people? and, at the same time, the neglect of masters, and all ranks and conditions of men, to denounce that sin, and set their faces against it, in the power of the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? All these are the punish-

ments that God makes the sins of men, reacting on themselves, inflict on them.

This brings me to another point, with which I conclude, previous to leading you to the two great lessons to be derived from the subject; and that is, whenever God sends evil (calamity) on the land, he sends with it a voice, calling upon his own people to do all the good they can by the means of the evil he inflicts on them and others. Let me give you a striking example of this in our own land. How little thought of were the islands that surround our coast, containing a multitudinous population, living in gross darkness, even to the absolute worshipping of shapeless idols. What led to the knowledge of this? The calamity of past years, by which the inhabitants of these distant coasts were deprived of the means of food, from which there came across the land and waters, unto all the ends of the kingdom, the wail of a starving population crying for bread. The cry was not unanswered—it penetrated to the ears of generous sympathy, and opened the hand of the rich; but it brought to light the dark, and neglected, and heathenish condition of the people; and if only that effect was produced, it were enough to repay the kingdom for all the wealth it supplied. If it only established one missionary station in the Island of Achil, one light in a dreary and dark wilderness, it had been sufficient evidence of the great good that often out of evil arises, when the Lord, by the very calamity of the world, gives us a call, and an opportunity, and a specimen of the good that may be done, and the evil that may be removed.

Now, in the same way, let me apply the present case. There is a cry from all our artisans, at least from a very large number of them, from our hospitals, from our wandering poor, crying for bread, and what is all this? Is it merely a call to take a little of what we can spare and give to them? Is it a call to feed their bodies for a short period until the approaching and ripening harvest will have begun to supply these wants? Is it merely a call to aid the people until the present stagnant condition of the country will again resume its former career, and the channels of employment flow as abundant waters? No, if the call rest here, it has done nothing; it is an appeal to the heart of every Christian in the

land to consider, what is, in a great degree, the immediate cause of want. The spread of the irregularity of self-indulgence, the disposition to drunkenness, the want of civilization,—all these, far more than any present stagnation of trade, will be found to be the real and original causes of a large proportion of all the want under which our people labour. Where is the fault? Do we charge this merely on the artisans, on the thoughtless men and their families, who always, instead of living within their means, live beyond them? No, we charge it on the example of the rich and great, on the neglect of the spiritual education of the people. We charge it on their masters, who, instead of commencing the business of apprenticeship in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are accustomed to commence it by a libation to drunkenness, by an introduction to the vilest of crimes,—that which lowers man *below* the condition of the very beast; for the beast will drink till he is satisfied, and then cease, but the drunken man will drink till he has dethroned reason and enthroned the worst of his passions in their stead, and made himself as a creature unable to do aught, or, so long as he is able to do aught, only to perpetrate the deeds of a demon!

Now, let us just remember, how true this is, though men will not look to it,—suppose all those who were suffering from want of employment had used frugal principles, if they had made always their expenditure come within the range of their income:—suppose they had learned this for years, they would not now require the demand thus made on you, they would have abundant means within their own power. What is the reason these evils exist? They are to be charged on every one of us, on the habits which in the ordinary occasions of life we countenance and tolerate: and it becomes every one of us to remember, “shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it;” for the Lord has done it to call us all more to our duty, that by the inculcation of early education in the principles of piety, by discountenancing the various systems wherein our artisans are early initiated into intemperance and insubordination, we may make the sutler of evil a call to good.

The two reasons with which I conclude are, first, *the mercy of God in the*

infliction of evil. If God allowed us all to go on in prosperity, we would, in reality be of all men most miserable. Worldly prosperity, disjointed from God, never will lead any man to real enjoyment, not even to the enjoyment of this life, he will be disappointed in every thing; and surely, it will not lead him to the enjoyment of the life to come.

God is therefore merciful, when he causes calamity to awaken us from our sleep of forgetfulness; when he snatches us from this world's folly, when he drags us from our self-delusion and shows us our need of a Saviour, by the suffering of evil. The mercy of God in inflicting individual calamity is great; there are more men drawn to God from a sick bed than in the condition of health; thousands there are who have blessed God for the hour that laid them on beds of suffering, and consequently, separated between them and the sins in which they were indulging, and gave them time and inclination, and a heart to draw nigh to God.

We have no less reason to be thankful for the mercy of national calamities. I believe, the merchandize of this and every land is always running on to forget God; it forgets him in the energy of its employment—it has not time for God; it forgets him in calculating the amount of its profits, it forgets him in the calculation of its losses, and in every way is disposed to forget him, until calamity becomes so great, and its profits and its losses are equally put out of sight, and God, the inflictor of calamity, comes immediately into view. So long as men have their minds employed with losses and profit, so long as they are actuated by the hope of avoiding the one and attaining the other, so long they are continually in danger of forgetting God. God, therefore, from time to time, paralyzes the power of their commerce, strikes a panic to its mighty heart, dries up its numerous channels and sources by calamity, in order that the nation may turn to God.

But let me, in conclusion, direct you to the remedy for all evil. There is but one remedy for the evils of the land, *the Lord Jesus Christ*; there is but one remedy for our own sins:—here is the only remedy for all the evils we endure in our families, in our land. What will unite the disjointed counsels of the land,

but individuals uniting their souls to Christ? What will enable the land to return to its prosperity, but men who have learned to use the world without abusing it? And what will enable man to meet the pestilence, or death itself?—it is leaning on the arm of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me commend you, then, to examine the evils the land endures; let me commend you to Christ, the physician by whom alone these evils and sufferings can be alleviated and remedied. Let me call every one of you to him who is King of kings and Lord of lords; and oh! never trust to the prescriptions of men for remedying the evils of your own hearts and the evils of the world. There is but *one* physician, the Lord Jesus Christ, who “calleth not the righteous, but sinners to repentance,” and is calling

us by the rod of public infliction in various forms, and entreating us by his word and Spirit, “Turn ye, turn ye; why will you die, ye house of Israel?”

“Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?” God is now giving us a call to take his word, to take his character, to stand up for him, to endeavour to remedy the evil sin has brought into the world. God is giving us a call to be his agents, his stewards; let us be faithful in our stewardship. The time will soon come when, with all our bodily health, and strength, and property, “we shall be no longer stewards.” Let us contemplate the coming of that time—let us be faithful to him that hath called us to his stewardship.

THE OFFICES OF THE SPIRIT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE EPISCOPAL CHAPEL, LIMERICK,

BY THE REV. E. G. CARR, A.M.

(Rector of St. Lawrence, &c. &c.)

2 COR vi. part of 16th verse.

“I will dwell in them. and walk in them.”

IN our previous remarks on this passage,* we endeavoured to establish the fact of the Holy Spirit's indwelling, and the advantages and blessings necessarily connected with his permanent abiding in the hearts of God's people. We propose now to enlarge on these privileges resulting to the Christian from this, by taking a brief view of HIS OFFICES. And though we dare not venture to hope to unfold to their full extent the blessings of which an indwelling Spirit makes us partakers, yet we trust something may be done towards it. Could we condense the experience of the Church at large—could

we gather into one heart the full flowings of spiritual experience which have made glad the Church from the commencement of its erection unto the present time—still we should be unable fully to develop the amount of blessing connected with the gift of the Spirit. His present influences are but the embryo blessings, the seed which shall blossom in eternity. We must not, however, lead you to a false conclusion by seeming to disparage present blessings. Though hope commands us to look *forward*, yet gratitude desires that we should look *inward*, and not suffer the brightness of the future,

to dazzle into contempt the joy of the present. Once more let the love of God, as manifested in the Spirit's gift, be mentioned; let us again admire the condescension of him, who, though his centre is everywhere, and his circumference nowhere, yet circumscribes himself by the narrow confines of a heart of sin, and gathers into a point those untold and unintelligible energies which demand the homage and praise of a universe, but which the praise of a universe could not adequately unfold. He, whose throne is heaven, and earth his footstool—he who walks the airy vaults of heaven, and spans immensity in a step—he who created all things, for whom they are and were created, and whom all things cannot contain—he whose essence could pervade immensity multiplied by itself—he, even he, has stooped down to dwell within the contracted confines of human hearts! Well might we say, "How can these things be?" if the word of God had not assured us of their truth, and did not our own happy experience testify to the same. It is the holy, happy portion of the children of God to realize this experience—"Such honour have all his saints." We must not anticipate what will necessarily come before us as we proceed; nor can we proceed without seeking a new favour at his hands, whose praise we now would speak, that God the Spirit may acknowledge, direct, and bless this effort for his glory.

1. We view the Spirit, first, as fulfilling the office of WITNESS. He witnesses for God, through Christ. We know that the perfections of Jehovah have been delineated in the Saviour. That he is the container of the Father's fulness, the Father's glory, and the express image of his person. The portraiture of Deity has not only been sketched in outline, but every feature accurately described in the Saviour: he, and he alone, "who was in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him." The loveliness of love, the rigidity of justice, the inviolability of truth, and the pitifulness of mercy, find each their image reflected in the Saviour. To this the Spirit testifies; he reveals the Son as the Son reveals the Father; and, as without the Son there could be no saving knowledge of the Father, so without the Spirit there can be no vital knowledge of the Son.

The person of Christ is glorious—too

glorious for angels to behold with unveiled faces (Isa vi); it contains the heights and depths of majesty, which it will be the blessedness of the redeemed gradually to explore. But these glories are presented in darkness, where the Spirit beams not. The Spirit is the revealer of the Son; he must dispel the darkness which man's benighted soul throws up between him and Jehovah, ere the glory of God, in the face of Jesus, is discernible. It is not enough that we be placed in the midst of beautiful landscapes, to admire their scenery:—vision, and the brightness of day, must cheer the scene, or its beauties are lost; and does not experience establish the correctness of the illustration? Do we not walk amidst the brightest beauties of the character of God—his mercy, truth, and holiness—justice, love, and pity—each successively presented by the messengers of God, his word, his ordinances, his providences; and yet, how many—how few, we should rather say—are arrested by the sight? They see "no comeliness in the Saviour, that they should desire him." And why is this? They walk through in darkness and in blindness; in other words, they want the light and teaching of God's Spirit. The Spirit testifies then to Christ as to *his death and resurrection*. The first operation of the Spirit is to lead the sinner to the cross. Thither he must go, if he would experience the joy of pardon; and this is the foundation of his peace, in time and for eternity; here his sins, though as scarlet, are made white as snow—yea, cancelled from the register of heaven, as though they had not been. To the efficacy of this blood the Spirit testifies. Nor is this testimony but once given; he *stands* by the fountain at the cross, and bears fresh testimony to the value and power of the Saviour's blood at every fresh outbreak of sin's fountain. Sin *dwells* in the believer, and it were not, therefore, enough for his peace that the Spirit came with an occasional testimony; sin, the enemy to man's peace, *abides*, and the counteracting influence must abide, to give permanent enjoyment. Hence, we should be constrained to infer the necessity of the Spirit's indwelling, even were it not revealed. We could not, upon any other supposition, expect that sin should not have dominion over the believer. We have, then, the abiding testimony of the Spirit to the power of

the blood of Calvary. We have not to wait for the return of a distant friend to administer consolation; he is *with us—in us*. True, his testimony is sometimes silenced—his voice, though loud, is not heard. But this cannot continue. His agency is not that of a subordinate being; he it is who moved of old upon the face of the waters to tranquillize them. The Spirit of the Lord hath garnished the heavens, and will he be resisted effectually by the carnal heart of man? This were to acknowledge the creature stronger than the Creator. We have not, then, merely an abiding, but an Almighty witness. Angels, devils, and men would conspire in vain to contradict him. Sooner may a man be persuaded that he is but a phantasm, and led to doubt his existence, than the Christian, with such evidence, be induced to doubt the Spirit's power. True it is, however, he does doubt; true, that the testimony is not always heard effectually; true, that the trembling believer is left to mourn at the cross, when he should drink in consolation from beholding it. But this supplies no proof of the insufficiency of the evidence, but only of the Spirit's sovereignty. He is God; and shall God, in his actings, be confined within the limits specified by the creature? He is love; and shall we refuse to submit to his own way of dealing with us? Sovereign love devised, carries on, and will accomplish, all the purposes of grace. Nor are we to limit this love, or the manner of its manifestations, to one person of Deity and not another. The principle which pervades the government of God is carried out by each; the actings of each are but the manifestations of one mind, and that mind will not have been fully developed whilst any portion of the office assigned to each shall remain unfulfilled. Should the Spirit, then, leave us for a season beneath the cross, and suffer the cloud which our sins have raised to remain unbroken; let us, in such a case, remember, that he is *Sovereign*, and *Sovereign Love*—that he acts wisely—that he will not allow the cross to remain longer out of view than is absolutely necessary to our future and general peace—that in denying us, he means to teach us the necessity of waiting upon him—and that, as soon as we have learned that it is “not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit,” that we are to have

peace, he will cause the cloud to retire into the back ground, that it may add, by contrast, to the consolations arising from a cloudless view of Calvary.

There is another and a different sphere in which the Spirit acts as a witness for God—*he witnesses for God in the world, through the medium of his church*. The Church, like the temple of old, contains the holy fire burning perpetually, and is required to let her light so shine before men, that they may see her good works, and glorify God. She stands not merely a monument of mercy, but likewise of grace, a model of God's character, the reflector of heaven's light upon the world's darkness. It is a great evil in the Church that this has been too much lost sight of. In general it is thought enough to reach the cross, and find from thence assurance of safety; as if the work of redemption only regarded the creature, and excluded the Creator from his praise—as if the sons and daughters of the King of Glory had no higher object after which to aspire than *safety*. Safety of life is not a princely object—the beggar and the king stand upon an equal footing here; and yet the professed sons and daughters of Jehovah will be satisfied without the dignity of their calling; the name of children and heirs is greedily pursued, whilst the state and wealth of the high calling are neglected. Sons of God! your heavenly Father's honour is in your hand; your calling is a high calling—dignity such as angels cannot boast, privileges which angels desire to participate, are your portion. Oh, let your walk and conversation be consistent with the dignity of your calling. Put on the royal apparel provided by God himself. When you go forth through this lower world, act as heirs of a better; keep your eyes full fixed on your inheritance, and let the air of Canaan, inspired by God's Spirit, be diffused around you. Remember the high commission which you hold—*witnesses for God*. You must witness for God's *truth*, and this is no easy task. It is everywhere confronted; his promises and his threats alike are disregarded and despised. Believer, it is yours to bear witness to them; you must *witness for the truth of the promises*, by enjoying them; you must witness for their *fulness* by enjoying them *always*; you must prove that the tree from which you gather

the fruit of life, possesses twelve kinds—an unending variety suited to your need as it arises. The Spirit of God in you will thus convince the world. You must likewise testify to the threats of God by avoiding them. No reckless indifference will be suffered to make you outstep the bounds of steady obedience; you will prove, by your walk, that sin and sorrow are now, as they ever were, and ever will be, inseparably connected; and that, whilst promises strew your path with blessing, that God's threats are made to guard it. The fiery sword of punishment is placed on either side the tree of life, that the saints of God should dwell beneath its shade, and enjoy, without departing from it, those precious fruits which cluster upon it for their use.

The Spirit testifies through the words of his people. That most powerful agent for good or evil, the tongue, is to be occupied in his service; it is to rebuke, to encourage, to invite, to entreat; for this is the work of the Spirit. God's witnesses are not to be ashamed to testify for him: Jesus ever testifies for them before the hosts of heaven, and shall they not testify for him before men?

We are not however, to confine our testimony to words—our testimony must be seen, as well as heard—it is the testimony of action. The fire which burns with least noise, burns with most heat—the crackling thorn is soon consumed—the water which runs most smoothly, runs most deeply—and thus the Christian. He does not *refuse* to be heard, but he does not *seek* to be heard. If God's providence compel to speak, he refuses not to speak boldly in the name of Jesus; but when the voice of Providence is not distinct, he solves the doubt in favour of silence. If the Spirit of God, indeed, dwell in us, we shall find no occasion for Jehu's invitation, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord." It will, it must be seen, if it is there; but it is possible, nay, it is of common occurrence, that it may be heard of where it cannot be seen. One feature in the Spirit's testimony to Jesus, is well worthy our imitation. He never testifies of *himself*. It is the testimony of humility which the Spirit approves and honours. Let us beware that we make not the things of God a means by which to attract attention to ourselves, and thus exalt ourselves when

we profess to honour God. That testimony is most spiritual which places God so fully before us, that we forget ourselves, and lead others to forget us.

We cannot avoid drawing a practical inference from all this. How unspeakably helpless must we be to need the Almighty energies of God's Spirit to qualify us for his service! How blind, to require an Almighty agency to open the eyes of our understandings to see the glory and beauty of Jesus! Let those who contend for the sufficiency of natural ability reflect on this, that so difficult of accomplishment is salvation, that God must undertake it; and so difficult of perception, that God (the Spirit) must reveal it; and so perverse even the renewed man, so prone to follow the leadings of his carnal mind, that God the Spirit must strengthen him for the work of testifying for God.

II. We pass on now to another office of the Spirit, that one in which the Saviour speaks most of him—THE COMFORTER. All his other offices look to this—it is the focus (so to speak) to which the various rays of his other offices converge. The Comforter! Oh what a thought for the sin-stricken, sorrowing, doubting, fainting Spirit—the Comforter! And God Himself the Comforter! and this full fountain of consolation dwelling within! Surely there is peace, there is happiness in the Christian's portion—"blessed, thrice blessed are they that are in such a case, blessed are they whose God is the Lord." It is almost needless to remark that, we need such a Comforter. That God has provided such, is quite sufficient to prove our need of him—for God does nothing in vain—but we need not the aid of abstract truth, to prove that we need an Almighty, indwelling Comforter. We are born sons and daughters of sorrow. Man's heart, as it is a fountain of vileness—is a fountain of woe—he is "born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." And does he not need a comforter? whilst the stream of corruption, which issues from the dark fountain of nature, is flowing on, and rising as it goes, and the world's tribute thrown in—and the devil's energies in constant exercise to swell the tide of corruption, and all this flooding the soul, and drowning the struggling conscience—does not this son of sorrow, this heir of corruption need a Comforter? And is

there not rich provision made for his need? Be the source of sorrow what it may—whether from without or within—whether the rough hand of an adverse providence oppresses him; or whether he groans beneath the uprisings of natural corruption, still he has a Comforter. Or to sum up the full amount of his sorrows in a word—*Is he an orphan?* (or comfortless;) then the promise is to him, “I will not leave you *orphans*, I will send the Comforter.” Thus we have the Spirit of adoption contained in the promise of the Comforter—the orphan Church adopted into the family of God through the Spirit. But this hereafter—we are now pressed for an answer to the question, how does the Spirit comfort? Too great importance cannot be attached to the question. To have false comfort, is, in fact to have none: we are not left to determine the question by probabilities—we are not permitted even to speculate here—it is a question of life and death: why should we? the Scripture tells us—“he will take of mine, and show it unto you.” It is by revealing Jesus—in his obedience to the Father, by suffering and doing—by revealing the source of comfort which flowed out in the experience of Jesus, and cheered him on in his career of conflict and of love. It is by revealing to us what Jesus was, and making us like him, that the Spirit comforts. And here observe—the Spirit could not be given till Jesus was glorified, why? because he was not purchased. This perhaps may enter into the difficulties which suspended this gift of the Father: but may we not infer, that He could not come till Jesus had finished his work—had fulfilled his experience, because this work and experience was to form the subject of the Spirit’s teaching to the Church. The fulness of the Spirit was in Christ—he advanced with Jesus from infancy to manhood, and from the trials of the one, to the full experience of the other: and in Jesus experienced all the trials of the Church, as well as the means of overcoming them. He could not therefore have come till Jesus had finished his course, because it was the things of Jesus—the man Jesus—his experience in trial—temptation—death; that he was to take and show unto the believer.

What we need to be informed then, and that is the Spirit’s work, is simply, whence arose the joy of Christ? To

this we reply—in doing his Father’s will, “my meat is to do the will of him that sent me”—we are prepared for the objection here, that our obedience is imperfect—that of Christ was perfect—and therefore we cannot have the same cause of joy—the same in kind assuredly, though not *equal* in degree. Our joy resembles his, though not so full—yes, we are assimilated to Jesus by the Spirit in all things, “he that is joined to the Lord *is one Spirit*,” and how can one Spirit operate differently on Christ and his people? impossible—it is objected yet, there may be obedience without true knowledge. True obedience there cannot be; obedience is a fruit which grows alone upon the tree of knowledge, the clusters which are the fruit of ignorance like the grapes of Sodom, may appear fair outside, and are but dust within—the comfort of the Spirit has been exclusively referred to his testimony to our spirit’s, that we are sons of God without reference to our walk, in other words that the Spirit of order and holiness, testifies to the sonship of those whose conversation makes their calling at least doubtful. We deny not the privilege of sonship to those who may walk disorderly—but the *enjoyment* of this privilege we do deny—and be it remembered that we are now speaking of the Spirit as a *Comforter*. The Spirit’s work in redemption bears analogy to his office in creation: he was then a Spirit of order—he moved over the shapeless face of chaos, and digested and divided its elements—and such is his office in the new creation, he moves over the confused mass of mental chaos, and restores harmony and beauty to the soul’s affections—and thus testifies to its adoption. Holiness is beauty of order, and the Spirit of holiness walks not amidst the chaos, approving, and commending. When the elements of order contained in the name of Jesus are laid in the heart, he begins to testify; and as this name gathers all the affections of the soul around it, his testimony brightens. It is not intended by this, to convey the idea that we should rejoice either in the warmth of our love, or extent of our obedience; the Spirit will ever testify to the shortness of both. All that is intended is this, we may be children of God without much comfort from our position as such, perhaps without any—but we cannot have the comfort which should

ever be connected with this privilege, without love to Jesus. If then we would enjoy more of the comfort of God's Spirit, let us remember it is, "the comfort of love"—in seeking to love Jesus more, we are seeking more comfort for our souls—increasing conformity to the image of Jesus, will ever bring with it increase of comfort; as we ripen under the sun of righteousness, we shall enjoy his brightness, till the time comes when full ripe for glory, we shall see him in a cloudless sky and enjoy his presence for ever.

From what has been stated, it is easy to infer that we are not to expect comfort irrespective of the word. The providence—word—and Spirit of God all agree, the work of the Spirit is to develop the two former—he is the faithful interpreter of God's word, and of his providences—all under his teaching are made to harmonize—and that for the believer's joy.

III. These thoughts conduct us, naturally, to another office—he is likewise the promised **GUIDE OF THE CHURCH**. We have said something of the word and providences of God, as ministering to the believer's comfort; they minister also to his guidance, under the teaching of the Spirit. The brightest promises of the word cheer not, when the Spirit's voice is absent. Diamonds cannot sparkle without the sun, the plainest way-marks are hidden by darkness; and thus in the things of God's kingdom. The Spirit of God is a *sure guide*; the Saviour's promise is, that he shall lead his people into all truth. He will guide in the *doctrines of Christianity, and in its duties*. And whence comes the conflict, it may be asked, which agitates the Church on both subjects? Why is it that, if all are under the teaching of one Spirit, all are not yet agreed as to the doctrines of the Bible? The reply is simple. *All are agreed*—at least essentially agreed. There can be no radical difference amongst the children of God, otherwise they cease to be children. As well deny to our fellow-men the essentials of humanity, because of the diversity of their features or the difference in their powers, mental or bodily, as deny the guidance of God's Spirit to those who are in some things disagreed. In the essentials themselves there may be a difference in *degree*, as in

the natural powers there may be, without destroying the claim to spiritual existence. When we speak of essentials, we mean, of course, in reference to salvation. Much loss may be endured otherwise; enjoyment may be lessened, and privilege shortened; but life is still preserved. Thus the Spirit does surely guide; however separated by opinions the different members of Christ may be, all are led by the same Spirit in the way of life; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Many persons may travel together, and disagree about every thing except the way they travel; they all consent about the city to which the road will lead them, and agree that there is none other which will lead them thither; so the travellers to Zion, however they may differ in other things, are all assured of this, that "Jesus is the way, the truth, and life," and none can come to Zion, save by him.

In the *duties of Christianity* the Spirit guides his people. This is a field too diversified to traverse; we can only remark, in general, that in all the variety of cases which may arise in our experience, we have a sure guide in the Spirit of God.

When we depart from the course which he approves, he will be grieved; and when we adhere to it, he will bear us sweet testimony that he is pleased; and this is what constitutes the believer's joy. In general, we may remark, that to ascertain what is pleasing or not to God's Spirit, we may ask whether it is calculated to reflect glory on Jesus; for this, as before observed, is his special work. He will surely guide us in our *dangers*, innumerable though they be, or what their course. Come they from within, or from without, or both—should earth and hell combine to pour their legions together, God the Spirit will guide his people safely through them. We cannot estimate duly the value of the Spirit's guidance, because we know not the number or power of our spiritual adversaries. We may best conceive both, by the contemplation of the fact, that no other than God himself can bear us safely through. Could we but enter upon the confines of the unseen world, and see but a portion of our dangers arising from thence, we should wonder at the power which sustained and preserved us; but without such a view we cannot know our blessedness in having

such a guide. And if the world of spirits be opened to view at the great consummation, as it is reasonable to expect it will, then our hearts will swell with rapture, and our tongues will tell out the long, long roll of mercies before unknown; our enlarged energies and untiring powers will then travel through a newly opened kingdom of mercy, and gather from hence an endless accession to former subjects of praise. We shall then best know the power of our guide, when, reviewing our dangers passed, we are enabled to add to our enemies, the hitherto unseen powers of darkness. But will the Spirit guide us safely through? Ask the glorious company of the apostles, the noble army of martyrs: they have advanced to their crowns and thrones under his guidance, and never (they will tell you) did he fail them. They were men of like passions as ourselves, who now encompass us as a cloud of witnesses; and they certify that none can fall short of the heavenly inheritance who are led by the Spirit of God.

Nor can we doubt that he is a *constant* guide. The promise is, that he shall abide for ever with his people—"Lo, I am with you always;" and, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The Spirit will not return without the Church. The Church is his dwelling-place—"I will dwell in them." It is the Spirit's home; and though he is grieved by the pollutions of his temple, he is never grieved away. True to his purpose, he conflicts with sin, and binds the strong man, and holds possession. Who amongst the sons of God has ever found the Spirit inconstant? With the other attributes of God, he possesses his faithfulness; and never, till the last son is adopted into the family above, will the Spirit's work be done. Happy to have such a guide. Who shall now impede our progress Canaanwards? Shall men? The Spirit has met their assaults, and overcome them, in the person of Jesus.—Or devils? Their legions have been scattered before him. Or death? It has yielded.—He who led Jesus to the conflict (Matt. iv. 1), and sustained him, will guide all the scattered members of his body, till they are united with their risen Head in glory.

IV. Once more, the Spirit's offices include that of *SANCTIFIER*—the most important, perhaps, and that to which all the others tend. To separate from earth, and hell, and self, is the work of the Spirit, and to set apart for God. For this purpose he testifies, comforts, quickens, guides; and we can ascertain the character of all the others, we can know whether the testimony we have received is one from heaven, whether our consolation flow from the fountain above, or whether our guide is indeed leading us to Canaan, by ascertaining whether we are under his sanctifying influence. It is the office least acceptable, and therefore most necessary to be fully ascertained as to its influence upon us. It is almost natural to seek a testimony of God's concern for us—natural to seek comfort, if not to seek guidance; but to be sanctified, set apart for the praise of God, is not natural, but heavenly. But can the gross materials of the sinful mind and body be sanctified? The word replies by a question—"Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost: as God has said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them?" Not that the old man is ever changed: he is, however, *subdued*—his powers are pressed into God's service; and though they never yield a willing obedience, yet they must obey. Dominant before, they only wrought in Satan's service; subject now, though unwilling, they are occupied for Christ. The strong man armed kept his palace safely, till a stronger came upon him and despoiled him; and the machinery of mental and bodily energy which hitherto moved, subject to his will, is now preparing, under the Spirit's controul, for the higher work of heavenly service.

May it be ours to experience more and more every day the blessedness of possessing the Spirit of God in his various offices, till, fitted by his influence for our places in the temple above, and raised from a temporal, to an eternal habitation of God, we shall experience in its future and untold fulness, the blessedness of the promise—"I will dwell in them and walk in them."

LINES

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE REV. DR. LLOYD,

PROVOST OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

'Tis sad to muse on graves just tenanted—
To see the form so lately animate,
And rife with spirit, intellect and soul,
Stript of its living principle, and laid
Voiceless and soulless in the silent tomb.
And yet, from out the tomb—scarce clos'd
on death,

To raise in fancy, and call back again
To mimic life its new inhabitant,
Is such a glorious privilege of thought,
So rich a source of wisdom to the soul,
That though men fall like autumn leaves
around,
Whilst few regard it—save to note their
fall,
And others soon supply the blank they
leave

And shortly fill their places,—we should not
In listless apathy avert our thought
From such a contemplation, but look on
With meditative eye on each sad proof
Of frail mortality, and so make each
A monitor to whisper—“*thou shalt die.*”

How lately hath the admonition spoke
In sad reality to many a heart!
For *one* hath left us whom a city mourns,
One who hath liv'd to benefit mankind,
Whom virtue dignified, whom wisdom
lov'd,

And science honor'd: whose preceptive
mind
Was never weary in the cause of truth;
Whose zeal, untiring, never knew repose,
Giving his name a memory, that tho'
Entomb'd—he still shall be illustrious.

WE MOURN THE PARENT;—for no father's
care
Dispens'd more kindness, or secur'd from
all

More grateful homage; while the placid
smile,

And gentle and affectionate reproof
Won and secured from all—obedience.

WE MOURN THE FRIEND;—the warm, the
faithful friend,

With heart as noble as his hand was free,
Who knew no foes save ignorance and vice.
WE MOURN THE MAN,—the annals of whose
life

Like its concluding act,* may thus be writ—
“*The true philanthropist.*” But oh! again,
WE MOURN THE CHRISTIAN;—think you
that his praise

Lay in the record of his active life,
His bright career of science, or his course
Of humbler but emboding usefulness,
Seen in the various charities of life—
His deeds of mercy and benevolence?—
No—but his sense of utter worthlessness

Before a Holy God; and humble trust
In the great sacrifice once made
For a lost world. And shall we mourn for
him?

Oh, raise the veil that bounds the world
of sense,—

Behold the realms of light—the throne
itself—

The King—and they that circle him;—and
see,

Amid the hosts of cherubim that chant
The heav'nly psalm, one new-*ransom'd*
soul,

Freed from his mortal bonds, releas'd from
earth,

Redeem'd and glorified—and say, is this—
This change of mortal for immortal life,
A change that we should *mourn*? Oh! if
the mind

Could estimate the change from earth to
heav'n,

Could scan the glories of eternity,
And count its blessedness,—how should
the thought

Dry ev'ry tear, and cause us to *rejoice!*

Still *he hath left us*—and the blank is sad,
And earthly tears will flow for earthly loss;
And death must have its mourners; the
fresh grave

Its tribute; life its sad remembrances;
And man his sorrows—such is human life,
And such hath He ordain'd who wills it all.

Let, then, the thought of our departed sire
Instruct and profit us. He only leads
Where we must follow—each man's time is
fix'd

By One who changeth not, and of that time
No form'd intelligence hath cognizance.

We live *this hour*—the *next* are with the
dead;

And if the warning voice of Him that
speaks

In His mysterious providence to man,
Wake not his slumb'ring soul, ere yet that
hour

Hath past for ever,—better that to him
No life had been imparted, than a life
That must be endless misery. But oh!
The dead can teach; and from the grave
may come

A voice of mercy,—may we hear that voice;
That when the Shepherd comes to count
his flock

We may discern the voice, and follow Him
To the green pastures of his Father's land—
The happy Salem, where the voice of praise
From angels' lips, around the throne of God,
Shall echo back the song of the redeem'd—
“*Salvation to our God and to the Lamb!*”

R. D.

* The last act of the late Provost, immediately before his decease, was—rendering his vote on behalf of a deaf and dumb child.

THE NEW IRISH PULPIT,

OR

GOSPEL PREACHER.

“ We preach Christ crucified—

“ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”—1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

No. XLVI.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1837.

PRICE 3d.

REV. J. C. LLOYD.

REV. W. MATURIN.

PREPARATION FOR JUDGMENT.

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE CHAPEL OF THE MOLYNEAUX ASYLUM, DUBLIN,

BY THE REV. J. C. LLOYD, A. M.

Chaplain.

ROMANS XIV. 10, 11, 12.

“ For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written,—As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

THE Apostle is pressing upon the members of the then Church of Rome the necessity and duty of extending each to each a full liberty of conscience. He argues for the exercise of a spirit of kindness and mutual allowance between believers in minor matters specially. There were points on which it were scarcely possible and certainly unnecessary that all should think and act alike. He deprecates then, any attempt on the part of one set of professing Christians denouncing others, because of a partial difference of ideas. If there be agreement on the essentials, it need not be demanded in circumstantial, at least none have a right to denounce others upon that score. If there be unity there needs not to be uniformity. Does there not seem almost to be somewhat prophetic in the spirit and tone of this whole chapter, addressed as it was to the members of the Church in that city,

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seated on the seven hills, whose bishops should, ere some few centuries had revolved, assume to themselves the title of vice-God, and the thunder of whose anathemas was to be heard throughout all Christendom? I know not whether any of you are acquainted with the form of excommunication used by the Romish church, if not, I can inform you that it is terrific. Language is exhausted by the variety and number of the curses which are poured out upon the head of the offender, who may determinately resist the churches will on any point. What an extraordinary echo to those malignant execrations would be awakened by some words in this original epistle addressed by an inspired apostle to this church. When all the vials of priestly wrath had been emptied, and the transgressor had been cursed in all the various relations of life, in every occupation in which he

C C

might be engaged, in every part and member of his bodily frame, and his whole soul and spirit consigned to everlasting destruction, (for so runs the form) how appositely and awfully might those words be uttered in reply which you find in the place immediately preceding my text—"But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother?"

Omitting for the present however, to pursue any farther such reflections, let me remark to you, that the apostle in order to the enforcing his arguments for the exercise of toleration from Christian to Christian, presses on them the recollection that a day of final judgment awaits all—"We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." He who is so ready now at pronouncing the condemnation of others shall himself as well as they undergo the scrutiny of eternal wisdom and power. Such a consideration, carefully maintained, will have a vast effect in moderating our tempers and conduct towards each other, and turn our solicitude rather into that proper and legitimate channel as to thinking how *our* conduct shall appear on the great day of future final trial. And such a day unquestionably awaits the whole world. This is not a matter of mere probability suggested as it is indeed by reason and enforced by conscience, no, it stands on a more sure foundation—the word and oath of the Almighty God. He speaking by the mouth of his holy prophet of old hath declared, "As I live, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." This announcement, pregnant as it is with all that is quickening, humbling, and solemnizing, forms part and parcel of that holy scripture, every tittle of which must be fulfilled. "It is written" says St. Paul, it must be, "*so then*," and may the thought teach you moderation towards others and carefulness about yourselves, "*so then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*"

There seems at the first glance a great

simplicity about the apostle's statement on a point so momentous. In this very simplicity however consists its strength. "It is written," "*so then*," here is the whole of the argument. But after all, this is the true way of putting the matter.

Had St. Paul gone merely upon the reasonableness of the thing, how consonant to all the just expectations of mankind it was that there should be a day in which we should stand before a judgment seat above; he could have said a vast deal indeed, still there would have been room for cavil and rejoinder, some show of opposition might be made, and under cover of that, escape might be made from the cogency of an unanswerable conviction. But basing his statement upon the ground of a divine revelation, his appeal to conscience admits of no shifting or evasion, at least with persons like those to whom he wrote, who admit the truth and authority of scripture. And herein consists the grand difference between philosophising and preaching. The *philosopher* addresses his audience as one who in common with them is *in search of truth*; the preacher, as one *who is possessed of it*. In this relation I stand to you at present, my friends, and I rejoice to think that I do. I am most anxious to call your attention to the subject which above all others must demand your first regards. In so doing, how important is it that I come furnished with that authority which the word of God imparts. I do protest to you from my very heart and soul that there is not a syllable I speak but what I wish it might commend itself to your most profound attention. I shall endeavour not to be tedious, and may I not add without the slightest imputation of vanity, that I cannot be dull; for the topic on which I would address you is intrinsically so momentous, so calculated to awaken interest, as to give to the most rudely gifted lips which ever spoke upon it a temporary eloquence. Let me add, and it is no unimportant consideration, that every one of us individually are alike and equally concerned. Not a soul under this roof this moment, but what

shall abide that awful ordeal of heaven's scrutiny. May the great God write it upon our hearts now if never before, that "*we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ!*"

"Stand before the judgment seat of Christ!" who can repeat to himself the words in the sobriety of belief, and not feel as though he heard the knell of this world ringing out!—for certainly if there be one characteristic more than another stamped broadly upon the ordinary courses of human action, it is that of an utter disregard concerning an after reckoning with the great God. It is impossible to mingle with society in the general and not to feel this of it, to say no worse, that its tendencies are altogether "of the earth, earthy." Its highest joys, its fairest anticipations, its most profound speculations are *of and from and for* this world. You could never imagine, to look at the actors upon this stage of life, that there was, when this brief drama was enacted, the grand ulterior concerns of a boundless eternity awaiting them—and yet "we shall all stand before the judgment seat Christ."

Our marts of business and our halls of science, our haunts of traffic or of pleasure, are crowded by beings, every one of whom is destined to an immortality of glory or of despair. Look at those who are active, or at those who loiter along life's road, and you see them alike passing on to trial and to judgment, and alike, in most instances, unprepared and unconcerned. How often have I felt this, when, from some of the green eminences which skirt this city, I have looked upon it as it reposed in the distance, with the sulphurous canopy of its own smoke settling down upon its domes, and steeples, and factory roofs, and shutting out the clearness of the overarching skies—what a type, have I said, is this of the state of those who throng those busy streets, whose hum now reaches not my ear! Thousands and tens of thousands are there, over whose heads impend the abiding arbitrations of the Holy One and the Just, but they regard

it not! Through the dim mists which their own artificial and unwholesome state of existence condenses round them, they see little or nothing of that which truly should constitute the business of life.

There are temples upon temples to the god of this world, from the proud and pillared massiveness of the nation's treasure-house, down to the base and bare unseemliness of the drinking-house and the brothel; and, withal, Christ died for those who under those roofs neglect him and despise him; and, withal, *he cometh, he cometh to judge the earth.* Alas! alas! for the unprepared ones.

As I stated before, however, and with perfect truth, that my anxiety was for you; let me not lose sight of your particular circumstances under those ordinary and general views of men in the aggregate. The apostle says, "We shall all stand before the judgment:" let us apply this as it was intended to be applied, to our own cases individually and personally. "We shall *all* be judged." How are we, all and each of us, prepared for it? and what, in fact, constitutes a preparation for it? The phraseology of the text is full of meaning here.—"We shall stand before the judgment-seat of Christ;" that is to say, that to us the standard of admeasurement shall be the Gospel standard—the rule of Christianity. All those quibblings and perversions "of science, falsely so called," by which men would perplex the holy truth, in order to their indulgence in unholy error—all false glossings and questionings about good and bad, right and wrong, are at once and peremptorily silenced by the fact, that God has spoken to us by his Son, and has displayed before us the distinct statements of a Gospel dispensation. If we wish to know what is God's estimate of human nature, we find the answer in the coming of Christ. He died for all; and "we thus judge"—says the apostle Paul—"we thus judge, that *if he died for all, then were all dead;*" a conclusion, indeed, from which there is no escaping. Men may amuse themselves with speculating about the nature and extent of

human sinfulness, what it may be, to what degree it may extend, or whether it exists at all; but the flimsy frost-work of such argumentation melts away at once before the sunbeam of revealed truth, as it streams from the cross of Jesus. *He died for us*—here is a fact—and by that death evidenced the utter incapacity of human kind to meet the scrutiny of the All-holy and All-wise. The mission of such an one as Christ, evinces an urgency in our case, a bankruptcy in our spiritual resources: it is intelligible on no other principle than that we were lost and ruined, “*earnal, sold under sin,*” the children of a perfect disobedience, and by consequence, of a just and necessary wrath. They who are to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, are sinners, either redeemed by grace, which is through faith in Jesus, or continuing exposed to the actings of that wrath of God, which, as the Scripture tells, abideth upon all who remain unbelieving and impenitent. The very character and offices of Him who shall sit upon that throne, argue, and demonstrate, the impossibility of escape to those who neglect his great salvation. Now, my dear friends, has this truth, in all its length, and breadth, and depth, and fulness, entered into your minds? Have you felt the awful and the dangerous circumstances which involve you, born as you are in sin, and shapen in iniquity? Have you apprehended what salvation implies, both as concerns him who gives and him who takes it? And, having heard the word of life, the Gospel of this very Jesus, the message which says, “*Repent and believe, and your sins shall be forgiven you,*” have you with your whole hearts cast yourselves upon the abounding mercies of the God of all compassion and long-suffering, and made haste and tarried not, but fled, with the combined stimulants of love and fear urging you, fled unto that city of refuge, opened for you in the death and merits and intercession of your crucified Emmanuel? It is not merely before the throne and judgment of God that you must appear,

awful enough though that might be, and enough to make the stoutest heart quail under the contemplation—you must, indeed, give account of yourselves unto God—to him, “*UNTO WHOM ALL HEARTS BE OPEN, AND FROM WHOM NO SECRETS ARE HID;*” you must render an account of all you ever thought, or did, or said—but you must render this account to him who for your sakes became man as well as God—who for you “*made himself of no account, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross;*” you must render account not only about that righteousness of *your own*, which you cannot have because of your sinfulness, and without which you cannot see heaven, but also about that *righteousness of God’s providing*, which you might have had, but perhaps would not—the righteousness which is by faith of Christ. How shall ye answer it at the bar of Jesus, any of you who have disregarded his mighty expenditure of love, “*counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing,*” treating it with less regard than the petty details of your every-day business or pleasure, and have “*trodden under foot the Son of God,*” have dealt as contemptuously with his religion, and suffered it to have as little practical influence upon your lives, as though he were the absolute impostor which the blaspheming Jewish nation pronounced him to be, and dealt with him as such? My dear friends, there is no firmer truth than this, that great mercies involve great responsibilities; but where shall this ever be more profoundly exemplified than before the judgment-seat of Christ? I put this to you, and I pray God that you may feel this as you ought to feel it. Think not it is a light matter to hear the Gospel: he to whom it proves not “*the savour of life unto life,*” must of necessity find it “*the savour of death unto death.*” Judge, then, yourselves, brethren, that ye be not judged of the Lord; search narrowly, and not after the manner of dissemblers, into your own hearts; examine whether indeed ye be “*followers of those who through faith and*

patience shall inherit the promises ;” or whether ye be not of that unhappy number who draw back unto perdition, at least who believe not to the saving of the soul, and in whom the Lord can find no pleasure. The text tells us, that we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ ; shall it be before the judgment-seat of a Christ received, or of a Christ rejected ? *This is the point.* By which rejecting of Christ I mean not necessarily any open villifying of him, but merely that continuing in our present state, unchanged, unreformed to the image of Jesus, that secret preferring of the things of time and sense, that unwillingness to pluck out the right eye and cut off the right hand, and to enter into life halt and maimed, the want of a real, heartfelt, sincere devotedness to the Saviour inclining to any sacrifice for his sake, and which finds his yoke easy and his burden light. Upon your real state, as concerns those points, rests the entire issue of the question whether your standing before the throne of the Redeemer shall prove a ground of joy or a cause of sorrow. If you have, any of you, indeed embraced the faith of Christ, (and I am well persuaded many of you have), oh, how precious to you should be the thought, that before a redeeming God it is you shall ultimately stand—he of whom you are “bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh”—he who has “loved you with an everlasting love”—and who, knowing your frame, and remembering that you are but dust, shall ever make his grace sufficient for you—he it is who shall look upon you from that place of dignity ; nor need you fear to look upon him, even there, vested as he shall be with the apparellings of eternal power and greatness, having “righteousness the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins ;” for all that righteousness, and all that faithfulness, are for, and not against those who believe. By *men* here—it may be even by *fellow-believers*—ye may be harshly judged, by Christ never. He is the Prince of Peace here unto you, and ye shall find

him never more so than in that great day. Happy, happy believers ! ye shall stand before the judgment of none other than Christ.

And if there be here, as I know well there are, those who set no store by those things, who think that any thing or every thing is better deserving their regards than the love of God manifested in Christ Jesus, and who, whatever they may affect to say or think about the being of a God, manifestly so live, and act, and speak as though there were no God, and shall be no judgment—to such I say, I know no higher argument for God’s mercy than that he died for you, if you will but even now turn to him by faith in his Son. He bids me tell you, that the iniquities you have wrought shall be no more remembered unto you ; great as may have been your sins, greater still, if ye will but prove it, shall ye find the full, the free, the effectual grace of him who is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if you will not hearken—think not that the *long suffering* of God is any argument for his *impotence*. You may, indeed, resist, reject, despise the *love* of God : ye may not, ye shall not, ye could not resist the arm of his power. It is written, that all shall submit ultimately to God, either morally persuaded here, or physically constrained hereafter. Go, then, if ye will persist—go away from this place worse than ye came to it ; go away—I will not say, to be wittily blasphemous, to be droll upon the preacher, and comic on the subject of your everlasting damnation. No ; I will not suppose you guilty of such length of crime ; I will merely say—go away, neglecting God and God’s dear Son ; go away, and plunge yourselves anew into the vortex of this world’s cares and pleasures, and continue on as though God’s word was never written, and God’s Son had never died.—But, as you go, take with you the word of the living God, take with you this—“EVERY ONE OF US SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF UNTO GOD.”

THE WHOLE WORLD LIETH IN WICKEDNESS

A SERMON,

PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF SAINT PETER, DUBLIN

ON SUNDAY, 3d DECEMBER, 1837.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM MATURIN, A.B.

Chaplain of St. Stephen's.

1st, JOHN, v. 19.

“ The whole world lieth in wickedness.”

“ LIETH in wickedness!” this is strong and sweeping language; and the involuntary sentiment of many, if it received expression, would doubtless be,—“ this is a hard saying, who can bear it?” The young might ask,—‘ Is this the world whose opinions and customs we have from very infancy been taught to revere and imitate, and for an entrance upon whose bright and busy scenes our hearts throb with ardour and expectation? is this the world for which education has been forming us; whose approval we have been taught to consider as the goal of our wishes, and its censure as the evil hardest to be borne? Those who are already entangled in its pursuits, and have seen, and it may be, done enough to make their credulous assumption of its purity and innocence waver, are yet more strongly fascinated by the force of habit—by the power of intimidation or sarcasm—by the strength of those passions it kindles and feeds—while those whom time has withdrawn from under its more active influence, are seared by the ordeal through which they have passed, and are still held to a world whose hollowness they have experienced, whose corruptions they condemn, but whose chains they have not force to break.

In short, whether from hope or habit, passion or prejudice, blindness or fear, a thorough and active conviction of the truth in the text is one of the hardest to

bring home to the mind of man,—yea, one which divine light and power alone can establish. Nevertheless, my brethren, it is indispensable, we ever fall ourselves within the line which we draw—thus, do we conceive of the world, that its estimate of things is reasonable, that its maxims are prudent, that its habits are defensible—upon such views, our own character and conduct will infallibly be formed: it is charity, forsooth, to put the best construction on what we see around us, and to expunge the word *sin* from our vocabulary—our standard must not be too uncompromising,—such a habit is allowable—such an error venial—such a diversion innocent: but all these pleas and excuses, meanwhile, are as a sheath to protect our own practises.

To feel that we stand in the middle of a system of evil, to the perpetual contact and attraction of which we are exposed—to hold our allotted place in the world, and yet be conscious of, and studiously cultivate, an inward separation from it—to live *in* the world, without loving or living *to* it—by faith to overcome the world and set the affections on things above—to walk amid the din of men, as in the sight of God—this is what Christianity demands, and what she supplies power for; and it is impossible to find any substitute for this.

To estimate your religion or mine, my brethren, we must set aside all that glitters

in man's eyes—our outward distinctions, our knowledge, the professions we make, our ability to speak of religion, the external duties we perform, our prayers or alms, however frequent the one, or abundant the other. We must search into the bottom of our hearts, and ask the all important question—do we love God better than the whole world? is it our daily study to please him, our daily grief when we fall short of it?

It is scarcely necessary to say, that the words of the text,—“the whole world lieth in wickedness,” do not apply to God's fair workmanship about us. The world in which we live has shared the fate of man, but not his sin; and though its lustre is dimmed and its beauty marred, it still testifies of its wondrous author, and calls upon man's grovelling spirit to take an upward flight. The heavens, though clouded now, declare the glory of God, the earth amid all her weakness reveals the power and mercy of her Creator, and her innumerable progeny bear each, as it were, a message from God, an appeal to us to study the character of that Being, who has spread around our path such various manifestations of his goodness and his majesty; and there are hours, when a serene glory, flowing over the face of quiet nature, and communicating its influence to the heart of man, gives rise to that involuntary utterance of adoration, “O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all!—” Yes, my brethren, the natural world though shorn of its primeval beauty, still retains its allegiance to its Creator, and in many an earnest tone remonstrates with unthinking and disobedient man, and did we listen to its voices, we might be wiser and better.

Nor are the words of the apostle applicable to the ordinary occupations of the world, so far as these do not require the compromise of any right principle—the meaning is not, that every thing which pertains to it, bears this stamp and character of evil; it is obvious that there are many pursuits in

life harmless, and many necessary; and though men may enter upon these from very wrong motives, and pursue them to a most unwarrantable excess, yet it would be alike indiscriminate and unjust, to lay the blame of the agent upon that in which he is engaged. To what degree any man may with safety pursue even a lawful calling, is a question to be decided upon evidence open only to his Maker and himself; and in all cases of the kind, a sincere heart, distrustful of its own firmness, and dependent upon God, is a better casuist than could be made by all the rules or books upon the subject, that have ever been written.

Nor does the text relate to the mere external habits and forms of social life, where these are not connected with duty and moral obligation. A Christian is not called upon to be a stern ascetic, nor is he to be distinguished from other men by a peculiarity of diction or an austerity of manner—there is a vast difference between seriousness and gloom. If the ordinary intercourse of society is characterised by smoothness and polish, by deference to the feelings and prejudices of those with whom we associate,—this is for a Christian to emulate, though on far other principles than those of the world, and at the same time to evince a sincerity, which will add a charm to that civility, which is not the mere result of custom, but the natural expression of the heart. Indeed, where Christianity has interfered in such matters, it is to enjoin upon us courtesy of manner as well as tenderness of feeling; nor is it unlikely that those who would discountenance the former, might easily be betrayed into forgetfulness of the temper of which it is the index. It is true, our religion searches higher and deeper than mere outward expression; yet this is also demanded.

What then is meant by the world which St. John in this place so awfully describes? He is not speaking of a mere place; nor a class of employments; nor any peculiar habits; nor any limited community—but he is speaking of that

portion of mankind, whenever and wherever they exist, who are not living in real and inward allegiance to God, along with the system of principles on which they have acted, and will continue to act, till the present scheme of things is finally dissolved. They are called the world—they have always formed the large proportion of mankind—and they are described as lying in wickedness. Now this we must understand as a general description. The outward aspects of this world may change with protean versatility—it may seem better in one age, and worse in another—it may now persecute religion, and again praise it; but its actual principles remain permanent and unaltered—they are too deeply rooted in the natural heart, and too aptly accommodated to the purposes of our great enemy, ever to be eradicated but by the energy of that Divine Spirit, under whose influence all things become new. No man of ordinary information will indeed deny that the world presents an appearance very different from what it did in the days of St. John—the most irreligious among us are not now, blessed be God, carried about after dumb idols—but while we felicitate ourselves upon the change, let us beware of carrying our dependence upon it too far; let us consider, if, while the gods of wood and stone have been flung to the moles and the bats, while their shrines of gold and their temples of marble have been long laid low—the mind of man does not continue the worship under another and a subtler form: if, while the knees bow, and the lips profess the living and true God, who made heaven and earth, and all things that are therein, the heart does not receive within its shrine an unholy occupant, and secretly revolt from him whose name is Jealous, and who will not give his honor to another. Men have ceased to worship the outward emblems of wealth or pleasure, of fame or fortune;—it is well—but have they ceased inwardly to worship these objects themselves? Look round you in life for an answer;

and if they have not, surely the difference between him who devotes his heart and his life to the service of these things, and him who prostrated his body before their material images, is a difference more in name than in fact. Remember that the Scripture denounces covetousness as idolatry: remember too, that it is declared “we cannot serve God and Mammon,” and Mammon may be as effectually served where he is not worshipped. When our blessed Lord warned his disciples against worldly mindedness, as expressing itself in the anxious pursuit of the things pertaining to the body—in the too solicitous inquiry after “what we shall eat and what we shall drink, and wherewithal we shall be clothed,” he adds—“all these things do the nations of the world seek after,”—and what do they seek after at the present day? have they yet learned to change the object, or abate the ardor of the pursuit—or is their devotion less complete and unqualified because it wants the outward homage? No—in its essential character the world remains unchanged: nor have the great vicissitudes that have broken up institutions, subverted empires, and in many respects, changed the aspect of the globe, done more in this than disturb the surface, while the disease lies at the core, and “as it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man—they did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.”

In illustration of the text, therefore, it is not necessary for us to look to the world at its worst periods, or even now to confine our view to the worst portion of mankind—it is not necessary that the eye should be shocked by scenes of grossness and pollution—the most thorough depravity is not always the most obtrusive, and guilt of the deepest dye, may be combined with a fair and flattering exterior. I should find little difficulty in convincing you that there are many classes of people in the world who are in an abandoned state,

and I may add, there would be little use, but this is not my object, nor is it the spirit or meaning of the present text—that text declares that the *whole* world lieth in wickedness—the world namely *as such*, that this is the character and spirit of the world—and the short and searching inquiry for each of us, is, do we actually believe this to be the case, and in the conviction, are we distinguished from the world?

One of the most glaring instances of this awful truth, is to be found in the uniform preference which the men of the world give to the objects and interests of the *present* life, above those of the *next*. To such men, the present scene is every thing—the future nothing: whatever they engage in here, is their engrossing *business*—they act as if they were created for it—they give their whole hearts and thoughts to it—while *eternity* supplies only a fleeting speculation of a vacant hour—a last resource when we are already trembling upon its brink. This is a principle which pervades all periods, all ranks, and all ages:—the child and the beggar are under its influence, as well as those who are advanced in life, or prominent in earthly station. To devise plans for a future upon earth—to anticipate years that may never arrive—that may find us in another state of being—to realize the enjoyments of to-morrow, without realizing that existence in the midst of which, to-morrow may find us—busies the mind of man; nor does he feel any apprehension of what is hanging over him:—he knows he *may* suffer; he knows he *must* die; he knows that into an eternal world he *is* passing; but it causes him no trouble—all this is deliberately set aside and neglected, and he gives himself *first* to the present scene, making it the prominent object of each day, though that day may close upon his grave. Such is the world's estimate of things; and easy would it be to descant upon the folly and madness of this; but contrast it with the command of the Son of God—"seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness,"—let this

be your first object, says the Lord of glory:—let it be your last, says the world. Come, says the Saviour of mankind,—come unto me—take my yoke upon you, and enlist yourself in my service—fulfil your duty in life, and occupy your allotted station; but let it be in the character of my disciple—regard not the present world as your home—look not for your reward upon earth—place your treasure where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, nor thief break through and steal—make it your chief concern, in short, to live as an immortal being, a native of eternity—to this great end, consecrate your first and best powers, and let every thing else be considered and employed as subordinate to it.' Such is the plain command of Christ. And what is the principle of the world? 'Let all preparation for eternity be put off to the last—when this life has consumed your strength, when it has worn out your faculties, when it has exhausted your affections—when you have expended all with which God distinguished you, upon another master—when you have nothing to offer Him who gave you everything, but the miserable and mutilated remains of what you were—when you are old, feeble, decrepit—your eye dim—your natural force abated—your mind clouded and dark—*then seek the kingdom of God.*' This is the way the world acts towards its Creator. When you have nothing else to turn to—when from every other side you are cast off—when every door is closed against you, and that of the grave stands open—*then* turn to God:—while the altars of the world are heaped with every splendid gift with which the Almighty has endowed man; upon those of the giver, the blind, the maimed, the sick, are presumptuously offered. While the world has enlisted in its service, youth, health, energy, industry, talents; for God, are considered sufficient the miserable dregs of tottering age, and universal caducity. My brethren, you must be sensible that here is no declamatory exaggeration, but a simple statement of what is acting every day

around us; and that, if the plain question was put to any worldly person, What is the *last* subject you think of to any practical purpose? The answer would be, "the kingdom of God and his righteousness." I appeal then to yourselves, whether the fact does not exhibit an awful view of human apostasy? We could pity, while we trembled over the infatuated darkness of the man who should deny the paramount claims of God upon his first obedience; but we could understand—we might hope that such an one could be convinced of his error, and reclaimed from this dismal state; but what could we, what can we say to him who acknowledges those claims in their fullest extent, and yet, dares to despise them? In what language can we address a world trifling upon the sides of eternity, with everlasting glory opening above their head, and everlasting ruin yawning at their feet! Oh! there is but one thing for us to say—"now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Yes, God has proclaimed mercy to a world lying in wickedness—he has sent sinners to speak to their fellow sinners, and to tell them of the wonders of his love; he has spoken to our hearts, he has laid upon his own Son the punishment of our sins, and now he *beseeches*—what a term to describe God's address to us!—he beseeches men to be reconciled to him.

Again, men of the world have no fear of God, no practical reverence for him—it is not one of the principles of their conduct. People that are incapable of being influenced by the higher and better affections of our nature, may be wrought upon strongly by fear; nor is its influence to be excluded even where that of the former prevails: there is a sober and reasonable fear which it is want of feeling and sense to be devoid of—but nothing of the kind is felt by men of the world in reference to God: they may indeed fear those objects which are but instruments to work his pleasure—they may fear the hurricane or the thunderbolt, or the pestilence as it tracks its

path with desolation—they may tremble at sickness and death; but they do not fear God, they have no sense of the terrible majesty of Him whose chariots are the clouds, whose voice is the thunder, who walketh upon the wings of the winds, and holds in his hands the reins of universal nature. They fear God's servants, but they fear not God himself; they tremble when the frame of nature is disturbed, but they are utterly unmoved when the Author of nature commands or threatens them. If the lightning flashes, they shrink from it—if the tempest rages, they seek for shelter; but of God's wrath, they have no serious dread: when the blow hangs over their heads, they are terrified, but when it is withdrawn, they sin without apprehension—they can fear the stroke, but not the hand that inflicts it! And is not this awful wickedness? Men sin, and they have no apprehension of any danger incurred by doing so—it does not come home to their minds as a vivid reality, that God is offended and will ever call them to account for what they have done. If a child displeases its parent, or one man offends another, he is aware it will not pass unnoticed—if a man transgresses the laws of his country, he is fully conscious of danger; but over the face of the world the laws of God are broken—broken systematically, without the slightest fear, and on the most frivolous pretences. Men leave years of sin behind them, and the account they have to render, gives them no sort of disquietude; they can go about their employment in the day, surrounded by all the power of God, and lie down to rest at night in total helplessness, not knowing but the next morning may find them in eternity; and alarm at their condition never crosses their mind.

To omit grosser instances of this,—not to dwell upon the cases of those who are living in acknowledged impiety or open sin, such as the drunkard, the profligate, or the blasphemer; what multitudes are there that bear respectable characters in the world, so that people would be astonished if it was doubted that they have

fair prospects for eternity, and who, nevertheless, are living in a systematic breach of the law of God ; in whose mind the resolution has never once been decidedly formed, of doing the whole will of God, in all circumstances, and under every trial, though they were to meet with ridicule, loss, or persecution, by it ; nay, who would regard such a resolution as weak-minded scrupulosity, or pitiable enthusiasm—*lo ! these are the ungodly*. They may call themselves, and they may be considered wise men in their generation, prudent, thoughtful, moral men—men of honour and substance in the world ; but “ they have no fear of God before their eyes ”—that fear, if it exists, sways a man in secret as well as in public—it rules in the still chambers of the soul, where none but God is witness, as well as when the eyes of our fellow creatures are fastened upon our conduct—it chains the unruly lusts, quells the angry and evil passions, sobers and humbles the whole man, abiding in him as a principle of conduct, which the world cannot supply, and does not acknowledge.

But the world makes its own attempt at religion—and this we may for a moment notice. A man is to live to the present world as long as he can, and prepare for death when he is dying. It is said that forgiveness of sin is necessary, and that some sort of repentance and preparation are requisite to fit men for Heaven ; but, then, this we can do at any time.—Can we do so ? Think well of it :—can you promise yourself the power, the will, to turn to God at what time you please ? when the body is wasted with sickness, or perhaps racked with pain—when the terrors of an unknown futurity are staring one in the face ; when conscience awakens its tremendous energies within the breast, and begins to lash and goad the unhappy sinner with the remembrance of deeds long past, of follies long forgotten—are these things calculated to facilitate our first approach to God ? And where is the man living to the present world, who can promise himself that such and more

appalling terrors do not await him ? Oh ! if men could witness the state of a mind which has through life lain immersed in worldliness, and begins to think of God when about to enter his presence—it would sober them. If you could witness its dim and desperate struggles—the anguish, the self-reproach, the grasping after hope, and the inability to embrace it—the eager, despairing demand for comfort while the heart is still seared and flinty, the soul dropping its anchor and finding no bottom—you would fly to God *now* ; you would seek him in earnest while it is called to-day. Besides, on what grounds can a man persuade himself, that truths which he has been resisting all his life will prove effectual with him at the last ? Is not present resistance, is not the present resolution to defer their consideration and oppose their power, the very way to ensure they shall have no power when we apply to them ? If I will not listen to the voice of Christ and yield to the authority of God to-day, what madness and infatuation to suppose I shall be more ready to do so to-morrow ? or that disease and sorrow and death with their accumulated distresses and terrors, will win that heart which life and its abundant mercies were insufficient to dissolve ? And, lastly, take this into consideration, repentance and faith imply a change in the affections, tastes and desires—a softening and renewing of the heart—a revolution in the soul, which the unaided powers of man can never effect : it is a work of grace—a restoring of the decayed and corrupted constitution of the soul, which the Holy Spirit alone can accomplish. We can act, indeed, and we must act—there are means to be used, but all we can do is to use the means, the result is with God—we have the gracious assurance that he will bless the sincere endeavours of those who seek him, that “ He will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him : ” we have not one promise held out to those who neglect or presumptuously postpone doing so.

And now, my brethren, let me, in

conclusion make a very short application of this subject to those who are here assembled. Some may perhaps be disposed to think that in speaking of the world, I have been speaking of the *absent*—it is a mistake: the world has its representatives in this congregation. Others may conceive that what I have been treating of, is only applicable to the less religious portion of those whom I address. It is not, however, the case—there are none among whom the spirit of the world may be seen to insinuate itself with a deeper and more malignant subtlety, and whose danger from it is, therefore, greater, than they who seem to have entered on the narrow road: in short, the spirit of the world is the spirit of unsanctified human nature, fostered and stimulated by almost everything around us, and whose influence ceases not while we have being.

I would now suggest to you two criterions, amongst the many that offer themselves, by which you may detect the presence of worldliness. The first is *pride*. If you are proud, you are worldly;—genuine humility is the first principle of evangelic religion. What then is your general demeanour? how do you carry yourself towards your equals—towards your dependents, towards your menials? Among the former, is your natural movement to take the lowest place? Among the latter, are you mild, obliging, kind, patient, not disposed to act with strictness or severity? Or, on the contrary, are you harsh, domineering, easily provoked, and ready to blame them for faults, of which you are perhaps often guilty yourself, with far less excuse than they have?—*this is pride*. Again, what opinion do you entertain of yourself? I do not ask whether you are ready to make humbling acknowledgments—to own your-

self a miserable sinner, undeserving of God's mercies—a monument of his forbearance, and general admissions to the same effect—but I ask, how do you *feel* on these momentous matters—do you really *feel* your own corruption? are you shocked to think that you have sinned against God?—and does the sentiment make you set a watch upon your thoughts and upon the door of your lips, and live in the spirit of dependence, and reflection, and vigilance?—if this is not the case—you are *proud*.

Indevotion is the other test which I would briefly mention to you. Indevotion is the spirit of the world. Are you then devout—really and affectionately devout? I do not on this head, inquire what times you give to religious subjects—how much of your day you spend in reading, or in hearing, or in prayer—But I ask, how you engage in all these duties—with what fervor, with what earnestness, with what application of heart, and mind, and soul?—for this is the test of a devotional spirit. They are not alone the worldly, who are living in pleasure, in dissipation, or absorbed in business—you may have the poison of the world as much in the most retired circle, you may have it in all its power in your chamber—on your knees!

It is *Christ alone*, who can rebuke and cast out this spirit; and if you really desire it in your own case, he *will*. “Be of good cheer,” said he to his disciples, “*I have overcome the world*”—and the power of his cross to all who are sincere believers in him, is described by St. Paul in these words, with which I conclude—“God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I unto the world.”

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