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THE  
RINGWOOD DISCOURSES;  
OR, SERMONS  
ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

BY T. B. BALCH, A. M.,

AUTHOR OF DISCOURSES ON CHRISTIANITY AND LITERATURE.

*(Presbyterian.)*

HAGERSTOWN, MD.:

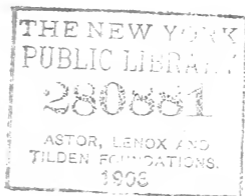
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TO THE  
REV. J. M. ATKINSON,  
OF FREDERICK, MD.,

THESE DISCOURSES ARE DEDICATED AS A  
MARK OF THE PROFOUND RESPECT IN  
WHICH HE IS HELD, BY THE  
AUTHOR, BOTH AS  
A MAN AND A THEOLOGIAN.



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## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

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DURING the summer of 1847 the writer had occasion to supply the pulpit of the Rev. Septimus Tustin, in Hagerstown, Md. At that time he delivered three, at least, of the subjoined discourses, which awakened in some minds a desire that they should be published. As the subjects discussed differ somewhat from the ordinary routine of pulpit instruction, it was supposed by many that patronage might be procured for a small volume. It is at the earnest request of the publishers that the manuscripts have been prepared by the author for the press.

The writer is aware that some persons may ask why the title of Ringwood Discourses should be given to the volume. To this he replies that the discourses were written at a cottage which bears this designation; and, as it was necessary to give a name to the book, it occurred that this was about as appropriate

as any which could be chosen. As the diversions of Horne Tooke were prepared at Purley, he assumed the right of calling them the Purley Diversions.

The writer considers it due to himself to say that, in various places, where these discourses have been delivered, individuals have solicited their publication; and, as this has been uniformly declined, those persons have taken copies from his manuscripts. The perseverance, however, of several gentlemen in Hagerstown, has at length induced me to hope that some good may arise from their being given to the press. They are submitted, therefore, respectfully, to the public, under a deep conviction that all the benefit which will result must flow from the Divine blessing.

T. B. BALCH,

*Ringwood Cottage, 1849.*

THE  
RINGWOOD DISCOURSES.

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DISCOURSE I.

THE FARMER IN RURAL PURSUITS.

*“But Cain was a tiller of the ground.”*

GENESIS IV: 2.

THE preacher does not pretend to any practical acquaintance with Agriculture, either as an art or a science. His design, in this discourse, is of a moral and spiritual kind. If you wish to learn how you may improve your lands or add to the weight of your crops, you must apply to some other source for information, for we have no new light to communicate. There are men who have reached just as great eminence in Agriculture as others have attained in Government, Law or Mechanics, and we refer you to their writings. Need we mention Arthur Young, Sir Humphry Davy or Judge Buell who have written exten-

sively of those substances which will enrich the soil? Had it been my intention to tell you how poor land may be made productive, I should this day have addressed a congregation as crowded as any that could have been convened in China. But my purpose is simply to state the demands which Religion makes on that class of men who live by the soil; and numerous they are, beyond question, both in this country and in other lands. The plough has turned up every rood of English earth, and implements of husbandry have been rattling, from immemorial time, among the annual harvests of the world. Human diligence has subdued the most rugged spots. It has run lines of greenness among the glaciers of Switzerland, and turned the vine around the summits of the Alps. It has planted cottages on the highlands of Scotland: and gone up the Pyrenees with its scythe: and educes the pomegranite on the plains of Lombardy: and robed Northern valleys in verdure: and rifled the rocks of Palestine of their honey. It has spread its table in the deserts of Sahara. It has thrown its chain on the neck of the wildest reindeer, and driven into captivity the lamas of Peru and the gazelles of eastern woods. It has turned the waist of the world into a round saloon, where millions are regaled by tropical flowers, and millions more are nourished by those fruits which the sun has suspended before rejoicing guests. We ask, then, whether any apology



is needed for addressing our agriculturalists upon their obligations to obey our Christianity?

Permit me here briefly to state some of the characteristics of agricultural life, before we advance further into the subject.

And, first, *it is a pursuit entirely scriptural.*

The Scriptures were written, for the most part, in Palestine, which was a corner of the world at the head of the Mediterranean sea. Its inhabitants were shepherds, herdsmen and husbandmen. Commerce was interdicted and did not obtain until the time of Solomon. That monarch brought into his kingdom many curious birds and many barbaric ornaments, which demoralized both himself and his subjects.—The Jews were a peculiar people, and, for this reason, secluded from the rest of the world. Their habits were formed, and their ritual was carried on among vales which became endeared to them by time, and among sheepfolds which were dispersed over their country. Its boundaries were clearly defined, and the chain of protection to those boundaries was lowered by the Divine hand and ran into every curve and angle of its soil; nor did foreign foes ever step across those limits until the chain was withdrawn. The Bible is a record of the pastoral and agricultural life of the Jews. We have but to open and read it, and we shall find a series of maps on which pastoral objects and rural pictures are impressed. Flocks are

here winding o'er the milky way of inspiration from Genesis to the close of the Apocalypse. Here are men who are wielding the wand of prophets among lowing herds, and sounding the shell of inspiration over the olive mountains of Jerusalem. Here is the Rose of Sharon—the Tree of Life—the True Vine—the Watchful Husbandman—the Almighty Shepherd—the seed of Grace—the wheat and the tares, and the wine-press of Divine Justice. Here we are taught a thousand spiritual lessons by objects taken from husbandry, and surely the Bible must countenance rustic occupations.

But was the Bible given for a few millions of Jews, or was it arranged to suit the emotions of all men?

The affections of all men answer to such a Bible, so far as rural life may be concerned. For its quiet the statesman sighs, the merchant longs, the mechanic toils and the soldier pants.

But, secondly, *Agriculture is an old employment.*

Antiquity seems to exercise a large influence over men. We have people in our country who are fond of tracing their families back to the time of Queen Elizabeth, or to the time that William of Normandy conquered England, which event took place in the year one thousand and sixty. Sentimental people, in particular, like an antique castle, such as Kenilworth, in the shire of Warwick, or a dilapidated Abbey, such as Pluscarden, near Elgin, or Dryburgh,

near the Tweed. In the view of some, our young government is nothing in comparison with that of old England, though the latter hold a starving peasantry—a lazy and profligate priesthood—an aristocracy who live by plunder, and where prelacy and robbery are synonymous terms. The Gentoo in India travels back by the chain of caste, in search of his forefathers, until he is stopped by the flood; and the Chinese profess to belong to an empire that has stood at least twenty thousand years. The papal priest clings to the fond conceit of apostolical succession, and is puffed up with the delusion, though he derive his credentials from popes who have outraged Heaven by their villainies, and bishops whose heels have stamped on every precept of the decalogue.

But let me speak of an antiquity about which there is no uncertainty nor dispute, and the tiller of the ground may say that his employment is coeval with human existence. Adam, when innocent, pruned his garden; when fallen, he reduced the brambles and cultivated the virgin clods of Eden; and the Bible, here, has revealed objects and scenes among which the imagination can scarce be trusted. Therefore, we remark,

Thirdly, that *Agriculture is a useful occupation.*

It has been said that the man who causes a tree to grow where one did not grow before, does not live in vain. The Duke of Athole is now making himself

useful in Scotland by setting out large numbers of exotic trees, and thereby putting a new face on the country, and giving employment to his tenantry. But we need not speak of the usefulness of Agriculture, for it is written out to our view in smiling fields and in harvests that laugh in gladness. The land is the raw material on which the farmer works until he evolve the grain, which waves in homage to his diligence; and the soil is the basis of national wealth, according to our best political economists. If rustic labors could be suddenly stopped in our world, what a convulsion would be created!—what famine—what absolute starvation would follow! Those labours are performed in the silence of the country, but they excite the hum of business in our towns and cities. They quicken the hammer of the artisan, and the machinery of the manufacturer. They keep the merchant awake and despatch his ships over the sea, and they feed myriads from age to age.

Fourthly, *Agriculture is an employment entirely patriotic.*

The people of the world are divided into clans and countries instead of their being but one immense family, sprung, as they all are, from the same root. The Bible no where commands us to love our country, because our country is included in that world which is an object of christian affection. But that part of the Earth assigned to us is included in the whole, and it

is natural that our affections should be intense toward our farms and homes. He is a good citizen and patriot who obeys the laws and quietly tills his acres. If, unhappily, war should arise, he must not withhold what is due to the commonwealth; and more than once have bold peasants retrieved the liberties of their country. Are any proofs needed to this statement? What kind of men, we ask, were led by Sir William Wallace! and what kind achieved, under Bruce, the victory of Bannockburn! Who lead the peasantry of Switzerland, among the rocks and snows of Uri, in the fourteenth century! Who resisted the despotism of Charles I, and achieved the memorable revolution, in England, of 1688! It is true that Magna Charta was extorted from King John by his barons: but the barons had scarcely spurred off their steeds from the plain of Runnymede, before they made themselves strong in their castles and oppressed their retainers. Our own deliverance from a foreign yoke was effected by the yeomanry of our country.

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates and men decay;  
Princes and lords may flourish or may fade:  
A breath may make them as a breath has made.  
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,  
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

This leads me, in the fifth place, to say, that *Agriculture is an honorable pursuit.*

Kings have desired the quiet which it bestows, statesmen have coveted its appliances, warriors have dreamed of its repose, and poets have celebrated its charms. The emperor Dioclesian used to escape from Rome to Salona, in Dalmatia, where he trained the vine; and the banks of the Tiber were lined with the villas of philosophers, and poets, and consuls, and senators. The kings of England may own palaces in London, but White Hall, Windsor, and Epsom have long peered above the foliage of the Thames. The French have the palaces of St. Cloud, St. Germaine, and the Thuilleries in the vicinity of Paris, but Versailles and Fontainebleau stand among parks and forests. British statesmen have longed, amid the din of Parliament, for the shades of the country; and we follow Chatham to Hays, and his son to Wimbledon, Fox to St. Anne's Hill, Burke to Beaconsfield, Wilberforce to his cottage on Ulswater, and Sir Philip Sidney to the dense beeches of Penshurst in the shire of Kent. How well has a fondness for Agriculture been exemplified by the rulers of our own country! The leader of our revolutionary armies was glad to escape from the cares of Government to the plough; and we may look down into a panorama and see Mount Vernon, Quincy, Oak Hill, Monticello, Montpelier, the Hermitage, Lindenwald, North Bend, and Sherwood, sending forth our Presidents, and then receiving them back when they had

fulfilled the offices or encountered the disappointments incident to high stations. If we pass down the stream of poetry, from its source, we shall see what homage has been paid by the Muses to Rural Life. That stream can bear us along as leisurely as though we were riding in the barge of Cleopatra. On its banks we descry meadows, fragrant with clover and alive with herds—lawns, set out in exotic trees whose fruits induce upon the air a cheering vision—gardens, where shrubbery has supplanted briars, and where imprisoned flowers have been redeemed and dismissed from their cells by the golden orb of day—pastures, silvered o'er with flocks—vineyards, where grapes have convened in clusters—harvests, waiting for the scythe of the buoyant reaper—orchards, laden with mellow fruit—plants, worried by murmuring bees—cottages, from which the hedger goes forth to his morning toil—hamlets, from which rises a kind of incense smoke, and Abbeys, like Tintern or Melrose, overhung by the grey clouds of Antiquity. Along this stream stand a multitude of poets, from Chaucer down to Wordsworth, dispersing their rich verses among the moss and heather, and throwing the colors of the imagination over that assemblage of rural objects which they have grouped together from the wilderness of this world.

We then remark, sixthly, that *Agriculture is a meditative employment.*

The tranquility it inspires is friendly to thought, and especially to religious reflection. Meditation may be considered as an act of the mind by which attention, so prone to wander, is concentrated on any given subject. It is said of one of the patriarchs that he went forth to meditate at even-tide. He left his tent beneath an eastern sky, and, with slow and solemn steps, moved among the divine works, surrounded by the inspiring objects which crowded into view. All was calm on earth and all was serene in Heaven. The camels were winding home, and the stars were rising on his sight like diamonds educed from the furnace of the sun. How sweet must that hour have been to the patriarch. But at this time we may enjoy the pleasures of meditation. We have the same earth and clouds to call out our thoughts, and objects equally chaste to excite our slumbering devotion. We can see divine goodness in the fields, and in the woods, and in rows of standing corn, in the succession of the seasons, in the rains as they fall, and in the dews of the night. All holy men have, at times, delighted in abstraction; nor can agriculturalists become eminently pious without meditation. Topics, without number, present themselves as themes of heavenly musing. They rise in a perfect congregation, and are too numerous to be mentioned; but we will say that it is our duty to meditate in the Scriptures and daily to use those holy records. The Bible, when used, is a



moral and spiritual honeycomb. When not conned over from day to day, it is as some coral of the sea, which has, indeed, the shape and cells of the honeycomb, but is devoid of all honey. But the diligent reading of the Bible will leave an unction on your soul and supply you with the bread of life, amid your clumps of wood, your threshing floors, and your fire-sides.

“Then, all the grass which beautifies your farm,  
Will manna bear, each morn, instead of dew;  
And that blest bread is sweeter, far, than balm  
That hangs in crowded drops on Hermon’s brow.”

Such are a few of the characteristics which may, with truth, be applied to agricultural life. We have been detained by them from the practical part of our subject, which is to give a few counsels to such as may be engaged in pursuits of this kind.

In the first place, then, let me counsel farmers to *shun all those sins which are peculiar to their calling.*

Selfishness is often engendered by living remote from towns. Some men literally worship roods and acres. They entrench themselves in their own domicils and are as jealous of them as though they were castles of the middle ages and belonged to feudal lords. They add field to field, and that without apparent remorse, even though their title be doubtful in a court of equity. The widow may be wronged and the orphan plundered in their getting. If such

men want to buy, they slander the property; if they want to sell, they can chatter with a saucy eloquence. They conceal defects and disguise truth. They speculate upon the artless by their superior shrewdness. They mix with men, but come home and tuck away their bonds and calculate interest. They would cut up a cent into a hundred parts to get one out of the hundred, and they are looked upon as the trained blood-hounds of usury. This is an awful state in which to be found, and yet it is the condition of thousands. Men have killed the mothers that nursed them for property, and their own posterity for land. Cain was a tiller of the soil, and yet he slew his blooming brother and made his flock shepherdless. Think you that agricultural life is now exempt from all dark passions and all cunning frauds? Think you that all unrighteous gains are confined to the wharf, to the counting-house, to the street or to the squares of towns? Have they never been borne along the lanes of the country, and laid away in the chest of the farm-house! Has the guilty one who bore them never heard the whistle of the ploughman, nor the song of the milkmaid, nor the twittering of the birds, nor the rattling of the scythe, nor the sound of the pruning hook! Alas! the first sin was committed among trees and lawns, and sins are committed in glades of the wilderness at this day. If any man love the world unduly, the love of the Father is not

in that man. And we have known agriculturalists to be quite fond of litigation—plunged into law either about the division of their estates or the lines of their farms—wrangling with their neighbors or quarreling with their domestics because they could find no one else with whom to quarrel. We have known them to kill an irresponsible brute because of a trespass, when they might have had amends from the owner. All this argues vulgar manners and a coarse taste, and is in contrariety to the gospel.—Some agriculturalists carry on works of labor during the hours of the Sabbath, which is a sin of enormous magnitude. Some are profane in their language and irascible in their tempers; and others are querulous, always talking of the weather, as if they were atheists. We have never known a farmer for whom rain falls exactly at the right time or in the right quantity; and thus this class of men “spend their days in discontent and their nights in unbelief.” Covetousness is a ruling passion with many, and its consequences are thus awfully portrayed in Luke XII ch.: “I will pull down my present barns,” said a yeoman of Palestine, “and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and all my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee.” The conversation of some

is exclusively about markets and the prices of grain ; and, if they be graziers, we doubt whether it be even so elevated as the value of corn and wheat.

My second counsel to farmers is, *to seek after intellectual improvement.*

We do not exhort them to become students in the full sense of that word, but we know that agriculturalists can and ought to redeem time for the enlargement of their information. When a boy, it was my habit to visit a farmer who lived not far from my native town. He never owned but four books. They were the Bible, Josephus, Morse's Geography, and Cook's Voyages. But he had read these to some purpose. They enlivened his conversation and made him a truly interesting man. We once knew a farmer who raised about sixteen hundred bushels of wheat. He never was educated, but had read a history by Rollin, who was a Belles Lettres professor in Paris. He was perfectly at home in that book and he was, also, most perfectly versed in the history of England. If a man read nothing, his mind will become a blank, and he will be made a dupe. We do not mean that he will be defrauded in selling his crops or in the purchase of stock ; but for every thing beyond his farm he must be absolutely dependent on the opinions of other men, and he can be made the victim of every absurdity. He sits all day, should it be snowing or raining, with his eye beaming keen

on vacancy, with no map to consult, and no book to read, and no verse to hum. A man of sense might come in and tell him that a mouse had overturned Mont Blanc, or that a lama had carried off the top of Chimborazo, and he could not contradict the marvellous statement.

But the farmer's life is propitious to gaining intelligence if even the corners of time be improved.—Most of the great intellectual works with which scholars are familiar have been written in the country. It would be a pleasing thing to pass into those numerous retreats in which philosophers have studied: in which historians have written: in which political economists have speculated, and in which poets have sung of fresh fields and green woods. We should be met by a thousand streams of melody, issuing as if they came from haunted grottos or enchanted forests. But we feel that all this would be incongruous to the gravity of a pulpit discourse. It may not, however, be amiss to say that pious authors have sought the shades of seclusion. Watts wrote those hymns which have given strength to the living and fervor to the dying, not in London, but at Newington Green. The seat of Sir Thomas Abney was in that villa at which Watts was domesticated for six and thirty years.—The villa is now included within the mammoth city, and the din of business is heard where the minstrel modulated his heavenly songs among orchards reden-

ed by the blossoms of the peach tree, and his hymns have been sung in the four quarters of the world. The tracts of Leigh Richmond were written among those people in the Isle of Wight who wore not purple and fine linen, but russet coats and hob-nailed shoes; and yet no man has better described the operations of grace on the hearts of the poor. He has lent sanctity to the downs, and flocks, and the thatched cottages of the small but fertile island in which he lives. We might here prolong our statement and take in a multitude of other writers.

Thirdly, let me advise agricultural men to cherish a variety of virtues, which cannot here be drawn out in detail: such as public spirit in their several neighborhoods, particularly when the cause of general education is concerned; gratitude to Heaven and submission to the will of Providence, instead of murmuring at seasons and drought; kindness to the poor and liberality in selling corn, especially in times of scarcity; gentleness to all in your employment, both in behavior and speech; hospitality to the wayfaring man who turns aside for a night; fairness to any who may rent under you; an absence of cruelty to every thing possessing animal life, and promptness in supporting the gospel and contributing to proper causes.

Rural life may be made pre-eminently domestic, social, christian, and charming. Sir Thomas More, the first lay chancellor of England, and Montesquieu,

author of the Spirit of Laws, were greatly beloved by their tenantry. Miss Edgeworth might have squandered her wealth in England; but she has laid out much of it among the peasantry that live around her in the county of Longford. Sir Joseph Banks, a botanist, after sailing around the world, and stripping islands of their plants, retired to his estates in Lincolnshire where he wrote on Merino sheep, the spanish chestnut, and the fruits of Ceylon. He died in Middlesex revered by the poor. What a picture is set before us of peasant life in the examples of Oberlin, Neff and Herbert, and the efforts of such holy men to improve and elevate its condition. How different from the extortioner, the absentee, and the usurer—the man who would chase a starving Ruth from his fields, and drive an Eliezer from his wells; and whose heart is like the rock which bears no velvet verdure on its surface, and no gem in the interior to embellish or enrich the cabin of the widow.

Finally, we counsel the class we address *to cultivate the whole Religion of the Bible*. Cherish it whether you be in prosperity or adversity. It will keep you lowly when other sheaves are doing homage to yours, and it will comfort you even when your sheaf shall be crushed into the dust, and its yellow grain scattered in the whirlwind of adversity. Let the fruits of the christian life fall around you, even within the iron rings which hold you in captivity to

men who seize this world as their portion, and howl after it like gaunt and famished wolves. Our Religion is contained in the Bible. That book was given in fractional parts; but we may evolve from it whole pictures of moral beauty and whole volumes in which Heaven is disclosed to those who read it aright. We would that all who live amid sylvan retreats might make it the rule by which to measure their actions. In following the self-denial which Religion demands, you cannot possibly go astray: nor will sacrifices ever embitter your feelings.

There is a bird in Africa which frequents the settlements and tries many winning ways to decoy the lazy people to the woods, and when the people follow the bird they find honey in the hollows of the trees. In the woods and fields which environ you, there is an abundance of spiritual honey, could Religion but win you to crush its combs. There is a sweetness in the Religion of the heart which transcends all the assembled fruits of eastern lands, though they wear a golden rind, or be dressed in purple coats, or wrapped in the most sumptuous shells.

There are many who think that they can dispense with the Religion which our condescending Saviour taught, even when they come to die. But, oh! what a sad mistake! Like Solomon, they accumulate every rural object around them, which can thrill the nerves or minister to sensual gratification. They labor hard



after a kind of *sans souci* establishment, and rifle even foreign climates of their gorgeous plants and speckled birds. Peru is searched for its lamas, and Arabia for its gums, and the Indian Isles for their spices, and Quito for its fruits. The sheep of the Pyrenees wind into their folds, and the herbs of China flourish at their doors. The gardens of the Alcinous were not so superb, nor the grounds of the Leasowes more entangled with shrubs. The slow brook creeps to every plant, or falls in rapture over shelving banks, and the hum of plenty sounds in every field and mingles with the lowing of brindled herds. Time moves on and the swiftness of its current is concealed by the smoothness of its surface. But this sensual bliss may be interrupted. The Pale Horse may, at its height, be ranging on the lawn, and its rider may dismount and demand an entrance with a sternness that may appal his selected victim. Since the first sin done in Paradise, that horse has been scourging the world. He crops, in his flight, the grass on myriad graves; but he has never reclined in a pasture nor found leisure for repose in a meadow. He races round the tropics; he forces his way into the temperate zones, and his footsteps crush the polar ice. He haunts the valley, and outstrips the mountain, and walks the billows of the ocean, and stops by the wreck only to demand infancy, youth and age, and devotion itself, even when its eye discerns the

Saviour in the storm or sees him leaning from the clouds. His rider spurs him to the cottage or the palace; through the lane or the street; over the lonely moor or through the crowded city. At his approach all our oaks, and elms, and hollies fall into the yellow leaf, and all our streams of earthly comfort expose their sandy channels; nor will his race be done until he has delivered up his last bill of mortality and seized the last cypress wreath suspended at his goal. But how differently does he look when our Saviour is at his bridle! He is still terrible, but he wrangles and prances with a consciousness that a powerful arm has grasped his reins. How he paws, and falls down on his knees and feeds on the willowy mounds; and how his rider shivers, who has turned so many pale; and how readily, at the command of the Saviour, does he receive a velvet pillow, and celestial flowers, and sweet burial spices, and steal away to the couch of the dying saint. And how swiftly are this horse and his rider transformed into fire to convey, into Paradise, the christian who may die even in the lonely thicket or among the thorns and briers of a hovel. There the saint reaches his long sought home, even the warm green-house of the Universe, to which he so often lifted his eyes from a tangled wilderness. There are immortal fruits, which fall, without cessation, for the redeemed, and wait not to be rent from the boughs on which they grow. Let me affection-

ately call on you, this day, not to sacrifice such bliss at the shrine of any earthly or rural good.

There is a tradition in the world that Faust once stipulated with Lucifer to lose his soul forever, provided Lucifer would secure to him twenty-four years of sensual delight. This was a terrible contract; but it is one made every day. The years passed off until Faust was left but a single hour, and then he could not set back the clock of time. He summoned the planets to stop. He tried to pull back the Earth; but that swift traveller went on its Zodiac way. He spoke in a voice like leaping thunder to the constellations; but they were dumb. He tried to pluck out the Evening star and use it for a christian's lamp, but it sparkled not with the oil of grace; and, like thousands of our infatuated world, Faust died, but made no sign that all was peace.



## DISCOURSE II.

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### THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

“*He is a Merchant.*” HOSEA, XII: 7.

THE Bible contains several allusions to persons engaged in mercantile pursuits. In Genesis, XXIII: 16, it is said that “Abraham weighed to Ephron four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant.” In the 37th chapter of the same book it is stated that “a company of Ishmaelites came from Gilead, with their camels, bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt.” “Then there passed by Midianites, merchantmen.” In Nahum III: 16, that prophet says of Nineveh, “Thou hast multiplied thy merchants as the stars of heaven.” In Revelations XVIII: 11, where the fall of Babylon is spoken of, it is written, “And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.” Perhaps this class of men may be alluded to in James, IV: 13, “Go to now, ye that say, to-day, or to-morrow, we

will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain; whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow." We need not multiply passages. We have cited the above with a view to show that merchandise is an ancient, honorable and even momentous pursuit, and to justify myself in attempting to apply some of the principles of our Religion to men of business, on whom the weal or woe of communities may often depend.

Allow me, here, to say that few men are less acquainted with business than the preacher. My education was not practical, and this defect has ever been a cause of regret. My temporal affairs have been injured more than once by my ignorance; and, in dealing, my dependence has ever been in the probity of men rather than on my own sagacity. Happily, we have met with merchants of untarnished honor, whose principles were based on the Bible, and whose integrity no temptation could shake. The principles of that Book have been, to them, a key which has locked them up in that City of Righteousness whose wall is adamant and whose gates are brass. Such men are to be held in esteem. They are the salt of the commercial world. They have been the companions of nobles and kings, as we might easily prove by authentic facts. But, above all, our Creator has beheld them with approbation; and his approbation will infinitely outweigh that of all the potentates of

Earth and the principalities of Heaven combined.

My design at present is to perform an act of justice to a large class of men by exploring the source of their conduct; by analyzing their character; by showing that we ought to sustain them in prosperity, and shield them in adversity; and by pointing them anew to that course which will end in a peace of conscience more valuable than the purple of Tyre or the gems of Peru.

What a power of meaning is in our text. "*He is a merchant.*" This may be said of millions of men. But what kind of a merchant? This is the question replete with the fate of tens of thousands. Are the balances of deceit in his hand? Is he an oppressor? Does cunning, with him, supplant prudence, or does keenness usurp the place of wisdom? Has he on his books, among his stocks, in his purse, his coffers, his vaults, but one dollar, one shilling, one cent, one farthing of ill-gotten gain? Has he spent a life in working out of the divine favor, or in the light of that favor? Has he hoarded for self or for noble ends, and from disinterested views? Can he stand the searchings of the Bible morality? Does he vend in the fear of God or does Satan aid him in his sales? Is he penurious or generous? Is he an Elwes or a Thornton? Has he planted his standard as a Bible merchant or as one of the world's merchants?

A thousand questions might be propounded which

have a bearing on this topic. But let me proceed to draw a picture of the christian merchant; and we invoke not the aid of Flemish or Italian artists, but the spirit, the maxims, the precepts, and the requirements of the Bible. And what are his principles of action? What are the springs by which he moves? What are the pivots on which he turns?

First, *he settles himself in the immovable belief of the Divine omnipresence.* This, with him, is not a doubtful perfection of the Divine Nature. God knows all things and sees all things. He is present at the sources of the Nile as in the tumultuous city; in his closet as at the Exchange; before his ledger or at the docks and quays. If he travel by day, that omnipresence is his pillar of cloud; or, if he slumber by night, it is transformed into a pillar of fire. He goes into that omnipresence as into a broad and beautiful pavilion, and transacts within its folds, and invites all others within that august tabernacle. Let me ask you to read the cxxxixth Psalm. Read it with attention. Read it with prayer. "If I say, surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." "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." Of all men, the merchant has the most frequent occasion to utter this prayer. His business is complex; his temptations



are numerous; his pretexts are plausible, and motives to action are often insidious. He is struggling on an arena where many combatants are engaged; where self-interest inspires, and where wealth holds out its magnificent laurels. But the christian merchant is proof against the fiercest temptations,

Nor lets his weaker passions dare  
Consent to sin; for God is there.

A second principle of action with the christian merchant is, that *to be unjust in a little is to be unjust in a great deal*. He recognizes a Lawgiver, and his obedience is given to the law for the sake of Him by whom it was made. The apostle James had an insight into the spirituality of that law when he said: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." This is a severe touchstone of christian integrity; but its soundness is beyond question. He who would be faithful in a thousand dollars because purloining that sum would create a disturbance, but who would take a cent, because the fact could be concealed, must be guilty of violating the law, and, of course, discrediting the omnipresence of the Lawgiver. If a man be possessed of but one grain of wheat, is it of no importance whether he came by it honestly? Many merchants treat petty peculations committed on them with great mildness, but heavy ones with high resentment. This course is subversive of gospel mo-

rality. It is as much as to say to the culprit or delinquent, your sins are small, and it amounts only to a peccadillo; whereas the sin is one of enormity when measured by the dignity of the Lawgiver. Did any one ever read in the Decalogue, Thou shalt not steal a thousand pounds? Methinks it reads "Thou shalt not steal." If a man plunder another of a large sum of money, he has bartered his soul for that sum; and, if he unjustly take a sixpence, he has bartered it away for a sixpence. But will not this sentiment lead to large and extensive robberies? Not at all; for how are large robberies effected? Suppose there be a defalcation in a bank of one hundred thousand dollars, how did the defalcation begin? We say by petty thefts. Therefore, the christian merchant watches small gains, and that with an eagle's eye. He may be called over stint, or righteous over much, or puritanical. He knows that a slate crowded with fractions, when added, amount to integers; and fractional gains, if unjust, will, in a lifetime, come out like an added legion of devils to rend him to pieces in his dying hours. Blame him not, then, for preferring sweet peace of conscience to all the spices of Ceylon, the barks of Quito, or the poppies of Turkey.

A third principle upon which the christian merchant acts, is, that there is *a curse connected with all unrighteous profits*. The Bible is full to this point. Even as far back as the time of Job, who was before

Moses, this principle was clear to the view of the Idumean Patriarch. It is wonderful with what frequency unjust gain is denounced under the Old Testament economy. Numerous proof-texts might be brought; but, wishing to condense our views as much as possible, we will adduce one from the Apostle James. Give ear to the startling passage! "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days." There cannot be a doubt that this awful passage alludes to riches improperly acquired. The Divine Being is not offended at riches. Abraham was wealthy, and of him the Apostle James has said that "he was the friend of God." Job was the richest man in the East; and, after a temporary deprivation, his affluence was restored. Joseph, of Arimathea, had an estate, and he brought sweet spices to anoint the body of the Saviour. But, at ill-gotten money he is offended, displeased, incensed; and, toward those upon whom it be found, his anger will burn to the lowest Hell! It matters not in what way it has been acquired; whether by shrewdness, by bold oppression, by remorseless extortion, by perfidy, by quirks of the Law, by pretended insolvency, by

over-reaching, or by chicanery. Such gains are rejected by the christian merchant. He will not violate a fundamental principle of action. He would as soon attempt to sleep with a mountain upon his conscience as a dollar unrighteously obtained! He examines closely, scrutinizes accurately, and does not permit himself to be duped or hoodwinked. If he detect anything wrong, he restores, he refunds, he reimburses. He knows that a dollar, unrighteously obtained, may corrupt all his estate. It may consume his wares; it may blast his credit; it may burn his dwelling; it may taint his goods; it may wreck his ships. Such are its rules for traffic, and we dare not soften the rigor or reduce the extent of its demands. The christian merchant may lawfully desire gain; but his dollars must come from the mint of Justice, and be able to stand any crucible or furnace to which they may be subjected.

A fourth principle which is vital with the character we describe is, that *he is but the steward of his own gains*. This is one of the clearest truths taught in the Scriptures. It is thus written: "Give an account of thy stewardship, for thou mayest no longer be steward." This applies to us all. It is not peculiar to the merchant, but the merchant must feel the force of the truth. It is true he has used the means by which wealth has been acquired. He has travelled and bought; he has packed and unpacked; he has

conciliated patrons and found purchasers; he has exported and imported: but he looks not so much at the means as the blessing on the means. He who is blind to an overruling Providence is utterly unfit for mercantile life. He sets himself up as an independent being; he is, emphatically, without God in the world; he lives within his own charmed circle; he accumulates, indeed, but the blossom of his prosperity is dust, and may, at any time, be dispersed. But happy, thrice happy is that merchant who knows that he holds his all as a depositary! He is the trustee of the widow and the orphan; the friend of the forlorn and the friendless; the stay of the stranger; the patron of all that is good; the cheerful and the liberal giver. He is the very antipodes of the man of whom it has been said:

Creation's blot, creation's blank,  
Whom none can bless, and none can thank.

There are merchants, however, who answer fully to the character of benefactors, and upon whom distressed humanity can draw at sight. Out of volumes of good deeds permit me to recite a few instances of mercantile generosity. Notice, if you please, that we can state but few instances. Our limits, however, alone forbid; for, in every age, merchants have been the patrons of genius, learning and the arts. They have founded asylums; they have reared colleges; they have purchased sumptuous paintings; they have

excavated canals; they have finished rail-roads; they have promoted missions, Sabbath schools, Bible societies, the erection of churches, and the support of the Gospel. In the north-west of Kentshire, in England, there is a place called Black Heath. On that heath stands a college reared by Sir John Morden, a Turkey merchant. Its design is to be a refuge for all poor and decayed merchants; and there very many have spent the evening of their lives. Sir John Morden was but the steward of his goods. He remembered his brethren who had suffered in the precariousness of trade; for the merchant is, emphatically, the man who may be ruined between sunrise and sunset. The humanity of such an institution, in England, is obvious; for England lives by commerce. She has been called by Cowper the mart of all nations. Hers are the riches of the Delta and the treasures of the Levant. She rifles the spoils of the West and the spices of the East. She robs the tropical girdle of the world of every flower and fruit. She clothes her Queens in Persian silks, and wraps her mariners in the furs of Greenland. She leads into her Norman parks the gazelles of oriental woods. She has forced her way among the secrets of the northern Pole, and burst the seal of the celestial empire. The sun never sets upon her dominions; and, when it is midnight at Windsor palace, the rays of that orb are playing upon her colonial possessions,

and are returning to throw in their splendor among the diamonds which sparkle in the august crown of Victoria. But let us not forget the benevolence of Sir John Morden; for we revere him more than all vulgar kings. As steward of the bounties of Heaven, he provided a home for unfortunate merchants; and there, in communion with each other, they live over and talk over their checkered mercantile life. Henry Thornton was likewise a good steward. Let us see whether this distinguished merchant did any good? He aided, then, in sustaining Wilberforce. The members of the House of Commons, in England, do not receive a *per diem* like our Congress. They are supported by subscription; and hence we find Dr. Scott, the commentator, and the poor rector of Aston Sandford, giving twenty pounds for the benefit of Wilberforce—and Wilberforce procured the abolition of the slave trade. Thornton, then, had some agency in abolishing a traffic pronounced to be nefarious both by Parliament and by our Congress. On one occasion, John Newton, of Olney, in Buckshire, wrote to this London merchant that his congregation was large in the morning, but thin in the afternoon, because he had no means of giving refreshment to the people who came from the country. Henry Thornton immediately instructed the rector to draw on him to a very liberal amount, that this obstacle to a full attendance in the afternoon might be removed. At

that time John Newton was almost the only minister in the established Church of England who was upholding evangelical religion. He was cherishing Cowper and using every effort to bring before the public the productions of the Weston bard—Weston being one mile distant from Olney. Since that period there have been many evangelical clergymen in the Church of England who would mix neither in the sports of the turf nor the field, but who have hunted after souls with more ardor than others hunted after foxes. But, subsequently, Newton became the rector of a church in London, called St. Mary's, Woolnoth. There arrived in London a poor young man who had left, in Scotland, a mother. Toward that mother he used deceit. He dated his letters to her from cities abroad, and pretended that he was travelling on the continent procuring, like Goldsmith, subsistence by his flute. While thus dealing in falsehood he strayed into Newton's church, and his conscience was powerfully arrested. Being the subject of a sound conversion he wished to devote himself to the ministry, and most generously was he sent to the university of Cambridge by Henry Thornton. This young man became the Rev. Claudius Buchanan, a distinguished missionary to the East. He spent years of research in oriental countries. He was a pioneer of missions, and to him, more than to any man, has it been owing that England planted the Christian



Religion in India and a sound calvinistic bishop now holds the see of Calcutta. We think, then, that with all this good Henry Thornton had some connection. Surely some of the best links in that chain of causes and effects passed through his counting-room! At that counting-room some pious females called one day. They were engaged in spreading the Bible among the obscure lanes of London. He gave them fifty guineas; and, upon opening a letter which was then handed him, he was informed that one of his India-men was lost at sea. "Here are fifty guineas more," said he; "for, as my wealth is perishing, let me put some of it where it will never perish."

It is probable that David Dale of the city of Glasgow, in Scotland, was a good steward. He founded factories at the falls of the Clyde, at an immense outlay of capital, with a view to give employment to the poor, and thus expend the means of subsistence. The rich scenery of Corra Linn was not more striking in nature than such conduct was striking in morals.

We are happy to say that our country is not destitute of generous merchants. The balance of this discourse might be filled in recording their deeds; In August, 1819, we spent an evening with William Bartlett, of the town of Newburyport, in Massachusetts. He was then far stricken in years, and has since departed this life. He had been engaged in the South American trade, and Providence had given

him great success. He had given an hundred thousand dollars to the Theological Seminary of Andover. He was an unpretending man; but, in the course of the evening, he took down a record and some maps and shewed me all the points in the pagan world at which young men were stationed who had gone from that seminary: and he seemed delighted that Christian light had radiated far and wide through his humble instrumentality. Another merchant of that town had just given twenty-five thousand dollars to found a new professorship, and we attended the inauguration at Andover. William Bartlett arrived in an old sulky drawn by a plough horse: but we could not help saying, "he is a merchant," as he sat by the governor of the state, among learned professors, and admiring pupils, and costly libraries which his munificence had purchased. During that visit we preached in the church of Newburyport. In that church are deposited the remains of George Whitfield, the greatest evangelist of modern times; but there was no monument over his ashes. We have since heard that one has been reared by William Bartlett at a cost of about three thousand dollars.

The christian merchant is indeed a steward. If he lock up his treasures it is to keep them secure, not from, but for their giver; and he supplicates their giver to send him worthy beggars, widows and orphans, strangers, the lame, the blind, the withered,

to partake with him in what he possesses. What has he, we ask, that he did not receive! Who gave him the canopy in which he sleeps—the credit on which he reposes—the garden in which he roves, or the saloon in which he entertains! When he shall prove that the same Being who blessed the means which he used could not have blasted those means, then, and not till then, will we allow him to scowl from his presence the children of indigence and misfortune—the man who has lost his limbs in the battles of his country, or the widow, whose house has been consumed by the element of fire! Believe me that the christian merchant will ever bear in mind the words of the Saviour: “For inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me.” He acts from a renewed conscience, where others look at nothing beyond human law and the mere maxims of society. The Bible, the whole Bible, is his rule and his standard. He does not smile his customers into debt, and then transfix them by the sword of the law. He does not wantonly pass off the obligations of honest and honorable men. He does not league himself with the agents of the commonwealth and apply his spur to their heels. He labors after punctuality in all his engagements for the honor of Religion. He establishes such a character that his word is his bond. When Napoleon was leaving Paris to escape to the United States, after

the defeat of Waterloo, he went to a banker and deposited with him five millions of francs. The banker offered him a receipt. "Not at all," said Napoleon, "you will die as you have lived, and that is one honest man." That banker has but recently died at Paris, and he had as large a funeral as Napoleon, although he never drew a sword nor wheeled a squadron in the field. The christian merchant, like others, is liable to adversity; he may become insolvent. But although the physical giants have long since disappeared from the earth, an occasional moral giant may even now be seen, who can wrestle down adversity in his stalwart arms. The christian merchant keeps not back from his creditors a thread or a shoe-latchet, much less a wedge of gold or a Babylonish garment. If he break, he breaks empty-handed. The world is then before him, and where to choose; but Providence is his guide.

We are not aiming to describe the private character of the christian merchant. That he has in common with all christians. His private struggles; his personal watchfulness; his closet devotion; his secret tears; his demeanor in his family; his domestic altar; his fidelity to servants, are things which must remain with his own conscience and feeling of individual responsibility. We are viewing him in his business; in his official station and public character. We must, therefore, be allowed to state a few temptations to

which even the christian merchant is sometimes exposed.

And, first. We have seen some merchants professing christianity who do not scruple to violate the Sabbath. They leave home and return on that day. They cannot let their letters remain in the office over Sunday, and even in sacred hours they must see the prices current. If politics run high, they must mingle the bitter paragraphs of the gazettes with the pure and hallowed pages of the bible. If the commercial world be shaken to its centre, they must see the details. Their faith is so weak that they cannot trust the Governor of the world with its management from Saturday night until Monday morning. "Oh, tell it not in Gath: publish it not in the streets of Askelon, lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph."

Secondly. Some merchants professing christianity are sometimes tempted to overtrade. They extend their credit beyond a reasonable prospect of payment, and their liabilities become so burdensome as to interfere with that tranquility of mind which is necessary to the pursuit of piety. He is thus tempted to murmur and even to be sceptical of Providence. To meet his engagements he must be harsh and rigorous with his customers: and that will affect his popularity at home, and the cause which he espouses, and the church to which he belongs. If a man buy many

more goods than he can sell, it is clear that he must lose or else he must put exorbitant prices upon what he does sell.

Thirdly. Some merchants are prone to speak lightly of the awful sin of usury. We do not intend to enter into this litigated point or answer the cavils of its advocates. It is a subject, too, that belongs more to the civilian than to the theologian. But for the present we say that the value of money is fixed by law, and the christian will neither break nor evade the law of the land. The usurer complains that society has placed too little value on his money. But if the law had allowed him twenty-five per cent. he would have wanted fifty. If the usurer be worth an hundred thousand dollars, it is society gives valuation to that sum; for, let society be dissolved and what is his money worth! Usury, as now practised among us, is an odious sin, and no man will ever see the kingdom of Heaven who thus robs his fellow in distress. It is a sin which taints a man's whole estate, and which affects his posterity. When the usurer is in his grave, he is presenting the poison of oppressive gains to the lips of his children, and that poison is not the less deadly because it is held up in a golden chalice. There is one way in which a man who has been betrayed into this iniquity may be released from the penalties which await him, and that is by *restitution*. "Restore!" "Restore!" is the order of the

Bible, and the mandate of Heaven. There is an instance of restitution recorded in the life of Parkhurst, the Hebrew lexicographer, in which no usury was employed worthy of mention. Parkhurst lived in Epsom, in Surreyshire, but owned valuable estates both in Surrey and Northamptonshire. He had rented one of his estates for five hundred pounds sterling per annum. At length one of his tenants failed in paying his rent, and assigned as the cause that he was manifestly over-rented. "Over-rented," said his landlord, "then a new valuation must be made." The arbitrators decided that four hundred and fifty pounds ought to be the value of the rent. "Then," said Parkhurst, "it becomes me to pay back fifty pounds for every preceeding year of the lease." Here was the power of christian principle; and let me implore all men engaged in business to examine narrowly and see whether they have got a shilling they ought not to possess.

Fourthly. An inordinate desire to be rich is a temptation too often indulged by men in mercantile life. We do not censure a desire to be rich, but we censure it when it transcends scriptural bounds. With some men the love of money amounts to an insatiable passion. Charge them, says the Bible, that be rich in this world, not to trust in uncertain riches: and they that would be too rich fall into divers temptations and a snare. And, again, it is said, that the

love of money is the root of all evil; or, as it reads in the Greek, *of all these evils*; that is, the evils of which the apostle was writing. There is scarcely anything more revolting than purse pride; and this is a sin offensive to God, and one to which a christian merchant may be exposed. The gains of merchandize are frequently immense. Girard died worth from seven to ten millions of dollars. The Rothschilds owned sixty millions. In the sixteenth century the wealth of the Dutch merchants was enormous. Many of them gave ten thousand florins for a single tulip. A French traveller who once visited a Dutch city wrote back to France: "In France we have but one queen, but here I have seen five hundred queens in one church." He meant that the merchants were kings and that their consorts were arrayed in royal attire. One of these men, a merchant of Antwerp, loaned the emperor, Charles V, one million of money, and to release the emperor from the slavery to which he had thus reduced himself, burnt his bond in a fire made of cinnamon. Such facts, to which a hundred others might be added, are apt to fire the imagination even of a christian merchant. He may forget his soul in redoubling his efforts to be rich. He may dream of a palace — of cultivated grounds — of tropical birds — of decorated gardens — of foreign plants — of stately ships — of fragrant spices; but these, all, and Heaven beside, would be too much for any



mortal. We condemn not the Holland merchants for their accumulations, because they may have performed many acts of generosity. We know not how many widows they may have succored, or to how many famished poor they may have given employment. They, at least, put money into circulation by sustaining the naval honor of their country, and by purchasing the productions of such artists as Rembrandt, Rubens and Van Dyke. We blame no man for seeking an easy independence, or for attending strictly to his worldly affairs. In the fifteenth Psalm it is said that the good man ordereth his affairs with discretion. If a man wish to grow in grace, let him keep out of debt. Many melancholy effects have followed even from carelessness in this respect. From a number of instances let me direct your attention to two in particular. On the 27th of June, 1777, Dr. Dodd, a highly popular preacher in the Church of England, was executed at Tyburn. He was more than a preacher. He was a man of Letters. He was a poet of more than ordinary power. He was chaplain to the Earl of Chesterfield; and, overwhelmed by debt, he was tempted, in an evil hour, during the absence of the Earl, to forge his name, and raise money on the credit of his patron. The fraud was detected, and Dodd instantly fell from his high standing. After receiving sentence of death, thirty thousand people in London signed a petition

to the king for a change of his punishment to transportation. At the head of this list was Dr. Samuel Johnson, who was at that time the most distinguished subject of the English crown. But the king was inexorable. His chains clanked on him a few more weeks, when he penitently met his fate. The other instance is Lord Bacon, who figured in the reign of Queen Elizabeth and of James I. He was the greatest man of the age in which he lived. Intellectually speaking, mankind owe him an immense debt. He was a close observer of all facts, both in the natural and moral world. He dispersed the mists of long existing error. He taught mankind to reason by induction; and philosophy, under his management, became a handmaid, dealing out practical fruit to millions of men as her guests. He was a peer of the realm—the favorite of his king—the courtier of Windsor—the oracle of law, and the retired scholar of Gorhambury, his seat near London. He saw the land of intellectual plenty;—its celestial arches—its remote mountains—its magnificent rivers—its brooks of milk, all shining in the light of day, while the tribes of England remained at the foot of the august elevation which he occupied. But happy would it have been for himself, though not for his race, had he been a peasant, driving his ploughshare through a few paternal acres; or a shepherd, leading his flock from down to down. In his office

as High Chancellor of England, he had received numerous bribes, and he was attainted of corruption by the first Parliament convened in the reign of James I. He was convicted, fined, banished from Court and Parliament, and degraded. He had lived beyond his means and indulged his household; and his servants had mastered him, instead of his mastering his servants.

These temptations the christian merchant avoids, while he cultivates a variety of virtues. He is kind, condescending, liberal, hospitable, public spirited, prompt to help every good work, a friend to order, and a supporter of the laws. But to be particular.

First, *He is a friend to mental improvement.* It cannot be expected of men in mercantile life that they should be scholars in the fullest sense of that word; for then, we will venture to say, they would make very mediocre merchants. It is not theirs, we think, to extract Hebrew roots or to thread Greek verbs; but there is a vast mass of knowledge falling legitimately within their calling. They may pursue calculation to a considerable extent. They ought to excel in Geography and Topography—to be well acquainted with all foreign ports—to know the productions indigenous to every soil and climate—to be acquainted with several modern languages, and nothing can excuse them for the want of good taste and very general information. By redeeming even

one hour in the twenty-four, they might become men of extensive knowledge. In the course of my reading, whenever I have met with any fact or incident reflecting credit on the mercantile character, I have noted that fact, and from a great number will state a few. Zeno was a merchant in the island of Cyprus, but returning from Phœnicia, he was ship-wrecked and lost all his goods. Instead of yielding to despair, he resolved to become a philosopher, and went to Athens, where he founded a school. The mercurial and polished inhabitants of that city presented him a crown of gold. In 1705, Linnæus the botanist was born in Sweden. He was the son of a poor Swedish preacher who lived by vending plants. Linnæus was, for a long time, in pecuniary difficulties; but, in his various journeys, he fell in with a wealthy Harlem merchant. That merchant took him to his seat in the country and opened to him his halls, his gardens, his green house, his aviaries, his warrens, his plants of every climate, and his flowers of every hue. From a wilderness of want the poor student was thus translated into a paradise of plenty, and in that paradise he spent a year free of cost. Brown, of Haddington, was an obscure wagon boy; but, by power of mind, he had taught himself to read the Greek language. Driving his team one day through Edinburgh, he saw a man walking in front of his bookstore. He stopped his wagon and asked the

price of his Greek Testaments. "Boy," said the merchant, "if you will read me some Greek I will give you a Testament." And he obtained one on that easy condition. It is well known that Brown spent his life in the deep obscurity of Haddington. Though a Presbyterian, he was not of the established church; and, of course, never attended the General Assembly in the capital of Scotland. Thirty-five years passed away and he went to Edinburgh. In passing through one of its streets he saw the same book merchant before his door. He went in and asked him if he had, on sale, any copies of Brown's Dictionary, or Brown's Self-Interpreting Bible.—"Only a few," replied the merchant, "for they sell fast and have been worth to me many hundreds of dollars." "I am the author of those works," said Brown, "and just called to thank you for the Greek Testament you once gave me, without which those works might never have been written." The man was astonished, but immediately recollected the incident, and joyfully presented the poor pastor with a valuable assortment of books. In 1806, Henry Kirke White, of whom you have all heard, died at the University of Cambridge. He was buried on the classic premises of that institution, but none of the learned professors or corporations of Cambridge ever dreamed of rearing a monument over his ashes. An American merchant, making a tour of England, a

few years since, ordered a monument at his own individual cost. Noble merchant! We have forgotten his name at this moment, but will recover it and try to enrol it where it shall be remembered, at least, until my memory shall cease. The father of Campbell, the poet, was a merchant in Falmouth. He was a gentleman and a scholar, and it was perhaps owing to his liberal pursuits that his son became, in connection with Lord Brougham, the founder of the London University, and that he sung the magic charms of hope and the tragic scenes of massacre, which occurred in 1778, in the valley of Wyoming. Let it not be forgotten that Irving, after failing as a merchant, paid off his obligations by his pen; and, though foreign criticism had long denied our country a title to taste, he appeared before those self-constituted and dictatorial tribunals, and made out our claim as transparent as light. Glover, an English merchant, was the author of *Leonidas*. Meikle translated out of the Portuguese the *Lusiad* of Camoens. Hoole, of the India House, translated Tasso. Barton and Lamb were clerks in the same house. Rogers, the author of various elegant poems, is now an extensive banker in London. Henry Thrale was not indeed a merchant, but owned extensive breweries at Streatham, a village seven miles to the south of London. His great wealth was lavishly expended in the cause of Literature. His house was the home

of Dr. Johnson, who there gathered around him a circle of society to which the Kings and Queens of England could scarcely have gained admission. Nor let it be forgotten that we are indebted to William Roscoe, a merchant of Liverpool, for some of the best historical works of modern times. His counting house was in Liverpool, but he kept a sacred and secluded cottage, on the banks of the Mersey, to which he retired at night; and there, among his books, he threaded the labyrinth of Italian history. Merchants, who say they have no time for mental improvement, ought to weigh these authentic facts.

Secondly, *The christian merchant is a friend of Temperance.* Many of this class of the community have proved the sincerity with which they have espoused that cause, by great personal sacrifices: and, after all, this is the best test of friendship. A man may make glowing speeches in favor of Temperance, and he may even abstain from everything that inebriates; but when a man's purse is opened to aid efforts of this kind, a doubt of his sincerity cannot be entertained. But volumes have been written on this subject, nor need we annex another word.

Thirdly, *The christian merchant is a supporter of the gospel.* He recognises the Divine command that they who preach the gospel and serve at the altar should live by the altar. You must not ask me why the Divine Head of the church appointed

an order of men to serve in the ministry. The Society of Friends oppose the support of the ministry, and the consequence is, with some few exceptions, that their instructors are feeble. It is unbecoming in ministers to engage in other pursuits. Much as we esteem the mercantile character, and much as we have labored to honor it, we should not like to see ministers vending merchandise. By supporting the ministry men loose nothing, for they keep a large number of ecclesiastics from their fields and departments of labour. The merchant gets more custom, and the lawyer more fees, because the minister he supports is neither a merchant nor a lawyer. This is self-evident; but many merchants want no such selfish motive to induce them to support the gospel. The late Robert Ralston, of Philadelphia, and the late Alexander Fridge, of Baltimore, and others we could mention, were men whose purse, and heart, and hand were always open when the church called for support.

Fourthly, *The christian merchant is a friend to Missions, Sunday Schools, Tract and Bible societies, and every institution for the promotion of good.* Some of the most valuable aids given to all such institutions have been derived from this class of men. Their ships have conveyed missionaries, free of expense, to their allotted fields of labour. At a meeting, some time past, a donation was sent to the board



of missions of ten thousand dollars for the China mission. The name of the donor was concealed; but we will venture to say that he either was or had been a merchant. If the world should ever be evangelized this class of men will act a conspicuous part in that great event.

Finally, *Religion is the chief concern of men*, according to that most beautiful and impressive declaration of the Saviour, recorded in Matt. 13: 45, 46, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant-man seeking goodly pearls: who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all he had, and bought it." In the twelfth century there lived in France, in the city of Lyons, a wealthy merchant whose name was Valdo. He sold all he had and gave to the poor. He established himself as the leader of a large protestant interest, and appealed to the Bible as the touchstone of truth and the standard by which everything, calling itself church, ought to be tried. According to his standard, popery was a caricature of the church; and against that popery he and all his followers solemnly protested. He became an influential man among the Vallenses, a people who, for ages, had lived in the valleys of Piedmont, and from their obscure retreats bidding defiance to apostate Rome. He probably purified their religious opinions, and thus they were called Valdenses and Waldenses. The world may

possibly be largely indebted to this man who made himself poor by choice; for the merchant of Lyons probably paved the way for Luther, the monk of Saxony, and for Zwingle, the shepherd of the Alps. Valdo was, doubtless, happy, and possessed of that which lifted him above the uncertainties of merchandise. Trade may and often does decline. In the sixteenth century the city of Antwerp, in Brabant, was stocked with a congregation of the richest merchants in the world; but the wharves of that city are now overgrown with grass, and its warehouses are covered with the rankest herbage. Those nabobs had their day. With what joy did they hail their returning ships, laden with the silks of Japan and all the rich productions of Ceylon and Borneo. But commerce, ever fickle and inconstant, changed its seats and unfolded her wealthy and ornate hand to enrich other cities. Where your treasure is, there will your heart also be; and happy are all they who, like a merchant already named in this discourse, deposit their wealth amid heavenly vaults, from which thieves cannot steal and which no fluctuations of life or reverses of fortune can disturb.

A christian merchant, then, is to be beloved and even revered. He blends kind offices with useful pursuits. He collects the productions of every climate. His ships work their way round distant capes and return laden with the balmiest fruits. He trans-

forms tin to gold and gathers rubies from the fleeces of our pastures. The five zones are his fields of action, and his mind ought ever to turn on the poles of universal charity. Wherever man be found, he recognises a brother: whether in China or Peru, beneath genial clouds or a copper sky. He cherishes the last spark among the ashes of indigence, and supplies the materials from which the flame is kindled that enlightens and makes glad the hovel of the widow. Should such a merchant be wrecked on the treacherous seas of commerce, there is a harmony in his character which would charm even dolphins to his rescue, that he might be borne to some haven where his fortunes may be retrieved.

## DISCOURSE III.

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THE CHRISTIAN BARRISTER.

“*Bring Zenas the lawyer.*” TITUS, III: 13.

THIS discourse will be limited to one class of men, known by the title of lawyers or barristers. They need not, however, suppose that any assault is intended either on their pursuits or feelings. If we did not entertain great respect for the profession we certainly should not address them to the exclusion of a large congregation. But justice to myself requires me here to say that I know nothing of law, having never read but one book connected with legal pursuits and that was Jones on Bailments. We had heard of its author as an orientalist, a poet and philanthropist; and, being a boy at the time, we were curious to see how he could write on so dry a subject. It was read through because of its lucid style. Barristers could not expect divines to read Blackstone and Coke or Lyttleton, any more than we could call on them to study Lightfoot's *Horæ Talmudicæ*, or

Ravennelli Bibliotheca Sacra. My simple design is to hold up the claims of my Divine Master to the attention of men who, in every age, have possessed powerful influence. The reasons which have led me to prepare this discourse may be thus stated:

First: *Many vulgar prejudices against the legal profession are indulged, which ought to be corrected.*

It is true that some of this calling have descended to unworthy arts; but unworthy arts have carried them only to an ill-gotten celebrity. I would demur, exceedingly, to having my own profession judged by the conduct of all its members. Thomas Becket, cardinals Wolsey and Beaton, as well as pope Borgia, belonged to the sacerdotal order. Because these villains degraded their vocation it would be unjust to alledge that the sacred office had been stained by a Chalmers or a Jay. And because judge Jeffries sullied the ermine of the bench, in the trial of the Puritan divines, my veneration is not at all diminished for the integrity of Chief Justice Hale, Sir William Jones, or an Oliver Ellsworth. The contrast, in fact, only places them on a higher niche in the temple of Justice.

Secondly: *The influence of barristers is great: and, on many accounts, deservedly great.*

Out of eleven Presidents of the United States, nine have been either lawyers by practice or were initiated into the elements of law, and were driven,

only by the force of circumstances, to abandon the pursuit for the more general pursuits of politics; by which we mean the science of government. One of them drew the celebrated paper called the Declaration of Independence, and when drawn another sustained it in debate. When in 1787 our Constitution was made, its adoption was probably owing to the light which had been thrown on that instrument by Jay, Hamilton and a citizen of our State.

When our treasury went into operation a lawyer was placed at its head, and to his financial abilities are we indebted for our national credit. It is true indeed that the Declaration of Independence has been denounced as a piece of plagiarism: but much as we dislike some of the religious tenets of its author, we cannot believe that he would have condescended to dress himself out in borrowed plumes. We will here state the circumstances. Fourteen months before July fourth, seventeen hundred and seventy-six, a number of citizens met in Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, and published a Declaration, the beginning and close of which are verbatim et literatim, the same which the sage of Monticello presented for signatures in Congress. That declaration, however, was sent on to Philadelphia, and placed among the archives of Congress. Here then is a mystery to be explained; but it is possible that both the opening and closing sentences of the instrument, were the current and

popular language of the country at the time. They were terms in common vogue. Be this, however, as it may; the circumstance does not infringe on the position laid down, that the influence of lawyers has been very great not only in this but in all civilized countries; and, therefore, we wish them, like Zenas, to be brought to our help.

Thirdly: *Whenever this influence has taken a right direction towards sound morals and genuine Christianity, it has been an influence most salutary.* Some young Barristers are, at times, inclined, we admit, to self-confidence; and particularly in determining upon the great principles of religion.—They have read, we grant, all that Hume has written; his dissertation against the miracles of the Bible; his caricature of that great man, Oliver Cromwell; his view of feudalism, and his account of what King Alfred did for the establishment of Law. They have read, also, Gibbon's attacks on the christian religion; and, on the basis of such knowledge, proceed to a dogmatical decision about the truth of our blessed Bible. But is this all the knowledge that is required to overthrow our faith in revealed religion? Have they studied the Hebrew, the Lyric, and Greek copies of the Scriptures? Have they compared four or five hundred manuscripts of the New Testament? Have they traced out the wonderful analogies between the Jewish and Chris-

tian dispensations? Have they mastered Edwards on the Will, or Bishop Butler's Analogy? Have they collated the Ancient Geography of Judea with fifty modern travellers, and have they plunged into the vast sea of Christian Literature? To check such presumption let lawyers speak whose influence has been given to religion. Let Grotius, the learned dutchman, speak; who, at home, or abroad on foreign embassies, devoted his nights to writing the work *De Veritate Christianæ Religionis*, which we have perused with singular pleasure. Let me here call on Chief Justice Hale, deemed an oracle of law in his day. He was a man of incorruptible virtue, of sterling integrity, and unostentatious, fervent piety, and the strictest observer of the Sabbath in all England, at the time he lived. We cannot but recommend to all the reading of his divine contemplations. We might cite Selden, the great ornament of the reign of Charles the First, who wrote on national law, and on many weighty, abstruse subjects, but who was a profound student of the Scriptures, and who sat in the Westminster Assembly of divines in 1643. It is remarkable that every Chief Justice of our country, thus far, has been a friend to morals and religion, and many of the judges of our Supreme Court have been pious men. The same is true of many of our state judges. It would be easy, here, to bring forward the many able



dissertations which have been written on the Bible by jurists and advocates, but we will be content with the mention of the testimony borne by Sir William Jones. No man was better calculated than he to judge. He was a very considerable proficient in the science of Mathematics; he understood twenty-seven languages—he had exhausted all the learning of the English Universities—he had plead in the courts of England—he was made a judge at Bengal by his sovereign—he investigated the Antiquities of India—he examined the statutes of Menu—he unravelled the religion of the Brahmins—he searched Pagodas—he gathered the flowers of Sanscrit poetry, and, at the early age of forty-seven, fell a victim to the climate into which he had gone. When he had finished his researches he made the following entry on a blank leaf of his Bible. “I have carefully studied these Holy Books; and, independently of their divine origin, am of opinion that they contain more pure morality, sound wisdom, and sublimer strains of poetry and eloquence than all other works beside, known among men.” Such a testimony, from so high a source, is certainly worth attention, and it ought to act as a foil to the scepticism of unprincipled minds and inexperienced young men. Talents they may possess; but they are utterly incompetent to weigh evidence in the same scales which were held by the powerful arm of Lord Bacon

or the more ornate hand of Sir William Jones. For these, and other reasons which might be given, it is my wish to apply some of the principles of Christianity to lawyers, in the sequel of this discourse. They are men valuable and even indispensable to society; but they are not without temptations, and of these they ought to be admonished with fidelity.

Law, my brethren, is a noble science. Hooker, the most judicious divine ever known in the church of England, calls it "the harmony of the world and the voice of God in the universe." Submission to its restraints, and obedience to its demands, is the duty of all. Its very administrators are bound by its requisitions. Irresponsibility is another name for despotism. It is true, we go for the independence of our judiciary, and our affairs would soon arrive at a sad crisis were our judges elected by the people. We hope never to see the dark day that such a dangerous power shall be given to the electors. It would soon introduce a dismemberment in society like that which agitated France in 1789. A judge should hold his office through good behaviour; because he administers justice not to a dominant party, but to all parties. Such questions, however, concern others more than divines.

We remark then, that *law has become a very complex science.* Its principles, at first, were extremely

simple, because, in its origin, the structure of society was simple. A chief governed his tribe as a shepherd ruled his flock. Even in Egypt judges delivered no elaborate opinions; but, after hearing a statement of the parties at issue, the judge immediately turned a small image, called the image of truth, to the party in the right. In the time of Demosthenes and Æschines, in Athens, and even in the time of Cicero, law was a much simpler branch of knowledge than it has now become. Since printing was invented—since statutes and precedents have multiplied—since new lands have been discovered, and commerce has enlarged its boundaries, and new states are being settled, its details have become more accumulated. It is now more necessary than before that there should be an order of men set apart for the purpose of studying the science that truth may be reached by the collision of minds. The idea of every man being his own lawyer is perfectly ridiculous, and we will not waste time in any attempt to overthrow a sentiment so fraught with every thing preposterous. Every professor of the science who would reach eminence, must be a devoted student and well read man. He ought to be acquainted, profoundly, with all systems of moral philosophy known among men. Too many of the profession have read nothing but Paley, when Scotland has produced giants in this branch. He ought

to be acquainted extensively with the Latin tongue, because much of his reading lies in that language. He should be able to thread every maze and avenue of English history from the time of Julius Cæsar, Agricola, Adrian—the Picts and Scots, the Saxons and Anglians, to the last statute of Queen Victoria. Especially should he be acquainted with the decisions and statutes of his own country. Some of the profession have even redeemed time for more general and polite studies. Blackstone, at one time, did cultivate elegant pursuits; but, when he came to grapple with the huge wilderness of law, he indited a very tender farewell to the Muses. Sir William Jones, among the jungles and banyan trees of the East, amused himself with the flowers of the imagination. A most conspicuous literary work of modern times was founded, it is said, in a high garret of Edinburgh, by a briefless barrister and a titheless preacher. The barrister has since become Lord Jeffrey, and the preacher, who was the late Rev. Sidney Smith, left, in all conscience, enough of England's tithes to his heirs. But there is a prejudice against those more general pursuits in a lawyer, except where they are directed to government, and the incongruity between law and politics is not considerable. In fact they are somewhat cognate, and hence lawyers step into political preferment just when they please. They have had a thousand chairs

in the Senate, and two or three thousand in the Lower House of Congress. But, if a lawyer wish to cultivate polite letters, his best way is to make an estate, make it honorably, and then retire, leaving his place to some one of his juniors. Society, in our country, is not advanced enough for the encouragement of the elegant Arts. The above plan was pursued by Cicero the great Roman orator. He appears to have been of a remarkably liberal mind; studying systems of philosophy as well as codes of law.—Nothing escaped his notice. His midnight hours were devoted to the investigation of his favorite subjects. His mind was ever on the alert, whether he reclined in the Senate, or stood in the Forum; whether he walked the streets of imperial Rome, or loitered on the olive and vine-dressed declivities of his villa, then called Tusculum, but now Frascati. There he collected the choicest books, and valuable manuscripts, and costly paintings, and the statues of old and distinguished Romans. The mind of Burke bore no slight resemblance to that of Tully; for he pursued the same course at Beaconsfield, near London, so far as his limited fortunes would permit. The taste of Lord Mansfield probably never deserted him entirely, though he became a profound student of law; and the declaration about him was never more than partially fulfilled when he forsook his earliest studies:

“How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost.”

It is impossible for any man to say why men of the legal profession should not be humble, self-denied, and spiritual christians. They rest, perhaps, under stronger obligations than many other men to embrace the christian system. Paul wanted Titus to bring along with him Zenas. The great apostle of the Gentiles knew, probably, that Zenas was possessed of a strong judgment, and the introduction of christianity was so irregular a movement that men of his sober views were greatly needed. We will briefly state some of their peculiar obligations to become disciples of our Redeemer.

It cannot, then, be denied, that the science of law owes a great debt to our christianity. Many laws, in fact, have been founded on the Jewish Pentateuch. This has been conceded by jurists. Trials by ordeal probably originated from trials of guilt or innocence presented in a case of jealousy as laid down by Moses. Walking among burning ploughshares was, no doubt, an appeal to a superior power and a superintending Providence. The laws of the Jewish commonwealth were made in Heaven, revealed to men, and enforced by Moses, just as by an inspired instrument and agent. A more perfect system could not have been desired for the Jews, or better adapted to the circumstances in which those semi-barbarous tribes were at that time placed.— There was a wonderful minuteness in all the regula-

tions, and a most rigid and scrupulous exactness as to the manner in which they were to be observed. They thus served as a school in which a benighted people were taught by rites and symbols. It is true, however, that this code has, in one or two particulars, been abused, as in the system of tithes and the union of church and state. The system of tithes prevails in England, even at this time, and often brings about quarrels, litigation, combats and wounds between the Rector and his congregation; and in Ireland it often leads to the pretty dexterous use of the shilalah, a kind of club which is manufactured in a town of the same name, and by which death is sometimes inflicted on the incumbent of the Parish. Before these tithes can be vindicated it ought to be shewn that the Divine Being presides in England just as he presided in the Jewish commonwealth, and that one whole tribe of thirty or forty thousand men are so curtailed in their privileges as to be absolutely without support, independent of tithes. The union of church and state was repealed by our Saviour. If you ask where and when He repealed it, we reply, by not taking it into His Dispensation. He no where enjoins it, and He might well omit it, for the church had become so corrupt that it helped the state in putting Him to death. But do not suppose, my brethren, that our objection to this unhallowed union stops with England and Ireland, be-

cause Episcopacy is their established system. We say that the Presbyterian church of Holland was wrong to enter into union with the state, and so was the Presbyterian church of Geneva. In 1701 the church of Scotland did the same thing, and she has lately experienced the bitter evils of the system, and wisely gone out from her Egyptian bondage, and is now on her travels to a land flowing with spiritual milk and honey. We hope never to see that dark day when the church in this country shall in any way ally itself to the government. We are aware, indeed, that some ecclesiastics are very restiff. They get tired of their humble office and want to turn civilians and politicians. They so sway it over their people that they become inflated with self-conceit, and imagine that they have the world in a sling, and that they can throw the pebble at the Goliath of the state. The church in her simple state is an object in which holy men have ever taken delight; but the state has ever been to it a boa-constrictor, taking it into its folds and then crushing out the heart of its spirituality. Wherever one denomination is fostered by the state, it will lead to the public or clandestine persecution of other denominations. All history evinces the truth of this statement. But though abuses have grown out of a misapplication of the Mosaic system; the system itself has ever been the fountain of law to the



world. It has matured and perfected, to a high degree, a science which, without it, would have been comparatively crude, and while the laws of Minos, Solon, Lycurgus and Confucius have perished, or are perishing, christianity is infusing its conservative principles into immense masses of society. When lawyers become christians they only uphold the system by which they are upheld. Lawyers also are under obligations to become christians, because their calling leads them to sift and weigh evidence. If christianity possess witnesses by whom its truth can be proved, they are bound not only to examine, but to cross-examine those witnesses. The Bible does not shun, but it courts the most eagle eye that ever shone. On one occasion we remember that a printer in England was indicted for publishing an infidel work, perhaps Paine's *Age of Reason*; and, on that occasion, Erskine, the celebrated advocate, appeared for the prosecutor. He took occasion in the course of his speech to enumerate some of the distinguished men who had spent their lives in examining the basis on which Revelation rests. This is one of the richest and most eloquent eulogiums ever pronounced on the inspired volume. To young barristers we cannot forbear to say, that a few hours would be profitably spent in giving it a perusal. It will, at least, teach them to be modest, when Newton, the great hermit of science, became a babe upon enter-

ing the temple of Revelation; when Locke was a perfect child in the hands of Paul; when the vast mind of Bacon drew its sweetest repasts from the Bible; when Boyle was reverential as an eastern pilgrim; and when the wheels on which the imagination of Milton rode in among the cherubim and seraphim were annointed by the Hebrew legislator. We want you to search our bible. If you can prove it to be false, then prove it and let the book be discarded; but if it will stand the strictest scrutiny, then bestow that scrutiny. Look into the Bible itself, for that is the very volume which is to be brought to the touch-stone. See what it teaches. Analyse, sift, thread it, and you will assuredly draw nigh to the conclusion, that it is infinitely more than a dry system of ethics, and that it teaches the total depravity of man, his helpless condition, atonement by a Saviour, the necessity of being born again, and salvation by grace, and that grace inspiring the rapture of gratitude. We challenge contradiction when we say that all distinguished men have been formed by the Bible. Even Hume was taught to read it when a child, and Rousseau read it throughout his whole life. Do not look at the priesthood, but look at the Bible, and then you will arrive at just conclusions. Does it teach human depravity? Then we know that all law and the sanctions of law have their foundation in that very depravity. Does

it teach human guilt? Then we know that guilt is nothing more nor less than liability to punishment for crime. Does it teach satisfaction to the majesty of offended law, and a divine government which has been outraged by sin? Then what is the course of human justice but satisfaction and restitution where injuries have been inflicted! If barristers possess talents for intellectual research, they are doubtless under some obligation to clothe those talents with moral power and enhance their usefulness among men. Why should they plead that their sphere is limited — that their practice is a kind of tread-mill — that it consists in getting the results of forthcoming bonds, and that but few causes of importance ever occur in our ordinary courts! But this may be a mere apology of, or, indolence. A man who wishes to honor his profession by becoming profound in it, will never want a sphere sufficiently large for his exertions. If dissatisfied with the routine of an inferior court, believe me, the inferior court is not going to get away from you, but you must get away from that court by merit — by studying and attention to business. If we begin on great, in this world, we will be apt to end on small; but, if we begin on small, we will end on great. The most distinguished lawyer now in this country began practice in the small town of Salisbury, on the Merrimack river, in New Hampshire; and he used the

retirement of that hamlet for purposes of devotion to the books of his calling. We need not say where that man has since stood, but, rather, where has he not stood, in that homage which has been paid to his talents, both at home and abroad. A profession can raise no man to eminence. He must raise his profession by laborious and indefatigable efforts. Many lawyers have begun their career in obscurity, who have become vastly useful to society at large; nor can that usefulness at all be curtailed by their fulfilling the obligations under which they lie, to take a decided stand as christians. In sitting in the Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies both of Scotland and this country, their services have been weighty, and generally rendered on principles highly judicious. And they have been equally so in the north of Ireland where the Presbyterian church prevails—and a blessed thing it is that it does prevail in that portion of the Island—for we were reading, a short time since, a book, written by Kohl, the Austrian traveller, in which he remarks: “The Presbyterians are no great favorites of mine; but, leaving the rags of the south of Ireland, where priests and tithes devour the peasantry, and going among the Presbyterians, it is like going from a heath into a comparative paradise.” We give you what he says, my brethren, and I am not the author of Kohl’s Ireland. If he would read it, perhaps

this sentence might open the eyes of that lawyer who is now agitating Ireland to its centre; and who, instead of attending his courts, is ignobly wringing from the palms of his deluded countrymen fifty thousand pounds a year, whilst he lives superbly at Derrynane Abbey, in the county of Kerry.

Barristers, my brethren, ought to embrace our religion, because, morally, they are placed precisely in the same circumstances with all other men. They have the same sins to be pardoned—the same guilt from which to be released—the same depravity to be reduced and conquered—the same habits to be corrected—the same kind of hearts to be cleansed—the same temptations with which to conflict—the same disappointments to encounter—the same keen afflictions to endure—the same stings of conscience to soften—the same Bible to understand—the same death to meet—the same dark valley to travel—the same last day, at which, as voluntary agents, to be responsible. And why should we despair of seeing them brought into the church as humble, teachable christians? We have known many of them to attend to the concerns of the soul. We have known some of them, distinguished for their opposition to the gospel, to become distinguished for their attachment to the Saviour. The late professor of law in the university of Virginia was a meek and lowly christian. Before he perished by the hand of one

of the students of that university, we had enjoyed his society ; and, at one time, it is believed, he had been an unbeliever. The late Governor Gilmer was, at one time, hostile to christianity, at least as to the internal experience of its power ; but he certainly became a most decided follower of the Lamb. The Secretary of State, who perished in the same sad catastrophe with Governor Gilmer, was a sceptic ; but he told me that after reading McGee on Sacrifice and Atonement, he had never entertained a doubt. The celebrated Patrick Henry, of this State, published at his own expense, and that for gratuitous distribution, an edition of Soame Jenyn's Essay on the truth of the New Testament. In the close of his life, William Wirt became a member of the church in Baltimore, of which Dr. Nevins was the pastor. He was a very consistent christian. Many of his papers, after his death, were published,\* and they all breathe the spirit of an ardent and child-like piety. It is, indeed, encouraging from those papers to find a man who had practiced with so high a reputation in many of the courts of his country—who had been sent for far and near—who had figured in the trial of Burr in 1807—who had been Attorney General of the United States—who had sketched the blue mountains and green valleys of Virginia, occupied in reading Flavel's treatise on keeping the heart. But need

But why need we multiply examples, as scores could easily be produced. We will therefore be satisfied with but one in addition, and the facts connected with it are extremely interesting. In giving the following narrative, we feel bound to pledge ourself for the truth of the statement. We know the incidents to be authentic, having lived nine years in the neighborhood where they occurred. There was a lawyer in Lewistown, on Delaware bay, in the state of Delaware. His name was James Patriot Wilson. His father was the pastor of a church in that place, in which, more than once, we have officiated. He educated his son, with great care, for the bar, and the son took so high a rank that James A. Bayard was his only competitor. He was a man of a powerful mind—of fine classical and large mathematical attainments. He made no pretensions to the rhetorical part of his profession. He used no jestures when he spoke, but stood, a tall, spare figure, with a countenance like snow. His animation was not in his limbs, but in his mind. In his pleadings he was ever calm, that he might be the more lucid—and dispassionate, that he might disentangle his subject from every thing extraneous. He was remarkable for the simplicity of his manners. All approached him with confidence, and yet with reverence. He kept a purse filled with small pieces of money, in order to give change to his clients.

It was said that he did not believe the Bible, but he molested no one with his sentiments, for he was quiet, unobtrusive, and kind to his friends and poor relatives. He emphatically went his own gait, and permitted no one to trouble him about his soul. All despaired of ever seeing him a christian. This man, however, under a placid exterior, carried very deep passions, when those passions were once aroused. One day, as he was seated in his office, a messenger ran in and told him that in a rencountre his brother had been killed. "Then" said he, "I'll put to death the man by whom he was slain;" and, accordingly, he got the same pistol by which his brother was shot, charged it, and went in swift and sanguinary pursuit. The man, seeing him approach, stood still and opened his bosom, saying "you are welcome to my life;" "and I'll take it," said the exasperated brother. He then drew the trigger, but the weapon snapped, and Judge Hall, who stood near him, extricated the pistol from his hand and discharged it in the air. This incident became a subject of serious reflection. He began to study the Bible; and more than once have we heard him preach charming spiritual discourses, in the city of Philadelphia, where he was a pastor for twenty years. At the time of his death, he was probably the most learned man in the Presbyterian church of this country, though he had not gone into the ministry until he



was forty years of age. Once, if not oftener, while preaching to his people, he alluded to the above circumstance; and he stopped, while his fine pallid countenance was dripping in tears. "But," said he, "these are tears of gratitude."

We have related the above incident, that we may learn never to despond about men embracing christianity. Professional men ought to feel that they need our religion, nor can they possibly do without it, at the hour of death. When pastor once, of a considerable congregation, I had spent a day in prayer to my Good Master, that He would send me some inquirers after eternal life. About 8 o'clock that night the door of my study was opened, and a profane physician and moral judge came in, to ask how they could be saved. They joined the church. The physician has recently departed this life, and the judge still walks consistently with his profession as a christian.

It is not my wish to be tedious in this discourse, and we will therefore conclude by some respectful and affectionate admonitions to any engaged at present, or who may intend to engage in legal pursuits. It is not impossible that others so employed may derive advantage from what may be advanced. First then, let me earnestly beg all present, not to violate the Sabbath. This is the day of sacred rest, and it is no breach of charity to say that barristers

very frequently trample it beneath their feet. We are very far from saying that events may not occur on the Sabbath which render legal services necessary as well as medical services. But these events are comparatively rare, and an enlightened conscience must guide the barrister. But where briefs, deeds, bonds, declarations, are drawn on that day, and law arguments studied, there can be no proper reverence for holy time. Chief justice Hale used to say, that all things went well with him in each week, just in proportion to the sanctity with which he had kept the previous Sabbath; but, say lawyers, upon your strict principles we could not reach our courts in time. You demand of us not to travel on Sunday. When then are we to travel? To this, we reply that courts meet too frequently in Virginia; or, at least, too many of them meet on Monday, and we fear that too many barristers are not zealous in urging on our legislature the necessity of changing the day. If they sincerely love the Sabbath, they would be moving the state to its centre for a change; and, if they will but move in it, we will venture to say that the change will soon be made. And, also, try for a while, in attending your courts, to keep holy the Sabbath day, on conscientious principles, and even at great sacrifice, and if you repent it, let us know, and we will next tell you how to shape your course.

Secondly: *Let me entreat you not to become immersed in worldly business to the detriment of the soul.* How often do barristers plead worldly engagements in bar of the claims of religion. They are often absent from the sanctuary, and about what can they be employed when we are lifting up the supplication and the hymn on high? This plunging into the world, my brethren, is an awful sin. As Job says, "it is an iniquity to be punished by the Judge." It is driving our merchants, by wholesale, down the steps of destruction. It is idolatry; it is wickedness; it is disguised atheism; it is a want of faith in divine Providence.

Thirdly: *Let me implore all who interpret and administer our laws, themselves not to be lawless.* We have laws against usury, and they are right, and founded on the immutable revelation of Heaven. Do not break them yourselves, but bring the violators to speedy justice. Drag the transgressors into day, and let them know how they stand with all virtuous men. We have laws against gaming. Be vigilant in detecting those who ruin the youth of our country, and who thus circulate money without labor. We have laws against duelling; but is it not mortifying to hear of our members of Congress meeting in secret conclave at the mid-night hour, to legislate about a rifle—to pick a flint, or examine a trigger. Oh, "tell it not in Gath, publish it not in

the streets of Askelon!" Was it not an humbling sight, on the 11th of July, 1804, to see General Hamilton, the greatest expounder of law then in America, and a Vice President of the United States, setting out from New York, in two barges, to reach the bloody Hoboken! How slowly those skiffs move across the river! How solemn the sylvan recess! Hark, my brethren, hark! the soldier, the statesman, the patriot falls, and yet Hamilton knew that all this was sinful! Barrington, in his Irish sketches somewhere mentions, that the lawyers at the bars of Ireland, at one time, used to delight in duelling so much, that they made up some four or five duels in each week. Here, then, were lawyers metamorphosed into so many unprincipled homicides.

Fourthly: *Let me entreat you to cultivate the spirit of generosity; for an avaricious spirit will ever be a reflection upon the professor of the noble science of law.* It is extremely probable that Bacon had a sordid passion for money—money, however, not to hoard up, but to expend. He did some mean things. He was an ungrateful man. The Earl of Essex had been his patron and his friend. He had, in fact, given him a small but beautiful estate.—When Essex was tried, who would not have supposed that Bacon would have started from his couch and rushed to his defence! Who could suppose that he would have appeared as his prosecutor. But he

did so appear! When judge Chase was arraigned, before the Senate, on charges perfectly frivolous, who would suppose that a lawyer who owed all his eminence to his fostering hand, would have declined such a noble opportunity of pouring out the sounds of an eloquent and impassioned gratitude. Even Curran was not always proof against money, nor was Lord Coke. His behaviour, on the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh, has left a black stain on his memory. He violated common decorum, to say nothing of urbanity. "You spider!" said he, "you carry a Spanish heart beneath an English face." But look at Cicero, how different was his behaviour. We envy not the Roman orator when he rose to thunder at Catiline in the Senate; or when he arraigned Verres; or when he made Cæsar tremble; but we do envy his rich feelings of gratitude, when he rose to defend the poor and friendless poet, Archias, who stood at the bar, without patrons and without friends, but adorned by every spoil and embellished by every wreath which taste could bestow. He had taught Cicero, and the orator did not forget his preceptor. Let me beseech you to protect the widow and orphan. See that their wrongs are redressed. Bestow on them the labor of the mind, which is often more valuable than that of money.

Finally: *Be persuaded to lend your co-operation to every scheme that may tend to extirpate the evils*

*of society, or to enhance its moral tranquility and comfort.* Intemperance is an awful vice, which has scourged our race. It may be discountenanced in many ways. Contribute to the preaching of the gospel as far as lies in your power. "The lady Law," said John Selden, "need not always dwell alone. She has often been yoked with benevolence, and they have wrought harmoniously in that car from which philanthropy has dispersed her benefits to rejoicing multitudes." But if there be any one scheme of good more than another, which we would recommend to the attention of barristers, it would be the scheme of colonizing with our free people of color the Western coast of Africa. We believe this to be the most urgent and important field of good that now presents itself to the christian world. One of the sweetest reminiscences of my life arises from the fact, that some years ago, I spent thirteen months in traversing these azure mountains and vallies of unrivalled beauty, to plead the cause of Liberia. Would that I had plead it with moral success; but one thing I know, that it was plead with sincerity and to the best of my poor abilities. Let me call, especially, on young barristers, to give a portion of their time to a profound study of the claims of Africa on this country, blessed with such accumulated privileges. We, your seniors, must soon leave the stage of time. To you we commit this impor-

tant work, and prove not faithless to the august and responsible trust. Follow in the footsteps of a Caldwell, a Key, a Gilmer, a Fitzhugh, and a Grimke. The goal of philanthropy is in the centre of Africa. They started, but were broken down in the mighty race! Happy, however, shall the youth of coming generations be, who shall reach it; for they will be crowned with palm leaves, plucked by the now degraded, but then regenerated millions of a continent. Amen.

## DISCOURSE IV.

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### CHURCH EXTENSION.

“*Enlarge the place of thy tent.*” ISA. LIV: 2.

The text may either be a command or an exhortation. It was usual in Palestine, even for one shepherd to pitch his tent or tabernacle; but in a short time he might have been joined by a caravan. The canopies were stretched upon stakes and fastened by cords; and the church is here exhorted by the prophet, both to lengthen her cords and strengthen her stakes. But what was a lonely tabernacle or a cluster of tents compared with the encampment of an army on the plains of the East. The camps of such an army dotted frequently a spacious area, with a quickness like that which brings the planets into view, or that which assembles the constellations of the night. A poet has thus described the hosts of an Arabian Caliph, which description we introduce, though his language be most too gorgeous for a grave discourse :



“ Whose are yon gilded tents that crowd the way,  
Where all was waste and silent yesterday?  
This war-like city, that in a few short hours,  
Hath sprung up here, as if the magic powers  
Had conjured up, far as the eye can see,  
This world of tents, and domes, and sun-bright armory :  
And camels, tufted o'er with Yemen's shells,  
Shaking in every breeze their light-toned bells.”

We have chosen our text, with a view to recommend and enforce the plan of *church extension*, set on foot by our General Assembly, and with which our Presbytery concurs. The plan is simple. It is to call on the whole Presbyterian family in the United States for contributions, with a view to aid in the erection of churches. The fund thus raised is to be sacred to the rearing of edifices in destitute parts—to helping emigrants on our frontier settlements—to lifting spires over the lanes of our cities—to succoring congregations oppressed with debt, and to breaking up those petty schemes of paying off the obligations of building committees, to which multitudes resort. This fund is to be under the supervision of our General Assembly; or of the church in its collected capacity, as the disbursing committee will only be our agents, and of course responsible to our supreme judicatory. This plan is, as yet, in its infancy; but an hundred new churches have already sprung into being beneath its influence, and now stand as monuments of its power. But these are mere specimens of what may be accomplished

by this plan. In one of the towns of Switzerland, the whole country is shewn in miniature to the traveller; but what is that specimen view, cast, indeed, on a fine but contracted scale, when contrasted with the outline of the Helvetic republic? Our ecclesiastical outline is far more extensive, and we hope to fill it up at the four cardinal points of the compass, and arrange our churches around the circle of this magnificent scheme. It only wants the smile of Providence, which will be promptly given, the diligence of our ministry, and the generosity of our people, who have always been liberal to every good design.

This scheme may be considered in the light of a moral discovery. Its inventor deserves the thanks of the Presbyterian church. He has opened a continent which presents space for operation, and materials with which to build, and annointed far and wide with a spiritual influence sweeter than Arabian gums. There are mechanical and intellectual discoveries of the highest moment, which have abbreviated human labor and annihilated distance. It is needless to enlarge on inventions of the kind, for we are all familiar with propelling boats by fire—with the steam engine, which facilitates transportation, and with the telegraph, which disperses intelligence through tracts of space with electric swiftness. If the glory of mechanical and physical inventions be

due to the Creator, how much more the glory of moral discoveries! When millions of children convene for the instruction of Sabbath schools, shall we not consider Robert Raikes as having been an agent of Providence? When the scriptures are found in Indian wigwams, shall we not believe that the tour over Wales, which led to the formation of the British Bible Society, was an inspired tour? When Presbyteries are planted in India, and will soon convene in China, shall we not honor the hand that first touched into vibration the missionary cord, as a hand sustained by an invisible, but Heavenly power? We should esteem but lightly, the man who does not reverence Columbus as an instrument of good; but we should esteem much more lightly, the individual who fails to recognize the divine interposition, in the detection of novel schemes, for promoting the moral welfare of our race. The world is the christian's country, and his country is the world. If a new invention, by which good can be effected, were placed on a point exactly opposite his feet and on the other side of the earth, he carries an arm by which that invention can be grasped, and a wing of fire by which he can poise himself before such a sweet-scented flower, though it may, perchance, bloom in other churches or in other lands. We know with what ease a giant could pull an orange, and we know with what rapture a christian can pluck, from

any latitude, even the smallest bud that promises to enrich with novel fragrance any portion of our Zion.

Many centuries have passed since the Presbyterian church was planted by the twelve apostles, who were commissioned for the purpose. These men were not scrupulous as to where they preached. They did not seek the temple, for they knew it was to be destroyed. They sought the cave, the desert, or the synagogue, in which to proclaim their messages. But the world is subject to change, and, in the present state of society, such appliances as churches or buildings in which believers convene, are necessary, if not indispensable. Innovations were gradually introduced, by which men lost the model of the apostolic organization, until the form was partially restored by the Waldenses, and more perfectly by Calvin, on the basis of the New Testament. The New Testament was with him a permanent constitution, and if men had violated or changed it by novelties, he had a right to restore it, and to retrieve into simplicity the complex machinery of priests, and to cleanse by his breath the foul web of Popery. All christians would have acted in the same way, and just so all patriots act. The Pope was established in the seventh century, as a second Aaron; but Calvin knew that this was done contrary to that oath of the Lord, which says, "Thou art a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec." The

church has gone through ages of moral and mental darkness; but since the reformation, she has emerged into comparative light. Her resources are increasing, and her means of usefulness becoming more abundant; but it is strange that, until lately, this plan of church extension has not been cherished. It has broken in upon us with the light of an unpremeditated discovery. Still occasional efforts have been made, and it is nothing but justice to mention here two excellent women, worthy of all praise. We mean lady Glenorchy, and the countess of Huntingdon. The first of these was a lady of rank in Scotland, who took her title from one of the glens of that country. She was a pious member of the Presbyterian church, which, we regret to say, was established by law, in 1701, when Anna became the Queen of Great Britain. Established churches are generally afraid of the very shadow which they create; and, with them, drowsiness becomes the order of the day, as well as of the night. There is peculiar jealousy of all attempts to make one more church than the law allows. It is called a conventicle, or a kind of separatist box or house for ravens. If the old king hear of it, he begins to toss about his sceptre in a kind of fury, and he summons the Bishop, who is apt to add fuel to the flame, and to wield his crosier in juxta position with the sceptre. to strike down some luckless Bunyan; or some heroic

Baxter; or some heart-searching Flavel; or some didactic Owen; or some eloquent Bates; or some cornucopian Howe, and demolish the boxes in which they preached, and produce a fluttering among the ravens. Against such puerile prejudices had lady Glenorchy to contend, in her attempts to enlarge the boundaries of the Scottish church. Had she been seconded by the then lazy clergy of Scotland, she might have done much to build up and enlarge the establishment and quicken it into spirituality. She did, however, procure the licensing of some buildings, both in England and Scotland. Though her efforts were circumscribed by law, and her hands fettered by the State, her designs were noble. The State could not quench her sparkling zeal, for her zeal was as much above the reach of kings, as is the planet, whose light runs independently over the moors, and lakes, and kirks of Scotland. She felt deeply for the spiritual destitution of her country, and when she died, she left on earth the remembrance of the just, and her name is revered from the mountain wall of North Britain, to the dale of Teviot. The same may be said of the countess of Huntingdon, whose labors in the cause of church extension have been highly appreciated. Towards this woman, Southey, the biographer of Wesley, has used nothing but ridicule; but we wish that the poet Laureate had possessed but a fractional part of her

goodness. On an income of not more than fifteen hundred pounds sterling, she reared churches and rented chapels over England, for the use of preachers in her connexion. She founded seminaries at Cheshunt, in the shire of Herts, and at Trevecca in Wales. One of her chapels was in the superb and ancient city of Bath, in the shire of Somerset, and has long been filled by no less a man than the Rev. William Jay, whose works of devotion have been widely circulated. It was well to open an evangelical chapel in that city, as it is the resort of the gay, and of thousands in feeble health, and to many such Jay has been an instrument of good. We know not how many of the fashionables he may have won from the pleasures of the world to the higher charms and better pursuits of religion, or how many he may have sent home in spiritual health who arrived there full of the leprosy of sin. He still preaches among the meadows and vales, and about the fountains of Bath; and in this way the countess of Huntingdon, though dead, still speaks from her sepulchre at Ashby de la Zouch to the children of dissipation. She has left the monuments of her zeal on the English downs, and her memory is revered not so much by the dignitaries of the church and the peers of the realm, as by hedgers, miners, colliers and dairy-men. Why may not females be energetic in extending the church? Does

woman lack energy in any great scheme? Who saved the colony of Virginia? Who opposed the Spanish Armada? Who suspended her jewels before the eye of Columbus and enriched the world by the addition of a continent? Who strengthened the pinions of the imagination when Longinus rose in search of the sublime? Who founded Carthage? Who fed Mungo Park on the sands of Africa? It is true that a woman fired Troy; but it is equally true that Rome was burnt to ashes by a woman. But among the advocates of church extension it would be most unjust to omit Dr. Chalmers of Edinburgh. His pen has glowed with fire in commending this scheme to the notice of the Scottish church. In early life, he was settled in the Parish of Kilmany, in the shire of Fife; but he was subsequently translated to Glasgow on the Clyde. He had scarcely arrived in that populous city, before his eagle eye discovered the need which existed for church accommodation. In Glasgow new kirks began to raise under his auspices. His civic economy of large towns might be studied to advantage by Sir Robert Peel in his pavilion of diplomacy. His efforts, indeed, have been confined to the places in which he has lived; but his views on this subject have become universally known through the press. In his writings, his ardor in this scheme is apparent, and we read his breathings after more churches, that a



population ravenous after spiritual food may be supplied, and that the highlands of Scotland may be surmounted by steeples, and its lowlands adorned by spires. And these results will soon take place :

From where the loud Corbrechtan rolls,  
To where the gently murmuring Tweed  
Guides up and down its grassy knolls,  
The flocks that on its margin feed.

Permit me now to mention the secession which has lately taken place from the established church of Scotland, and which has led to one of the most remarkable efforts ever made in behalf of the plan which we are trying to illustrate. Since that event more than seven hundred new kirks have arisen in Scotland. The Scottish church was reformed by Knox, in 1559, who was a man fearless and somewhat rude, as Luther was cheerful and uncompromising; or as Melancthon was modest and studious; or Cranmer was cautious and timid; or Latimer brave, rough, and ready; or Calvin acute, learned and sagacious. But when Queen Anne ascended the English throne she engaged to sustain a thousand parishes in Scotland, and to pay a thousand small stipends to ministers who might officiate in the churches. The Queen or the King, as it might be, was to send annually a commissioner with his mace of authority to open the General Assembly in the city of Edinburgh. The church kept itself as independent as possible in this gretna green marriage to

the State, and resisted encroachments from time to time attempted on her rights; but the puseyite Victoria, through her prime minister, began seriously to infringe on the constitution of the kirk, whilst her husband was shooting grouse and slaughtering deer. She totally misunderstood the constituents of caledonian character, for the Scots have always loved both national and ecclesiastical freedom, and have always been prompt to make sacrifices for principles. The ministry of England wished to plant merry preachers in the congregations; or men who were always present when the flocks were to be shorn; but then they were to be turned out to a bleak spiritual winter, instead of reclining in the warm pastures and sunny folds of the Redeemer. This was tried in the Presbytery of Strathbogie, where ministers were ordained, and the General Assembly deposed the ordainers and removed the incumbents. Truly Lord Brougham might well say that Presbyterianism is too republican ever to be popular in England; for the General Assembly were but sustaining the rights of the people in the choice of their pastors. The Presbyteries which refused to ordain and instal were then dragged into courts of law, and substantially arraigned at the bar of the Parliament. Then was all Scotland agitated from her centre to her friths and forths, and the church, which had so long slumbered in olive woods, began

to roll out her chariots, and unchain her fiery steeds for battle with Dukes and Queens, and to encounter, once more, if necessary, those flames of martyrdom, which, in the reign of Charles the Second, had burnt so ravenously among her hills and dales. Happily, however, the contest was ended by the secession from the established church of nearly all the valuables it contained; and as this event is ever to be remembered, a brief description of it may not here be out of place. Five hundred of the clergy, but since increased to more than seven hundred, resolved to withdraw, and the withdrawal was effected on a bright spring day in Edinburgh. We need not speak of the renown of that classic city, which has been most justly styled the Athens of Scotland.— There stands the palace of Holy rood, and the house in which Parliament used to meet when Scotland had a Parliament; and there are old cathedrals, and kirks, and parks, and crags, and hills, and ranging streets, composed of quarried rock and parian marble; and among which, seats of learning unfold their secluded gardens. On the night before the secession, the city had become full of people, who longed to behold the moral convulsion which was to rend the church of their fathers from the lap and the neck of the State. They had come from the Clyde and the Nith, the Dee and the Yarrow; from rippling burns and tracken glens; from lakes once

dyed by the blood of martyrs; from heaths and islands; from town and city, and such a convention old Edina had never before witnessed. It is a serious thing to disturb tried connections, and thousands were still doubtful whether the clergy would be true to their reiterated declarations; but time plumed its wing and hurried it on to the decisive moment. The vicegerent of Victoria arrives at Holyrood, surrounded by Lords of Session and Scottish nobility. The great bell is sounded, and the procession begins its march; and in the long line are ministers, who had fed their flocks on the Grampian and Pentland hills, and among the vales of Kilmany, and by the locks of Lomond and Katrine. They had grown gray in the establishment, and had been its moral and gigantic pyramids; but they were now endowed with a kind of supernatural and locomotive vigor to manage the unhallowed burden. When they entered their place of meeting, what a dense crowd! What a gaze of mingled scepticism and confidence on the part of the people! What an array of intelligence, science and literature — of civic, political and legal information! There were men present who had long swept the lyre of Scotland; who had scaled the steps of philosophy; who had bent over her plants with beaming eyes; who had searched her minerals and explored her caves; who had administered her jurisprudence and expounded her laws; who had

wielded her eloquence and dispersed abroad her learning; who had depicted her scenery; who had led her armies, and who had guided her fleets among the ever restive and winding waves of the sea. And there were peasants, who had trudged over snows to the house of the Lord, or trampled down the blossoms of the heather at the sound of the kirk-going bell. And now the question is, will they leave or will they stay in that corrupt establishment; for the seceders were certainly bound to it by many tender ties and long cherished associations. We can almost read their thoughts during the brief interval of suspense, for those thoughts must have been at least partially employed upon the nooks in which they had so long resided; upon kirks with which they had long been familiar, and upon homes, plain, but embellished with fir trees, and alive with flocks; upon closets which had been annointed with prayer, and studies embalmed by research; upon gardens in which they and their children had wrought all which must be relinquished and given back to the Queen. But the deed was done. They rose, amid that breathless audience, scorning the leeks and onions of England, and made good their way to a land of spiritual milk and honey. And this was a spectacle worthy to have brought to a poise the ever working wing of Gabriel, and to have arrested even his eye when it wakes from some dream of

reverence, or some profounder night of homage, glowing in tints of heavenly reflection, and kindling more and more to meridian splendor.

In viewing what Scotland has done in church extension, may we not derive from the view a motive to enlarge the Presbyterian church in the United States by funds given freely by our people? Though the nobility, almost to a man, adhered to the old establishment, the Scottish people have, since the division, contributed nearly four millions of dollars to the purposes of the free church. We are aware, indeed, that objections are urged against this plan, one or two of which we will mention. It is thought, by some, that the funds of our General Assembly are too numerous, and here we propose to add another to the variety. But sooner than neglect church extension, we had better give up some less important fund. It is true, however, that all the money comes back to the people, and is returned to them with many benefits. We are opposed to the General Assembly becoming a monied corporation, just as much as the people. We go for their disbursing all they get, and that as quickly as possible; and they have done so according to the best of my knowledge and belief. When, we ask, did Presbyterian ministers ever rob the people? They made Scotland rich at the Reformation, but the nobles seized the church revenues and left them to starve.

They get a bare subsistence in Scotland, Switzerland, Holland, the North of Ireland, and in the United States, even in the nineteenth century of the christian era. They are obliged to toil for bread just like other men; but we want to see our beloved church extending. Others think that this money will be expended in building fine churches and decking them out in artificial ornaments. We admit that pomp and show is the easily besetting sin of some ministers; but a fund raised from the people ought not to be squandered in this way; nor will it be. The churches, we hope, will be small, neat and simple. What is St. Peters at Rome but a theatre for the exhibition of religious apes! To what good purpose can the cathedral of Salisbury, in England, which is four hundred and twenty feet long, be appropriated! Who ever worshiped satisfactorily in Westminster Abbey, or in St. Paul's! We have heard some pious Episcopalians regret the erection of that Puseyite cathedral in New York, and in their regrets we cordially sympathise. But we wish Presbyterians to give of their means to multiply simple churches, and to send in an annual supply of money to the General Assembly, to be used for the holy purpose of building, not gaudy, but modest edifices. When the Nile, after an overflow, returns to its bed, the prospect of the traveller reveals steeples and minarets in abundance, as well

as fields of grain; and after an inundation of Presbyterian generosity the inundation will come back to us, and we shall behold moral plenty crowned with a multitude of heavenly spires. By merely talking of this scheme we are only like the musician who works on the air; but the gladness he inspires dies in the sound. Every good plan is liable to objections; but no man of reflection can fail to see the necessity of combined action for the spreading out of our churches. We need a multiplication of houses of worship. The church ought to multiply itself, and if every member of our body were to give but a fraction of his means, the Assembly of the fractions would at least present a thousand whole buildings in which christians might meet, and ministers might preach, and Bible classes be instructed, and Sabbath schools taught, and children baptised; and in which the bread of the gospel might be prepared for the hungry and the famished. The whole church is one; if not in form, it is certainly in feeling. A Presbyterian, in the north of Iowa, who has a church, can certainly feel sympathy for the one in the south of Louisiana, who has no ordinances and no house of worship to enter. What can prevent a man in Nantucket from feeling for the destitution of one who lives in Oregon prairie? Is there anything wrong in wishing the whole Presbyterian body to feel a common interest and a com-



mon sympathy, and to establish a fund by which this sympathy may be promoted and enlivened? Is it out of place to transform the church into a long drawn gallery, through which the least whisper of want may be distinctly heard, and supplied so soon as heard? Or is it wrong in the General Assembly to establish a moral Magnetic Telegraph, and to create a fluid composed of sympathy and love, by the use of which they may ascertain the want of churches at a distance, and despatch, not hieroglyphics hard to be understood, but cards stamped with eagles which their people have given, and with plans and pictures of edifices for worship, to the prairie, to the desert, to the village and the city. Consider the need of churches which almost every where exists! Consider the emigration which is flooding this country! The Presbyterian church has good reason to expect more accessions from the north of Ireland, from Scotland, from Holland, from among the Swiss, from the descendents of the Huguenots, and even from among the Lutherans. Shall we not provide room for their accommodation?—There is a city in Asia called Pegee, which is distinguished by this peculiarity, that every dwelling has a palm tree at the door. Pilgrims may rest beneath their umbrella shade, or enter each house as a guest; and thus we wish to provide moral shade and spiritual refreshment for emigrants passing through the

length and breadth of our land. Consider, too, the declension and total decay of many of our houses of worship — of the many that are brought to the hammer of the auctioneer — of the many struggling with debt — and of the many which are obliged to beg or institute fairs to pay off their obligations.

The ecclesiastical wants of our country, then, are great and urgent, and the more to be considered when we think what kind of a country this is which we inhabit. It is one in which no church is sustained by law. We have no congress or parliament endowed with constitutional power to erect cathedrals and chapels of ease. Every thing is conducted on the voluntary plan. If a church will not keep itself and enlarge itself, it must inevitably perish, or, to say the least, be constantly losing what territory it may have gained. Shall Presbyterianism lose or gain? She must go back or advance! She must make retrograde or aggressive movements, for she cannot be still! She must be enshrouded in moral darkness, unless she rise to disperse that darkness! If she fail to execute this plan, others will seize it and turn the invention to their own advantage. But we do not intend to lose the things we have wrought, or neglect that vast field presented to our efforts in the United States. What a wonderful country! England has a few fens, Scotland a few dusky and circumscribed lakes, Ireland a few bogs, Holland a

few dykes, and Switzerland a few glaziers; but look at the dimensions of this country, and what prospects for church extension are opened to the long drawn gaze of the christian philanthropist. We have on our northern border, lakes which may be called seas, over which is spread the sail of commerce, and along the shores of which clans of population are almost daily arriving. On our southern border is the gulf of Mexico, the margin of which is cultivated by the planter. The Atlantic lays its tribute of shells on our eastern coast and mingles its loud notes with the hum of industry; and on the west our people are urging their way, and relinquishing their staves and sandals on the Pacific. Within this field of vision, what a multitude of rivers that pay their tribute to our lakes, or their louder homage to the sea, and on whose banks men are rearing incipient towns and cities! What a diversity of objects, and what a variety of interests, all combined under one form of government! Our population has grown from three to twenty millions, and this country, at some future day, may support as many millions as swarm in China. But can we all be held together by a paper constitution, without light, intelligence, education, morals and religion? No man acquainted with history believes that we can unless we expel religious ignorance. Christianity, every where cherished, may and must preserve

our institutions, and to this end the resources of our church ought to be applied. It is true that we have aims infinitely higher than the preservation of anything human. The man who takes his portion in this life may admire the science of government; he may found academies; he may build temples of law and halls of justice; he may rejoice in mechanical inventions; he may love the plough; but the christian looks at his race in the light of an immortal interest. He desires that men may be collected into the church of the Redeemer from every desert, and prairie, island and continent. He alone can justly adopt the sentiment of the Roman dramatist, which drew rounds of applause in the theatres of Rome: "I am a man, and nothing is alien to me which belongs to humanity."

It may be well here to ask whether there be anything in the history of the Presbyterian church, which authorises the belief that it is capable of extension. May we not lawfully bring up the past to illustrate the future? About one hundred and forty-six years have gone by since the root of Presbyterianism was planted in this country. In the year 1705, all our denomination in this vast continent might have been held in this house. Our beginning was small. We are indebted to the north of Ireland for that pioneer, who brought the system to the then colony of Virginia. The Rev. Francis

McKamie, upon his arrival in this country, settled in the county of Accomac, where, by mercantile pursuits, he became not only independent, but wealthy. For ten years we drew the interest of one hundred pounds, left by his only daughter, for the support of the gospel in that county. But the few congregations which he established in that peninsula, between the Chesapeake and Delaware Bays, were not nipped in the bud, though exposed to many blasts of opposition. They were watched over by the same Providence who had guided his chosen servant across the sea; and now the vine which he brought from the green isle of the ocean, has entwined itself around many thousands of western altars, and enriched millions of hearts with its fruits. Our present statistics show the great increase which has taken place in both branches of the Presbyterian family, even since the separation in 1837. Ulterior good may arise from an event which, at the time, was deplored by many good men. It has led to the erection of many new buildings, and to the employment of new forces in carrying forward the church. The two separated wings of our body, we trust, will not be at war, but aid and encourage each other as opportunities may arise. This increase has taken place in defiance of great and virulent opposition. It is in vain to disguise the fact, that what ground we have gained has been

reluctantly yielded; but truth is mighty and it will prevail. More ground will be the result of our adherence to our sound doctrines and excellent forms, which have challenged the confidence of so many thousands. Encouraged by the past, shall we not go on to build? Shall not the hammer of the artisan be heard in every portion of our country?—There remaineth yet much land to be possessed, and we have not yet run out our borders according to the map projected by our divine Teacher and King. The Presbyterian interest is reviving in England and growing in France. It is distancing everything else in Scotland, and it has sprung anew in Geneva, where it has long been embalmed in the ashes of Calvin. The many objects of moral grandeur which have been evolved from Presbyterianism, historians have recorded; and if we be true to our trust, and successful in enlarging its boundaries, the world will yet admire its adaptedness to our nation. She holds an immense portion of moral light; but she must open the gates and multiply the avenues through which that light is to reach the dreariest huts of ignorance, and be thrown to all the cardinal and intermediate points of this western wilderness. But whether Presbyterianism prosper or decline, the system will never want adherents. Should it even die by the hand of persecution, there are not a few who may survive the strife, whose fingers will

re-chisel the letters which record its death, and the holy pictures which must be inscribed on its illustrious sepulchre.

Let us then, as a people, rise with the heart of one man to the execution of this great plan. Let us save thereby the multitudes who are perishing, and who are scattered as sheep without a shepherd. Let us multiply the number who shall say, "we were glad when they said unto us, let us go up into the house of the Lord." Let us begin with secret prayer and unseen communion with the blessed Redeemer; for except the Lord build the city, they labor in vain that build it; and except He keep it, the watchman walketh but in vain. Then from above and beneath shall the flues of zeal be opened, and produce a spiritual temperature in the whole church, which will throw into richer bloom the august Rose of Sharon, and ripen all our bitter buds into precious fruits, and crown our simple alters with the juiciest herbs. Among the ruins of Luxore, in Egypt, may be found paintings descriptive of many objects in agriculture, and of fruits which thrive in the Delta; but the curious traveller may also find outlines chalked by the artist, but never finished. Our design is chalked out, but it is a solemn inquiry, shall we ever bring it to completion? Let us not be likened to the Egyptian artists, but let us rather resemble the people who inhabited Pœs-

tum in Italy. Not a trace of the city can be found, and we know not what has become of its inhabitants; but they have left three temples standing near what was once a city, which time has not impaired, and which still awaken the admiration of the architect. It matters little what may become of us; but when we retire from the stage of action, let us not leave three, but three thousand temples, in which the Redeemer's praise shall resound, and we shall find our gracious reward in the smile of Heaven, and in the thanksgivings of distant generations.

Let none suppose that because we have in this discourse, advocated the extension of the Presbyterian church, that we feel no kindness to those who are not of that church. We claim, indeed, to be a part of the universal church. We honestly rejoice in our simple forms—in our sound doctrines—in our imperishable history, and in the co-equality of our bishops; but we love disciples of the Redeemer, who are no where called churchmen in the Bible, but christians. We wish unostentatious piety to flourish under the systems they conscientiously prefer. We would not lay a feather or straw of opposition in their way. We anticipate meeting them in that Heaven where those names are all forgotten which now divide the vast household of faith! Then every soul shall be alive with such felicity as Heaven



can bestow, and resound with such melody as Gabriel cannot equal. For though he has plucked every fruit, and ranged to every stream of divine goodness, he has never tasted the fountain of mercy empurpled by atoning blood. Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. Amen.

## DISCOURSE V.

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MOSES AND GÖTTE.

*“Forty years long was I grieved with this generation.”* PSALMS XCV: 10.

Goethe, a German author, lived in a town called Weimar, which is situated in Saxony, and where he died in 1832. About ten miles to the east of that place is the small city of Jena, located in a valley, whilst the adjacent hills are clothed in vines. At the latter town lived Schiller, an historian and a poet, who departed this life in 1805, not long before the battle which was fought at that place in 1806, between the French and the Prussians. For many years before the death of Schiller, this pair of distinguished men carried on a correspondence, the letters of which have been recently published. In looking them over we were not a little surprised at the following sentiments expressed by Goethe, which we give substantially, though not perhaps in his exact words. The people of Israel, says he, were not in the Arabian wilderness forty years. This is

a fable invented in an age posterior to the time of Moses, and the record has doubtless been altered and interpolated. A delusion has thus been palmed on the world. To this view his correspondent assents and proceeds not only to deny the wonders of the desert, but the miracles of the New Testament. To encounter one giant is enough; but to be arrayed against two is altogether fearful, except for our unlimited confidence in those pebbles of truth which lie in the brooks of Zion, and which may be wielded against the foes of our Israel, even by a rustic preacher. It is not the strength of the preacher on which you are to rely, but on the cause of truth which he espouses. Goethe, then, is the plaintiff in this cause, and Moses is the defendant; but as the Hebrew legislator is not in court, we will volunteer to shew that he has not duped the people, nor have others been permitted to dupe them in his name.

Every subject, my brethren, has to it a kind of threshold; and, therefore, we remark, that men of letters have not always been successful theologians. When Hume undertook to shew that miracles are against our experience, he undertook to shew what no one denies. It is the veriest nature of a miracle to be contrary to our observation, for were they common they would necessarily be established laws. We do not say, however, that they were contrary to the experience of the chosen witnesses before whom

they were wrought. These witnesses never forgot the impression made by them at the stake, in the dungeon, or on the cross. Voltaire endeavored to impugn the five books of Moses; but it is no declamation when we say that the answer to the animadversions in the name of certain Jews annihilated the sophisms of the philosopher of Ferney. Lord Brougham has fallen into several theological mistakes, and Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, has replied to him and exposed his sophistry, and when ever that noble Lord speaks of Calvin, he declaims — he does not reason. But instances might be multiplied.— We cannot, however, forbear to say that the state of theology in Germany is deplorable. There are individuals still in that country who are laboring to restore the lost landmarks of the gospel; but the most of its authors, whether literary or theological, swing into any latitude they please, even though it be one of polar ice; and as to their looming longitude, they are stopped only by degrees of error beyond which error cannot pass, in their distance from the meridian of truth. Oh, could Luther, the monk of Eiselben — the hero of Worms — the prisoner of Wartburg, and the champion of protestant christendom, survey the land for which he so bravely struggled, what would be his emotions at such a signal apostacy! But as Lord Bacon has remarked, “let our love of truth always perform its revolutions on

the poles of charity," and yet charity has become centrifugal to German theology; but scepticism does not dwell alone in the country of which we speak. It is common among men, and we have seen hundreds who doubted in their own hearts, whether Israel did provoke the Lord for near half a century between Goshen and the land of promise.

At first sight we can see nothing so startling as some men represent in the period of forty years. It was but a small part in the life of the Jewish nation. Let us compare it with a few well known facts. Hannibal was abroad with the Carthagenian army for sixteen years, and once he was very nigh the gates of Rome; but he fell back on Capua. It took Zenophon fifteen months to carry home even ten thousand Greeks, though he was hurried continually by Persians in his rear. The Peloponnesian soldiers were encamped for seven and twenty years in the Morean war against Athens. Schiller himself has written of a war carried on for thirty years, before they who were engaged in it could retire from their tents with their independence established and their rights secured. In the time of the crusades European armies were in Asia, and more than one of them perished in its deserts. From 1789 to 1815 France was sending out her forces all over Europe. Our revolution was achieved in seven years; but it took us full thirteen before our nation

became settled. Israel was in their tents during forty years, and that in a dreary wilderness. But the ulterior results have long since justified the prolonged nature of the march. The rapidity of events is nothing in their favor. The divine operations may be slow, but the consequences evolved may correspond better with a protracted than a brief period. There was no necessity for the Creator to consume what we call time in reducing the chaos of this world. He could at the same moment have arranged the stars and educed the herbs; but he chose to proceed through successive periods in rearing the earth. A man who would object to this might as well be offended at the delay of the Messiah, in not arriving earlier at His manger, or he might as well murmur that the *Georgium sidous* did not shew its sparkling face some ages before it appeared to Herschel. It may take time to find the rough diamond, but it is valuable when found and polished.

The theory of Goethe is, that Israel accomplished the journey in a few weeks or months, and that in a future day some one interpolated the record and made up the story of forty years. He even suggests that a different route was taken than the one which Moses has detailed. The interpolator, then, must have had a difficult task, for he must not only have changed dates, but he must have invented stages and stations, marches and countermarches,

and circuits, and miracles. But who could have been so bold a pretender as to have set Moses right? Was he a Gentile or a Jew? He could not have been the first, because the Gentiles had no acquaintance with the Mosaic records, or the Jewish scriptures. They were in fact locked up till the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt; or, till two hundred and eighty years before the Saviour came. The descendents of Abraham would make themselves quite merry at the statement, that the Pentateuch had been palmed on them by Gentiles.—They cherished too deep a reverence for their legislator and law-giver to have committed his code to their unhallowed ravages. Nor did Gentiles covet such an office, sunk as they were into superstition and idolatry. They were not so convinced of the dangers of explosion in their caverns of ignorance, as to have sought and found that safety lamp of revelation, which was burning so richly over the curtains of the temple, and among the hills of Palestine. All the philosophers of Greece could not have fabricated the complex march of the Pentateuch. Plato indeed sketched out his imaginary republic; but even his invention never set over that republic a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. He never took away the hunger of its people by inserting even the key of his imagination into the clouds, and detaching from their folds that manna

which was sweet as honey and white as the flower of the almond tree. His rod would have been powerless before the granite rock, from which Moses evolved a torrent that flew in serpentine currents to smiling infancy and hoary age, and to flocks smitten by the sun, and herds tottering in the sands. To say the least, it is improbable that any Gentile philosopher ever invented the incidents of the Pentateuch, or mended the line of march through the desert, which was drawn by the Divine hand and passed over by Moses. It took Cæsar ten years to reduce Gaul. We might gratuitously suppose that his commentaries had been interpolated; but we may suppose anything, if we please, and then no fact on any record would be above suspicion. It is not possible that the people of Gaul ever changed the facts given by their conqueror. They might have proclaimed the facts as different, but this would not have been an alteration. It would have been nothing more than a counter statement to the commentaries. The Romans would not have changed the book, for the fraud could have been detected quite easily. Cæsar thought a great deal of his manuscript. When about to perish in the bay of Alexandria, he swam to shore with his sword in one hand and his book in the other, buoyed up by the genius of war and the leaves of literature. Literary frauds have been frequently attempted, but



they have not been able to stand the tests to which they have been brought. There is a crucible in which they can be melted down into evaporation and dispersed into trifles lighter than air. Who now believes in the spurious gospels which were for a time palmed on men as worthy to be placed along side of our blessed evangelists? Who believes in the apostles' creed? Where is the faith in those fathers of the church which has not been shaken, whose writings were interpolated in behalf of prelacy and popery? Who believes in McPherson's Ossian? Who believes that the letters of Lord Lyttleton are genuine, or that priest Rowley wrote the Chatterton poems? We could mention numerous other frauds which have been discovered, but it would be needless. But if Gentiles had no ingress to the records of a secluded people, did those people themselves alter their own records? Did they foist in the fiction of forty years? This would seem more improbable than the first supposition, namely: that the Gentiles had broken into the Holy of Holies, and borne off the archives of the Jewish nation. The jealousy of the Jews over their scriptures is notorious even to the numbering of every syllable and letter. If their scriptures were translated into the Greek, we ask, by whom was it done? By themselves or by the Egyptians? Could they have practised interpolation, would they not have made their

progenitors obedient instead of rebellious, and believing instead of their constant scepticism. When the Messiah came, would they not have blotted out all the prophecies which respected his coming, inasmuch as he was nationally disowned? Would they not have defaced their captivity in Babylon for seventy years, and swept their harps in the temple during all that time, rather than suspended them on the willows of the Euphrates? Would they not have obliterated the conquest of their country and the degradation to which it was reduced, when more than once Jerusalem was beseiged, and foreign cymbals were sounding over Siloas' brook, and in the august courts of the temple? There is just as much plausibility in denying that the Jews were seventy years in Babylon, as that their fathers were forty years in the desert. It is not Goethe against Moses, but the German sceptic against three millions of people and their uncounted descendants to the present hour. On their religion the Jews are all of one opinion and of one faith. Many of their sacred rights looked back to the desert. Let us select one illustration. There was a feast among the Jews called the Feast of Tabernacles, which referred to a touching incident in the history of their fathers. The feast was kept up from age to age, and it was the creed of Palestine that their ancestry lived in booths; but where? On a route of a few weeks,

marked out by a German dealer in fiction, or in the wilderness along which the traces of the great journey can be found by travellers of the present day. Let us suppose the German to have been at one of those celebrations of a feast, which served as a retrospective pointer to an event in their national annals, and he had told the assembled crowds that they were all under a delusion. Methinks they would have plunged him into the pool of Bethesda as diseased in mind if not in body. He might as well have rebuked the Germans for celebrating the birth of Luther; or the United Provinces, for keeping up the memory of their release from the Spanish yoke; or the English, for rejoicing that the Prince of Orange ever touched their shores; or the people of this country, for holding jubilees in honor of our independence. This plea of interpolation is defective and of no avail against a nation who plead in bar that no such thing has ever been proved. Other interpolations have been given up by general agreement. There is a sentence in Josephus that refers to our Saviour, which ought to be yielded by christians. It is yielded by thousands as perfectly spurious; but who has ever acknowledged that the pilgrimage of forty years was an invention or corruption. So far from this its importance in the divine records is immense. Could we erase it from the Bible, how many christian consolations would be

destroyed; how many moral truths would be annihilated; and how many hopes, reaching beyond the Jordan of death, would be extinguished! Geologists believe in the disappearance of islands that once bloomed on the exterior of the ocean. They have sunk, bearing along with them all the materials of natural beauty with which they were laden, and the rich freight has been lost. The tree whose boughs yielded bread, or from whose leaves gushed water, and the date, the pomegranate, the orange and the citron groves, have gone down into fathomless depths. But what is the loss of an island, or the destruction of its sweetest fruits, compared with the fall of the Pentateuch into the sea of scepticism, and the loss of sweet spiritual truths drawn from the march of Israel? What towering palm trees should we part with, in whose shade we have delighted? From what wells should we be torn away, at which we have so long quenched our spiritual thirst? What comfort should we relinquish when we are hemmed in at the Red Sea of perplexity and worldly trials? The waters from the rock, Christ Jesus, would fall with a less musical sound, and our christian wands would almost cease to touch the clouds and range the stars, in search of the manna which prefigured him, who said, "I am the bread of life."

The Lord, my brethren, works against or with means. In the miracles of Egypt, he wrought far

above all means that were used to detain his people. But, when his people are delivered, he suits his dispensations to their states—moral, civic, and ecclesiastical. He could have marched them to the Land of Promise in three weeks or months, if he had pleased. But he resolved to hold them on the vestibule of the wilderness for forty years before opening the Jordan and unfolding the gates of Palestine. They left Egypt after centuries of dreary bondage, and yet they were a nation of slaves, destined to give law, and literature, and revelation to the world. If any time they had successfully cultivated Goshen, that time had long since passed, and they were crushed down to the most menial services by monarchs who knew not Joseph. They had degenerated into rather more than a semi-barbarian or half civilized state. Their leader, indeed, had been brought up at the court of Pharaoh, and instructed in the best learning of Egypt; and Egypt, at that time, was a land of science. There geometry had its beginning; there architecture flourished, and there the pyramids were reared, which have astonished the world. But nine-tenths of the people were in a state perfectly crude. They needed education, and, of course, to be put into a state of pupilage; and it was a blessed education which they received in the desert through the voices of revelation, a variety of the most striking symbols, and emblems without

number. These people did not understand law ; but they were placed under a law-giver who settled the foundations of jurisprudence for them and its elementary principles for the rest of mankind. They did not understand poetry, but they heard machless strains on the Red Sea and the plains of Moab.— They did not understand war ; but there were intervening nations that lay along their route, who had filled up the cup of their iniquity, and whom it was necessary to punish, and by whom they were taught that skill which was of some account when they confronted the seven nations of Canaan. They did not understand religion ; but how could they fail in forty years to comprehend that which was set before them in forms and figures ; in types and shadows ; in sacrifices and altars ; in tabernacles and victims ; in goats and sheep ; in miracles and judgments ; in expiation and absolution ; in moral and spiritual pictures ; and in pillars that moved and paused at the Divine order. We pretend not to say what reasons dictated the Divine procedure, touching this apparently long detention in the wilderness ; but, all things considered, it would appear to me to have been a detention sufficiently brief. When the Israelites started, there were just forty years to elapse before the period was to be fulfilled, at which Divine patience was to have an end with the nations whose seats they were to occupy. They

had long been climbing into the mountains of idolatry, and penetrating into the sanguinary dens of infanticide, and were now about reaching the acme of the one, and plunging into the dread caverns of the other, when the Lord sent up his scourge from the wilderness. He chose this mode of punishment. He might have rocked the cradle of their country by an earthquake, and thrown off the guilty inhabitants; but he chose the sword. Large bodies move slow, and the Jews, or Israelites, themselves, opposed barriers to their own speed. They wanted to turn back into Egypt—they murmured at every difficulty—they rebelled and vexed the Lord's Holy Spirit. In our own revolution of seven years, suppose instead of acting in concurrence with the Divine Will we had opposed it, might not our Heavenly Guide have kept our fathers in the wilderness of revolution, instead of carrying us out to the land of freedom, stocked with His own bounties, and glowing with the juiciest fruits? Might He not have cut off one generation, and given it to other generations to accomplish our deliverance? In this way He acted to the people of Israel, until those three millions of bitter buds which He had watched in Egypt and kept for forty years in the green-house of a desert, broke into flower and fruit over the honied vales and balmy mountains of Palestine.

Permit me now to draw your attention for a while

to the complex ritual of the Jews, which was given them in the wilderness. When they left Egypt they had no ritual. All nations express their religion through the medium of forms. In proof of this statement we might appeal to the mythology of the cultivated Greeks, or to the Romans who were their imitators. We might appeal to those Druids who roamed the hills of Gaul and the forests of Germany and Britain; or to the systems of Confucius and Zoroaster in the East; or to the followers of Mohammed. But the ritual given in the desert was peculiar and minute, and abounding to the last degree in details. Its formation demanded time. It was prescribed by an all-wise Being, who required no time for its plan; but he condescended, in this matter, to the slow intellect of his semi-barbarian people. There was a movable Tabernacle to be built, and its materials were to be brought together, and workmen and artificers were to be employed. The skill of man would have been incompetent to its erection, independent of Divine Inspiration.—Its nails, its pins, its curtains, its boards, its fine-twined linen, its staves, its rings, its loops, its mercy-seat, its cherubims, and many other appendages which might be mentioned. It takes but a short time to rear a simple cottage, or to put up the transient kiosk, or summer house of the Turk. But here was the desert palace of our God; “and see,” said he



to Moses, "that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the Mount." A priesthood was to be formed, consisting of Aaron and his sons; for we owe it to a later age than the sojourn of the wilderness, that Aaron was called High Priest. Some men are so fond of rank and orders, that they sometimes find an order where none exists. They must be miserable theologians, indeed, who can see in Aaron anything but a priest, except in his typical character, shadowing out Jesus Christ. The conceit that he shadowed out the Bishops, is a conceit of the shallowest supererrogation. If he fell sick, the priests could perform his duties; but let a Bishop get sick, and see then whether a Presbyter can confirm, ordain and consecrate. Something was due to the age of Aaron—something to his being the Father of the other priests—something to points of jurisdiction, but nothing to his being of a higher order. This is all a fable; just as much as if the Archbishop of Canterbury were of a fourth order of the clergy, when every one knows that he is but a Bishop, with jurisdiction attached. Some men, in their zeal for a system, make themselves ridiculous. But Aaron had his duties to learn, and so had his sons; and it was a most onerous and difficult routine, round which he and they had to pass. The Levites, too, were a kind of Lay Deacons, or Teachers to the Nation—had their offices marked out in

this intricate map of the wilderness church. But our subject is too holy for controversy, though be it remembered, that Aaron was consecrated by Moses a Layman. We remark, then, that in the Jewish system, sacrifices were to be offered, and oblations made — feasts were to be celebrated, and events to be commemorated — rites to be performed, and the rise of new moons to be watched — lambs were to be killed, and heifers to be slain — priests were to be washed, and lepers cleansed, and the high day of Atonement to be observed. But we must refer you to the Pentateuch itself, for the minutiae of the Mosaic system, which is well worthy your profoundest study. We simply add, that the whole system was to be learned and reduced to practice by three millions of people, and that they were prepared in the wilderness to carry it out after crossing the Jordan. It would have taken our German objector, himself, some years, at least, to have familiarized himself to its rites, and even then he might, at times, have been bewildered in this more than Cretan labyrinth, which the Inspired Lawgiver despatched and guided, in all its winding mazes, through a howling wilderness. It has been an object and subject of investigation to the most learned and holy men in every age, and will be to the end of time, though it was but a shadow of good things which have come. — Paul has devoted a whole letter to the Hebrew

Church at Jerusalem, in which he has analyzed its typical meaning, and shewn its spiritual significancy. That great Apostle has crushed all its typical shells, and handed over the kernels of truth and sweetness to the New Testament Church. He has drawn all the spiritual threads of the labyrinth, and woven them into purple robes for the Savior, and into chords of melody for our simple, but superior Dispensation. He has collected all its compound light, and made a beautiful distribution of its luxuriant spirituality over the green pastures of our Zion, and thrown it high as the blue mountains on which the hope of the saint travels heavenward.

“Thus saith the Lord, your work is vain,  
Give your burnt offerings o'er;  
In dying goats and bullocks slain,  
My soul delights no more.”

Permit me, brethren, to close this discourse by considering a few of those spiritual truths, which are taught in this pilgrimage of forty years. It is a mistake to suppose that these lessons were intended, exclusively, for a few millions of Israelites. The Jews were but the pupils of a model school, in which the scholars were intended to be teachers to the world. Our Creator, for forty years, was preparing those elements of instruction for Gentiles, which, by being combined, have expanded into large and spiritual volumes, from which millions have been reading for ages, with profit and delight. We are aware that

fancy has sometimes been employed in explaining the types of Moses; but the Evangelists and Apostles, and the blessed Savior himself, were not fanciful—and they are our guides. Some of these lessons are taught us before Israel left Egypt. The infant Moses lay among the flags of the Nile, with the decree of a despot threatening his life; and the infant Savior lay in Judea, with a similar decree over his head. The miracles of Egypt were of a stern character, and suited the court, and monarch, and dispensation then begun; but the miracles of the Gospel were of a mild and benevolent nature. The civic bondage and triumphant redemption of Israel, portrayed our moral captivity and deliverance. The Paschal Lambs which were slaughtered in such numbers on the night of the deliverance, taught the people to behold, in a figure, that Lamb who taketh away the sin of the world. The blood on the door posts, and the flight of the Angel, shewed forth the security of all interested in the Atonement of the Savior. From the pillar of the wilderness, we learn that Heaven, under our dispensation, guides all its people. From the rite of circumcision, we learn the circumcision of the heart. By the waters of Marah, we are taught that the Tree of Life can sweeten our bitterest afflictions. Our spiritual hunger is set before us in the want to which Israel was reduced, and our supplies, by the manna which descended. —

“Night after night, did manna fall like dew ;  
 In rich abundance round their tents it lay ;  
 And then each morn the hungry millions flew,  
 And in their omers bore it all away.”

And here we are liable to no mistake, for our Savior has said that the manna was Himself, in a type. The rock of Horeb is used by Paul as a figure of Jesus Christ, for he says, — “And they all drank of that rock, and the rock that followed them is Christ.” The Ten Commandments make known the strict obedience which we must render ; and the Gospel, whilst it shews our inability to keep them, supplies us with a perfect obedience in our Savior, apprehended, on our part, by faith. The Angel who led the wilderness Church, was our Savior, under whose direction all Christians are placed. What meant the blood and Ark of the Covenant — the table of shew bread, and the mercy seat — the veils of the Tabernacle, and the holy anointing oil, but that the Lord is now in covenant with His people — that He gives them spiritual bread — that He opens to them the mercy seat, and imbues them with a choice unction ? What meant Aaron, the chief of the priests, or the first among equals, except our High Priest ? What meant the altar of incense, but our prayers, and what the ransom money, and what the laver, except that we might wash, and then throw our arms round the Divine altars ? What meant the Sabbath — the cherubims overshadowing the mercy seat — the scape-

goat, the day of expiation, and the year of Jubilee? What meant the grapes of Eshchol, but foretastes of our land of rest?—What the brazen serpent, to which our Savior spake in these words, — “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life”? What meant the Feast of the Tabernacles, and the Cities of Refuge? What meant the secret burial of the body of Moses, except to prevent idolatry, and to keep it for the Transfiguration? What meant Jordan, and the green country beyond its parted waves?—

“When the last footstep struck the flowery shore,  
Then Jordan rolled just as it did before.”

These spiritual germs have become incorporated with all the views and associations of the New Testament Church, and the forty years so much complained of as a waste of time, were consumed more profitably, we think, in maturing them for that church. They are not less sweet because they gradually ripened in a desert, and finally grew into perfect mellowness beneath the culture of the Galilean peasant. Revelation was given by degrees, and that by voices that disturbed the air—by Angels, who threw aside their sparkling robes in patriarchal cottages, and by emblems, at first dim, but now transparent. But ages were necessary to make plain the meaning of the

Jewish symbols. But they were all understood by the Twelve. The Apostles managed all the connecting wires between an inferior Judaism and a superior Christianity, and they despatched on those wires the types of the one, down to the lowly temples in which we worship. They have suspended among us pictures of patriarchs, priests and prophets, and thrown them all into a state of genuflection before the cross of Calvary. If we might change the figure they have taken, all the shells which the local sea of Judaism cast up on its margin, and burst them open on the ocean of Christianity, and distributed their Gospel riches to the exulting millions whom that ocean is sweetly wafting into the haven of everlasting rest. Or, in other words, they loved the diamond points and refracted stars which Moses kindled; but they did not hesitate to roll them all away, except in their spiritual meaning, that the Sun of Righteousness might come to His meridian. Will any, then, go back to Judaism? We fear that even in the nineteenth century, the tendencies to return are very strong. What means the growth of Puseyism?—what the introduction of pictures into our churches? What mean cathedrals, and their mummery? What mean priestly coats, and the arrogance of our ecclesiastics? What mean high claims of descent from Aaron, when the true Melchizedec has come? A return to Judaism!

Why the natural heart loves a gaudy religion, and loathes the manna of one that is spiritual. But what would you think of that man who would search and hunt up the chalk outlines of Rubens and the divine Raffaello, in preference to the glowing pictures which escaped from their rapt pencils? But how vastly more marked is the folly of that man who would return to the beggarly elements of Judaism! But, oh! Christian, you, at least, are safe from such startling folly. This journey of forty years has often given you the heart, if not the staff and girdle, and the robe of the pilgrim. It is heart pilgrimage which the angel of the desert requires. Struggle hard, then, to keep up with your Guide, and His pure and fiery pillar. Every day consume your manna, and let it all be fresh. Often repair to your spiritual rock, and from the fissures and wounds into which He was smitten for your sake, seize the laver of purification and the cistern of atonement. You are in a desert land, and in a howling wilderness; but the wilderness is dotted over by Christian tents. In due time you will reach the Jordan. Its waters may be cold; but warmed by the Redeemer's breath, they will kindle into beams, and you will throw off your sandal among its waves. Then comes the land which it would be almost profane to describe. We would rather stand adoring at its gates.

Finally, my impenitent brethren, the text may



contain honey for the Christian, but nothing besides poison for you. It speaks of those who fell in the wilderness. It speaks of an oath that barred them from the land of rest. You shut yourselves out by your moral taste, which is a taste for the wilderness and its shaggy fruits, instead of those which are divine. Provoke not the Lord. Grieve not his spirit, quench not his influence; but come and learn that

“Men of grace have found  
Glory begun below;  
Celestial fruits on earthly ground,  
From faith and hope may grow.  
The hill of Zion yields  
A thousand sacred sweets,  
Before we reach the heavenly fields,  
Or walk the golden streets.  
Then let our songs abound,  
And every tear be dry;  
We're marching thro' Immanuel's ground,  
To blooming worlds on high.”

AMEN.

## DISCOURSE VI.

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AN OUTLINE OF CHRISTIAN READING.

*“Give attendance to reading.”* 1 TIMOTHY, IV : 10.

This was advice from Paul to Timothy. Paul was quite an aged man in comparison with the stripling to whom he wrote. It is supposed that Timothy, at this time, was ranging from eighteen to twenty; but such was the call for laborers, in propelling the aggressive movement of Christianity on idolatry, that, young as he was, the Presbytery concluded to make him an Evangelist, or traveling preacher, whose business it should be to tell good news. Some have made the young gentleman a Bishop, or Prelate, and fixed him quite snugly in the see of Ephesus; but Paul, his Archbishop, seems disposed to rout him from that see, after performing a few duties which belonged to one who was a messenger from an Apostle. Be so diligent in getting forward with your duties at Ephesus, as to join me ere long, for this is no time to take established positions, and to sink

into that apathy which is engendered by long residence. Do the work of an Evangelist, and make full proof, not of this Episcopate, but of thy ministry; and till we meet, give attendance to reading. It is right that every minister should read. It gives him many advantages, and promotes mental inventiveness, and helps him to a wide command of facts and illustrations. But it is not my intention to treat of ministerial education at present. We intend to speak of the obligation on private Christians to read. Let such give ear, whilst we attempt to furnish an outline of religious reading, and then to enforce the duty by Christian motives.

Permit me here to define my position with respect to the subject to be discussed: It will be immediately seen that we must limit the observations which we propose to make; for what theme could be more multifarious than that of religious reading. It is not my purpose, then, to say anything of the study of the Scriptures, because the whole discourse would be immediately absorbed, or subtracted from that which is subsidiary to the Bible, and because Scriptural reading is so plain a duty. We might as well speak of a geologist who had never seen a fossil, or of a miner who had never tried for a vein, or of a botanist who had never taken a plant into his herbal, as of a Christian who had never searched the Scriptures. Nor do we wish to give what may be called

an arbitrary course of reading, because each Christian must be left, in a great measure, to consult his own peculiar taste. We could not supply a catalogue of books, for the catalogue would amount to thousands. — Attention would thereby be distracted. Nor is it needful to speak of the fashionable publications of the day, by which a morbid and puerile taste has been engendered, adverse, as we think, to sound improvement. We could not violate the gravity of the pulpit, by discussing the merits of novel-writers and dramatists. The impropriety of such a step would be too obvious. Nor will we raise the question, whether religious newspapers have done most harm or good. Their agency has not been slight in dividing the great Presbyterian family, and establishing separate organizations. But what is done cannot be undone. My humble opinion has always been, that there should be but one paper for the whole Presbyterian body, the editors of which should be responsible to the General Assembly — to which judicatory a part of the profits ought to accrue, to be disbursed for some general benevolent purpose — say the scheme of church extension. My design, then, is neither literary nor scientific; nor will it extend beyond our own denomination. We intend, simply, to throw out a few hints for Presbyterian Christians, which they may use, if they please, when their leisure shall permit them to spend a win-

ter or summer evening in reading, or when they can redeem a few Sabbath hours for an exercise so delightful. We thought that some might be profited, even by a Crayon sketch. We remark, then, that commentaries on the Bible, or parts of the Bible, have been very numerous. That Book has given rise to investigations which have exercised hundreds of minds. Many of them are too learned for plain Christians, who have no time to unravel intricate criticisms; and in such a wilderness of learning, we fear they might lose their relish for the manna which might be broken, in its fall, by the superstructure of the desert. In some of them there are curious speculations, and singular opinions, which tend not to spiritual profit. Some of these might be mentioned, but it might be thought invidious. We would, therefore, advise private Christians, by the counsel of their pastors, to select one good commentary, and make of that a kind of *vade mecum*—that is, let it always be at hand—ready for use and consultation; and, if possible, let it be a small volume, so that when you go abroad on a summer excursion, you can take along one of the familiar-looking affairs. It will help you in times of temptation, especially in places of gay resort,—say at Saratoga or the Greenbrier Springs. Now, the children of gayety generally furnish themselves with some amusing legend,—a tale, or poem, or play; and surely the

Christian cannot be blamed for carrying along a little moral provision. We had a friend once, who always traveled with his own wine, — and it was old wine. But the Christian can use spiritual wine as old as the Creator; for Revelation is coeval with the fall, and, in fact, anterior to that event. But would you not prefer that we should use the Bible itself, without note or comment? Certainly, if you feel competent to be your own expositors. If you can solve every difficulty, you are fairly entitled to the right and the privilege. But many have not confidence in their own views, and would rather be pupils than teachers. If this be so, they may certainly receive great aid from the commentary of Dr. Scott, who was rector of Aston Sanford, in Berkshire, England. In his doctrines he was a follower of Calvin, and wrote a very able defence of the Calvinistic system, in reply to an illogical assault made on it by the Bishop of Lincoln. The Presbyter used up the Bishop so effectually, that we cannot help thinking that the latter ought to have given his mitre and crosier to the one by whom he was so fairly conquered. The practical nature of this commentary makes it particularly suitable to families; but for individuals, no commentary is to be preferred to old Matthew Henry's. There is a quaintness about it, it is true; but there is a power, or fullness, and an unction rarely, if ever, equaled. This leads me to say, that

An ocean of books have been written to evince the Inspiration of the Bible. This subject has evoked the powers of some gigantic minds. They have applied every test, and brought the Scriptures to every possible touch-stone. Evidence has been weighed in all the scales of logic. Are the Scriptures true? Are they Inspired?—and if so, what is the amount of Inspiration which was bestowed on the writers? Infidels have reiterated their attacks on the Bible, with a perseverance and a frequency which remind us of those made by the French cavalry on the British squares at Waterloo. But the Bible and its defenders have rolled back the tide. Gibbon was a cypher in the hands of Watson, and Hume a pigmy in the arms of Dr. Campbell, of Aberdeen. But we cannot enlarge. What we want to enforce, may be thus expressed: Every Christian ought to be well acquainted with at least one able Treatise, the object of which is to defend the truth, and evince the credibility, of the Bible; and, in his selection, he can scarcely go amiss, because, by necessity, there must be great unity and identity in the course of the argument. It is a subject on which the vast learning of Grotius has been employed, and on which Addison took up his graceful pen; and the light of a thousand minds has converged to a point, and that point has become a sun, pouring out its meridian rays on the blessed Bible.

Infidelity is now boring through the surface of the globe, torturing its minerals, and summoning its shells to testify against the Bible. They have plunged, with this view, into the chaos of the pre-Adamite earth, and argued against Moses; but Cuvier, himself, admits that Moses is strengthened in all he says, so far as the race of man is concerned. And, indeed, it would be singular that our race should have existed a hundred thousand years, and no trace of its existence be found beyond six thousand years. Geology, however, is, thus far, in its infancy; and we must await its further developments. In the mean time, we can recommend, on this subject, a series of Discourses, recently published, by the Rev. Dr. Smith, of Homerton, in England.

Permit me here to say, that every Christian ought to read one good work on the Primitive Church. We do not recommend the reading of the Fathers, and that for several reasons: They are in languages inaccessible to about ninety-nine hundredths of private Christians. They were corrupted, in the fifth century, with a view to favor the Papal and Prelatical changes, introduced by Constantine.— They are thus made to countenance a Liturgical ritual. They Judaize the Gospel, and contain many puerilities. The very early Fathers all testify that the Presbytery succeeded to the Apostles; and well they might, for so Apostles, themselves, have taught:



“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which thou hast received by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. Is any sick, let him send for the Presbyters” — who at that time made a Presbytery in each Church; and they were to use oil as a symbol of the miracle which was to be wrought by men who held an office at that time, which some wish now to throw into disrepute, under the scowl of lawn-sleeved Ecclesiastics. Let the Presbyters that rule well, be counted worthy of double honor, especially such among them as are laborious in word and doctrine. If you will look into the first four verses of thirteenth Acts, you will read that Paul, himself, kneeled down before the Presbytery of Antioch, and was qualified, by the imposition of their hands, for a Missionary tour. But had not the Apostles vast influence with the Presbyters? Certainly; for had not the Reformers great influence with the Continental Presbyters, in the 16th century? — and yet, what more than Presbyters were Luther, Calvin, Beza, Zuinglius, and Knose? And what more, in their Church capacity, were Apostles than Presbyters? But we decline entering into this litigated question. We make these remarks, just to intimate that Presbyterians are the last people in the world to decline looking into the Primitive Church. We are not afraid to employ either a telescope, microscope, kaleidoscope, panorama, or anything you

please; and we can outlook Argus, himself, with his hundred eyes. We know that Sir John Herschell's telescope, itself, could not find a Prelate in the first two centuries of the Christian era, or a Pope within the first six centuries; though we admit that, after employing that instrument for six hundred and six years, old Pope Boniface does heave in sight, dressed out in his Pontifical turban. But we prefer a kaleidoscope, because everything in primitive times, looks so unpretending — so pious — so devoid of pomp — so richly colored, and so spiritually beautiful. With the New Testament before us, we can tell what sort of a Church the Apostles organized, just as well as Lactantius, Jerome, or Chrysostom. But what we say is, that though private Christians cannot read profound works on Church Government, for the want of time, they may, individually, read some compend: and we really think that Dr. Miller has written, on this subject, with candor and unrivaled meekness. Permit me to recommend his Tract, called "Presbyterianism — the truly Primitive and Apostolic Constitution of the Church." And this leads me to observe, that every Christian ought to read at least one good history of the Waldenses.

The corruptions of the Church of Rome commenced quite early. In the Epistle to the Romans, you may find what that Church believed when Paul wrote that letter; but in the third century, ambi-

tious, designing men undertook to organize a grand Catholic Church, based on the fact that the city of Rome was mistress of the world. This villainous scheme went on until the nail was clinched, in the fourth century, by Constantine, who used the Church for State purposes. Then corruption became rife, depravity stalked through all the aisles of Zion, and the pure and simple grotto, left by the Apostles, became the nestling place of Ecclesiastical banditti. Protestations against this state of things early commenced. For centuries did the Culdees of Scotland battle with Rome; and they were a true sprout from the Apostolic stock. Vast numbers were arrayed against the dominant power; and the Vallenses, or Waldenses, rose as early as the twelfth century.—They derived their name from the valleys of Piedmont, in Italy, among which they lived—or from Waldo, a merchant of Lyons; and they were, truly, an interesting people. Into particulars we cannot enter at present. Dr. Allix has written a profound history of these people; and the Rev. Robert Baird has been among them, and searched out their pious traditions. We rejoice that Rome has not yet exterminated these witnesses of the Truth. She tried her best from the time they rose. She has been employed in this unholy work for six hundred years; and their blood, in cascades, has leaped from every rock, and thundered down the Alps. Will we, then,

refuse to read of those who are our brethren in faith and in Church Government?—who so long kept alive the light of the Gospel in their mountain fastnesses? We hasten on to the remark, that every Christian ought to give attention to reading several histories of the Reformation. The history of that event has been written as a whole, and in parts.—Many pens have recorded its events; nor can any Christian be at a moment's loss to find sources of the most ample information. The Papists, themselves, confessed that the red slaughter-house needed to be cleansed and made white; and it was brought about by a special Providence. Yet, in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, we find men at Oxford, ostensibly Protestants, impugning the resistance which Luther made to Papal tyranny. About thirty Puseyites in England, and some eight or ten ministers in this country, have gone over to the man of sin, and have become his veriest bond-slaves—bending the hinges of their knees at the Pontifical slipper. Shall we not read and ponder on this subject, when we are advised to give up our Bibles for Monkish legends? Shall we not enter into a Cabinet composed of illustrious Reformers, depicted by historical artists, who have employed their choicest colors, and wielded their boldest pencils, and made the empty niches of the Church to swarm with august portraits and imposing figures? We know that

you will not remain in ignorance, when light is even forcing its way into your houses; and, therefore, we proceed to say, that Christians cannot possibly be too familiar with the writings of the Puritan Divines. These men flourished in a stormy period of the English history. They were objects of the most vindictive persecution; but they were calm and collected. They were something like a caravan overtaken by the whirlwind of the desert. The people composing the caravan must fall flat on their faces, and fold up their little ones, if they would escape. Two thousand of them were cut off from the English Church in one day; but they still studied their Bibles; and, as their tongues were tied, they took to their quills. Their works were modeled after those of the Reformers; and they were poured forth in a series of rills which, in the end, amounted to an inundation. That moral inundation was far better for England than if it had been the overflow of the Nile, which leaves its sediment upon the Egyptian vallies, and gives employment to the husbandman. But here is a spiritual harvest, all ripe for the sickle of the Christian—a harvest reared from the incorruptible seed of the Word. In this field we advise you to reap late and long; and in the evening of your spiritual life, your hearts may be stocked with plenty, and your sunset may be richly colored with clouds fringed with orange hues. We love to pene-

trate into the green, secluded spots of England, once occupied by these holy men. Christians cannot plead the difficulty of procuring the works of these men, for they are circulated far and wide.—Who among you is unable to give twenty-five cents for Baxter's Call, or his Saints' Rest?—or for Alleine's Alarm?—or a dollar or two for Pilgrim's Progress? This last work has, of late, been splendidly gotten up by our Board of Publication. We hope, however, that they will not reduce it to the condition of the cinnamon tree, the rind of which is said to be the best part of the tree. A work may be made outwardly so fine by binding and gilding, as to prevent thorough handling; and, therefore, we would rather recommend the cheap editions of this book.

But when we thus speak, do not suppose that we wish to debar you from the pleasure of reading the Divines of the Church of England. Who have read more constantly than Presbyterians, the works of John Newton, Hervey, and many others too numerous to be mentioned? What a contrast between such men and the super-refined theories of the German Divines, who have filled the world with theological webs? And let me counsel you to read very extensively the Scottish Covenanters—the Huguenots in France, and the Seceding Divines in Scotland. For twenty-eight years did the Covenanters

stand the shock of persecution from Charles, the Second; and yet, that perjured mountebank had himself, sworn to the covenant. Their blood dyed the lakes, caves and heather of Scotland, and their annals are very interesting. Divines are now searching every Caledonian glen to find traditions of those martyrs, who were shot down in platoons by Claverhouse. And the same may be said of the Huguenots, sixty thousand of whom were cut off in one night by the sanguinary arm of Rome. Nor do we know of anything in the way of sound Divinity, more worthy of being read, than the Discourses of Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, or the works of Boston, who wrote among the fir-trees of his Ettrick manse. Scotland is a country quite poor; but it has given us some rich Divinity, on which millions have fed; and when its rocks have been ruptured by the earthquake of persecution, their gaps and valves have yielded gems of piety. These martyr grounds are to the Christian, what good mineral grounds are to the mineralogist, or what botanical gardens are to the lover of plants. The Christian can here find fields of thistles, in which the white flower of innocence is mingled with the purple blossom of martyrdom. But why recur to those gloomy days? Because the blood of martyrs is not forgotten in Heaven! — Why should it be on earth? That will be a dark day when such men shall be stricken out from

our memory, and when the Church shall shut up her halls, in which she keeps her martyr robes and chariots! But has your Church never persecuted?— and to this we boldly reply in the negative. Men have exhausted all old histories, and then imagined new, and have collected three facts of this kind:— We objected to the continuance of the Abbeys in Scotland; we burnt Servetus in Geneva; and imprisoned some Divines in Holland, in 1618. The last mentioned we acknowledge to have been an act of persecution. It is true that Servetus was put to death; but it remains that men should ponder the indignant disavowal of that deed by Calvin, into the details of which time now forbids me to enter. The most of people think that Calvin had the city of Geneva in his hand, just like a nutshell, and tossed it about, or cracked it, just as he pleased. But what a huge mistake they have fallen into about that little fiery Republic, which Voltaire called a tumbler full of storms! Calvin, himself, was banished from Geneva; and, so far from being all powerful to burn people, his influence was always watched with an eye of the greenest jealousy. But John Knox demolished the Abbeys, and they were such fine specimens of architecture! This is a fruitful theme with poets; but it is hard to weigh the liberties of many millions of people against a few receptacles of lazy monks. Scotland was, at the time, in a state of re-



volution; and excesses have occurred, even in our own country, arising from popular fury. This was no more an act of persecution, than the taking certain fortifications in war, but not touching a hair on the heads of those who held them. It is common for Governments to confiscate property. We think Henry VIII was right in seizing the Abbey lands in England; and we are not certain that the people of Scotland are to blame for pulling down houses which had become insufferable evils. But, at all events, we hope that Presbyterians will not be blamed for burning the Charleston Nunnery, or the Catholic Churches in Philadelphia.

§ We would earnestly exhort all Christians to read memoirs of pious persons, of all denominations, and religious tracts, hymns and poems; and to explore, as far as possible, the whole missionary ground now occupied by the Christian world. Some lives of Christians are peculiarly rich in evangelical views and enjoyments. We do not like to distinguish.— Christian biography has now become a broad and verdant field in the Church, where a Christian can find every kind of book lying in the grass, and where he may recline and read among green pastures and quiet waters. Nothing incites him to the pursuit of holiness quicker, than to see that holiness exhibited in the actions of other men. How is it possible for him to rise from the perusal of the life

of Hallyburton, Leighton, Boston, or Dr. Scott, and not feel a fresh impulse to be holy? — And how do Church distinctions dwindle into insignificance, before the enlarged views of Henry Martyn, or the sublime death-bed of Calvin! — And how happy may a Christian be, with his copy of the life of Brainard, the Indian Missionary, even though it be enlivened with nothing but the curling smoke of the wigwam, and that wild, idolatrous dance of savages which tried his holy soul! But enlargement is unnecessary. Let me press on your attention the fact, that nothing incites us to more abstraction from the world, than missionary reading. Missionary men have many motives to aim at that simple piety which is at war with the pomp so prevalent, at present, in the Church. We remark their self-denial, and ought to copy their example. Some are in Persian groves some in Chinese pagodas; some in Hottentot kraals and some in Tartar tents. The naked diaries, themselves, of Moravian Missionaries, make a feast for the Christian, because of the simplicity and fervor of their piety. We know of no Christian who does not delight in the tracts of Leigh Richmond, or does not take pleasure in his descriptive touches of nature, as he traversed the island on which he lived, in search of the poor and forlorn! In such a course consists the glory of the ministerial office, and not in a fancied tactual succession from the Apostles

Do not, in your reading, hold in contempt the lowly hymn; for how many dying Christians have been inspired by a stanza, ere they warble celestial psalms! We sincerely wish that our Board of Publication would issue a very large edition of Graham's poem on the Sabbath. We should rejoice to see it in every family; and it is my conscientious belief that immense good would be the result. Nothing remains but that we subjoin a few motives to induce Christians to read; but these must be summarily expressed.

First, then, every man is supposed to study the subject on which he writes. His attention becomes concentrated. Take the commentary of Dr. Chalmers on Romans, or Calvin on the Psalms, as an example. Can ordinary Christians command time to study and write works? But they may command time to read such works.

Secondly, The Christian is often opposed in his religion, and he ought to be able to make some defense against Infidelity, and give every man a reason for his hope.

Thirdly, He has responsibilities as a moral agent, and he is under obligations to improve his mental faculties, from which he cannot escape in any other way than by improvement.

Fourthly, Reading is indispensable to the extension of his own usefulness.

Fifthly, He is under obligation, at all times, to distinguish between truth and error.

Sixthly, To promote the Divine glory and his own rational happiness—neither of which can be advanced by remaining in ignorance.

This, my Christian friend, is a reading age. The human mind is everywhere aroused, and it is on the stretch for discovery in every department of knowledge. The poet is busy with his lyre; the geologist is on the summit of the Alps, and among the ravines of the Jura; the traveller is musing about the Egyptian pyramids; the limner is before the master-pieces of his art; the statesman is in his pavilion; the chemist is in his laboratory; the astronomer is at his telescope, straining to throw a successful glance beyond the rings of the planets; the botanist is hovering over the plants of the wilderness,—and where, we ask, is the Christian? Where ought he to be, unless among the works, and over the Word of the Lord? He can read. None can disturb him in his peculiar tastes. He may be poor, but

“He has his portion of each silver star  
Sent to his eye quite freely; and the light  
Of the blest sun pours on his book as clear  
As on the golden missal of a king.”

Finally, let me exhort those who have never read anything of a religious kind, to change, as quickly as possible, their habits in this respect. Believe me,

that much of your reading is calculated to carry leanness into your soul. The drama may excite — the novel may amuse — the tale may bestow a momentary happiness — the history may instruct, or the poem may carry you to enchanted forests; but the Scriptures, alone, can make you wise unto salvation. They, alone, can fill your last bed with peace and comfort, and plant the star of hope in the cloud of death. They, alone, can enable you to draw the curtain of futurity, and say with confidence — “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” AMEN.

## DISCOURSE VII.

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### MIZPAH.

*“And Mizpah; for he said, the Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent one from another.”* GEN. XXXI: 49.

Any person who reads the book of Genesis, even in a cursory way, cannot fail to remark the sentiments of piety and gratitude in which it abounds. It is descriptive of an early period in the history of our race, when the simplest manners prevailed. — Even in those days there were cunning men; for the beautiful sentiment of the text was uttered by Laban, who had given fearful proofs of unrighteousness. But at the time referred to, such persons were seldom found, in comparison with the present; and even they were obliged to affect artlessness in their habits. In that age, Government was simple; but now it has become complex. Manners were dictated by the heart; but now they are conformed to standards entirely artificial — in which outward pro-

Passion prevails over inward homages. In looking at the advances and over-actings of a concrete refinement which now prevails, one is almost tempted to wish that the patriarchal age could be recalled, that we might taste those social pleasures which would be free from the alloy of insincerity, and that men might speak all they feel, and feel all they speak. Then would that lost and golden age be revived, which poets have so often celebrated, and of which the imagination still loves to dream.

Jacob, after laborious services, had escaped from Padan Aram; but had been overtaken by Laban, his kinsman, in Mount Galeed, near Hermon. The particulars of the interview are given; but it is not necessary to repeat them in this congregation, for no doubt they are fresh on your minds. An altercation, indeed, would, probably, have taken place between the parties; but the Lord had composed the irritated mind of Laban before he got sight of the caravan of Jacob — after which he had set out in the very hottest haste. All hearts are subject to Divine control. The passion of a man may resemble the wave that lashes the shore; but under Divine management, it may die away, and leave in its place some harmless shell. Thus Laban retired, after the settlement of a long family feud, and went back to his flocks. Jacob kept on his way; but they had, before their separation, entered into a covenant,

or stipulation, to keep the peace. Laban seems to have played a deep game to the last of this transaction; and we fear that when he called the heap of stones by the name of Mizpah, or watch-tower, that he had not lost his peculiarly selfish views. He probably alluded, in the seemingly pious views of the text, to some suspicion that Jacob might pass that pillar, or heap, with a view to his injury; whereas, Jacob had been the injured party. But the Christian can, in a delightful sense, adopt our text in all his separations, and say—the Lord watch between me and thee whilst absence shall continue. We propose to make a practical use of this sweet and engaging passage, in which we recognize a Providence that watches over us wherever we go, or wherever we stay. To this end let me ask your devout attention whilst we try to illustrate the following simple propositions:

1st. Separations—tender and touching—are continually taking place among men.

2d. There is a Power competent to control all consequences which may arise from such separations.

3d. It is our duty to acknowledge our dependence on that power; and

Lastly, What is implied in our recognition of that dependence?—And may the Spirit of all Grace be with us when we speak, and with you when you hear; and thus, if there be any stream of comfort in the



text, it will find its way into those cisterns which your faith may hold out in this sanctuary of the Lord.

In returning, then, upon these views, we remark, that separations among men occur every day. We have no allusion here to the many which are mentioned in history. Socrates parted from his pupils; Lady Jane Grey from her husband; Mary, Queen of Scots, from her servants; Lord Russell from his wife; Charles I. from his son; Louis XVI. and Marshal Ney from their families; Washington from his officers, and Napoleon from his Generals, under circumstances peculiarly affecting. Nor do we allude, here, to that multitude of martyrs who have taken leave of their families at the dungeon, or at the stake. In the reign of Queen Mary, John Rodgers was followed to the stake by his weeping family; but his courage was not at all shaken. We could cite your attention to a thousand touching incidents, from the records of martyrology, in which resignation to the Divine Will has been displayed; but my allusion is to the ordinary intercourse of life, and to that partial rending, which so often takes place, of ties entwined about our hearts.

It has pleased our Creator to establish among us a variety of pleasing connexions, which are the source of great happiness, mingled, however, with frequent pain. The most interesting of these, is

that of husband and wife—a relation treated of most solemnly in the Bible. The vocation of the one frequently calls him from home; and it is more immediately his duty to provide for that household of which he is the constituted chief. To the one belong the outward toils of life—the din of business, and that tumult of the passions which results from self-interest. Self-interest among men often hushes the voice of conscience; and the adjustment of worldly affairs leads multitudes into temptation and danger. The husband may belong to the Army of his country, and his duties may lead him into climates unpropitious to health and life. He may be exposed on the day of battle, or he may be stretched on his bed of hair, or wrapped in such blankets as soldiers use; or he may be borne bleeding from that field, on which he has plucked a laurel at the cannon's mouth. Or his vocation may be to plough the distant waves, and wrestle with giant billows on the mountains of the sea. His lonely barque may, at times, skim over the summer ocean, and touch the strand of islands from which fragrance rolls; but, peradventure, he may face the storm, and be left all alone on the wreck which that storm has created. These are not the creations of a morbid fancy, but realities, known to exist, and the power of which is felt every day. Now, if Leonidas and his consort parted with a tenderness that

shook even Spartan fortitude; or if Hector and Andromache shed tears when he buckled on his Trojan armor, with what emotions ought Christian husbands and wives to utter their impressive adieus! Has he no arm of faith that can seize the Divine promises, and disperse them round the family scene? — or has she no eye to scan the Heavens, and no lip to speak forth the word “Mizpah; for the Lord will watch between you and me and our little ones, till your return shall gladden the domestic altar”? It is a mournful sight to behold a female, under such circumstances, bereft of all Heavenly trust! The watch-tower which she rears, in that event, is one of porcelain, or of materials perfectly brittle — liable to be dashed, at any moment, into pieces, and she left among its ruins! But the tower of the Christian wife is stronger than adamant; and, capped with gold, it pierces beyond the clouds, and sublimely leans on the throne of her Redeemer!

We need not speak of those separations which are constantly taking place between parents and children. They are among the daily events of life. How often are the needles of the fond mother and affectionate sisters shining by the midnight taper, in getting ready the boy about to leave his paternal home! And where, we ask, is the boy going? Perhaps to a counting-room, where, seduced by the charm of money, he may ruin himself, and degrade

his family! Perhaps to college, where temptations throng, as we know from experience. Perhaps to sea, where peril brews in every cloud, and lurks in every wave! Perhaps to hew forests in the West, or to open a cotton farm in the South. Or it may be to make the tour of foreign lands, where immorality stalks abroad among the people. Endless are the situations into which youth may be introduced, extending from China to Peru. Will you trust them abroad without counsel, admonition and prayer?—Has the mother reared no tower of faith, which, like the one in Pisa, may mount to Heaven, and still lean over the child of her hopes, and the heir of her husband's name? If she be a Christian mother, believe me, she will not always be talking about his worldly prospects; but her tower will resound with prayer about his soul. She will feel the import of that passage — “What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” She will inscribe that declaration on those hands, the palms of which she so often shews to the eye of her Redeemer — “The Lord watch between me and my boy, till the glad day arrive on which he shall reopen a mother's gate, and fall into a mother's arms, in the bloom of spiritual health!” For multitudes, such sentiments are too refined. They border on romance; but they hold their basis in practical sense — in the fear of the Lord, and in the Scriptures of Truth.

They concern fathers and mothers, daughters and sons, uncles and nephews, nieces and aunts, guardians and wards, masters and servants, physicians and patients, teachers and pupils, landlords and guests; and, in short, every relation that men sustain. The friendships which we form are often of a lasting character; and friendship is not a mere name or form. We have had two personal friends, my brethren; and the remembrance of them is still dear to my heart. One of them was the Rev. James Murray, of the Island of Edisto, who perished, with his wife and children, in the melancholy wreck of the Pulaski. We fear his friend was not on his watch-tower during that mournful night. The other was David Meade, of Virginia, who carried about him the amulet of as rich a heart as ever throbbed;

“ Whom portioned maids — apprenticed orphans blest —  
The young who labor, and the old who rest, ” —

but who was cut off in the meridian of his days, and not without a good hope through grace. There is a Mizpah, into which friends and neighborhoods and emigrants ought to ascend. How often do ministers part from their people, under circumstances the most touching! How strikingly is the separation of Paul from the Ephesian Church narrated, in the twentieth chapter of Acts, after he had been their pastor for three years! — They all fell on his neck and wept. Such occurrences take place at the present day; and

with ministers, it is a time of peculiar and tender interest. They know not into whose hands, or under whose rod their sheep may fall. Thus, the congregations of Leigh Richmond, in the Isle of Wight, have got into the keeping of a preacher who ridicules all serious religion. There must have been quite liberal weeping in England, when, in one day, two thousand preachers were driven from their flocks! But the true minister will not cease to visit his watch-tower in behalf of his people. He will burn in it the incense of prayer, and kindle his midnight lamp, and transform it into a kind of light-house, blazing with Gospel oil, and alive with Heavenly fire, that, even at a distance, he may guide his flock upon a sea of uncertainty, or moor them in some haven where, with the minister of their choice, they may find repose. — Or, by his telegraph, he may often introduce to their view, reminiscences of the past, such as the baptism of the dear little children — the flock in an old-times' communion — the quiet Sabbath — the summer evening, or the wintry storm — the meeting for prayer — the funeral hearse, and the funeral hymn; and how he labored among them night and day, even to tears, that he might win them to deeper repentance and firmer faith.

But, secondly, There is a power able to control all the consequences of such separations. It is not a vain hope that the Lord can, and will watch between

absent friends and distant kindred. All men, more or less, seem to believe in some kind of power, superior to themselves, on which they may rely in times of emergency. It is true that, when all things are smoothe, they are not apt to recur to this source of help; but let them get into danger, and encounter losses, or shipwreck, and then what rapid changes pass over their views! They may even ridicule the Christian who professes to believe in a Providence that watches between him and his relatives; but they are nothing loth to adopt the same creed, under peculiar circumstances. Tell them of a son that lies dangerously ill, or of a daughter drawing nigh to the gates of death, and then will they reject the prayers of pious men, that restoration may take place, or that they may be enabled to meet the blow? A faith in the curse of unrighteous gains is just as common among men of no religion, as among men of religion. It may spring from a belief in destiny, or some blind power—but it is a belief; nor do we doubt that many an act of clandestine robbery has been prevented by this very impression. Thousands, we admit, rush through it, and secretly strip the widow and orphan; and then conscience becomes hardened. But other thousands cannot entirely rid themselves of the conviction, that there is an eye over the affairs of men, that outlooks and outshines a hundred suns! All Pagan nations have feared

judgments from on high, and have ascribed to their Gods eclipses in the sun or moon — the pestilence which has swept off thousands — the lava which has burned cities, and the earthquake which has demolished the proudest work of man, and torn asunder the pillars of architecture ! When wicked men die, they are buoyed up to the last ; but when hope is exhausted, and means successful, they close the scene by “the Will of God be done !” But the Christian takes enlightened views of Providence ; and they are derived from the fountain of the Scriptures. He believes in means ; but not without believing that there is a power above means which chooses, often, to display its sovereignty. And how often do facts square themselves with this statement ? We see men, just as frugal and diligent as other men, spend their lives in embarrassment — screwed down by debt into a kind of premature coffin, whilst others get rich, without apparent effort, and stay rich ! An ivied wreath seems to cling to some families, and wrap them round even for centuries. Does not the Irish peasant toil, whilst his oppressor is carousing in London or Florence ? Does not the English collier work for money ? — but does he ever get rich ? — while the nobleman drinks his goblets of wine, and the bishop keeps his hounds ! But in our own country are there no inequalities of wealth, even among men of equal diligence in using means ? Why have



not you the same wealth as John Jacob Astor? You are just as industrious as he, and you may possess just as sound a judgment in worldly matters. You say that such a man has spent his all, and he is to be pitied; but yonder is another man who has squandered everything, and some one has died and left him thirty thousand dollars. This perpetual talk about means will not answer before facts. We find no fault with means; we only say they are good for nothing, if Providence say that such a man shall not thrive; or, if he be allowed to thrive, he will lose his soul! Why was not Lord Wellington killed at Waterloo? Five hundred balls went within a few inches distance of him, on the 18th of June, 1815. Why was not Washington killed during the Revolution? Special pains were taken, and special means used to kill them both; but means are in the Divine hand. No man can believe in the Prophecies, who is an unbeliever in a special Providence; because they were uttered a thousand years before the events. Their fulfilment depended on very minute affairs.— In a special Providence every Christian believes. He is so taught in his Bible. He keeps in his watch-tower a kind of telescope, which he employs on the objects of his love, when they are at a distance. By it he pursues them wherever they may travel or sojourn. It is an instrument of such power, that it can be turned to any part of the world. It can be

turned to the city or the desert — to a continent, or to an island of an hundred roods; and then, if it report that our children are deceased, it can be turned among stars and constellations, and even into the Holy of Holies on high, in search of their ransomed spirits, and bring them nigh to our hearts. Belief in a special Providence round this earth, is just as much believed by the Christian, as a philosopher believes that a natural atmosphere enwraps the globe. This power can manage all issues arising from absence and separation. If it be His will, they can return; for the hairs of their heads are all numbered. If it be not His will, you will never see them more till that day arrive

“For which all other days were made.”

But, thirdly, it is our duty to recognize that Power which watches over every event in the world, be it small or great. For the illustration of this duty, it is only necessary to ask, does the Power exist? Is it spread through the world? Is it at all the cardinal, as well as the intervening points of the compass? — Then the duty is plain as the milky way. If it be not in being, or if it be a fable, then you stand released from all obligation. Then turn Atheists, at once, and be consistent. Send your children adrift, without a rudder, and without a compass; for it matters very little where they drive, or where they may be wrecked. Without a Moral Governor, the

world must be in absolute confusion; and we have nothing to do but to try our best to confound it into greater confusion. But this is not the creed of the Christian. He repels such sentiments with an abhorrence undisguised. He professes not a cold faith in Providence, but one that is warm and lively. He seeks to shew it unostentatiously in his life. A faith burning in the heart will naturally seek a valve, by which explosions may be prevented, and safety secured to those next our hearts. All this the beloved disciples of the Redeemer believe. They are the children of a Father who lives in Heaven; and that Father regards their posterity with peculiar favor: where they are in danger, His eye comes rushing up to the danger like the evening star. Let us, for one moment, make the following supposition: Suppose that Sir Isaac Newton had had a son who was about to leave his roof, with the view of establishing himself in life; and suppose that that distinguished Philosopher had thus addressed the youth: "My son, it devolved on me to shew men the law of gravitation, but it is my wish, when, in your transmigration on the rind of the earth, your feet get opposite mine, that you should lose your centre of gravity! It also fell to my lot to reveal to men the secret of light; but it is my wish that you should riot, the balance of your days, in shadows, eclipses, and Cimmerian darkness! It was my prerogative to examine the

sun; but it is my wish that you should never once look at the central orb, and that you should adopt the views of the Tycho Brahe!" Would we not immediately brand Sir Isaac as a lunatic, and send off that great luminary to the hospital? Let us, then, suppose a Christian about to dismiss his son: "My son, it is true that my faith in Providence has been strong; but it is my wish that you should never think of that Providence! It has been my aim to breathe in a spiritual atmosphere; but you had better try some other mode of respiration!" How preposterous would such conduct be!—and conduct of which a Christian never can be guilty. All holy men have cherished faith in Providence, from Patriarchal times. The book of Genesis is but a record of vows—of thanksgivings—of memorials, and of pillars. If the earliest men felt it their duty to recognize the Divine hand in all things, what must the obligation of the Christian be? Suppose a man could live one-half his life, without ever having seen but twenty dim stars; and that, all of a sudden, they had been changed to twenty suns—would this bring no addition to his duty of noting the Divine hand? And yet, our Dispensation is a million of times brighter than the Patriarchal, Mosaic, or Prophetical. What lessons of Divine Providence have been left us by the Savior! How tenderly did he part with his disciples! "It is expedient for you that I

go away; for if I go not away, neither will the Comforter come." His Apostles were his family. He convened them to a supper of a truly spiritual kind. "Henceforth," said He, "I will not drink of this fruit of the wine, till that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." Thus do Christians separate, confiding, at all times, in the Divine promises of grace and support. Where other men behold nothing but concavity in Heaven, the Christian can roll out from that concavity the pavilion of convexity, in the center of which is the Sun of Righteousness, and the remotest skirts of which are laden with manna, sweetly scented!

We consider, fourthly, what is implied in our recognition of this Providential power; but our views must here be abbreviated, that we may hasten to a conclusion.

1st. Vastly more is here implied, than that levity which many show in taking leave, and interchanging adieus.

2d. More is implied than that sympathy which so many display, and which is the result of mere animal feeling.

3d. Our faith must go far beyond the mere temporal advantage of our children. In any other view than this, the doctrine of watching would engender nothing but the sheerest selfishness.

4th. Prayer is implied, profound, sincere and persevering.

5th. The keeping of the watch-tower in a good condition, by all the means of grace.

6th. A dependance on something above means, whilst means are diligently used.

7th. An infinite preference of spiritual good for our children, over every other sort of good.

8th. A love for family peace.

9th. Gratitude for all past favors.

10th. An expectation of mingled good and evil, — the rough and the smoothe — the smiling with the sorrowful — the bright with the dark; for this mixture suits us in our present state.

11th. An acquiescence in the Divine Will, and

12th. Our pious desires are, as far as possible, to be carried into outward acts. It is true that the age of pillars and mounds is past; but we trust that it has been supplanted by one of moral watch-towers. We hope that such will rise from every valley, and be conspicuous on every hill. The last external pillar of which we have heard, was set up in the year of our Lord, 1656, near the town of Penrith, in the English shire of Cumberland; and we will briefly state the touching incident to which it refers: On the second of April, 1616, the Countess of Pembroke parted with a fond and beloved mother, the Countess of Cumberland, in a sylvan spot near that town. The vehicles stopped; and it proved to be their last earthly interview. The daughter died in 1656, and

she ordered a pillar to be reared on the spot, commemorative of the separation. It was a pillar of stone, with dials on each side, and a plate of brass; and near it is a stone table. On the second day of each returning April, she ordered four pounds to be distributed from off that table in the wilderness.— Say that one hundred and ninety-one years have since elapsed, and, according to the old pound, there have been distributed to the poor hinds of the neighborhood, the sum of \$2,546 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ ; and she ordered it to go on forever. How beautiful! To see the poor going, every year, among the woods and violets of April, to be fed from a hand turned to dust, but a hand still rich in the grains of gold to the forlorn children of poverty. Blessed art thou among women, Countess Dowager of Pembroke. Were it ever our lot to touch the strand of England, we could not withhold the tear of admiration from her ashes.

My Christian brethren, our children are coming forward into a world of manifold temptations.— They need our watchful care; but this amounts to nothing, without the vigilance of Heaven. In concurrence, however, with Heaven, it is important. The Divine voice is calling to every Christian parent, “Watchman, what of the night?” Can you answer, that the morning cometh, and that the rosy dawn of a new and regenerated life is breaking on our children? Are you more ambitious of dismissing

them with songs, and tabrets, and in all the revelry of fashionable mirth, than with the benedictions of Heaven, and the prayer of faith? If your son were going to Norway, would you not tell him of the Maelstrom there, which has engulfed thousands, and swallowed up many richly freighted vessels?— and have you no parting word for the quicksands and stagnant pools of dissipation which beset the voyage of life? We live in a changing world, where congregations are always breaking up, and where families are scattering in the autumnal decline of fortune, and in the wintry storm of adversity! To the children of our affections we look, that they may return to us with the buds of prosperity, and the gold of summer. Look out for disappointments.— Be not too sanguine; for children are not always grateful. The son of Sophocles, tired out with the long life of his father, and grasping at his fortune, gave out that he was insane, to the Areopagus of Athens; but the old man came forward, and read his *vedipus* in the presence of his judges. When small, our little ones are like gold pieces; but, when large, they are, sometimes, not even silver dollars; and they have often degenerated into brass cents! But we must struggle on through this trying world: there is a better in reserve —

“ Where visions sweet shall ne'er dissolve  
And anthems loud shall never end ;



To that rich land, with fixed resolve,  
My hourly thoughts and footsteps tend.  
There shall my eye range round such views,  
As Heaven, all bright, alone displays —  
Where love unfolds its thousand flues  
To warm that land through endless days.  
There reigns one mild and genial spring,  
Which o'er each field its flow'rs unrolls —  
And saints all heavenly choirs outsing,  
In strains that gush from ransom'd souls!  
Oh! when, oh! when shall I awake,  
And feel that death and hell are past;  
And from my harp in raptures break,  
The question — Am I here at last?  
'Tis true, 'tis true — forever here —  
Where joyful saints shall part no more!  
And separation's burning tear  
Falls not as oft it fell before! —  
In yonder earthly desert land,  
Once sprinkled o'er with manna sweet —  
And grains of gold that strew'd the sand,  
But numerous thorns for pilgrim's feet!  
And am I in that heavenly rest,  
Which Jesus said that he would give? —  
Then will I be his raptured guest,  
And in his presence always live!"

## DISCOURSE VIII.

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THE AGENCY OF PROVIDENCE IN SMALL EVENTS.

*“Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one shall not fall to the ground without your Father.”* MATTHEW X: 29.

Our Savior taught that Providence exercises control over small events, as well as events every way imposing. This, however, is not the view which Philosophy takes of the Divine operations. It contravenes the opinion which is popularly held, that the Creator has established certain laws, but that with these laws He never interferes. This sentiment, if true, would destroy Revelation: because Revelation makes known a series of miracles, by which the regular laws of Nature have been disturbed. If the miracles be established by proper testimony, they prove the Divine existence.

We are at some loss to tell why some affairs should be thrust out of the Divine plan, when those small affairs so often become links in the chain of exten-

sive and ulterior consequences. Nor can we, possibly, see how an attention to the minute objects of creation, subtract anything from the Divine Majesty. Galileo might have lifted up his telescope among immense planets, curious to discover their belts and rings; but the dignity of that Italian philosopher would not have been diminished by his employing a microscope upon insects not visible to the naked eye. The Creator, then, is everywhere present, and

“Sees with equal eye as God of all,—  
A hero perish, or a sparrow fall.”

My design, in the following discourse, will be to show that, from diminutive incidents, great results have arisen. My illustrations will be taken from facts, which history has given as perfectly authentic, and confined, for the most part, to facts connected with the mind, or facts in which the mind has been displayed. It is my profound conviction that the glory of all mental discoveries is due to the Creator. We have no right to strip Him of that glory to which He is entitled. The man who surprises the world by some unexpected mental achievement, or by some splendid discovery, might have been sent to a lunatic asylum, had Providence so determined. We, likewise, intend to confine your attention to incidents of modern date, because it is necessary to limit the field of observation, and because the last four hundred years have been distinguished by dis-

covery and invention. But it is time to begin this discussion.

Four centuries have elapsed since the discovery of the art of Printing. Before that time Europe had been involved in the dark ages; and ages they were, stocked with bitter evils. Popery, at all times a Upas tree, had, by degrees, extended its boughs, until the nations could get nothing from that horrible system but the rankest poison. Romanism is Christianity in a state of gangrene, — that is, a stoppage is put to the vitals of the system; nor can the galvanic batteries of its priests ever resuscitate the system to anything more than an artificial and chattering life. In retired spots, there were men cultivating piety; but to those corners swarms of priests directed their flight. Upon their arrival, they found these nooks to be like small and blooming gardens; but before quitting them, they had steeped every plant, and flower, and herb in blood! We should suppose that a system of such enormity would have required the peal of thunder, or the shock of earthquake for its overthrow; but it pleased Providence to attack it by the mild and ingenious art of Printing, by which some gleams of light were radiated, even into the dens of the Papal beast! By this invention the Scriptures were multiplied into vast numbers of copies. If it be said that the Monks preserved the manuscripts of the Bible, we reply, that

they could not read nor decypher those manuscripts. Suppose a man were to live an hundred years on the top of the Peruvian mines, and did not know what were under his feet — what credit would be due to him for keeping the mines? But if the Menks knew what they were, then they were guilty of keeping them from the people. At this day they would lock up the Bible, were they not prevented by types! — And, in like manner, they were ignorant of those manuscripts which held the recorded thoughts of Latin and Greek authors, whom we all esteem as models of classical taste and style. The glory of this discovery has been taken away from the Creator, and given over to its German inventors. But there was an agency prior to that of the human inventors, which wrought on their minds. In its beginning, the art was a small affair. Its first operations were extremely crude. Blocks of wood were used, on which letters were carved; but now it has become an art which awakes the vertical thunders of the Vatican! — which makes despots tremble, and which sends forth, to a returnless distance, the treasures of learning which enrich our dwellings!

Providence had his agents ready, when the condition of the world required His special interposition: He said, “Let there be light, and there was light!” His eye watched the first rude incision made on the block; and now, when we ponder the Scriptures in

our vernacular tongue, when involved in the labyrinths of science — when plunged into the depths of history — when charmed by the lyre of the poet, which sounds over each page of his printed works, we ought to be grateful for our increased facilities of knowledge. We ought, at least, to feel that mind is just as much under Divine control, as all the complex systems of matter.

It is probable that the art of Printing had an influence quite considerable in bringing forward the Reformation, which took its rise at Wittenberg, in 1517. Attempts at Reformation had been made ages before the sixteenth century; but the power of Rome had been too strong for the Reformers. But at the time alluded to, the evils of Popery had become intolerable; and a longer submission to the triple mitre would have been treason to the world! It is impossible, in one pulpit effort, to enter into a detail of incidents and causes which ushered in the Reformation; and it is my wish to keep the subject in view — which is, the use that Divine Providence makes of apparently small events, in the moral and mental government of the world. Let it, then, be borne in mind, that Luther was a Monk, trying to make himself just before his Maker, by a round of observances common to such institutions. In an anxious state of mind, he was toiling after justification by the deeds of the Law, when he incidentally

found in his cell a few leaves of the Bible. Upon these fragments of Scriptural truth, great events were depending; and they turned the scale of determination in the mind of a deluded Anchorite. We ask, then, who threw those leaves into Luther's way? — took the film off his eyes, that he might read them with a fixed gaze, and with an astonished heart? You may reply, that some careless hand might have laid them down; but who directed that hand? That is the question. They gave new light to the Reformer; but the light was gradual. He subsequently went to Rome, in the Pontificate of Leo the Tenth, and crawled up St. Peter's steps; but, while advancing step by step, the crawler thought that he heard thunder, and that the cloud was charged with a commission to utter these words — “For the just shall live by faith!” If this be true, then it cannot be irrational to think that those leaves of the Bible might have exercised some influence on the future destinies of Luther. From the vestibule of St. Peter's — from the gate of Wittenburg — from the position occupied by the miner of Mansfield before Electors and Emperors at the Diet of Worms — from among nations released from the yoke of Popery — from the centre of Reformed Christendom, we may look back on the lonely cell, in which the Reformer found that small part of the Bible, to which we have alluded! It was a sweet and precious kernel, and it

nourished a moral and gigantic warrior, in the person of an obscure Monk, who eventually seized error by its hoary beard, and shook principalities, established by cunning priests, to their foundations. It might be instructive to pass over other countries, into which the Reformation was introduced, and show how small incidents were managed by Providence, to the production of great results; but we feel that our time is limited.

James I., of England, had two sons, whose names were Henry and Charles. Henry would have succeeded him, under the title of Henry the Ninth. He was an extraordinary youth — skilled in every manly accomplishment; but he died — and it is quite an ordinary thing for princes to die. Had he lived, he would, probably, have figured as a warrior on the fields of France. He might have crushed all her lilies, which had been spared by his ancestors. His plume might have waved in triumph over the fertile plains of Normandy, or on the banks of the Seine. His decease, probably, changed the current of English history for centuries. But for that event, the power of kings might never have been checked; the Puritan Divines might never have created an era in the science of Theology; Hampden might never have inspired other patriots; Cromwell might have died in the obscurity of a hamlet; Milton's might have been an inglorious name; the Prince of Orange



might never have ascended the throne of the Stuarts, and our own Revolution might never have taken place! It appears, then quite plain that, if we deny the agency of Providence in the death of a worm, or the fall of a sparrow, that we may, with equal plausibility, deny that agency in the demise of a prince. It is true that some evils are mixed with those events, which produce ultimate good. And this is the prerogative of our Creator, to overrule the follies of his creatures. Of such folly, a remarkable instance occurred in the twelfth century, when the crusades arose in Europe: The imaginations of men became excited about one small sepulchre at Jerusalem! He who had slept in it three days, was not there—for He had risen. But this delusion of mankind was overruled, to an enlargement of knowledge—to the increase of commerce—and to the polishing of the human race.

In 1739, Wesley and Whitfield commenced their operations in England. The one was the son of a poor and embarrassed Rector, in the town of Epworth, in Lincolnshire; and the other was the son of an inn-keeper, in the shire of Gloucester. They both rose from among the people. They were not titled men. In the retirement of Epworth, Wesley spent his boyish days, under the instructions of his father, and the management of a sagacious mother. Whitfield used to lead off the henses of travellers' as

they arrived at night, and then join himself to those travellers, asking them questions about the great world, and watching their emotions and passions, as expressed in their countenances. The one could have legislated, and that in a most dispassionate way, for the British Empire; but the other could roll the thunder, and direct the flash of a vivid eloquence, and manage, with singular adroitness, all reverberations in the tempest of oratory. The one possessed a perseverance perfectly indomitable; whilst the other acted out the impulses of a rapid and mercurial nature. The one embraced the views of Arminius—the other the doctrines of Calvin, the great Genevese Reformer. Lady Hope was the co-adjutor of Wesley, while the Countess of Huntingdon was the patroness of Whitfield. The one could collect and disburse large sums of money, while the other had no worldly tact beyond the management of human passions. In constitutional temperament, and even in some of their doctrinal sentiments, these men were opposite as the poles; but they met on the equator of a glowing friendship, and walked round the tropical circle of their lives, annointed by the round flowers of Christian experience, which burst forth beneath the splendor of the Sun of Righteousness. They were great and good men, though with some of the views of Wesley we are constrained to differ. But we wish you to remark, that it was a

small event when these striplings set out for the University of Oxford. While the Wesleys were at Oxford, a stranger arrived in that city, who offered them a large estate in Ireland, provided they would settle in that country. This overture they declined, and the estate fell into the possession of the Wellesley, instead of the Wesley family. This fact led to important results; for that estate nourished Lord Wellington, whilst its rejection left the Wesleys untrammelled, to pursue their religious course. We see, then, on what an inconsiderable event depended the rise and spread of the Wesleyan system, and the fall of Napoleon at Waterloo!

It was a small event when, in 1722, a company of Moravians arrived on the estates of Count Zinzendorf, in Lusatia. They had been driven thither by persecution; and at the foot of a hill they built a small town, called Hernhut. Charmed by the innocent manners of these strangers, the Count of Zinzendorf, himself, became a member and minister of their Church. This denomination of Christians are distinguished by some peculiarities. Deciding weighty matters by the lot, is one of those peculiarities; and of this we cannot approve. But we must do justice to the vast good which has been wrought by these unpretending disciples of our Lord. Their system, perhaps, is not suited to a refined and advanced state of society; but it has been remarkably

efficient among the obscure — the ignorant and despised. The stunted Esquimaux — the Greenlander — the Hottentot, have heard the Gospel, effectually, from these lowly men. As a Church, they conduct the most extensive missions, on the smallest amount of means. They have touched on many islands, and penetrated into many deserts. And all this has been done in a spirit free from ostentation. The ambition of most denominations is to figure in cities and courts. They hunt after the stars of the nobility, or the diadems of kings and queens; but their ambition has been to dot the Pagan wilderness with Christian Churches. From small beginnings, the Moravians have become a large body; and, probably other Churches have been fired with missionary zeal, in consequence of the self-denial which they have manifested.

Most of the modern institutions for the promotion of good, have resulted from the most inconsiderable beginnings. Robert Raikes was led to found Sabbath Schools, from seeing a few boys at play on Sunday, in the streets of Gloucester, the city in which he lived. The Foreign Bible Society was founded in consequence of a tour among the mountains of Wales, made by a clergyman, and his remarking, in that tour, how seldom he met with a copy of the Scriptures. The Foreign Missionary Society of our country, had its origin in the fact of

four young men at Andover, in Massachusetts, desiring to go abroad to savage nations. And in 1816, the Colonization Society was founded, at Washington, by an humble Presbyterian clergyman from New Jersey. This last is an institution in which we shall ever feel the liveliest interest. Who shall dare say, that from that strip of coast, purchased twenty years ago, on the continent of Africa, important consequences may not arise in future time? Those Christian settlements, though small, may widen their influence. The man may there be in training, who shall plant the standard of the Gospel in the centre of Africa — a nobler deed than any performed by Bruce, or Mungo Park, or Lander, or our own Ledyard. Where, then, is the Remus who shall dare, contemptuously, to leap over our infant works at Liberia? Some haughty man, perhaps, might have felt like grinding the Plymouth Rock to powder, in 1620, or like stamping down the grass wharf on which our ancestors landed in 1607; but those rills of emigration, augmented by cognate streams, came to an Anglo-Saxon and Norman confluence, and then expanded to an ocean, on the bosom of which repose, in moral and civic grandeur, thirty sovereign States! with territories and deserts bursting out with scions, which proclaim their fitness to be engrafted into that tree of liberty, which rolls its magnificent fruit and flowers over the area of this Union. Let me so-

lemnly charge you, before you die, to give something to the Colonization Society. If you cannot give us a dollar, give us a farthing.

The management of small events might be shewn, in many additional facts, taken from Sacred and Ecclesiastical History; but we wish to draw your attention to a few circumstances, not immediately connected with sacred things. We rob our blessed Creator of that glory which is His due, when we deny His influence over mind. Some suppose that He watches the wheels of material nature; but that mind acts independently of His agency. But we believe that He presides over all human discovery, and causes small circumstances to work out the noblest ends. On the 10th day of October, 1492, Columbus discovered this Continent. The Genoese mariner was the agent, but who impelled the agent? This wonderful man acted under clouds of discouragement. He was everywhere branded as a visionary. Even the University of Salamanca assured him that the earth was flat. He applied, for years, to different Courts in Europe, to favor his design, but they refused. His heart was cheered under all forbidding circumstances, and his faith strengthened just in proportion to his difficulties. Who supplied fuel to the flame which was burning in his heart, and fed that flame with incense from the glowing tropics of this Western world? Who infused rivalry in

commercial discovery between the Portuguese and the kingdoms of Arragon and Castille? Who drove the Moors out of Spain — shut the gates of the Alhambra, and stopped the play of its sparkling fountains? Who uncurled into smiles the lips of the haughty Ferdinand, and touched the heart of his queen to stake her jewels on the adventure? Who watched the frail skiffs, as they set sail from Port Palos, and ventured beyond the pillar of Hercules, and ploughed their way over the mountain towers, and along the blue slopes of the sea? Who checked insubordination, and suppressed mutiny? Who spread the rose-colored cloud along the horizon? Who unfolded the green saloons of our Indies, and welcomed in those strangers who were to become astonished guests — regaled by the flowers of the golden orange, and enraptured by the melody of tropic birds? Columbus was certainly the instrument, but God was the agent who wielded that instrument; and the same remark will apply to Vasco De Gama, who, in 1497, found his way round the Cape of Good Hope. Nor will the same remark be out of place in application to the discovery of New Holland, in 1618, New Zealand, in 1620, or the Sandwich Islands, in 1777. Into the former, European civilization has since been partially introduced, and in the latter, our holy religion has achieved triumphs almost primitive and Apostolic! We rejoice

that modern navigators have acknowledged a Providence, as is evidenced by the published voyages of Franklin, Parry and Ross, who have reached the highest latitudes accessible to man.

Let us now suppose, for a moment, that our text were changed to the following terms: "Are not two apples sold for a farthing? yet not one of them falleth to the ground without the Divine notice." We contend, then, that science has been mostly enlarged by the fall of an apple: Sir Isaac Newton was a Professor in the University of Cambridge; and, in an adjoining garden, he heard an apple fall on the ground. He had heard the same a thousand times before; but his mind was wrought up to enthusiasm by this trifling incident. What immense consequences have arisen to mankind from this simple circumstance!—for it led to a discovery of the great law of gravitation. It does not devolve on me to explain the nature and magnitude of this discovery; for it might be unsuitable to the pulpit—the design of this discourse being to vindicate the power of Providence over inconsiderable events. Thus, in the fourteenth century, the Emperor of Germany governed Switzerland by petty legates; and Gesler, one of those legates, set up his hat at Altorf, to which the people were commanded to pay respect. William Tell refused to comply with this mandate, and he was sentenced to death; but his



life was spared on condition that he would strike an apple placed on the head of his son. His dear boy was placed at a convenient distance, and stood as firm as those Alpine rocks over which he had so often bounded with elastic step. The archer seized his bow, and fixed the arrow on the string. The multitude stand around in fixed attention. All eyes glance from father to son, and from the son back to the anxious father. But hark! Listen to the twang of the bow. The arrow is in the centre of the apple! His boy is saved; and sire and son rush into each other's arms! Can we be certain, then, that this apple had no connection with the establishment of the liberties of Switzerland? and can we be certain that the establishment of Swiss liberty has had no influence over mind? Might it not have given Ewler leisure for his philosophical researches; Zimmerman for his Alpine rambles, or Gessner for his mountain lute? Subsequently to the apple, Gesler was taking Tell, in chains, to be imprisoned in a castle that stood on one of the Swiss lakes, when a storm arose, and the pilot could not manage the boat. Those on board were then obliged to release their prisoner, under whose management the skiff flew into ~~into~~ its haven, and Tell escaped, and fought for, and gained the independence of his country! My brethren, you may call me credulous; but it is part of my creed, that a Heavenly power opened the ear of

Sir Isaac Newton, in that orchard of mellow fruit ; directed the flight of Tell's arrow, and wrought the Alpine lake into commotion by his breath !

We must all admit that a great display of mind has been consequent upon the American Revolution ; but when he who led our armies to victory was a boy, he applied for a midshipman's warrant in the British Navy. Suppose he had not been disappointed : what a blank might have been the consequence in that volume of our history which now lies open before an astonished world !

Let us now consider some other discoveries of modern times. Before Newton's day, mankind had no correct view of the nature of light. They regarded it as a simple substance — if substance it can be called. But the great hermit of science, in his Cantibrigian cell, analysed its rays, and detected its compound nature. He applied the prism to its particles ; and lo ! that robe which floats from the sun in silvery whiteness, is transformed into a robe of gorgeous hues, before which the purple of Tyre escapes abashed ! Beautiful discovery ! and originating, too, from a small incident — smaller than the apple ! And now we read the truth of his experiment among the arches of the rainbow — in the charming clouds of evening — in the glories of the rising sun — in the sparkling waterfall — in green vales, inky lakes, or along the lines of the indigo

mountains! A question here arises, whether all the glory of this discovery be due to Newton? What! all? Then Newton had no Creator, and light no source from which it emanated! Light flows from the sun. True; but who made the sun? Who inscribed his magnificent circle, and set bounds to the ocean in which he rolls? Who made him a shepherd, to cherish his flock of dependent planets—to spread over them the rich and blossomed mantle of spring, or educe among them the bounties of summer?—feed them on autumnal slopes, or recall them from the snowy mountains of winter back to vernal flowers, and streams that chime among the green meadows, and birds whose notes are like jingling bells? Let us not withhold from the Creator what is His due. Let us rather plunge, impetuously, into light; and wrapping ourselves in its garments, let us ascribe all honor to Him, who once said—“Let there be light; and there was light!” When men ascribe to accident, what took place by Providence, they are very near to Atheism. Does Galileo, in the cathedral of Pisa, find out how to measure time by a pendulum? It was an accident. Does Herschel discover the Georgium Sidus—or Sir Humphrey Davy invent the safety lamp for the mines of Cornwall or Dalecarlia?—They were accidents! Does Franklin identify electricity and lightning?—or does Fulton propel boats by fire?—or does Watt

improve the steam engine, and facilitate human labor? Here are three illustrious accidents. Does Peen colonise the banks of the Delaware, or Calvert the shores of Chesapeake Bay? Or does Daniel Boone chase off the wild herds of Kentucky? Here Harvey discover the circulation of the blood, or Jenner the power of vaccination to prevent awful and odious disease? Here is another pair of accidents! But we call them incidents, prompted by Divine Providence, and using men as instruments for the development of its own benign purposes. We would here pause a moment on the memory of Jenner, who, in 1798, brought into use his discovery of vaccination. He lived in the vale of Gloucester, in England; and he had long revolved in his mind, whether there could be no remedy against a scourge which had swept off millions of our race, and which rose in the seventh century, and was borne on Eastern gales, desolating, alike, the huts of Greenland — the embowered hamlets of England — imperial and oriental cities, and which smote with poverty the golden horn of Constantinople! Providence raised up Jenner as a benefactor. We can easily imagine him straying down the vale in which he lived — watching the lowing herds — leaning over the bars which confined the domestic animals, from which he was to obtain a preventative to the scourge — listening to the milk-maid's song beneath the first diamond stars of

evening. We cannot forbear, here, to adopt the language of Bloomfield, who, at one time, was popular as a poet :

“ What, when hope triumphed — what did Jenner feel ?  
Perhaps alone — supreme — triumphant stood  
The great — the conscious power of doing good ;  
A joy that must all mortal praise outlive —  
A wealth that grateful nations cannot give !  
Forth spread the truth immediate from his hand ;  
And confirmations sprung in every land !

In reading the lives of literary men, it has been my habit, for years, to note simple facts and incidents, which go to evince a Providence over mind. A man who is destined to literary life, will always find the niche for which he was designed. The smallest circumstances may determine the pursuits of life. We could certainly give scores of striking incidents on this subject, from the records of biography ; but many of them might not be consonant to the gravity of the sacred desk. Homer was, probably, a beggar ; and if he had been Cræsus, he never would have been Homer. The lands of Virgil were confiscated ; and if they had not been, we should, probably, never have seen the *Aeniad*. Camoëns was poor, and his poverty led him to accompany Vasco De Gama to India, where he collected the materials of his *Lusiad*. Tasso and Bunyan were imprisoned ; and in prison, one of them wrote an immortal poem, and the other an allegory never to be

forgotten. James I., of Scotland, was incarcerated in the castle of Windsor, where he employed in writing, an arm that would have been employed in reducing the rebellious barons of his country. Pascal retired to the monastery of Port Royal, where he cultivated letters; but not until he had well nigh lost his life in crossing one of the bridges of the Seine. Boccacio went to the tomb of Virgil, and vowed, by its side, to consecrate himself to literary life. Who, we ask, incited him to go to that tomb? Gibbon was a long time casting about for a subject of history; and he might have died before fixing his choice and concentrating his attention; but, in 1764, he was in the city of Rome. He states that he determined on the rise and termination of the Roman Empire as his subject, one evening, upon overhearing a company of barefooted Friars chanting a hymn. Some add, that he heard a pillar falling by night. If so, who loosened that pillar? Time, you will reply. Then, who carried the historian there just in time to hear it fall? He had served in a military company in Kentshire, and had there got some notions of the Roman phalañx, and shield and helmet. Providence guided him; and yet, to that Providence he proved faithless and ungrateful. But hundreds of lettered men have been thankful to the Creator, by whom they were endowed above the rest of their species, and for minute incidents, which have color-

ed the rich complexion of their lives. Milton studied late and long over his theme — invoking not the muses of Greece, but that Creator who reared the Cherubim out of nothing, and filled the vast deserts of space with the fruits of existence. There was Locke, who fathomed the depths of the human understanding, and Bacon, who taught his race how to reason. We might mention Linnæus, the reformer of the science of Botany, and Wilson, the founder of ornithology. The plants of his father's garden (for he lived by horticulture,) determined the pursuits of the one, while the other came to this country from Perthshire, in Scotland; and, impelled by hunger, killed a bird on the banks of the Delaware; and, as it lay in its spotted shroud, he determined to devote his life to an examination of our forests. We ask, then, did that bird fall, in vain, to the ground? Examples might be multiplied; but they are unnecessary. All things evince that there is a sleepless Providence at work over the minds, as well as the bodies of men — over intellect, as well as over matter. To Him are men indebted for all that eminence by which they are distinguished, and for every adventitious circumstance by which that eminence has been secured. He can turn a ploughman into a poet, or a mill-boy into a statesman; an ostler into an orator, or a shepherd into a reformer; a collier, like Henry Martyn, into a missionary; or an

apprentice, like Gifford, into a critic! He can bring an admiral, like Nelson, or an essayist, like Addison, from quiet rectories in England; or a poet, like Thompson, from among the fir-trees of a Scottish manse, or an Akenside and a Kirk White from a slaughter-house. He can lift His scourge from the rocks of Corsica, or screw it down in the coffin of St. Helena. He can plant the rose of England or the Irish shamrock above the lilies of Gaul. He can bring opposing armies into dreadful array, or roll between them the rainbow of perpetual peace. He can expel Danes by the lyre of Alfred, or British myrmidons by the sword of Washington. He can scatter the plumes of the warrior on the desert air of a battle-field, or He can strengthen the trembling chords by which the poet holds on to the melody of life. He is the great sentinel of the universe, and watches the sparrow's nest, or the eagle's flight; the undulations of the violet, or the gnarled limbs of the oak—the movements of the seraphim, or the track of the worm!

But, in drawing this discourse to a close, it may be asked, whether we mean to deprive men of that distinction they have so laboriously earned? Far from it. No person holds such individuals in greater esteem. We yield to none in veneration for Sir Matthew Hale, as a jurist, or for Burke, as a philosophic statesman — for Robertson, as a historian,



Howard, as a philanthropist, or Cowper, as a poet. We may revere the instrument, as well as the Creator, who made and employed the instrument. We may be charmed by the harp; but we may think most of him who chorded it, and who, by his skill, evolved its sweetest tones. And then, again, it may be asked, whether we acknowledge no mysteries in Providence? My brethren, we confess that there are secrets in Providence, startling and impenetrable. Look at Columbus in his chains. Look at Sir Walter Raleigh, mounting the ladder of execution. Look at Galileo, on his knees before a stupid Pontiff, and his brainless cardinals. Look at Milton—old and blind—forn and forsaken. Look at Anne Boleyn, in the Tower of London, or the Queen of Scots at Fotheringay castle. Look at Fulton, dying poor, after enriching nations. Look at virtue often prostrated, and vice triumphant. Look at the extortioner, riding on his wheel of gold, and crushing the widow and orphan. Look at Anacreon, the wine-bibber, living to old age, and Kirk White dying just when the thread of life had begun to spin itself out into robes of taste. He started in his career like the lama, that receives its ores at the mines of Potosi; but soon begins to struggle with more than the rugged defiles of the Andes, and he lay down under the burden of life, and turned his dying eyes towards Heaven! The book of Providence is a sealed

book for the present. And so is Arithmetic mysterious to the beginner.—Fractions are confusion, and so is Tare and Tret unintelligible—Loss and Gain, and the Extraction of Roots; but they are mere amusement to the giant in Mathematics. The more we study Divine Providence, the more skillful shall we become in unraveling its mysteries; and yet dense clouds will rest on the secrets yet to be explored. “Verily, Thou art a God that hidest Thyself, oh, God of Israel, the Savior!

“The ways of Heaven are dark and intricate—  
Our understanding traces them in vain—  
Nor sees with how much art the windings run,  
Nor where the regular confusion ends!”

Let us all remember that we are indebted to Divine Providence for all we possess, whether in the way of talents, wealth, influence, rank, or distinction. To be content with our lot, is a Christian duty. Whatever may befall you is intended for your good. Do not murmur or repine. You can be reduced to no extremity, at which Providence will not appear for your rescue. When Dr. Johnson was reduced to his last earthly fortunes—when old age paralysed his great powers, his king conferred on him a pension of three hundred pounds. When Dr. Beattie could no longer sustain his Professorship at Aberdeen, he received from George III. a pension of the same amount. When Cowper drew on to the close of life, his circumstances became distressing;

but he was favored by the royal bounty. And Sir Robert Peel sent upon the poets a shower of munificence. May Heaven bless him for those acts of kindness.

Let me here earnestly recommend to my Christian brethren the life of Stilling, which has recently been published. He was a Westphalian, by birth, and rose from an humble mechanical employment to be Aulic Counselor to the Grand Duke of Baden. He was wonderfully led; and we have never read a more charming biography. His faith in Providence was perfectly stupendous. There are two facts in his life, which we will here state: He was, at one time, so oppressed by his landlord, that a promise was extorted from him that, in ten days, the money should certainly be paid. The morning arrived, and not a cent in his purse! But Goethe, the distinguished author, who lived in Weimar, had published, without his knowledge, some incidents in the life of Stilling; and, on that morning, he received, in a letter, the amount of the profits, which exactly covered his rent! On another occasion, his debts amounted, in all, to nearly two thousand dollars of our money. Being an oculist, he took an excursion into Switzerland, where he performed many operations. He had along a record of his debts, to the last fraction. No human being, but himself and his consort, knew the amount of those debts; and he determined to

leave his compensation entirely to his numerous patients:—it does seem strange that what they sent in, should have exactly squared with his obligations! Heaven takes care of benefactors, philanthropists, men of letters, and, particularly poets, except where their own indiscretions prevent. Exert yourselves, then, and be diligent on business; but remember that Divine Providence is at war with all ill-gotten gains. Devote your wealth to Him by whom it has been generously bestowed; and if the Egyptian, when reveling in the riches of the Delta, thinks of the sources of the Nile, you ought not to do less than think of that celestial fountain from whence those gems of prosperity which embellish your homes, have wrought their way, and which glow in the center, and decorate the margin of your earthly possessions.

The doctrine which we have been trying to enforce, has been thus expressed by Cowper:

“ Know, then, that Heavenly wisdom on this ball  
Creates—gives birth to—guides, and settles all;  
That, while laborious and quick-thoughted man  
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan;  
He first conceives, then perfects his design,  
As a mere instrument in hands divine!”

## DISCOURSE IX.

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### THE PATRIARCH'S VISION.

A Discourse delivered at the dedication of the Central Presbyterian Church, Washington city, Sabbath morning, May 31, 1846.

*“For this is none other but the House of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven.”* GEN. XXVIII: 17.

A Patriarch was on his way from Beersheba to Haran: and between those oriental settlements, he became the witness of a remarkable vision. He travelled on foot, and was overtaken by night. The sun had become buried in his western sepulchre: but not till he had suspended over the head of our pilgrim those stars which are the symbols of his temporary absence, and which serve as pointers to his anticipated resurrection. Probably no human home was in sight; not even the tent of a shepherd. The flocks had all found their folds, and the camel bells had ceased to animate the footsteps of our pedestrian

traveller. Confiding himself, however, to Divine protection, he lay down on the cold earth for his bed, whilst his temple rested on a mound of stones. At that time revelation was given to men by angels, by dreams and visions; and the vision of a ladder, crowded with angels, was vouchsafed, on that night, to Jacob. We can form no adequate conception of this appearance, nor will we be daring enough to describe the fiery rounds of that ladder; nor the upward and downward marching and countermarching of the angels; nor the robes in which those spirits were arrayed; nor the heavenly recorders which rolled in their melody on the ear of the wanderer, as he lay steeped in dew. But the moral of the vision is quite plain, for it was intended to teach us, that though sin had annihilated all intercourse between heaven and earth, that intercourse is re-opened through our Lord Jesus Christ. The vision of Jacob had its fulfilment in the Savior, towards whom angels descended, and from whom they returned to Heaven. Therefore the patriarch could not restrain his emotions, and he gave utterance to them in the words of the text: "How dreadful is this place! It is none other than the gate to Heaven;" and he thus speaks, although no sanctuary had been reared at the place from which he had discerned the vision.

Not more than one year has elapsed, my brethren, since the spot on which this building stands was

lonely and uncultivated. On this very ground the sheep might have browsed, the bird might have reared its nest, or even a patriarch might have encamped. But lo, what a change! An edifice, which displays the charms of a simple architecture, and the beauties of unpretending taste, has risen as by the power of enchantment! This is none other than the house of the Lord. It is not a Lyceum—it is not a hall for legislation or the cultivation of letters—it is not a depository for the mechanical inventions of the age—but a Church—a place for the rites of homage to our blessed Savior, and a footstool for the Most High. Before we enter, however, into the spiritual nature of our text, permit me to speak of those who have been benefactors to this church.—Perhaps some of them may now be present, to behold the work which their munificence has brought from nothing into thriving existence. Their presence, alone, prevents me from speaking forth our emotions of gratitude, as the only recompense we can make them for their enterprise, diligence, and disinterestedness. To those who planned this building; who contrived pecuniary ways of annihilating the debt; and to those noble and generous artisans who wrought out its completion, we return the thanks of this congregation and vicinity; of this city, and of the whole Presbyterian Church in the United States. We would say more in the way of grati-

tude, if we knew in what terms that gratitude could be expressed. But there is one of the benefactors to this enterprise, who has been called out of this life since the enterprise commenced: we mean the late General Van Ness, who enjoyed the confidence of his fellow citizens to a high degree, and whose life was distinguished by many generous acts. He took a deep interest in the improvement of this city, and his decease was much lamented by its inhabitants. He gave this ground, and, of course, furnished the basis on which the superstructure rests. Nor will we do violence to the feelings of any, if we recall, on this day, the memory of his consort, whose good works are conspicuous in this city. It is true she belonged to a denomination of Christians differing from our own; but we are as willing as they to associate her name with those of Lady Glenorchy, the Countess of Huntingdon, and Isabella Graham. It is a fable that the ring of Gyges made him invisible to mortal sight; but it was a reality that she possessed more than the ring of Gyges, for, in communion with her Savior, she was indeed unseen by men; but she became visible in this city, by the good fruits which that communion inspired. There is one, however, whose acts of generosity and benevolence are well known among this people: but she has been prevented, by a call to a better world, from participating in the solemnities of this day. Less



avored, perhaps, than Mrs. Van Ness, by what we call fortune, she had a mind equally noble. Each successive week is bringing to light her many acts of kindness, and they will long be remembered, even though she be sleeping in the silent dust. Conjugal affection has reared the memorials of love upon her grave ; but her highest eulogium is found in the enduring gratitude of the poor and the destitute, to whose wants she so liberally contributed. Her generous deeds, though unknown among men, are recorded in Heaven, and will be published to her credit "in that day" when "a cup of cold water," given for the refreshing of suffering humanity, shall be acknowledged and rewarded. The influence of her name still falls, like the gentle dew of heaven upon the unfolding rose, gilding the gloomy scenes of adversity, and softening the miseries of human poverty and want. This congregation need not be told that my allusion is to Mrs. Mary Ann Coltman.

Permit me now, brethren, to call your attention to the subject of our discourse. The occasion is one of the highest interest, if not in a national sense, certainly it is in a sense local and ecclesiastical.— One more sanctuary has been completed, and one more gate to Heaven has been opened. The Church universal, which consists of all who truly repent and sincerely believe the Gospel, has been enlarged by one more edifice for the reception of penitents and

believers. Here our Gospel will be successfully planted and faithfully preached. Here children will be taught the elements of the Christian religion — the hum of the Sabbath school will be heard — the Divine Statutes will be observed — the Word will be read — the Scriptures will be interpreted, and their injunctions enforced — prayer will be continually offered — the promises will be presented — duties will be illustrated — the doctrines of Grace defended — the rite of baptism administered, and the Redeemer's death often commemorated. Here, for ages to come, will champions of the Cross successively appear, planting themselves in this pulpit; and the light of the Bible will be radiated over thousands in this gay Metropolis. Some future Brainard, fresh from the smoke of Indian wigwams, may officiate in this desk, or some transatlantic Chalmers may here wield his unrivaled logic among senators and representatives, jurists and law-givers. Its pastor, and pastors in time to come, will welcome all the defenders of the Christian Faith, whether they come from prairies, or savannas, or everglades — from tropics, zones, or poles. It is the house of the Lord, and prepared for a portion, at least, of the household of faith. Though the faith of the Presbyterian Church will, doubtless, be here illustrated and enforced, yet we hope this will never be done to the injury of that charity which is recommended in the Bible.

The language of the text is certainly figurative. There was no building where the Patriarch stood; and yet so powerful was the Divine presence, that his faith figured a dwelling around him filled with the Divine glory. There was no literal gate; and yet Heaven stood open to his view, as if some massive gate had been shut upon him, and he detained as an enraptured captive, gazing on the vision. It was not a sight of these exterior clouds and stars, and suns and systems, but of the interior Heaven. He saw the Divine Holiness, and the Mediator standing on the summit of the ladder, and the blessed angels, who moved in obedience to the Redeemer's voice. Allow me now to show in what sense the building which we dedicate this day, is the Lord's house.

We recognise this building, then, as a fruit of Divine goodness, and as a production of the Divine Will. Had our Maker frowned on the undertaking, the whole scheme would have been a failure. Could this house have risen here, if He had said it shall not rise? It is true, we have given thanks to those who designed it, to those who contributed, and to those who wrought on it from the morning light to the evening shade; but they were all simple instruments and agents in the Divine hand. Has any heart given cheerfully: the Lord opened that heart. Has any hand labored indefatigably: He strength-

ened that hand. Have any been moved to more than common efforts: He supplied the motives. It was a sin of no ordinary grade, which a Chaldean king committed, when he said: "Is not this great Babylon which I have builded?" And the same sin, precisely, may be committed by ascribing to ourselves the glory of erecting a Church. Let us, my brethren, rather be humble and lowly. Let our language be, "Lord, thou hast, by Thy Providence, given us a spiritual home, a place where parents and children, wives and husbands, masters and servants, pastor and people, may convene. Thou hast marked out a central point, to which the rich and poor, the rude and polite, the obscure and celebrated, may converge. Thou hast given us a hive, where spiritual honey may be made, or a garden, where the fruits of Zion may be pulled, or a treasury, where we may always check for the pearl of great price—nor will those checks be protested, nor will their number lessen the pearl whose value is infinite.—Thou hast reared for us moral altars, where penitents may weep, and where suppliants may kneel, and where convicted publicans may stand and smite upon their breasts, and where the pardoned may rejoice, and salvation be proclaimed."

This is the Lord's house, because to all structures of the kind He has promised His special presence, and His peculiar blessing. "In all places," says Je-

hovah, "where I record my name, to those places will I return with a blessing." Our Savior has promised the manifestation of Himself, even to two or three disciples gathered together in His name, and by His authority. It is true that our Lord, in the fourth chapter of John, cast off the temple of Gerizim, because the Samaritans had disfigured Revelation, and rejected the prophetic writings; and He announces the discontinuance of worship in Solomon's Temple, because the Jews had striven to merge the light which He brought, into the shadows of Judaism, instead of permitting the shadows of Judaism to disperse themselves as so much incense in that light. He, by no means, discountenances public worship; but He expands its privileges, and enlarges the area on which it is spiritually to be performed. The Tabernacle set up by Moses in the wilderness, had answered its purposes, and then it was taken down and succeeded by the Temple; and the Temple was nothing more than a typical vestibule to a vast, moral, and interior spirituality, intended for the Gentile, as well as the Jewish world. We have said that both the Tabernacle and Temple were built by the Divine order, and the platform of each minutely arranged by Inspiration. The Lord presided over the worship of His chosen people; and much more will He be present at the simple rites which prevail in His New Testament Church.

How many passages may be read in the Psalms, descriptive of the charm connected with the Divine presence, even in earthly sanctuaries: "I was glad when they said to me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." "Our feet, after long travel, shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem!" "As the heart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after the living God." "When shall I come and appear before God?" "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may behold His beauty, and inquire at His Temple." "I will wash my hands in innocency, and so will I encompass thine holy altars." "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And shall we, who live under a clearer dispensation, be regardless of the joy which springs from the moral presence of Jehovah? Pliny states, in his letter to Trajan, that the Christians of Bythinia were accustomed to sing hymns, at midnight, to our Lord Jesus Christ. The Apocalypse, or book of Revelation, is descriptive of that worship which the New Testament Church gives to the Lamb; and, compared to the homage of the old dispensation, was as the murmur of Siloa's brook, to the thunders of the sea, when its sublimity stands confessed, or when its mountain waves are reduced to blue slopes and green lawns, and myriads of rich and glowing shells work their way to its margin.

This is the Lord's house, because its founders have this day set it apart from all common uses to purposes of a most sacred kind. We do not expect that the principia of Sir Isaac Newton will be here studied, nor the poems of Dante or Goethe recited. The people will not flock here as to a drama, but to hear serious things. Divine truth, as taught in the whole Bible, will here be made known. From this moral paradise error will be shut out, as by an angel's sword, and men will be established as antipodes to error, by that gravitation which is inherent to the truth which the Bible proclaims. Here let the fall of the first Adam be loudly proclaimed, and the restoration of mankind by the Second Adam be more loudly made known. Here let the moral inability of man be preached, in a feeling of which he will repair to the Savior with more than a giant's strength, and the speed of the dromedary, that pants for release from its burden. Here let regeneration be enforced, and salvation by grace, and grace alone, and the justifying righteousness of Jesus, and the sanctification of men by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Sin, in its bitterness, its wormwood and gall, will here be announced; but its pardon, at the same time, through the scheme of redemption. This is a fountain from which no milk-and-water theology will ever issue; but here babes will come for the sincere milk of truth. They who are hungry will find

a repast of manna; they who are thirsty will find the stream of salvation; and they who are giants will here drink refreshing wine. Hell will here be portrayed, and Heaven will bend its arches for the reception of prayer, and set open its pavilions, in which praise shall resound. It was said of Dante, as he walked along the streets of Florence, "Behold the man who has been to hell;" but this, and more, may be said of every faithful minister: "Behold the man who lives both in heaven and hell." He hears the roar of the one, and buries himself in its ashes, that he may rise from its depth and warn the impenitent; and he ascends into the other, that he may return from its interior glories, and poise himself in moral grandeur around the feeble, the desponding, and the loitering, and near the smitten heart, and the raven garments of the widow, the orphan, and all the afflicted. Here will the map of Christian duty be frequently unrolled, and the straight and narrow way be repeatedly traced. The Vesuvian smoke of error, we trust, will never rise from this spot; but may it always be distinguished in this city by its cloud of moral incense, on its swift and reverential ascension.

This is a place for the instruction of the ignorant — for the confirmation of the wavering — for the alarm of the impenitent — for the conviction of the sinful — for the healing of the morally sick, and



blind, and halt, and withered. Its pastor will here arrange a kind of moral magnetic telegraph, which shall report, even to angels, tidings of converted sinners, and exulting believers, and triumphant saints; and display, even to a heavenly distance, pictures of Sabbath repose, and green pastures, and quiet waters, and blessed feasts, and rejoicing Christians, and holy promises, and precious consolations; the tears of contrition, the vows of the pious, the resolutions of the doubtful; the flock at rest, or the bewildered sheep struggling in the defiles of the mountains. — Here the tenets of Apostles will be dwelt on, and the principles of the Reformation discussed. And, if it is to continue to be a house of the Lord, then the rites of the New Testament must be respected and observed. It is well known, my brethren, that, as a denomination, we are opposed to any complex forms, or any gaudy ceremonial. This is no occasion, however, on which to attack the ritual of other churches; but we may defend our own, and its defence may be found in its Apostolic simplicity. — Many are astonished that Presbyterians should be so fondly attached to a ceremonial which is so destitute of pomp or parade, and from which mitres, and croziers, and altars, and incense, and images, and pictures, and robes are totally absent. It has nothing of which to boast in the way of fashion; but if the imagination of others be imposed on by such things,

we, as Presbyterians, have learned to school our imagination to something less suited to the popular taste. We wish to be men, and not children, in our religion; and we leave others to play with their toys, whilst we wish to seek the essence of the Bible.— There is quite enough in our history to entertain our imagination, without resorting to human inventions. Our churches, in all ages, have been simple. They have been so among the Scottish dales, and the Swiss and Italian Alps, and in Holland, where the broad ocean leans against the land.

This is the Lord's house, because it was built as a place in which its occupants will seek intercourse with Heaven. We are aware that, in speaking of intercourse with Heaven, we subject ourselves to the charge of enthusiasm, if not of fanaticism. But mankind, in all ages, have believed that there are some links of connexion between Heaven and earth. They sought the resolution of their doubts from the oracles of Delphi and Dodona; and even Alexander, the Great, penetrated into Lydia to ascertain, from an oracle, his celestial descent. Even Deists have maintained public worship in London and Paris, and in New York. But what kind of intercommunion are we to look for between this house and Heaven? It would argue uncommon weakness in any one, to expect miraculous interviews with the Lord— such as our Patriarch enjoyed on his way to Padanaram.

We know that marvellous dreams have ceased; that angels descend not now as in patriarchal times; and that the canon of Revelation is closed. No one entertains a more contemptuous opinion than we, of the hallucinations of Joanna Southcote, and the reveries of Emanuel Swedenbourg, or the visions of the French prophets, or of the raptures of Ignatius Loyola. We believe, however, in a moral and spiritual intercourse between Heaven and earth, even in the nineteenth century. This doctrine is taught in all the Bible, and this intercommunion is founded on the study of the Scriptures, and the Holy Spirit giving light and unction to the Revelation of Heaven. "Behold, I stand at the door of the Church and knock; if any man in that Church shall open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with me." The Holy Spirit, through the medium of revealed truth, still operates on the conscience of the sinner, and on the heart of the saint. He still gives life to His pastors, and unction to His people. He still binds up the heart of the mourner, and unravels the perplexities of the convicted. He still rolls out magnificent orbs of truth from the midst of His own infinite splendor, which guide the bewildered through the mazes of a tangled wilderness. He still cheers, enlivens, cleanses, and purifies the souls of men. He still, by means, ordinances, sacraments and privileges, opens the gates of His

Church, and shuts out the world, while he entertains His people with sweet views of Beulah, and sweet foretastes of the heavenly land. He still revives His Church, and strengthens His drooping cause. He still extracts the sting of death. But, especially, at death, will this Church become the gate of Heaven. Its hinges will often turn and transmit souls to the upper world. Death, my brethren, is busy in our world; but, though mounted on his pale horse, he carries dread and dismay even among Christians, yet is he nothing more than a kind of outrider to those chariots of fire in which saints are borne over the Jordan, to the green fields, and ripened fruits, and superb flowers of Canaan. Piety is often found in connection with a feeble frame. Death may ruin the temple, and reduce the altar, even, to fragments; but he cannot quench the fire of the sanctified soul. For thirty years did Baxter daily look for death, so tottering was his frame. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, there was, in the palace of Windsor, a harp made entirely of glass, except its chords. — Equally brittle was the body of this holy man, and liable to be dashed in pieces; but there were still chords in his heart which death could not touch, and melody which death could not stop. He was the Demosthenes of the Puritan Divines, whilst the allegory of Bunyan has spread a kind of milky way over the sky of the Christian world.

But it is time to close: and if the views we have taken be correct, then a faithful attendance on this sanctuary is both our duty and our privilege. Let there be a place for every hearer, and every hearer in his place. Let no slight cause keep you away. Rather watch for opportunities to come. Do not come to be religiously amused, but seek for deep Scriptural instruction. Distinguish the chaff from the wheat, and be satisfied with nothing short of the Gospel itself. Teach your children and your domestics to revere the Sabbath. Pray much for the peace of Jerusalem, for they who love its peace shall prosper. Let all wrath, bitterness and evil-speaking be put away. Be kind to one another, and courteous. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." It is sweeter than Hermon's dew. Learn to feel for those who are without a sanctuary. Be advocates for Church extension. As others have given to you, do not forget others when called on to give. In charity and silence maintain your distinctive principles. Even die for them, and be like that Spartan band who perished at the Straits of Thermopylæ, and let not even one survive to tell the story of your martyrdom. Our creed is assailed far and wide. Even Brougham has been writing against Calvin; but this noble lord, peradventure, does not relish the heavenly atmosphere in which the Reformer lived, any more than he would

relish the natural atmosphere on the top of Mont Blanc, which crowns what was once the home of the illustrious Genevese. Cultivate in your children a love for missions. Teach them to pray for the heathen; and let the impenitent be alarmed, seeing that they remain unconverted when means are daily multiplying for their conversion.

We are not responsible for the length of this discourse; but you are responsible who have created an occasion so interesting as the present. We are not accustomed to preach after the fashion of a city. — We meet a people in the woods, whose patience is not exhausted by the discourse of an hour. The history of Redemption has often been told them, but they are not yet wearied with its wonders. Calvary still possesses for them its wonted interest. Its declivities, its rocks, its crosses, its crown of thorns, its reed, its spear, its victim, its darkness, its convulsions, its shrouded sun, its twilight have still a tongue that speaks in power to their hearts. So may it ever be in this sanctuary, which we this day dedicate, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of the Triune Jehovah. AMEN.













