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THE

## INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

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DR. THOMAS JEWETT was born in Rindge, N. H., Feb. 28, 1771, where, with the exception of four years, he resided till his death, which occurred April 24, 1840, at the age of 69. For many years he was a reputable physician, and also a justice of the peace; but he relinquished the active services of both stations some time previous to his death.

Having labored a few months in the ministry at Rindge, I called on Dr. Jewett, in the spring of 1822, to ask his consent that his eldest daughter might assist as a teacher in the Sabbath-school. He frankly stated his objections to Sabbath-schools; but, after a candid reconsideration of them, granted my request, and all his children of proper age, were also permitted to attend. This brought the family more directly into contact with Christian influence, and at length this daughter and four other children, became hopefully pious, and united with the church. He was tenderly attached to his family; and so far as his children exhibited the fruits of the Spirit, their influence upon their father was favorable to evangelical religion. He once said to me, in the hearing of some of them who were anxious for their salvation, "Say what you think proper to them; for though I do not believe your doctrine, if any of my family think it will add to their happiness to join your church, I am willing they should do it."

He continued to indulge them in the enjoyment of religious privileges, though still maintaining his infidelity, and rarely entering the sanctuary himself except on days of public fasting or thanksgiving. The temperance cause he cordially espoused, though he evidently perceived, and once frankly stated to me, that its influence was undeniably favorable to evangelical religion.

In the summer and autumn of 1832, he was frequently

present at public worship; and on the last Saturday in March, 1833, called on me, and in the course of conversation remarked, that he *had resolved to destroy his infidel books!*

Early on the following Monday he called again, bringing a large bundle enclosed in a handkerchief, and with great apparent earnestness and solemnity said, "Here are my infidel books; I thought the minister's house the most suitable place to destroy them. Are you willing I should burn them in your fire?" On my consenting, he called in two neighbors to be *witnesses*, as he said, of the transaction; and then, after concisely stating what had been his religious opinions, took from his bundle book after book, gave its title and character, and committed it to the flames, till the whole were consumed. The stillness of death pervaded the room, and the tears of some, if not all the spectators, evinced the deep emotion which the occasion excited. While the last book was burning, the doctor broke the silence by saying, "It is a wonder that I have not come to some miserable end. Of six men who once joined me in reading these books, and ridiculing religion, four have already terminated their lives by drunkenness or suicide. It is a wonder that *I* too have not come to some miserable end."

I proposed that prayer should be offered. The doctor readily assented, and with evident emotion added, "I wish you to pray that all my sins may be forgiven." I was prevented having any conversation with him again till, on Sabbath evening, two weeks after, he came to inquire *what he must do to be saved?* He was under pungent convictions of sin; and in the stillness of that night, about two o'clock, this aged sinner sent up his *first cry* for mercy to that Saviour whom he had sixty years "despised and rejected."

I might here dwell upon the scenes of the ensuing week: the agonies he experienced, the temptations with which he was assailed, the victory which, through grace, he achieved; the peace that flowed in upon his own soul, and the joy felt by the pious members of his family, when, after disclosing his feelings to his children, and requesting them to talk with him and *teach him as they would a child*, on a subject so new as religion was to him, he first raised the voice of prayer at the family altar. I could speak of other incidents, on which my own mind, while memory lasts, will dwell with peculiar interest; but I forbear.

On the last Sabbath in August, 1833, Dr. Jewett was received as a member of the church, when, at his request, the following communication was read from the pulpit in the hearing of a numerous assembly, many of whom had known his "manner of life from his youth."

"RESPECTED BRETHREN AND FRIENDS—With my general course of life most of this people are acquainted. It is sufficient therefore to say, that, though educated in the belief that the Scriptures are the word of God, yet in early life, by means of erroneous books and associates of bad principles, I imbibed opinions which I now regard as fundamentally corrupt and ruinous. Led astray first by the plausible but fallacious arguments of Elkanah Winchester, I adopted his sentiments fully; and from his doctrine of *temporary* future punishment, the transition to Universalism, or the disbelief of *any* future punishment, was very natural and easy. This latter scheme, so perfectly agreeable to the doer of evil, I readily adopted, and warmly advocated for several years.

"At thirty years of age, I tried to become an Atheist, but though I never was left to deny or disbelieve the existence of God, yet I adopted the system of Deism; utterly rejecting the Bible, as the work of man, and an imposition upon the world. My course of conduct in relation to evangelical ministers and Christians, was such as might be expected from one who cherished such sentiments. I have it in painful remembrance that I opposed them, and made them and the cause they espoused, the subject of ridicule and contempt.

"But the names of Infidel and Universalist, I was aware, were not popular. For a few years past I have assumed the name of *Unitarian*, for two reasons: one was, that it exposed me to less odium; the other, I found that I could be reckoned in that class without any material change in my religious opinions. And here I honestly and soberly declare, that these several names were assumed at different times as a mere disguise, as convenience or interest might require. And I now regard these several schemes as essentially the same. I have been intimate with men in all ranks of society belonging to these religious persuasions, and I have found their sentiments substantially the same rela-

tive to the fundamental points in religion—none of them, so far as I could discover, receiving the Bible as decisive authority in religious faith. This, I need not say, is denying its inspiration.

“During a few years past, my feelings towards evangelical religion and its advocates have been gradually becoming more favorable. Several causes have operated to produce this change. Among these, I regard the *temperance* efforts as having had no inconsiderable influence. In this enterprise I cordially enlisted; and I found myself at once connected with evangelical ministers and Christians, while those who agreed with me in religious opinions, with few exceptions, did not promote, but rather hindered the cause of temperance.

“In the course of the last winter, I was led, by what means I know not, to the conviction that my infidel books, of which I had several, would do mischief to my children, or others, should they ever come into their hands. This impression continued, and became deeper and deeper, and gave me no little uneasiness for many months. I at length concluded to destroy them, not doubting, that if this were done, my mind would at once regain its accustomed calmness. These pernicious books I *deliberately burnt the first day of last April*. But the ways of God are not as our ways. As soon as the last book was consumed, and before I rose from my seat, for the first time in my life, so far as I can recollect, I felt a conviction that I was personally a sinner, and guilty before God. From this moment, though I knew not what it meant, I had no peace day nor night for two or three weeks. My agony of mind it is impossible for me to describe. My feelings were to me entirely new; and the doctrine of conviction of sin and of conversion I had always ridiculed. I tried in vain to throw off my impressions. For aught I know, my health was good, my mind sound—but I had such a view of my sins, and such, particularly, was the opposition of my hard and rebellious heart against God, that for several days I was unable to attend to any business, or enjoy food or sleep. After days and nights of struggling, in my extremity I called, for the first time in my life, upon Jesus Christ for help. My hardened heart began to yield, and I experienced some quietness of mind. I immediately felt that I ought to set up the wor-

ship of God in my family. But the duty was new to me, and very formidable obstacles rose up to view. After a violent conflict, I have reason to bless God he enabled me to overcome them, and to commence, and to maintain to this time, morning and evening worship in my family. From this hour particularly, I have enjoyed a peace of mind before unknown to me, and have obtained increasing light and strength in spiritual things.

“The Bible which I once rejected, I am fully convinced, and firmly believe, to be a revelation from God. My views of the Christian Sabbath, which I have greatly profaned, are entirely altered. I now regard it as a divine institution, to be kept holy; and I look forward to its return, from week to week, with high anticipations of happiness in the enjoyment of the precious privileges it affords in the private and public worship of God. I take great comfort in prayer, in reading the Bible, in hearing the Gospel, and in intercourse with pious people. The way of salvation by the grace of God, through the atonement of Christ, appears right, safe, and glorious, and I rejoice in committing myself to the hands of Christ, whom I desire to receive as my all-sufficient Redeemer and portion. I daily feel that I am a sinner, and my past life appears to me inexpressibly vile; and I am filled with wonder that God has so long suffered me to live.

“It is with a desire, if I am not deceived, to honor the name and promote the cause of Him who died for me, the chief of sinners, and from a sense of duty to the Saviour and his church, that I offer myself for admission among his visible followers. I do this with fear and trembling, lest I shall be left to dishonor religion; but I ask for a special interest in the prayers and watchful admonitions of the church, that I may be enabled, by divine grace, to do something for the advancement of the Redeemer’s kingdom in the world.

“I reflect with shuddering of soul upon the awful gulf to which my former opinions were leading me—a course which I was induced to enter upon through the influence of erroneous writings and corrupt companions. Let youth beware of these sources of danger. I believe their only ground of safety to be a life of prayer and of obedience to the will of God.

“Different opinions, probably, will be formed by different persons, of the communication I have here made. But I have only to say, that I have done it in the sincerity of my heart, and must leave the result with God, earnestly desiring that this expression of my views may be blessed to the good of my fellow-men.

“THOMAS JEWETT.”

By the grace of God, the doctor's life was such as to fulfil the hopes of the friends, and disappoint the predictions of the enemies of truth. He uniformly manifested a child-like *simplicity* and *teachableness* of character. This was exhibited at the time of his conversion, and was maintained to the close of his life.

He cherished a *warm attachment to the house and people of God*; prayed for the peace of Zion; rejoiced in her prosperity, and mourned over her afflictions.

Watchful over his own heart, and circumspect in all his words and actions, he made *growth in grace* and *usefulness* in the cause of his Redeemer the great object of his life. Family worship he maintained morning and evening; he was regular and punctual, not only in the house of God, but at religious services during the week; and aware of the tendency of miscellaneous conversation on the Sabbath to efface good impressions, he usually walked in silence and thoughtfulness to and from the sanctuary.

He took great delight in hearing the Gospel, and though he could be pleased with taste, and learning, and eloquence, he rather desired “the sincere milk of the word, that he might grow thereby.” He also daily studied the Bible, and prayerfully meditated on its blessed truths; and by these and other means made very rapid advances in the Christian life. This was manifested in the tender compassion he felt for impenitent sinners, especially those who had imbibed the errors he lamented in himself; and he rarely expressed his religious feelings without uttering, in some form, his concern for their salvation. He “fought a good fight,” he “kept the faith,” and “*finished his course*” with joy.

About three months before his death, he became seriously ill, and without delay began to “set his house in order,” making all needful arrangements as to his worldly



concerns, even including his funeral, with great calmness, and yet with becoming solemnity.

In one of my first interviews with him after he became ill, he said substantially, "I have had great enjoyment under the means of grace, and now I have great peace. I am as happy as I can be. My confidence is all in the merits of Jesus Christ, who has purchased my redemption with his own precious blood. The way of salvation appears wonderful, and I have great peace in meditating upon it. Alluding to the expression of a dying infidel, that he was "about to take a leap in the dark," he said, "It is all *light* in heaven; they have no need of the sun; the Lord is their light—I shall soon be there."

Again—"I am failing in body, but in faith and comfort I am growing stronger and stronger every day. A door is open before me into the New Jerusalem, the holy city, where are the angels and glorified saints, and where God is. Oh what seasons of joy are there! Christ has opened this door, and invites us to come; Oh that men would forsake their sins and come to Christ!" He was asked if he laid any claim to heaven on the ground of good deeds. "Oh, no; I am a guilty sinner. It is a wonder that I was spared. I joined with the wicked in all their reproaches and injurious reports against evangelical ministers and Christians."

At another time he said, "I am wasting away, but I am not afraid of death or of hell. God is with me. He will be with me in the dark valley. All is light—I seem to look right into heaven. I did not know before that any one could have such near views of God and heaven."

In the course of his sickness he exhibited remarkable patience and submission, though his sufferings the last two weeks were uncommonly severe. He used his strength in praising God, and exhorting his brethren and fellow-citizens, nearly two hundred of whom called on him in the course of his confinement. Some hours each day were spent in conversation; and he once said, "What can I do better than to talk my life out for my fellow-mortals? Christ poured out *his* life for a guilty world."

On one of the family rising to wait upon him, he said, "I sleep under the banner of Christ; go lay yourself down to sleep in his arms; I need no one to sit up; the presence of Christ overshadows me."

At another time—"I feel that I have done with earth, and I have comforting views of Christ's goodness and love, and feel no choice whether to live or die—just as God wills. I lay myself in his arms; his Spirit dwells with me. Oh, the wonderful plan of salvation! I never sought the Lord, but *he* sought *me*, and my soul shall praise him for ever."

Again—"Bless the Lord, Oh my soul, and magnify his name, for his riches, for his wonderful kindness, his tender mercies to me a sinner. Oh the joy and peace in believing! 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.' Blessed be the name of that Saviour who allowed me to enter before it was too late. Oh, had I sought the Lord in my youth, how much I might have enjoyed! All you, my children, remember your Creator *now—now—even to-day*, and do not abuse his tender care and compassion."

The last time I saw him alive, was two days before he died. He said, "I may live till to-morrow, but I wish you to read the 21st chapter of the Revelation, containing the account of the holy city. I wish to hear that *once more before I die*." As soon as the reading was closed, he said with great earnestness, "Is not that worth living for seventy years in such pain and anguish as I now endure? Yes, oh yes; worth thousands and thousands of years of pain to obtain such an eternal inheritance."

To the question, "Do you long to be gone?" he answered, "Not till my work is done—not till my heavenly Father is ready." Just before he ceased to breathe, he was asked, "Do you know that you are going?" "Yes," he replied, "Christ is just at hand."

Thus lived and thus died the "INFIDEL RECLAIMED."

# THE SABBATH.

---

LAW OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK.—“There shall be no shooting, hunting, fishing, sporting, playing, horse-racing, gaming, frequenting of tippling-houses, or any unlawful exercises or pastimes, on the first day of the week, called Sunday; nor shall any person travel on that day, unless in cases of charity or necessity, or in going to or returning from some church or place of worship; \* \* \* \* \* nor shall there be any servile laboring or working on that day, excepting works of necessity and charity.”

Most, if not all the states in the Union have laws essentially agreeing with the above; and this protection of the Sabbath has obviously grown out of the conviction of all intelligent legislators, that a holy day of rest, and the public worship of God, “are,” as the statutes of Vermont well express, “in the highest degree promotive of the peace, happiness, and prosperity of a people.”

LAW OF GOD.—“Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath-day, and hallowed it.” Exod. 20:8-11.

PROMISE OF GOD.—“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.” Isa. 58:13, 14.

Learned men have abundantly shown, (particularly in a recent examination before the British House of Commons,) that the horse and ox live longer, perform a greater amount of service, and are every way more valuable to their owners, when allowed to rest one day in seven.

The Sabbath-day of rest is necessary to the full development of our physical powers, and to the longest continuance of health. Careful examination at a public institution in London, employing above two thousand laborers, proved that more work was performed in a year, when the Sabbath was faithfully kept, than during the same amount of time, when the men were required to labor every day. Planters in the West Indies, not many years since, worked their slaves on the Sabbath, till they became satisfied that this practice was a pecuniary loss to them. It produced enfeebled constitutions and premature death.

The Sabbath is one of the strongest safeguards of virtuous principle in the young: the more respectable and amiable virtues will be seen in families who regard the Lord's day; while, on the other hand, it is well known, that children rarely honor their parents, or prove a blessing to their old age, unless taught to honor the Sabbath.

Sabbath-breaking leaves the mind to be filled with dark and dangerous errors, in regard to God and religion. This sin often leads men far into scepticism, and, in many ways, tends to instability of character.

Sabbath-breakers are generally found among the foul-mouthed and profane.

It is believed that very few persons ever become licentious or drunken, until they are accustomed to desecrate the Lord's day.

Sabbath-breaking and intemperance have produced nearly all the crime committed in our land. In Connecticut state prison, ninety, out of one hundred convicts, had been habitual Sabbath-breakers: in Massachusetts state prison, one hundred and eighty-two, out of two hundred and fifty-six, were of the same character. Much the same state of

things may be affirmed of Auburn, and probably of all our public penitentiaries. The testimony of magistrates also, so far as we have been able to learn, is, that those concerned in riots and assaults, are almost universally notorious Sabbath-breakers.

A gentleman, acquainted twenty-five years in New York city, says those merchants of his acquaintance who kept their counting-rooms open on the Sabbath, have failed, with scarcely an exception.

History most clearly proves that every nation and community has been prospered while it honored God's Sabbath; and that social order and the supremacy of law have not been maintained where the Sabbath has been trampled on. Ancient Israel is a signal proof of this: the nations of Western Europe illustrate the same truth; while the history of our own New England most conspicuously demonstrates the blessing of the Christian Sabbath.

France attempted to destroy the Lord's day by public enactment, but brought such scenes of bloodshed and horror upon itself, in consequence, that the Infidel authorities were compelled to restore the fourth commandment, and institute religious worship, to save the metropolis and kingdom from utter desolation.

In the church immediately succeeding the apostolic age, pagan persecutors detected and exposed those who were disciples, by the question, *Dominicum servasti?* "Hast thou kept the Lord's day?" And the uniform answer of the believer is declared by a distinguished Roman governor to have been, "I am a Christian, I cannot omit it."

Sabbath-breakers, so far as can be known, seldom attain that purity of heart and life which enables them to die in peace, or look forward with solid hope to a blessed immortality.

To CITIZENS.—Freemen, will you not faithfully obey and maintain the ordinance of your own legislators respecting the Sabbath? Can you be patriots or republicans while your example tends to bring into contempt any one of the

laws of your own state? As you prize your liberties, be entreated to lend your whole influence in favor of the Christian Sabbath: civil freedom and national prosperity cannot exist without it.

TO PARENTS.—Will you not, by precept and example, sanctify the Sabbath? Its blessed influence is all needed in training your children: without it, you cannot educate them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, nor can you have good hope of leaving them with fixed moral principle that shall carry them honorably through life.

TO MAGISTRATES.—You have sworn to maintain the laws: will you, then, wink at profanations of the Lord's day, knowing that its protection is necessary to the maintenance of all the great interests of this republic? Above all, will you break the Sabbath, and thus lay upon your soul the awful sin of violating your own oath?

TO BUSINESS MEN.—Be entreated to require your workmen, your mills, your boats, your shops, and your legers, to rest on the Sabbath. You will gain nothing substantial by violating this law of your country and your God. By desecrating the Lord's day, you peril every thing that can be dear.

Finally, this little Tract addresses itself to every dying reader. Will you not henceforth "REMEMBER THE SABBATH-DAY to keep it holy?" It is an institution rich in mercy and blessing. O, turn not away from it; thrust not from you its hallowed influences; lest its slighted privileges weigh you down in deep anguish and woe, at the last, as you hear this word, "So I swear in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest." Heb. 3: 11. But, dear reader, love the Sabbath-day; receive it with gratitude, with gladness, as the type and earnest of that Sabbath, sweet, unending, glorious, which shall be to the people of God. Heb. 4: 9.

# MARKS

OF

## RELIGIOUS DECLENSION.

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1. WHEN you are reluctant to religious conversation, and the company of serious, heavenly-minded Christians, and enjoy yourself best with men of the world.

2. When, from preference, you are absent from meetings for prayer, confine yourself to Sabbath meetings, are easily detained from them, and are ready to excuse such neglects.

3. When you are afraid to consider certain duties seriously, lest your conscience rebuke past neglect, and insist on fidelity now.

4. When it is more your object, in doing duty, to pacify conscience, than to honor Christ, obtain spiritual profit, or do good to others.

5. When you have an over-critical spirit respecting preaching; are dissatisfied with the *manner*, as inelegant, too plain, too intellectual, or not according to some favorite model; or with the *matter*, as too doctrinal, or too preceptive; or when you complain of it as too close, or are suspicious of personality.

6. When you are more afraid of being accounted strict, than of sinning against Christ by negligence in practice, and unfaithfulness "to your Lord and Master."

7. When you have little fear of temptation, and can trifle with spiritual danger.

8. When you thirst for the complacency of men of the world, and are more anxious to know what they think or say of you, than whether you honor the Saviour in their sight.

9. When scandals to religion are more the subject of your censure, than of your secret grieving and prayer before God, and faithful endeavors for their removal.

10. When you are more afraid to encounter the scorn of an offending man, by rebuking sin, than of offending God by silence.

11. When you are more bent on being rich than holy.

12. When you cannot receive deserved reproof for faults, are unwilling to confess them, and justify yourself.

13. When you are impatient and unforbearing towards the frailties, misjudgments, and faults of others.

14. When your reading of the Bible is formal, hasty, lesson-wise, or merely intellectual, and unattended with self-application; or when you read almost any other book with more interest than the book of God.

15. When you have more religion abroad than at home; are apparently fervent when "seen of men," but languid when seen only in the family, or by God alone.

16. When your religious taste is more for the new things of men, than for the old things of the treasury of God's word.

17. When you call spiritual sloth and withdrawment from Christian activity by the names of prudence and peaceableness, while sinners are going to destruction, and the church suffering declension; unmindful that prudence can be united with apostolic fidelity, and peaceableness with most anxious seeking of the salvation of souls. Also,

18. When, because there is false zeal abroad, you will neither trust yourself, nor others, even in that "fervency in spirit, serving the Lord," which Paul taught and practised.

19. When you are secretly more gratified at the falls of some professor of religion, than grieved for the wounds he inflicts upon Christ.

20. When, under chastisement of Providence, you think more of your sufferings than your deserts, and look more for relief than purification from sin.

21. When you *confess*, but do *not forsake* besetting sin.

22. When you *acknowledge*, but still *neglect* duty.

23. When, under slight temptations, you step across the strict, straight lines of the divine law; doing improper



things on the Sabbath ; not being exactly just in business transactions ; swerving from strict veracity ; and do such things without much shrinking of conscience.

24. When your cheerfulness has more of the levity of the unregenerate, than of the holy joy of a son of God.

25. When you live so little like a Christian, that you are embarrassed and ashamed in attempting religious duties.

26. When you say in yourself, of *this* or *that sin*, "Is it not a little one?" "the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing;" and think so lightly of sins called *small*, that you are not disturbed respecting *great* ones; when, also, you laugh at sins in others, instead of reproving them, and mourning before God.

27. When the *habit* of neglecting duty is plead as an *excuse*, instead of an *aggravation*, and a reason for penitence.

28. When you have so many worldly plans, and please yourself so much with success, that you are unwilling or afraid to think of death; and in your daily manner of living say, "I would live here always."

29. When you think more of being *saved* by Christ, than of *servicing* Christ; more of security of heaven, than of deliverance from sin, saving dying men, and honoring God.

30. When you shut your eyes from self-examination, for fear of what you shall find in yourself to alarm you and shake your hope.

31. When you lean on the opinion of others that you are a Christian, instead of faithfully searching your heart and life, and comparing them with the "sure word."

32. When you speak more frequently of declension in the church, than in your own heart; or talk of both more than you mourn and pray before God, and labor for a better state of things.

33. When the worldly spirit, savor, and cares of the week follow you farther into the Sabbath, than the spirit and savor of the Sabbath follow you into the week.

34. When you are easily induced to make your *duty as a Christian* bend to your *worldly interest*.

35. When you can be in frequent association with men of the world, without solicitude lest they *do your soul hurt*, or you *do theirs no good*, or both.

36. When, in your thoughts, reading, or conversation on religious subjects, your clearness of head, ingenuity, and justness of conclusions, outgo your spirituality, and heartiness, and love to Christ and his Gospel.

37. When your orthodoxy is the most or all there is which is right in you ; and when you contend more about its positions, than you strive for holiness.

38. When your zeal, instead of being "according to knowledge," is according to your pride and prejudice ; and you are more occupied in censuring the coldness of others, than in affectionate endeavors to persuade them to do their duty, and quietly and humbly to do your own.

39. When your activity in religion depends upon the excitement of occasions, instead of being the fruit of steady, spiritual-minded, disinterested principle ; and when you take more delight in the bustle of outward and popular religious movements, than in secret communion with God, and in duties in which you are retired from the notice of men.

40. When you think more of "the mote in your brother's eye," than of the "beam in your own."

41. When you find it difficult to tell wherein you are essentially different, as to your state of heart and habits of life, from what you were before you professed to be a Christian.

Declining professor of religion, will you use these pages as a help to self-examination, that you may know yourself and your state. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked ; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." "Be watchful, and strengthen the things that remain and are ready to die ; for I have not found thy works perfect before God."

THE  
MOTHER'S LAST PRAYER;  
OR,  
GEORGE VINING.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

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IN the year 1792, I was called to the pastoral charge of a congregation of new settlers who had removed from the vicinity of Boston, and located themselves at P——, on the Green Mountains, in the same state. Some of them had sat under preaching far from evangelical, but their common hardships constituted a bond of union; and as soon as they had made an opening in the forest, and provided a shelter for their families, they united without a dissenting voice to secure the public ordinances of the Gospel. It was an interesting scene when they assembled, at the earliest dawn of day, to raise the heavy timbers for a house of worship. I believe that every male inhabitant of the district was present, and the stillness of night yet reigned when I was called to lead them in invoking the blessing of God.

No people were ever apparently more harmonious; yet I soon discovered, in a number of individuals, a decided hostility to the humbling doctrines of the Gospel. Among these was GEORGE VINING, who, at the time of my settlement, was thirty-eight years of age. He had been early left an orphan; at eight was placed as an apprentice in an irreligious family; was married at twenty-two; and then sat for thirteen years under preaching which inculcated a good moral life as the ground of acceptance with God.

He was eminently a self-made man. His mind was vigorous and independent; his thoughts original, and often expressed with surprising terseness and force. His mind

was metal *in the ore*. For fifteen years he was one of the most attentive hearers I addressed ; but it was only to parry every argument and reject every truth that conflicted with his system of salvation.

The Holy Spirit converted many around him, and among them the wife of his bosom ; but the only visible effect on him was to render him more decided in defending his own opinions. She has told me, that on returning from public worship, she always dreaded to take a seat with him on the horse, which was their only conveyance, as he failed not to go home quarrelling with the truths he had heard ; and what was worse, to vent his bitterness against them in the presence of his family of six sons and five daughters, all of whom were far from God. If his wife uttered a word in their defence, his authoritative tone would silence her, and thus secure the argument.

He indulged himself in like manner in the circle at the public-house, whither he loved to repair from the labors of his farm, to exchange horses, and mingle his social feelings as the glass passed briskly ; and where his loud voice, his ready wit, and his bitter thrusts at vital religion, gave him a sad preëminence.

The town is intersected by a small river, with long and steep acclivities on either side, spreading out, as they recede, into beautiful table-lands gradually ascending, bringing a large part of the farms and dwellings of the inhabitants in full view of each other, and presenting, in distant prospect, the spires of a number of neighboring churches. Vining's residence was on the opposite side of the gulf, about two miles from my own, and as some of my shade-trees excluded the public-house from his view, he rudely but honestly requested their removal. That public-house was his paradise, where the native brilliancy of his mind sparkled and was admired. Often, as I sat in my study on Saturday evening, endeavoring to prepare my mind and heart for the Lord's day, have I heard the rude trampling of horses passing rapidly by, as the group dispersed, and recognized Vining's voice drowning that of his companions, and perhaps convulsing them with laughter.

Yet on the following morning he would be early at the house of God, and always listen with attention. Not unfrequently he would call on me, perhaps abruptly com-

mencing his interview by saying, "Well, Mr. H——, I like you as a man, but I don't like your preaching. I don't believe the heart is depraved, as you represent it; I suppose you think what you preach is true, but I don't."

He would then sit down and debate the point, often with much shrewdness, till, feeling that enough had been said, and seeming to have an instinctive apprehension of the value of a minister's time, he would rise, seize his hat, kindly bid me farewell, and in an instant would be gone.

In one of these visits, when his mind had become intent on the arguments for and against the doctrines of the cross, he broke out in a loud, half-ironical tone, with a shrewd glance of the eye, as if he were condescending to our religious weakness, and with astonishing recklessness of feeling, "*Well, perhaps I shall come over yet. They say—I know nothing about it—but they say MY MOTHER DIED WHEN I WAS TWO WEEKS OLD, AND JUST BEFORE SHE BREATHED HER LAST, SHE TOOK ME IN HER ARMS AND BLESSED ME, AND GAVE ME UP TO GOD!*"

"Mr. Vining may yet be brought in," said my now departed wife when he was gone, with a breaking heart, and hoping against hope: "God is a prayer-hearing God, and that MOTHER'S LAST PRAYER may yet be answered."

He had now been hardening in sin *more than fifty years*. His oldest son had left the paternal roof, and apparently inheriting all his father's faults, with little of his stability of character, changed from one object to another, till he located himself in D——, Vermont, on the borders of Canada, and engaged in the traffic of lumber. With the ministrations of the sanctuary, he had taken leave of the Bible; the Sabbath he profaned by business or amusement; and he loved the exhilaration of the festive bowl.

But a prayer-hearing God had his purposes of mercy, and was not straitened in his means of fulfilling them. Through the example and influence of a pious lady, an impression was made on his mind that religion is a reality, and that he must be "*born again,*" or perish. He struggled to conceal his alarm; obtained some fragments of a Bible, studied them in secret, and soon saw clearly that he was ruined by sin, that there was no hope but in Christ, and was brought humbly to accept of his mercy. His thoughts quickly reverted to his obdurate father and his almost dis-

consolate mother; and without delay he wrote them all the feelings of his heart.

The father soon called on me, saying, with his characteristic frankness, and with unusual apparent seriousness, "Mr. H——, we have received a most surprising letter from my son F——. He is up there in the wilderness, with no means of grace, and thinks he is converted; and it is unaccountable to me that, ignorant as he was about religion, he tells the same story that you do. I confess, it looks some like being taught by 'one and the same Spirit.'"

It was not long before this son visited his parents. His heart was full, and he related to the listening family what he had experienced; ascribing it all to the sovereign mercy of God, who had opened his blind eyes, showed him his sin and danger, and led him to the Saviour.

As he unfolded God's dealings with him, a conflict words cannot describe agitated his mother's heart. To hear such language from his lips was indeed "life from the dead;" but at every new disclosure she trembled, lest her husband should break out in wrath against the hated truths he uttered, denouncing the whole as fanaticism, and vindicate, with increased obstinacy, his cherished errors. The depravity of the human heart, the sovereignty of the divine purposes, dependence on the Holy Spirit, and salvation solely through the efficacy of atoning blood, were doctrines with which he had been at war ever since he came to years of discretion. But he heard in silence the whole narration of his son, and then only added, with much seriousness, "*I do not know but these things are so.*"

He was soon again at my house, related all his son had said, and with a solemnity and tenderness I had never observed before, added, "*If these things are so, all my hopes are without foundation.*"

A few evenings afterwards he accompanied his wife to the residence of one of his daughters who had recently married, but the great subject of salvation so pressed upon his heart, that he could not be induced to take a mouthful of the plain refreshment provided. "Mr. Vining," said the wife of his pastor to him on this occasion, "how greatly should we rejoice to have you submit to Christ. Not only would your own soul be saved, but you might then be a blessing to your family and the church of God. If you

live and die as you are, you will be no substantial benefit to either, but must spend an eternity in misery."

Those words, he afterwards said, sunk into his heart. That night he scarcely closed his eyes. His long-cherished views of the method of salvation appeared baseless as a dream. He saw he must have light from the Bible, and aid from the Holy Spirit, or perish. He was dumb in his opposition to the doctrines of the cross, and felt that he needed unmerited mercy. He came to me again and again. "*I now see,*" said he, "what neither you nor all other ministers could have convinced me of, that I am *totally depraved.*"

He saw that God would be just in his condemnation, but his heart rose against that justice. All his former refuges failed. He felt that he was sinking, and needed some deliverer; yet all we could do was unavailing to bring him to accept of Christ. At every religious meeting he would be present, borne down with the weight of his sins. He had cherished them for half a century, and cherished his unbelief. He wondered that the patience of God had not long since been exhausted, and saw not but he must lie down in eternal sorrow. In the interval of public worship, he was one of many who came to my house to spend the hour in religious conversation and prayer. "How are you, to-day, Mr. Vining?" said one very tenderly. "He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out; he hath made my chain heavy," was his only reply, and in tones that indicated the crushing weight of a burden which God only could remove.

Another Sabbath arrived before he would yield the contest with his Maker. A discourse that day on the judgment, he said, "was the first sermon I ever heard; I saw myself at the bar of God, with my sins all before me. A lie that I told when a child, and which I had not thought of *for thirty years*, came as fresh to my memory as if it had been yesterday. My whole life appeared filled up with sin against a holy God. I saw there was nothing in me but sin—that God's law condemned me to the lowest hell, and that it was just. God then appeared to be as glorious in his *justice* as in his *mercy*."

"At evening," he continued, "as I approached the prayer-meeting, I heard them singing, from the 119th Psalm,

'My soul lies cleaving to the dust—  
Lord, give me life divine.'

The feelings of my heart, as those precious words fell on my ear, I can never describe; they reached my inmost soul. Never did I hear music so melodious, like one of the songs of heaven. I saw that I was vile, but that in Christ there was an ocean of love and mercy. I saw he justly claimed all my heart, and I wished to give him ALL. I wanted an eternity and angelic powers to praise him. I wondered that there could be a rebel on earth unmoved by his love and his glorious perfections, and longed that he should be honored and praised by every child of Adam."

The whole subsequent life of Mr. Vining showed that the change was real. He publicly professed Christ by uniting with the church, and became not only an attentive, but a spiritual worshipper. The idle group at the public-house was deserted, and his delight was in the company of the devout. He loved prayer, and for many years was the principal supporter of regular weekly prayer-meetings in his neighborhood. He was a fearless and decided Christian. Much of the native roughness of his character remained, but a life of consistent piety gave unquestionable evidence that he had "*been born again.*"

Two or three traits in his character deserve special notice. One of these was,

*His study of the Bible.* As he had few or no helps in commentaries, he brought his own powers more diligently and prayerfully to the work of "comparing Scripture with Scripture," and thus understanding its spiritual import; and it became to him an exhaustless fountain at once of entertainment and of religious knowledge. Almost from Sabbath to Sabbath he came to me in the interval of worship, as an humble inquirer for light on some portion of the inspired word. With an adroitness peculiar to himself, he would almost break into my study, (where he knew he was welcome,) instantly propose his inquiry, and as suddenly depart.

There was always pertinency in his inquiries, and his original thoughts and childlike docility often quickened my ideas of truth, and warmed and animated my heart.

Another subject that continually pressed sore upon him, was *the unhappy influence he had, before his conversion, exerted upon others, and especially upon his children.* He did not doubt divine forgiveness, but feared souls were



already lost, and others pressing their way irreclaimably to perdition, through his ungodly example and influence; and he could not cease to mourn over the consequences of his guilt. *Never did he speak to me of his neglect of his children without tears.*

“I neither prayed,” said he, “with them nor for them. I long for the privilege of consecrating them to God from their earliest existence, and training them in infancy and childhood to fear him; but most of them are out of my reach. Some are heads of families, some are far away, and one is dead.”

Equally did he reproach himself for his *unceasing contention with the truth*. “I depended for salvation,” said he, “upon my Pharisaic religion of a moral life, and I had not even that.”

He was also intent on *redeeming the time*. On one occasion, when a heavy rain had fallen on a deep snow towards the close of winter, and rendered the roads almost utterly impassable, some one unexpectedly knocked at my door—it was Vining, wet as if he had been wading a river. He had come two miles on foot, descending and climbing the long hills: his hard countenance expressed the deepest emotion—his lips trembled, and the bursting of his heart almost prevented utterance.

“I want,” said he, “Mr. H——, that you should ‘come over into Macedonia and help us.’ The Spirit of the Lord, I am sure, is among us. We had a very solemn meeting last evening. A number of persons seem deeply anxious for their salvation, and two or three are indulging hope.”

This hardened sinner, who for more than fifteen years had been my grief, was now for nearly an equal period my consolation, support, and joy in the ministry—“my helper in Christ Jesus.” And in his death, which occurred April 8, 1822, at the age of 67, he exhibited that calm resignation and that blessed peace and hope which the Gospel inspires.

READER, mark, in the above faithful and unadorned narrative of facts, the display of God's *boundless grace*, and the necessity and reality of the *new birth*. Had you seen Vining one year before his conversion, you would have said he was among the most hopeless of men. But “the blood of Jesus Christ,” that blood which he long persisted in

rejecting, applied through the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, "cleanseth from all sin."

Observe also how God *answers prayer*, and by what a train of distant and apparently unconnected events, he can fulfil his merciful designs. Perhaps this Tract has fallen into the hands of a *mother*, who trembles lest she shall train up children for perdition. All we know of Vining's mother is the simple record, "*Just before she breathed her last, she took me in her arms and blessed me, and gave me up to God.*" That MOTHER'S LAST PRAYER reached over an ungodly life of half a century. It was not forgotten of God. He met the wandering, reckless grandson in the wilderness, and through him reached and subdued the hardened heart of the son, grown old in rebellion and prejudice. Give me poverty, chain me in the dungeon, bind me to the martyr's stake, but deny me not *the prayers of a godly mother*.

Is any one so dead to every tender and moving consideration as to DELAY REPENTANCE because Vining at last found mercy? Will you, as he did, provoke God's wrath, and hazard the rejection of Christ, till your sins rise up like mountains between your soul and heaven? Beware, O beware, lest God, who glorified his *grace* in rescuing him, glorify his *justice* in condemning you. Even now you may be "grieving the Holy Spirit." He may be ready to depart, and you "find no place for repentance." One hour's delay is at your peril. *Now* God invites you—*now* the bleeding Saviour claims your whole heart. Will you thrust him away? Can you deliberately *postpone* a matter of such amazing interest? Remember, that while one hardened sinner of fifty years has found mercy, thousands have persisted in iniquity, and perished for ever!

THE  
RINGLEADER.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

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It is well known to those who are acquainted with — college, that a ringleader is regularly chosen from each senior class. There are some little formalities on the occasion, such as a short speech, and the presentation of a club, which has been handed down through successive generations, and which is the badge of his official station.

The selection of a ringleader is made with a view to strength and muscular activity, and has no particular reference to scholarship or genius. It sometimes happens that the choice—as in the case of which I shall speak—falls on one who possesses a happy combination of both mental and bodily vigor. It is expected that the ringleader will head his fellow-students in any affray, offensive or defensive, in which their honor or persons may be in danger.

I make these remarks merely to introduce S—— C——, who was unanimously chosen to the above office by the suffrages of his classmates. Never was there a more popular selection. One would not imagine, at first sight, that so much muscular power dwelt in such a frame. He was rather above the middle size, thin, and very erect, his head thrown so far back as almost to be out of the line of his body; and his gait was characterized by a remarkable boldness and freedom. His countenance bespoke his character. It was open as the day. It seemed to beam with courage

and generosity. The light of genius was visible also in his small but piercing eye, which harmonized perfectly with a fine aquiline nose. Such was S—— C—— in person, as I first knew him.

As to his mind, it was like his form, partaking both of strength and freedom. He was a good scholar without any great effort; for he had a singular quickness of perception, and more than common genius. The book which he read most was Shakspeare; and his principal study seemed to be the human mind and heart, as developed in himself and others. He had a style of manners peculiarly his own: all was nature, but it was nature on a chivalrous and generous scale. He was as incapable of meanness as any human being I ever saw. He loved society, and was the centre of attraction in every circle. But he was accustomed also to solitude; and seemed fond of roaming alone in the still, deep woods, conversing with his own reflections, and gathering images and ideas fresh from the storehouse of nature. He had a soul whose emotions were deep—intensely deep. Indeed, no ordinary mind could fully sympathize with his. On a subject which interested him, he would launch forth in strains the most energetic and eloquent, until every muscle would speak, and his beaming, often *tearful* eye, would tell you what was passing within. He was, in fact, the idol of his class. If any felt envy, it was not towards him. All conceded to his fine muscular proportions of body and mind. It should be stated, however, that S—— C—— was not so remarkable for a talent at fine writing as for an eloquent style of conversation. His soul had too much emotion, and the current of his ideas was too impetuous for the deliberation of writing; but who that ever heard him converse was not reminded of the richness and copiousness of a Johnson or a Burke?

But was this man a Christian? Ah, reader, this is a

question which the sequel will unfold. He was NOT at the time I am speaking of—no, he was apparently the *farthest from* it. Only think of his situation. He knew religion but at a distance, and could scarcely catch the outline of her fair proportions. His Shakspeare was his Bible. His companions were the gay, the thoughtless, even the scorner of religion. Between him and the pious stood a circle of proud-spirited, and, in many instances, dissipated companions, who echoed every sentiment he uttered, and were ready to swear, that as he was the strongest, so also was he the noblest fellow they ever knew. See what an influence girded him about. How, I may almost ask, was it *possible* for the ringleader to bow at the feet of Jesus? But with God all things are possible; and let no man despair of the conversion of his fellow-man, so long as God holds the heart in his hand.

S—— C—— was not forgotten by the pious, if he overlooked or even despised *them*. Said they, “What a pity such a man and such a mind should be lost to the cause of God.” “O, if those native traits were but consecrated to Jesus, what a minister would they embody.” “Let us pray for him;” and they *did* sincerely, and, as I shall show, effectually. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Let Christians select particular persons as subjects of prayer, and persevere until God answers them; for he “that converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death.”

It pleased God, in the senior year of S—— C——, to visit the college with the special influences of the Holy Spirit. Well do I remember the scene. The whole college inclosure was solemn as the threshold of eternity. One and another of the pious students were seen weeping and at prayer, until deep feeling, *religious* feeling, as I verily believe, pervaded the little church. All took knowledge

of it, from the president to the lowest member of the institution; and each was ready to admit that an invisible but powerful influence was stealing over the mind. At many a pious student's door was heard the gentle tap for admittance, even at the midnight hour; and when opened, some poor wanderer presented himself in tears, and begged to know what he must do to be saved. The number of the convicted multiplied rapidly, and ever and anon were seen the eyes of a liberated soul glistening with the emotions of new-born hope. O, it was a blessed season. Let the infidel deride and call us fanatics; let the formalist pronounce it folly; but we will remember the days of the right hand of the Most High. Return, O God, and renew these visits of thy mercy. Here were not the weak-minded to be duped with what scoffers term the "incantations of the priests;" no: God was moving on minds of a high order—choice spirits, who are now wielding influences which are felt in the four quarters of the globe. Away, then, with that low infidel sneer which says that "none but the weak-minded are affected by revivals."

But where was S—— C—— all this while? Reader, he was in the hearts and in the prayers of the pious; but as yet he was not converted. He saw what was going on. Indeed, how could he *fail* to see it, for it invaded his own circle; and, smitten by the Spirit of God, some left him and his gay companions to their mirth. S—— C—— was ill at ease. Conscience was at work; but there was a desperate struggle to put it to silence. He was more reckless, apparently, than ever. His voice was louder, and his feats of strength and agility elicited great applause. He seemed determined to stand out against all that was serious, and to show that he and his party were not to be subdued even by God himself. But Christians had him in their eye. They felt for him, and prayed for him. Their dependence was

on God. They knew that if this strong pillar fell, the sound of it would shake the whole college. Some, who watched him narrowly, discovered in his very efforts against seriousness an incipient movement of soul. They expressed their belief. Prayer was unceasingly made for him. It was soon evident that there was something strange in his appearance and conduct. He was seen at times alone and downcast. O the struggle which his proud spirit underwent. None can know it who have not themselves *felt* it. “*What, I become a Christian! I, who am the ringleader, the centre of attraction to so many gay and careless spirits!*” *Then*, as we may suppose, would he dash the thought away, and brace himself anew against the impression.

But the strong man armed was not too strong for God. Conviction, dark and dreadful, *did* roll in upon that soul. It unmanned him. It made him a child. But, as a last desperate effort at concealment, he asked leave of the president to go home. He could not state the reason; it was of a *private* nature. Leave was granted, and the conscience-smitten man is seen taking his seat in the carriage which is to convey him to his native village. So clandestinely did he go, that the inquiry was everywhere, “What has become of S—— C——?” But none could say why he had gone, nor where.

But who can escape from God? “If we ascend up to heaven, he is there; and if we make our bed in hell, behold, he is there.” What his thoughts were in the stage-coach none can tell. We may *imagine*, however. Reader, they were probably what yours *will* be, if you attempt, by change of place, to get away from the convictions of the Holy Spirit. S—— C—— is roused from his reflections by the sight of his home. Now, thought he, I shall be able to shake off these desponding thoughts. As the vehicle rolled along the street, his eye fell upon a group of his former

companions. They were moving slowly, as if towards a given point, and he thought their countenances wore an unusual expression of solemnity. What can this mean? He stops and inquires. "O," said they, "there is a great revival of religion here; and we are going to hear the Rev. Mr. —— preach." The intelligence went like a thunderbolt to his heart. It seemed as if an angel, as in the case of Balaam, stood with a drawn sword athwart his path. His convictions were awfully accumulated. He prostrated himself before God and cried for mercy. His heart melted. He was humbled. The Saviour lifted him up; and soon he began to speak the language of a Christian. See him now, reader, a *new* man. Like Saul of Tarsus, he was smitten, and his eyes are opened.

Immediately S—— C—— bethought himself of college and college-mates. He prepares to return. Another day finds him where he was wont to be; but O how changed. Surely, as he approached the venerable pile, and those almost enchanting grounds, they must have worn a richer hue of loveliness to his reilluminated vision. He was a man to feel such things; yes, he felt them *intensely*.

There was, of course, great joy at his return; but it was partially subdued by the unwonted sweetness of his expressive countenance. The image of Jesus was visible there, and gay companions looked and wondered. He shook them cordially by the hand, and told them he had a story to tell them that evening, and they must meet him at a certain hour. All was eager expectation. The room was crowded. Good and bad hurried to the spot. The stillness of death pervaded the assembly. Every eye was intent, and every ear open. Methinks I can see him rising in that assembly with almost angelic expression—an expression which told us what was coming. But, for a moment, the heart was too full; it would not allow the speaker utterance. At



length he broke the silence and declared the whole story from the beginning. But who can describe it? What language! It seemed borrowed from the upper world. What a countenance. What an effect. *All felt that night*, if they never felt before; and tears came from eyes not accustomed to weep.

From this time forth, the leader in sports became a leader in the work of his Master. This noble person—these engaging manners—this chivalrous spirit—this brilliant genius, were all laid at the foot of the cross. The conversion of S—— C—— was a means, under God, of giving new impulse to the revival. Many, when they saw his case, said, “Surely, this is the finger of God.” Often have I seen him in the recitation-room, surrounded by his fellow-students—with just space enough in the centre for him to stand—addressing them in language pointed, affecting, and original, pleading with streaming eyes that they would repent. Once, after describing, in terms most penetrating, the sufferings of Christ, he paused, raised both hands, and with an energy peculiar to himself, and in a subdued tone, exclaimed, “Can you look at all this, and not feel a generous indignation at your sins?”

Reader, here is a great change. This man was once far from God, as far, apparently, as he *could* get from him. Now he is brought nigh. His whole course, for time and for eternity, is changed. He is all absorbed in urging sinners to repentance. He is full of the love of Christ. He wants every one to drink at the same fountain, and to rest on the same foundation. Does not the question occur to you, *has this change ever passed upon my soul?* This we call conversion—regeneration—the new birth, without which Christ has said no man can “see the kingdom of God.” Here you see it exemplified. There is nothing abstract here; nothing that you cannot perfectly understand. You

see what religion *did for this* man; and you may hence infer what it must *do for you*, or you are lost. Have you ever been thus exercised, thus humbled, thus changed? Have you turned, as *he* did, with full purpose of heart, from the world, from wicked companions, and given yourself to God?

Is there not something of *reality* in religion? Look at this case and say. It is the honest truth which I have related. The happy individual is gone to eternity. He died young. He had just girded himself for the conflict. He had breathed his vows to God in the ministry, but he was destined to serve his Saviour in a higher sphere of action. He went to his reward with the language of triumph on his lips.

But how is it with *you*, my reader? Have *you* the same blessed hope? Can you look forward to the same triumphant departure. This Tract comes to tell you, in the light of the above example, what you must, by God's grace, become, or be for ever undone. It comes to ask you if you are not a sinner. Is not thy heart polluted? And can such a heart go unchanged to heaven? O no; nothing unclean can ever enter there. It must, in a Saviour's blood, be washed from its pollution, or in eternity it will be "filthy still." Go then, at once, where S—— C—— went, into the dust before God. Fall before him and say, "Father, I have sinned." Fly to the cross, for God will be reconciled nowhere else. He will meet you in peace on *Calvary*, but nowhere else.

## THE ACT OF FAITH.

“BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE  
SAVED.”—Acts 16: 31.

I ONCE saw a lad on the roof of a very high building, where several men were at work. He was gazing about, with apparent unconcern, when suddenly his foot slipped, and he fell. In falling he caught by a rope, and hung suspended in mid-air, where he could get neither up nor down, and where it was evident he could sustain himself but a short time. He perfectly knew his situation, and expected that, in a few moments, he must drop upon the rocks below, and be dashed to pieces.

At this fearful moment, a kind and powerful man rushed out of the house, and standing beneath him with extended arms, called out, “Let go the rope, and I will receive you. I can do it. Let go the rope, and I promise you shall escape unharmed.”

The boy hesitated a moment, and then quit his hold, and dropped easily and safely into the arms of his deliverer.

Here, thought I, is an illustration of faith. Here is a simple *act of faith*. The boy was sensible of his danger. He saw his deliverer, and heard his voice. He *believed* in him, *trusted* to him, and, letting go every other dependence and hope, dropped into his arms.

So must a sinner distinctly apprehend *his guilt* and *his awful exposure* by nature. He must know where he is, and what he *needs*, before he will apply to Christ for help. He must see distinctly, that he *is* a sinner—a transgressor of God’s law, and a rebel against his throne. He must see that he has incurred the sentence of the law; that it is a *just* sentence, and that he is liable every moment to sink and perish under it. He must see that, so far as his own efforts are concerned, there is no possibility of escape. He cannot pay the debt he has contracted, nor can he, in any way, diminish it a farthing. He can make no amends, no expiation, for his past sins. The long catalogue of his transgressions stands arrayed against him; and for aught he can do, there it must stand. The sentence of the law has been passed upon him, and for aught he can do, it must be speedily executed; and if it is executed, it will sink him for

ever; for this sentence is no other than eternal death: "eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1: 9. In this awfully exposed, and, so far as he is concerned, helpless and hopeless condition, he must see himself, before he will consent to drop into the arms of the Saviour, and accept deliverance on the conditions of the Gospel.

And he must see more than this. He must see *who the Saviour is*, and *what he has done*, and what is his ability and readiness to save. Suppose the boy, suspended by the rope, had seen another little boy like himself come out of the house and stretch his weak arms, and call upon him to trust to him for deliverance. He would have cried out at once, "You cannot save me. Get out of the way, or I shall fall and crush myself and you." Just so the convicted sinner feels, when invited to put his trust in a man like himself. "A mere human deliverer!" he exclaims—"do you mean to mock me? What can such a deliverer do for a wretch like me? What can he do with those mountains of guilt which are pressing upon me, and with that deathless worm which is gnawing within me? What can he do with the dreadful sentence of the law which hangs over me, and with the devouring flames which are kindled to consume me?" The sinner feels now that he needs a divine Saviour—an almighty Saviour—one who is able to "save to the uttermost"—one whose "blood cleanseth from all sin." He feels that no other Saviour can meet the fearful exigencies of his case, or can ever do him any good. And when he looks into the Bible, and finds that just such a Saviour is provided and freely offered; when he finds that he is a holy Saviour, whose word is truth—a glorious Saviour, altogether deserving his confidence and love; when, with the eye of faith, he sees this Saviour standing beneath him, and extending his mighty arms to receive him, and calling out to him to let go all his false dependencies and hopes, and drop at once into his faithful hands: what should prevent him from doing it—from simply putting forth *the act of faith*, and falling into the kind and gracious arms of his Deliverer? He obviously has all the knowledge and conviction that are necessary, and he has only now to believe in Christ, to trust to him, to fall into his embrace, and live for ever.

But suppose a man, while hanging, as it were, over the

jaws of death, begins to *doubt the ability* or the *readiness* of Christ to save. Suppose he begins to reason with himself, "My soul is of great value, and the difficulties in the way of my salvation are great. How do I know that this Jesus can save me—that he can cleanse such a polluted heart, and rescue such a vile and guilty sinner? Or if he can, how do I know that he will? He may not be sincere in his offers. It may be, he only intends to trifle with my misery." Would not this be a high affront and indignity offered to the benevolent Saviour? Would it not provoke him soon to withdraw his gracious hand, and say, "Well, sinner, if you are determined not to be saved, then you must perish. If you will not *trust in me*, I can do nothing for you. You might have been delivered, if you had hearkened to my voice; but now you must be cast off for ever."

Or suppose that, while the Saviour is crying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," you should say, "*I am not worthy* to come to Christ as I now am. I must wait till I have done something to recommend me to his regards." And suppose the Saviour should continue crying, "Come just as you are; come in all your vileness, and be cleansed in the fountain of my blood;" and you still hold back, and persist in the struggle, and hang upon the vain excuse; might he not be expected soon to withdraw, and leave an unbelieving rebel to perish?

Or suppose you should say, "*How came I* to be a sinner? Why did God permit me to sin, or permit sin to come into the world?" Or, "How can I believe of myself? Is not faith the gift of God? and until the gift is bestowed, what can I do but patiently to wait for it?" Or suppose you fly to the other extreme, and say, "I can believe and secure my salvation whenever I please; I need be in no haste about it. I will put off the work till a more convenient season." Or suppose you allege that you are not yet enough convicted; have not had enough feeling, enough distress, to render it possible for you to come to Christ. Suppose you speculate and trifle, and think to throw off present obligation in either of these ways; what must be the feelings of the Saviour in regard to you? Here the poor rebel hangs over the pit of destruction, ready to drop at once into the burning lake; and here the Saviour stands in all his fulness, offering to rescue him, and pleading with him to submit, and

live! What more likely method could he take to seal and secure his own destruction?

Suppose the boy suspended by the rope, instead of dropping into the arms extended to receive him, had insisted on first knowing how he came to fall—"How came my foot to slip, and I to make this fearful plunge? Why did not the men on the roof take better care of me?" Or suppose he had said, "I have no power to let go the rope. My hands are fast clenched upon it, and how can I open them of myself?" Or, "I can let go and be delivered at any time, and I choose to hang a little longer. Perhaps I have not yet had enough distress." Would he not be evidently beside himself? And yet such is the conduct of the great mass of sinners, and of serious, awakened sinners, under the Gospel.

Reader, what is your state? Are you yet in your sins? Do you see your dreadful guilt and exposure? And do you anxiously seek and inquire for deliverance? If not, it will be in vain to direct you. You will not follow any directions, if given. But if you see yourself to be all guilty and exposed; if your feelings prompt you to inquire, with the trembling jailer, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" then it is easy and pleasant to direct you, to point you to the compassionate Saviour. There he stands, with outstretched arms, waiting to intercept your fall. Hear him calling. Hear him inviting. "Come, come, for all things are now ready." Sinner, yield to him. Yield at once. Do not doubt his ability to save you. Do not doubt the sincerity of his offers. Do not wait to make yourself better. Do not hesitate or speculate a moment. Remember, that the question before you is one of *right* and *wrong*; and it is also one of *salvation* or *destruction*. You cannot delay without adding to your sin, and hazarding the interests of your immortal soul. *Now, then, is your time.* *Now*, while you are reading and pondering these lines—*now*, while the pressure of obligation is strong upon you, let go, at once, every other dependence, and fall into the arms of your all-powerful Deliverer.

"Here, Lord, *I give myself away*;

"Tis all that I can do."

"Love so amazing, so divine,

Demands *my soul, my life, MY ALL.*"

# WHAT IS IT TO BELIEVE ON CHRIST?

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READER, did you ever ask this question? Is it your sincere and earnest wish to have it answered? If so, this Tract is intended *for you*. May God make it a blessing to your soul.

I will suppose that you have at some time felt alarmed in view of your sins, and inquired in your thoughts, if not in words, "What must I do to be saved?" You have the same answer that Paul gave to the jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Still you hesitate. You ask what this language means. You desire to know *what it is* to believe on Christ.

Your wish, fellow-sinner, is a very reasonable one. The wonder and the sin is, that you have not asked such a question before. It is a most important and solemn question. It has much to do with your salvation; for the BIBLE declares, "He that believeth on the SON hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the SON, shall not see life; *but the wrath of GOD abideth on him.*"

"*What is it to believe on Christ?*" It is,

TO FEEL YOUR NEED OF HIM;

TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS ABLE AND WILLING TO SAVE YOU,  
AND TO SAVE YOU NOW; and

TO CAST YOURSELF UNRESERVEDLY ON HIS MERCY, and  
TRUST IN HIM ALONE FOR SALVATION.

*To feel your need of him.* Till you do this, you will never seek him earnestly, or trust him wholly. You do not send for a physician till you feel yourself to be ill. It was only when Peter found he was beginning to sink, that he cried, "Lord, save me." So the sinner never goes to Christ in a right manner, till he feels himself to be a lost, wretched being. It is not enough to *know* this: you must *feel* it.

Do you say *you cannot*? O, then, *how lost, how wretched* you must be! Your very language ought to fill you with shame and fear. Whose fault is it that you do not

feel? How long need it be before you feel? You can feel *alarm* when a murderer holds you in his grasp; you can feel *sorrow* when a friend is dying in agony before your eyes; and can you feel no sorrow when you think of a suffering Saviour, whose love you have abused? no alarm, when you call to mind that fearful judgment to which you are hastening? Will you dare tell your Judge, at the great day, that you could not feel your need of a Saviour?

But you say, "I *do* feel, at least in some degree, that I am a poor, guilty, undone sinner; but this will not save me." *No, it will not.* Thousands have felt this and perished. You must also,

*Believe that Christ is able and willing to save you, and to save you now.* He is able, for he is almighty. You are a great sinner, but Christ is a great Saviour. Satan has been trying to persuade you that Christ is not able to save so great a sinner as you are. It is false. He *is* able, and unless you *believe this* in all its glorious extent, you will no more be willing to trust him, than a man on the roof of a burning house will step upon a weak ladder which he knows will give way beneath him.

You must believe that he is *willing*. He has in many ways shown himself to be willing. If you doubt it, you disbelieve and offend him. Does it please him, think you, when he utters this kind welcome, "WHOSOEVER cometh unto me, *I will in nowise cast out,*" to hear you reply, "O Lord, I cannot think that thou wouldst receive such an one as me, if I *should* come?" Yet you do in effect say this, every moment you cherish the feeling that you are too sinful to hope for pardon. You mistake this for humility; but it is unbelief, and sin.

You must believe that he is willing *now*. Perhaps you have thought he *would* be willing, after a few more days or weeks spent in praying, and weeping, and growing better. Be assured your worst enemy wants no more than that you should continue to think so. *You are growing no better.* You are doing nothing to gain Christ's favor while you refuse to yield to his invitations. Until you believe that he is able and willing to save you, and to do it now, you never will be saved. The great enemy of your soul does not wish you to set a time *far distant* when you can go to Christ, and when he will be willing to receive you. If you



will *continue* to place that time at the distance of a week, or an hour, or a minute, his object is gained, and your soul is lost.

But you ask, "Does not a sinner, at the moment of his actual submission to the Saviour, feel more fit to be pardoned; and is not Christ more willing to pardon him than ever before?" No, dear friend, NO! He was *less* fit to be pardoned, for his sins had been increasing every moment up to that very time; and Christ was no more *willing* to pardon him than he had always been. Every Christian will tell you that, so far as Christ's willingness was concerned, he might as well have found peace in him months or years sooner, as when he hopes he *was* pardoned. The next thing required of you is,

*To cast yourself unreservedly upon his mercy, and trust in him alone for salvation.* This implies that you renounce all expectations of saving yourself, or of being saved any other way than through the righteousness and redemption of Christ. Did you ever feel as if you had done all you could? Have you tried to think of something more to do to obtain hope and forgiveness? You have done *too much* in this way already.

Just stop doing, and begin to trust Christ to do all, and you are safe. A man is rowing a boat on a river just above a dreadful cataract. The current begins to bear him downward, the spectators on the banks give him up for lost, "He is gone," they all exclaim. But in another moment a rope is thrown towards the wretched man, it strikes the water near the boat; *now* how does the case stand? Do all the spectators call upon him *to row*, to row *stronger*, to *try harder* to reach the shore, when with every stroke of his arm the boat is evidently floating towards the falls? O no, the eager and united cry is, "*Drop your oars! Give up your desperate attempt! TAKE HOLD OF THE ROPE!*" But he chooses to row, and in a few minutes he disappears and perishes. All his hope lay, not in rowing, but in *ceasing* to row; for while he was rowing he could not grasp the rope. So all the sinner's hope lies not in struggling to save himself, but in *ceasing* to struggle; for while he expects soon to accomplish the work of salvation, he will not look to Christ to do it for him. It is not *doing* but *yielding*, that is required.

But you say, "If all I have to do is to cease from attempting to save myself, and to be willing that Christ should do the work of my salvation, why do you urge me *to become a Christian*, or to do *any thing*? Why not let me sit still, and wait till Christ shall come and pardon me?" And what if the man in the boat had dropped his oar, and then folded his hands and waited for the rope to save him? He might as well have died rowing as sitting still, and would *as certainly* have died in the latter case as in the former. But he must *grasp the rope*. So the sinner must *lay hold upon the cross*; not by waiting till he is better, but by first concluding that he shall never be any better in the way he is going on, and then *looking to Christ*. As he perceives the ground sinking beneath him, and feels how lost and wretched he is, filled with mingled despair and hope—despair in himself, and hope in the power and mercy of Christ—he says,

"I stand upon a mountain's edge,  
O save me, lest I fall!"

His prayer is heard—the heart of the compassionate Saviour is ready to welcome him—the arms of mercy are stretched out to receive him—a word of kind welcome reaches his ear, "*Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*" He believes that word—he trusts that heart—he falls into those arms, *and he is safe*.

Now, dear reader, your question is answered. Is not the answer true? Is it not *plain*? Do you not see your mistake? Since all things are now ready, and the Holy Spirit not quite grieved away from your heart by your delay, will you wait any longer?

Does your heart now say, "Lord, I believe: help thou mine unbelief?" Will you take the Saviour *at his word*? Are you willing to trust him to do *the whole work* of your salvation?

If so, lay down this Tract; prostrate yourself before this waiting, insulted, and still compassionate Redeemer; tell him all your heart, and he will pardon, accept, and save you.

THE  
WONDERFUL ESCAPE.

IN the town where I reside were twelve young men, who were accustomed, early in life, to meet together for indulgence in drinking and all manner of excess. In the course of time, some of them engaged in business; but their habits of intemperance were so entwined with their very existence, that they became bankrupts or insolvents. Eight of them died under the age of forty, without a hope beyond the grave, victims of intemperance. Three others are still living in the most abject poverty. Two of these had formerly moved in very respectable circles, but now they are in the most miserable state of poverty and disgrace.

One more, the last of the twelve, the worst of all, remains to be accounted for. He was a sort of ringleader; and being in the wine and spirit trade, his business was, to take the head of the table at convivial parties, and sit up whole nights, drinking and inducing others to do the same, never going to bed sober. He was an infidel, a blasphemer, a disciple of Tom Paine, both in principle and practice, yet he was a good-natured man, and would do anybody a kindness. At length he left the town, and went to reside at a distance, where, for a time, he refrained from drinking, was married, and every thing seemed prosperous around him; but instead of being thankful to God for his mercy, and watching against his besetting sin, he gave way to his old propensity, and brought misery on his family and friends.

One dark night, being in the neighborhood of Dudley, he had been drinking to excess, wandered out of the house, and staggered among the coalpits, exposed to fall into them, and be lost. He proceeded on till he fell, and rolled down the bank of the canal; but God, who is rich in mercy, had caused a stone to lie directly in his path, and the poor drunkard was stopped from rolling over into the water, where, by one turn more, he would have sunk into eternal ruin. His senses returned for a moment; he saw that if he

attempted to stand, he would fall headlong into the canal, and crawled back again into the road. But this miraculous preservation had no effect upon him; he merely called it a lucky escape.

Once, after having indulged in many days of intemperance, being come a little to his senses, he began to reason with himself upon his folly—surrounded with blessings, yet abusing the whole—and in an angry, passionate manner, he muttered, “O, it’s no use for me to repent; my sins are too great to be forgiven.” He had no sooner uttered these words, than a voice seemed to say, with strong emphasis, “If thou wilt forsake thy sins, they shall be forgiven.” The poor man started at what he believed to be real sound, and turned round, but saw no one, and said to himself, “I have been drinking till I am going mad.” He stood paralyzed, not knowing what to think, till relieved by a flood of tears, and then exclaimed, “Surely, this is the voice of mercy, once more calling me to repentance.” He fell on his knees, and half suffocated by his feelings, cried out, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” The poor wretch was broken-hearted; and now his besetting sin appeared more horrible than ever; but it must be conquered, or he must perish. Then commenced a contest more terrible than that of conflicting armies; the soul was at stake; an impetuous torrent was to be turned into an opposite course. He now began to search the Bible, which he had once despised. Here he saw that crimson and scarlet sins could be blotted out, and made white as snow; that the grace of God was sufficient. He refrained from intemperance, commenced family prayer, and hope again revived; but his deadly foe still pursued him, and he was again overcome.

Now his disgrace and sinfulness appeared worse than ever, and with melancholy feeling he cried out, in anguish of spirit, that he was doomed to eternal misery, and it was useless to try to avert his fate. His cruel enemy took this opportunity to suggest to his mind that he had so disgraced himself, that it would be better to get rid of his life at once—frequently the end of drunkards. The razor was in his hand; but the Spirit of the Lord interposed, and the weapon fell to the ground. Still his enemy pursued him, and seemed to have new power over his sin of intemperance. He would sometimes refrain for days and weeks, and then

again he was as bad as ever. Hope seemed now to be lost ; especially one day, when, after having been brought into great weakness through intemperance, death appeared to be very near, and his awful state more terrific than ever. Not a moment was to be lost ; he cast himself once more at the footstool of his long-insulted Creator, and with an intensity of agony cried out, “What profit is there in my blood when I go down to the pit ? Shall the dust praise thee ? Shall it declare thy truth ? Hear, O Lord, and have mercy upon me ; Lord, be thou my helper.” He sunk down exhausted ; he could say no more. That prayer was heard ; and a voice from heaven seemed to reply, “I will help thee ; I have seen thy struggles, and I will now say to thine enemy, ‘Hitherto thou hast come—but no further.’”

A physician was consulted as to the probability or possibility of medicine being rendered effectual to stop the disposition to intemperance. The poor man would have suffered the amputation of all his limbs, could so severe a method have freed him from his deadly habit, which, like a vulture, had fastened upon his very vitals. Eagerly did he begin to take the simple medicine prescribed, (a preparation of steel,) with earnest prayer to God for help in this last struggle for life ; but faith and prayer proved the best of remedies ; he persevered, and conquered ; and be it said to the honor and glory of the Lord God Almighty, who sent his angel to whisper in the poor man’s ear, “I will help thee,” that from the latter end of September, 1816, to the present hour, nearly twenty years, *not so much as a spoonful of spirituous liquor, or wine of any description, has ever passed the surface of that man’s tongue.*

The above account of his own experience, was given by Mr. Hall, a merchant of Maidstone, Kent, at the anniversary of the British and Foreign Temperance Society, May, 1836.

Mr. Hall stated, in conclusion, that he had since been aiming to be useful to his fellow-men, and had written a Tract, the object of which was, to call drunkards, and all sinners to repentance, of which more than one hundred thousand copies had been circulated. See Tract, No. 349.

Has the reader a relative, friend, or neighbor, who drinks his daily drams, and is plunging into that awful gulf which yearly swallows up its thousands of victims? Let the above history suggest a duty, and encourage to its performance. This is not a solitary instance of victory obtained over powerful and raging appetite. There is evidence that tens of thousands of persons in the United States, who were once intemperate, have become sober, useful citizens; and not a few of them ardent Christians. And this has been effected, not by despising and reproaching them, but chiefly through the divine blessing on *the kind personal influence of friends*, excited by no other motive than Christian benevolence and love of their fellow-men. The self-despair of the intemperate man arises, in a great measure, from the conviction, that he is an outcast from public respect and sympathy. He is moved by the language of kindness; and if suitably warned of his danger, and pointed to the way of escape, may be saved from ruin. Persuade him to refrain, till reason resumes her sway, and the burning desire for stimulus has subsided. A few months will generally effect this great change. In his sober hours he often weeps over his folly, his ear is open to the voice of friendship, and he will yield to kind remonstrance—perhaps consent to place himself under the care of a temperate physician. *Go to him when alone*, with tenderness and love. Offer him such aid as is needed by himself or family. Give him the above history, in view of which none need despair. Bring him, if possible, to the house of God. Go to him again and again, till you obtain his pledge to abstinence. Follow him with kindness. Support him in the struggle. Induce him *utterly to abandon all that can intoxicate, as his only safety*; wholly to refrain from the *place* and the *company* where intoxicating drinks are used; and in dependence on Christ, humbly to offer the prayer, “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.” Interest yourself in his welfare, and persevere till you gain the glorious triumph—the conquest of an *immortal mind*, that may diffuse blessings on every side in this life, and be a star in the Redeemer’s crown of glory for ever.

# THE CHILD A HUNDRED YEARS OLD.

BY REV. WILLIAM S. PLUMER, D. D.

So long as the work of the Holy Spirit continues on earth, we may expect wonders. Especially may most glorious displays of divine grace be looked for, as the day draws nigh when "the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold, as the light of seven days." Then "the child shall die a hundred years old."

ANN ELIZA, the eldest child of Charles B. and Ann M. Williams, was born January 16, 1820, at Meadsville, Halifax county, Virginia. She had three sisters and one brother, besides a sister and brother who died in infancy. Her mother, who professed religion when she was Miss Hackley, four days after the birth of Ann Eliza, thus wrote :

"On the 16th of this month, I was made the happy mother of a promising daughter. To thee, O Lord, I desire in faith to dedicate her. And I implore the sanctifying influence of thy Spirit to enable me to bring her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord—to rear her up as an immortal being, destined to eternal misery or eternal blessedness. O wash her, and grant that as she ripens in years, she may grow in grace."

On the 16th January, 1821, her mother again wrote, "I gave my dear Ann Eliza to God before she was born. I have done it since. On this her birthday I desire, O Lord, to renew the offering ; and I beseech thee to cleanse her soul in the blood of Christ, and adopt her into thy family. If by thy will she should long sojourn in this barren wilderness, guide her, and lead her early to seek thy face. Keep her in thy way without weariness or fainting, and enable me to fulfil my solemn obligations as a Christian parent."

At an early period, Ann Eliza was found to have an irascible, obstinate, and ungovernable temper, combined with exquisite nervous sensibility. Her mind was sound and

sprightly, though the incidents of her very early life were not remarkable. In some respects, elements of a more unpromising kind seldom enter into character. Yet, though self-willed, there was a sort of independence which was capable of being turned to good account. It is also a remarkable fact, that she was never detected in any falsehood. She was naturally very timid. She was not naturally generous, or amiable, or confiding. Yet, for one of her age, she always commanded respect.

When Ann Eliza was about seven years of age, she was invited to a dancing-party of little children, and was anxious to attend; and her mother saying she was too young, she replied, that some others were going who were younger than she. Her mother then took her in her arms, and said, "My child, your father and I have both often and solemnly given you to God, and promised to train you up for him. We trust we are Christians. We seek your *eternal* happiness. The parents of the little girls you have named do not profess to think much about another world. We cannot, without sinning against God, permit you to go to the ball."

These things seemed to satisfy her conscience, and retained it on the side of her parents. Yet after her conversion, she confessed, "I was wicked enough to wish that my parents were not Christians, that I might partake of the gayeties in which others engage."

By the blessing of God on a course of mild and firm training, her parents were pleased to find that her judgment and principles were, to some extent, on the side of duty, and that she had some correct *general* views of the truth of the Bible, and of the reality and importance of religion. Yet she gave no evidence of special seriousness or tenderness until she was more than eight years old.

In her ninth year, her heavenly Father began that course of gracious discipline which has clothed her character with such interest, and rendered her history worthy of a place in the annals of redemption. In the winter of 1828, her parents removed to Lynchburgh. Here, in May, 1829, she ruptured a bloodvessel in the lungs. This was succeeded by a



copious bleeding. For some months she remained apparently thoughtless respecting eternal things. Late in the autumn of this year, she accompanied her grandmother on a visit to a maternal aunt in the county of Orange. Here, in March, 1830, she had a second attack of bleeding at the lungs, which was attended with immediate danger, and which cut off nearly all hope of ever regaining permanent health. During this sickness, her alarm was agonizing. Death was to her the king of terrors. Courage in facing such trials was no part of her natural character. It soon became manifest, that she was deeply impressed with a sense of her guilt, and misery, and danger as a sinner. She was found in retirement, bathed in tears, nor did she attempt to conceal the cause of her weeping. She confessed it to be her sinfulness. Her sins of every kind, and above all, the deep pollution of her heart, filled her with grief and self-abasement before God. She said, "How could I be so wicked, and sin against a God so good and so holy."

She now felt the unspeakable value of the friendship, and counsel, and prayers of her excellent grandmother. At one time, her views of sin being very clear, and her convictions very pungent, she said, "Pray with me; ask God to give me a new heart, and to renew a right spirit within me, and to prepare me for death, if he intends to take me now, or for living to his glory, if he shall be pleased to spare me."

It should be observed, that from this time forward her intellect seemed to have a greatly increased vigor, and her language was generally very appropriate. The absence of childish companions in very early life, the constant society of her grandmother, the character of her disease, her familiar acquaintance with scriptural language, and the elevating influence of vital religion, may be assigned as the causes of this seeming precocity. Every sentence of her conversation quoted in these pages, is in the words she herself employed.

By degrees a change in her character became manifest. Her burden of misery seemed to be gone. She was beginning to trust in atoning blood. Her views of the plan of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus, and by the renewing of

the Holy Ghost, were clear and consistent. She never ascribed any thing to human merit or human power. She esteemed all her experiences as only calling for praise to the glory of His grace who had made her accepted in the Beloved. Her whole conversation and deportment from this time forward, proved the change to be great and real. Her mind seemed to grasp spiritual truth with vigor, and to feed upon it with zest. Her memory readily retained impressions of the truth, and all she had ever learned seemed now to come to her aid. She often wrote down her thoughts, especially such as occurred in reading the Scriptures. A specimen is here given.

“ 1 John, 4 : 8, 9. O what infinite, great, and amazing love is that described here. How glorious is God, to send his only-begotten Son into the world to die for sinful men. ‘ O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man, that thou visitest him ? ’ ”

A few weeks after her hopeful conversion, her life was again brought into extreme jeopardy by a return of bleeding at the lungs. This attack was worse than either of the preceding. Yet all was now tranquil. No violent agitations disturbed her. As soon as she was able, she spoke freely of her feelings, and contrasted them with what they had been under her second attack. *Then*, she was filled with fear. *Now*, with love and peace. She said, “ I am not afraid to die ; I am willing to be in the hands of God.”

As soon as it could be done, she was taken to her parents in Lynchburgh. In the last week of December, 1830, she was received into the communion of the visible church. This step was not taken until she had been well instructed in the nature of the transaction. Much prayer had been offered on the subject, and many conversations held with her respecting her religious exercises. She had also, during about seven months, exhibited a Christian temper and deportment. She was now about ten years and ten months old. On the same day of her admission to the church, she partook of the Lord’s supper. In speaking of this service soon afterwards, she said, “ O it was so delightful. I felt it

was good to be there. I felt as if God, for a little season, had let down heaven to earth." When asked why the communion had been like heaven, she said, "Because God's presence was there—'tis that makes heaven."

Early in her Christian life she began to see why God had afflicted her. Years before her death, she requested that whenever she should die, the text of the sermon at her funeral should be Psalm 94 : 12. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." She said, "I had rather be sick, and suffer all my days, and enjoy religion, than be restored to health, and live as I have done."

During her residence in Lynchburgh there was great attention to religion in that town, and in all the surrounding country. In the progress of this work she felt the most lively interest. She prayed for its extension, and rejoiced whenever she heard of a hopeful conversion. Her interest was so great, that when her pious physician and pastor, meeting in her room, conversed on the work of God, her joy abounded. At the close of this conversation, one asked her how she was. She seemed to forget all her bodily pain, and replied, "O, Jesus is precious; I am happy in him; his favor is life, and his loving-kindness is better than life."

Meanwhile her disease advanced, and in the spring of 1832 her parents again removed to Richmond. Here her mind and her gracious affections matured fast. For a long time she had given up all expectation of ever recovering. One day her grandmother inquired if the stillness of the grave produced no alarm. "O no," said she, "'I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh I shall see God.'"

On another occasion she said, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." She was often in immediate and imminent danger of sudden death; and it was feared that her frequent recoveries from violent attacks would leave her mind exposed to surprise when death ap-

proached. Yet any return of health did not make her less devout, or less solemn.

On Saturday preceding her death, there was a marked change in her disease. She was the first to perceive it, and spoke of it with composure, saying, "Mother, you had best not leave me, for I don't know but I am dying." "I hope not," said the mother; "but if you are, I trust you are leaning on a stronger arm than your poor frail mother's." "O yes," said she, "God is the strength of my heart."

A paroxysm of great suffering now brought on, for the first and only time, a momentary delirium. In this state her grandmother said, "Ann Eliza, would you not wish to go to your heavenly home—to Jesus?" The delirium was gone, reason regained its seat, and she said, "O yes, I wish to go to Jesus, he is precious to my soul. Help me to praise him."

One said, "As you approach nearer to eternity, do your views of the glory and excellency of Christ become more clear and precious?" She replied, "He is my *all*, *my all*."

In the evening of this day, after a short conversation and prayer, led by her faithful pastor, she said, in a low but distinct voice, "I love my parents, I love you all, but I love my Saviour more; I long to depart, and be with Christ, which is far better."

She even objected to the usual opiate, saying, "Let me praise God while I have breath." Yet when told that it was thought to be her duty, she readily complied. The day before her death, it became evident that the closing scene was at hand. Her distress for breath, and her danger of suffocation, were extreme, and prevented her saying much. Yet she spoke not of her pains. She said, "I am dying; but death has no sting for me—all is peace. Sing 'When I can read my title clear.'"

Early on the morning of this her last Sabbath on earth, she desired a very dear young friend to be sent for. When she came, Ann Eliza, extending her emaciated arms, received her very cordially, and though unable to speak aloud, whispered a most solemn and tender exhortation; but her strength

failing, she said, "Grandma, I can't talk to her ; do *you* say to her what *I* would, if I were able."

Some time during her last night on earth, she awoke from a short slumber, and perceived a cold sweat upon herself. She asked if it was not the cold sweat of death. Her friend replied, "It may be ; but if it is, I hope it gives you no concern." She replied, "O no ; death is sweet to me."

To her parents, who soon came into the room, she said, "I have perfect peace ; we shall now part, but we shall soon meet again." She then took an affectionate leave of them, and seemed concerned at their sufferings only.

During this trying time, her faithful grandmother was able to be with her. As the night began to be far spent, her agony was great, and her spirit seemed to say, as the angel to Jacob, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." But her warfare was not quite accomplished. The sun arose. Her mind was clear. Every look of her eye indicated intelligence and inward peace, though the pain which racked her little frame, was severe beyond all ordinary cases. She was unable to speak much ; but just before she ceased to breathe, after a violent struggle, her countenance seemed to "shine as it had been the face of an angel," and her whole appearance seemed to say, "My cup runneth over ;" she whispered firmly and audibly, "All is peace, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." Then, without another struggle, God set her spirit free, and she fell asleep in Jesus. Thus, on the 18th day of March, 1833, died "the child a hundred years old." She is buried in the new graveyard at Richmond. A small marble tablet, bearing her name and age, and her favorite text, Psalm 94 : 12, in verse, points the wanderer among the tombs to her resting-place.

In the religious character of Ann Eliza Williams, some things claim a more full consideration. The first of these is, *Her faith.* After her conversion, her confidence in God, through Jesus Christ, seldom wavered. Her heart was fixed, trusting in God. Taught by the Spirit, her views and impressions of the truth were vivid and abiding. Eternal things always seemed near. She often spoke of a state of

happiness to come, not only as an undoubted reality, but as at hand. In speaking of heaven one evening, she pointed to a beautiful view of the sky, and said, "If I could break from this clay tabernacle, and burst through that *azure shell*, I should be there." So far as faith regards the person and offices of Christ, hers was dependence on him alone as a complete Saviour. Nor was her faith dead. It wrought with her works, and by works was faith made perfect.

*Her peace was great.* It was "peace in believing," and it was like a river. Those who were in the habit of seeing her, would have been surprised to have found her bereft of calmness of soul. In her case, "the work of righteousness was peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever."

*Her repentance was thorough, deep, ingenuous, and lasting.* Her sense of personal unworthiness grew from her first attention to religion to her death. She was more than once found weeping, years after conversion. When asked why she wept, her answer was, "I am so wicked." She did not think once sorrowing for sin was enough. As often as she thought of her sins, it was with shame and sorrow. Her frequent prayer was, "Remember not against me the sins of my youth; enter not into judgment with me."

*She rejoiced in hope.* And she held fast her confidence, which had great recompense of reward. The apostle's figure of hope being an anchor to the soul precisely suited her case. She was tossed with tempest, the night was dark, the storm was loud, the wind was rude, the waters roared, but her hope was anchored in heaven, and her bark outrode the storm, and, as we have seen, glided serenely into the haven of rest. Seldom was her hope obscured, and then for a short time only.

*Her love was strong.* She longed after God. She loved all that belonged to God. Her delight was in his saints, the excellent of the earth. His word was sweeter than honey. His Sabbaths were in her eyes honorable. One day in his courts was better than a thousand. She had a most lively sense of the self-denial of remaining at home, when others

went to inquire in God's temple, and there behold his beauty ; and when her health permitted her to go, none seemed to enjoy the privilege more.

*She abounded in prayer.* She seemed never to lose the spirit of prayer, but to be continually breathing after communion with God. Nor were her prayers unanswered. God manifested himself unto her as he does not to the world. Two Sabbaths after she joined the church, she was left alone in the afternoon. On her grandmother's return, she said, "I have had a precious season. God has been with me. He has given me such realizing views of the joys of heaven, and the sufferings of my Saviour to purchase them for me, that I could scarcely contain myself for joy."

*Her gratitude was constant and lively.* The least favor at the hands of any person, excited her thankfulness. "I thank you—I thank you much—you are so kind," were expressions often in her mouth. And her gratitude to God was very prominent. If she slept better, or coughed less than usual, she mentioned it with praise ; and often did she thank God for having afflicted her. She could say,

"For all I bless thee—most for the severe."

*Being grateful for all, she was of course submissive.* During her whole sickness she was not known to utter one murmuring word, nor was one fretful expression seen on her countenance. Many remember how dreadfully she suffered, yet none remember to have heard one word of impatience. A few days before her death, she said, "I must have more dross to consume than others, that God sees it necessary to keep me so long in this furnace of suffering." Thus she never "charged God foolishly."

*She was strictly conscientious.* She was greatly afraid lest her ignorance, or inexperience, or unsanctified temper, should dishonor religion. Her rule respecting all doubtful things was, to avoid them. She would not go to any place or company, as a show or fair, unless it were of such a kind as to have no *appearance* of evil. The decisions of her conscience were clothed with the majesty of law.

*Her piety was based on the Bible.* It was the rule of her life, the standard of her faith, the end of disputes. During her long sickness she was not able to read much, and wisely confined herself to the holy Scriptures. Her views of the truths of revelation were clear, sound, and consistent. She is remembered to have expressed herself clearly on all the great doctrines, even down to that sublime doctrine of the resurrection.

*She had great strength of religious principle.* Before her conversion she was dreadfully afraid of pain, and the sight of a physician coming to her almost overcame her; but afterwards she never refused medicine, however offensive, nor objected to any operation, however painful.

*Her religion insured good conduct.* She did not so learn Christ as to allow her to set up her own will in opposition to that of her parents. From the time of her conversion she scrupulously honored her parents and others her superiors. She was very careful of the comfort of others. She often exerted herself beyond her strength to avoid giving trouble, and expressed fears lest her own sickness should so multiply her mother's cares, as to injure her health. She often said nothing of her sickness and wants, until others spoke of them to her. She was very industrious, and of great service in maintaining family discipline with the younger children.

*She was engaged in the service of Christ.* She seemed ingenious in making occasions to say something for God. Long before her death, she told her father that the conversion and salvation of souls lay as a heavy burden on her heart; and when near the close of life, refused to have a rocking-chair bought for her, and requested the price of it to be given to the Ceylon mission. Not ten days before her death, she undertook to employ her skilful needle in doing some work for a benevolent society. Among her last efforts she said to one, "Why don't you love Jesus? O do love him—he died for you." To another she said, "Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth." Her zeal was well tempered with discretion and gentleness.

*Her religion wore well.* It bore her on—it bore her up—



it bore her through. She came out like gold, purified under every trial. Two years before her death, she said she was not afraid to die. Some months afterwards she said, "Death is a pleasant journey, a sweet release, a stepping from time into eternity." It may be truly said, that death was her familiar acquaintance for years. She said, that as she lay down at night, she often thought she might wake in eternity, nor did the thought give her pain. On one occasion she said, "I have brought death very near to me this evening—he was robbed of his terrors. At times I look at death as a *narrow* stream, which I must pass to get to heaven." During the last forty hours of her life, she often said, when she could say no more, "No fear—no fear."

*Her religion was well-proportioned.* It was not all knowledge, nor all sentiment, nor all practice. It was all these harmoniously combined. One duty or one grace was not allowed to crowd another out of its place. It was uniform. It was dignified. Though she was but a child, and a very humble and unassuming child, it was impossible to be with her and not feel "how awful goodness is."

*Her piety was lovely.* Her humility was not meanness; her firmness was not stubbornness; her solemnity was not sourness; her zeal was not bitterness; her calmness was not stupidity; her speech was well-ordered and gracious. She had self-distrust, but no cunning. Her faith was not presumptuous; her hope was not a vain confidence. Though meek, she was not tame. She feigned nothing; she dissembled nothing. She readily acknowledged her faults, and modestly said nothing to her own praise. Her joys were sober and chastened, though unspeakable.

*Her humility was a robe cast all around.* The attentions shown her were well suited to inflate a carnal mind with pride and self-conceit, But they all seemed to humble her. She preferred to be a hearer rather than a speaker on all important subjects. There was nothing like pertness in her character. She was naturally tenacious of her opinions, yet her great change so deeply impressed her with a sense of her own ignorance as to make her cautious of any opinion

not founded on the clear authority of God. Of the hundreds who saw her, most remarked her great humility. It was no scanty garment. It covered all her graces. She was "clothed with humility."

ARE YOU A PARENT? Behold here, under the divine blessing, the success of a proper religious education in saving the soul. If Ann Eliza had been trained as you are training your children, do you think her end would have been peace?

ARE YOU SCEPTICAL? Behold here the power and the glory of the Gospel. See a little child triumphing over sufferings and death, neither "wearyed with the footmen," nor fearing to "contend with horses," neither fainting in "the land of peace," nor dismayed in "the swelling of Jordan." What else besides Christianity, pure and undefiled, can point, in all its annals, to the story of one whose sun went down in such bright effulgence as that which surrounded the departing spirit of Ann Eliza Williams?

This case also shows the possibility of very early piety. The Bible long since taught this. The history of Ann Eliza furnishes an illustrious example of what God can do, when out of the mouth of babes and sucklings he would ordain strength. Jesus Christ, who died for little children, and who said, "Feed my lambs," still cares for them. Himself was once a little child.

ARE YOU A CHILD? O come to Jesus now. Here is a loud call to *all*, to repent, and prepare for death. Perhaps you are unwilling to hear the living. Then listen to the dead. Hear Ann Eliza's last appeal, given in her own words: "Look at me now dying. What should I do, if I had put off repentance till this time? What should I do now, without religion to support me? O don't let the world cheat you out of your soul; if you lean on it, you will find it a broken reed, that will pierce you through with many sorrows." Here her voice failed. Dear reader, are you ready? "Except you be converted, and become as a little child, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

## REDEEMING THE TIME.

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“Do not squander time,” said an eminent philosopher and statesman, “for *time is the stuff life is made of.*” Acting on this maxim himself, he rose from an humble situation in life, to learning, wealth, and honor; and had he applied the principle to the subject of religion, he would also have gained the endless and invaluable blessings which it secures.

“*Redeem the time,*” said the apostle Paul, under the influence of the Spirit of inspiration. Obeying himself the injunction which he delivered to others, we find him “instant in season and out of season,” in the service of his divine Master, endeavoring to be more abundant in his labors, because he had once persecuted that faith which now he preached. Under its influence we find him stamping the impress of his own mind on thousands in his own and succeeding ages, instrumentally saving many souls from death, and winning for himself a crown of unfading glory.

The proper improvement of time is a subject worthy of frequent and most serious attention. Nothing is more valuable, and yet nothing is in general less regarded; there are indeed some who sincerely and earnestly wish to improve the time, and glorify God, and do good to men while they remain on earth, who yet accomplish little, because they do not use their means aright; such need counsel. There are others who look on time as a kind of enemy, and seek to *kill* it, to use their own expression. Appropriate language. It is indeed *murder*—a species of *suicide*. The period will certainly come, when like England’s maiden queen, they would give all that they possessed for one moment of that

precious time which they have wantonly squandered. Happy will they be if, aroused to a sense of its value while some of it yet remains, they endeavor to *redeem* it.

The expression which the apostle employs is peculiar and striking. He seems to speak of time as something *lost*, which, however, was so valuable that it would be proper to make efforts to procure it again, or *redeem* it. Past time, it is true, never can return, but yet its experience may afford much valuable instruction, and incite us to greater diligence in the improvement of that which may yet be granted us. In this way the future may be made more useful, and we may, in a certain sense, recover the past.

#### I. TIME IS EXCEEDINGLY VALUABLE.

This will appear from several considerations.

1. From *the opportunities which it affords*. During its progress all our work is to be done, and our eternal happiness to be secured. "There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, *in the grave*." Death puts an end to all earthly labors, and any work unfinished then, must remain so for ever. There is no *intermediate state*, in which neglect and criminality in this world may be repaired or expiated. There is no repentance in the grave, no forgiveness in hell. No ordinances, no preaching, no praying, no praising, no Sabbaths, no sanctuaries, no friendly admonitions, no strivings of the SPIRIT, can be enjoyed in the other world by those who have disregarded them in this. All such opportunities misimproved are irrevocably lost.

2. The *shortness of time* also proves its value. The less there may be of any good thing, the more valuable is it considered. In this point of view, how much should time be prized. "What is our life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." "When a few years are come, we shall go the way whence we shall not return." The average duration of human life is scarcely *thirty years*. From this must be deducted at least *one-third*

spent in sleep, and taking our food ; and in most cases, something more is lost by sickness : how small is the remainder ; and therefore, how valuable.

3. Its *uncertainty* also renders it valuable : short as it is, we know not *how short* it is ; we know not whether it may be a year, or a month, or a day, or an hour, which may form the whole of the future part of our lives. Suppose, to use an illustration of the celebrated essayist, John Foster, that a prisoner is supplied with water from a cistern, the amount contained in which he knows not, but he is sure he can obtain no more when it is exhausted ; how careful would he be of every drop, because he knows not how much remains. So is it in human life. How many sudden deaths do we notice—how unexpectedly to ourselves as well as to others may we be called away. “At such a time as we think not, the Son of man cometh.” We need to be *watching*, to be always *ready*—we may have so little time remaining that we cannot dare to squander any of it.

4. It *cannot be recovered, if once lost*, except in the secondary sense already mentioned. “There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again ; but man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?” A man would not like to lose what was very valuable, even if he had the hope at some future time of recovering it ; how much less should we be willing to lose that which we can never regain. It is like dropping the precious jewel into the unfathomable abysses of the ocean. If *to-day* is lost, *to-morrow* will not restore it. Our regret or repentance will not bring it back ; our improvement of the future will not obliterate our loss of the past.

5. It is a thing *for which we must give an account*. “We must all appear at the judgment-seat of CHRIST.” For *every moment* we are accountable. How have we improved our Sabbaths, our common time, our hours of business, or of leisure ? The servant who knows that his master

will ask him at nightfall how he has been employed during the day, will feel that his time is precious, and should act accordingly.

## II. MUCH OF IT IS LOST.

All that time is *lost* which is spent in a sinful manner ; and as God requires all our time to be devoted to himself, all of it which is not employed directly or indirectly in his service, is spent sinfully. We thus may lose our time,

1. By *idleness*. How many pass hours and days in listless apathy—mind and body unemployed—a dreaming existence, like the life of an infant or an idiot. Let such ask, at the close of the day, how they have been engaged, what they have thought or done, and there is nothing for the memory to recall ; their time has been almost a blank. Certainly such persons have *lost* their time.

2. By *dissipation* much time is lost. Some relaxation is necessary both for mind and body ; if the bow is always tightly strung it will break. This will not be lost time, since it recruits our strength, and prepares us to spend more advantageously what follows. But *dissipation*, whether physical or mental, *unfits*, not *refits*. How much is the body often thus impaired. Excess of eating, or drinking, or sleeping, all weaken the system, and prevent proper improvement of time. Midnight revels, gay company, not to mention indulgences the very names of which should not be uttered, all are destructive. How much dissipation of time is caused also by the works of fiction, or even what might be called utter nonsense, with which the press is now so prolific. How do the theatre, the circus, and shows of various kinds, fascinate the young and thoughtless, and ere they are aware, carry them away from sober thought and regular habits, plunging them in degradation and destruction. None can think time is profitably spent while thus employed. It is *killed* indeed.

3. By *crime*. Principles of evil are deeply rooted in the

human constitution, and oftentimes external objects call them out to a fearful development. How much time is worse than lost in *thoughts* of envy, malice, pride, covetousness, or other similar baneful affections; how much in the formation or execution of the schemes which these, if unchecked, are sure to suggest. The Psalmist tells us that "the wicked man deviseth mischief upon his bed," and the prophet Micah denounces a woe on such characters. How much time and toil does the sinner take in his course of crime—all lost, indeed; and how often, by the punishment which human laws exact, and by the sure vengeance of divine retribution, is he made to suffer for such conduct.

4. By *worldly pursuits*. It is proper for every one to have some particular employment, and to be diligent in his business. "If any man will not work, neither let him eat." But it is *not proper* to let the world and its pursuits engross the whole, or even the greater part of our thoughts and labors. To be making haste to be rich, to be rising early and retiring late, and eating the bread of sorrow, in order to increase our gain, is time misspent. The love of the world and the love of God are incompatible with each other, and all who are endeavoring to serve God and mammon are engaged in a vain effort, and will find at the last that they have lost their time and betrayed their hopes.

### III. HOW MAY TIME BE IMPROVED?

The consideration of its value, and the great part of it which has been lost, should cause us to give earnest heed to this point. And we mention,

1. *Consecrate it all to Christ*: it belongs to him of *right*, for he has given it to us. Thus will it be spent *most pleasantly*, and only thus *safely and successfully*. First of all, if we wish to redeem the time, we must devote it to the service of our blessed Saviour, to be spent directly or indirectly in promoting his glory. But more particularly, we should,

2. *Distribute it properly.* The *duties of religion, public and private*, personal and social, require our attention, and should have a portion of time sacredly devoted to them. The *ordinary affairs of life* must not be neglected; but in whatever calling a man may be, he must conscientiously give it the time which it justly demands. *Benevolence*, too, claims its portion of time from those who are to love their neighbor as themselves. While attending to our own souls, or our own bodies, we must not forget the souls or the bodies of others; we should set apart a portion of time to instruct the ignorant, to comfort the afflicted, to warn the thoughtless, to supply the bodily wants of the destitute. We should ascertain what each of these objects calls for from us, and arrange our time accordingly.

But in order that we may not waste our time, we should,

3. Be *careful of moments.* Because we have but a *little* time, we sometimes think we need not be careful of it; but the gathered *fragments* make *baskets-full*. If we take the sum of squandered *moments*, we shall find that it will amount to hours, and days, and months, and even years. Besides, the habit of disregarding the *little*, will tend to make us neglect the *much*. In the mint, in Philadelphia, there is a wooden grating on the floor of the room in which gold is prepared for coinage; the design of which is to prevent any of the precious metal being lost by adhering to the feet. It has been found that the minute particles which are thus saved, amount to thousands of dollars. We must not lose one golden minute.

4. *Do one thing at a time.* This was the rule on which the celebrated De Witt acted, and which he assigned as the reason for his having accomplished so much. When the mind is distracted by the attempt to attend to many things at once, nothing will be done right, and all the time will most probably be lost.



5. *Acquire command of your thoughts.* How much time is lost by wandering thoughts, by dreamy reveries, when we wake from which, we can scarcely say we have been even conscious of existence. Newton ascribed his eminent attainments to *patient thought*, and every one who desires to become an instrument of good, or to spend his time profitably, must obtain a control over his thoughts—a power to direct them to any subject he desires to confine them to, and to guide them as he pleases in its consideration. We should endeavor to make our mental powers as obedient to the will as the members of our body are.

6. *Endeavor to get some good out of every object.* If properly viewed, every thing will afford it. We may be compelled sometimes to attend to what may not be pleasant in itself, but it is possible to get honey even from a lion's carcass; and the more unlikely the source from which we have obtained the benefit, the more satisfaction should we feel that we have procured it.

7. *Frequently review the past.* This will teach us better to understand our errors, and prevent a repetition of them; it will strengthen our intellectual powers, it will lead, if rightly attended to, to more conscientious improvement of our time.

8. *Fervently pray for divine direction and assistance,* for it is only when God himself "teaches us to number our days," that we "apply our hearts to wisdom."

These hints may serve to suggest to us the proper way of redeeming our time. No doubt the closing year has witnessed much which has been misspent and lost; let us endeavor that the end of the next year, if we are all spared to reach it, may show that we have been "redeeming the time."

## TIME AND ETERNITY.

Lo, on a narrow neck of land,  
 'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand ;  
 Yet how insensible !  
 A point of time, a moment's space,  
 Removes me to yon heavenly place,  
 Or shuts me up in hell.

O God, my inmost soul convert,  
 And deeply in my thoughtless heart,  
 Eternal things impress ;  
 Give me to feel their solemn weight,  
 And save me ere it be too late :  
 Wake me to righteousness.

Before me place, in bright array,  
 The pomp of that tremendous day,  
 When thou with clouds shalt come  
 To judge the nations at thy bar ;  
 And tell me, Lord, shall I be there,  
 To meet a joyful doom ?

Be this my one great business here,  
 With holy trembling, holy fear,  
 To make my calling sure ;  
 Thine utmost counsel to fulfil,  
 And suffer all thy righteous will,  
 And to the end endure.

Then, Saviour, then my soul receive,  
 Transported from this vale, to live  
 And reign with thee above ;  
 Where faith is sweetly lost in sight,  
 And hope in full, supreme delight,  
 And everlasting love !

Wesley.

# ATONING BLOOD.

“THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST CLEANSETH FROM ALL SIN.”

1 John, 1: 7.

SIN is a want of conformity to the law of God. It includes opposition to his will, rebellion against his government, ingratitude for his favors, and an impious refusal to serve and glorify him. No wonder, then, that sin is represented in Scripture as that abominable thing which Jehovah hates; that he cannot look upon it but with abhorrence; and that “he will by no means clear the guilty.” Nor is this all: sin is not only an object of God’s just displeasure, but it is as polluting and degrading as it is criminal. It is not merely an *offence*, but it is also a corroding *disease*, which, unless it be removed, must inevitably separate the soul from God, and render it wholly unfit for the pure joys of his presence.

With this evil every son and daughter of Adam is chargeable. “There is not a just man upon earth, who doeth good, and sinneth not.” Eccles. 7: 20. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Rom. 5: 12. With the guilt of transgression every one of our race is by nature loaded, and with the pollution of this moral leprosy every soul is defiled. “If any man say he hath no sin, he deceiveth himself, and the truth is not in him.”

And as sin is so odious in itself, so it is the parent of all misery. As it is that “accursed thing” which God has forbidden, and which is an abomination in his sight, so it ever brings with it its natural and unfailing consequence—the wrath of a holy God; all the miseries of this life; the death of the body; the blight and ruin of the soul; and, when not repented of, the pains of hell for ever. Nor is this a mere arbitrary consequence. The justice of God is

an essential attribute of his character. As the righteous Governor of the universe, it is impossible that he should fail to testify his displeasure against sin. He cannot receive the impenitent sinner to his favor without "denying himself," trampling on the authority of his own law, abandoning the dignity of his government, and setting an example to the subjects of his moral empire, adapted to encourage rebellion, and to introduce universal disorder. He can therefore no more omit to testify his fixed opposition to sin and sinners, than he can cease to be a righteous and holy Sovereign.

All this the method of salvation by Christ presupposes. The Gospel is addressed to us as sinners. All its commands, all its offers, all its exhortations and warnings, and all its "exceeding great and precious promises," proceed upon the principle that all those to whom it comes stand in need of a deliverer from guilt and pollution. Hence, the Saviour, we are told, was expressly called JESUS, because he came "to save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Accordingly, from sin, in every respect, the Gospel proclaims complete and eternal deliverance.

But *how* is this deliverance effected? By simply passing sin by, and dispensing with its threatened penalty? By a mere act of sovereign forgiveness, without any demonstration of God's abhorrence of evil? By no means. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, *being made a curse for us.*" "We have redemption *through his blood*, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

There is no doctrine more important than this. It lies at the foundation of all Christian faith and hope. If it were asked, What is the *essence* of the Gospel? The answer, undoubtedly, ought to be, It is a gracious message which informs a race of lost, miserable sinners, how they may be delivered from the condemnation of sin by the atoning blood of the Son of God, and from the dominion and pollution of sin by the power of the Holy Spirit, given in virtue of the

vicarious, atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer, who came that he might "finish transgression, make an end of sin, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness." Daniel 9 : 24.

Reader, are you not desirous to know in what manner "THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST CLEANSETH FROM ALL SIN?" Your attention is earnestly requested to an humble attempt to throw light on this subject.

1. How does the blood of Christ cleanse from the CONDEMNATION OF SIN? How does it deliver men from the wrath and curse of God justly due for every transgression? We shall conceive more clearly of this subject by recurring for a moment to the language and the typical institutions of the Old Testament economy. Immediately after the fall of our first parents, God was pleased to command that the blood of animals should be poured out, and the flesh offered in sacrifice, by those who worshipped him, as an acknowledgment of their sins, and as a kind of figurative expiation of them. Not that "the blood of bulls or of goats could really take away sin," but he who brought and offered up the bleeding victim in obedience to the divine command, by this sacrifice made confession of his sins, and of his desert of death, and typically expressed his humble reliance on the atoning blood of the infinitely greater sacrifice afterwards to be offered up once for all. Hence, a large part of the worship of the ceremonial dispensation consisted in the daily offering of bloody sacrifices, which, typically and ceremonially, took away sin; that is, when they were regularly brought according to the divine prescription, the sacrificer was absolved from all liability to suffer the external penalty of transgression; and when they were offered with sincere and humble reliance on the atoning sacrifice of the Messiah to come, all guilt, all obligation to punishment was taken away, and the penitent and believing offerer accepted as righteous in the sight of God. In making this offering, he who brought the victim laid his hand upon its head, as

a kind of solemn symbolical transfer of sin from himself to the devoted animal, and as an acknowledgment that he himself deserved to die.

Besides this daily offering, once a year, on the great day of atonement, a similar but still more formal and solemn expiatory offering was made in behalf of the whole people. But the most remarkable bloody offering was that of the *paschal lamb*, intended to commemorate the deliverance of the children of Israel from bondage in Egypt, and more especially from the stroke of the destroying angel when the first-born of the Egyptians were slain. The blood of the slain lamb was ordered to be sprinkled upon the lintels and door-posts of the Israelitish houses, and all the families which had this mark on their dwellings were *passed over*, and spared by the destroying angel; thus teaching, by a most impressive type, that all who were washed in the blood of the great sacrifice, and none others, should be spared and accepted in the day of trial. In short, as the apostle to the Hebrews declares, "almost all things under the law were purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood there was no remission." Hebrews 9:22.

All this was done, not that the literal blood of animals was expected to take away moral defilement, nor that a God of infinite benevolence delighted in the slaughter of innocent creatures on its own account; but as a series of "sacramental memorials" of man's desert of death, and of "the Lord's death" as the substitute and surety of all who should believe in his name.

Accordingly, when our blessed Saviour came in the flesh, all these typical representations were fulfilled, and their meaning realized. These were "shadows;" Christ was the "substance" and the "end" of them all. These were "figures for the time then present; but Christ being come a High-Priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered

once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us: for if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb. 9: 9-14.

But *how* does the blood of Christ deliver from the condemnation of sin? By "the blood of Christ" we are to understand the death of Christ, which was effected by shedding his blood. Hence, he is said to have "died for our sins," 1 Cor. 15: 3; that is, to "take away our sins," Rom. 11: 27; to have "made his soul an offering for sin;" to have "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Hebrews 9: 26. All that Christ underwent as the Redeemer of sinners, and which was consummated by shedding his blood on the cross, may be considered as comprehended under the general expression of his atoning blood. As the sacrifice, under the ceremonial economy, was not complete without actually shedding the blood of the victim; so the sacrifice of the Son of God, offered up once for all, was not finished until "he bowed his head" in the agony of expiring nature, and "gave up the ghost."

Our race had become miserable sinners. We had broken the holy law of God under which we were placed, and had rendered ourselves liable to all the weight of that dreadful penalty which it denounces against offenders. The language of this holy law is, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Yet no one of Adam's race ever did render a perfect obedience to this law. Such, then, is our awful situation. We have transgressed the holy law of God times and ways without number. We have no righteousness of our own to meet its inexorable demands. We must die, or the justice of God must be tarnished; or some one, able and willing, must pay, in our behalf, the mighty debt which

we owe to divine justice, and become our ransom. We can make no reparation for our sins; we are helpless, and without hope in ourselves. Not all the men on earth, nor all the angels in heaven could deliver us from the grasp of divine justice armed with almighty power. But "what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God" accomplished by "sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Rom. 8 : 3, 4. Yes, this alternative, which has filled all heaven with wonder, joy, and praise, since the hour in which it was proclaimed—this amazing alternative was adopted in the counsels of eternal wisdom. The Son of God, the Lord of angels and of men, condescended to take our nature upon him—to appear in the form of a servant, and to obey and suffer as our substitute. He said, in the counsel of peace, "Let me take the place of the guilty. Let me die to save them. Deliver them from going down to the pit—I have found a ransom." The wonderful, the unparalleled offer was accepted. He who "thought it no robbery to be equal with God, took upon him the form of a servant; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He "suffered for us, the just for the unjust." He who was very God and very man in the same mysterious person, made himself a willing sacrifice for the sins of rebels. The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all. "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5 : 21. Not that Christ literally *became a sinner*, or *deserved to be treated as a sinner*; but he took the law-place of sinners, and was treated *as if* he had been a sinner, that we, though most unworthy, might be treated, for his sake, *as if* we had fulfilled the law in our own persons. Accordingly "he made peace by the blood of his cross." He "gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity." There



is, therefore, now “no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” They are freely “justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

Thus does the blood of Jesus Christ cleanse from the CONDEMNATION OF SIN. It takes away from the true believer all liableness to punishment on account of sin. Though his sins still *deserve* the wrath of God, he is graciously acquitted and accepted through the merits of Christ’s atoning sacrifice; and this acquittal has a respect not merely to *some* of his sins, but to *all of them*. This precious blood cleanseth from ALL SIN. The moment the regenerated soul embraces the Saviour by faith, as “the Lord his righteousness,” “though his sins were as scarlet, they become white as snow; though they were red like crimson, they are as wool.” He is clothed in a “robe washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.” Isaiah 1 : 18; Rev. 7 : 14.

But the apostate children of Adam need something more than cleansing from the *condemnation* of sin. Their nature is depraved. “The carnal mind is enmity against God,” and while it remains under the reigning power of this depraved disposition, is altogether unfitted for communion with God, and incapable of participating in the joys of heaven. The soul must be “cleansed” from this moral defilement, this spiritual leprosy, before it can be “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Accordingly the Scriptures teach that,

2. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses effectually and completely FROM THE POWER AND POLLUTION OF SIN, as well as from its condemnation. “Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord.” It is just as essential to our eternal well-being that we be restored to the *image* of God, as that we be restored to his *favor*. Hence, it is a vital part of the plan of salvation by Christ, to *sanctify* men as well as to *justify* them.

But *how* does the blood of Christ cleanse the soul from its inherent depravity? This is a question which must appear deeply interesting to all who know any thing of the

evil of indwelling sin, and who groan, being burdened under the weight of its grievous corruption.

It is the immediate and appropriate office of the Holy Spirit to sanctify the soul. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." John 6 : 63. Hence the promise of Jehovah to the objects of his saving mercy : "Behold, I will sprinkle clean water upon you ; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezekiel 36 : 25-27. In short, for the commencement of holiness in the heart in regeneration, and for every progressive attainment made in conformity to the will of God, "in crucifying the flesh, with the affections and lusts," we are indebted to the Holy Spirit of God.

But it is only in virtue of the atoning sacrifice of Christ that the Holy Spirit of sanctification is given. This is one of the great benefits which the Redeemer died to purchase for his people. Had he not suffered and died, the Holy Spirit had never been given to enlighten and purify his disciples. "If I go not away," said he, "the Comforter will not come unto you." John 16 : 7. Not only so, but one great purpose for which the Saviour became incarnate was, that "he might sanctify his people with his own blood." Accordingly we are told, "He loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word ; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. 5 : 25-27. And again, "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." Titus 2 : 14. We may say, then, that the sanctification of

his people is as much a part of the purchase of a Saviour's blood, as any of the benefits which they receive. In laying down his life, he left no uncertainty in respect to the salvation of believers; but "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," secured as firmly their deliverance from the dominion and pollution of sin, as from its condemnation; and insured to every child of God conformity to his image, and preparation for the society and employments of a holy heaven.

We may add, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from the power and pollution of sin, in that believing views of his atoning blood have a direct and powerful tendency to promote our sanctification. In proportion as the mind of man believingly contemplates, and practically embraces "the truth as it is in Jesus," and especially that great cardinal truth, in which all the lines of revelation meet—that Jesus Christ laid down his life to save sinners, and that his blood cleanseth from all sin—will the power of sin be broken in him, and he conformed to the great design of the Saviour's death. Nothing is more adapted to humble, soften, and purify the soul, than believing views of the adorable Redeemer—his eternal and matchless love—his wonderful sufferings and death—and the rich benefits which flow from his atoning blood. A lively faith in these amazing objects presents such views of the divine character and law, such apprehensions of the astonishing love of Christ, such motives to obedience, and such a constraining power over the whole man, as are adapted, more than any or all other considerations, to abase pride, to convince of sin, to melt the heart in penitential sorrow, to bind it to the Redeemer in sacred confidence and love, and to impel to habitual holiness of heart and of life.

Thus complete is the deliverance from all sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. Thus does it take away the condemning power of sin; the dominion of sin; the love of sin; the pollution of sin; and, in due time, all its remaining

existence from the heart. Happy, thrice happy is he on whom these benefits are bestowed. Well may the inspired Psalmist pronounce, "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered; unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

But let it ever be remembered, that this blessedness belongs to *none but true believers*; to none but those who "believe with the heart unto righteousness;" that is, who receive and rest on the Saviour, with humility, gratitude, and love, as their hope and life. The blood of the paschal lamb did not avail excepting to those on whose door-posts it was *sprinkled*. Neither will the blood of Jesus Christ avail to the cleansing of any but those to whom it is spiritually *applied*. However complete the atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer, we are assured it will benefit only those who cordially and gratefully receive it. However rich and all-cleansing the efficacy of his blood, those only will have their sins washed away in this precious fountain, who repair to it by faith, and renounce all hope of cleansing and saving themselves. "He that believeth," said the Lord of glory, "shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16 : 16. Again he declared, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." John 8 : 24. And again, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John 3 : 36. Yes, notwithstanding all that the divine Redeemer has done and suffered, those who reject or disregard his merciful offer, must go down to the prison of eternal despair, with all their sins unpardoned, with all their depravity unbroken; under the power of that "fleshly mind" which is enmity against God, and under the weight of that wrath which will consign them to "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." 2 Thess. 1 : 9.

Beloved reader, what think you of these things? Be assured, that what has been said is no idle speculation. It

is truth of everlasting importance. It is your life. You are a sinner. You cannot deny the charge. You need forgiveness and sanctification. You must inevitably perish unless you obtain both. You can never obtain those blessings but "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;" and you can have no interest in that redemption without feeling your need of it, and cordially receiving it as the ground of your hope, and the life of your soul. Have you, then, received Christ, and are you resting in him? Have you good evidence that you have been pardoned through the atoning blood, and renewed by the Spirit of the Lord Jesus? Or does your conscience bear witness that you are "yet in your sins," and of course have no part nor lot in the salvation of the Gospel? O reader, these are questions in comparison with which all others are trifling.

Many hearers of the Gospel are daily busying themselves in vain speculations concerning the *origin of evil*, and the *philosophy of our depravity*; while the melancholy *fact*, and the proffered *deliverance from it*, occupy but little of their attention. O when will infatuated mortals be persuaded to renounce this folly, and to "consider their ways?" Impenitent reader, while you speculate and cavil, you perish. Behold, through Christ, is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. "He that cometh to him shall in no wise be cast out." He is "able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him." Hebrews 7 : 25. Let no sinner, then, either wilfully or carelessly neglect to embrace the offer of mercy so freely and graciously made. If any are excluded from the cleansing power of the Saviour's blood, it will be because they exclude themselves. Yes, fellow-mortal, if you perish, it will not be on account of any insufficiency in the blood of Christ to make you clean; but solely because of your voluntary and unbelieving rejection of a proffered deliverance, the most effectual, blessed, and glorious, that was ever presented to a creature's acceptance.

Nor let the awakened, anxious sinner, who has been

made in some measure to see the number and aggravation of his sins, indulge the fear that his sins are too great to be washed away even by a Saviour's blood. Were it the blood of a mere man, or of a mere exalted creature, O sinner, to which we direct your attention and your confidence, you might well despair. But it is the blood of him who was truly God, as well as truly man, in the same mysterious person. It is no extravagance to say, that it is the blood of an *infinite sacrifice*. "Wherefore he is able to save them to the *uttermost*, that come unto God by him." Heb. 7 : 25. Blessed be his holy name for that precious word, the *uttermost*. It covers the worst cases. It extends to every possible degree of guilt. Though your sins were the blackest that ever disgraced the annals of rebellion, yet, if you humbly apply to this blood of atonement, if you come with faith and penitence to this "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness," you will not be rejected. Has the Saviour pledged his almightiness as well as his love? Has he said, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am Jehovah, and there is none else?" Isa. 45 : 22. And can you still doubt whether he is *able* as well as *willing* to save all that come unto God through him?

Let those who have already taken refuge in the Saviour, and who desire more and more to be cleansed from sin, remember whither they are to go for the attainment of this blessing. Yes, believer, if you wish daily to mortify corruption, to overcome the world, and to grow in grace, be much employed every day in believing contemplations of Christ, his redeeming love, his atoning sacrifice, his cleansing blood, his holy example, and the holy joys of his presence. Meditate much on these objects, and you will be able to say, with the apostle, "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Gal. 2 : 20.

# UNIVERSALISM

## UNSCRIPTURAL AND ABSURD.

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THE Bible speaks of a time when the Lord Jesus Christ will appear in glory with the holy angels, will have all nations assembled before him, and will there separate the righteous from the wicked—saying to the righteous, “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;” and to the wicked, “Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” And the history closes with this tremendous declaration, “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” Matt. 25 : 31–46. Agreeably to what seems the obvious import of this scripture, the great body of Christians in all ages have believed that those who live and die impenitent suffer endless punishment. On the other hand, many, commonly denominated Universalists, have held that no one will thus suffer, but that all the children of Adam will be eventually and for ever happy with God.

Before entering directly upon the examination of the latter sentiment, it may be useful to state the essential principles of the divine government, as generally understood by evangelical Christians. What is needful to our present purpose may be embodied in the four following propositions.

1. God has placed men under a righteous law, Rom. 2 : 12–15, whose penalty—according to its just value, the importance of the interests it guards, and the consequences of transgression—is eternal death. Ezek. 18 : 20 ; Rom. 6 : 23.

2. All men have broken this law, and are, therefore, righteously condemned. Rom. 3 : 11–19.

3. The Lord Jesus Christ has offered himself a propitiatory sacrifice, Rom. 3 : 25, for the sins of men, Heb. 10 : 12 ; so that whosoever will repent and trust in him for pardon, shall be justified and receive everlasting happiness. John 3 : 15, 16 ; Rom. 3 : 24–26.

4. Those who will not turn from their transgressions, nor comply with the reasonable conditions of the Gospel, during the present season of probation, will be driven away in their wickedness, to endless suffering and shame. John 3 : 5, 36 ; 2 Thess. 1 : 7–9.

Universalists generally allow that all men are subject to the moral law, and are sinners ; but they maintain that the salvation which is through Christ, is not only sufficient for all, and within reach of all, and freely offered to all, but that it will be absolutely secured to all. Their error appears to originate mainly in very low views of the nature and value of God's commandments, and in practically regarding sin as a small matter. Hence, they suppose the penalty of the divine law to be a mere trifle in comparison with what has been stated above. Most of them maintain one of the two following positions: Either, 1. That the proper and just punishment of sin is moral and spiritual death, (*i. e.* destitution of holiness,) remorse of conscience, and the varied ills of the present life, including the death of the body—and that there is nothing after death but a pure and blessed immortality ; Or, 2. That punishment is commenced in the mental and bodily sufferings of this life,



and continued in a future temporary hell, where the wicked suffer as much as their sins deserve, are purified, and taken to heaven. Those holding this opinion are comparatively few in number, and are generally known as "Restorationists."

The inconsistency and folly of this latter scheme may be thus evinced :

1. There are no passages of Scripture which show how, and when, and where the sinner is delivered from hell, if once he falls into it ; and it seems impossible to doubt that, had our Saviour designed to teach the doctrine in question, so momentous a fact would have been clearly and explicitly revealed. Luke 16 : 26.

2. If the scheme of final restoration be true, prophets and apostles are chargeable with such weakness and obscurity in their writings as would destroy all confidence in the sacred volume. No author, of modern times at least, has ever found difficulty in writing so as to make men understand that he did not believe in endless punishment ; but conceding the truth of Universalism, inspired men have written so strangely as to lead a great majority of all serious and learned persons, who study the original Scriptures, or the different translations, to believe what is false in regard to the character and government of God, and the hopes and destiny of man. See Psalm 11 : 6 ; Matt. 10 : 28 ; Mark 3 : 29 ; John 5 : 29 ; 2 Peter 2 : 12.

3. It is irrational to affirm that mere suffering or punishment would ever win to loyalty and love the heart that had remained impenitent amid rich and varied exhibitions of paternal chastisement, forbearance, and mercy. Rev. 16 : 9-11. Nor is it conceivable that the companionship of sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and liars, Rev. 22 : 15, should have any tendency to make men holy and fit them for heaven.

4. The scheme of restoration destroys the whole doctrine of salvation by grace. The Bible declares, that there is no other name through which we can be saved, except that of Christ, Acts 4 : 12, and that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Ephes. 1 : 7. But if the wicked suffer the just punishment of their sins in hell, and are there purified, they can be just as well saved without Christ as with him. Indeed, they neither want a Saviour nor can they have any. Moreover, it is manifest that, upon this scheme, sinners can neither receive *forgiveness* through the blood of Christ, nor in any other way ; for having suffered the proper penalty of the law, they have a *right* to deliverance on the footing of justice. It is mere mockery to say to a culprit that he receives forgiveness "according to the riches of grace," while at the same time he has paid in his own person "the wages of sin."

5. The doctrine of restoration teaches—what, indeed, Universalists generally affirm—that God punishes no sinner except for *his individual good* ; that the penalty for all transgression is fatherly correction, designed to reclaim and bless. Hence, whenever a man sins, he receives as penalty, goodness, in some form, at the hand of the Lord. Upon this hypothesis, the more men sin, the richer experience will they continually have of God's goodness ; and the soul that shall receive the highest possible manifestations of divine favor, will be the most outrageous and heaven-daring rebel on earth. This follows inevitably from the doctrine that God inflicts upon sinners only that which is for their good ; and who can help seeing that this is little else than for the Almighty to offer a premium for blasphemy and rebellion ? According to this doctrine also, God's raining upon the wicked "snares, fire, and brimstone," is synonymous with sending upon them sanctifying mercies ! And

the threatening against the ungodly, of "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," refers to the distribution of different sorts of blessings! The Scripture expression, "fierce wrath of God," means simply, *fierce goodness of God*; and the "fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries," means *fiery mercy which shall save the adversaries*; and "the smoke of their torment which ascendeth up for ever and ever," must be understood as the smoke of the salvation of the damned!

6. If the penalty of the divine law be disciplinary and purifying punishment in a future state, then hell is a most desirable home. According to the doctrine in hand, it fits multitudes for heaven who were incorrigible upon earth; it is a kind of hospital, where the deeply diseased with sin, and otherwise incurable, are restored to perfect soundness. Hence, no one need fear the "damnation of hell," nor indulge a mistaken wish to "escape" it. It is a place of mercy. Hell is designed to secure the eternal salvation of the ungodly, and the sooner they feel its purifying flames, the sooner will they have paid the wages of sin, and be cleansed for the joys of heaven.

The absurdity of supposing that hell, or the proper punishment of sin, is in this life, may be thus evinced:

1. If remorse of conscience, etc., be the penalty of the divine law, then it follows, that the more men sin, the less they are punished; for every one knows that forebodings of evil and the stings of conscience cease to be distressing just in proportion as men become habituated to work wickedness. All that sinners need do to "escape the damnation of hell," and what it would be wisdom for them to do, according to this sentiment, is, simply, to sin with such a high hand as that conscience shall become seared, and they be "past feeling," then their happy souls will be almost if not altogether prepared for eternal glory.

2. If the just punishment of sin immediately and necessarily follow its commission, in mental and bodily sufferings, then all the inflictions of parents upon rebellious children, and of magistrates upon the state criminal, are most unjustifiable tyranny, as well as an impious invasion of the divine prerogative. Universalism maintains that God has so constituted us, that the commission of crime draws after it its full reward of suffering, immediately and without the possibility of escape. This being so, who shall dare add to the righteous penalty which heaven ordains, and the culprit has suffered? On this scheme of morals, an abused people would be fully justified in demolishing every jail, penitentiary, and gallows in the land, and in treating judges, jurors, and sheriffs as the worst of nuisances and the most flagitious oppressors.

3. This scheme of Universalism gives perfect and unlimited license to the ungodly and the scoffer. It says to the infidel, whose breath is poisoning the very fountain of morals, and to those who are rotting within the precincts of the brothel, and to those who curse and stagger under the influence of intoxication, "You are now suffering the penalty of God's law—there is no hell for the wicked besides the one you are now in—after death is no sin, no suffering—nothing for the soul but a pure and blessed immortality." Who does not see that the most abandoned wretches can desire no greater impunity than this doctrine affords them? And what intelligent mind can resist the conviction that, if this view of the divine government were to prevail, personal safety and social order would no longer exist, but anarchy, confusion, and blood would overspread the land?

4. This doctrine destroys the entire substance of the Gospel, and is also contradictory to itself. Universalism professes to believe that the *Lord Jesus saves all men*; yet

he cannot save from a *future* hell, for the doctrine affirms that there is none: he saves none from a *present* hell, or from the just demerit of their sins, for the doctrine affirms that a righteous retribution immediately and irresistibly follows every transgression. It will not be seriously pretended that our Lord saves all from *sin*, for it is notorious that great multitudes live and die in iniquity; nor will it be alleged that the grace of Christ, in some unimaginable way, *changes men's hearts* so as to fit them for heaven, for Universalism maintains that *death* produces this change. Hence, it is demonstrably true, that this heresy not only destroys the Gospel of Christ, but actually subverts itself.

5. The doctrine that sin and suffering exist only in this present life, would make it a dictate of prudence and piety, for some individuals at least, to commit suicide. The Bible warns sinners to "flee from the wrath to come," and reason strongly urges men to become holy and happy. Let any one, then, who pants after the joys of heaven and communion with God, just put an end to his own life, and he will inherit immortality and bliss in a moment. Especially, if Universalism be true, ought those who are deeply conscious of sin, and all who are oppressed with poverty and sickness, as well as those who are daily vexed with the fanatical zeal of the "orthodox," to call in the aid of pistol, or razor, or laudanum—for either of these instruments would secure a comparatively easy death—and glide quickly into paradise, where they would receive the plaudit, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." If the doctrine under discussion be according to Scripture, no reasoning can set aside this conclusion.

6. Conceding the truth of Universalism, it can be proved that the pirate executed at New York for having killed some two hundred of his fellow-men, lived a most

useful life ; for he hurried great numbers, with but little pain, from sin and sorrow, to the joys which are at God's right hand. And allowing that sin and suffering exist only in this life, and that beyond the grave is a bright and blessed state of existence for all, this robber of the seas might have plead before his judges that in all he did he was actuated by the purest benevolence : and no one can gainsay his declaration. "I saw my fellow-men," he might allege, "toiling and suffering, almost continually falling into sins that dishonored God, and haunted with gloomy remembrances and forebodings—exposed, moreover, to a death of uncertain and dreadful anguish : my compassionate heart yearned over them, and longed to do them good : it was plain, yea, certain, that glory and blessing was prepared for all after death ; and that many fearful souls would not 'escape the damnation of hell,' in which they were suffering in this life ; accordingly I devoted my life to the simple and (who shall deny it) benevolent business of aiding my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, up to paradise, by the quickest and gentlest means."

And this is a picture of *Universalism* : not drawn with any wish to caricature or misrepresent, but to exhibit the true features and relations of this most monstrous and deformed of all the progeny of error. Isaiah 28 : 15–20. Reader, beware of it : make not its lies your refuge or your hope.

## C O M E T O J E S U S ;

OR,

## H O W T O F I N D R E S T .

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

A CLERGYMAN was one morning sitting in his study, when Mrs. A., a coachmaker's wife, called on him in great distress of mind. Upon her entering the room, a conversation took place, of which the following is the substance.

“ Good morning, Mrs. A. ; I hope I see you quite well ? ”  
 “ Quite well, I thank you, sir, in body, but I am wretched in mind,” answered Mrs. A., weeping. “ Indeed,” said Mr. R., “ what is the cause of your distress ? ” “ O, sir, I am such a sinner.” “ How long have you been in this state ? How long have you been suffering in mind on account of your sins ? ” “ About four years, sir.” “ And what have you done to obtain relief ? ” “ Sir, I have done every thing I can think of.” “ Have you attended the appointed means of grace ? What church have you been in the habit of frequenting ? ” “ Sir, I have gone to every church in the town.” “ And have you found no comfort, no benefit ? ” “ A little, sometimes ; but it soon goes away again, and leaves me as wretched as before. Sir, I am a miserable woman.” Here Mrs. A. again wept bitterly.

Mr. R. now began to suspect that poor Mrs. A. was one of those persons who, neglecting the private means of grace, and having itching ears, run about from church to church to hear different preachers, but who neglect the admonition, “ Take heed how ye hear.” He therefore continued : “ Have you searched the Scriptures ? Do you read the Bible at home ? ” “ Sir, I am always reading the Bible. I cannot but read it ; it is my only hope.” “ Have you derived no comfort from its invitations and promises ? ” “ I think I

have got a little comfort sometimes, sir ; but it soon leaves me, and I become as wretched as before."

Still Mr. R. thought that Mrs. A., whilst diligent in searching the Scriptures, might be neglecting prayer, the true index of the soul. He proceeded, and said, "Have you *prayed* for peace?" "Sir, I am praying all day long." "And have you received no answer to your prayers ; have you obtained no consolation?" "Sometimes, sir, I get a little peace after I have prayed, but it soon goes away again. O, sir, I am a miserable woman." And here, again, the tears, which the poor woman shed abundantly, showed the deep anguish of her soul.

Mr. R. was now satisfied that she was a sincere inquirer after salvation. He inwardly rejoiced at her state. He felt assured the Holy Spirit was leading her, though through deep waterfloods, to the feet of Jesus. But for a while he was at a loss to discover why the peace which she so earnestly desired, and so diligently sought, was withheld from her. At length he thought he could see the rock on which she was splitting. He therefore, after a pause, continued :

"I think I can see wherein you have erred." "Indeed, sir," replied Mrs. A., "I shall be very thankful if you can point out my error, and tell me how I can find rest for my poor soul." "Will you, then, candidly answer two or three questions? When you attended the house of God, read your Bible, and prayed, did you *rely on these means* to give you comfort?" "I think I did, sir," answered Mrs. A., looking surprised at the question. "And when you prayed, *to whom* did you pray?" "To God, sir," said Mrs. A., looking still more surprised than before ; "to whom else could I pray?"

Mr. R. was now satisfied that he had discovered her error : that she had not with simple faith looked to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, through whom alone we have access to the Father ; that she had not duly "considered HIM" as bearing our nature in union with his own, being "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." "I think," said he,



“I see why you have not found abiding rest for your soul. Will you read this verse?” pointing her to the 28th verse of the 11th chapter of Matthew. Mrs. A. read, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” “Who spoke these words?” asked Mr. R.—“read the 25th verse, just before; what does that say?” “At that time JESUS answered, and said ——.” “Now, who is the speaker?” “JESUS, sir.” “Now tell me, in your distresses, have you not used the means you have named—attending church, reading the Bible, and prayer—and *rested upon them* for comfort, and not upon THE LORD JESUS? And in your prayers, have you accepted the invitation of Jesus? Have you gone TO HIM for rest? Have you prayed to him? Have you closed with the invitation, and hung upon the promise of Jesus, ‘Come unto ME, and I will give you rest?’”

Mrs. A. looked amazed; she paused for a few moments, and then, whilst tears filled her eyes, exclaimed, “O, sir, I see my mistake. I see where I have been wrong. O, how could I so long have overlooked the LORD JESUS. He promises rest, but I never went to him. Now I see it. I wonder at myself that I never saw this before.”

Mrs. A. had, till now, been ignorant of the *true* character of God. The being of whom she had conceived, was not the God of the Bible, not God manifest in Jesus Christ, the God of infinite love and pity. Till now, she had overlooked the all-important declaration of Jesus, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.” John 14:6. She had overlooked Christ as “God manifest in the flesh.” She, like Peter, had looked at the storm rather than at the Saviour, and began to sink. But now a flood of light burst upon her mind, and discovered to her burdened soul, that God has revealed himself as the God of all grace and consolation in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit had now, “in the day of Christ’s power,” taken of the things of Jesus, and shown her, that according to the terms of the everlasting covenant, Jesus is the appointed Mediator between a holy God and the sinner, who, possessing the hu-

man as well as the divine nature, can "lay his hand upon us both," Job 9 : 33 ; that he alone is the way to the Father, and that no man cometh to the Father but by him, John 14 : 6 ; and moreover, that he has received from the Father all saving gifts for his people. Eph. 4 : 8.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh;" and Mrs. A. quoted from a well-stored mind, many passages of Scripture in proof of her past error. And the tears which a few minutes before indicated the anguish of an oppressed spirit, now flowed in the channel of grateful and peaceful joy.

Mr. R. having commended her to that Saviour, that redeeming God, in whom she now confided for rest, she hastened home to gladden the heart of her husband with the joyous tidings of her discovery.

A short time elapsed before Mr. R. had an opportunity of seeing her again. When he called at her house, he found her "rejoicing in a *reconciled* God through Jesus Christ." "What have you been doing with my wife, sir?" said her grateful and happy husband ; "for since she saw you, she has been quite another woman. She always used to be going about the house sighing and mourning, but now she is singing hymns all day long."

The recital of this instructive incident has been blessed to the conversion and comfort of more than one individual.

In a village in B——, Mr. R., the brother of this clergyman, was in the habit of visiting a poor woman, and reading the Scriptures to her. She received his visits with but little pleasure, and would often, as she afterwards confessed, feign herself "not at home," when she was aware of his coming. On one occasion the above narrative occurred to his mind, and he related it to her. She listened with more than usual attention, but gave no evidence of any deep impression.

When Mr. R. visited her again, he noticed a marked change in her deportment ; the cloud which had hitherto darkened her features had been dispelled, and serenity and

joy could be traced upon her fine and open countenance. "O, sir," she said, whilst tears filled her eyes, "I was just like that woman you told me about the other day. I never took my sins and troubles to *Jesus* till you told me that story. But now I have prayed to HIM, and found rest to my soul." This woman, like the first named, had approached God without relying on the atoning merits of Christ. So soon as she was led to discern the God of the Bible, the God who pardons sin through the blood of the Lamb, and who delighteth to pardon, her heart was softened, and her conscience found peace. She gave satisfactory evidence of the saving change wrought in her soul. She became indeed "a new creature," and a consistent and humble follower of the Lamb. She was enabled, to a remarkable degree, to obey the injunction given to all true believers whose "faith worketh by love," "Rejoice in the Lord alway."

Having found peace and happiness herself, her heart was set upon, and yearned for the salvation of her husband. Her prayers and labors on his behalf were owned of God, who blessed her in this "work of faith and labor of love," and made her the honored and happy instrument of leading him to the foot of the cross.

Another instance of the blessing attending the narration of this incident, occurred in the city of ——. Mr. R. was asked by his sister, a district visitor, to address a few poor people in a room in which she was accustomed to assemble them, and read to them the Scriptures. He was informed that a Roman Catholic was in the habit of attending; but he was not aware, till afterwards, that she was one of his hearers. The subject selected was the parable of the Prodigal Son, Luke 15. He took occasion to remark, that as the prodigal did not go to his father's servants, and ask them to intercede for him, but "arose and went to his father" direct, and found a welcome in his bosom; so the repenting and returning sinner may go directly to Christ the "one Mediator between God and men," and will find, without the intercession of the virgin Mary or any other saint, the freest

acceptance and the fullest pardon. The Holy Spirit carried conviction to the heart of Anne B——. Her sleep was broken during the following night. Her mind could not rest, for her sins pressed upon her conscience.

A few days after the lecture, Mr. R., having been apprized that Anne B—— had been one of his hearers, and that she seemed impressed by what was then said, called to see her. She occupied a small back room, on a first floor, and supported herself by shoe-binding. She was reclining on the bed when Mr. R. entered the room, as for some time she had been suffering from severe indisposition. She evinced much pleasure at seeing him. In directing her to look to Jesus for rest, and assuring her that no man knoweth "who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him," Luke 10 : 22, Mr. R. related the anecdote of the coachmaker's wife. His visit was short, and he left her with but little encouragement that the truth had entered her soul.

A second visit, however, proved that the word of the Lord had not returned unto him void, but had prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. "O, sir," she exclaimed, whilst her pallid countenance flushed with joy, "my lips were sealed when you came here before. I was just like the coachmaker's wife. I could not sleep during the night, and I rose three times and prayed, not to the virgin, as I used to do, but to God; yet I did not then find comfort, for I overlooked Jesus Christ as the way to the Father. But since you told me that story, and directed me to Jesus, to God giving his Son to die for sinners, I have found peace."

Peace Anne B—— had evidently found. It reigned in her heart, and did not forsake her to the day of her death. She had found that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." 2 Cor. 5 : 19. Her illness increased, and her sufferings were great, but her consolations were greater. Her placid countenance indicated the peace of her mind. She was not only a monument of grace, but an example of patience and meekness. A visit to her bedside was both refreshing and edify-

ing. She seemed to recline, like the disciple whom Jesus loved, on her Saviour's bosom. She lingered a few months, and after having given satisfactory evidence of the saving change wrought in her heart, she fell asleep in Jesus

Let me ask the reader, What have you done with your sins? To whom have you carried them? Have you accepted Christ's gracious invitation, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest." In vain will you seek saving and abiding rest till you come unto him. Let the following reasons convince you of this.

1. God the Father has committed to the Son all "power," Matt. 28 : 18 ; all "grace," John 1 : 16, compared with Col. 1 : 19 ; all pardon, Matt. 1 : 21 ; John 5 : 22, 23 ; all salvation. John 1 : 12. He has treasured up "all things," even the knowledge of himself, in Jesus. Matt. 11 : 27. And as Pharaoh directed the famishing Egyptians to *go to Joseph*, to whom he had committed the storehouses of corn ; so the Father directs all who hunger and thirst after righteousness to *go to Jesus*, to whom he has committed the treasures of grace. "This is my beloved Son," he said, when his voice was heard out of the cloud on the mount of transfiguration, "This is my beloved Son ; hear ye him." You will, therefore, obey and honor the Father, John 5 : 23, by obeying and honoring the Son ; by hearing his voice, and accepting his invitation, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest."

2. The gift of the Holy Ghost is purchased by the blood, and bestowed by the grace of the Lord Jesus. John 15 : 26. The Father sends him to regenerate and dwell in the hearts of his people in the name of his Son. John 14 : 26. He comes only in the name of Jesus ; he does not speak of himself, but reveals the fulness and sufficiency of Jesus ; his things only he takes, and shows unto his people. John 16 : 7-15.

Has the Holy Spirit revealed the Lord Jesus to you as the source of all rest, and the fountain of all peace? Has he led you by his gentle influences to the cross, and there enabled you to repent of your sins, to unburden your soul,

and to close with the gracious offer, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest?"

3. Jesus himself has given many great and precious promises of rest to all who come to him. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," Rev. 19 : 10 ; and the Scriptures bear full testimony to his power, grace, and sufficiency. He quickens dead souls. John 5 : 21, 25. He cleanses them from all sin. Isa. 1 : 16 ; 1 John, 1 : 7. He robes them in spotless righteousness. Jer. 23 : 6. He gives light. John 1 : 9. He refreshes. John 6 : 35 ; 7 : 37, 38. He strengthens. 2 Cor. 12 : 9. He preserves. John 10 : 27, 28. He gives saving rest here, and an "eternal weight of glory" hereafter. 2 Cor. 4 : 17.

Come, then, fellow-sinner, to Jesus. "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22 : 17. Come, bring all your sins, doubts, fears, and cares to him. Diligently and prayerfully use all ; but do not stay thy soul upon any of the means of grace. Means are only means—Jesus is all in all. Cast your heavy burden upon him. He will receive you. He rejects none who truly and sincerely come to him. John 6 : 37. Arise, and come then at once to him, leaning upon his infallible word, "Come unto ME, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." Matt. 11 : 28-30.

# HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE.

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ON this winged hour eternity depends. Both the kind and degree of eternal retribution will be determined by present conduct: "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." How then shall a man *make the most of life?*

**KNOW YOURSELF.** Self-knowledge is first in order. The prodigal first "came to himself," and then to his father. The royal Psalmist says, "I thought on *my* ways, and turned my feet unto *thy* testimonies." If you would gain correct knowledge of yourself, you must receive the Scriptural account of human nature as true of *you*.

**KNOW GOD.** He maintains your life. From him all goodness flows. To know him as revealed in Christ Jesus, is eternal life begun on earth. "Acquaint thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." Honor the Son, even as you honor the Father. Receive the Holy Ghost. To the sacred Three in One consecrate all you have, and are, and hope for.

**DEVOTE YOUR LIFE TO DOING GOOD.** Your obligations to usefulness are perpetual, indissoluble, and mighty. Nothing can remit them. They result from your nature, and your relations to God and man. In doing good,

**DISCERN THE NATURE OF THINGS.** Make a careful selection. Squander nothing on unworthy objects, or in unworthy pursuits. Learn to judge of both men and things.

**WATCH FOR OPPORTUNITIES.** Henry Martyn, with all his zeal, says he lost, through inattention, the best opportunity of usefulness which he had for many months in India. "Oh that our heads were waters," exclaims Cotton Mather, "because they have been so dry of all thoughts to do good. Oh that our eyes were a fountain of tears, because they have looked so little for occasions to do good." "As we have therefore *opportunity*, let us do good unto all men."

**LET YOUR ABILITY BE THE RULE OF YOUR EFFORTS.** "Get all you can, save all you can, give all you can," do all you can. "If there be first a willing mind, it is accepted ac-

ording to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not." "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thy hand to do it."

**NEVER QUIT CERTAINTY FOR HOPE.** Never abandon a sure way of doing good for some doubtful scheme. Conform your plans to the rules of God's providence, and the dictates of a sober mind. Beware of the habit of originating devices which you do not intend to execute.

**PERSEVERE.** When you have made a good beginning, do not think the work done. Call not a commencement the completion. "Let not him that girdeth on the harness boast himself as he that putteth it off." Have "long patience," and you shall have "precious fruits."

**BE IMPARTIAL.** Never favor one good cause or object of charity to the prejudice of another. It was a shame for the early Christians to wrangle about the comparative merits of Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. They all had excellent gifts and more excellent graces. 'Tis a mark of folly, yea, it is a sin to undervalue objects merely because we are not engaged in promoting them. Therefore encourage whatever promises substantial good.

**DEFER NOT.** To assign to the future what God assigns to the present, is very hazardous. One would not give any until he could give a large sum: when he had a large part of the desired sum, he lost it by fire. Another deferred, for one hour, a warning which he intended to give an unconverted friend: at the end of the hour, the unconverted man was in eternity. "Say not unto thy neighbor, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give, when thou hast it by thee." To-morrow is not thine.

**ACT FROM PRINCIPLE.** What you do, do not from persuasion, or fancy, or ostentation, or to avoid importunity. You have a rational soul. Make use of it. Be fully persuaded and firmly established in good *principles*.

**LIVE BY RULE.** Be systematic in your charities and efforts. If there be irregularity in your life, let it come from the overflowings of your benevolence breaking over a well-constructed system of usefulness.

**BE HEARTY IN ALL YOUR LABORS.** Let not your head, and hands, and tongue be busy, and your heart idle. Results by their greatness will surprise the truly engaged, while the double-minded will wonder that so little good is



done. When the walls of Jerusalem went up rapidly, it was because "the people had a mind to build." "The sluggard desireth, and hath nothing."

ENLIST OTHERS. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "Two are better than one." "Woe to him that is alone when he falleth." "A threefold cord is not quickly broken." "One shall chase a thousand, and *two* shall put *ten thousand* to flight." Despise not the services of any *in their appropriate sphere*. A little captive maid knew more about the man of God in Palestine, than did the king of Israel, and was the means of saving her master Naaman.

ESPECIALLY ENLIST GOD. His foolishness is wiser than men, and his weakness is stronger than men. He charges his angels with folly. His word is power. His will is victory. He makes the feeble like David, and David like the angel of God. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." He who prays aright, wins the heart that wields the arm that moves the world.

BE DETERMINED. Timidity awakens opposition from the cowardly. Men will not rally around him whose heart is not fixed. But let a man himself be intrepid and unwavering, and his friends will be; and difficulty will vanish.

AIM HIGH. Desire great things, meditate great things, attempt great things; then let your efforts correspond, and, with God's blessing, you will accomplish great things. *Yet undertake not too much*. Be not grasping after things beyond your reach, or above your strength.

BE MINDFUL OF LITTLE THINGS. Nothing is of little importance which possesses, even in its results, the attribute of eternity. Despise not the day of small things. "Sands form the mountains, minutes make the year."

SPARE NOT THYSELF. The greatest good is only accomplished by the greatest pains. "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully."

MAINTAIN CHEERFULNESS. The demon of melancholy unnerves religious effort. Be joyful in the Lord; for the joy of the Lord is strength. Rarely will you find a better motto than this: "*Serve God, and be cheerful.*"

BE OF GOOD COURAGE. In the Christian course, cowardice alone is the loss of nearly every victory. It is needless,

it is wicked. "The voice that rolls the stars along, spake all the promises."

**BE NOT FAITHLESS.** Have faith in God. The greatest good is generally done in the face of the greatest discouragements. It was a saying of Andrew Fuller, "Only let us have faith in God, and we shall not lack the means of doing good." "Lord, increase our faith," is perhaps the best prayer the disciples offered during Christ's ministry on earth.

**HOPE AGAINST HOPE.** Nothing is too hard for God. Eliot used to say, "Prayer and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, can accomplish any purpose." Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

**LET YOUR CHARITY ABOUND.** Be it your meat and your drink to do good.

"Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?  
 Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?  
 Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief?  
 Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold.  
 'Tis when the rose is wrapt in many a fold,  
 Close to its heart the worm is wasting there  
 Its life and beauty: not when all unrolled,  
 Leaf after leaf, its blossom rich and fair  
 Breathes freely its perfumes throughout the ambient air."

**BE HUMBLE.** "When you have done all, acknowledge that you are nothing, that you deserve nothing, and that God has a right to do with you as seems good to him." If you attain or accomplish any thing, say, "It was not I, but the grace of God."

**NEVER FORGET THE JUDGMENT-DAY.** Keep it always in view. Frame every action in reference to its unchanging decisions.

And now may you be blessed of God, who "is able to make all grace abound towards you; that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work; being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth," through the saints, "thanksgiving to God."  
**THUS SHALL YOU MAKE THE MOST OF LIFE.**

THE  
ISLAND PLANTER.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

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A LITTLE island at the south designates the late residence of J—— M——, a man of integrity and influence, kind, amiable, and affectionate, but radically hostile to the religion of Christ. He had accumulated a handsome estate, and, though past the meridian of life, was intent on still more splendid accessions. He neglected all the ordinances of religion, and habitually desecrated the Sabbath, yet he would not interfere with the religion of others; he allowed members of his family to unite with the church, and even contributed to the support of the Gospel, though he put not himself in the way of having its truths impressed upon his own heart.

No occurrence had awakened into vigorous action his hostility to vital religion, till at length some of his early and familiar associates were arrested by the power of divine truth, and took sanctuary in the blood of atonement. The effect of this entire revolution in their whole character, instead of leading him to consideration, was rather to harden his heart and give viperous expression to its latent enmity. At times he affected pity for their delusion, and then again, contempt for their hypocrisy. And when they drew near, as new converts are wont to approach their former associates, with the tender of salvation, he indignantly repelled the overtures of mercy, and gave those who bore them, distinctly to learn, that they *must* not confer with him upon this hated subject. From their knowledge of his character, rather than goad to madness the already enraged opposer of Christ, they thought it better to let him alone, and pour out their continual prayer on his behalf in the ear of Him in whose hands are the hearts of all, that he might manifest

the exceeding riches of his grace in the salvation of their neighbor and their friend.

Meanwhile his spirit was troubled. The conflict within was severe and increasing. Conscience woke up with energy, and broke his rest. The enmity of his heart, which had till now been under partial restraint and smothered by a worldly spirit, put on a giant's strength, and assailed the church with which his former associates had united. That church was now the Mordecai in the king's gate which excited his wrath, and drove him to a desperate resolve. But instead of warring against it by direct attack, he confederated with others in the establishment of another church—a church which he had never attended, and for which he had neither partiality nor affection. His object was to “divide and conquer;” to weaken the society, which, united, could barely sustain the regular administration of the Gospel, and thus effect the removal of the pastor through whose instrumentality the church had been gathered; anticipating, as the ultimate result, the total dispersion of the flock. The edifice was erected under his superintendence. He “lavished gold out of the bag” to complete it, and when finished, he abandoned the spot, lest there also he should hear the hated doctrines of the cross.

It had been his previous custom to be present on funeral occasions. But these at length brought him so frequently into contact with the truth of God, as to be past endurance. When his neighbors fell around him, and the sympathizing group, with the officiating minister, assembled in the house of mourning, he could no longer join in the affecting solemnity, but hastened to his farms and drowned reflection by plunging deeper than ever into worldly pursuits. But God sent his plagues still nearer. Death entered his own habitation at the successive intervals of a year, till four of his children, three having been committed to the dust at an earlier period, expired in his arms. And thus did decency compel him to hear the Gospel once a year at funerals in his own house. While he mourned his dead, the living appeared more lovely than before, and he clung to them with still stronger affection. The last of the four was an only daughter, now near the stature of womanhood, and possessing those attractions which render a blooming daughter, in the eyes of a doting father, something

approaching the angelic. When she sickened, rebellious murmurings struggled within him, and in broken accents trembled upon his lips. But when death came, he had some misgivings, under the impression that God had been dealing with him in judgment—in terrible judgment, for his contempt of the Gospel.

But the shock thus given to his unbelief became still more severe, when at length a pious neighbor, in whom, as a physician and friend, he had great confidence, was laid upon a bed of death. This physician had been the associate of his earlier years, and was one of those who sought in vain to present to his mind that blessed truth which had proved effectual in his own salvation. When he heard that his friend “was sick nigh unto death,” he came not into

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate,”

that privileged spot, “quite on the verge of heaven,” but sent to inquire his views on nearing the judgment. From the messenger to whom he had given this commission, he ascertained that hope brightened as death approached, that the terror of the grave had fled apace, and that with feeble but joyous accents he could employ his expiring breath in singing,

“Hallelujah to the Lamb  
Who hath purchased my pardon.”

When J—— M—— heard this affecting narrative, he mused for a while in deep and troubled thought, and then exclaimed with unwonted energy, “Let *me* die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.” An arrow was now deeply lodged in his heart, and like a stricken deer he pined in solitude, his flesh wasting away and his strength becoming feeble as infancy. When he said, “My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint,” Job 7:13, he was constrained to add, “Then THOU scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions; so that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life.” Believing that he had committed the unpardonable sin, often did he say, “the harvest is past, and the summer is ended;” and full often did the fiery darts of the tempter pierce him in his master-passion, his love of wealth;

producing, in a state of high prosperity, the dread of impending want.

A poor maniac one day, who had escaped from a neighboring asylum, strayed in vacancy of thought near his habitation. A summer's sun was beaming on his bare head, and his uncombed locks were sporting in the breeze. The sight of an object so pitiable, with a visage excessively haggard, and with a gait, and gesture, and attire that told his ruin, deeply affected J—— M——, and made him tremble in every joint. To one standing near he said, with terrible emphasis, pointing to the maniac, "There, there is my image. But mine is the deeper misery—ruin within, ruin around, and endless ruin in prospect." It was fearful to mark the horror displayed in his countenance, and attitude, and voice. His pious wife, feeling all his wretchedness, attempted in vain to console him. His Christian friends, sympathizing in his anguish, pointed him to the hopes of the Gospel, but with no effect. When told that with God there is mercy, he responded with amazing emphasis, "With God there *was* mercy; but now it is hid from mine eyes. TWELVE YEARS AGO I might have repented—I might have believed; but now, alas, all hope is gone. I am lost—lost for ever."

Why he fixed upon "twelve years ago" as the period of mercy, I could not ascertain. He doubtless referred to some conviction, some warning, some peculiar impression of the Holy Spirit upon his heart, which he then effectually resisted and subdued. Ah, how many now in hell, and how many on their way thither, will look back to some awful "twelve years ago," or to some other remembered period, and wail out the hopeless lamentation, "I might have been saved; for to me the Gospel was offered—freely, fully, affectionately, and sincerely offered; but I deferred accepting the gracious tender. I slighted the counsel of God; I rejected, often and again, the only terms of salvation; and now I have exchanged for ever the hope of heaven for the agonies of despair!" Will the reader pause a moment to inquire whether he did not, some twelve years ago, quench the Spirit. Mercy slighted, how bitter! It stings as the scorpion—it bites as the adder—it is "hell moving beneath to meet them at their coming!"

While in this state of terrible conflict, a kind minister, whose praise is in all the churches, came in to help gather

the perishing harvest. On his arrival, the friends of J—— M—— resolved, if possible, to bring him to the sanctuary of God. "It may be," said they, "that the waters of the pool will be troubled by the angel of the covenant." In the very spirit of the men who once let down a paralytic through the tiling, Luke 5 : 19, with much entreaty they brought him to the threshold of the sanctuary, where he lingered, and for a while resisted every motive to proceed. As one in terrible apprehension of danger pauses and trembles and grows pale, so he, riveted to the spot, shook with terror, and a deadly paleness mantled his visage. At length they caused him to be seated in the assembly of worshippers, where he felt as a fallen angel amid the sons of light, "damned, but not destroyed." For a while he listened with fixed attention to the preacher's voice, but it aggravated rather than assuaged the anguish of his soul. There was nothing to console him in the provisions of a rejected Gospel. His distress, already verging on despair, was now awakened to still keener intensity, with no other prospect before him but the "fearful looking for of judgment." And when he quit the house, which he did in the midst of the services, it was with the determined resolution never again to expose himself to the searching appeals of divine truth. Weeks and months passed away, leaving him still in this state of unalleviated wretchedness. When assured that God was merciful, and could forgive—that Christ had died for sinners, even the chief, and that none were too guilty to be pardoned, he was wont to reply, "Others can be forgiven, but to me is reserved the blackness of darkness. For others there is hope, but my day of grace has closed—my sun has set in everlasting night."

An incident now occurred which throws light as well upon his general character as upon the peculiar state of his mind. A female friend, "a mother in Israel," had selected, as a balm for his wounded spirit, a little Tract which described the case of an unbeliever who was neither the kind husband, nor the affectionate father, nor the faithful friend ; who neither attended the sanctuary himself, nor suffered his family to attend ; and yet, notwithstanding his outbreking hostility to the cross of Christ, became at length a rich trophy of grace, and spent the residue of his days a consistent, humble, and happy Christian. When she read that

part of the narrative where its subject was described as playing the tyrant in his house, and shutting up the kingdom of heaven from his family, he cried, "It is not I! It is not I! That I never did—no, never. Did I, E——?" addressing his wife. "Did I ever prevent your going to the house of God? No, *never* did I. Thank God, this is not numbered among my manifold offences." And it was true, otherwise his anguish had perhaps been past endurance.

About a year after he was first awakened, on an occasion when the thronging multitudes assembled around the man of God in the open field, he was again prevailed upon to attend. And it is a delightful thought, that the promise of God to be with his people, respects alike "the broad waste" and "the city full"—when assembled under the arched canopy of heaven, or in a consecrated temple. His blessing is not confined to place, nor circumstance, nor form. Wherever he is worshipped in spirit and in truth, is the temple where his power and glory are displayed. Here again he heard the voice of the living herald publishing salvation; but to him it seemed louder than ever a message of wrath—"a savor of death unto death." He was overwhelmed by the pressure of truth upon his soul. Still, incessant supplication was offered on his behalf. He was pointed to the bleeding Lamb—to his sufferings in the garden, and his agonies on the cross; and especially was he reminded, that however intense his anguish, or insupportable his grief, there was still *One* able and willing to save, who had been "touched with the feeling of our infirmities, being in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." This was tidings which, till now, he could not understand. He seemed never before to have heard of the Saviour's *temptation* and of the Saviour's *agony*. Now, for the first time, the voice that published salvation was lovely—sweet to his ear as angel music. And though only a single ray of mercy was let into his soul, just enough to render heavenly things indistinctly perceptible, it was the bearer of relief, O how amazing! of consolation, O how unspeakable! It lighted up his face with a smile—the first smile that had played upon his lips for a score of months—a smile indicative of joy within, tranquil, not transporting; calm, not ecstatic. And from that time forth he has indulged the "hope that maketh not ashamed," and that has increased in brightness.



In his distress, he had feared that God could not forgive, and that his Christian friends could not forgive; but now he knew, from the testimony of his own conscience, that there is, in very deed, forgiveness with God for the chief of sinners, *himself* the chief; and that they who had the Spirit of Christ, could also forgive. With him old things had passed away; and "Lo, I make all things new," was a precious truth, the import of which he could realize in his blessed transition from darkness to light. Nor did he fail to ascribe to the unspeakable riches of grace his wondrous deliverance—to him more wondrous than to those who had witnessed the power of God in plucking such a brand from the burning. Need I add as the result, that there was joy in his family, in the church, and among the angels of God.

Still, he had his trials and his conflicts; nor was it till months after he had indulged the hope of forgiveness, and manifested in his conduct a childlike docility, that he could venture to take the place of a professed believer in the church of God, because, in his own estimation, he was so much less than the least of all saints as to debar him from the privilege. But at length, by the grace that bringeth salvation, he received strength to come out from the world, and avouch the Lord Jehovah his covenant God: he has since been growing in grace and the knowledge of Christ; giving by his conduct, as well as by his lips, most unequivocal evidence that he has passed from death to life.

So have we seen the enraged beast of prey held in vexatious restraints, till at length he crouched tamely at the feet of his master. And so the time will assuredly come when, there being nothing to hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain of the Lord, "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together."

Would it were with all as with the subject of this narrative. But, ah, how many copy his rebellion, but not his repentance! How many refrain from the sanctuary of God, and desecrate his Sabbath, and grasp the world with insatiable eagerness, without suspecting that they are "treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath!"

How few who pass the awful meridian of life in unbelief, are ever brought to see, confess, and forsake their sins! A conversion at fifty is a rare event.

The forbearance of God, how amazing! That sinners are suffered to live, what a wonder; and live when, year after year, they have rejected the Gospel! But it furnishes an exhibition of the endurance of God towards those who perish, and of the exceeding riches of his grace in them that are saved.

The remembrance of past mercies slighted and trampled on, what pungent reflections does it awaken! What remorse accompanies the thought, that *years ago* I might have been saved! Let the reader who has hitherto resisted the strivings of the Spirit, be spared, O God of mercy, from the deep damnation of interminable remorse. Give him repentance now, even now, before thy mercies are clean gone for ever.

How manifest that infidelity is generally the result of disobedience to the divine injunctions! It was to justify himself for his worldly spirit, and for the desecration of the Sabbath, that J—— M—— became an infidel. And infidelity and some prominent vice are usually in close and wedded connection.

What a blessing, when a sinner is the subject of Christian solicitude! J—— M—— would most probably have perished, had not a pious wife and pious neighbors hedged up his way to ruin, grappled him as in a death-struggle, and brought him in faith as well as in person, and laid him at the feet of Jesus.

What encouragement for Christians to labor and pray for the salvation of the most hardened of men! The grace that conquered such obstinacy as was displayed by the subject of this narrative, should be devoutly adored. It can reach and subdue guilt ever so crimsoned—depravity ever so inveterate.

Every sinner must one day awake to his lost condition. And if J—— M—— had such a conflict, and endured such agony here, how terrible the conflict, and how amazing the agony of all who enter unforgiven upon the retributions of eternity!

## THE

## BEGINNINGS OF EVIL.

THE influence of a single *thought, word, or action*, may be incalculable in forming the character and deciding the destiny of the soul.

1. A THOUGHT—what does it? In its unpretending character, it enters with a common train, and intrudes upon the leisure or unsuspecting relaxation of the mind. But once admitted, it may whisper rebellion, infuse moral poison into the lifeblood, inflame the passions, bewilder the brain, intoxicate, madden, destroy the soul. It *was*, at first, only *a thought*. In its maturity, it is language, speech, action, rebellion. In the end, it becomes crime and death.

It was only a thought which at first entered the mind of an angel of light, that, in the end, laid the deep foundations of hell, built its adamantine walls, forged its chains, kindled its fires, and changed the whole character of that bright angel, with others who now feel those quenchless fires, and wear those eternal chains.

A thought, whispered in the ear of our first mother, blasted Eden, and “brought death into the world, and all our woe.” How often, in the history of the human soul, is a thought made the starting-point of diverging lines, which shall run parallel with eternity, widening as they stretch their eternal course, one through fields of light, the other into deeper and darker shades.

There is no truant like the mind. Constitutionally active, it is now the constant and willing servant of an evil heart. The heart can never exercise its affections, or covet unlawful gratifications, without leading captive the mind; and unless this wandering heart be strongly confined by a stern habit of virtue, and disciplined to law, the mind be-

comes incapable of control, and walks on the boundary-line of madness and despair. "Out of the heart," says our Lord, "proceed evil thoughts," and all uncleanness.

Again, we are surrounded by *temptations*, which are all originating and sustaining their appropriate trains of thought in the mind, through the medium of the senses. By these means the heart easily fixes its affections, and becomes the subject of an ill-directed desire. It is difficult to think of an evil action without becoming contaminated with the evil itself, and a partaker of its guilt.

It is often said, we cannot help our thoughts, and are not accountable for them. But this is very far from the fact, as a little attention to the subject will readily show. Although associated trains of thought are unbroken links in the great chain of the mind's existence, binding it in its self-consciousness to its past history, yet these associations are, to a great extent, under our own control. We can, at will, dismiss one set of ideas and call up another. We dwell at pleasure on business, or religion; on worldly cares, or on the cross. This is true in the experience of all, whether in relation to internal or external sources of thought.

With this power to control the subjects of its thought, the mind is responsible for the thoughts it entertains. Although an evil thought may have intruded, unbidden and unwelcome, a vigilant and well-disciplined mind will readily detect, and promptly exclude it. The original suggestion may have been attended with no guilt. It may find admission even to a pure mind, as the history of the revolt both in heaven and Eden testifies. Guilt attaches to the mind not in the conception, but in the entertainment of the thought.

The simple admission of impure or evil thoughts may imply a state of mind not wholly innocent, where the access has been made easy by that mental lassitude and want of discipline which ever attend a state of intellectual idleness or dissipation. Here, as in every thing else, we form habits, and these habits decide our characters.

The elements and principles of all character exist in the thoughts. *They* are the essential forms, which are bodied forth in speech and action. *They* form the man, to be exhibited in the world of spirits disembodied, a transparent existence of thought, glowing with undying fires of love, or burning with the quenchless flames of passion and hate in the dark regions of hell. *This character* is formed *here*, and its starting-point is a thought, and all its lineaments are trains of thought, and all its immortal sources of pleasures or pains, are thoughts.

By indulging one train of thought, a man may become an egotist; by another, a miser; by a third, ambitious; by a fourth, sensual. By suppressing these, and entertaining an opposite class, the same man may become disinterested, liberal, public-spirited, or self-denying. He dwells, as it were, in heaven, by cherishing thoughts of heaven. He treasures up a knowledge of God by thinking of God. The soul is prepared by knowledge for the graces of the Spirit, where the mind has long been disciplined, and accustomed to dwell, in its thoughts, on divine things.

How important, then, in directing, framing, and controlling the character and eternal destiny of the soul, may be a single thought. Guard well thy thoughts. There the *true action* lies. There is the portal through which every heresy and unworthy sentiment will seek a familiar intercourse with the heart, and there lies the active agency through which all the internal sources of corruption and error will be acted out and become flagrant. Well did the apostle commend the most excellent grace of charity, when he said, "*It thinketh no evil.*"

2. Next, let me turn your attention to your habits of conversation. How insignificant is A WORD! Yet the Saviour said, "For every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." A word! What does it? In a moment of thoughtless mirth or anger, it fell from unadvised or hasty lips. It offended a friend. It unlocked the arms and sundered the bands of friendship,

dried up the kindly affections, opened the fountains of passion, hatred, malice, and revenge. Those friends are alienated. They leave the domestic circle, where the wife, the sister, the daughter, the babes mingle their influence, and bless the scene. They separate. After a season of awful preparation, they meet on some desolate spot, where justice has not arrived, and law cannot speak; where mercy is not permitted to enter; where the spirit that reigns in hell holds undisputed empire. With this spirit in their hearts, they meet. They fight. There, by the hand of one friend, the other falls. He dies. The murderer flies, a felon under the laws of God and of man. He flies—the victim of undying thought, his friend made the victim of his murderous passion. That happy family is dismembered. The wife is a widow. The children are orphans. The aged parent is bereft of his staff, and his gray hairs are brought down with sorrow to the grave. Yesterday, that house was filled with joy; every heart bounded with hilarity. To-day, the bright sun rises upon them solitary, and in their weeds. It reflects its glories dimly upon the dejected eyes of a widow and her orphans, through floods of tears. Every countenance is sad. There is public sorrow. The laws have been broken, justice is defeated and dishonored in the death of a citizen, a statesman, dishonored in his fall. What has produced this train of evils? *A word*—an unadvised, a hasty word.

The ruler of a people, the ambassador of a nation conducts the most intricate and complicated subject of litigation with another nation to an amicable and happy termination. The principles of justice are all mutually applied to the case, and conceded. A question involving great interests and lasting results is settled. But on the very eve of completion, this harmony is suddenly interrupted. Negotiation is broken off. Each assumes a hostile attitude. They are at war. History records a protracted conflict. Thousands were slain in battle. Their substance was eaten up, their wealth wasted; the land mourns, the temples of

worship are desolated, widows and orphans are multiplied, and the moral, physical, and pecuniary losses to both sides are irreparable. What mighty agent has effected this sudden change, and spread this wide desolation? It was *a word*. It involved no principle in the controversy, but, being excepted to by one party, was insisted on by the other.

A great captain once went forth to battle. He was victorious over his foes; and, elated with success, he returned in triumph with his army. The glory of his deeds had gone before him, and the people participated his joy. Every heart was glad, and every mother and sister stood to welcome the soldier at their thresholds. There was a daughter of that chieftain, the joy of her father's heart, the pride of her family, the heir to a people's gratitude, and to all her father's glory. Her young heart bounded with exultation. Her filial devotion urged her forward to greet and give the family salutation to the happy father, the victorious chief. But instead of pressing that daughter's hand with a father's love, instead of bending to receive the filial embrace of those eloquent arms with a paternal benediction, he gave the order, as appears from the history, for her execution. That threshold was stained with blood. It filled that house with mourning. It hung its chambers with curtains of black, spread consternation through the land, obscured the glory of that bright day, and has drawn tears from the eye of sympathy in every age at the recital of the story of Jephtha's daughter. And what was the cause of all this? It was a word, an unadvised word of that father.

There was once a holy man who preached before a wicked ruler, and that adulterer trembled before the preacher. But, under convictions that, suitably cherished, might have resulted in his salvation, he was induced by the wicked woman whom he had unlawfully married, to imprison, and afterwards to behead that holy man. John the Baptist was killed by order of Herod, and his head brought in a charger, and delivered to the daughter of Herodias, his brother

Philip's wife. How could he do it? It was for a hasty word.

What is *a word*? It is but breath modified by muscular action. It is a vibration of the air, that settles back quickly to its original repose. But not so with the *thought* which moved those muscles, and the *thought*, too, which is awakened by that vibration. That thought is identified with the character of the man who has uttered it; and that wave of air which was too feeble to waft a feather, has conveyed a sentiment from soul to soul, and excited a passion that may burn perhaps, or an affection that may glow to all eternity.

Words are the medium of intercommunication between immortal minds. They are the motive engines by which thoughts and feelings are communicated from heart to heart. Thus do they often become the means of binding closer the cords of friendship and love, or of alienating and imbittering the enemies of a depraved heart. "Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, who are made after the similitude of God." "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation." By a word, expressive of the sentiments of the heart, we are brought into union with the Saviour, and by a word expressive of another sentiment, we blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and transcend the limits of divine mercy! Oh, how important in its results often, is a word spoken. Truly did an apostle say, an un-governed tongue "defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell." And again, "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, that man's religion is vain."

3. Now, consider YOUR ACTIONS. It is principally important to do this in order to bring to view a part of conduct which is not commonly regarded as attended by any serious consequences—I mean that which consists in *trifles*. Great crimes we revolt at, but we sometimes forget how near the least is to the greatest, the same in kind, leading directly to others, and serving, in its measure, to disease and weaken the moral energies of the soul that entertains it. Tasting a



forbidden fruit, perhaps the eating of a common apple, ruined all our race. It was the transgression of the law. That is the most that can be said of any sin. A healthy constitution of moral habits can be attained only by a watchful care of every part of our conduct. It is vain to close our house against the thief, while one avenue is left unguarded. It is folly to order an infected ship on quarantine, while we embrace one of the infected crew in the bosom of society. Equally vain is it to regulate the great lines of our conduct, if we neglect the small points, which will "grow with our growth, and strengthen with our strength." Attainments in guilt are gradual. No man ever became a prodigy of wickedness at once.

If we examine the histories of prisons, and the annals of the gallows, we shall uniformly find that the tenants of the one, and the victims of the other, have once been harmless, irreproachable men, women, or children, and have come gradually to their end from small beginnings. In the history of human depravity, we should probably find that the confirmed drunkard was once a fashionable tippler; the remorseless thief a decent gambler; the bold blasphemer an idle talker; the dishonest spendthrift one who began with a restricted profusion; and the exhausted profligate might be traced back to a conflict of conscience, where he consented for once to sin, and resolved never to repeat the commission of the crime.

It is melancholy to hear from the haunts of wickedness and excess, the story of those who, wasted by disease, yield at last a remaining skeleton to the hands of the surgeon for dissection, as the only and scant remuneration for his professional attendance. The wretched victim of seduction, now the discarded subject of a murdered reputation, once blushed at the whisper of reproach, and shuddered at the thought of impurity. The hardened and emaciated debauchee was once a youth, who listened to the counsels of a pious mother, and shrunk from the "way of the strange woman." The bankrupt, whose midnight revels have wasted

his estate and impoverished his family, will tell you that he commenced his career at a decent card-party, and only staked his change to give an interest to the game. The expiring drunkard, in his rags and wretchedness, will admit that he began at the social board, where gayety led to excessive mirth, and mirth to intoxication. The bold blasphemer, brought to reflection, will confess that he first trifled with sacred things in a frolic, and then profaned the name of God without remorse. The wretch, whose scathed and seared visage shows already the inward malice of a spirit damned, perhaps twenty years before was a father's pride, smiling in a mother's arms, furnishing to the pencil of the painter, or the fancy of the poet, the original picture from which he drew his portrait of bliss and innocence in Eden. And the apostate, now branded and excommunicated, is the man who, a few years ago, wept at the sacramental table, but from mistaken policy or irresolution, yielded to popular custom or private convenience, still resolved to maintain his hope, now withered and dead. Truly, that man only is safe, who "abstains from all appearance of evil."

I can now, in conclusion, only direct your vigilance towards the dangers which arise from three sources, namely, from *the company you keep, the business you engage in, and the subjects of thought you entertain*. I solemnly say, then, separate from your companionship all those whose principles, example, or conversation, are injurious or unprofitable. Abandon at once, and for ever, all business which you cannot pursue with safety to the cultivation and maintenance of a high religious character. And admit no subjects of thought, cherish no mental associations, which sensualize or degrade the soul. These rules, faithfully applied, may make a great change in your affairs, and require great sacrifices; but be assured they will also be attended with great results, whose record may be read by you in heaven instead of hell.

# LIVE FOR THE WORLD.

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“BY THE GRACE OF GOD, I WILL HENCEFORTH LIVE FOR THE WORLD.”

THAT is a strange and bold avowal. Very few men form such a purpose, and still fewer live according to it. A man ought to be careful how he promises; for “it is better not to vow, than to vow and not pay.” To act agreeably to such a purpose would make one very singular. It will also be expensive. I shall not be able to lay up much, if any thing. Neither shall I be able to call any thing my own. And I shall be worn out with constant care and labor for the benefit of others. I shall not have a day for myself in the whole year. What did I say? “*I will henceforth live for the world?*” The world is very large. This is a great deal to undertake. I must give my reasons for such a resolution.

The fact that *God made the world* is a reason why I should feel an interest in it according to his design in creating it. I will regard the operation of his hands. The same God who made me, made all men. Why should I not seek the good of all? Having a common Creator and Father of all, we ought to have a common interest.

*All men are mortal, yet immortal.* They will soon be dead, yet shall they live for ever. Time is but an introduction to eternity. Life is the first link in immortality. Men shall henceforth exist as long as the God that made them. This is the destiny of all. All men, therefore, are worth living for. Jesus Christ, who knew the worth of souls, declared *one* of more value than all the treasures of earth. How can I then decline living for a world of souls?

The world *needs help*, for the whole of it lies in wickedness. Men’s dwellings are on fire, and they are sunk into

sound sleep. They have lost their way. They have lost their vision. They have a race to run, yet they cannot walk. Unless they hear, their souls shall not live, and yet their ears are dull of hearing. 'Tis enough to break one's heart to see how much is justly required of men, and yet how unprepared they are to meet any requirement—to think how much they have to do, and how long and late they are in beginning any duty. "The whole creation groaneth until now." Its wailings and its crimes wrung the heart of the incarnate God. Unless its present tribes be speedily saved, they will for ever writhe under the fell gnaw of the undying worm. I know not that the cry of despair has in it one more melting or piercing note, than has the cry of the perishing millions of earth. Necessities could not be more urgent.

Besides, in all the earth are *some souls willing to be helped*. Everywhere the sighing of the prisoner is heard, and to him the preaching of "the acceptable year of the Lord" would be music. The shivering Greenlander, the fair Georgian, the bloody Tartar, the caste-ridden Hindoo, the inhabitant of the freezing and of the burning zones, the wild man and the polished citizen in many lands,

"Call us to deliver  
Their souls from error's chain."

I will live for the world because *many are living against it*. There is "that old serpent the Devil, and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world." And besides him, "many deceivers are entered into the world." Wherever on all the earth there are souls, there also are wicked men and wicked angels plotting and essaying their ruin. Doth Satan accuse them before God? I will intercede with God for them. Do wicked men disseminate writings and sentiments to draw them down to the pit? I will send them books and speak to them words whereby they may be saved. Shall the malicious never tire in deeds and plans of darkness and death, and shall I grow weary in works of love and devices of

mercy? Doth Satan go to and fro, seeking whom he may devour? Then I will imitate Him who, bruising Satan under him, "went about doing good." Where there is much zeal for evil, indifference to good is a great crime.

*Many* of those whose care for others might avail, *live wholly unto themselves*; therefore I must do my part in filling up this lack of service. If others hold back, I will go forward. If others linger, why should I become a pillar of salt? Because there was no man like-minded, who would naturally care for the Ephesian converts, therefore Timothy must be their pastor. If others *would* not, he *must* care for them. All the good that is done in this world is done by a few. By the grace of God, I will be one of the little company.

Moreover, God "hath *made of one blood all nations of men* to dwell on the face of the earth." If all are of *one* blood, it is as great an honor to save the soul of a slave as that of a prince. All men are bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh. And no man ever yet hated his own flesh. But he who does not love, hates; and he who loves all he does know, loves all he does not know. And "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God."

I will live for all, because *all are my neighbors*. So Christ Jesus has taught me by a most beautiful parable. Difference in manners, complexion, age, rank, fortune, nation, politics, or religion, shall never chill my charity. Every sinner who is not in hell is my neighbor. If I can reach him in no other way, I may by prayer. I must love my neighbor as myself, or dwell with everlasting burnings.

To live for all would *make me like the best men*. One said, "Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end—rivers of water run down my eyes, because they keep not thy law." Another said, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Another saw an angel with an inkhorn at his side, putting

a mark on all that did sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the land. Afterwards, when the middle wall of partition was broken down, Paul said, "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is offended, and I burn not? I will very gladly spend and be spent for you, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." Richard Baxter said, "There is nothing in the world that lies so heavy upon my heart, as the thought of the miserable nations of the earth. I cannot be affected so much with the calamities of my own relations, or of the land of my nativity, as with the case of the heathen, Mahommedan, ignorant nations of the earth. No part of my prayers is so deeply serious, as that for the infidel and ungodly world." Dr. Nevins, as he was falling asleep in Jesus, said, "I would like to have it known, that the nearer I get to heaven, the dearer is the cause of missions to my heart."

"Oh that on me with rays divine  
His countenance would turn;  
I too would then arise and shine,  
Arise and shine and burn!"

To keep my resolutions, will make me *like God*; for "he is not willing that any should perish, and he will have all men to be saved. God so loved *the world*, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Shall I not be "a follower of God," especially when commanded to be? Did God love the world, and shall I love none but myself? Rather let my benevolence run round the earth. If God gave his Son, shall I withhold the fruit of my body? And if with his Son he freely giveth all things, then

"I'll love my God with zeal so great,  
That I will give him all."

I will henceforth live for the world, because I have *hitherto lived very much to unworthy ends and objects*. Much of my time has been spent in sin, much in folly, much in

unproductive efforts to do good. "The time past may suffice for" these things. The time to come I will devote, little as it may be, to the glory of God in the salvation of the world.

I will keep my resolution, because *Christ prayed for the salvation of the world*; yea, he is in heaven "from henceforth expecting" until all the earth shall bow to his gracious sceptre, and all the dying be filled with his saving health. If my Lord prays for it, shall not I? If he expects it, may I not dare to look for it?

There is sufficient *merit in Christ to save all*; then will I seek the salvation of all. "The Lamb of God taketh away the sin of the world. He is a propitiation for the sins of the whole world." If Christ has made such ample provision, I cannot keep silence until all know it. I must seek to bring all to Christ, whom he is ready and able to save.

*God calls on all to be saved.* "Ho, every one that thirsteth." "Whosoever will"—"Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Who dares to limit this invitation? "Let him that heareth" it, "say, Come!" If Jehovah calls all, I will call all too, and I will call on Jehovah in behalf of all.

It is promised, that the *heathen shall be Christ's inheritance*, and the uttermost parts of the earth his possession. Yea, God hath sworn, and he will not repent, "that all the earth shall be filled with his glory." Of this none may safely doubt, for "the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." I may therefore properly live for an object which shall assuredly be gained. My purpose shall be accomplished in the fulfilment of God's word and oath. There is no fanaticism in believing all that God has spoken and sworn to, for his word and oath are "two immutable things."

I must act on my resolution, for the only *commission* under which I may attempt any thing demands the *most enlarged action*. The very texts which authorize any efforts to save souls, command to "preach the Gospel to every

creature—to the end of the world.” He who wilfully acts on but half his commission, is unfit to hold it.

Unless such be my constant aim, there will be a sad *discrepancy between my prayers and my life*. Every day I ask that God’s will may “be done on earth as it is in heaven”—that there may be rebellion in no part of earth. Unless my benevolent plans and efforts correspond to this prayer, I am a hypocrite. And unless I sincerely *use* the Lord’s prayer now, he will not *hear* my prayer in the day of my distress.

Acting thus, I shall best secure *my own religious comfort and growth*. “The liberal soul deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. The liberal soul shall be made fat. He that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.” Much exercise of religious graces will impart great vigor, which is but another name for great happiness. Walking in the ways of God’s commands, is soon followed by leaping and praising God. To work righteousness is to rejoice.

I will live for the world, because in this way alone can I *avoid a twofold curse*. The people shall curse him who withholds corn in the time of famine; and shall not they curse him who withholds the bread of life from the famishing, the cup of the wine of consolation from the dying, the water of life from lips parched with the fever of sin, and “goodness from such as are bound in affliction and iron?” Yea, God himself will send a curse, the bitter curse of Me-roz, on all who come not to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

I will take large views, because *if I attempt but little, I shall probably do less*. Even if small plans are *fully* accomplished, and small expectations *fully* realized, but few are benefited. My soul must dilate with love until it comprehends the human race. Then, if I attempt much, I shall probably do more. Nothing is more common than for men of expanded views and warm hearts to accomplish



more than they at first thought of. Read the history of every modern device of love. "We are able, if we think so," was the motto under which the whole world was conquered to the sceptre of the Cæsars. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," is a far better and more potent motto, by which we shall subdue the earth to Christ the King.

I should be *more criminal* for declining such a resolution *than my fathers were*, for "all things are now ready." We have the books, the translations, the missionaries, the ships, the facilities of every kind. Even political changes are favorable. Every invention is auxiliary. Whatever is done for the world prospers. The most sottish and barbarous, the most cruel and superstitious, are proved to be within the renovating grasp of God's benevolence. A nation is wellnigh born in a day. The ploughman overtakes the reaper. Before we call, God answers; and while we are yet speaking, he hears. The prophecies are big with unborn blessings. Even the heathen are expecting a change. Every system of error is in its dotage, and is sinking under accumulated infirmities. And the sound of a going is heard in the tops of the mulberry-trees.

I will live for all, because *all must go to the judgment*. God will "judge the world in righteousness. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ." As we shall all have a Judge, we shall all need an Advocate. What would I not do or suffer in the last great day, if thereby I might save one soul of those on whom I shall see the vials of wrath poured out? I will now do and suffer all I can, that may tend to save souls, ere it is too late. A soul saved now, will be saved for ever.

For these reasons I conclude, that my resolution, though to many it seem strange and bold, is not rash. It can be justified. There are the best reasons for it, and many of them. I have assigned more than twenty. Others can add to the number. My conscience is satisfied; yea more,

she is firmly and sweetly bound. Thanks be to God for putting such a thought into my mind, and for giving me grace to shape it into a solemn purpose.

And now, lest I should spoil the whole, I will record what I mean. I mean, that I will not be selfish, idle, taking narrow views, and having narrow feelings. I mean, that I will not live for pleasure, for gain, for ease, for honor. I mean, that I will not delude myself by romantic notions of some good I may do, I know not how. My charity shall *begin* at home—in my family, and with my neighbors; for if I love not my brother whom I have seen, how can I love my brother whom I have not seen? But my charity shall not *end* at home. I will day and night seek the salvation of others more remote. Yea, I will inquire for avenues of sending light and love to the ends of the earth. I will inform myself of the wants and miseries of the world I will cordially listen to every appeal in behalf of every good object. I will then do all I can, by money, time, influence, prayer, example, and personal effort. This is what I mean by my resolution.

“Lord, can a feeble, helpless worm  
Fulfil a task so hard?  
Thy grace must all the work perform,  
And give the free reward.”

O for grace to redeem my pledge. Lord Jesus, increase my faith, enlarge my heart, fortify my determination, be thou my strength, out of weakness make me mighty, let me not basely fail and flee: thine shall be the glory through eternal ages.

## DON'T PUT IT OFF.

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Most men agree that something must be *done* in this life. It is not enough to *know*, and *purpose*, and *promise* something. It must be *done*.

Nor is it generally doubted but *every man* has something to do. Every man must die, and every man must give account of himself to God. Should not every man, then, prepare to die and be judged?

Nor is it impossible for us to learn *what* we must do. In all essential things our duty is exceedingly plain. To forsake wicked ways, and words, and thoughts; to repent of all sin; to believe with the heart in Jesus Christ; to be led by the Holy Spirit; to love God's name, people, Sabbath, word, and worship; to be humble, meek, gentle, contented, forgiving, and holy—are duties so plain that few intend to leave this world without attending to them. Men are kept from embracing religion by deferring it. To such I say, DON'T PUT IT OFF.

Don't put it off—for, decide as you may, *others will be likely to follow your example*. When Zaccheus, and Lydia, and the jailer embraced Christ, salvation came to their households. Christ notices it as a mark of peculiar guilt in the Pharisees not to repent, when they *saw* the publicans and harlots believing John. "One sinner destroyeth much good." No man perishes alone.

Don't put it off—for *the appropriate business of time can not be done in eternity*. "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose." It would be as wise to expect harvest in midwinter, as to suppose that the next life would afford opportunity for doing the business of this. This life is in order to that which is to come. This is the seed-time; the next is the harvest. Now we run a race: if successfully, we shall in the next world wear the unfading crown; if unsuccessfully, we shall fall into shame and everlasting contempt.

*The work to be done is great*. A soul is to be saved, countless sins are to be pardoned, vicious propensities eradi-

cated, bad habits broken up, good habits established, Jesus Christ to be formed in the soul, God to be pleased, the fear of death to be expelled, hell escaped, and heaven won. In building the ark, Noah did a great work. This work, "the mighty work of life," is greater.

*Time is short.* Like a post, time travels night and day ; like a weaver's shuttle, it flies so fast that it cannot be seen ; like the shadow of a cloud falling on the earth, it goes on the wings of the wind ; like a vapor, it vanishes, none can tell how.

" A point of time, a moment's space  
Removes you to yon heavenly place,  
Or shuts you up in hell."

*Life is uncertain.* One man died in the midst of a demonstration, another in the midst of an argument, another reading the newspaper, another walking in his garden, another laughing at a ludicrous picture. Many fall asleep and never awake in time. Many, in health one hour, are at God's bar the next. Rest not thy soul's eternal well-being on such an uncertainty.

*Now is the best time.* Even if you should live half a century, you will have no time so good as the present.

*There is much at stake.* A deathless soul, an eternity of bliss or woe, the withering frown or life-giving smile of Jehovah are concerned. No cherub or archangel can compute the worth of that which you risk by delay.

*It may become disagreeable.* Religion thought of, but not embraced, will make you very unhappy ; languidly or reluctantly attended to, nothing is more unprofitable. Its first and great demand is, *Give me thy heart.* Until this is done, the ways of wisdom are irksomeness. Hope deferred, makes the heart sick. Religion deferred, is death to the soul.

*Religion delayed, is religion rejected.* To postpone the matter a day, is to postpone it indefinitely. To hesitate about receiving Christ, is to despise him. All pretences of obeying God by and by, are hypocritical. To yield *immediately* to his claims, is as much a duty as to yield at all. Who would think him sincere, who, in promising amendment in habits of honesty, or sobriety, or truth, should propose to begin his reformation a month hence ?

*The difficulty of your salvation is continually increasing.*

Satan is always adding new chains or riveting old ones on all his captives. The world entwines itself around the soul by a new fold every day. The unregenerate heart is always waxing worse and worse. Especially does delay make it dreadfully hard. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, *harden not your heart.*"

*You will grieve the greatest goodness.* To requite the Father's love with coldness, the Son's compassion with indifference, and the Spirit's wooings with resistance, is to be a vile ingrate. Call me ungrateful, said a *heathen*, and you can call me nothing worse.

*The Bible warrants no delay.* "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." In a matter involving eternal interests, be not so daring as to act without scriptural warrant.

*Don't put it off, lest you be lost.* None ever got to heaven by delaying the surrender of their hearts to God. Waiting to become better or less wicked, never does any good. Delay is disobedience, disobedience is sin, and sin can never fit the soul for being saved.

*Don't put it off, and you shall be saved.* This was the way in which the thief on the cross, Saul of Tarsus, and all the redeemed have come to Christ. Yea, before the coming of Christ, this was the way men were converted, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. *I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments.*" Thus did David, and success attended his holy speed. They who hasten after another god, multiply their sorrows. But they who hasten after the true God, shall have more abundant joys than sinners have when their corn and wine abound. They shall be saved from sin, and guilt, and hell, and raised to heaven, and holiness, and eternal bliss.

*Don't put it off; for God, who now waits to be gracious, may withdraw his Spirit.* Christ says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me."

"Admit him ere his anger burn,  
His feet, departed, ne'er return:  
Admit him, or the hour's at hand  
You'll at his door rejected stand."

God's Spirit, on whose agency your salvation depends, will not always strive with man. Had not Bartimeus called just when he did, and earnestly as he did, he would have remained blind for life. The opportunity of repentance, once gone, is gone for ever.

*Don't put it off, and you will never regret it ; but delay will, sooner or later, fill you with the most poignant grief.* "I am dying," said one who has just left the world, "but I am happy. I am going to Jesus. Thanks to God, who did not let me put it off." "I am dying," said a youth recently, "and I am going to hell. Tell them all from me, that it is a dreadful thing to die a sinner. Tell them not to put it off, as I have done." Very recently another said, "In the midst of the terrors of dissolution and despair, I say, God will punish the wicked. O, if I had taken good advice when it was given me—but now it is too late." Yield now to God, "lest thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me." Pull not away the shoulder, nor refuse to hearken. More mournful words are not to be found than those which delaying sinners will use in the end: "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." Oh, what words!—NOT SAVED—WE ARE NOT SAVED!

Dear reader, decide. Decide now. How long will you hesitate? Let not thy *death* decide thy case. *Choose* life, that you may live. God invites, hell threatens, conscience urges, thy soul is perishing. Oh, DON'T PUT IT OFF.

THE  
 TIME NOT COME.

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WHEN the Jews were carried away to Babylon, their temple, the most splendid building in the world, was laid in ruins. After the captivity, they were commanded by God to rebuild it, and to restore the rites of the ceremonial worship. Accordingly, they commenced the work with a zeal so earnest and vigorous as to promise its speedy completion. Being engrossed, however, at first by the opposition of their enemies, and afterwards by their own selfish pursuits, they began to be satisfied that God's house should *remain* waste; and not only so, but glad of any pretence by which they might plausibly excuse their guilty negligence in omitting to rebuild it. They did not positively *refuse* to engage in the work: *this* they hardly *dared* to do; but they endeavored to satisfy their consciences with the quieting and plausible plea, "*The time is not yet come—the time that the Lord's house should be built.*"

Alas, the children of Judah are not the only ones chargeable with the folly and the guilt of *postponing duty*. The same procrastinating spirit *still* exists, all around us, to the injury of the cause of Christ—to the ruin of multitudes of souls. There are many, very many duties, which we admit *are* duties, which we dare not refuse *ever* to perform, and yet which we are prone to *defer* to some future season; neglecting them *for the present*, on the plea that we will attend to them *hereafter*; saying to ourselves, in the language of a self-deceiving heart, "*The time is not yet come.*"

Let me fix your attention, for a few moments, on some INSTANCES *evincing this spirit*, and on a few of the many MOTIVES *which should urge you to avoid it*. It is on this plea that,

1. Multitudes of the impenitent are *deferring the great work of personal salvation*. You not only *acknowledge*, but to some extent *feel*, that the concerns of eternity are of the highest importance. Perhaps you are the child of pious

parents, or surrounded by Christian friends. You often think, and hear the Gospel, or read the word of God. And you know that you *must* be converted, or you can never see the kingdom of heaven. The truth is impressed on your conscience by sober reflection, by affliction, by the prospect of death, or by some alarming providence. At such seasons, when God is very near, it is not unusual for you to resolve that you will forsake your sins—that you will attend, in serious earnest, to your soul. You feel that this is right, and wise, and best; that your present course is at war with reason, and gratitude, and conscience, and all your better feelings, and all your nobler prospects; that you *must* and *will* forsake it, and that delay is folly, presumption, madness, death! And yet you rest satisfied *now*, with the resolution *to do in future*. You will not forswear religion for ever: you will merely *postpone it just for the present*. And having thus soothed the voice of conscience, and compromised with the pressure of instant obligation, you are satisfied to dismiss the subject till some more convenient season: *satisfied!* as if it were any less hazardous to *neglect* heaven, than to *reject* it—to *disregard* damnation, than to *brave* it.

So it may be with you, if *in youth*. You often feel that religion is *important*, and important *now*. The promises to the young sound powerfully on your ears. Conscience urges you to repentance, or upbraids you for its neglect. But your heart is averse from duty and from God, and is fixed with relentless, though perhaps not thoughtless grasp on folly, and self, and sin. You are not willing to renounce Christ *for ever*, but you would be excused *for the present*—for a few more years—for a little more of worldly and sinful enjoyment—to rivet still faster upon your own soul the shackles of despair and death.

And so it may be, if you are grown up to *manhood*. Now, business, ambition, pleasure, wealth, may have taken the place of youthful folly, but, alas, to the continued exclusion of religion from your present acceptance. There are times when you are obliged to think—when your aspirations flit for a little season above the world; when conscience, now in whispers, and now in thunders, chides you for living in sin; and when death, and judgment, and your own future destiny, are pressed upon your mind with intense and mourn-



ful weight. And what is your refuge? Do you repent, and fly to Christ? No; you do not even *promise* to do this *now*. You merely resolve that when this or that pressing business is over; when so much is accumulated; when this plan is perfected, or that end gained, *then* you *will* seek the favor of God; not thinking, heedless mortal, that before you reach that point, death may fix an impassable gulf between it and your immortal soul. Thus you go on from year to year, perhaps to old age, still evading the claims of conscience and of God; wasting probation, steeling your soul against offered mercy, and gathering wrath, and closing your eyes to the prospect, while you madly rush on to the certainty of endless woe. To all the overtures of reason, and conscience, and God, your reply is, "*The time is not yet come.*" And that cry you seem likely to continue till your voice is hushed in death, and you learn the extent of your folly in the bitterness of despair. While replying to every heavenly demand and invitation, "the time has not come," beware lest you find in your own fearful experience, that the time *has* come which has sealed your endless doom, and made you an outcast from God for ever. This plea also,

2. Extends its influence more or less to many of the *duties of the Christian life*. In almost every department of duty, instead of regarding *obstacles* as *designed* for the trial of your sincerity and faith, and instead of resolving in God's strength to overcome them, not by *delay*, but by *immediate effort*, you are prone to wait for their *removal*—prone to imagine that you will be better fitted, or more disposed for effort in *future* than you *now* are. The impenitent are to be warned, or the erring Christian reproved, and from fear of giving offence, you defer the duty. The cause of benevolence is to be advanced, or the tide of guilt to be rolled backward, but you are content for the present to leave the work to others. The duty requires *time*, and selfishness suggests that it cannot be spared from business. It demands *expense*, and avarice whispers, "wait a little longer, till your riches are increased." It needs *united effort*, and from dread of opposition, or reproach, or singularity, you suffer the cause of truth to languish, till all shall be of one mind, which can never be expected.

So too with numberless specific duties to yourself, to friends, to society, and to God. You are neglectful of fam-

ily or secret prayer, of self-examination or self-denial; your example is inconsistent, your spirit unhumbled, your conduct marked by austerity or folly—and you rarely or never speak for God and religion to those who are neglecting or despising both.

And now I ask, as in God's name, "Are you living as in soberness and truth you know you ought to live?" You admit that you are not. "And when," I ask, "do you intend to change your course; when live the life of the devoted Christian; when be more prayerful, and zealous, and self-denying, and holy; when make growth in grace and the highest usefulness the great end of your being; when be more spiritually minded, more diligent in self-examination, more decidedly the friend of God, more conformed to the example, and imbued with the spirit of Jesus?" Alas, the answer of your conduct is, "*The time is not yet come.*" And thus temptation adds strength to her grasp, and the prince of darkness power to his chains; and you are preparing yourself either to be *scourged* back to duty by some fearful judgment, or to be *left of God* to slumber on in hardness of heart and negligence of duty, till you are waked by the fires of perdition, to find that your hope was that of the hypocrite, which shall perish like the "spider's web," when God shall take away the soul.

3. This spirit also very frequently operates *to prevent full preparation for death*. Whoever you are, reader, you are not as fully prepared for death as you could wish to be. You look forward to the hour when the king of terrors shall call you hence—when friends shall surround you in weeping silence—when strength shall be weakness—when paleness shall gather upon your brow, or fever scorch your cheek—when the brain shall throb with its last agony, and the heart with its last pulsation—when the spirit shall be torn from its tenement of flesh, and borne away to the judgment. You look forward to these things, and if impenitent, you shrink back with shuddering dread; and even if a Christian, you think it would be well to be more estranged from the world than you now are, before that hour shall come. You resolve that you *will* be. But still you put off the evil day, and treat death as far distant, and think all men mortal but yourself. Though commanded by Christ to be *ever* ready, as you know not the hour of his appear-

ance, you still persuade yourself that "*the time is not yet come.*" Like the evil servant, you say, "My Lord *delayeth* his coming;" and while, in consequence, you delay preparing to meet him, he comes, and finds you unprepared. Instead of having your loins girded about, and your lamps trimmed and burning, you are as much engrossed in business and the world, as though "eternity" were stamped upon all around you, and *you* had a title to its full possession.

Such are a few of the many *instances* which may illustrate the evil influence of procrastination in matters of religion. Let me now present some of the *MOTIVES* which urge you to avoid it.

1. The spirit of procrastination *is directly opposed to the plain commands of God.* The entire scope of Scripture injunctions is, that you attend to duty *at once*, and *without delay.* "Seek *first* the kingdom of God." "Work while it is called *to-day.*" "*To-day*, if you will hear his voice." "*Now* is the accepted time." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, *do it with thy might*; for there is no work, nor device, nor wisdom, nor knowledge in the grave, whither thou goest." These injunctions are not only binding *in general*, but they are to be carried out and obeyed in all the *particulars* of life. If trials and difficulties beset your path, still the command is unchanged. You are *at once* to deny yourself, and take up the cross and follow Christ. *Whatever* your condition, *that is* the post of duty assigned you by God, and *in it* he calls upon you *now* to serve and glorify him: if in poverty, by contentment; if afflicted, by patience; if bereaved, by submission; if persecuted, by meekness; if opposed, by firmness; if injured, by forgiveness; if tempted, by denying yourself for his sake. Nor can these duties be performed at other times, and when your circumstances are changed. They must be attended to *now*; and to defer them to some future and uncertain season, is a virtual refusal to perform them at all—is direct opposition to the plain command of God.

2. To put off to the future the duties that *now* claim your attention, *implies a lurking dislike to the duties themselves.* Whatever affords you delight, you are eager at once to seek or do. You give yourself no rest till it is gained or accomplished. If the hearts of the Jews had been fixed,

bent, set upon building the temple, they would never have urged that the *time* was not come. And if your heart is fixed supremely upon doing the will of God, you will never plead for delay. With you, as with them, *postponement* of duty must flow from secret *dislike* to it—from alienation of heart from God, which is deeply offensive in his sight.

3. Such delay *will subject you to many inevitable and irretrievable losses*. Time is wasted, which can return no more—grace is wasted, for it is neglected or abused to your own hurt. And opportunities of doing and getting good, are recklessly squandered for ever. You delay the reformation of little errors in conduct, and soon you are marked by the community as an inconsistent Christian. You neglect for a season the religious education of your children, and before you are aware they are fixed in wickedness. You neglect to control them, to train them to obedience, and soon they have grown up with turbulent, and unsubmitive, and unkind tempers, to be sources of constant unhappiness to themselves, and of pitying regret to others. You hesitate *now* to stem the inroads of infidelity and Sabbath-breaking, and soon they gather boldness, and walk abroad with reckless hand and unblushing front. You postpone the discipline of your own spirit, and soon you are known as the creature of wayward and sinful impulse—of fitful and useless effort. You allow the presence of impure thoughts, and soon your soul is a living brothel. You indulge for a little the risings of *envy*, and soon your bosom is an earthly hell. You defer attending to religion till some future hour, but ere it arrives, death has stopped your breath, and consigned your body to the sepulchre and your soul to perdition. You put off the commencement of serious effort to grow in grace, and in a little while your standard of Christian character becomes fixed, and that at an elevation far below your privilege and your duty. You hesitate to admonish that erring Christian, and soon he goes on to disgrace his profession. You delay to warn that thoughtless sinner, and soon he dies and his soul is lost; and as he is tossed through a long eternity upon the billows of burning wrath, he may for ever curse you, as the guilty cause of his ruin and woe.

Now, in all these things you did not *intend* to incur such immense, irretrievable loss. You did not intend to neglect

effort *for ever*. You merely said to the demands of duty, "*The time is not yet come*;" and thus you have brought upon yourself results of woe, which will either aggravate your anguish in the world of despair, or the remembrance of which, if there were grief in heaven, would cause you to weep bitter, scalding tears, even before the throne of God.

Would you avoid such results? Then let me urge you to *do*, and to do *at once*, and to do *with your might*, whatever your hands find, and your conscience, or the word of God, commands you to do, for your God, for yourself, for a world lying in wickedness.

CHRISTIAN—*If you are delaying duty*, you are living at war with profession, and privilege, and interest, and conscience. You are taking the most effectual course to destroy your comfort, and disgrace your profession, and limit your usefulness, and blight your hopes. Remember, I beseech you, that the eye of God, and the vows of God are upon you. Waste not, then, your only day of usefulness, your only day of action for Christ your Redeemer, and for man your brother: waste it not in idle, sinful, ruinous delay, when upon every passing moment are hanging the glory of God, and the destiny of immortal souls.

YE TOO WHO ARE THOUGHTLESS IN SIN, I beseech you, be warned to awake to the claims of God—to the interests of your own souls. Trifle no longer with your deathless spirits—no longer with time—time, which is so uncertain in continuance, so brief in duration, so swift in its flight, so soon at its end. Waste, O waste not your probation; the turning point, the crisis of your existence; the only season in which sin can be pardoned, God's favor be secured, hell be escaped, and heaven be won. Soon it will all be gone; and if misimproved, you will be lost—for ever lost. And O, how indescribably keen the reflection, as you look back from the shores of a wretched eternity, to see that on earth every means of salvation was wasted upon you—wasted, to your own endless ruin—wasted, because when God was calling you to the skies, your answer to every overture of mercy was, "*The time is not yet come.*" How bitter in perdition will be the reflection, that *your time*, your *time of salvation never came*; and that then *the time of God's wrath came*, and that you are sinking under its endless, its ever-

gathering weight, and that from it there *is*, there *can be no escape!*

You have gone, with a company of friends, down into the crater of a slumbering volcano. Presuming on the continuance of its present quiet and stillness, you all recline yourselves to rest, and soon fall asleep. But the slumbers of the flaming gulf beneath are suddenly broken. Its rumblings are heard—its vapors and smoke ascend—its suffocating heat is felt. Your friends are waked from their sleep—they see their danger, and they rush to rouse you, with them to flee for life. But their efforts are in vain. You *will* have a little more sleep, a little more slumber; and the result is, that your companions escape, while you are left to perish. How fearful your situation! And as you should sink in the fiery waves, O how would you curse that love of ease which led you to indulge yourself a little longer—that delaying spirit which led you to sleep on, when the billows of burning death were rising, and gathering, and dashing to overwhelm you!

But what is ruin like this, to the ruin of a lost soul? Nothing—less than nothing. The time is coming when even the volcano's flames would be a refuge—when to be crushed by rocks and mountains would be a mercy—a mercy to be desired: desired in vain! Yes, in vain; for, to those who neglect the great salvation, there will then be no escape from the overwhelming wrath of God and of the Lamb. *To-day* then, reader, I entreat, I beseech you, awake to duty. Fly to Jesus: seek his pardoning mercy before it be for ever too late. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish from the way when his wrath is kindled but a little."

"So shall that curse remove,  
By which the Saviour bled,  
And the last awful day shall pour  
His blessings on your head!"

MEMOIR

OF

DR. JOHN D. GODMAN,

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY, AUTHOR OF "ANATOMICAL ILLUSTRATIONS," ETC.

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FROM AN INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

BY THOMAS SEWALL, M. D.,

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY IN THE COLUMBIAN COLLEGE,  
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

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THERE are occasions when it is proper, when it is profitable, to pause in the career of life, not only to mark the progress of things, but to observe the character of men, and more especially of men distinguished for eminent success or signal failure, that we may emulate the examples of the one, and shun the misfortunes of the other. The present is such an occasion; and if properly improved, cannot fail to instruct as well as to gratify.

There has recently appeared among us a man, so remarkable for the character of his mind and the qualities of his heart; one whose life, though short, was attended with such brilliant displays of genius, and such distinguished success in the study of the medical profession and the kindred sciences, that the history of his career, and the prominent traits of his character as exhibited in the important events of his life, constitute one of the noblest examples of the age.

PROFESSOR GODMAN was born in the city of Annapolis, Maryland. He was early deprived of the fostering care which flows from parental solicitude and affection. His mother died before he was a year old, and his father did not long survive. On the death of his mother, he was placed

under the care of an aunt, then residing at Wilmington, in the state of Delaware—a lady who, from the superiority of her intellect and education, as well as the sweetness of her disposition and her elevated piety, was eminently qualified to unfold, impress, and direct the youthful mind. Under such culture he received the first rudiments of his education and his earliest moral impressions. His alphabet was taught him upon the knee of his grandmother, and before he was two years old he was able to read in the Psalms.

At the age of four his aunt removed from Delaware to Chestertown, upon the eastern shore of Maryland, and here she first placed the interesting orphan at school. He had already become the idol of the family, but now he manifested such a precocity of intellect, such a fondness for books, and an aptitude to learn, and withal evinced so much sensibility, frankness, and sweetness of disposition, that he gained the affection and excited the admiration of all. His reverence for truth was such, even from his infancy, that he was never known to equivocate. At the age of six his aunt died, and he was left without any suitable protector or guide, exposed to the adversities of fortune and the snares of an unfriendly world. But it appears that the moral and religious impressions which had already been made upon his mind, though obscured for a time, were never wholly obliterated. During his last illness he was often heard to speak in raptures of his aunt, and say, “If I have ever been led to do any good, it has been through the influence of her example, instruction, and prayers.” His father had lost the greater part of his estate before his death, and that which remained never came into the hands of his children. Young Godman, therefore, was early taught to rely on his own talents and industry. In this situation he was indented an apprentice to a printer in the city of Baltimore; but the occupation was not congenial to his taste, and after a few years he left the business in disgust, and at the same time



entered as a sailor on board the flotilla, which was then, the fall of 1814, stationed in the Chesapeake Bay. At the close of the war, having arrived at the age of fifteen, he was permitted to pursue the inclination of his own mind, and immediately commenced the study of medicine. So indefatigable was he in the acquisition of knowledge, that he left no opportunity of advancement unimproved, and notwithstanding the deficiencies of his preparatory education, he pressed forward with an energy and perseverance that enabled him to rival all his fellows, and graduated before he was twenty years old, in the University of Maryland, with the highest honors.

He settled for a short time in the practice of medicine ; but was soon called to the professorship of anatomy in the Medical College of Ohio. After one year he left the West, and opened a school of anatomy in Philadelphia, for the benefit of the medical classes of the University of Pennsylvania.

After he had here prosecuted his anatomical studies for four or five years, his reputation as an anatomist became so generally known, that the eyes of the profession were directed to him from every part of the country ; and in 1826 he was called to fill the chair of anatomy in Rutgers' Medical College, in the city of New York. This situation, as well as every other in which he had been placed, he sustained with a popularity almost unparalleled. He never exhibited in public but he gathered around him an admiring audience, who hung with delight upon his lips. But the duties of the chair, together with his other scientific pursuits, were too arduous, and the climate too rigorous for a constitution already subdued by labor and broken by disease ; and before he had completed his second course of lectures, he was compelled to retire from the school, and seek a residence in a milder climate. He repaired with his family to one of the West India islands, and remained till

the approach of summer, when he returned and settled in Germantown. Here and in Philadelphia he spent the remainder of his life, which was principally devoted to composing works for the press.

The productions of Dr. Godman's pen, and the fruits of his labor, are too numerous to be specified. Among them will be found, "Anatomical Investigations, comprising a Description of various Fasciæ of the Human Body;" "An account of some Irregularities of Structure, and Morbid Anatomy;" "Contributions to Physiological and Pathological Anatomy;" "A System of Natural History of American Quadrupeds;" "An Edition of Bell's Anatomy, with Notes;" "Rambles of a Naturalist;" and several articles on natural history, for the American Encyclopedia, besides numerous papers which have appeared in the periodical journals of the day. At one time he was the principal editor of the "Philadelphia Journal of the Medical and Physical Sciences." Some time before his death he published a volume of Addresses which he had delivered on different public occasions. Most of these admired productions have been before the public for a considerable time; have been received with high approbation, and several of them have been favorably noticed, and even republished in foreign countries.

His intellectual character was very extraordinary. He possessed all the characteristic features of a mind of the highest order. Naturally bold, ardent, and enterprising, he never stopped to calculate consequences, so far as they regarded himself; but rushed forward with impetuosity to perform whatever he undertook. Great and lofty intellectual purposes seemed to be the natural element in which he lived. His perception was quick and accurate; his memory exceedingly retentive; and he possessed an uncommon facility of abstracting his attention from surrounding objects, and of concentrating all his powers upon the subject of his

pursuit. It was this latter trait of mind, no doubt, which gave such effect to all his efforts ; while he was indebted to the power of his memory for the remarkable facility he possessed of acquiring languages ; for although his early education had been exceedingly limited, he acquired such a knowledge of the Latin, Greek, French, German, Danish, Spanish, and Italian languages, as to read and translate them with fluency, and to write several of them with elegance. His quick and discriminating powers of observation naturally inclined him to notice the habits and economy of animals, and gave him his taste for the study of natural history.

His powers of description and illustration imparted freshness and splendor to every thing he touched. All his conceptions were strong, clear, and original ; and he possessed the power of holding before him whatever object engaged his attention, till all its parts and relations were brought to view. By those who have listened to his extemporaneous discussions, it is said, that while he was speaking, a thousand images seemed to cluster around the subject, and that he had just time to select such as imparted beauty, or furnished the happiest illustration of the object he wished to explain. Yet, while he possessed all this richness and fertility of mind, taste and judgment ever controlled its operations.

He was a laborious and untiring student, and possessed in a high degree the requisites of all true intellectual greatness—the habit of patient investigation, long-continued attention, and a singular love of labor. “How often,” says one to whom he unbosomed the secrets of his heart, “have I entreated him, while poring half the night over his books and papers—how often have I begged him to consider his health ; but his ambition and thirst for knowledge were such, that having commenced an investigation, or a language, no difficulty could stop him ; and what he had no time to

accomplish in the day, he would do at night, instead of enjoying that rest of which he stood in so much need."

It has been truly and happily said by one who knew him intimately, that his eagerness in the pursuit of knowledge seemed like the impulse of gnawing hunger and an unquenchable thirst, which neither adversity nor disease could allay. Variety of occupations was the only relaxation which he sought or desired.

He composed with rapidity, but not without a high degree of intellectual excitement, and the most abstracted attention. Under such an influence, some of his best essays were sent to the press as they first came from his pen, without the smallest correction.

There have been but few men more variously gifted by nature, or more nobly distinguished by industry and zeal, than Dr. Godman. Notwithstanding all the disadvantages under which he labored, he became "one of the most accomplished general scholars and linguists, acute and erudite naturalists, ready, pleasing, and instructive lecturers and writers of his country or era. He prosecuted extensive and diversified researches, composed superior disquisitions and reviews, and large and valuable volumes," and he imparted a freshness and vigor to every thing he touched.

But there remains another view of Dr. Godman—his MORAL AND RELIGIOUS CHARACTER, which was so admirable, so strongly drawn, and so worthy of imitation, that it cannot be withheld, and which proved his solace in sickness, cheered him as he approached the valley of death, and shed light and immortality around his dying bed.

Unhappily he had formed his philosophical and religious opinions after the model of the French naturalists of the last century, the most distinguished of whom were deists and atheists; and such is man in his natural, his fallen condition, that even while surrounded by the most magnificent

displays of divine power and wisdom, and with his eyes directed to those very objects, and his attention arrested by those very laws which proclaim the existence and the presence of an almighty power, he overlooks and passes by the evidences they furnish of the existence of a Deity; and this often under the specious but delusive pretext of casting off the shackles of prejudice and superstition, and of giving the reins to free, enlightened, and philosophical inquiry. It was the case with Dr. Godman; for while assisted by such lights as these, and guided alone in his investigations by perverted reason, he became, as he tells us, an established infidel, rejecting revelation, and casting all the evidences of an existing God beneath his feet.

It was not till the winter of 1827, while engaged in his course of lectures in New York, that he was arrested in his career, and brought to an experimental knowledge of the truth. At this time an incident occurred which led him to a candid perusal of the gospels, as contained in the New Testament. It was a visit to a death-bed—the death-bed of a Christian—the death-bed of a student of medicine. There he saw what reason could not explain, nor philosophy fathom. He opened his Bible, and the secret was unfolded. From this time he became a devoted student of the Scriptures. How far they were made the efficient cause of his conversion to Christianity will best appear from his own eloquent pen.

To a medical friend, Dr. Judson, of Washington city, a surgeon in the navy of the United States, who was at that time in the last stage of consumption, he wrote as follows:

“GERMANTOWN, Dec. 25, 1828.

“In relation to dying, my dear friend, you talk like a sick man, and just as I used to do when very despondent; death is a debt we all owe to nature, and must eventually ensue from a mere wearing out of the machine, if not from

disease. The time when, makes no difference in the act of dying to the individual; for after all, it terminates in corporeal insensibility, let the preceding anguish be never so severe. Nature certainly has a strong abhorrence to this cessation of corporeal action, and all animals have a dread of death who are conscious of its approach. A part of our dread of death is purely physical, and is avoidable only by a philosophical conviction of its necessity; but the greater part of our dread, and the terrors with which the avenues to the grave are surrounded, are from another and a more potent source. 'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all,' and forces us by our terrors to confess that we dread something beyond physical dissolution, and that we are terrified, not at merely ceasing to breathe, but that we have not lived as we ought to have done, have not effected the good that was within the compass of our abilities, and neglected to exercise the talents we possessed to the greatest advantage. The only remedy for this fear of death is to be sought by approaching the Author of all things in the way prescribed by himself, and not according to our own foolish imaginations. Humiliation of pride, denial of self, subjection of evil tempers and dispositions, and an entire submission to his will for support and direction, are the best preparatives for such an approach. A perusal of the gospels, in a spirit of real inquiry after a direction how to act, will certainly teach the way. In these gospels the Saviour himself has preached his own doctrines, and he who runs may read. He has prescribed the course; he shows how the approval and mercy of God may be won; he shows how awfully corrupt is man's nature, and how deadly his pride and stubbornness of heart, which cause him to try every subterfuge to avoid the humiliating confession of his own weakness, ignorance, and folly. But the same blessed hand has stripped death of all the terrors which brooded around the grave, and converted the gloomy receptacle of our mor-

tal remains into the portal of life and light. O, let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end and future state be like his.

“This is all I know on the subject. I am no theologian, and have as great an aversion to priestcraft as one can entertain. I was once an infidel, as I told you in the West Indies. I became a Christian from conviction, produced by the candid inquiry recommended to you. I know of no other way in which death can be stripped of its terrors; certainly none better can be wished. Philosophy is a fool, and pride a madman. Many persons die with what is called *manly firmness*; that is, having acted a part all their lives, according to their prideful creed, they must die *game*. They put on as smooth a face as they can, to impose on the spectators and die *firmly*. But this is all deception; the true state of their minds at the very time, nine times out of ten, is worse than the most horrible imaginings even of hell itself. Some who have led lives adapted to sear their conscience and petrify all the moral sensibilities, die with a kind of indifference similar to that with which a hardened convict submits to a new infliction of disgraceful punishment. But the man who dies as a man ought to die, is the humble-minded, believing Christian; one who has tasted and enjoyed all the blessings of creation, who has had an enlightened view of the wisdom and glory of his Creator; who has felt the vanity of merely worldly pursuits and motives, and been permitted to know the mercies of a blessed Redeemer as he approaches the narrow house appointed for all the living.

“Physical death may cause his senses to shrink and fail at the trial; but his mind, sustained by the Rock of ages, is serene and unwavering. He relies not on his own righteousness, for that would be vain; but the arms of mercy are beneath him, the ministering spirits of the Omnipotent are around him. He does not ‘die manfully,’ but he ‘rests

in Jesus ;' he blesses his friends, he casts his hope on One all-powerful to sustain and mighty to save, then sleeps in peace. He is dead, but liveth ; for He who is the resurrection and the life has declared, 'Whoso believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.' "

This letter, which so truly contrasts the death-bed scene of the infidel with that of the Christian, so beautifully portrays the history of the change which had been effected in Dr. Godman's own sentiments and affections, and so clearly points the benighted wanderer to the true source of life and light, was not lost upon his friend to whom it was addressed. It described his condition, and it reached his heart.

Dr. Judson, though religiously instructed when young, having a pious clergyman for his father, and another for his elder brother, the distinguished and devoted missionary to Burmah, yet had long since freed himself from what he called the prejudices of education, the shackles of priestcraft, and was ranging the fields of infidelity. He had acquired wealth and reputation, was an estimable man in all the domestic relations of life, and a highly respected member of our profession ; but the self-denying doctrines of the Saviour were too humbling to his proud spirit, and he could not submit to their influence. At the time he received Dr. Godman's letter, however, he was gloomy and despondent ; looking forward with fearful forebodings to the period of his dissolution, which seemed not far distant. He had no confidence but that of the sceptic—no hope but that of ceasing to be. Aware of the fatal nature of the disease under which he had lingered for years, he had long been arming himself to meet the king of terrors with composure, that he might die like a philosopher—"with manly firmness," but as he drew nearer to the grave, the clouds and



darkness thickened around him, and he began to fear that there might be something beyond this narrow prison. He had hitherto refused all religious intercourse, but now his infidelity began to give way, and he inquired with solicitude, "Is there such a thing as the new birth; and if so, in what does it consist?" He was directed to the gospels for the answer. He at length consented to make the investigation recommended by Dr. Godman. He took up the New Testament, and read it in the spirit of candid inquiry. A conviction of the truth of its doctrines fastened upon him. He now solicited the advice and prayers of a pious clergyman. Yet he could not consent to relinquish the sentiments which he had so long cherished, without the clearest proof, and he disputed every inch of ground with great acuteness and ability; but the truth was exhibited by the venerable divine with such force and simplicity, that it overcame every argument he could produce, and he saw clearly the folly of his sceptical opinions. The clouds were dissipated, light broke in upon his mind, and he was enabled to take hold of the promises. The remaining days of his life were devoted to fervent prayer and the constant study of the Scriptures, which filled his soul with divine composure, and enabled him to rely with undoubting confidence on the infinite merits of his Redeemer, and with his last breath to cry, "Peace, peace." If he did not die with "manly firmness," he "rested in Jesus."

The exercises of such a mind as Dr. Godman's, during a long period of affliction, cannot fail to be interesting as well to the philosopher as to the Christian, and more especially as expressed by himself. I shall therefore present a few brief extracts from some of his correspondence of that period.

“PHILADELPHIA, February 17, 1829.

“MY DEAR FRIEND—Since my last to you, my health has suffered various and most afflicting changes. The un-

sual severity of the weather, and other scarcely perceptible causes, induced an attack of inflammation in the diseased lung, which, in my enfeebled condition, required more of depletion and reduction of diet than could be readily borne; hemorrhage ensued on the third or fourth day, which relieved the local affection considerably, and by the aid of blistering frequently, and perfect rest, I gradually amended; still the great suffering, caused by the mental and corporeal debility, was beyond any thing ever before experienced by me, even after the active condition of disease was checked. But thanks to the mercies of Him who is alone able to save, the valley and shadow of death were stripped of their terrors, and the descent to the grave was smoothed before me. Relying on the mercies and infinite merits of the Saviour, had it pleased God to call me then, I believe I should have died in a peaceful, humble confidence. But I have been restored to a state of comparative health, perhaps nearly to the condition in which I was when I wrote to Dr. Judson; and I am again allowed to think of the education of my children and the support of my family.

“Believe me truly your friend,

‘J. D. GODMAN.’

“Professor SEWALL.”

In answer to a suggestion which I made to him of the propriety of leaving behind him a memoir of his life, he says, “It has long been my intention, as my life has been a curious one, to put a short account of it together for the benefit of my children and others.”

It appears, however, from some lines he wrote at a later period of his life, that he never accomplished this object; for in a manuscript volume which he sent to a friend, and which he intended to fill with original pieces of his own composition, he writes as follows.

“Did I not in all things feel most thoroughly convinced that the overruling of our plans by an all-wise Providence

is always for good, I might regret that a part of my plan cannot be executed. This was, to relate a few curious incidents from among the events of my most singularly guided life, which, in addition to mere novelty or peculiarity of character, could not have failed practically to illustrate the importance of inculcating correct religious and moral principles, and imbuing the mind therewith from the very earliest dawn of intellect, from the very moment that the utter imbecility of infancy begins to disappear. May *His* holy will be done, who can raise up abler advocates to support the truth. This is my first attempt to write in my token—why may it not be the last? O, should it be, believe me that the will of God will be most acceptable. Notwithstanding the life of neglect, sinfulness, and perversion of heart which I so long led before it pleased him to dash all my idols in the dust, I feel an humble hope in the boundless mercy of our blessed Lord and Saviour, who alone can save the soul from merited condemnation. May it be in the power of those who chance to read these lines, to say, Into thy hands I commend my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of truth.”

On my communicating to Dr. Godman an account of the last moments of his friend Dr. Judson, he responds in the following feeling and beautiful manner.

“GERMANTOWN, May 21, 1829.

“MY DEAR FRIEND—I feel very grateful for your attention in sending me an account of our dear Judson’s last moments. After all his doubts, difficulties, and mental conflicts, to know that the Father of mercies was pleased to open his eyes to the truth, and shed abroad in his heart the love and salvation offered through the Redeemer, is to me a source of the purest gratification, and a cause of the most sincere rejoicing. The bare possibility of my having been

even slightly instrumental in effecting the blessed change of mind he experienced, excites in me emotions of gratitude to the Source of all good which words cannot express.

“My health has been in a very poor condition since my last to you. My cough and expectoration have been generally bad, and my body is emaciated to a very great degree. The warm weather now appears to have set in, and possibly I may improve a little; otherwise, it will not be long before I follow our lately departed friend. Let me participate in the prayers you offer for the sick and afflicted, and may God grant me strength to die to his honor and glory, in the hopes and constancy derived from the merits and atonement of the blessed Saviour. With my best wishes for your health and prosperity, I remain sincerely yours,

“J. D. GODMAN.”

“PHILADELPHIA, October 6, 1829.

“MY DEAR FRIEND—My health is, as for a considerable time past, in a very tolerable condition; that is, I can sit up a great part of the day, writing or reading, without much injury. My emaciation is great, and though not very rapid, is steady, so that the change in my strength takes place almost imperceptibly. On the whole, though I suffer greatly, compared with persons in health, yet so gently have the chastenings of the Lord fallen upon me, that I am hourly called upon for thankfulness and gratitude for his unfailing mercies. Equal cause have I had for rejoicing that I have learned to put my whole trust in him; as he has raised me up help and friends in circumstances which seemed to render even hope impossible, and has blessed me and mine with peace and content in the midst of all afflictions, trials, and adversity.

“Knowing experimentally the value of implicit submission of all thoughts and desires to his most holy will, it is no small source of distress to me, to see how many of my

most valued friends live in the habitual neglect of a happiness so pure, so attainable, and admirable.”

Dr. Godman’s religious feelings, though ardent, were not bigoted. In him religion was not that cold, selfish, and narrow principle which shuts out from one’s confidence all not of his own faith; nor did it consist in a loud profession of a particular doctrine or creed. It was the religion of the heart, deep, sincere, and as comprehensive as the charity of Heaven; embracing all the humble, faithful, and really excellent of every denomination of Christians.

In the concluding part of the above letter, after speaking of the different religious denominations in terms of great liberality and candor, he says,

“However, I find all *really religious* persons to be of one mind. Those who have drunk at the undefiled spring of truth, as set forth in the New Testament, without obscuration of human creeds or tradition, I have never found to differ in any respect that was of the slightest importance; and therefore with such persons, however called, I can always communicate advantageously.

“Sincerely your friend,

“J. D. GODMAN.”

His strong and practical views of the authenticity of Christianity are clearly exhibited in the following extract which he wrote not long before his death.

“Is proof wanting, that these gospels are true? It is only necessary for an honest mind to read them candidly to be convinced. Every occurrence is stated clearly, simply, and unostentatiously. The narrations are not supported by asseverations of their truth, nor by parade of witnesses: the circumstances described took place in presence of vast multi-

tudes, and are told in that downright, unpretending manner which would have called forth innumerable positive contradictions, had they been untrue. Mysteries are stated without attempt at explanation, because *explanation* is not necessary to establish the *existence* of facts, however mysterious. Miracles also, attested by the presence of vast numbers, are stated in the plainest language of narration, in which the slightest working of imagination cannot be traced. This very simplicity, this unaffected sincerity and quiet affirmation, have more force than a thousand witnesses—more efficacy than volumes of ambitious effort to support truth by dint of argumentation.

“What motive could the evangelist have to falsify? The Christian kingdom is not *of this world*, nor *in it*. Christianity teaches disregard of its vanities, depreciates its honors and enjoyments, and sternly declares, that none can be Christians but those who escape from its vices and allurements. There is no call directed to ambition—no gratification proposed to vanity; the sacrifice of self—the denial of all the propensities which relate to the gratification of passion or pride, with the most humble dependence upon God, are invariably taught, and most solemnly enjoined, under penalty of the most awful consequences. Is it then wonderful that such a system should find revilers? Is it surprising that sceptics should abound, when the slightest allowance of belief would force them to condemn all their actions? Or is it to be wondered at, that a purity of life and conversation so repugnant to human passions, and a humility so offensive to human pride, should be opposed, rejected, and contemned? Such is the true secret of the opposition to *religion*—such the cause inducing men who lead unchristian lives to array the frailties, errors, weakness, and vices of individuals, or sects, against *Christianity*, hoping to weaken or destroy the system by rendering ridiculous or contemptible those who *profess* to be governed by its

influence, though their conduct shows them to be acting under an opposite spirit.

“What is the mode in which this most extraordinary doctrine of Christianity is to be diffused? By force—temporal power—temporal rewards—earthly triumphs? None of these. By earnest persuasion, gentle entreaty, brotherly monition, paternal remonstrance. The dread resort of threatened punishment comes last—exhibited in sorrow, not in anger; told as a fearful truth, not denounced with vindictive exultation; while, to the last moment, the beamy shield of mercy is ready to be interposed for the saving of the endangered.

“Human doctrines are wavering and mutable; the doctrines of the blessed and adorable Jesus, our Saviour, are fixed and immutable. The traditions of men are dissimilar and inconsistent; the declarations of the Gospel are harmonious, not only with each other, but with the acknowledged attributes of the Deity, and the well-known condition of human nature.

“What do sceptics propose to give us in exchange for this system of Christianity, with its ‘hidden mysteries,’ ‘miracles,’ ‘signs and wonders?’ Doubt, confusion, obscurity, annihilation. Life, without higher motive than selfishness; death—without hope. Is it for this that their zeal is so warmly displayed in proselyting? Is such the gain to accrue for the relinquishment of our souls? In very deed, this is the utmost they have to propose, and we can only account for their rancorous efforts to render others like themselves, by reflecting that misery loves company.”

In the last letter which I ever received from him, he observes, “My time is so exceedingly occupied by the literary business I am engaged in, that it is with great difficulty that I can attend to any other affairs. However, I have always intended to leave behind me the sort of mem-

oranda you wish for, which my friends' may use at their discretion. I have to-day, as above mentioned, concluded one book, which leaves me at liberty to write some long-deferred letters. To-morrow I must resume my pen to complete some articles of zoology for the *Encyclopædia Americana*, now preparing in Boston. It shall be my constant endeavor to husband my strength to the last; and by doing as much as is consistent with safety, for the good of my fellow-creatures, endeavor to discharge a mite of the immense debt I owe for the never-failing bounties of Providence."

He did husband his strength, and toiled with his pen almost to the last hours of his life; and by thus doing, has furnished us with a singular evidence of the possibility of uniting the highest attainments in science, and the most ardent devotion to letters, with the firmest belief and the purest practice of the Christian. But the period of his dissolution was not distant: the summons arrived; and conscious that the messenger who had been long in waiting could not be bribed to tarry, he commended his little family in a fervent prayer to Him who has promised to be the "Father of the fatherless, and the widow's God;" and then with uplifted eyes and hands, and a face beaming with joy and confidence, resigned his spirit into the arms of his Redeemer, on the morning of the 17th of April, 1830, aged thirty-two years.

A friend who was his constant companion during his sickness, and witnessed his last moments, writes me thus:

"You ask me to give you an account of his last moments: they were such as have robbed me of all terror of death, and will afford me lasting comfort through life. The same self-composure and entire resignation which were so remarkable through his whole sickness, supported him to



the end. O, it was not death—it was a release from mortal misery to everlasting happiness. Such calmness when he prayed for us all—such a heavenly composure, even till the breath left him, you would have thought he was going only a short journey. During the day his sufferings had been almost beyond enduring. Frequently did he pray that the Lord would give him patience to endure all till the end, knowing that it could not be many hours; and truly his prayers were heard. *Lord Jesus, receive my soul*, were the last words he uttered, and his countenance appeared as if he had a foretaste of heaven even before his spirit left this world.”

I might enlarge, but I forbear. Allow me only to add, that there are those who feel that in the death of Dr. Godman the strongest ties of nature are torn asunder. While we mingle our sighs with theirs, let us delight to dwell upon those traits, and emulate those virtues, which we admired while he lived, and which death can never efface from the memory.

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TRIBUTE FROM ROBERT WALSH, ESQ.

“The tributes which have been paid to the late Dr. Godman, were especially due to the memory of a man so variously gifted by nature, and so nobly distinguished by industry and zeal in the acquisition and advancement of science. He did not enjoy early opportunities of self-improvement, but he cultivated his talents, as he approached manhood, with a degree of ardor and success which supplied all deficiencies; and he finally became one of the most accomplished general scholars and linguists, acute and erudite naturalists, ready, pleasing, and instructive lecturers and writers of his country and era. The principal subject of his study was anatomy in its main branches, in which he

excelled in every respect. His attention was much directed also to physiology, pathology, and natural history ; with an aptitude and efficiency abundantly proved by the merits of his published works, which we need not enumerate.

“ We do not now recollect to have known any individual who inspired us with more respect for his intellect and heart than Dr. Godman ; to whom knowledge and discovery appeared more abstractly precious ; whose eye shed more of the lustre of generous and enlightened enthusiasm ; whose heart remained more vivid and sympathetic amidst professional labor and responsibility always extremely severe and urgent. Considering the decline of his health for a long period, and the pressure of adverse circumstances, which he too frequently experienced, he performed prodigies as a student, an author, and a teacher—he prosecuted extensive and diversified researches ; composed superior disquisitions and reviews, and large and valuable volumes ; and in the great number of topics which he handled simultaneously, or in immediate succession, he touched none without doing himself credit, and producing some new development of light.

“ He lingered for years under consumption of the lungs ; understood fully the incurableness of his melancholy state ; spoke and acted with an unfeigned and beautiful resignation ; toiled at his desk to the last day of his thirty-two years, still glowing with the love of science and the domestic affections.”

THE

## SINNER HIS OWN DESTROYER.

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MANY think that if they could be sure there is no place of future punishment, they should not be afraid to die. The word HELL, which they find in the Bible, troubles them; and the awful descriptions, drawn by the pen of inspiration, make eternity dreadful. They cannot look forward to the judgment without distressing apprehensions that they must be condemned. If they could tear from the Bible the 25th chapter of Matthew, and erase all the passages which threaten the wrath of God, and describe the eternal condition of the wicked as one of "torment," "the smoke of which ascendeth up for ever;" of pain and anguish, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" and of "everlasting punishment," "prepared for the devil and his angels;" their fears would be quieted, and they would look upon death only as the termination of this earthly scene.

To such it is proper to remark, that the wish to change God's word, even in one jot or tittle, is *utterly vain*. As well might you stop the motion of the earth, or pluck down the stars from heaven. The same hand that formed them erected the prison-house of hell, and wrote the law; and "it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16 : 17.

But even if you could blot from the Bible every line that excites your fears, or satisfy yourself that its threatenings all relate merely to the sufferings of the present life; if you could prove that there really will be no sentence of condemnation from the throne of God—that there is no hell for his enemies, or evil spirits to torment them, would you be *sure of happiness*? The declaration of our Maker would still stand in all its force: "There is no peace to the wicked." This he uttered, not as a judicial sentence against individual offenders, but as *the fact*, founded in the very constitution of man, that *sin destroys his happiness*.

*Death makes no change in the moral character.* It disengages the soul from the trammels of the body, and gives

expansion to its powers; but he that was "unjust" will be "unjust still," and he that was "filthy" will be "filthy still," though removed from earth to the world of spirits. The passage through the dark valley is but a single step, and in its agony and gloom there is no such mighty efficacy as to convert a hardened sinner into a saint; a work which the Almighty Spirit alone can accomplish. Nor will death divest the soul of any of its passions and propensities. Those which belong to the body, will of course accompany it to the silence of the grave; but all that belong to the soul, as anger, malice, revenge, will not only be retained in the disembodied state, but acquire greater capacity and power for action.

*In this world a man's happiness depends chiefly upon the state of his mind.* Wealth, honor, friends, and every external good may be possessed, and yet the man be wretched; or he may be poor, and afflicted, and despised, and yet be happy, because his mind is tranquil and contented. If the emotions of our hearts conform to the standard of the Bible, nothing can make us miserable; but if unholy passions reign, they destroy our happiness, whatever else may promote it. And as all the passions of the soul accompany it into the other world, and form a part of its very being, they will *there* have the same influence upon our happiness as *here*; and if evil passions predominate, they will utterly destroy it. Consider the influence of,

1. DISAPPOINTMENT. You expect to be admitted to heaven and participate its bliss. But if there were no day of judgment and no hell, would you be sure of heaven? None but holy beings are there, and you are not holy. This you now confess, and then you will feel the dread reality. If no voice forbade your entrance, and no *flaming sword* enforced the prohibition, you would of your own choice retire, when you learned that no kindred spirits are there; that not one unsanctified sinner is found in all its mansions; and that not a soul in heaven would receive you as a companion, or admit you to share in his employments and pleasures.

*Your own aversion to the service of God* and the spiritual and holy exercises of divine worship, would quicken your determination to withdraw from a place where you would be neither welcome nor happy; and thus you would

take an everlasting farewell of the paradise of God, and of all your former hopes. Though they were built upon the sand, you expected by some means they would be realized, and that "glory," and "honor," and "eternal life" would be yours. But the morning of eternity blasts all your expectations. Heaven is not yours! You have lost it! Its "joy unspeakable and full of glory" fills the ever-expanding souls of the saints, but not a ray of it can reach your dark spirit. Things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man," await them; but your eye can never behold those glories; your ear can never enjoy those celestial melodies; your heart can never understand those wonderful mysteries of divine knowledge, nor feel the elevating influences of that society of saints and angels, seraphim and cherubim, and "Him that sitteth on the throne, and the Lamb!" Those pleasures you can never, *never* enjoy. As long as you exist, this reflection will be your companion: *Heaven was once within my reach, and I turned away and lost it.* There too will be,

2. ENVY. Have you ever felt this passion? When you have seen your neighbor more prosperous and happy than yourself, have you disliked him and regarded him with suspicion? Would it have given you satisfaction to see his good fortune reversed, and himself brought down to a level with you? As often as you met him, envy was excited and your peace disturbed. The mention of his name would raise a storm in your breast, and the recollection of his prosperity intrude upon your sleeping hours. Whenever you thought of him you were miserable.

This passion is not often felt here so keenly as some others, for pride persuades us that though our neighbor may be superior in some respects, we surpass him in others; but in the spiritual state it will be fully developed. You will then contrast the condition of the saints in glory with your own. Once, you and they lived in the same neighborhood, met in the same social circle, and assembled in the same place of worship. Now, they have taken possession of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" they are clothed in robes of white, with "everlasting joy upon their heads," and the smiles of God's countenance pour an enduring flood of delight upon their

enraptured spirits! But where are you? A voluntary exile from heaven; poor and forlorn; a wanderer from the abodes of bliss; having no capacity for the enjoyment of paradise, and no means of ever acquiring it. And as you advance in eternity, and appreciate more and more the treasures they have gained and you have lost, will you not envy them more and more, and consequently be more and more wretched? The reflection will be

“ — like a wave of wormwood o’er the soul  
Rolling its bitterness.”

3. REVENGE will also be enkindled there. You have seen a man under the influence of this passion. He had received an injury, and he was determined on revenge. His face was pale, his frame trembled, and his eye beamed fire. His soul was lacerated and agonized. An angry man is wretched; but revenge tears the heart, as with a hundred barbed arrows. And when the first paroxysm has subsided, and given place to the meditated means of vengeance, peace is banished, and every gentle and virtuous affection driven from the heart.

Let this passion take complete possession of one’s soul, and reign without restraint, and he will need no hell to render him miserable. It will be a *fire* in his bosom and a *gnawing worm* upon his vitals. How then will it rage in the outcast from heaven! He will meet those who have influenced him to reject Christ, and led him in the *broad road*. But for their evil example, or persuasions, or ridicule, he would have become a Christian, and an heir of God. They cast from him the “pearl of great price” he was about to purchase, and dashed from his hand the cup of divine mercy he was about to receive. They cheated him out of heaven, while they seemed to be his friends; and under pretence of ministering to his pleasures, led him in the paths of sin, until every prospect of peace and happiness was for ever blasted. Will he not hate the authors of his irreparable loss? Will he not reproach them, and endeavor to aggravate their wretchedness in retaliation for his own? As Voltaire lay on his dying bed, aware of the everlasting ruin that awaited him, and surrounded by his companions in infidelity, he would often curse them, and

exclaim, "Retire! It is you that have brought me to my present state." There also will be,

4. REMORSE. While he casts the blame of his eternal ruin upon others, and his heart burns with enmity, he will be tortured with the reflection that they had no power to compel him to sin. He did it voluntarily. Their course was agreeable to his inclinations. He preferred it to the *narrow way* of piety. When they interposed to banish his seriousness and dispel his religious impressions, he made no resistance; he readily dismissed the Holy Spirit till a *convenient season*, and yielded himself to their baneful influences. Conscience will make him feel this. He may blind, and stifle, and sear his conscience now; but then it will rise with giant might, and reproach him with all his sins. It will bring to his recollection all his past offences, and show him how each one contributed to corrupt his soul and disqualify him for heaven. It will array before him the many invitations of divine mercy, and favorable opportunities for repentance offered to him, and rejected. It will present to his view those points of his life, when he was "not far from the kingdom of heaven," and show him the fatal step which turned him away. It will call up the remembrance of the many kind but unavailing prayers and efforts of pious friends; and that solemn and awful scene when the Spirit of God was present with him, and being grieved and resisted, departed for ever.

Conscience will make him feel that his exclusion from heaven is *his own work*; that it is the necessary consequence of the life he chose to live; that whatever anguish he bears, and whatever bliss he has lost, *all, all* is produced by sin; as naturally as pain is produced by wounds, or hunger by abstinence. He will see that he has been *his own destroyer*; that his own folly rendered the provisions of infinite mercy unavailing; that he bartered an inheritance of endless felicity for "a dream" of happiness; that he "sold his birthright for a mess of pottage." He will look upon himself as his worst enemy; and feel, while he experiences the pangs of "the second death," that his own hand inflicted the fatal wound. He will see how stupid and foolish he has been; how treacherous to his best interests; how unworthy to have had the keeping of an immortal soul! He will be ashamed of himself and of his whole

life, hate himself, abhor his very being, curse the day that he was born, and call on annihilation to hide him from himself and his misery.

But there he is—an outcast from heaven—hopelessly disappointed—burning with envy towards its happy inhabitants, and with malice and revenge towards his companions in exile—and oppressed and buffeted by most mortifying and agonizing reflections of his own sad follies and fatal errors!

Where will he find relief? He cannot now resort to the business and pleasures of the world to divert his thoughts. Will he try to amuse himself by recalling his past history? Every period of it will afford food for remorse and self-abasement. Will he go to his companions in exile? “Miserable comforters” he finds them all. Will he look for the return of night to bring sleep and forgetfulness? Alas, there is neither day nor night there: and the disembodied soul neither slumbers nor sleeps. Will he, after having been long tossed on the billows of his tempestuous passions, cast his eye once more towards the heaven of holy rest, and implore compassion from him whose name is Love? What could *He* do for him? If he admit *him* to heaven, he must banish saints and angels, for he and they cannot dwell together. And if he were there, all its joys would be insipid, and all its pleasures disgusting. Must He give his only Son again to die? The same feelings that led him to reject the salvation of Christ when offered, still reign in his soul, and would lead him again to reject it. Is not his case, then, utterly hopeless, and his condition completely miserable? Now comes,

5. **DESPAIR.** Once there might have been hope of alleviation, but now the last remnant of it is scattered and destroyed. There is no eye to pity, and no arm to bring deliverance. Despair spreads its dark wings over the soul, and fastens its poisonous talons upon the vitals. Who can tell its dismal power? Who can describe its blasting, withering, sickening influences? Of all the feelings of the heart, this is the most dreadful. Its unfortunate victims are miserable—supremely and completely miserable.

This, my impenitent friend, will be your constant attendant if you die in your sins. You may think that I have exaggerated the sufferings to be expected from the other



sources I have mentioned, though I am confident *the half has not been told*; but who *can* exaggerate the wretchedness of *despair*? I leave you to form your own estimate of it, and doubt not, whatever that may be, it will fill you with horror and dismay to look at it one half hour, under the impression that it is to be your eternal portion. But I must not omit,

6. THE EMOTIONS WITH WHICH THE UNGODLY WILL REGARD JEHOVAH. How do you feel towards him now? Do you love him, and love his government? Does not your heart sometimes rise up against his authority and providence? Do you not feel disposed to murmur when he sends adversity upon you, and prosperity upon others? Do you like to think of his presence, and draw near to him in prayer? Is the thought pleasant, that the eye of God is upon you? Do you desire to feel that you are alone with him, and by meditation and prayer to obtain the most enlarged and correct views of his character and attributes?

The same feelings which the knowledge of his character here produces, will be excited in the other world. There you will not be able to banish Him from your thoughts, and live as though he were not present, for you will see and feel that *he is everywhere*. Wherever you turn you will see him. Above and beneath, on the right hand and on the left, before and behind, and even within your very soul, the Almighty Spirit will be present. Wherever you may be, God will be there, in all his majesty and glory. If now you cannot endure the very faint conceptions of the divine Being which you have reluctantly formed, if you are unhappy when these are brought to your recollection, how will you be able to bear that full display of his perfections which eternity will unfold before you, and which will constantly fix your attention, notwithstanding all your efforts to prevent it?

What is it in Jehovah that now makes you wish to avoid his presence, and renders you unhappy when you reflect that his eye is upon you? Is it his great power? You will witness much more awful exhibitions of it when, by his command, "the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." Is it his sovereign authority over mankind, by which he makes some to rise and others to fall; bestows his restrain-

ing and converting grace upon some, and leaves others to reap the fruits of their iniquity? If this excites your aversion to God, you will find that aversion vastly increased in the other world, as you become more acquainted with his plans and purposes. Is it because he knows all your actions and all your thoughts, while you desire to conceal them? His knowledge of your character will not be bounded by the end of time; and if you now are ashamed of yourself, how much more will you be ashamed when the light of eternity shall give you a full view of your moral deformity? Or is the presence of God disagreeable, because you have sinned against his holy law, and know that he is offended with you? In eternity you will know much more than you can at present, of the purity of that law, of the heinousness of violating it, and of the anger of the Almighty. If the transient thought of his displeasure makes you unhappy, how will you feel when he appears before you continually "*a consuming fire,*" and fastens upon you his withering look of wrath, as much more dreadful than man's, as his power and holiness are greater?

*If there were no day of judgment and no hell,* must you not, continuing the enemy of God, be lost and wretched? You carry in your own bosom the elements of woe; and the circumstances in which you will be placed will call them into action. Any *one* of the feelings and passions we have considered, will be enough to make you wretched. And what is to hinder them *all* from beating, like fiery waves, one after another, upon your poor soul, while the eye of the Almighty, like the southern sun at midday, incessantly pours its rays upon it, and you plead in vain *for one drop of water to cool your parched tongue?* "THERE IS NO PEACE, saith my God, TO THE WICKED."

## JOY IN SORROW,

OR

## COMFORT FOR THE BEREAVED.

MY AFFLICTED FRIEND—I come not to deny your grief: the cause of it is a sore and grievous wound. Nor can I pretend to comfort you by saying that your grief will do no good: its greatest aggravation is, that no tears will bring back the light of your eyes. Nor can I so far forget your woes, as merely to say that sorrow is the common lot of man. How can it but add to the grief of a benevolent mind, to know that others endure the same ills? Nor dare I declare your present feelings unreasonable. There is, too, a sacredness in your sorrow, which I would not rudely touch. I therefore come not impertinently to meddle with another's feelings, or harass you with vain words. Yet let me say a few things. They are for your good. They may prove inestimable blessings.

Your present affliction is *from God*, the good, the just, the wise, the holy. Your bereavement came not by chance, nor from the power of wicked men, or wicked angels. God has not consigned the world over to the uncontrollable sway of a blind fortuity, nor to the reign of devils. Look not much at the mere instruments of your affliction. To lament that *something else was not done*, when you did all that at the time seemed proper, is to lament that you have not as much knowledge as the prophets of God, or the God of prophets.

Beware of spending time in reflection on *second causes*. One important end of God in this affliction, is, to fix the thoughts *on him*. Defeat not this design of love. Though the Sabeans and Chaldeans took away Job's oxen and asses and camels, and murdered his servants, yet he said not a word of their wicked robbery, but declared, "The Lord hath taken away." Perhaps a message of deeper alarm never wrung a father's heart, than that which Samuel bore to Eli. With one thought the venerable man quieted himself: "It is the Lord: let him do what seemeth him good."

There are *reasons for all your afflictions*. They are good and sufficient. They satisfy God. If known, you would see them to be such as should satisfy you.

In the absence of the principal of a grammar-school, his pupils formed two societies for mutual improvement. Their meetings were held in the only commodious vacant house in the village. A letter informed the teacher of what had been done. He immediately wrote, positively forbidding all further meetings. His order was strictly, though with pain, obeyed. It required all his good standing among his devoted young friends to restrain them from believing this act tyrannical. So painful was the state of their minds, that on his return, all preferred a respectful request for explanation of this mysterious conduct. Reminding them of his former and known kindness, he inquired if *that*, united with his declaration that he had good reasons, was not sufficient. They promptly expressed their confidence both in his kindness and veracity, but said it would relieve their minds to know his reasons. "Then," said he, "I have several. One is, that a few days before I left you, three men, having been secretly lodged in the house where your meetings were held, had died of the smallpox. Are you satisfied?" All assented.

So, child of sorrow, God is trying you. He spoils your plans, he crosses your wishes, he takes away your delights; but he has good reasons for all he does. Yet he frequently conceals the cause of all these trials. He says, "What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." It is both folly and wickedness to doubt his love or his wisdom in the mysteries of providence.

*Good may come* out of this affliction. You should be far more desirous of obtaining that good, than of getting rid of the evil under which you suffer. It is not necessary that your sorrow cease. It is necessary that it be sanctified. God has brought you into the house of mourning, that "by the sadness of the countenance, the heart may be made better." See to it, that you here gather some of the ripe clusters of "the peaceable fruit of righteousness." Nothing but dreadful unbelief and wickedness can hinder this affliction from being one of God's choice and rich blessings.

Take heed that you *sin not*. The least sin, an unworthy thought of God, is a far greater evil than all your sorrows.

The kindest wish any can now have for you is, that in all your trials, you may not sin, nor charge God foolishly. Sin is the greatest of all evils. *Sin* is your worst enemy. Hell is not so terrible. *Sorrow* may be a friend: the cup in Benjamin's sack was the forerunner of Benjamin's portion. They who suffer with Christ shall also reign with him.

“The path of sorrow, and that path alone,  
Leads to the land where sorrows are unknown.”

God has had on earth one Son without sin, but *never one without affliction*. The road to heaven is soaked with the blood of fifty millions of martyrs. Rivers of water ran down their eyes. Yet they all, even when on earth, regarded sin as the worst evil in the universe. O, avoid the very appearance of evil. God has a right to expect that you will now honor him. Do it, and he will honor you. But if you now sin against him, you shall be lightly esteemed.

Suffer not to pass unheeded the *mercies* which attend this affliction. Does your heart faint under the *suddenness* of the stroke? Perhaps nothing but a revelation from God, attested by miracles, or severe and protracted sufferings in the deceased, could have fully prepared your mind for it. The former you could not expect. The latter you could not wish. Besides, God has told you to be always ready for any death: “All flesh is grass.” He lent you your beloved only to *remain with you at his will*. Let the thought of murmuring be rebuked by the following beautiful story from the Mishna of the Rabbins.

During the absence of the Rabbi Meir, his two sons died—both of them of uncommon beauty, and enlightened in the divine law. His wife bore them to her chamber, and laid them upon her bed. When Rabbi Meir returned, his first inquiry was for his sons. His wife reached to him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, “Where are my sons?” “They are not far off,” she said, placing food before him that he might eat. He was in a genial mood, and when he had said grace after meat, she thus addressed him: “Rabbi, with thy permission, I would fain propose to thee one question.” “Ask it then, my love,” replied he. “A few days ago a person intrusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them: should I give them back to

him?" "This is a question," said the Rabbi, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What, wouldest thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?" "No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them, without acquainting thee therewith." She then led him to the chamber, and stepping to the bed, took the white covering from the dead bodies. "Ah, my sons, my sons," loudly lamented their father; "my sons! the light of my eyes, and the light of my understanding: I was your father, but you were my teachers in the law." The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length she took her husband by the hand and said, "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was intrusted to our keeping? See, 'the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord.'" "Blessed be the name of the Lord," echoed the Rabbi, "and blessed be his holy name for ever."

Besides, had you known all you now know, perhaps you could not have done your duty to the dear deceased. Therefore, think of the mercies attending this whole affliction, count them up. It is a mark of an ignoble mind to pervert any conduct, especially that of our best friend.

Lastly: your present situation is not without *its appropriate duties*. Is any afflicted, let him pray? Cast your care upon God, for he careth for you. Earnestly inquire why God has afflicted you. Be patient. Be quiet. Be gentle. Be tender-hearted. Weep with those who weep. Do your duty to those who still live. Labor for the salvation of souls. Especially, rely on Jesus Christ and his rich grace; and even *you* shall soon say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Blessed be the name of the Lord. My choicest blessings flow from my severest trials."

"Therefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees." "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." Flee to the promises. Make God your refuge; and when you "pass through the waters, he shall be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you; for Jehovah is your God, and your Saviour. Fear not. He will be with you."

## DECLARATIONS OF A DEIST.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

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 BY REV. HERMAN NORTON,  
 OF CINCINNATI.
 

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ON the morning of January 10, 1837, a young man called at my door and said that Mr. Isaac Baker, residing at the corner of Court and Elm streets, desired to see me. In about half an hour I went to the house, and found him on his bed. He had been a stranger to me; but those who knew him intimately, speak of him as a gentleman, upright in his transactions with his fellow-men, and sustaining a good moral character. I inquired how long he had been sick, and what were his prospects of recovery. He said he had been sick three or four weeks, and added, "I am better than I have been, and expect to be about again in a few days." This remark should be observed, as it shows that he was not now excited by the fear of death. Death, in his own view, was not near.

Then taking my hand, he said, "There are one or two points, sir, on which I have desired to converse; therefore I have sent for you. In the first place, I wish to know *what evidence there is that there ever was such a being as Jesus Christ in this world.* For twenty years past, I have advocated the belief that there never was such a being. I now wish to know the truth. If there never was such a being as Jesus Christ, the Bible is not true; and if there was such a being, it is true. If the question respecting Jesus Christ is settled, that decides many others, or every thing else in my mind."

His apparent sincerity seemed to require a candid answer. In reply, I stated that we lived in 1837, that is, eighteen hundred and thirty-seven years after the birth of Christ, according to the dates of all documents in Christian countries. Infidels as well as Christians must admit the

fact of such a date. Now the question arises, How came this to pass, if there never was such a person? How could the world be so deceived and deluded?

A pause was made for his reply, but he was silent and absorbed in deep thought. I then stated, that I was that morning reading a passage from Lucian, a Greek writer of the second century, an enemy of Christianity, who speaks of Christians, and says *their Master was crucified*. "Perhaps God turned my attention to that account, that I might speak of it to you, although I knew nothing of your sickness, or of your sentiments."

He was then referred to Celsus and many other opposers of Christianity, who admitted that Jesus Christ lived in Judea, and was crucified there, but said he was an impostor.

The testimony of Infidels who have been converted to Christianity was brought forward, and also the dying testimony of some who left the world in unutterable despair.

Finally, I remarked that I knew not how to take the other side of the question, and to prove there never was such a being as Jesus Christ.

After this there was silence for several minutes, when he seemed to be engaged in intense thought. Very soon he said, "Do you know, sir, of our bereavement this morning?" I replied that I did not. "My eldest son," said he, "died this morning, and is a corpse in the room below." Some conversation followed on the cause and design of afflictions, when he requested me to pray.

After prayer, he said that he desired to make a *declaration*. No one understood what he designed to do. The curiosity of all present being excited, they rose and approached his bed, when, with the deepest solemnity, he expressed himself as follows:

"I wish to make a declaration in the presence of my family and of these witnesses. I now declare before you all, that I am convinced of the error of the sentiments I have advocated for twenty years past. I believe there is such a being as Jesus Christ. I believe he is the Son of God. I believe he is the only name by which we can be saved."

Referring to the uncertainty of life, although he expected to recover, he added, "Whether I shall survive my



present sickness or not, such I wish you to understand is my full belief. *I repent of my error.* I wish you, sir, to use this, my declaration, to comfort or strengthen Christians as you may judge best. If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents, Christians on earth will rejoice also. *I do repent.* Such are the sentiments I believe, and mean to support and defend while I live."

He made this confession with such unaffected sincerity, so important in his own view was this transaction, that he spoke as a man who believed that the eye of God was upon him. Every eye filled with tears, and his wife wept aloud. She afterwards said that she wept for joy. Mr. Baker had often said that his sentiments would be unchanged in death, and that he was not afraid to die. This had been the cause of her deepest grief, which at times she feared would sink her in the grave. He was so deliberate and so fixed in his opinions, that it seemed to her he would never be shaken. He had never suffered religion to be introduced into his family. Up to that very morning when his child died, no one had been permitted to point his dying son to that "Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world."

Calling the next day, and inquiring into the state of his mind, he said he trusted in Jesus Christ for salvation, and added with deep emotion, "I am thankful to God, that I am alive to offer my body a living sacrifice to Jesus Christ."

Some plain conversation was held with him on the nature of experimental religion. He saw clearly the difference between the mere conviction of the understanding and feeling the holy power of truth on the heart, and appeared to enter into the spirit of this distinction. How fatal is the mistake of many who think an *orthodox head* is unquestionable evidence of an *humble and holy heart*.

On the 12th of January he was apparently better. He said he had rested more during the night, and thought he should be out of his chamber in a few days. This occasion was seized as the most favorable yet presented, to converse with him about his future course. He said he 'designed, if God spared his life, to devote it to the Lord Jesus Christ; and as soon as he could, to profess his faith in Christ publicly, that men might know that he was not

ashamed of that Saviour he had so long denied. This was spoken not in the rashness of self-confidence, but apparently under a deep sense of gratitude and obligation to Jesus Christ.

This was the only time I saw him weep. A simple question started the tears in streams. The question was this: "Mr. Baker, how do you feel when you review your past life?" Instantly his cheeks were wet, he seized his handkerchief, shook his head, and only said, "Very unpleasantly."

Remorse was too keen for utterance. His soul was agonized. What must have been the anguish of a father's heart, who had so often ridiculed the very existence of a Saviour before his children, who had robbed his family of their immortal interests, and had suffered his first-born son to pass into eternity uninstructed and unwarned?

The next day Mr. Baker sent for me, with a message that he should not probably live through the day. He was greatly changed, and appeared to be near the hour when his soul would be summoned to the bar of God. He said he was not able to converse much, but he had expressed his desires to Mrs. Baker, and she would communicate them to me. She then said that Mr. Baker requested, if it could be done, that the *Lord's supper* might be administered to him before he died.

This was to me a startling request. I was fearful that he had wrong views of the nature of this ordinance, and like many others, might think, through its influence, to obtain the pardon of sin. Some questions were proposed to him for the purpose of drawing out his views of this institution. Immediately he drew my head down and whispered in my ear, as he was unable to speak aloud without much effort and pain. He said that he regarded the Lord's supper simply as a symbol of the Saviour's sufferings—he did not think there was any efficacy in it to save from sin, and that he did not expect by it to receive forgiveness of his sins, for he trusted only in the blood of Christ for salvation. But his reasons for desiring to receive this ordinance were as follows:

For twenty years he had denied publicly that there ever was such a being as Jesus Christ. Had he lived, he designed to have made a public profession of his faith in

him, and thus undo, as far as possible, the evil he had done. But now he was about to die without the privilege of making a public profession of religion. He therefore desired to make as public a manifestation of his faith in Christ as he could in his situation, and once before he died, if it could consistently be done, to partake of the Lord's supper.

His views were so much in accordance with the word of God and the experience of Christians, and his motives so proper, that the writer was not willing to assume the responsibility of saying that he should not partake the memorials of a Saviour's sufferings before he died.

The table of the Lord was then spread in his dying chamber, where he had often denied the Saviour. The voice of prayer broke the silence of that memorable hour, when all felt that we were at the place where two worlds meet.

He then gave his assent to the essential articles of the Christian faith, and for the first and last time received the emblems of the great sacrifice for sin. This was done with the deepest solemnity, and apparently under the influence of feelings highly devotional.

At 2 P. M. I called again. He was sinking rapidly in the arms of death. You may judge of the state of his mind, from the prompt answer to the following, among other questions.

“Mr. Baker, have you now any fears of death?”

“No, not any.”

“How long is it since you began to doubt the truth of your sentiments?”

“At times I have doubted for many years.”

“Mr. Baker, do you wish your former associates and friends to know that you have renounced your former sentiments, and now die in the full belief of the declaration that you have made?”

“Yes, I do.” This was said with much emphasis.

“Did you think, a few years ago, that you should ever believe and feel as you now do?”

“No, I did not.”

“Is your faith in Jesus Christ now strong and unwavering?”

“Yes, it is.”

“Do you feel willing to submit yourself wholly into the hands of God, and are you now willing to die?”

He bowed assent, and then said, “I am.”

These were the last words I heard him utter.

At 7 P. M. I was again at his bedside. But no voice disturbed him. Nothing around attracted his attention. His eyes were fixed, looking upward. He breathed freely. All was peaceful. He fell asleep so gently, we knew not the moment when he ceased to breathe.

In view of this history, a few thoughts may be suggested.

1. No confidence can be placed in what is called a *death-bed repentance*.

From a number of such instances which the writer has attended, he could not select one in which he has much or any confidence. It may not be very extravagant to say, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, where persons profess repentance in view of death, but unexpectedly recover, they become worse than they were before they professed to repent.

Mr. Baker's case was the reverse of all this. He expressed no anxiety about his salvation until, in his own view, he began to recover. If he exercised any repentance or faith, it was when death was viewed at a distance. Whatever was the real state of his bodily health, he did not think death near until a few hours before he died.

The fears awakened in the prospect of immediate death, have their origin in the selfishness of the heart, and entirely overlook the character and claims of God. The man who begins to repent only when he thinks he can sin no longer with impunity, will be the first to plunge into sin when he believes the punishment he dreads is suspended for a time. If you, beloved reader, are postponing the time of repentance, you must expect soon to be numbered with those who repent not of their deeds, but blaspheme the God of heaven.

2. Christians should be excited to *labor and prayer for the salvation of sceptical men*.

The unbelief and timidity of the church often induce them to think that the case of such men is hopeless. Hence, Christians do not pray for them, but suffer them to go down to hell unwarned. Thus, doubtless, many thought of Mr.

Baker. But how rich the grace of God appears in rescuing the guilty man from infidelity, and as he believed, from eternal death. How offensive to God is it in Christians to neglect the souls of such men. Think of the efficacy of atoning blood, of the power of the Holy Ghost, and of the willingness of God to hear prayer, and then *tell*, if you can, the guilt of unbelief. Have you no reason to believe, Christian reader, that the blood of an infidel friend or neighbor will be found in your skirts on that day when Christians and Infidels "will part to meet no more?"

3. The history of Mr. Baker should both reprove parents and encourage them to be *faithful to their children*. He had been consecrated to God in parental faith and love, and was trained, under the rigid discipline exercised in New England forty years since, by a mother who publicly professed her faith in Christ at the early age of seven, and was a devoted Christian for half a century. This, in connection with the declaration, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," furnished him an argument against the Bible. He often referred to this passage in his course of infidelity, and brought himself forward as evidence that it was false. Alluding to his strictly religious education, he would inquire triumphantly, "Why, then, have I departed?"

His frequent allusions to his strictly religious education, and to the Scripture quoted above, fully prove that his early impressions were not entirely erased, nor his early instructions wholly forgotten. These might have originated those *doubts* that were darting across his pathway of infidelity, and were so fatal to his peace.

How is it with you, parent? "Is it well with thee? Is it well with the child?" Do your children know that you are faithful to them? Are they converted to God? Does God approve of your conduct?

Finally, this account appeals to *the conscience of the Deist and the sceptic*.

The gentleman whose history is before you, said that he had "doubted for many years." To others he appeared to be immovably intrenched in deism. But they knew nothing of the fearful doubts which were waging an intestine and perpetual war against the bulwarks of infidelity that he had thrown around him.

How is it with you, sceptical reader? Have you no doubts about your sentiments? Is your mind at rest, both day and night? Do you hear from within no whispers of alarm—no forebodings of trouble yet to come?

Whence did you learn that the Bible is false, and Jesus Christ an impostor? Did you from the death-bed of the Deist, or of the Christian—from the despair and horror of the one, or from the joy and triumph of the other? *Are you CERTAIN that the Bible is false?* If you are not, *beware.* If it is not false, the certainty of your eternal perdition as a sceptic, is as unquestionable as your existence. Only lodge the thought in your heart that *you may be on a false foundation*, and then judge for yourself of the prospect before you.

Perhaps another reader respects the Bible, and says he believes it, but is unconcerned. Have you no fears about your salvation? Are your nerves firm when you look upward to the judgment-seat? Do you desire to depart from this world of sin, to be with Christ; or do you tremble when you think of the hour of departure? Remember, my dear friend, “the fear of the wicked, it shall come upon him.”

Fly, then, from these fears—*instantly fly* to the Lord Jesus Christ. He only can save you. But if you will not repent, and believe in Christ, then sit down and weep, and forget not your eternal inheritance: “The fearful and unbelieving,” says the immortal God, “shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

SHORT METHOD  
WITH THE SCEPTIC.

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By sceptics is intended all those, of every name, who reject the essential doctrines of Christianity: as the existence of one infinitely perfect Creator and Moral Governor of the universe; the divine original of the Christian Scriptures; salvation by atoning blood which they reveal; the immortality of the soul; the necessity of holiness of heart and life, and future eternal rewards and punishments. An exposition of the *causes* of scepticism would doubtless be a sufficient answer to most of the reasonings by which it is defended; but there are men who have been drawn into scepticism by the pressure of unhappy influences, who would be glad to know, that they may obey, the truth; and who, finding every scheme unsatisfying at the present, and gloomy in the prospect, would be glad to see solid evidence of the truth of Christianity, if it exists, that they may calmly and peacefully repose their all upon its blessed promises. Let such consider the following propositions.

PROPOSITION I. It is greatly to be desired that there should be a righteous Moral Governor, of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness, to control the affairs of this world, and that he should vouchsafe to men a revelation, explaining their destiny and their duty.

It is not seen how any serious mind can affirm against this proposition. The history of our world shows that men will have some kind of religion, and will worship some sort

of deities. Where a God of holiness is not known, loathsome and ferocious objects have been deified ; and the human mind has uniformly sunk under tyranny, superstition, and most debasing vice. The wisest of ancient philosophers taught that a revelation was needed, and would be a great blessing. As none but the lawless and profligate object to equitable rule in families or in states, none but such can dislike the administration of a righteous government over the universe.

PROPOSITION II. The Bible delineates the character of an infinitely perfect Creator, and enjoins upon all men such actions and such tempers of mind as might be expected if it were actually from God.

In this, all serious readers of the Bible, of all ages, have concurred : wherever this book has been spread, it has overturned and banished every other system of belief in regard to Deity, nor have the wise and good been able to discover the least defect in this revelation of Jehovah, or to add a single word that could render it more perfect or glorious. The sayings and actions of very wicked men are indeed recorded, and the sins of the righteous unsparingly revealed ; yet no one has ever found precepts which were not wise, equitable, and good. The entire code of Scripture morals, or, in other words, the rule of human action, is contained in a few sentences, commonly called the *ten commandments*, which are seen at a glance to form a standard, simple, comprehensive, and just, to perfection. The same perfect rule is summed up, by one of the prophets, in this beautiful sentence : “ He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ? ” And the Lord Jesus has embodied the preceptive parts of the Old and New Testaments in these words : “ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind ; this is the first and great



commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself; on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

That the morality of the Christian Scriptures is perfect, and worthy of infinite Wisdom, distinguished infidels themselves allow. Lord Herbert, one of the earliest English deistical writers, says, that "Christianity is the best religion, and that his own universal religion of nature agrees with Christianity, and contributes to its establishment." Lord Bolingbroke, who wrote largely against the Bible, confesses that "such moral perfections are in God as Christians ascribe to him; that Christianity is a republication of the religion of nature, and that its morals are pure." Admissions substantially like these are made by the Earl of Shaftsbury, Chubb, Tindal, and other distinguished infidels of Great Britain. The French sceptic, J. J. Rousseau, says, "If all were perfect Christians, individuals would do their duty; the people would be obedient to the laws; the chiefs just; the magistrates incorrupt; the soldiers would despise death, and there would be neither vanity nor luxury in such a state." Thomas Paine, with all his daring denial of facts and gross ribaldry respecting the Scriptures, concedes that the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, are genuine; not perceiving that this admission inevitably establishes the truth of nearly the whole of the Old Testament, for the books here mentioned accredit most of the prophetic writings. Mr. Paine also declares, that our Saviour was "a virtuous and amiable man, and that the morality he preached and practised was of the most benevolent kind."

From these facts, who can avoid the conclusion that the Bible embodies just such precepts as a holy God would enjoin—just such precepts as conduce to universal peace and happiness, and therefore may most safely be obeyed, and ought to be most faithfully followed?

PROPOSITION III. Christianity produces precisely the same effects upon communities and individuals, as might be expected if the system were really from heaven.

Not a state or community can be found in the whole world oppressed with ignorance or tyranny, where the religion of the Bible is embraced by the people; and not a nation or tribe has been ever found, in which science, social happiness, and civil freedom were enjoyed by the mass of the citizens, except where the Bible was read and revered. The boasted republics of ancient time form no exception to this universal fact. Not an instance is known to have ever occurred, where a ferocious, or dishonest, or licentious man, truly set himself to obey the Scriptures, without becoming an amiable, useful, and happy citizen. Great numbers who have called themselves Christians, have doubtless been hypocrites, and some even monsters of wickedness; but this fact can in nowise affect the truth of the Bible, nor render doubtful its real tendency, since almost every thing valuable or pure has been corrupted and counterfeited by those who were wilfully ignorant, and especially by those who would appear to be what they were not. Moreover, *sceptics themselves* evince their belief in the purifying and ennobling tendency of Christianity, for they uniformly demand of its professors a holier life than *they* themselves maintain; and are very ready to condemn, as arrant hypocrisy, every appearance of selfishness or vice in the church.

PROPOSITION IV. None have honestly and perseveringly sought to know the truth in regard to Christianity, at the same time living pure and useful lives, without gaining assurance of its divine origin, and realizing to themselves its power.

Let the history of every distinguished sceptic of other days be appealed to, and of every infidel now upon the stage. The Scripture account of the origin of infidelity

may be easily and most thoroughly confirmed : “ Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil ; for every one that doeth evil *hateth the light, neither cometh to the light,* LEST HIS DEEDS SHOULD BE REPROVED.” Men naturally dislike that which rebukes and threatens them ; of course those who love sin, will turn away from the Bible. From neglect of divine truth, and a cherished hope that its denunciations against them may not be real, come the beginnings of scepticism. A few years’ neglect of religious instruction will leave men in such darkness as may make them confident in errors which at first were too gross to be embraced. The testimony of thousands proves, that when men are ready heartily to forsake all vice and sin in every form, they find no difficulty in gaining an assurance of the truth of the Christian religion.

PROPOSITION V. No individual is known ever to have regretted living a devoted Christian life ; or to have found the promised consolations of religion delusive in adversity, or in the near prospect of death.

How can it be accounted for, that the Gospel of Christ is adapted to every emergency, and satisfies every need ; and that the more it is tried and proved by sincere obedience, the more it is found to be “ the wisdom of God, and the power of God ? ” How is it that the believer, on a sick bed or in a dying hour, never regrets his devotedness to Christ, nor complains of the insufficiency of religion to sustain him ; while great numbers in such seasons have renounced their scepticism, and prayed and mourned for the Christian’s hope ?

PROPOSITION VI. It is irrational, and must be dangerous, to reject a religion which is essentially safe, which is ennobling to human nature, which enjoins loyalty and love to supreme excellence, and which seeks to diffuse happiness through the whole earth.

Here let the sceptical reader pause and reflect. It can never be unsafe to live a humble, prayerful, benevolent life. It cannot but be ennobling to strive after purity of heart, and to labor for the greatest good of the whole human family. It is plain that Christianity is *true* to our individual interests, wants, and hopes; *true* to the interests of the world; *true* to all our superior relations; and without the evidence which would prove the Gospel *true* to history, may it not be well affirmed that the infidel has nowhere solid foundation upon which to rest; and that the sceptic is driven by the calm exercise of reason from the last refuge of his wicked disbelief?

As a REMEDY FOR SCEPTICISM, then, we say, let an individual set himself in earnest to live as his better judgment teaches that a man ought to live who is under the watchful care of a merciful, just, and holy God; and with this temper let him seek after truth. If his mind has been long poisoned by exposure to malign influences, let him, in addition to some treatise on the authenticity of the Scriptures, as Paley's, Soame Jenyns', Bogue's, or Bishop Watson's, read the memoirs of such men as John Newton and Edward Payson, and especially let him make himself a careful student of the BIBLE. Let no sceptic, who is unwilling to forsake his sins and live a life of practical godliness, pretend that reason or philosophy justify him in his impious course. It is not so.

The Bible promises, Proverbs 2: 3-5, that those who seek for heavenly wisdom with all their heart, shall find. It proffers, also, a divine influence, Luke 11: 13, and James 1: 5, to those who feel their need, and ask of God. It even declares, John 7: 17, that if men will *do the will of God* as revealed, they shall "*know*" whether the doctrine be eternal truth. Let the declarations in these passages be tested, and let no man, who is unwilling to honor and obey a rule of perfect rectitude, attempt to sustain himself by the deceits and falsehoods of infidelity.

## THE TESTIMONY OF AN INFIDEL.

A TRUE NARRATIVE.

Mr. B. lived in London ; he was a man of good abilities, successful in business, and possessed considerable property ; his manners were gentlemanly, and being lively and gay, as well as good-tempered, his company was much sought. With these advantages, to which may be added very excellent health and an agreeable person, it is not surprising that he was what the world usually calls a happy man, but we must add that he was, in the fullest sense of the word, an infidel and blasphemer. His greatest pleasure was to laugh at religion, and to burlesque the Bible. In company he eagerly seized every opportunity of declaring his sentiments, and of laughing at and deriding any person who professed religion. The blasphemies he uttered upon these occasions frequently were such as to strike with horror, not only the persons who were the subjects of his jokes, but also the rest of the company ; and to such lengths did he proceed, that the more moderate of his friends, when inviting him to their parties, would sometimes require him to promise that he would, for the time, refrain from profane discourse ; which promise, when given, he would strictly observe.

Thus he went on for several years, enjoying strong health, and every circumstance which could contribute to his worldly gratification. At length he was attacked by a severe illness. In a few days the progress of the disease was rapid ; he was alarmed, and eagerly inquired whether he was supposed to be in danger. His friends, observing his alarm, and fearing a knowledge of the real state of the case would hasten his end, concealed from him his danger, endeavoring to assure him that his illness would soon abate. Some days passed ; the disease increased, and he continued these anxious inquiries still more frequently. At length he was considered as decidedly past hope of recovery, and it became necessary to acquaint him with his danger. His friends did

this in the mildest manner, still endeavoring to buoy up his hopes, and to prevent him from being alarmed; but the truth could be no longer concealed; *he now saw his awful state.*

Instantly he broke out in the most dreadful exclamations, crying out that *his soul was lost*, and, for some hours, continued to repeat similar expressions; at the same time groaning deeply. After a short interval he renewed his exclamation, declaring he was now convinced the Bible was true, and that there was reality in religion, and expressed the most earnest desire that his life might be spared for a year, for a month, *or even for a week, that he might declare he was convinced of the falsehood of his former opinions.* In this state he continued for some time; when feeling his end approaching, he renewed his earnest wishes, that if he could not be spared for a week, *a day, a single day* might be granted, that he might warn others, as he himself “was going to hell.” At length he cried out, “*I am sinking into hell!—Oh, the burning—the burning—the torments of hell!*” This, and similar exclamations, he continued to utter while life lasted, (for about thirty hours longer,) shrieking and groaning so dreadfully that his friends all fled his bedside, and even the nurse, accustomed as she was to death-bed scenes, could scarcely be induced to continue in the room. At length he expired, on the third day after his danger was communicated to him: the whole interval having been a continued scene of horror and despair, which the pen fails to describe, and the imagination is unable fully to conceive.

There are several persons now living (1819) who bear testimony to the truth of this narrative.

# A FEW THOUGHTS.

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BY A MEMBER OF THE BAR.

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EXTRACT FROM A LETTER ADDRESSED BY ONE MEMBER OF THE BAR TO ANOTHER, AND TO WHICH THESE PAGES MAY BE REGARDED AS AN ANSWER.

“You too, it seems, have joined the church. What does this mean? I have been inclined to think, that men of business could find better employment.

“Give me your honest thoughts on the subject.”

ABOUT eighteen hundred years ago, a small tract of country bordering on the Mediterranean sea, and commonly known by the name of Palestine, or the land of Judea, and which now forms a part of Asiatic Turkey, was inhabited by a peculiar race of people, called the Jews. The northern and most barren province of this country, in consequence of its frontier position, was called Galilee of the Gentiles; and although the inhabitants were principally Jews, yet their habits, their language and accent, differed so essentially from those of their southern and more polished neighbors, that they were generally esteemed the most simple and ignorant part of the Jewish nation.

In the interior of Galilee there was a small lake of fresh water, about twelve miles in length, by some three or four in breadth, near the head of which was situated a small village called Capernaum, and which was supported chiefly by the fisheries on the borders of the lake. Shortly after the Roman empire had extended itself over the entire civilized world, and Herod, through the joint interest of Cæsar and Mark Antony, had been appointed king of Judea by

the senate of Rome, a person about thirty years of age made his appearance in the obscure village of Capernaum, as a public teacher in religion; or, as was supposed by some of his contemporaries, as a founder of a new religious sect. Of his early life little is known, except that he was born of poor and illiterate parents, who resided in the small town of Nazareth, about fifteen or twenty miles distant from Capernaum. His father was a carpenter, and it is probable that the son followed the same occupation, until about the time he removed to Capernaum, where he first commenced his public instructions in religion. As he travelled from place to place, on the shores of lake Gennesaret and its vicinity, he collected about him a few poor, illiterate fishermen and tent-makers, whom he called his disciples; a common appellation, in that age, for the followers of any sect in religion or philosophy. In the space of about three years, in company with his disciples, he visited most or all of the towns and villages in Palestine; but the doctrines he taught, and the principles he inculcated, were almost everywhere spoken against, and himself and his disciples were most commonly ridiculed and despised by the wise and learned men of that day. He at length came to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jewish nation, then one of the most populous and beautiful cities of the East, where he was arrested upon a charge of high treason against Cæsar, and of blasphemy against the Jewish religion, and was put to death as a malefactor. His disciples forsook him, and fled; and thus there seemed to be an end of the religion of Jesus Christ.

His disciples, however, within a few weeks after his death, reassembled at Jerusalem; and having made some preliminary arrangements, undertook to carry into execution one of the last commands of their Master—that, “beginning at Jerusalem,” they should “go into all the world,



and preach his Gospel to every creature." The consequence was, that the religion of Christ revived and spread with renewed vigor, not only in Judea, the soil that gave it birth, but throughout Asia, Africa, and Europe; and it has ever since prevailed, to a greater or less extent, in most or all of the civilized nations of the earth; and at the present day, we see it exerting no small influence over quite a large portion of the human family.

In tracing the history of this system of religion, a fact somewhat remarkable presents itself at every step in our progress. It is, that in every age, and in every country where the religion of Jesus Christ has prevailed, his true disciples are, generally, found among the common and humbler classes of mankind; while few men of wealth and rank have embraced his principles, or submitted to his authority. That such was the character of the early Christians, we have authority much less questionable than that of Tacitus, the Roman historian of that period. Among the converts to Christianity in the first century, was a learned Jew, a contemporary of Tacitus, and a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia. He was a Roman citizen by birth, and resided in the city of Rome about two years, during the reign of the emperor Nero. He travelled throughout Asia, visited Spain, and, as some think, the southern parts of England; and from his writings, several of which are still extant, he appears to have been a man of talents, and an accurate observer of human character. In one of his letters, written at Ephesus, a city of Asia Minor, to his friends at Corinth, in speaking of the Christian religion, and of the character of its professors, he says, "Not many wise men of the world, not many mighty, not many noble are called." This character, drawn by one of the ablest advocates of Christianity, has been confirmed by the experience of every succeeding age, throughout a period of eighteen hundred years.

It is true, that the wise men of the world have bestowed their honors upon the Christian name. In about three centuries from the death of Christ, not only the city of Rome, which Tacitus, in the first century, considered as polluted by the mere introduction of Christianity, but the whole Roman empire, with all its dominions, principalities, and powers, had renounced their national superstitions, and adopted the religion of Jesus Christ. The inhabitants of the earth have assumed the Christian name by nations; and Christian nations have congregated themselves into one vast dominion under the general name of Christendom. The rights of property, of reputation, and of life, have been made to depend upon the sacredness of an oath administered upon a book purporting to contain his history and the principles of his religion; and instead of the Olympiads of Greece, and the foundation of the "Eternal City," *Anno Domini* has become the landmark in the history and chronology of the world.

But how does it happen, that Christianity has so long been the prevalent religion among the most refined and opulent nations of the earth, and yet so few men of talents, wealth, and distinction, have embraced its principles, or acknowledged its authority?

The first inquiry obviously is, *What is Christianity?* What are its pretensions? Is it based upon the principles of common-sense? Does it open a field for thought and the exercise of intellect? Or is it adapted only to men of uncultivated minds, like the illiterate fishermen of Galilee, to whom it was first promulgated? Is it consistent with human reason and the dignity of human nature? Or is it, like the religious systems of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, a mere instrument in the hands of the crafty and the ambitious, to keep an ignorant and unruly populace in subjec-

tion? Will it stand the test of a sound, discriminating judgment? Or is it, like the Pagan and Mohammedan superstitions of our own day, grounded upon the fears of the timid and the passions of the sensualist? Is it based upon the principles of truth and justice? Or is it an imposture, palmed upon the credulous and superstitious by a cunning and ambitious priesthood?

In order to obtain a more satisfactory answer to these questions, it may be well to take a brief survey of *ourselves*, as rational and intelligent beings. Let a man, for a few moments, turn his thoughts upon himself. He finds that he has a body evidently material, but which assumed its form and advanced to maturity by the operation of causes over which he had little or no control. Within this body there is a mysterious something, called the soul, conscious of its own existence and identity, and possessed of powers capable of improvement and expansion beyond any assignable limits. It is the arbiter of all his movements, and uses the various members of the body, like instruments in the hand of a mechanic, to execute the purposes of its own will. It is the seat of a constant restlessness and solicitude; dissatisfied with what it has, and ever grasping for what it has not; and oftentimes, from its own action upon itself, it feels an agony of suffering almost beyond endurance. There was a time when it began to exist, and to be conscious of its existence; but whether that existence shall ever end, whether that consciousness shall ever cease to be felt, what was its origin, and what shall be its destiny, are questions not to be solved by any exertions of its own powers. It exists, it thinks, it feels—all beyond is doubt and mystery.

If he directs his attention to other objects than himself, he finds them equally mysterious and incomprehensible. He is located upon the surface of a globe many thousand

miles in diameter, and which, by the aid of certain instruments of his own construction, he finds to be one of a vast number of worlds, at immense distances from each other, and moving with inconceivable velocity around a common centre, which centre is itself supposed to be moving through unknown regions of space. He occupies this globe as a tenant in common with a multitude of other beings of like powers and faculties with himself, divided into numerous families, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, capable of a mutual interchange of thoughts, and feelings, and sympathies; actuated by a thousand different motives, and in pursuit of a thousand different objects; but whose origin and destiny, like his own, and that of the universe around him, are beyond the comprehension of the human intellect.

Among these mysterious objects there is one calculated above all others to arrest his attention and concentrate his thoughts. By the operation of some unknown cause, one of his companions is seized with a weariness, and anxiety, and lassitude. His bodily powers gradually become disorganized, and cease to perform their ordinary functions. At length his limbs and trunk become motionless. His blood stagnates at the heart—his breath ceases—he loses what is called his life—his body, if left to itself, soon becomes a mass of putrefaction; and his friends and neighbors, from motives of self-preservation, are compelled to remove him from their sight, and deposit him in the earth, where he moulders into dust, and his name and memory are forgotten. Nor is this a phenomenon of rare occurrence. The whole population of the globe varies but little from ten hundred millions: and of this number, not less than *eighty-six thousand four hundred* every day, or *three thousand six hundred* every hour, become thus motionless and lifeless, and are either committed to the flames, plunged into the deep, or buried beneath the earth by their survivors. Nor

does this happen for a single hour, or a single day. From very remote periods it is found, that upon an average the whole globe has been depopulated by this mysterious agency called death, and reepeople by another agency scarcely less mysterious, once in about every thirty years; and thus generation has succeeded generation, like the waves of the sea, from the time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.

And is this the destiny of all who now inhabit the earth? Is this immense throng, with all its bustle, and business, and luxury, and dissipation, and sport, and folly, to close its career in the silence and solitude of the tomb? Is this the common portion of the young and the old, the high and the low, the rich and the poor? And am I too included in this general doom? Is it a fact, that I too must leave for ever all my present employments and pleasures? Is it a fact, that the places which now know me, will know me no more for ever? Is it a fact, that these active and vigorous limbs will become cold, and stiff, and motionless? Is it a fact, that the time will come when this heart of mine, which has so long and so faithfully circulated the current of life, must exhaust itself in its own struggles, and cease for ever from its labors? Is it a fact, that the time will come when I too, in the agonies of dissolving nature, must breathe forth that last, convulsive groan, which proclaims that death has won another victory? Is it a fact, that this body which I have so long and so carefully fed, and clothed, and nourished, must lie buried beneath the earth, and there in silence and solitude moulder into dust, and be remembered no more for ever? And is this the *end* of my being—the end of consciousness—the end of thought? Is this longing after immortality—this inward dread—this startling and shrinking back of the soul upon itself, at the thought of its own annihilation, the dream of a disordered fancy?

Or will this mysterious something within me rise above the ruins of its earthly tabernacle, and enter upon some unknown and untried state of being? What then shall be my employment, and where shall be my home? Shall I be still myself? Shall I mingle with other kindred spirits, and unfold new energies, and find new employments, new joys, and new sorrows? Or is death an endless sleep; and will the soul, faithful to the tenement which it has so long inhabited, sink with the body into one common grave, and for ever cease to feel—cease to think—and cease to be?

And is it a fact, that these momentous questions are still open—still undecided? Has nothing occurred in the history of our race to tell us what we are, or what we shall be? Did the progenitor of our race, if progenitor we had, leave no record behind him to tell his posterity how and whence he derived his being, and what should be their final destiny? Of the innumerable millions of our race, which for so many ages have been thronging the regions of the dead, has no one ever returned to tell us what there may be beyond the dark confines of the grave? And is this the state of man, with all his wisdom, and forethought, and mighty intellect? Must he live, and die, and sink into the grave, in the midst of such uncertainties—so ignorant of himself, of his being and destiny; with such startling doubts whether, To be, or not to be—happiness or woe—life eternal or death everlasting, is to be his portion beyond the tomb? No—the mystery is solved. Glad tidings have reached us from beyond the grave. JESUS OF NAZARETH—the despised, the rejected, the crucified JESUS OF NAZARETH—has solved the mystery. JESUS OF NAZARETH, the SUN of the moral universe, has risen over the night of the grave, with healing in his beams, and revealed the most momentous truth that ever can be brought within the

range of the human intellect, that THE SOUL OF MAN SHALL LIVE FOR EVER.

The question then recurs, *What is Christianity* ; and what does it tell us of our being and our destiny ?

It tells us, that there is one great, invisible, self-existent Being—infinite in wisdom—infinite in power—a spirit, infinitely pure—infinately holy—the Maker and Ruler of the universe, and whose existence is from everlasting to everlasting—without beginning, and without end. That at some remote period in the eternity of his existence, this great and good Being saw fit to create the earth we now inhabit, gave it a place in the magnificent system of worlds of which it continues to form a part, and subjected its movements to those great laws which regulate and control the material universe. That about six thousand years ago, God, out of the dust of the earth, created MAN in his own moral image, breathed into him an immortal soul, and fixed his habitation in the plains of Asia, then a paradise, with directions to dress, and cultivate, and people the earth. That Adam, as he came from the hands of his Maker, was pure and holy, with all the affections of his heart centered upon God, and his supreme delight to worship and adore his great Creator and Benefactor. That to Adam, thus created and thus blessed, God, as his Sovereign, gave certain laws, holy, just, and good—the sum of whose requirements was, that man should continue to obey and love his Creator supremely ; and, to the violation of which, not only death, or the dissolution of the body into its original dust, but banishment of the soul from the presence and favor of his Maker, and consequently misery and woe, without limitation and without end, were annexed as penalties. That Adam was fully endowed by his Creator with a capacity either to obey or disobey the divine law, according to the free, voluntary determination of his own will. That in the

exercise of this absolute, unqualified freedom of choice, Adam did wilfully and deliberately transgress the divine law, and thereby lost at once the moral image of his Maker, all actual enjoyment of him, and all true desires to know and serve him. That upon this act of disobedience the earth was cursed by its Maker, and Adam was cast out of paradise, a fugitive and a wanderer, justly exposed to the tremendous penalties of the violated law. That this same Adam became the progenitor—the common father of the whole human family; and that all his posterity, from generation to generation, have continually followed in his footsteps, wandering far from God, disliking to retain him in their thoughts, loving supremely other and unworthy objects, and living in continual disobedience to his holy commandments; and thus all are guilty, and consequently deserving the fearful retributions of divine justice. That man being thus lost and ruined, God, in his infinite mercy, devised a plan which preserved inviolate the purity and integrity of his law, and at the same time opened a way by which Adam and all his fallen race might be pardoned and restored to the love, and favor, and presence of their Maker. That by this plan it was provided that at some future time God the Son would descend upon the earth, and take upon himself a human form; and by a perfect obedience to the holy law of God, and by his own personal sufferings and an ignominious death upon the cross, make an atonement for the sins of the whole world. That the atonement thus to be made is sufficient to cover all the sins of all mankind; but that in order to receive its benefits, and secure the salvation of the soul, every man must exercise a genuine sorrow for having violated the laws of God, and place his entire reliance for salvation upon the atonement thus made by the Son of God; in the just performance of which, the heart, under the influences of the Spirit of God, becomes



renewed, and all its affections restored to God as the supreme object of love and gratitude. That the life of man is a state of trial or probation, during the continuance of which the terms of salvation are freely offered to his acceptance. That death, the great crisis in our being, terminates for ever this state of probation; and upon the dissolution of the body, the soul enters at once into the world of spirits, and there receives its doom according to the character it formed while an inhabitant of this earth. If it has truly repented of its sins and led a life of holiness, it receives the approbation of its Maker, takes up its everlasting abode in his presence, feels no more pain, no more sorrow, no more trouble; mingles with other kindred spirits of just men made perfect, and lives and expatiates for ever in the enjoyment of such blessings "as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive:" but if, on the other hand, life has passed away without repentance, and without reconciliation to God through the atonement, the soul is banished from the presence of its Maker; and, overwhelmed with a consciousness of its own guilt, sinks into the world of despair, where hope never comes, and where those dreadful agonies which are sometimes felt in this life, take complete possession of the soul, and become "the gnawings of a worm that never dies, and the burnings of a fire that is never quenched."

Christianity also tells us, that at the appointed time the Son of God did descend upon the earth, and in the person of Jesus of Nazareth dwelt among men for the space of thirty years. That he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; was despised and rejected of men; was mocked, and buffeted, and spit upon; and at length, pressed down and overwhelmed with the accumulated load of human guilt, he was crucified between two thieves: an event which filled all heaven with wonder and amazement,

and the contemplation of which will swell the bosoms of redeemed spirits with love and gratitude throughout the never-ending ages of eternity. That he was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead; that he ascended into heaven, and now sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty, the Prince and Saviour of the world. That the earth is not to remain for ever the habitation of man; but that a day is fixed by Him who made it, when the Son of God shall again descend from heaven in his glory, and all the holy angels with him; that at his presence the earth and the heavens shall flee away, and no place be found for them; that all who are in their graves, both small and great, shall stand before him, and he shall separate them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left: then shall he say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: and then shall he also say unto them on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; and these shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous into life eternal. And thus shall end this world's eventful history; and the destiny of every son and daughter of Adam being thus irrevocably fixed, the ages of eternity will again roll onward, and this earth, with all its concerns, will be numbered among the things that have been, but are not.

Such, Christianity tells us, is the origin, and such the final destiny of our race. Nor need we stop to show that what Christianity tells us is true, and entitled to our confidence. No: the foundations of the Christian religion are laid too deep and too broad; its evidences are too clear and too convincing; its provisions are too kindly adapted to the wants, the necessities, the longings of an immortal

mind, ever to be rejected by the sincere inquirer after truth and happiness ; and it may be asserted, without the fear of contradiction, that no man ever yet lived, in any age or country, and remained an infidel, who read the Bible with an honest heart, and a sincere desire to know the truth.

The question then recurs, Why is it that so few men of wealth, of influence, of rank, are found among the true disciples of Jesus Christ ?

The answer may be given in a few words. *They will not take time for serious reflection.* Look abroad throughout the length and breadth of our land. How many of our lawyers, and physicians, and statesmen, have ever examined the evidences of the Christian religion with any degree of faithfulness ? How many have ever read the Bible with a sincere desire to know whether its contents are true or false ? How many who may chance to read these lines, have ever spent one single hour in the serious contemplation of death, and its momentous consequences ? How many have ever permitted the mind to dwell, for a single hour, upon that great truth, that the soul is immortal ; that this life is but the dawn of its existence, and that it yet has an eternity to spend in some unknown and untried state of being beyond the grave ? Not that religious thoughts are entirely excluded from the mind. At some leisure moment a superficial view is taken of the Christian world as divided into sects, regulated by various forms and ceremonies, governed by different constitutions and laws, and, alas, too often distracted by sectarian and theological controversies. Without stopping to notice the great and important fact, that all Christians harmonize upon the fundamental principles of Christianity ; that all unite upon the essential requisites to fit man for happiness in this world and the world to come ; the hasty inference is drawn, that religion is nothing more than opinions and disputes, or a talk about

outward duties, alike beneath the serious regard of a cultivated and an intelligent mind.

It is true, the claims of Christianity are sometimes more closely pressed upon the heart and conscience. Take, for instance, the lawyer.\* It is Saturday night. Court has adjourned late. He returns home weary and exhausted in body and mind. He seats himself in his office. "To what purpose is all this labor, and weariness, and anxiety? What real advantage do I hope to derive from all these struggles, and projects, and speculations? Suppose I acquire wealth and reputation, can they make me happy? Alas, I am weary of them even now. I know and feel that this soul of mine was created for nobler purposes. My possessions too I must soon leave. Leave?—and where shall I then go? To a world for which I have made no preparation. To a world of disembodied spirits, where nothing of all that I value here will be of the least use to me. Why, then, this labor and anxiety? What folly! What madness! Why not at once follow the dictates of reason and common-sense, and begin to live for something better?"

To one ignorant of the human heart, it would seem that this man was almost a Christian: but mark the result. A thought connected with the transactions of the day strikes his mind—an important cause just decided—a bad debt secured—a speculation—a motion in court—and thus thought after thought drops into the mind and expels at once all serious reflections. He plunges deeper than ever into his business; and the consequence probably is, that the same scene will be repeated again and again with similar results, till at length death dissolves the spell, and ushers his immortal spirit, unprepared, into the presence of his God.

\* A similar train of thought is found in *Abbott's Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 12.

Take the physician. He has just witnessed the last moments of a Christian. During the progress of the disease nothing remarkable was observed, except a somewhat more than usual degree of patience and resignation, accompanied with a uniform feeling of thankfulness for all the little kindnesses bestowed upon him by his friends. Once, upon receiving some little refreshment tendered by the kind hand of some one of the family, there was seen on his countenance an expression of anxiety amounting almost to anguish. It was the thought that he was so soon to go away, and leave behind him those who were so kind to him, and whom he so tenderly loved. But the cloud soon passed away, and his countenance resumed its wonted calmness and serenity. At length the hour of his departure arrives. There is no wild commotion—no enthusiastic extravagance. His features are much wasted, and his eye, though somewhat sunk in the socket, is full of calmness and hope. His countenance beams with unwonted serenity, and a kind of mysterious energy comes over him which is felt by all about him. “I am going,” says he, “the way of all the earth. I feel that the hand of death is upon me, and that I am about entering upon the realities of the eternal world. But I am willing to go. I have tried to love and serve my Saviour; and O, now he does not forsake me. Wife and children, grieve not for me. Be diligent—be faithful; and after a few more days of sorrow and affliction, we shall all meet again—root and branch—all gathered home—a family in heaven.” A long, deep respiration announces that the soul has gone to Him who made it.

The physician retires, and proceeds slowly towards home. “This certainly was not a nervous affection, nor an affection of the brain, nor any thing of a spasmodic nature. What was it? He was a Christian: that is the secret—

and I too am determined to become a Christian. I will set about a preparation for another world. Nothing else is comparatively of any importance. To be ready and willing *to die!* O, let me have the Christian's hope. Let *me* die the death of the righteous, and let *my* last end be like his." Such are his reflections: and does he become a Christian? Alas, these serious thoughts and serious promises are all chased out of the mind by the bare recollection of some unusual symptom which manifested itself in the progress of the disease, or by some trifling inquiry of a neighbor; or else the consideration of the whole matter is postponed *for the present*.

Incidents like these are of daily occurrence. Men of business, professional men, politicians, men of intelligence, have not time to think seriously on the subject of religion. Wealth, reputation, intellectual gratification, are paramount objects; and such indeed is their influence over the human heart, that it is noticed as a remarkable fact, that few men ever become truly pious after they arrive at the age of *thirty* years. At or about this period in life, almost every man experiences a kind of constitutional change—a change in his intellectual faculties—a change in his feelings—a change in his views of men and things. If he be not a Christian, the mind settles down composedly and firmly upon the acquisition of wealth, or honor, or pleasure, or whatever else is fixed upon as the great leading object of life. The heart becomes harder, and colder, and more selfish. The ruling passion grows and strengthens. The admonitions of conscience are less and less regarded, till at length he is cut down, and sinks into the grave, without God, and without hope—lost, and lost for ever.

Besides, Christianity treats of some matters, the serious consideration of which is not congenial to the natural feelings of the human heart. To one who is not a Christian,

no three words in the English language convey more repulsive ideas than DEATH, JUDGMENT, and ETERNITY. Whatever may be his professions—whatever may be his philosophy—whatever may be the strength of his intellect, there is a kind of mysterious meaning—a kind of indistinct foreboding of evil to come, connected with these terms, as used in the Christian religion, at the serious contemplation of which his mind almost instinctively revolts. The language of the heart, if not of the lips, is, “Go thy way for this time ; at a convenient season, I will call for thee.”

Such are some of the main reasons why so few men of intelligence and influence become Christians.

It sometimes happens, however, that men of this character are led to examine the subject of religion with a very considerable degree of care and attention. They become satisfied of the general truths of Christianity, and think and speak well of its institutions, and entertain a kind of indefinite hope that all will be well with them in another world. They perhaps regularly attend public worship, and lead moral lives, and do many things. But there are parts of the Christian religion which are mysterious, and which they do not comprehend. “Our clergymen tell us—and the Bible seems to warrant the assertion—that in order to be happy in another world, a man must be born again ; must be born of the Spirit of God. Now I do not understand this. To be *born again* ! To be *born of the Spirit of God* ! What does this mean ? How can these things be ?”

There is nothing unnatural, or contrary to the soundest principles of human reason, in the supposition that the soul of man may be operated upon by an unseen and supernatural power. The death of a Marshall can awaken emotions of sorrow and regret in the bosoms of millions of his countrymen. A few threatening words in the message of the President of the United States, can excite the apprehen-

sions, and concentrate the thoughts of three of the most populous nations of the earth. The brief military order of a Napoleon, in the shape of a Berlin or Milan decree, can shake the very foundations of civil society, and change the occupation, if not the destiny, of half the civilized world. If the mind of man can be thus wrought upon by human agency, it surely is not unreasonable to suppose, that there may be such an intercommunication between man and his Maker—between the infinite, eternal Mind, and created intellect, as to produce in the latter a change, not inaptly called a *spiritual regeneration*, or *new birth*.

This difficulty is not of modern origin. Soon after the spirit of prophecy had ceased, and when there were no inspired persons to whom the Jews could apply to decide their religious doubts and settle their disputes, a body of men in Judea associated themselves together under the name of the “Pharisees”—an association which existed in the time of our Saviour, and which embraced most of the learned and influential men of that day. Of this number was a certain Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, a man of sound judgment and great acuteness of mind. He had watched the movements of our Saviour from his first entrance into public life—had seen him give sight to the blind, cleanse the lepers, make the dumb to speak, and raise the dead. The possession and exercise of such powers satisfied the cool and reflecting mind of Nicodemus, that whether this Jesus of Nazareth was the long-expected Messiah or not, he was certainly clothed with supernatural energies, and had in fact been sent from God into this world for some important purpose. Nicodemus therefore, believing this to be a fit opportunity for acquiring some satisfactory knowledge of the world of spirits, and the place and mode of our existence after death, determined to gratify his curiosity, and seek a private interview with our Saviour. Ac-



cordingly, on a certain night, shortly after the celebration of the passover at Jerusalem, he came to our Saviour, when the following conversation took place :

“ Nicodemus saith unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God : for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old ? Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born ? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh ; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be ? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things ? If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things ?”

This conversation was had more than eighteen hundred years ago, and the question, “ How can these things be ?” has been repeated in every succeeding age, and still remains unanswered. The world has been inundated with scholastic controversies ; theologians have disputed, and lost their temper ; councils have decreed, and synods adjudicated ; and after all, the question remains precisely where our Saviour left it : “ The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

But it is to be remembered, that the *manner* of operation is one thing, and the *matter of fact* another. The wind may be felt, and we may hear the sound thereof, though we can neither tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. The inquiry of the husbandman is, Is it a *fact* that the earth, by proper culture, will bring forth and bud, and give seed to the sower and bread to the eater? not, *how* is the process effected? The merchant intrusts his fortune upon the ocean, because he knows it to be a *fact* that the needle is true to the pole; not because he can tell *why* it is so. The lawyer appeals to the sympathies of a jury, because he knows that such feelings exist in the human breast; not because he can tell *how*, or in what *manner*, they exist. Physicians may disagree in opinion as to the *manner* in which the body is nourished by food—they may perplex each other with hard words, and argue themselves into a quarrel; while the plain, honest countryman eats his meal in quietness, and gives God thanks for it. So here, the proper inquiry is, Is it a *fact* that men are born again? Is it a *fact* that men are born of the Spirit of God? Let the reader for a moment look into his own neighborhood, and among his own acquaintances. There is an individual, who, for some reason or other, forsakes the company of his former friends and associates, and attaches himself to a body of professing Christians. He abandons his former evil practices—becomes the friend and supporter of the religious and benevolent institutions of the day—is honest and upright in his dealings, and apparently at least, is governed by right principles and right motives. He is a regular attendant upon the public worship of God, participates with his brethren in the social prayer-meeting, and is regular and constant in family and private devotions. Thus far, as to his outward actions; but look into his heart. You there find a thorough conviction of the evil of *sin*. That

in which he once delighted is now loathsome to him. He no longer hears the reproof of sin as words of course, but the mention of his sin comes home to his very heart and conscience. He is convinced, too, of his own misery by reason of sin. He once read the threatenings of God's law, as he did the history of some foreign war; but now he sees and feels that his own everlasting welfare is at stake. He feels, too, the absolute necessity of pardon. Neither credit, nor riches, nor pleasures can heal his wounded conscience. "Jesus Christ and him crucified" is now his only hope of happiness and salvation. These are the real feelings of the heart—the genuine convictions of a man that thirsts; and not merely a change in opinion or theory. The spontaneous, unsophisticated breathing forth of his soul is, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Now this man has been *born again*—has been *born of the Spirit of God*. He may not be able to tell you the time, or the place, or the manner, or the order of these workings of the Spirit; all this may be involved in uncertainty; but in point of *fact*, the very foundations of his heart have been broken up, and he has come forth into the world a new creature, with new hopes and new fears, new joys and new sorrows—an heir of the kingdom of God. Not that new faculties or greater intellectual powers have been implanted in the mind; but simply, the great leading object of his pursuit is changed. All the affections—all the better feelings of the heart, have been taken away from the things of this world, and elevated, and purified, and fixed upon God. The great business of his life now is, to love and obey God, and to do good to his fellow-men. He is as enterprising as ever in all his plans; as persevering and as industrious; but he no longer labors for *himself*. He now acts for God. He is an *agent*, not a *principal*; and he feels and realizes that he must one day render an

exact account of his stewardship to God. Nor is this an irksome employment, and one which he would gladly avoid. No; it is his daily food—his pleasure—his delight. He knows and feels that he is fulfilling the great end of his being; and in all his trials, and in all his troubles, he enjoys a peace of mind, an inward satisfaction, such as this world can neither give nor take away, and with which a stranger intermeddled not. His treasure is in heaven, and to heaven he looks for a final resting-place, when the storms of this life shall have passed away. Such is the man who is *born again*—who is *born of the Spirit of God*.

Nor are cases of this kind so rare in society, as to leave in the mind a rational doubt as to their true character. Instances occur within the range of every man's observation; and it seems to be a part of the general providence of God, that in all places, and in all grades of society, there shall be men of known integrity and uprightness, who have felt in their own hearts this great moral change, and who not only with their lips, but in their lives, say to all about them, There is a reality in this thing called the religion of the heart.

But what are the means necessary to be used on the part of man, in order to effect this great change? As in most other cases where God makes provision for the real happiness of his creatures, the means are plain and simple. *The pride of the heart is to be humbled.* The prodigal son must arise, and go to his father, and say unto him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." There must be this humbling of one's self before God and man. From a broken and a contrite heart, there must ascend that humble, penitential cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner." There must be this absolute, unqualified giving away of one's self, soul and body, mind, might, and strength, to God and his

service. This done, and a man is born again: this done and a man is a Christian.

There is yet another objection, which sometimes embodies itself in language like this: The Bible represents *faith* in Jesus Christ as alone necessary to salvation. I have examined the evidences of the Christian religion, and I do believe in Jesus Christ. I believe he came into this world, and suffered, and died, to make an atonement for the sins of mankind: now, what more is necessary?

It is obvious, that the assent of the understanding to any abstract truth, is one thing; and that such a belief in the same truth, as to excite feeling and action, is quite another thing. The philosopher in his closet, may demonstrate and fully believe the truth of some mathematical principle applicable to the science of navigation; but who does not see the difference between his *faith* and the *faith* of the ship-master, who, amidst the perils of the ocean, is constantly reducing the same principle to actual practice, and thus brings the ship and her crew home in safety? The principle is all the while the same; but in the one case it is abstract and merely *intellectual*, while in the other it is used, practised upon, and *felt* to be true. The latter illustrates the faith of the Gospel; one of the fruits, or rather a constituent part of spiritual regeneration.

A father and his son, late in the day, come to the banks of a stream swollen by a heavy rain. The fears of the boy are excited. Night is at hand. Thoughts of home rush into his mind. He casts an anxious look, first upon the dark and rapid stream, and then upon his father's face. At length the father says to him, The stream is too deep for you, my son. I must carry you in my arms. Be not afraid. I have crossed the stream before. Hold fast to your father, and we shall soon be safe at home. Now, as the son silently clasps his arms around the neck of his kind and affection-

ate father, is there on his part nothing more than the mere assent of the understanding—nothing more than a simple, cold belief, that the father has bone and muscle sufficient to carry him safely across the stream? Far from it. His heart is overflowing with that sincere affection, that warm and filial confidence, which great waters cannot quench, nor floods drown; and as they approach the middle of the stream, and he feels the waters rising upon him, he clings the closer to his father's bosom, and soon is carried beyond the reach of danger, and safely arrives at home. So, too, with the Christian. The days of his pilgrimage draw to a close, and he approaches the cold stream of death, which all must pass. He looks upon the dark and turbid waters with fear and apprehension. But soon he hears the cheering language, "Let not your heart be troubled—Put your trust in me—Fear not—I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Nor are these mere unmeaning words. No. They lie as a cordial at his heart; and as he sinks into the stream, and its waters close over him, he feels beneath him the everlasting arms of his heavenly Father, and is soon carried to those mansions of rest which remain for the people of God.

A day is appointed by law for the session of the supreme judicial tribunal—a court of the last resort. Among other matters waiting a trial, is the cause of a plain, ignorant man, occupying a small tract of land left him by his father, and from the cultivation of which, by the use of great economy, he obtains a scanty livelihood. This little tract of land adjoins the possessions of a rich, and powerful, and avaricious neighbor, who having discovered some supposed defect in the title, has commenced a legal prosecution to recover the possession, and the cause now stands for final hearing at the head of the trial docket in the court of the last resort. Now, the citizens generally, in common with

this poor man, *believe* that this court will sit. They have read it in the statutes, or newspapers, or it is so understood in the neighborhood. A large proportion of the people, however, feel little or no interest in the matter, and give themselves no trouble about it. It is true, they fully *believe* the court will sit; but with them all is well, and they go in peace and quietness about their ordinary vocations; one to his farm, and another to his merchandise. Not so, however, with the man who feels that his little all is at stake. Many a day you will see him laboring in his fields with a sad and heavy heart. He is sowing, but he knows not who may reap. His little inheritance, which has hitherto furnished him and his children with food and raiment, may pass into other hands. His thoughts are continually recurring to the day of trial. He talks of it with his neighbors and friends. All his plans, all his domestic concerns, are arranged in reference to it. To him it is a day above all other days. His counsel advise him to be on his guard, to be constantly preparing for his defence; that he has a subtle and powerful adversary; that the contest will be a severe one, and that without constant watchfulness he will be overcome. At length the day arrives, the cause is opened, the testimony is heard, the opinion of the court is pronounced, and the sentence of the law recorded, "That the defendant go hence without day." The poor man goes home with a heart full of joy, and spends the residue of his days in peace and happiness upon his little patrimony, endeared to him a thousand-fold by the trials and troubles it has cost him.

So, too, the Christian. God has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness; when the secrets of all hearts shall be laid open, and every man shall be rewarded or punished according to the deeds done in the body. This, too, is a matter of public notoriety. It is

promulgated in the Bible, the statutes of God's kingdom, from the pulpit, by missionaries, by Sunday-schools, by prayer-books, by Tracts, and in a thousand other forms. And even in our courts of justice, we daily and hourly witness the appeal made to the "Searcher of all hearts," for the truth, as it shall be answered for at the same "great day." The fact, too, is *believed* by a great proportion of mankind. Indeed, few men express any serious doubts upon the matter. But, like the session of the supreme judicial tribunal, the great mass of mankind feel little or no interest in it. It is yet a great way off. They have not time to think of it. They must make provision for their families. The Judge, too, is a merciful being, and they hope all will be well with them. Besides, religion is a rational thing. "The best of Beings did not send us into the world to go weeping through it; nor will he call us to a severe reckoning because we have snatched at some of its fugacious pleasures." Not so, however, with the real Christian. In the book of God's law—and which is to form the rule of final judgment—he finds language like this :

"Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

He not only *believes*, but he *feels*, that the well-being of his immortal soul, throughout the ages of eternity, will depend upon the decision of that great day; and he acts accordingly. It occupies his thoughts—enters into all his arrangements. His family and neighbors all bear witness of his care and watchfulness. In short, he makes it the



great business of his life to prepare to meet that searching glance of the eye of Omniscience, which he knows will penetrate the inmost recesses of his soul. He, too, has his troubles and his trials, his doubts and his fears. He, too, has a subtle and a powerful adversary, who is continually seeking his destruction. "Without are fightings—within are fears;" and oftentimes there bursts forth from his troubled heart the involuntary cry, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But he, too, has an Advocate; his name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace." His language is, "Son, be of good cheer. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." And when the great and notable day of the Lord shall come; when the Son of man shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and the assembled universe shall stand up in final judgment before him, there will fall upon his ear in the same kind accents, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:" and then with all those who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, he enters upon an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens. *Who would not be a Christian?*

Say not, then, that there is want of evidence, or want of ability. "If any man will do my will, he shall know my doctrine." No earnest, *humble* inquirer ever yet failed in the search. If you will believe with the heart what the mind knows to be true, and will faithfully *act* after the convictions of conscience; if you will unite the affections and

the will, with all the faculties of the mind, in doing what you know and feel to be right, the way of truth will open broad before you, and you will find that all her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

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Nature with open volume stands,  
To spread her Maker's praise abroad,  
And every labor of his hands  
Shows something worthy of a God.

But in the grace that rescued man,  
His brightest form of glory shines ;  
Here, on the cross, 'tis fairest drawn,  
In precious blood and crimson lines.

Here I behold his inmost heart,  
Where grace and vengeance strangely join ;  
Piercing his Son with sharpest smart,  
To make the purchased pleasures mine.

O, the sweet wonders of that cross,  
Where God the Saviour loved and died ;  
Her noblest life my spirit draws  
From his dear wounds and bleeding side.

I would forever speak his name,  
In sounds to mortal ears unknown ;  
With angels join to praise the Lamb,  
And worship at his Father's throne.

Watts.

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THE  
INFIDEL'S CREED;

OR,

THE CREDULITY OF INFIDELITY.

FROM LETTERS ON CHRISTIANITY.

BY OLINTHUS GREGORY, LL. D.

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WE cannot suppose the advocates of Infidelity, as idolizers of reason, to reject the Christian religion, and adopt the notions of Deism, without thinking they have found sufficient reasons for the preference. Let us, my friend, by instituting a short comparison, see if we can discover them. Can a Deist arrive at his convictions by any thing like the following gradation?

Christianity reveals a God, glorious in holiness: deism, though it acknowledges a God, yet in a great measure overlooks his moral character; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity contains a professed revelation of the will of God: deism leaves me in perfect darkness as to his will; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity exhibits palpable, obvious, and simple marks of the nature of virtue and vice: deism envelopes the nature of virtue and vice in the greatest doubt and perplexity; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity furnishes the strongest possible motives for virtuous conduct, and the most cogent reasons for abstaining from vicious conduct: deism appeals only to some vague no-

tions relative to the fitness of things, or to moral beauty, or to expediency, which makes a man's own sentiments and feelings, however fluctuating, his ultimate guide; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity *often* reforms profligate and vicious men: deism *never*; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity frequently prompts men to schemes of the most extensive philanthropy, and compels them to execute those schemes: deism scarcely ever devises any such schemes; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity imparts principles that support men under all the trials and vicissitudes of life: deism can have recourse to no such principles; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity assures me of eternal existence beyond the grave; and that, if it is not to me an eternal portion of felicity, it will be my own fault: deism leaves me perfectly ignorant, let my conduct here be what it may, whether I shall live beyond the grave or not—whether such existence, if there be any, will be limited or infinite, happy or miserable; therefore I prefer deism. Christianity will support me under the languishments of a sick-bed, and in the prospect of death, with the “sure and certain hope,” that death is only a short, though dark passage into an “inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for God's people:” deism will then leave me sinking in an ocean of gloomy apprehensions, without *one* support—in trembling expectation that the icy hand of the king of terrors is about to seize me; but whether to convey me to heaven, to hell, or to a state of annihilation, I know not; therefore I prefer — : no, my friend, it is impossible that any man capable of correct reflection can, after tracing this contrast, say, deliberately and sincerely, *therefore I prefer deism.*

The reasons, then, which weigh with a Deist, must be different from the above. Perhaps you may be told, that the difficulties attending the belief of Christianity are very numerous and great; while the mere reception of the principles of deism is, in a considerable degree, free from difficulty, or at least presents no difficulties against which one's mind can strenuously revolt. To ascertain the force of this assertion, let us endeavor to collect into one point of view the chief propositions which must necessarily be included in the creed of a Deist; and I am much mistaken, if they will not furnish us with some cogent motives for wishing Christianity *may* be true, independent of all those that result from its own intrinsic beauty, value, and excellency.

Here, again, we will suppose a Deist speaking; delivering, if I may so call it, "A confession of his faith" in his own person. And after you have attended to his declaration, I think you will coincide with me in opinion, that *the credulity of unbelievers is the most marvellous thing imaginable*—that the rejecters of the Gospel are the most resolute believers in the world; or with Soame Jenyns, that they "must be possessed of much more faith than is necessary to make them declared Christians, and remain unbelievers from mere credulity." The creed of a Deist, so far as I am able to comprehend his principles, would run thus:

1. I believe that God is a being of matchless holiness, wisdom, power, and benevolence; that in consequence of his holiness, he "cannot look upon iniquity with satisfaction;" that his wisdom would enable him to contrive, his power to execute, and his benevolence stimulate him to accomplish the most effectual plans for the establishment

of virtue and the suppression of vice—for the extinction of mental and moral darkness, and the diffusion of mental and moral light; and yet, that God has suffered mankind in every age, and in almost every country, to remain in the grossest ignorance and darkness for nearly 6,000 years—to struggle with prejudices, to immerse themselves in the blackest and most dismal crimes, to perform the most horrid and murderous rites, and fancy them religious services; that he makes the being who possesses the finest faculties, to be the greatest enemy to his species, and thus to plunge himself and others into the deepest miseries: and all this in consequence of his never affording them the remotest aid—never supplying them with any invariable principles as preservatives against error, or any specific rules by which they should shape their conduct. That is, I believe this palpable contradiction, that the goodness of God has allowed this horridly miserable state of mankind to continue for so many centuries, and has all along prompted him to refuse them any effectual aid or direction.

2. I believe that what is called the Mosaic account of the creation of the world and the fall of man, is a mere fable; and therefore I believe that God, the wisest and the best of beings, created man with the most noble, refined, and extraordinary faculties of body and mind—faculties infinitely superior to what are possessed by other living creatures; that while *they* eat, and drink, and sleep, unconscious of what shall befall them, *he* may indulge the doubtful anticipation, intermingled with frequent *dread* of future occurrences; and that while *they* are supplied with all that is necessary for their subsistence, without either “toiling or spinning,” *man*, the lord of the creation, is so circumstanced, that, “by the sweat of his brow,” the labor of his

hands, and the anxiety of his mind, he shall earn and “eat bread:” I also believe that the same infinitely wise and benevolent Being formed woman with delicacy of perception, sweetness of disposition, tenderness of heart, and beauty of frame, far above all we could conceive, did we not witness them, in order that “her sorrow shall be greatly multiplied,” that “she shall bring forth children in sorrow;” and that she shall be formed exquisitely susceptible of all the emotions of love, in order that “her desire may be to her husband, and that he may *rule* over her.” That is, I will not believe that these are the effects of just punishment, but will believe that they are marks of *hard treatment* from the wisest and best of Beings towards the most exalted part of his visible creation. I know there is no possible medium between these alternatives; but I reject the former, because it is reasonable, and revealed in the Bible; and adopt the latter, because it is unreasonable, and revealed nowhere.

3. I believe that the book called the Bible was, every word of it, invented and written by men who had no help from God: that what are called *prophecies* were not such; that what are denominated *miracles* were either tricks of art, or never occurred; and that though the precepts are often admirable, and the morality pure, it proceeded from impostors, and not from God. The whole book being a collection of delusions and deceptions, which God nevertheless suffered to be accompanied by such evidence to gain it belief, as is not possessed by any other book.

4. I believe that bad men are often made better through the influence of this strange system of lies, delusions, and impostures; and that those who *were* good men, often become bad as soon as they are wise enough to free them-

selves from such influence, and to cast off the shackles with which this system encumbered them.

5. I believe that several of the best scholars, the ablest disputants, the most acute lawyers, the subtlest metaphysicians, the most cautious investigators, and the most profound philosophers that ever lived, such as Sir Thomas More, Grotius, Hale, Bacon, Barrow, Locke, Hartley, Boyle, Pascal, Euler, Newton, and many others, were never able to detect the cheat, but lived as much under the influence of this system of blood and blasphemous deception, as the most vulgar and illiterate peasant could do; and were, the majority of them, very excellent men notwithstanding.

6. I believe that the different persons who employed themselves at various times, and in different places, to compose the Bible, which avows itself by a thousand most solemn and explicit declarations, to be a collection of communications from heaven, were not madmen—for that supposition is untenable—but all shocking liars, and deceivers; that these wicked men, who thus impiously pretended to be employed by God, when they were not so employed, did, notwithstanding, with an amazing energy, resolution, and perseverance, go about doing good, and delivering the most important moral precepts—braving and often sustaining the greatest present evils; not *one* of them ever recanting or discovering the fraud, but supporting themselves in the daily diffusion of their noble precepts and detestable impostures, and the terrible sufferings which they thereby had to sustain, by the conviction that they had no hope but of experiencing further hardships here, and the vengeance of the God whom they had insulted hereafter.



Lastly, I believe that the great Being of infinite perfections, who sits enthroned at the head of the universe, has seen this horrid delusion prevail more and more for nearly two thousand years; and yet, instead of interposing to stay its progress, has suffered it to be accompanied with the most remarkable apparent sanctions, and has often accelerated its promulgation by surprising operations and occurrences. That is, I believe that the God of truth has, with regard to what is called the Christian religion, most astonishingly aided imposture. All this, I acknowledge, is perfectly incomprehensible, and totally irreconcilable with the obvious attributes of deity; but it is consistent with the principles of deism, however repugnant it may be to common-sense, and therefore I believe it.

If these and similar absurdities, my friend, result from the rejection of revelation—and as far as I am able to judge, they are not merely fair, but *necessary* consequences of such rejection—your deistical acquaintances cannot have so much reason as they suppose to pride themselves on that noble exercise of their understanding which has freed them from vulgar prejudices and sordid restraints. Is there not, hence, too much reason to fear, that in nineteen instances out of twenty, deism springs more from the state of the heart, than from the operations of intellect; and that it is not so much because Christianity offends the reason, as because it condemns the conduct of men, that they affect to despise it? They commence their progress with a carelessness respecting their future interests; in the language of Young, they

———“Give to time eternity’s regard,  
And, dreaming, take their passage for their port.”

Gliding along thus carelessly, it is natural enough that they should sink, first into error, next into vice. In such a situation, an inquiry into the evidences of revealed religion is not instituted under very favorable auspices ; for the inquirer has his mind overgrown with the worst of all prejudices, those that are rooted in *interest*. How should a man be indifferent as to the truth of a system, which, *if true*, must condemn him ? Though his life may not be grossly immoral, he knows that the tenor of his conduct is incompatible with the renunciations and requirements of real religion. He comes, therefore, to the trial, not as an impartial judge, but as a party deeply interested in the issue. He, in consequence, *wishes* that Christianity may not be true ; and what a man fervently wishes, he can easily persuade himself to believe, though he should involve himself in a thousand absurdities in consequence of that persuasion.

## FIFTY REASONS

FOR

# ATTENDING PUBLIC WORSHIP.

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1. God, your Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor, is worthy of your worship.

2. God says, "Bring an offering and come into his courts; O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." "Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together."

3. God's command, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," includes this as part of a proper keeping of the Sabbath.

4. God proposes, through the public preaching of the Gospel, "to save them that believe;" therefore, come to the sanctuary, and hear it.

5. Consider the condescension of God, that he will receive the worship of a sinful creature like yourself; and do not so ungratefully requite him as to refuse the performance of this duty.

6. Public worship is a *privilege* too great to lose.

7. It is necessary to you, as an immortal, but sinful being; to your preparation now, to glorify and enjoy God in eternity.

8. The sanctuary is the place, and the Sabbath the time, to get that knowledge which "giveth life unto the soul."

9. You profess to seek happiness; seek that which is rich, real, and eternal, through the right use of the privileges of the sanctuary.

10. Jesus Christ, his apostles, the prophets, and good men in all ages, have given you an example of this practice.

11. Christ has purchased for you the privileges of public worship at an infinite price—his own "precious blood."

12. Are you at the head of a family? And do you regard your influence on them? Be faithful in this duty.

13. Are you in early life? You owe it to God, to your companions, and to your own soul, to live in this habit.

14. Self-respect, regard for your own character in the estimation of all virtuous and Christian men, should lead you to practise this duty.

15. Habits of church-going are a strong and salutary bond of influence on civil society, which you should promote.

16. They humanize and refine men by the very neatness, cleanliness, frugality, good order, decency, and respectability of deportment which they promote.

17. They also promote good morals, personal comfort, and correct sentiments on all subjects, social and civil, as well as moral and religious.

18. Preaching, prayer, and sacred music, tend to subdue the ruder feelings, awaken humane and tender associations, suppress the violent passions, and promote in a man's character the things which are lovely, and of good report.

19. The more you attend on public worship, with a proper spirit, the more you will love to do it.

20. You will grow in tenderness of conscience, be withdrawn from temptations to violate the Sabbath by worldly business, improper reading, vain thoughts and conversation, and frequenting places of idle and vicious resort.

21. You will have increased *reverence for God*, that grand regulating principle of character.

22. By habitual and serious attendance on the public worship of God, you will encourage ministers of the Gospel, and all other good men, in their efforts to be useful.

23. The prevalence of habits of attendance on public worship, among all the people of this country, would be one of the best features of our national character, and one of the surest guarantees for our national safety and prosperity.

24. *Whatever, then, your station, private citizen or ruler, constituent or legislator, you ought to honor God and seek the public good, by maintaining public worship.* And,

25. Consider *this* seriously, that as far as you undervalue and neglect this means of public benefit, so far you contribute your example and influence towards injuring the moral character and interests of your country.

26. God has highly honored public worship in past ages, as the grand means of sustaining Christianity, and all else which is good in this world. Therefore,

27. If you undervalue and neglect it, you practically deny God's wisdom in appointing it, and thus commit a high offence against him.

Other EVIL THINGS you do, and will do, by neglecting public worship; we mention a few of them.

28. You show yourself to be far from God, holiness, and hope of heaven.

29. You cut yourself loose from many salutary restraints, and lay yourself open to the temptations of the devil and your own sinful heart, to go astray from God and to destruction.

30. You will probably neglect the Bible, prayer, serious meditation, and preparation for death and eternity.

31. You will dislike and shun the society of Christians.

32. You will increasingly dislike, yea, *hate* public worship.

33. You will try to disbelieve in and neglect all religion.

34. You will grieve and quench the Holy Spirit, and shut him from your soul as a Renewer and Sanctifier.

35. You will separate yourself from two of the most powerful means of good influence on your conscience and manner of life—prayer and preaching.

36. You will probably violate the Sabbath by business, labor, travelling; or by pleasure-seeking, visiting, hunting, fishing, vicious company, drinking, and like things; in short, if the devil finds you *neglecting the service of God*, he will certainly *decoy you into his own*.

37. Being in a Christian country, but neglecting Christian worship, you will make yourself a more absurd character than the very heathen; for they profess to worship some god or gods, but you worship *no* God, true or false. Of course,

38. You forfeit your claim to be considered even a *nominal*, much more a *real* Christian.

39. You place yourself among those most thoughtless of God, and fearless of the scenes of a coming eternity.

40. You help to promote practical atheism, and to curse the world with irreligion. Particularly,

41. You contribute your example and influence towards heathenizing your family, neighborhood, town, district, state, and country at large.

42. You show yourself capable of the most base ingratitude to a merciful God, in return for one of his kindest and richest provisions for your good, temporal and eternal.

43. You slight and throw away privileges, for want of which, millions perish, and for your doing which, they will "rise up in the judgment and condemn" you. And here,

44. REMEMBER, that for neglecting this solemn duty and precious privilege, "*God will bring thee into judgment.*"

45. And in eternity, you will mourn and weep, and curse yourself at the recollection of your Sabbaths and sanctuary privileges here slighted, despised, thrown away.

46. If there is any thing which, as a decent member of society, you should avoid, it is roaming about from one place of worship to another. *Belong to some one congregation*: be not a hanger-on upon half a dozen. Also,

47. If the Gospel is worth your hearing *one Sabbath*, it is worth your hearing *every Sabbath*.

48. If a holy God is worthy of your worship *one Sabbath*, he is worthy of it *every Sabbath*.

49. An *unsteady* and *infrequent* attendance on public worship is *little better than none*; for there is no regular recurrence of religious ordinances steadily to counteract the temptations and unholy influences which surround you, and the sinful propensities within you. You thus lose ground, in all moral and spiritual respects, faster than you gain it.

50. By such an attendance, you expose yourself to the mortification of its being noticed as a new or strange thing when you do attend. Better be in such habits, that your *absence* shall be noticed as the strange thing, rather than your *presence*.

Have you *certain wise reasons*, or EXCUSES, many years old, for not attending public worship? All we will say is,

51. Put to yourself *one question*—enough to silence the whole of them: “WILL THIS ANSWER MY PURPOSE BEFORE THE JUDGMENT-SEAT OF CHRIST,” “AT THE LAST DAY?” Also,

52. *Be well aware of this*, that a righteous God will not give you much time to waste in reasoning against so plain a duty, and in inventing vain excuses for your neglect of Sabbath and sanctuary privileges. They will very soon be for ever beyond your reach. “What thou doest, do quickly.”

More reasons we might give; but are not these enough? Will you *candidly* and seriously consider these? *Will you establish for yourself the practice of regular and conscientious attendance on the public worship of God?* WILL YOU BEGIN NEXT SABBATH? The Lord incline your heart to do it, bless you in it, and prepare you, by his grace, for the services of the Sabbath which is everlasting; for the worship of that sanctuary “not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.”

# THE FALSE HOPE.

BY REV. RICHARD KNILL,  
OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

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God often produces great effects from little causes. This has seldom been more strikingly displayed than in the circumstances about to be narrated.

Many years ago, I was addressing a strange congregation, and took for my text the words of the apostle, "Good hope through grace." In opening the subject, I introduced the following narrative.

A student for the Christian ministry was brought, in the course of providence, into the company of a young lady who was just recovering from a dangerous illness. She was still very weak, but liked, as most persons do when recovering, to tell how much she had suffered, and how wonderful was the preservation of her life.

Among other things she said, "At one time I sent for my aged parents, and my beloved brothers and sisters; and took, as I thought, my last farewell of them. Both the physicians had given me up, and my friends expected to see me no more."

As she finished this sentence, the young man said to her, "We seldom meet with a person who has been so near to death as you have been. Pray, tell me what were your feelings when you were on the verge of eternity?"

"I was happy," she replied.

"And will you please to tell me what were your prospects?"

"I hoped to go to heaven, of course."

"Had you no doubts, no fears, no suspicions?"

"None."

"Perhaps almost all hope to go to heaven. But I fear there are very few who have a good foundation for their hope. Pray, on what was your hope founded?"

"Founded?" she replied; "why, I have never injured any one, and I had endeavored to do all the good in my power. Was not this sufficient?"

“It is a delightful reflection,” said the student, “never to have injured any one; and still more delightful to think of having done all the good in our power. But even this is a poor foundation for a sinner to rest upon. Was this the foundation of your hope?”

She seemed quite astonished at this question, and eagerly inquired, “Was not this sufficient?”

The young man did not give her a direct answer, but observed, “I am very thankful that you did not then die.”

“What, do you think I should not have gone to heaven?”

“I am sure you could not in the way you mentioned. Do you not perceive, that according to your plan you were going to heaven *without Christ*? This is what no sinner has done since Adam fell, and what no sinner will be able to do while the world stands. Be very thankful that you did not go out of life resting on this delusive foundation. Jesus says, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.’”

God carried home this word to her soul. Light broke in upon her mind. From that day a decided change took place in the young lady’s views; and a corresponding holiness, and love, and zeal, and usefulness, have adorned her future life.

Before I had finished this short narrative, there was a mild, sedate-looking person in the congregation deeply affected. The tears were streaming down his placid cheeks, and although he tried to conceal them, yet he could not. He was unknown to me at that time, but he has since proved one of my most affectionate and devoted friends. Not many weeks passed before I received a visit from this friend, when the following conversation took place.

“I am come, sir, to tell you what the Lord has done for my soul.”

“Welcome, welcome. There are no visits so much to be desired as those which refer to eternity. Then tell me what the Lord has done for your soul.”

“O,” replied the happy man, “he ‘hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad.’ My experience is much like that described by St. Peter, ‘Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.’”



“This is happiness, indeed, sir; may it ever continue. Have you been long favored with it?”

“Not long,” said he. “Alas, more than forty years passed away before I knew any thing about it. I often had serious thoughts of eternity. I often meditated on the character of God. I often thought of the state of man; and I saw such infinite perfection in the Creator, and felt that there was so much evil in myself, that at last I concluded it was impossible for man—polluted, guilty man, to be admitted into heaven; and I sought for peace in the doctrine of *annihilation*—I say, I sought for peace in this doctrine, but I found it not. The thought would often occur, ‘Suppose, after all, you should be mistaken; suppose there should be a resurrection of the dead; suppose you should be judged for the deeds done in the body; what then? What will become of you?’ These thoughts, and thoughts like these broke up the delusion in a moment, and made me uneasy; and it is very strange that all this while the doctrine of *Christ’s atonement* was hid from my eyes. I must have heard of it, and read of it, times innumerable. My parents were religious people, and brought me up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. When I was young, I regularly attended the ministry of the word; and all the grand outlines of the Bible have been familiar to me from my childhood; and yet I was as ignorant of the way of salvation as if I had never seen a Bible. I had no conception how ‘God could be just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.’ Yes, it was on this point I was completely in the dark; and so it remained until the morning when you related the anecdote about the young lady.”

“And what effect did the relation of that anecdote produce?”

“Indeed, sir, it was wonderful. While you were showing the fallacy of her hope, and declaring that Jesus Christ is the only hope of the lost; that none can come unto the Father but by him; a flood of light burst upon my mind. I saw the whole plan of salvation with as much distinctness as if I had studied the subject for a thousand years. All that I had read and heard on the subject, seemed to rush on my memory at once. I could have explained it to all the world. I was overwhelmed with joy. I saw the fullness, the freeness, the all-sufficiency of Christ, in such a clear

and glorious manner, that if I had possessed ten thousand souls, I could have committed them all into his hands, and I did embrace him with joy unspeakable. Indeed, I could have rejoiced that moment to have escaped from this earthly tabernacle, and to have entered the happy world 'where Jesus is incessantly adored.' ”

Such impassioned language coming from a young man of warm temperament would have almost excited our fears; but here I saw a model of meekness, and prudence, and thoughtfulness, and sedateness—a Christian opening his mind for the first time in his life on the subject of experimental religion, and in such a way as filled my soul with praise.

Reader, is there not a power, secret, invisible, omnipotent, which often accompanies pious conversation and the preached word?

Pause—consider. Hast thou felt it?

Is not this power absolutely needful to drive the sinner from delusive hopes, and to bring him to rest entirely on the merits of Jesus? Dost thou see the need of it as it regards thyself and all thy dealings with the souls of others? Then ask it of God, with a living faith.

May it not be feared, that many will read this paper whose hope of heaven is not better than the young lady's was at the moment when she said, "I hoped to go to heaven, of course;" and why? Because she had not injured any one, and because she had endeavored to befriend her fellow-creatures. O, reader, away with all such hopes. "Behold," saith the Lord God, "I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation, and *whosoever believeth on Him*, shall not be ashamed." This foundation is Christ. Rest here, and you are safe.

Why is it that even pious people have not more joy in their experience? Because their views of Christ are not sufficiently clear; or else their faith in him is mingled with some secret trusting to a broken reed.

SOME MEMORIALS  
OF  
E D W A R D L E E .  
AN AUTHENTIC RECORD.

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WHEN the grace of God in the heart of man appears clearly in humble life, it shines with peculiar brightness. It was so with the subject of the present notice. He was born in the secluded village of Manchester, on the sea-shore, in the state of Massachusetts, November 30, 1729, and died December 22, 1793. It is therefore now more than forty years since his departure, and yet in his native village his memory is fresh and blessed, and "his name is as ointment poured forth." For that region, he is one of the "great cloud of witnesses;" and it is a happy thing for a neighborhood, a church, or a village, to recognize in that heavenly train a particular bright star, that went up on high from amidst their own society; for it exerts a sort of heavenly attraction over all who saw its brightness, and who beheld, or were told by others of the glory of its translation to heaven.

Edward Lee's conversion did not occur till he was more than thirty years old, and apparently hardened in sin. He lived a sailor from his early life, with a sailor's recklessness, and what was then, peculiarly, a sailor's profaneness. He had been blessed with a *pious mother*, of whom it is related that often in the winter season she broke a pathway through the drifted snow from her little cottage to the house of God, for herself and her fatherless children. Her prayers followed her beloved son amidst all his profaneness, and in the midnight storm he seemed to hear her warning voice; and many a night, amidst the terrors of the ocean, he dared not close his eyes in sleep, because he feared he might awake

in hell. He was in Lisbon at the time of the great earthquake which destroyed a large portion of that city, and by that solemn event was especially alarmed and terrified.

But all these terrors of soul and convictions of conscience wore off, leaving him exceedingly hardened and blinded, till, in 1763, a glorious revival of religion was enjoyed in a neighboring congregation, so glorious as to attract many from his native village, and among others his own wife, who became a follower of Christ. For himself, he derided the work, declaring that he wanted not a religion that had so much noise and excitement; and he went to the scene where the Spirit of God was thus poured out, resolved with his whole heart to oppose it. He "went to scoff," but God in mercy met him, and he returned "to pray." His convictions of guilt were deep and pungent, but for several weeks he remained unreconciled to God, though all the while attending meetings, reading his Bible, and very earnest in prayer. It was the mere dread of hell that led him to these duties, and not the spirit of submission and love.

At length one night, amidst the agony of his convictions, he resolved to throw himself upon the mercy of his Saviour. He arose from his bed, determined that, if he must perish, it should be pleading at the feet of Jesus, and crying out in the deepest abasement, "Lord, save me, I perish;" "God be merciful to me a sinner." He had no sooner done this, than he found peace, even while upon his knees in prayer: the moment he ceased from his self-righteous efforts, and came to the point of entire submission at the foot of the cross, throwing himself on the mercy of his Saviour, that moment the Saviour began to appear lovely to his soul, his heart was broken, the burden of sin removed; and the night which began almost with the wailings of despair, was ended in the praises of his Redeemer.

From that time the life of Edward Lee was one of humility, self-denial, gratitude, and prayer. He could scarcely ever speak of his conversion without tears: so deep and

vivid was the remembrance of his hardened, guilty, and lost condition, and so powerful his sense of the infinite love of Christ to his wretched soul. Those things were ever in his mind, exciting him to a consecration of all his powers to that blessed Being who by his own precious blood had redeemed him from such fearful guilt, and saved him from such intolerable wrath. His *business* thenceforward was the service of his Saviour, and his supreme anxiety and happiness was to seek, by all means in his power, to win souls to Christ. It was a thorough change, wrought in him by the power of the Holy Spirit; a new creation: from that time it might be truly said, that his "life was hid with Christ in God," and from that time he entered on the delightful work of publishing the goodness of his Saviour. He was like blind Bartimeus:

" Now, methinks, I hear him praising,  
Publishing to all around,  
' Friends, is not my case amazing ?  
What a Saviour I have found ! "

He went first to his reckless *seafaring brethren*; and we may easily conceive with what astonishment they would see Edward Lee, that hardened scoffer, now a humble believer, pleading with them to flee to the Lamb of God; assuring them, from his own blessed experience, of the preciousness of Christ, and the glory, the fulness, and the freeness of salvation.

After uniting with the church of Christ, he followed his occupation as usual for the support of his family, and during a voyage in a fishing vessel, spent so much of his time in exhortation and prayer, that his shipmates thought him mad. He did not, however, remain with them long, for he began to feel as if he were out of the path of duty at sea, and his soul panted with such earnestness after the privileges of the sanctuary and the salvation of souls, that he longed to be again on shore, and to go from place to place with the messages of mercy. Accordingly, when they fell

in with a homewardbound vessel, the captain consented that he should return home, rejoicing, perhaps, to be delivered from his holy faithfulness and importunity.

When he got back, he speedily made known the state of his feelings to his minister, and his *panting desires to go forth into the highways and hedges* in pursuit of sinners, and "compel them to come in." His pastor very judiciously advised him to labor to do good in the little neighborhood where God in his providence had fixed his sphere; and the course he took on receiving the advice was a proof of the depth and humility, as well as the fervor of his piety. He went away to a place in the forest known only to himself, to seek counsel of God by fasting and prayer; and he experienced the truth of the declaration, that God is the guide and "rewarder of them who diligently seek him."

He had a pious sister, a widow, who lived in a little cottage not far from the borders of the forest. Just as the sun was setting her brother Edward came in, his eyes swollen and red with weeping, while his face shone as from immediate communion with God. "Rejoice with me," said he, "my dear sister, for Christ has been with me;" the Saviour, he said, had accepted the desires of his heart to plead in his name with perishing sinners. At the same time he expressed himself fully satisfied with the advice of his good minister, and willing to use his "one talent" at home, and to do with his might whatever God in his goodness might give him opportunity of doing.

His holy desires for usefulness were no wild uncertain impulse, but the work of the Holy Spirit in his heart; and from this time till the period of his death, for more than thirty years, he was "a burning and a shining light," irradiating with a steady, and steadily increasing lustre, the sphere of life he occupied. His course was consistent as well as fervent, and every year he gained a greater influence as a man of God. He owned a house, with a barn and a few acres of land attached to it; and after the day described above as spent in fasting and prayer in the forest, he estab-

lished a "conference meeting" in his own cottage—every *Thursday afternoon* being consecrated to the worship of God, even if none but his own family attended—a practice maintained till his death, and in which, as the priest in his own household during the long period of thirty years, he must have found great enjoyment, and accomplished much for God. Even to this day, though the house he inhabited is no longer standing, yet the spot where it stood, and the fields around it, look like holy ground to those who remember the character of its tenant. It was indeed a Bethel for all who visited it; and such was his love towards those of every denomination, in whom he could trace the image of his divine Master, and such the open hospitality of his little store, that his house might be truly called the pilgrim's home; and many a weary traveller has left its lowly roof with tears of gratitude for its blessed refreshment. His homely fare was seasoned with cordial love; but, with a sort of jealousy for the Lord's goodness, he would never allow an apology to be made over the food upon his table, but would mildly and affectionately reprove his wife and children if they made any, by saying, "O, do not say so; it is all better than we poor sinners deserve, and is given to us sinners only through the mercy of Christ."

"The little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." Edward Lee's family thought that he gave away at least an eighth of his little income; and yet, with all this, he left enough for the support of his widow for twenty years or more after his death. He was industrious, frugal, and temperate in all his habits: "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;" obeying as faithfully and consistently the one precept as the other. And he was so conscientious in all his dealings, and at the same time so anxious to embrace every opportunity of winning souls to Christ, that if, when on his way to a day's work, he stopped to converse with any person, as was often the case, he would run to regain the time, that he might not wrong his employer. It was said of him, that he

always walked "like one that doeth the king's business, that requireth haste." Such, also, was his scrupulous tenderness of conscience, that once, when he thought he had not given enough by a penny to some fishermen with whom he had been dealing, he went back and insisted upon their taking fourfold. After his conversion he never used any intoxicating drink; and even the habit of tobacco-chewing, to which, like all sailors, he was idolatrously devoted, he at once renounced, nor ever again used that pernicious weed in any way.

His habits in regard to the *Sabbath* illustrated his piety, for he was a strict observer of its holiness, would never suffer any unnecessary work to be done in his family on that day; and if he saw any one pass who he thought was violating its sacredness, would go out of his house and with tears expostulate with the individual. His soul was greatly grieved by the carelessness of many professors of religion in regard to the Sabbath, and he was said often to have spent the whole night of that sacred day in prayers and weeping on account of their unholy observance of it. The intermission season between the morning and afternoon services, he was accustomed to spend in the house of God, exhorting and praying with his brethren. He was always early at the sanctuary, and was wont to stand up from the commencement of its sacred services till their end: his whole appearance in the house of prayer, his silver locks, his heavenly smile, his holy attitude, forming a delightful image of the happiness of the Christian in the worship of God.

The *communion Sabbath* was doubly sacred and dear to him; and in preparation for its solemn and affecting ordinances he was most assiduous. The Friday before the Lord's supper he always spent, in his favorite Bethel in the woods, in fasting and in prayer; and that he might not appear unto men to fast, he would bring home at night, as usual, a burden of wood upon his shoulders. Thus diligently waiting upon the Lord, the sacred feast could not



well be otherwise to him than a season of great refreshment and spiritual joy, preceded as it was by such earnest and humble prostration of soul in preparation for its observance.

His habits of *conversation and expostulation with the impenitent* were a portion of his life and character too remarkable not to be particularly noticed. He might eminently be said to be a living commentary on that exhortation of the apostle, to "walk in wisdom towards them that are without, redeeming the time." He accounted the season of probation as unutterably precious—the seedtime of eternity, and he would not waste a moment. Indeed, like the apostle, he "ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." He never walked far in the street with any person, whether a stranger or an acquaintance, without asking if the individual's peace were made with God.

It was his custom to visit every family in the village once a year, to inquire after their spiritual welfare; and the houses of affliction and death were at all times sure of his visits and prayers. A pious lady recollects his visiting in her family one day, when he observed that he felt it as much his duty to come there that afternoon, as if an earthly parent had bid him go upon some special errand. The love of Christ, and a near view of eternity, rendered him superior to the fear of man; and he would speak as freely of heaven and hell in the parlor of the rich, as in the cabin of the poor.

Calling once upon a family of high repute in his native village, he began, in his usual fervent manner, to speak of the wonders of redeeming love; and upon the lady of the house reproving him for speaking so loudly, "Oh, madam," said he, "to what world can you go where there are not loud voices? In heaven the saints and angels sing the songs of glory aloud, and in hell the devils and damned spirits weep and wail aloud."

When pleading with the unconverted, he seemed like a tender father who sees his house on fire, with his children asleep under the falling roof; and though his appearance

was always cheerful and happy, yet he might be said, with Paul, to have "great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart" on account of perishing sinners around him.

The year before he died, he made a visit to some friends in the country, and one night put up at an inn where a country *ball* had commenced. He asked to be admitted into the ballroom, and they gave him admission, not a little curious to see what would be the result, and probably expecting a triumph on their own part; but no sooner had he entered, than he began to speak on the one theme that absorbed his soul, with such fervency and power, that the music ceased, the dancing was suspended, the place, which had resounded with merriment, became silent and solemn; and the evening, which commenced in thoughtless gayety, was spent in holy exhortation, and closed with prayer.

In the month of May, 1780, there was a very terrific dark day in New England, when all faces seemed to gather blackness, and the people were filled with fear. There was great distress in the village where Edward Lee lived, men's hearts failing them with fear that the judgment-day was at hand; and the neighbors all flocked around the holy man, for *his* lamp was trimmed, and shining brighter than ever amidst the unnatural darkness. Happy and joyful in God, he pointed them to their only refuge from the wrath to come, and spent the gloomy hours in earnest prayer for the distressed multitude. His nephew, who was then a little child, in after-life retained a lively recollection of that scene; and his childish feelings are an interesting exhibition of the manner in which Mr. Lee was regarded, for he felt not the least alarm in his presence, thinking that he was perfectly safe where his good uncle was, even if the day of judgment *had* come.

The children of the village all loved him, and rejoiced if they could do him a kindness. He had always a most humbling sense of his own unworthiness, and a lively gratitude for any favor conferred. He would bless his benefactors with tears, and would say, "I hope my God will

reward you a thousand-fold from the upper and the nether springs, for your kindness to one so sinful and unworthy." Always, in answer to every salutation, he made mention of the divine goodness. He was chastised with many afflictions, for our Lord hath said, "as many as I *love*, I rebuke and chasten," and God is not a father who will spare the rod and spoil his children. Sanctified afflictions are one of the sweetest, surest proofs of adoption and sonship.

Within a few months, Edward Lee was called to mourn the loss of two beloved sons at sea; but amidst his keenest sorrows, he felt that God was doing it all; and while he wept, he said, that if the mere turning of his hand would reverse the decision of Providence, and bring them both to life again, he could not do it. God, who gave, had taken them, and it was right, and blessed be his name.

The most remarkable feature in the life of this holy man is yet to be mentioned—*his habits of prayer*. Here was the secret of his power—his close walk with God. A great while before day, he would arise and retire to a solitary place to commune with God. His spirit of prayer was seen in his family worship; and in the day, besides the devotions of the morning, he would labor the harder, that he might have time to retire awhile, both forenoon and afternoon, for secret prayer. Then, too, at midnight he was wont to arise and give thanks to God, and agonize in prayer for the world's evangelization. A few days before he died, some of his Christian friends being around his bed, he pointed them to a spot on the floor, and observed, that for more than thirty years, with the exception of ten days' severe illness, he had *risen from his bed every night* and knelt on that spot, and prayed for a dying world's salvation. Happy man in such faithfulness!

His power in prayer made him eminently useful in seasons of revival. It was said of him, that he was at all times dear to saints, but at such times he was sought out by anxious sinners. His minister often used to say, "I am but a babe to brother Lee; I prize his prayers more than

gold." He loved and prayed much for the ministers of Christ. He prayed in faith, and watched and expected an answer from God. Before his death, he told his family of the spiritual joy he had received in prayer for a number of persons, who, he doubted not, would be heirs of salvation, and who have been converted years since the holy man went home to glory. He seems to have had an inward assurance or token of the acceptance of his prayers. He prayed much for seamen, and "wrestled" in prayer for doors to be opened for the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands. In reference to his own family, he had the happiness to see his prayers answered in the conversion of three of his daughters.

The *example* of such a man, the spectacle of his life and conversation, could not be otherwise than powerful. The most hardened infidels would always acknowledge that Edward Lee was indeed a Christian; and the present minister of the church in Manchester often has occasion to allude to his memory. His nephew, who spent his life as a seaman, but died in the hope of Christ, declared, at the close of life, that he thought he should have reason to bless God through eternity, that, in his youth, he had an uncle Edward Lee; for, after seeing the different religions of other nations, and the inconsistent lives of many in his own country who professed to be followers of Christ, had it not been for the impressions made upon his youthful mind of the reality of the religion of Christ by the godly life of his uncle Lee, he should probably have lived and died an infidel. The limits of these pages will not permit the mention of numerous instances in which his labors were blessed to the conversion of souls. Without doubt many are with him in glory, and doubtless others will yet be brought in, by whom his happy soul will be encircled in the day of the Lord Jesus, recognized as the children whom the Lord hath given him as the seals of his faithfulness and crowns of his rejoicing.

The scene of *his death* was deeply interesting. He was

daily visited by the people of God, each one hoping to catch the falling mantle, and listening to the words of fervent exhortation, encouragement, warning, and triumph, that fell from the lips of this departing saint. It was a chamber privileged far beyond the common death-bed of the Christian. He still pleaded with the unconverted to flee from the wrath to come, and with the followers of Christ that they would live near to God, and labor for the world's salvation. His joys were very great, and as he drew near to the river of death, the borders of eternity, at times he had such views of the celestial city as would quite overpower his feeble frame. The atoning blood, the pardoning love of Christ was all his hope and all his theme, ascribing the whole glory of his salvation to the riches of infinite grace in the Redeemer of sinners. He died, breaking forth in an ecstasy of joy so strong, that his voice was heard for some distance from the cottage: "Farewell, vain world! I long to drop this sinful, dying body! I long for death, for my Saviour has taken its sting from my never-dying soul. I would not be translated as Enoch and Elijah were for a thousand worlds. Oh, no; I long to lie down in the grave, for there my Saviour has lain, and I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH!"

The character of an eminently good man is always written on high, but not always in this world. If the life of Edward Lee could be written, it would be a spiritual record—the record, as we have intimated, of a life "*hid with Christ in God.*" Its events were not many, but when a man's life is so hidden, it shines very brightly. The world do not see its inward, hidden processes; but they see its outward shinings, and are constrained to admire them. And it is just as impossible for a man to be thus inwardly united to Christ, and not outwardly live to his glory, as it is for a diamond to be placed in the sun and not shine.

The life of Edward Lee is a bright example of the power of holiness. It shows the vast amount of usefulness

which the humblest private Christian may be the means of accomplishing through the holy activity with which he can adorn his profession. The power of Edward Lee's character, humble as he was in life, was very great. Bold blasphemers feared him; the thoughtless and the gay were sober and silent in his presence; the good revered and loved him, and many of the bad were brought to repentance. So great is the influence of holiness. A man of many miracles could not gain a greater power than that perpetual miracle, eminent holiness—a close walk with God long maintained—will confer upon the Christian.

Again, his life is an eminent example of *the power of prayer*. He spent much time in prayer, and seems to have wrestled with God habitually; and this was the secret of all his attainments. O that all who love the Lord Jesus would walk as closely with their God; how rapidly would the kingdom of our Saviour then be advanced! Indeed, when the church has many such praying saints in her ranks, the world will speedily be converted. For, it is not the bustling, but the *praying* Christian, who does the work, and is honored by the Lord as his successful instrument in performing it. Prayer will certainly lead to external labor, but external labor is nothing without prayer. Let us then remember our entire dependence on the Holy Spirit, and pray without ceasing. So shall we have the blessed privilege of doing something for our risen Lord, who is infinitely worthy "to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, for ever and ever."

THE  
S P I R I T G R I E V E D .

A N A R R A T I V E O F F A C T S .

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IN January, 1825, Mr. H——, of S——, New York, where I was preaching, called upon me, and taking me by the hand, said, “Sir, do you think there is any mercy in heaven for a man who has sinned more than eighty years?”

“There is mercy,” I replied, “for those who repent of sin, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

“But, sir, do you think it possible that God will forgive a man who has rebelled against him eighty-one years?” This inquiry was made with a solemnity and earnestness that showed the deep and strong emotions of his soul. He was again directed to Christ as the only source of mercy, and exhorted to cast himself without delay on him.

Still pressing my hand, while tears were flowing over his wrinkled cheeks, and his frame trembling, he more earnestly renewed his inquiry, “*My dear sir, do you believe that God will forgive a man who has rebelled against him eighty-one years in this world?*” Before a word was uttered in reply, he cried out in agony, “I know I shall not be forgiven—I shall die in my sins!”

This caused me to ask how he knew, or what induced him to believe that God would never have mercy on him.

He replied, “I will tell you, and disclose what I never uttered to any human being. When I was twenty-one, I was awakened to feel that I was a sinner. I was then intimate with a number of young men, and was ashamed to have them know that I was anxious for my soul. For five or six weeks I read my Bible, and prayed every day in secret. Then *I said in my heart one day, I will put this subject off until I am married and settled in life, and then I will attend to my soul's salvation. But I knew that I was doing wrong.*

“After I was settled in the world, I thought of the resolution I had made, and of my solemn promise to God

then to make my peace with him. But as I had no disposition to do so, I again said in my heart, 'I will put off this subject *ten years*, and then prepare to die.'

"The time came, and I remembered my promise; but I had no special anxiety about my salvation. Then did I again postpone, and resolve that if God would spare me through another term of years, I would certainly attend to the concerns of my soul. God kindly spared me; but I was still careless, and lived on in my sins; and now I see my awful situation. I am lost. Now I believe that I sinned against the Holy Ghost when I was twenty-one, and that I have lived sixty years since my day of grace was past. *I know that I shall not be forgiven.*"

This simple-hearted history of his life, and the deep and awful feelings exhibited, affected and alarmed me. It excited deep compassion, and inexpressible interest for his spiritual welfare; and called up the question, Is this man among the unhappy number who, while on earth, have sinned away their day of grace?

I inquired if he was willing that we should pray with him. "Yes," he replied, "but it will do no good." The fearful certainty of destruction evinced by this reply, affected to tears all who were present, while it roused to deeper intensity the hope that his state was not what he believed it to be.

He bowed the knee with us, and wept as prayer was made for him, and even continued our supplications in a few words from his own lips; when he wept aloud, and rising, spoke in such a manner as to pierce every heart, "It will do no good, God will never hear me."

This appalling declaration, made by a man in the vigorous exercise of all his mental faculties, and of his bodily powers, and made with so much tenderness and apparent conviction of its truth, spread a gloom over the mind indescribably awful. Yet I still had hope of his salvation.

After this, for weeks and months, I had frequent interviews with him. I always found him in deep distress. He would request me to pray for him, or was willing to be the subject of prayer when it was proposed. But this blighting sentiment was always foremost in his thoughts, "It will do no good." The Saviour was often held up to his view, and he was told of the efficacy of the blood of Christ in



cleansing from sin, and urged to accept of salvation freely and sincerely offered ; but it was all in vain. The hope of salvation could not be awakened within him.

His very distress alarmed me. It was not contrition, or repentance for sin, but *the anticipation of wrath to come*. This filled him with horror. He looked back and saw what he had done. Then, with the rapidity of lightning, his mind darted forward to the eternity of misery before him. With no disposition to repent of his sins, he always anticipated and dwelt upon the horror and anguish of his irreversible doom. Often did his fearful forebodings remind me of those concerning whom the apostle affirms, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain *fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation.*"

Towards the close of the year which opened upon him with such dark and cheerless prospects, he was seized with sickness that soon removed him to the world of retribution. During the intervals of reason, he had the most fearful anticipations of the future, and said he expected the wrath of God in eternity. On the night he died, he still believed that, at the age of twenty-one, he grieved the Holy Spirit away for ever. He left the world under the awful conviction, as he said, that his soul was sinking into hell. We follow him no farther ; we attempt not to lift the curtain that hides him from our view ; but his departure made a most fearful and gloomy impression on my mind, and has always been associated with the words of Christ, "The last state of that man is worse than the first."

This history, which is strictly a narrative of facts, may appeal not only to the aged, but to the young.

*Your* day of grace, dear reader, may not extend to the close of life. It may already have passed. Think not this suggestion too alarming to be true. God has said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." "I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be." "Fill ye up, then, the measure of your fathers."

These passages, and many others, assure you that some sinners are abandoned of God, and yet live for years, in which they only prepare for a deeper perdition. *Do you know* that you are not among the number ? How infinitely momentous the inquiry, "Am I given up of God ? Have I grieved away the Spirit for ever ?" Remember, my dear

friend, that unbelief and indifference to this subject are among the "evident tokens of perdition." That man, of whom you have now read, said, that until a few hours before the conversation above narrated, it did not occur to him, during sixty years, that he was forsaken of God. Have you not been an awakened sinner? Has not the Spirit striven with you? Have you not grieved him away, and can you say, *It is not for ever?*

Nothing will be more fatal to your hopes than to indulge the confidence that your time of mercy will extend to the end of life. Alas, your day of grace may be passed, and yet you may be secure in sin. "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, and they shall not escape."

Let it be imprinted on your memory, that to postpone the day of repentance, is to *destroy your soul*.

Perhaps you say, "I do not mean to postpone for ever." Who ever did? But have you not *secretly deferred this subject* to a definite, or to an uncertain time? The unhappy man, whose history is before you, *never designed an eternal postponement*. To have resolved to defer repentance until his death-bed, or until his day of grace had gone by, would have been horrible in his view. But mark the deceptive influence of delay. Did not his brief delays cover the whole field of mercy, and extend far beyond the time when God said of him, "He is joined to idols, let him alone." Was not the blow of eternal death struck when he was yet a young man? During those sixty years of indifference, and yet of hope in his view, could angels have wept, would not their tears have fallen over this delaying and ruined sinner? Awake, then, immortal reader! O awake at the call of the Holy Ghost, and speedily take refuge in Jesus Christ! *To delay is to destroy yourself*. His arms will not always be stretched forth to save; he will not always wait to be gracious. "*To-day,*" saith the Holy Ghost, "if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart." "Whereas ye know not what *shall be on the morrow.*"

# “WE ARE ALL HERE.”

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AND that we are so, is surely a cause of great astonishment to angels, and of envy and wrath to devils. Yes, blessed be God, “we are all here”—here in health and strength—here in the enjoyment of ten thousand blessings of a kind Providence—here in possession of the inestimable means of salvation—all of us *here*, and out of hell.

Yes, “*we are all here*”—*here* in the land of the living, and in the enjoyment of a day of salvation. But on THE HOLY SABBATH, when God sends his servants to speak to *us* in his name all the things he has commanded, as he sent Peter to Cornelius and his friends, *where are we?* Answer, O Sabbath-breaker, to your own conscience answer. Are you in that place where you know the servant of the Most High God shall come? Where God, in infinite love, shall send his messengers of mercy and grace to men? Alas for you, you are not; your empty pew, your own accusing conscience, your grieving minister, the angels of God, and God himself, being witnesses.

But *where are you?* At *home*, enjoying the company of a *visitor*, who, not to hinder business, his own or yours, on a week-day, dares himself to violate God’s most holy Sabbath, to neglect public worship and the salvation of his own soul, and to hinder you, through your false love or fear of him, from doing your duty to God, your own soul, the world, and the church of the Redeemer. Heaven-daring, soul-ruining visits are these. You both *are*, but it is of the Lord’s mercy that you are *out of hell*, and that you were not *struck dead*—he for his sinful visit, and you for being detained from the house of God for his sake. How will such a visit appear to you on your dying bed? Would you desire to spend your *last Sabbath* so?

But *where are you?* At *home*; too *indolent* and too *careless* of God, your soul, and eternity, to put yourself to the trouble of going to the house of prayer. Too indolent to obey God; too indolent to secure the salvation of your never-dying soul. O, if another treated your everlasting welfare as you yourself do, all the world would hear your com-

plaints. But it is *yourself* that thus slight and neglect your own soul. And do death and judgment stand still to wait your leisure? O no, the judgment of God "lingereth not; and your damnation," O Sabbath-breaker, "slumbereth not." The day is hastening on, will soon be here, when your refuges of lies shall be swept away—"your covenant with death, and your agreement with hell" disannulled; and what will you do in that day? Reproach your minister because he did not warn you? No, but you will curse yourself because you set at naught his warnings, and neglected the messages of salvation he brought to you from God. Your blood shall be upon your own head.

But *where are you?* You started on Saturday afternoon, it may be, to *pay a visit to your friend*—there, however, to go to church on Sabbath morning, and return home in the evening. This is professedly robbing God of half his day; but in truth, of the whole of it. What were the topics of conversation on the Lord's-day morning between you and your friend? And how many little businesses of a worldly nature were settled, and how many engagements made, after you had returned from church, and just before you started for home? Ah, you know, and God knows it was not necessity, nor mercy, nor a desire to worship God, that took you there on his holy day, but some worldly, and sinful, and selfish motive. You may have gone to church to satisfy your own wounded conscience; but the motives which took you from home not having been spiritual, but carnal, it is numbered among broken Sabbaths, for which you must give account. And are you a *professor of religion* who do this? What an example do you set, and what a stumbling-block do you make yourself to others.

But *where are others?* We cannot tell. But *God can*; and they are equally in his presence, and before him, when breaking his holy Sabbath, as when keeping it; and he has written it in his book, and by and by he will inform an assembled world to their everlasting shame. Perhaps they are employed in posting their accounts, or in making them out, or in collecting their debts. Perhaps they are reading the news of the day, or sauntering in their gardens or fields, or riding out to enjoy country air and country scenery, or entertaining a gay party of friends and acquaintances, or sitting in the bar-room; or, it may be, they are even now

tossing, in pain of body and agony of mind, upon a bed of death, oppressed with the guilt of broken Sabbaths, and with a “certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries;” or being conveyed to the judgment; or “lifting up their eyes in hell, being in torment.” For “this shall be the portion of their cup” “who know not God, and who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.” “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?”

“*We are ALL here.*” Alas, *how few families* can say, in the house of God on his holy Sabbath, “*We are ALL here.*” We speak not of those who are obliged to stay at home. No. Where there is necessity for us to be, there it is our duty to be. We speak of those only who stay away from *choice*. Here is the mother, but where is the father? Here are the parents; but, parents, where are your children? Here are some of them, but where are the others? Parents, you and all your house should be present before God in his sanctuary on the Sabbath-day. And if, with your consent, unrestrained and unwarned, they are loitering at home, or gone on a visit on this holy day, you have much to fear, both for them and yourselves; and much, very much to account for to God. Of your family you ought to be able, every Sabbath, to say, with Cornelius, “Now are we *all* here present before God, to hear all things commanded thee of God.”

“*WE are all here.*” Who? All *the members of the church*? Surely they can say, every Sabbath-day, “*We are all here present.*” We mean all who are not detained by absolute necessity. This is what ought to be, and no more than what ought to be, on every Sabbath-day. But is it so? Can all the members of the church say in the house of God, every Sabbath-day, when they could and ought to be there, “*We are all here present before God?*”

Would to God it were so; but alas, the assembly of every Sabbath makes it manifest that it is not. And shall we wonder at men of the world absenting themselves from the house of God, and breaking the Sabbath, and trifling with their souls and eternity, with God, with the Saviour, with the Holy Spirit, with heaven and with hell, when the

very members of the church, by their example, teach them so? O members of the church, will you break your ministers' hearts, wound the minds of your brethren, and grieve the Holy Spirit, by making your own selves and your own conduct the very stones upon which multitudes shall stumble into hell. Shall we wonder that men of the world are absent, when you are not present before God in his house on his holy day? Should not you be the light of the world—the guides of them that are blind? Will you then cause darkness to rest upon all around you, and guide those who take you for their example of goodness and piety, into "everlasting burnings?" Are you not the only professed people of God? And are not many around you ready to justify their own evil ways by the lamentable inconsistency of yours?

While you live so, your ministers may preach and write as plainly and faithfully as angels would, but they will preach in vain so long as your example goes against the truth. Your neighbors will look to you, and refuse to hear them. O members of the church of Christ, wash you, make you clean from this blood of souls. Be ALL of YOU present before God, in his house, on his holy Sabbath. Let no excuse keep you back, but such as would justify you before God for not purchasing an estate, or transacting the most important business, at the appointed time; and most surely no trifling visit to a friend, no impertinent visitor at your house, no love of ease, no gayety nor society, neither the bad state of the roads, nor of the weather, would deter you from these. May they who read this, and who are guilty of misspending the holy Sabbath, humble themselves before God, and resolve, by his grace, to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," and to be "ALL here," *in his house*, "present before God." If they do not, this warning, so affectionately given, will witness against them in that day when, whether they will it or not, they too must be *present before God*. And better for them that they "had never been born."

# HAVE ME EXCUSED.

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FELLOW-SINNER, “*Why will you die?*” Know you not that you are under sentence of death? “The soul that sinneth, it shall die.” How can you escape? JESUS CHRIST ALONE can save you from eternal death: “There is none other name whereby we must be saved.” Through him you may be saved, if you will: “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” A rich feast is prepared, and you are entreated to eat and live for ever: “Come, for all things are now ready.” Will you come? Why not? “*I pray thee have me excused.*” Excused? Why?

1. “I AM TOO YOUNG.” Bless God that you *are* young. “They that seek me *early* shall find me.” If you are old enough to sin, you are old enough to *repent* of sin. If you have done wrong, you cannot be sorry for it too soon. Are you old enough to die? Then you are not too young to *prepare* for death. The sooner you seek God, the easier it will be. That little twig you can pull up with your thumb and finger; soon, the mighty oak will brave the storms of heaven. Wait not until sin has twined its roots around a rocky heart. “Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not.” “But,

2. “I AM TOO FOND OF THE WORLD.” And do you mean then to take your fill of the pleasures of the world before you repent? Will you give your best days to Satan, and a miserable fraction of your life to God? Will you thus put off your Creator? And for what? For the merest vanity. How often, as you have returned from the haunts of dissipation, from the theatre, the ballroom, or the party of pleasure, have you been forced to exclaim, “All is vanity and vexation of spirit?” How often, like Colonel Gardiner, “the happy rake,” have you groaned in the anguish of your spirit, and wished yourself a dog? The time *will* come, if not now, when you will be sick of the world. How will the thought of time thus wasted, then torture your soul. Why prepare these thorns for a dying pillow? O, give up the

world before it is torn from you. "Beware of the flatterer." Let the empty bubble go. Seek "fulness of joy," and "pleasures for evermore." "But,

3. "PROFESSORS ARE SUCH GLOOMY PEOPLE." All are not. Some cannot describe their joy. All true Christians say, that they never knew joy until converted. Some will tell you, that they have had more happiness in *one hour* since, than in years before. Some, indeed, there are, "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," that are gloomy enough. Others are Laodiceans, "neither cold nor hot." How *can* such be happy? It is for *want* of piety that they are gloomy. Let them enter with all their hearts into the service of God, and they will be as happy as heart can wish. Do you doubt it? TRY IT. God's word for it, you shall "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." But it may be, they are sad on *your* account. They see you dancing on the very brink of the bottomless pit, and how can they help weeping? Let them see you turning to God, and their grief will be turned to joy. Will you turn and fill the heart of a dear parent, perhaps, with joy? "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die?"

4. "I HAVE NO TIME TO ATTEND TO IT." No time? And what was time given for? To spend in pleasure? To heap up riches? And is this your home? Can you say, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years?" *God* may say, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Yes, you *must* die, and leave all behind. There are treasures in heaven worth seeking. "Palms of victory, crowns of glory," thrones on high, are set before you. Do you wait for a *leisure day*? So did Felix: "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." The convenient season may never come. Cares increase with years. And if it should come, it may not be convenient for *God* to attend to *thee* then. What does that mean: "Ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins?" Will you not *take* time to seek him now?

5. "THERE IS TIME ENOUGH YET." Has God told you that? How then do you know? Have you made a "covenant with death?" It "shall be disannulled." An "agree-



ment with hell?" It "shall not stand." Are you so sure that you have time enough, that you can venture to banish all thoughts of your conversion until a *fixed day*? Why not, if there is time enough? Can you ask God to let you sin as much as you wish till then? Why not, if you have time enough? And if he should hear such a prayer, are you sure that you will repent when that day comes? Will it be any easier then? What, when you have grown gray in sin? Ask that old man if *he* has time enough. "O, yes; time hangs very heavy on my hands." Why don't you then repent? "Ah, but my heart is too hard. *I can't feel.*" Fellow-sinner, let me beg of you not to wait until *your* heart too is cased in steel. "'Tis madness to defer." "*But,*

6. "I MUST TAKE MORE TIME TO THINK OF IT." To think of what? Whether the Bible is true? "I know that thou believest." Whether you are a sinner? You know it. Whether you must be lost for ever if you should die as you are? You have not a doubt of it. Whether the Lord Jesus Christ can save you? You cannot question it. Whether to become a Christian before you die? You have "no thought of dying" as you are. What then? "Why, to know whether I had better make it all sure *now.*" But you are sinking into the burning pit. The flames are spreading all around you. Soon escape will be impossible. There is but a *step* between thee and death. How can you escape *too soon*? Would you ever have any reason to be sorry for it, if you should become a Christian this moment? Then why delay another moment?

7. "I AM NOT SO BAD AS OTHERS." That may be. But why? It is sovereign grace that has kept you from being a vile reprobate. And will you make that very grace a reason for continuing in sin? Are these your thanks? O, why does God forbear to strike? But you are *bad enough*. The very best sinner on earth is too bad for heaven. If you could plead, "*I have sinned but once,*" it would not save you. One sin ruined Adam. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them." After all, you are worse than you will allow. Let but God pour the light of eternity upon your naked heart, and you will wish for the deepest

darkness in which to hide yourself. O, that you would even now cry out, "I am the very chief of sinners." Then there would be some hope. With the publican you might plead, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and with him be freely justified. Do you, then, give up this plea? If so, what have you yet to say?

8. "I HAVE NOT MUCH CONCERN." And do you suppose that this relieves your case at all? Your indifference—what is it but a *contempt of God*? He calls you to him, but you heed the idle wind as much. If your friend should serve *you* so, how it would cut you to the heart. But why complain of so cold a heart? Go and stand all night in the winter's storm—will you be warm? Refuse, though nearly frozen to death, to come or be brought to the fire—whose fault will it be if you perish? You have done this already. It is a wonder that you are not "past feeling." Come to Christ before it is all over with you.

9. "I MUST WAIT TILL GOD'S TIME HAS COME." Are you in earnest? Do you doubt whether God is *ready* to melt your heart? Why, then, all that uneasiness—that sense of sin and of danger? It is his Spirit that convinces of sin. What voice is that, that whispers so often in thy soul, "Turn, sinner, turn?" It is the Spirit's gracious voice. He tells you to "come, for all things are *now* ready." He says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him." God's time to save is when you seek. "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Ask the Christian, if God was not ready the very moment that he himself was ready. You are waiting your own time. God stretches out his hands all the day long, and you flee from him. He follows you; tracks you through every lane of life, even to your most secret retreats. And yet you say, "I must wait God's time." Shame on you! How can you treat so kind a Saviour thus. O, fall at his feet and beg for mercy. "But,

10. "PROFESSORS ARE JUST ABOUT AS BAD AS OTHERS." But what does this prove? That they have too much religion, or not enough? The Saviour tells us that there will

be many such, to whom he will say in the last day, "I never knew you." But are *all* so? You know better. Some are the very salt of the earth. No one asks you to be a hypocrite. If you know so well how Christians ought to live, come and show us by your example. But will many be deceived? Then "strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Take care that you are not of this wretched class. Be in earnest. "Do with your might. Work while it is day." You may be left out. Come, and go with us. "*But,*

11. "THERE ARE SO MANY SECTS, I DON'T KNOW WHICH IS RIGHT." However that may be, you know that you belong to a *wrong* sect now. No sect is so wrong as the ungodly. Forsake them as soon as you can for the sect of the righteous. They all belong to one class, though scattered among many denominations. First, be sure that you are among *them*. Christians do not differ as much as you think. They all agree in *loyalty* to the King of heaven, the Saviour of the world. Yield to him your heart; take his word for the man of your counsel; obey the teachings, and follow the leadings of his Holy Spirit; then you cannot go astray. "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."

12. "I CAN'T CHANGE MY OWN HEART." "Without me," said Christ, "ye can do nothing." But have *you*, then, nothing to do? Regeneration is, indeed, the work of the Spirit. But can you not *seek* the Holy Spirit? God has promised the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. And when the Spirit comes, have you *then* nothing to do? Hear: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, FOR it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." You are not to do the Spirit's work, but your own. There is a work which can be done only by yourself. You cannot believe, repent, and obey, by *proxy*. God will not *do* your work for you, though he works in you *to* do. If the Spirit, then, does not work, you are lost. And if *you* do not work, you are lost. When both work together, you will be saved. Do you still plead, "I can do nothing?" Then I would ask, Can you not *give up* the controversy with God? A garrison may not be able

to hold out, but surely they are able to surrender. Are you, then, willing to make a full surrender? "*But,*

13. "IF I AM TO BE SAVED, I SHALL BE SAVED, DO WHAT I WILL." And now, dear friend, be consistent, and say, "If I am to *live*, I shall live, do what I will," and so give up eating and toiling for food. Your duty has nothing to do with God's purposes. For them God only is responsible. Your duty is to love and serve him with all your heart. If you do it, you will be saved. Election hinders no one: its only influence is to save. It is God's unalterable purpose to save every believer. He that believeth *shall be saved*. The sooner you believe, the sooner you will know whether heaven is your portion. You can never know it in any other way. Will you believe?

14. "I HAVE NOT CONVICTION ENOUGH." Do you *certainly know* that you are a sinner? That is conviction. Can nothing make you more certain of it? Then you cannot have more conviction of that truth. Are you positively certain that you must perish unless you believe in Christ? Then what need of more conviction? Do you wait for more *distress*? Distress is neither conviction, nor the necessary fruit of conviction. Let the sinner cease struggling with the Holy Ghost, and yield to conviction, and his trouble will be gone. But conviction does not melt the heart. The devils believe, but do not love. If you perish, you will have conviction enough in hell, but it will not soften your heart. Wait, then, no longer for more conviction. Yield at once. "If I should,

15. "WHAT WILL THEY SAY OF ME?" "What is that to thee? Follow thou me," saith Christ. Let them say what they will. Follow your own convictions. None of them can answer for you in the judgment. "Every man shall bear his own burden." Your dearest friend cannot take your place "before the judgment-seat of Christ." Why, then, be governed by what *they* say? Ask, rather, what will *God* say. What will they say! Every one, whose words are worth minding, will say, "You did well." The worldling may sneer, but can say nothing to hurt you. Christians will say all they can to help you. And Christ

will say at last, before men, angels and devils, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And now what will *you* say? Are you ready to give up all for the blessed Redeemer?

16. "I AM AFRAID I SHALL NOT PERSEVERE." You never will, of course, unless you make a beginning. The FIRST STEP is the great difficulty. Practice always makes duty easier. Your only duty is the duty of the present moment. The next is yet in eternity, and there you and I may soon be. Do present duty, and trust God's grace for future duty. He has said, "My grace shall be sufficient for thee. Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself." Millions, as weak as yourself, have by God's grace persevered, and are now in heaven. "Whose faith follow." Make, then, a beginning now. What say you? "*Alas,*

17. "I HAVE DONE ALL THAT I COULD." All that you could? What, spent all your time? Sought with all your heart and soul, mind and strength? All that you could? Why, you have done more in one month for your poor house of clay, than in all your life for your precious soul. All that you could? Have you forsaken every sin? Are you doing every duty? Have you come out from the world? Have you given yourself, soul and body, to Christ? Have you made a full surrender? "Ah, I fear not." Do it then now. Be in earnest. Time flies. While you read you are hastening to the grave. Why hesitate?

18. "I HAVE BEEN SUCH A GREAT SINNER, THAT I FEAR HE WILL NOT RECEIVE ME." Not receive you? Who told you so? He says, "I will give you rest." What right have *you* to question it? Take him at his word. Are you worse than Saul of Tarsus, or Mary Magdalen, or the thief on the cross? He says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Are you worse than those who crucified him? For them he spent his latest breath, pleading, "Father, forgive them." Are you a great sinner *now*? You will be a greater sinner to-morrow. But how do you know that he will not receive you? "Him that cometh to me, I will *in no wise* cast out." Have you

been cast out? Has any one else? Never. What more do you want? You have his word for it, and the testimony of all that have come to him. Try him yourself. Try now. Will you come to him?

19. "I AM AFRAID THAT I HAVE COMMITTED THE UNPARDONABLE SIN." Is the Spirit now striving with you? Are you troubled about your guilt and duty? Are you anxious for the favor of God? If so, then the Spirit has not yet taken his final leave. He is yet striving to bring you to Christ. Look up, then, poor sinner, there is mercy for you. When you shall have committed that sin, you will be given over to blindness of mind, to hardness of heart, perhaps "to believe a lie." By all the horrors of that sin, which shall never be forgiven, I entreat you, "Quench not the Spirit." Yield while yet you may. Why not?

20. "I HAVE PUT IT OFF SO LONG." Then put it off no longer. He does not ask, "How long have you sinned?" but, "Are you *now* willing to forsake sin, to trust in my blood, and to serve me?" If so, you *may* be, you *WILL* be saved. Yes, even at the eleventh hour. O, then, flee to his arms. Cast yourself at his feet. Delay not a moment. If you perish, perish at his feet and nowhere else. You can *but* perish if you go.

And now, fellow-sinner, what have you yet to plead? Any more excuses? None. Then surely you will halt no longer. "All things are now ready." The SAVIOUR waits to wash you in his blood. The FATHER, to receive the long-lost child to his arms. The SPIRIT, to enter in and purify your heart. The angels are waiting to bear the glad news of your conversion to heaven. "*All things are now ready.*" And you are ready. Are you not? "O, yes; 'Tis Jesus calls; I must—I will—I can—I do believe.'" Then kneel down. Give yourself to Christ. Say,

"Thee, my new Master now I call,  
And consecrate to thee my all;  
Lord, let me live and die to thee,  
Be thine through all eternity."

## CONVERSION OF AN AGED DEIST.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

IN the spring and summer of 1831, the beautiful village of A——, in Georgia, was favored with a most interesting and powerful revival of religion. As usual, in such seasons, most of the subjects of the good work were the young—many of them young men attached to the literary institution in that place. But there were some exceptions. A few in middle life were hopefully converted; and the case of one aged man excited a deep and universal interest.

Mr. N—— P——, though the child of pious parents, and trained under the influence of a godly mother, at middle age was surrounded by infidels, and through the reading of a popular infidel work, became a settled Deist. He viewed the Bible as a fiction, and believed that death was an eternal sleep. For *thirty years* preceding his conversion, he was, probably, one of the most confirmed, undoubting Deists to be found in the world. His sceptical sentiments, however, were cautiously and prudently concealed, even from his own family, not a member of which knew that he was tinctured with infidelity. After he became a settled unbeliever, and before removing from Virginia to Georgia, he divulged his sentiments to an intimate friend, whom he knew to possess similar views. That friend, after hearing him, notwithstanding the coincidence of their sentiments, seriously charged him never again to open his lips upon that subject to a human being. With this injunction Mr. P., it is believed, strictly complied, until the happy change took place which will now be related. Though

three or four of his sons and daughters became worthy members of the Presbyterian church, yet the father uniformly maintained profound silence upon the subject of religion, and never appeared to be disposed to throw the least obstacle in the way of its pursuit and practice by his family.

He was, however, a settled, deliberate, silent Deist; slumbering, unconscious of his danger, upon the very brink of eternal ruin. He was frequently warned by the loud admonitions of divine Providence. He had followed to the tomb a beloved wife, a grown son, and a married daughter; he had repeatedly been brought, apparently, to the very verge of the grave; and when thus sinking under the ravages of disease, and kindly exhorted by friends to make his peace with God, that he might be prepared for his departure, he would calmly reply, that he was not in the least uneasy, that he had *no doubt that all would be well after death.*

The year 1831 arrived, and the old Deist was yet alive, in health, and as hard as the adamant. Time with him was now far spent; the day of life, in the course of nature, was rapidly drawing to a close; the shadows of death and of the tomb were gathering around him, and yet the aged slumberer did not awake. The spiritual sleep of seventy years, and the opiate of deism had paralyzed all his moral energies; and it seemed as if nothing could awaken him but the voice of the archangel. But a gracious God had mercy in store for him who, during thirty years, had viewed the story of the cross as a cunningly devised fable.

On a pleasant day, as Mr. P. was walking alone upon his plantation, he heard the voice of prayer. He listened. It was the voice of one of his servants, a pious old negro, who was holding communion with his God, alone in the grove. The master, without disturbing the praying ser-



vant, walked to the house in a reflecting mood. He knew not why, but he was disturbed—he felt unhappy. His foundation now trembled a little, though it had lain unmoved, in the hard cement of infidelity, for thirty years. Without saying a word to any one, he took up “Fletcher’s Appeal,” and read it. His uneasiness increased, though he was, as yet, by no means convinced of the truth of the Scriptures.

About this time his youngest daughter, who was pious, was inquiring in the bookstore for a devotional book which had been recommended to her by her pastor. The book not being in the store, the gentleman in attendance handed her “Watson’s Answer to Paine,” saying, as he put it into her hands, “Mr. H., your pastor, says this is a very excellent book.” She knew nothing of the nature of the work; but as she had failed to obtain the book desired, and this little volume had been recommended by the same friend, she bought it. When she retired from the store, and began to read the book, she felt disappointed, and remarked to a female friend that she would return it, as it was a treatise against infidelity, for which they had no special use in their family. But as God in his providence kindly ordered it, the book was not returned. The young lady carried it home, and having laid it by, probably neither said nor thought more of it. But the unbelieving father, who knew nothing of “Watson’s Answer to Paine,” and did not suspect that such a book was in the house, happened one day to lay his hands upon it. He sat down and deliberately read it through. And now his castle of infidelity, which had been trembling for some weeks under the gentle breezes of the divine Spirit, was so utterly demolished that not one stone was left upon another—all was in ruins. He stated to the writer, that when he had finished reading Watson, he was prepared to say that he believed every word of the Bible to be true.

About this time a series of public religious meetings was commenced, which were signally blessed of God, and were continued in the different churches for about three weeks. Mr. P. at first attended with his family, but perceiving that his concealed mental distress was increased, he refused to attend more.

As the good work of the Lord advanced powerfully, and many stout hearts were made to yield to the subduing influences of divine grace, the eldest daughter of Mr. P., a lady of ardent piety, could not endure her father's absence from the house of God. Returning one day from the solemn services of the sanctuary, which was about two miles distant, she related to her father some interesting facts which had occurred relative to the conversion of other citizens, and then entreated him to accompany a member of the family that night to the meeting. The old gentleman, whose burden was already as great as he knew how to bear, almost sunk under this affectionate but embarrassing request. He threw himself upon the bed, complained of indisposition, lay a short time, and then arose, and, with a firm step, walked away from his house, and out of sight of all his family, intending, probably, not to return until it should be too late for him to accompany them to the evening service. But the daughter, who was strong in faith, had every necessary preparation made for her father to attend church. At an early hour tea was prepared, the carriage was at the door, and all things were ready; but still the father did not come. She anxiously waited, she looked, she prayed, and still dared to believe, notwithstanding the long absence of her father, that he would return and go that night to the house of God.

She was not disappointed. Just before nightfall Mr. P. returned, and in silent agony, took his seat in the carriage, and rode to the village to attend service. There the Spirit

of God met him on that memorable night, and made further discoveries to him of his lost, his ruined condition. The Bible was now no longer a fable, but a record of the most solemn, momentous truths. He found that he had a soul destined to immortality, and, without speedy redemption, to endless and hopeless perdition. His dreams of annihilation fled; he saw that he was condemned by God's righteous and holy law, while, as yet, the Saviour was not revealed to his sinking, desponding soul. He reflected that once a godly mother had wept over him, and prayed for him. But she could do this no more, for she had long been with angels and with the spirits of just men made perfect before the throne of God and the Lamb. The voice of conscience he had hushed a thousand times; the counsels of pious parents, and the affectionate entreaties of Christian brothers and sisters he had neglected, till seventy years had rolled over his head; and now, when awakened to a sense of his condition, he seemed to view himself as an outcast, ruined, and undone for ever. His distress was truly awful.

Early on the following morning he appeared in a prayer-meeting. An atheist could not have looked upon him there without emotion. He said but little, while to every spectator it was evident that his bosom was the seat of distress and agonies not easily described. This darkness was the harbinger of a bright, a glorious day. Soon, he who had been wandering a spiritual maniac among the tombs of infidelity for thirty years, was seen sitting, clothed and in his right mind, at the feet of Jesus. The change was great, glorious, and visible to all.

On the very first night after he had obtained peace of mind, Mr. P., in broken accents, commenced worship in his family; and from that hour, during the remaining five years of his life, even to his last illness, there never was a

day when business was so pressing that he could not find time to bow with his household around the family altar. Whatever else was omitted, that duty was not neglected.

But his fidelity as a Christian was not limited to the discharge of any one duty. His whole life, walk, and conversation, from the time of his conversion to the day of his death in 1836, were remarkably consistent, circumspect, and holy. The writer has been long in the ministry, and has mingled much among Christians of different denominations, and he knows not that he has ever met a more holy and devoted Christian than was Mr. P. during the last five years of his life. In a few weeks after his conversion, he who had been "born when he was old," in company with forty others, most of them young people, came forward and united with the church, with which his connection continued until he was called to join the church triumphant.

His earthly pilgrimage was closed in a most calm and peaceful manner. Very soon after the attack of the disease which terminated his life, he seemed to be strongly impressed with the idea that he should never recover. He said that he had no desire to live any longer; that he was dead to the world; that his peace was made with God, and he was ready to go home. He spoke of his approaching dissolution with the utmost calmness and resignation. Just before he died, he requested one of his sons to sing the hymn,

"Why should we start, and fear to die?

What tim'rous worms we mortals are:

Death is the gate of endless joy,

And yet we dread to enter there.

Jesus can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillows are,

While on his breast I lean my head,

And breathe my life out sweetly there."

He also requested his son to pray with him. It was evident that he was calmly waiting for the hour of his departure, which soon arrived, when he cheerfully bade farewell to weeping friends, and sweetly slept in Jesus.

A few thoughts are suggested by this narrative.

1. Though it is a solemn fact, that very few are converted at the advanced age of Mr. P., yet we *do wrong to give up the aged, impenitent sinner*, as if he were certainly doomed to eternal woe. Were ministers and Christians to do their whole duty to old, gray-headed sinners, would not more of them, by the grace of God, be brought in at the eleventh hour?

2. How dangerous is it, especially for an unguarded youth, to read *corrupt books*. The perusal of one small volume was the means of confirming Mr. P. in deism. Let the youth of our land be on their guard. Let them be as conscientious and particular in the choice of their books, as they *should* be in the choice of their company.

3. How easy is it for God to render the *smallest incident* the means of effectually awakening the most stupid, hardened sinner. Who would have imagined that he who, through the days of childhood and youth, had resisted the powerful influence of parental piety; who, in a Christian land, had remained seventy years unmoved by a preached Gospel; who had witnessed the conversion of three or four of his own children; had been repeatedly admonished by the most alarming providences; and who for thirty years had been a confirmed Deist, should have been aroused from his deep spiritual sleep by the distant, broken accents of a praying negro? Truly, the ways of the Almighty are wonderful, and past finding out. Had the daughter of Mr. P., who purchased "Watson's Answer to Paine," returned the little volume to the bookstore, as she was half determined to do, to human view the loss to the father might

have been infinite. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth."

4. Let pious parents, in humble reliance upon the divine blessing, labor faithfully and zealously for the salvation of their children. Let them, like the pious mother of Mr. P., sow the good seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not their hand, as they know not which shall prosper, either this or that; or whether they both shall be alike good.

Though this mother in Israel did not live to witness the answer to her fervent prayers in the conversion of her son N.; though she was called to the rewards of the righteous, leaving him a hardened unbeliever, still walking towards perdition; though seventy years had rolled over his head, and he was still found not only an impenitent sinner, but a confirmed Deist; yet the happy day at length arrived when God remembered his covenant with his chosen. The prayer of faith is answered at last. The joyful tidings are communicated to "the general assembly and church of the first-born"—"Another sinner has repented." The angels rejoice anew, and in holy ecstasies of love, it may be, report to the glorified mother, "Behold, thy son, who was dead, is alive again; he who was lost, is found."

THE  
DAY OF TRIAL.

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It is said of an illustrious queen of England, that, when dying, her agonizing language was, *Millions of worlds—millions of worlds for another day of probation!* She felt that she could not “stand in the judgment.” And can any impenitent sinner stand in that day of trial?

ALL THE TESTIMONY WILL BE AGAINST HIM. His *companions in sin* will testify against him. Sinners, in this world, encourage one another in transgression; and if one is arrested, his associates may swear falsely to save him. But, at the tribunal of God, every mouth that would justify sin will be stopped. The false swearer, the liar, will feel it utterly impossible to evade Omniscience. Thus every sinner will be constrained to bear witness to the truth, even though it expose his nearest companions to “*shame and everlasting contempt.*”

The *examples of the righteous* will also testify against him. He will not be able to plead that he could not help continuing in sin; that he was urged on by a fatal necessity; for he will see that others, who were once of like dispositions, have repented, and have broken off their iniquities by turning unto the Lord.

His own *awakened conscience and memory* will testify against him. Conscience may now slumber. The sinner may impiously say, “Where is the promise of his coming? What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?” But very different will be his reflections on *another day*. When the

slumbers of death are broken, and the terrors of judgment burst upon the view, then, too, will the slumbers of conscience be broken, and heart-rending convictions fill the mind. Conscience will then testify how you here stifled conviction, resisted the truth, grieved the Holy Spirit. *Memory*, too, will on that day be amazingly quickened. All the privileges you have abused, and all the millions of your now forgotten sins, of thought, word, and deed, will come up in terrible array before you. O, what an immense, dark, thick cloud, to break at once in thunder on the conscience! And will not conscience thus be roused to fury, and declare you verily guilty? But more,

*The sufferings of Christ* will testify against the sinner at the judgment. That same Jesus who hung on the cross, will then fill the throne. But O, how changed! His countenance, once marred, now glorious as ten thousand suns shining in their strength. His very appearance will say with emphasis, *These arms were once extended for your salvation—for sinners like you, this head was crowned with thorns—this body and soul bore the tremendous weight of a world's redemption.* And this exhibition will furnish overwhelming proof of the ingratitude and guilt of him whom such love could not melt.

All the *instructions* of Christ will also testify against him. "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; *the word that I have spoken*, the same shall judge him in the last day." Yes, these glorious truths of the Saviour will be as noonday splendors, to render his ingratitude the more manifest—his perseverance in sin perfectly inexcusable, and his damnation just.

But cannot the LAW be set aside, and the sinner thus escape? "GOD IS THE JUDGE," and he cannot set aside



his own law. And when He shall exhibit its infinite purity in contrast with the sinner's vileness, then the poor wretch, if he have no *Saviour* to plead for him, must feel that he is indeed undone for ever. But,

He will have NO ADVOCATE. At a human tribunal, when the culprit is arraigned, though all the witnesses be against him, and the judge inflexibly just, still he cherishes hope from the ingenuity and eloquence of his advocate. But for the sinner at Jehovah's bar, no advocate will be found. Not one of his boldest companions will venture a syllable in his defence; not one of those foul spirits of darkness who beguiled him with lies, will now *care* for his safety; not one of the bright and generous millions of angels will attempt to palliate his guilt; and having rejected the Saviour, he can have no part in *his* mercy. Thus he must bear his own burden. He must meet the condemning witnesses, the violated law, and the eternal Judge, without any advocate. And,

ALL THE JURORS WILL BE PERFECTLY HOLY. "Know ye not that the *saints* shall judge the world?" Yes, these happy spirits, themselves "washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb," will then look on the wicked who have despised his mercy, just as they appear "in the light of God's countenance," amid the splendors of the "great white throne;" and in such circumstances they cannot but acquiesce in the sanctions of the holy law. Their part will then be, with Christ, to judge and condemn; and not as now, to entreat and suffer wrong. Men of piety and moral worth are sometimes most cruelly treated in this world. Wealth and intrigue may here succeed in a bad cause—"but 'tis not so *above*."

O sinner, when every witness shall be against you,

and your Judge inflexibly just ; when no kind advocate shall appear for you, and all the jurors shall be perfectly holy—can thy heart endure, or thy hands be strong? Ah, no. Every angel would say, *No* ; this controversy is with *Omnipotence*, and no sinner “shall be able to stand,” when “the great day of his wrath is come.”

“Agree, then, with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him.” Fly to the Saviour. Accept his offered mediation. It is inexpressible madness as well as guilt, to remain unreconciled to God, and approach the judgment, without an advocate, without one favoring witness, with no friend on the throne, nor one pitying saint or angel among all the assembled millions.

“The ungodly shall not stand.” And recollect, from that fall there is no recovery. It settles your character and destiny *for ever*. And oh, eternity, eternity, eternity! Who, that has now the offer of peace, would have the Holy One his eternal enemy? Think, O my soul, what it is to be condemned by the infinite Redeemer and Judge, and lie for ever under “the power of his anger!” Think of the amount of misery to be endured by a soul increasing for ever in guilt and remorse! Think of the extent of eternity! Send an angel forward on the awful deep, with lightning’s speed, for millions of centuries, and the dread waves of perdition are still rolling eternally beyond!

Dying man, what are *your* prospects? “Judge yourself now, that you may not be condemned with the world.” “The prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself.” “If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, thou alone must bear it.” D.

## CONVICTIONS STIFLED.

A NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

At a public religious service in R——, Pennsylvania, on a Sabbath evening in 1829, a gentleman was present who had not been in the house of God for years. He was a man of wealth; of a proud, independent spirit; notoriously opposed to religion and to ministers of the Gospel.

He was not observed by the speaker, but some remarks made on *the violation of the Sabbath*, set one of his sins before him, and he went homewards in a state of high excitement; saying to his daughter, "The preacher was very hard on the Sabbath-breaker this evening"—and again, "I don't know but he spoke the truth." On reaching home, he began to walk the room, and to speak violently against the sermon; and it was eleven o'clock before he ceased, and retired to rest.

In the morning he again complained of the sermon, and walked the room in great mental agitation. At breakfast he said he was sick; that he had lost his appetite, and must have a physician. As the physician was not a Christian, the daughter, a young lady of devoted piety, dreaded his influence on her father's mind; but as she could not dissuade him from his purpose, she went herself to the physician, told him she thought her father was not sick, but was distressed in view of his sins, and in the fulness of her agonized heart, begged to remind him of the responsibility of any influence he might exert in what she thought so critical a moment in her father's history.

The physician came. After an examination of his patient, he said there were no symptoms of disease, and he knew not what to prescribe.

"What shall I do, then," said the gentleman, "for I cannot live in such distress?"

"Were I in your case," said the physician, "I would send for Mr. ——," the preacher on the evening previous.

"What," he replied, surprised and excited: "Doctor, I thought you were not one of these praying people."

“I am not one of them, but I have known something about conviction within a few months; and the truth is, Mr. C——, you are under conviction for your sins.” Having said this, he rose, and immediately left him.

The gentleman was almost overwhelmed. His physician, in whom he had the most implicit confidence, was “of no value” in the present crisis. Every resource had now failed. The hour was one of untold agony. It was a mighty conflict with pride. He could endure it no longer. He called his daughter, and requested her to “send for the minister.”

In a few moments I entered his room. He was lying on his bed. When he saw me, he said, “I am not sick, sir. I know not what is the matter. I have called a physician, but he says I have no disease. I have no appetite for food. I have sent for you, but I hardly know what to say to you.”

I inquired if he had any bodily pain—in his head, or side, or breast. “No, I have not.”

“Have you ever been subject to such feelings or attacks?”

“No, sir, I have never been in such a state before.”

“Your state, Mr. C——, I think, is not peculiar to yourself; others have been affected in the same manner.”

“How is that, sir? Did you ever see a man in such a state? What do you think is the matter with me?”

“My opinion is, Mr. C——, that the Spirit of God is striving with you, and is causing you to feel that you are a sinner.”

“O no, it cannot be so; it is nothing of that kind.”

“If you will give your attention a few moments, I will attempt briefly to describe some of the views and feelings of a man when awakened by the Spirit of God, and then you may judge whether you are in that state.”

He listened for a while with intense interest, but suddenly interrupted me by saying, “O, that is not my case. I am not a sinner. What have I done?”

“You must surely know, Mr. C——, that you are a *sinner*, for all are sinners; and if you will suffer me to proceed, I may help you to see that you are an *awakened* sinner.”

“O, I don’t wish to hear any more. It distresses me to hear you. Do let me alone.”

His daughter, who, with a tearful eye, had silently heard every word, now said, very affectionately, "Father, you are willing, I suppose, that Mr. —— should pray with you before he leaves us?"

"O no, I don't wish to hear prayer. Do leave me, Mr. ——, I wish to be alone. This distress, I hope, will soon pass away, and I shall then feel better."

The agonized daughter now burst into tears. I rose to take my departure; but at this solemn and critical moment I could not refrain from dropping on his ear, in Christian kindness, a few words of caution.

"I cannot retire, Mr. C——, without saying, that I believe you are now an awakened sinner. The Spirit of God is striving with you, and you are resisting that Spirit. Should you now grieve him away, you have reason to fear he will not return to you again. If you do not now repent of your sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will probably yet be a hardened sinner. Your 'last state' will be 'worse than the first;' and the fearful probability is, that you will be taken from the world without any warning of your end. These words are not uttered merely to excite alarm, but as the honest convictions of my own mind in view of your present state. Time will show whether they are true or false. Be entreated, then, Mr. C——, to commit yourself to Christ, and make your peace with him without delay. I say this in view of our expected meeting at the judgment-seat of Christ. May God have mercy upon your soul."

Soon after I left him, he was in an agony of feeling. He called his daughter, and asked her if she would pray for him. They bowed together, while that daughter, whose prayers and religion had often been the subject of his ridicule and opposition, called upon the Lord for his salvation.

The tidings soon spread over the town, that Mr. C—— had sent for the minister to visit him. Nothing could have been more unexpected and surprising.

Early the next morning, a party of his old companions called upon him. They were men of wealth and influence, and brought a carriage in which they said he must ride. At first he declined; but at length their importunity prevailed.

He entered the carriage while the tears and prayers of

his daughter besought him to remain at home. His cruel friends took him away, and did not return until ten o'clock that evening; when—awful to utter—they *brought him home in a state of intoxication.*

When he awoke from his protracted slumbers in the morning, he was again in great agony. He had never before been intoxicated, and the recollection of this disgraceful sin enhanced his distress. But while his soul was thus keenly smarting under the lash of bitter remorse, his companions again presented themselves, requesting him to ride; and immediately on entering the house, began to laugh at him for turning Christian.

Their ridicule had more influence than the authority of God and his own danger of eternal destruction. Like so many demons, they beset him and persuaded him to ride with them on the second, and then again on the third day, and each night *brought him home intoxicated.*

After this he did not require the guardianship of his wicked friends to secure him in a course of sin. Their wit and opposition, aided by the palsy influence of the intoxicating draught, seemed to have seared his conscience, and to have swept away all conviction of his sin or danger.

For months after this, I saw him daily in the streets, but had no opportunity of personal conversation with him. He never again visited the house of God. He was known to be a bold blasphemer. He spoke publicly and with much apparent enmity against ministers of the Gospel and professors of religion.

About nine months after my introduction to him, I received a letter from a lawyer residing in R——, stating that early one morning Mr. C—— had ordered his carriage, that he might ride to Pottsville. The driver not being ready as soon as he expected, he went to his carriage-house to hasten him. Returning towards his house, he beckoned to his brother, who was standing in the door, to come to him, and immediately fell upon the earth. His body was taken up, but the spirit had departed for ever.

“He that, being often reprovèd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy.”

## S K E T C H

OF

## MISS HARRIET PATTERSON,

DAUGHTER OF COMMODORE PATTERSON, OF THE U. S. NAVY.

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THE natural disposition of Miss Patterson was uncommonly amiable, and her personal appearance interesting and commanding. To these were added all the improvements of the most polished education which Philadelphia could afford, under the special guidance of devoted parents and aunts. Her education completed, she removed to Washington, where her father held a high military command, and where, for several years, she had every opportunity of gratifying her desires for the follies and vanities of the world. In this metropolis of pleasure, fashion, rank, and splendor, she was flattered, admired, caressed, and thus became still more enamored of the world. Nor was Washington, with its gayeties and pageantry, to be the only theatre on which she was to seek for this world's happiness. Her father being ordered on a cruise in the Mediterranean, determined to take his family with him, consisting of Mrs. Patterson, two sons, and three daughters, of whom the subject of this notice was the eldest. In full health, and in the bloom of youth, with an inquiring and highly cultivated mind, and a heart full of this world, she left her native land to visit the most interesting places in the old world, and still more perfectly to cultivate the accomplishments already acquired.

“When she joined the ship,” said one who was well qualified to speak, “she was in fine health, and so continued for two years. Cheerful in disposition, with a mind well stored, and features so beautiful as to excite admiration wherever she went; kind in her feelings towards all, and blending feminine modesty with great sociableness, she soon became a favorite with all of us. We arrived in the Mediterranean in September, 1832, and during that and the following year visited nearly all the cities along its shores,

including Athens and Constantinople. The summer of 1834 was spent chiefly in visiting Egypt and Syria. While the ship remained at Alexandria we proceeded to Jaffa or Joppa, and then made a visit to Jerusalem." While here, Miss Patterson, in company with her parents, sisters, brothers, and officers of the ship, visited the places which are endeared to the Christian by so many hallowed recollections. They stood on the spot where the Redeemer of the world laid down his life for the sins of man; they visited the tomb in which he was buried; they walked in the garden where he agonized; ascended the Mount of Olives where he was wont to retire for prayer; and, by a short excursion from the Holy City, saw with delight the place of his nativity.

"To Miss Patterson," said one of those who attended her, "these visits seemed to have been peculiarly impressive. I do not know that any powerful conviction was immediately produced by them; her feelings seem to have been rather awe and admiration of the love of Christ for sinners, and a more powerful realizing of the great sacrifice there offered up for a lost world." She had always paid some attention to the subject of religion, and at the time she visited the sepulchre, having her Bible with her, she laid it on the marble coffin said to have contained the sacred body of Jesus, and with a pencil, on its blank leaf, wrote these words: "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord." Immediately on her return to the ship there was perceived to be an attention to the subject of religion as a thing of greater importance than she had hitherto regarded it. She read, and studied, and prayed, and became deeply humbled under a sense of her sinfulness, and trusted in her Saviour for salvation. Her life, soon after this visit, became that of a meek and humble, yet joyful Christian. She never shrunk from avowing the change which had been wrought in her, and indeed wished that all her friends and associates might be made aware of it.

Often was she strongly tempted, in the different places visited, and the trying scenes through which she must pass, to enter into gayeties unbecoming her religious character; but she firmly, though meekly, resisted every solicitation, and preferred her new and more elevated pleasures. During the summer of her visit to Syria her health became delicate, but not so much so as to cause any serious alarm. During



the winter at Mahon she became more feeble, but in the spring she began to regain her health, and there was every promise of a return to her native land, and to many much-loved friends. It was at this time she spoke with pleasure of publicly declaring to the world what the grace of God had done for her, and what she was resolved, by that same grace, to do, in evidence of her love and gratitude.

In a paper dated March 15, 1835, in which, unknown to any one on earth, she recorded the devout exercises of her soul, she says, "I have been possessed with the love of the world—I have sought it—I have loved it—I have adored it: in a word, it has been the sum and substance of my life—and what has it profited me? Should I not at once renounce those vain pursuits, those empty and false amusements and images, and seek the truth; that inexhaustible source of light, of strength, of satisfaction, and happiness?"

"I do not fear that thou wilt reject me, O mighty and loving Redeemer. I fear not that thou wilt disdain to accept the heart now offered thee, notwithstanding it has so repeatedly refused thy gracious invitations. Thy mercy is inexhaustible and unwearied. Thou canst subdue and establish my heart in peace. I know there is no excess or injustice of which it is incapable; but I know that it is easy to make thyself master of it, and to attach it to thee in 'bonds of a perpetual covenant never to be forgotten.' May I not hope to realize the blessed effects of thine holy influence? Refuse me not, O Lord, my God, refuse me not any of those helps of thy grace which may so attach me to thee, 'that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor the heights of prosperity, nor the depths of adversity, nor any other created thing, may be able to separate' me either from the love with which thou dost honor me in JESUS CHRIST, or that which I am ever bound to have for thee, both in time and in eternity. Take possession of this heart, O GOD, and so subject all its emotions to thyself that none may ever again arise which may not be conformable to thy will, and which tend not to thy glory."

When the above was written, she designed to make a public avowal of her Saviour as soon as she should reach her native land; but Providence thought fit to order it other-

wise. Unfavorable symptoms occasionally appeared, and her kind parents, on their passage over the Atlantic, were alternately encouraged by hope and depressed by fear. The shores of America were at length in sight, and their daughter was yet alive, and hope still comforted all the hearts which loved her. But He in whose hands are the winds and waves, saw fit to disappoint them. The earthly haven was seen, but was not reached, in life, by the object of their tender solicitude. Adverse winds arose, which drove them from the shore; and while the stately vessel was tossing to and fro on the mountain wave, seeking harbor, but in vain, the spirit of this lovely, interesting, and redeemed young woman was suddenly and unexpectedly taken up to the haven of everlasting rest. On the following day the majestic Delaware was seen passing from the now calmed Atlantic through the capes, into the safe and quiet harbor which she had been seeking, bearing the mortal remains of the departed child, and the weeping relatives and sympathizing crew. On the third day it anchored opposite Norfolk; and according to previous arrangements, the remains of the deceased, accompanied by the bereaved family and a large number of the officers and crew, were first carried into "Christ Church," where the funeral service was performed by the Right Rev. Bishop Meade, with some appropriate remarks, and afterwards conveyed to the churchyard adjoining the city, where it was consigned to the grave.

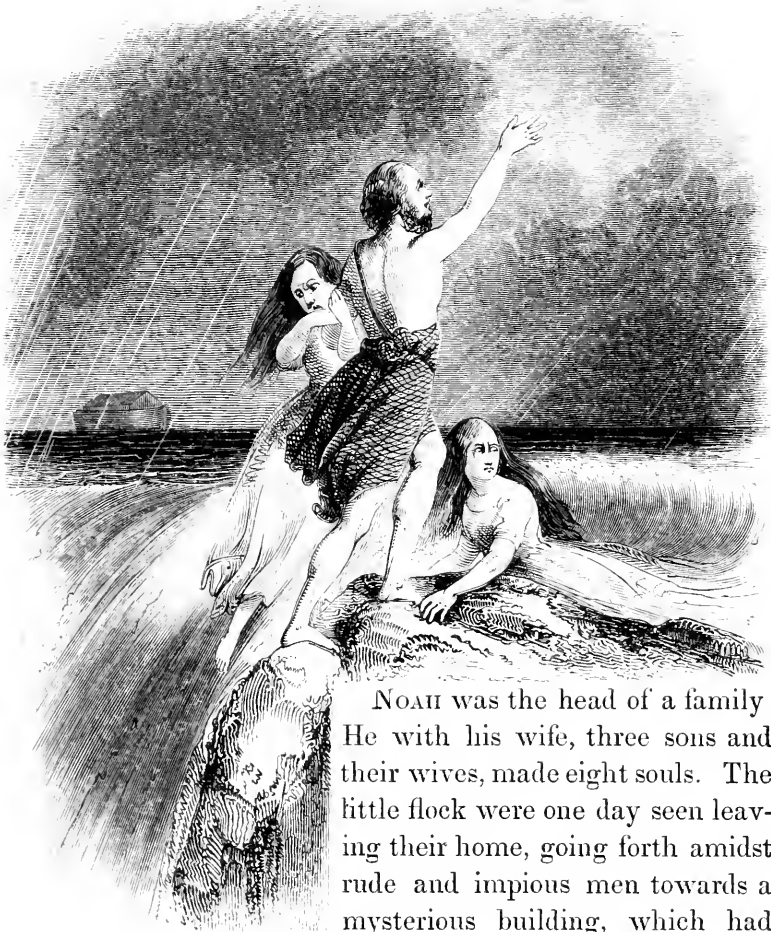
On the tombstone which covers that spot, the passing traveller may read the last words of the precious manuscript she left behind: "Most merciful Father, I beseech thee so to dispose of every event, that I may live in thy service, and that I may die in thy favor and in thy love."

To the youth of our land, especially those who were acquainted with the deceased in the days of her vanity, the above sketch is affectionately commended. Would they be blest, let them go and do likewise.

[This narrative is beautifully confirmed by Rev. George Jones, in his "Excursions to Jerusalem, etc., from U. S. ship Delaware."]

# ALL IN THE ARK.

A FAMILY TRACT.



NOAH was the head of a family. He with his wife, three sons and their wives, made eight souls. The little flock were one day seen leaving their home, going forth amidst rude and impious men towards a mysterious building, which had some time stood for their jest and mockery. The procession entered, and God shut them in. As they took their seats in the building, which for many days and nights was to be their home, they were impressed with an expectation of something terrible about to come. Suddenly they heard the wind rising;

its hollow moan portended a fearful storm. At once it seemed as though a cloud had burst upon the ark; the great rain of God's strength descended; the flood had come. All night a rushing sound of waters came from the earth; for the fountains of the sea were broken up, "the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high." The ark moved, and then was still; and again its inhabitants felt themselves born up by the rising waters.

As they looked, in a few days, from the window of the ark, the air was darkened with rain, and the dry land, as far as the eye could reach, had become a sea, which could not rest. Imagine what was probably the awful scene around them. Corpses of men, women, and children, parts of dwellings, promiscuous household things, were driven together upon the flood; and here and there a wild animal, with his head stretched above the waves, turned suddenly and uttered his frightened cry. From the tops of places not yet reached by the flood, but covered with darkness, voices of despair were heard, and from places within call of the ark, a crowd just ready to perish implored help. When the sun went down again, imagination made the scene more terrible. As each thunder-peal died away in the distance, a crashing sound of thunder would succeed, then roll in angry murmurs under the whole heaven. In the lull of the storm, voices of agonizing prayer were heard, and now and then, beneath the very window of the ark, the cry "of some strong swimmer in his agony," made the family within turn pale.

Noah had forewarned the victims of these scenes. The God in whom he believed is the strength of his heart, while the world around him is dying. His family are safe with him in the ark. He sings the praise of that mercy which had saved them from destruction: "How different would my feelings be, if any of you were now without, and I were listening to every cry, as though it might be the cry of one of you separated from us, and perishing under the wrath of God."

The fact that *the whole of Noah's family went with him into the ark*, is not a little remarkable. Here were three young men saved from a race of scoffers and despisers of religion. Having the same inclinations and passions with others, it no doubt required much prayer, and exhortation, and pious authority, to persuade them to go into the ark. Think how foolish Noah's project must have seemed to the men of his time. He declared that there was to be a flood that would cover the tops of the highest mountains; and therefore began to build a huge ark, to save himself and family from destruction. Suppose that a man should say and do the same now, we can imagine what jeers and mockery would befall him. How few, probably, would be induced to join him. But the flood must have seemed full as improbable to the men of Noah's time, as it would now to us; and Noah's ability to prevail upon his children to join him in preparing and entering into the ark, was a result of judicious, holy, parental influence. Though the grace of God effected it, Noah's influence as a pious, faithful head of a family, was no doubt the means. For it is said, "And Noah was perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God." Parents must walk with God, if they would bring their children with them into the ark.

To see the probability of what has now been said, look, in the way of contrast, to the family of Lot. When the angels told him that the Lord would destroy that place, and said, "Hast thou here any besides?" and sent him to his sons-in-law who married his daughters, he seemed to them like one that mocked. His influence over them had not been sanctified; his wife, too, had loved the world in a manner that prevented the salvation of her own soul; but Noah carried his daughters-in-law as well as his own children and his wife with him into the ark. We may, indeed, refer this distinction between the two families to the sovereignty of God; but who can doubt, with the Scripture history before him, that Noah was a better father than Lot,

and that the providence and grace of God coincided, as they usually do, in so appropriate a means for the salvation of his family?

The children of Noah were exposed to great temptations. They lived in a wicked age; their neighbors and their neighbors' children were wicked; they could not but hear scoffs against religion, and against their father, and against his ark; and it was almost a miracle that they did not turn against their father, and sit in the seat of the scornful. But there was something in the life of that good man more powerful than all this unholy influence. It is altogether probable that he used to pray with his sons. Every morning, before they were exposed to the temptations of a wicked world, it may be, he called them together, spake to them of God, their souls, the flood, eternity; and by prayer endeavored to guard their minds against the bad influences of the world. During the day his conversation would perhaps occasionally lead them to serious meditation; and as in the morning he sowed his seed, so in the evening he withheld not his hand. As the result of his faithfulness, he had the happiness of being surrounded in the ark by his unbroken family.

“The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” The ministers of God are now doing what Noah did, when first the long-suffering of God waited: they are pointing men to the only refuge, Jesus Christ, and warning them that those, and those only, who are found in him will be saved. Especially to every father and mother the message of God now is, as, in a somewhat different sense indeed, it was to Noah, “Come thou and all thy house into the ark.”

A happy family is the perfection of human happiness. The relations which it includes are the most tender on earth, and nothing is to be compared to the hold which family ties have upon a man's heart. God would preserve

these ties unbroken, because they make us happy on earth, and, sanctified, make a part of the happiness of heaven. Therefore his invitation of mercy is not merely directed to man as an individual, but he graciously thinks of those whom the man loves; and when he speaks to a husband and father about his soul and about eternity, it is not enough to bid him welcome, but he says, "Come thou *and all thy house* into the ark." When you think how sure and terrible is the last tempest—how kind and free the invitation to be saved from it—how dreadful to have a family scattered when that tempest comes—how delightful on earth and transporting in eternity that the family should be united in everlasting bonds—nothing seems more desirable than that this invitation should be accepted.

Let us then consider some of the more obvious means by which, with the blessing of God, *your whole family* may, like that of Noah, come into the ark.

THE PARENTS THEMSELVES SHOULD SET THE EXAMPLE. Parental influence is a powerful means of the children's salvation. Children should be pious, though their parents are not so; still, in the order of nature, the parent should lead the child, rather than the child the parent. If we would not have our families broken up at the last day, we who are parents must do all in our power to prevent it. We are not preventing it, but are helping it by the surest means, if we are not ourselves pious. Children make inferences as readily as grown persons; and they secretly think, "If there were any great importance in religion, if heaven and hell were what we read of, or our teachers tell us they are, our father and mother would not only tell us so, but would be pious themselves; but if they are not Christians, why should we be concerned? They know better than we what is right and safe, and we will follow them." We know not how many children have long since come to this conclusion. It is a thought that should make

a parent, who is not a Christian, tremble, that his children may be heard to plead hereafter, because indeed they have no better excuse, "If my father or mother had been a Christian, I should have thought more of the importance of religion." So long as a parent is not known by his family as a Christian, his influence is against experimental piety. His amiable disposition, his good principles, can never save the soul of his child; "*one thing is needful*," and his being without it will frequently be observed by a child sooner than by an older person.

This is peculiarly the case where *one of the parents is pious* and the other is not. If the father or mother prays with the child, and speaks to it on religious subjects, it will wonder why the other parent does not do the same. But often, when the mother has labored for the conversion of the child, and the father has not confirmed the instructions of the mother by his example, the child has been affected by the negative influence of the father, rather than by all the prayers and tears of the mother. A child regards his father's example with peculiar strictness, and the father may neutralize all that takes place in the closet between the mother and the child, merely by not being a Christian, and thus not adding his prayers, and his holy words, and his silent but mighty influence, in favor of religion. He need not be profane, or intemperate, nor tell the child that his mother is foolish; he may be a pattern, as a father, of all that is affectionate and kind; but only let him never speak to the child of its Saviour, nor pray with it, nor talk of another world; and if that mother's prayers and influence succeed, it will be a singular triumph of the grace of God over a strong counteracting influence. While it is worse for a child if neither of its parents are pious, it is a solemn thing for an unconverted parent that the other parent should be a Christian, for the piety of the one makes the influence of the other more dangerous. Is it not the silent language of every unconverted parent's example, "This world is



more than eternity ; its pleasures, riches, honors, are more important than religion ; repentance, faith, regeneration, are not essential ?”

What do children think who leave one parent at the Lord's supper, and see their honored and beloved father or mother go away ? Suppose that your child should say to you, as you are leading it home from church on a Sabbath, when your wife or husband has remained with the church at the Lord's table, “ Why do not *you* remain ?” Endeavor to form an answer to such a question, and see how it will stand the test of His judgment, who gave himself for you that you might not perish, and what its probable influence would be on that immortal spirit which you habitually bring away with you from the memorials of his body and blood. Impressions are made upon young children by our conduct which will last through eternity, and on which may depend, in many cases, where that eternity shall be spent. No one can describe the responsibility of being from day to day with a child, and of having its eternal destiny affected by us ; for who can doubt that parents and children in eternity will see that bliss or woe came to many a child through the influence of its father or its mother, and that some will mourn and say, “ Had I done my duty, my children might have been in heaven with their father and mother, and I with them ; whereas I, to whom the whole family looked for an example, am the cause of their perdition.” It is plain, therefore, that in seeking the salvation of the family, *both the parents* must, above all things, set an example of personal religion.

But some parents will say, as the servants did who had called the guests to the wedding-supper, “ ‘ Lord, we have done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.’ Some of them—perhaps all—refuse to come. And what shall we do ?” I answer, As another obvious means, by the blessing of God, of securing the salvation of the family,

PARENTAL AUTHORITY should, in a judicious manner, be joined with parental example.

This should be done with regard to *amusements and pleasures*. The people of Noah's time were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. They rioted in all manner of pleasures, some of which, without doubt, were fascinating to the young; and perhaps the sons of Noah, and their wives, were strongly inclined to join in them. No doubt there were innocent amusements to which they could have access. "The father of all them that handle the harp and organ" had supplied them with the diversions which music affords. The great artificer in brass and iron had also introduced his curious and useful implements; and the "mighty hunter," who afterwards arose in Noah's family, shows that the pleasures of the hunt and chase, useful in those days, may not have been unknown. There was no want of such diversions as were proper, and probably no disposition on the part of their father to restrain their use of them. But then it was hard not to do as they saw their neighbors and their neighbors' children do; and perhaps the sons and daughters of Noah plead with him for indulgence in the scenes of sinful festivity to which they were called. But God had said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me; and behold, I, even I, do bring a flood upon the earth, wherein every living thing shall die: make thee an ark." To suffer his children to mingle in sinful pleasures, he saw, would be to let them venture into the snares of Satan.

A part of the moral education of the young should be, to teach them that there are things in this world which *they cannot and must not have*; that they will frequently be called upon, in a wicked world, to be singular, to have numbers and influence against them, especially if they themselves are disposed to be decided in their uprightness. Is it a suitable preparation of them for such trials, to accustom them to immoderate and full indulgence of all their

wishes ; to let them do what, at best, is of doubtful tendency, because others do it ?

It is not my purpose to discuss the propriety of different amusements and pleasures, but only to say, that in cases where we doubt the good influence of such amusements, we must be decided in the proper exercise of parental authority.

Parental authority must also in a judicious manner be joined with parental example, *with regard to many things connected with religious faith and practice*. Suppose that the men of Noah's time had professed to be pious in the midst of their sins, and had altars where they worshipped what *they* called God, but such a god altogether as themselves, after their own hearts ; and suppose that the sons and daughters of Noah were strongly inclined to go with their neighbors on the Sabbath, when Noah and his wife came around their little altar to offer sacrifice—would he have said to them, “My children, I have no right to dictate to you what faith you shall embrace, or what God you shall worship ? God has warned me of the flood, in which even these men, who have the form of godliness but deny the power, must surely perish. And he has commanded me to come with all my house into the ark. At the same time I would not be illiberal, and I am not a bigot. Perhaps it may be well for you to ‘prove all things, and hold fast that which is good !’”

How like mockery this seems, compared with what we may suppose was his language and conduct. “My children, ‘Seek ye the Lord while he may be found ; call ye upon him while he is near. If ye seek him, he will be found of you ; but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever.’ Do I not know that the Lord is God ? Should I be willing to risk my soul at those unsanctified altars ? ‘Their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings will I not offer, neither will I take up their names into my lips.’ Let them denounce me as gloomy and intolerant ; I fear Him only, who, ‘after

he has killed, has power to cast into hell.' And I warn you, that if you forsake the altar of my God, and go after false religion, you will be covenant-breakers, and expose yourselves to be abandoned of heaven."

Would the children have disregarded such an appeal? But suppose that one, more headstrong than the rest, disobeyed, and renounced his father's faith; did the father cease from the most incessant and faithful efforts to reclaim him? Or, did he console himself by saying that he had done all he could, and the child must be responsible for his own conduct? Without doubt he exerted his parental influence and authority. So should Christian parents, if their children manifest wandering desires, or an idle curiosity with regard to religious worship, and are inclined to stray away from the watch and care of their parents on the Sabbath. So should they do, moreover, if their children are inclined to spend the intermission of public worship, or any part of the Sabbath, unnecessarily, in the streets or fields.

*Parents and children will rejoice hereafter at the successful use of authority.* Let us look once more upon the family in the ark, while the rains descend, the floods come, and the winds blow, and thousands all around are in the agonies of death. See the patriarch and his children, who were so strictly governed by him that some feared he would break their spirits and make them narrow-minded—see them praising God for his restraining grace, and adoring that mercy which saved them from the enticements and dangers of a dying world. How different at the judgment-day will the feelings of some parents be from what they now are, in regard to the management of their children; and of children in regard to their parents' strictness. How thankful those children will be who are saved, that their parents did exercise authority over them, though they had grown beyond childhood, and by a judicious and mild, though persevering course, governed their wayward and foolish dispo-

sitions. And what scenes, heart-rending scenes, will there be, when the last sentence is uttered, and the great throng is breaking up. There families will linger a moment for the farewell, and the child will think, "Why were my father and mother so easy with me, when they knew that the course I wished to take would certainly lead me to hell? Had they been a little more severe, and warned me faithfully, and made more efforts to keep me from my foolish ways, I might have been saved, or else my blood had been on my own head; but now, the authors of my existence are the occasion of my eternal ruin."

PIOUS PARENTS WHO HAVE UNCONVERTED CHILDREN—  
Have you done all that your parental character authorizes you to do for their souls, in the way of restraint and otherwise? God has given you a great trust; you are not merely the advisers of your children; God has clothed you with authority, and he will sustain you in it. By all means make them obey. If you let them resist and disobey *you*, they will the more readily disobey their consciences, and resist the Holy Ghost. Obedience is important for its influence on their subsequent character and conduct, as well as for the peace and happiness of the family. A fear of offending a child, or of urging or insisting upon what a parent knows is right and proper, has, in all probability, in many cases separated the child and the parent, the child and heaven, for ever. If you know what the Bible teaches, if you are persuaded of the truth of all that you profess, will you suffer timidity to deprive you of this only opportunity of laboring to save your children from destruction?

Do not excuse yourselves from duty by a mistaken view of divine sovereignty. Some pious parents have said, "There are many of the greatest and best of men that have unconverted children; if the prayers and efforts of such men fail, it is not my fault if mine are not converted." There is error in this reasoning, even if the conclusion itself

be true. The individuals in question may be the greatest and best of scholars, or preachers, or citizens; but are they the greatest and best of *parents*? A man may be pious and amiable in his family, but yet be so indulgent, or timid, and silent at his children's errors, that with all their other advantages, none of them may go to heaven.

But why is it that the children of some of the best of Christians are yet unconverted, and are entering upon life impenitent? The answer is twofold. First, have the parents *ceased* to labor and pray for their conversion? Like the king of Israel, who "smote only thrice and stayed," the parents may now suffer for their want of faith and perseverance. But do they still continue instant in prayer, in the morning sowing their seed, and in the evening not withholding their hand? The second reply is, the door of the ark is *not yet shut*. Perhaps the conversion of the children is delayed for the good of the parents, or for some other wise purpose. Still there is hope; in due season you may reap, if you faint not. Never despair of the conversion of a child who has been a subject of special prayer and consecration.

ARE YOU AN UNCONVERTED HUSBAND OR WIFE, WHOSE COMPANION IS A CHRISTIAN? You are standing in the way of your children's salvation. Perhaps, if you should be a Christian, all your children would be Christians. If you do not pray for them, nor with them, nor converse with them in a religious manner, nor set them a decided example of religion, that may be the reason why some or all of them are unconverted. There are several hinderances which they cannot pass in the way of their salvation, and *you may be the first*. If you were removed out of their way by death, they might all be saved. Are you willing to spend eternity with your children lost? Shall their spirits haunt you through the shades of death, for having prevented their salvation?

You may be the UNCONVERTED CHILD OF PIOUS PARENTS. It may be that your parents have often warned you, and prayed with you, and exhausted all their endeavors to bring you with them into the ark; "but ye would not." Are you the *elder* brother or sister? The guilt of breaking up the family circle, it may be, will rest on you. If your example did not hinder, if its influence were good, all your father's family might be saved. The younger children in a family are greatly influenced by the conduct of the eldest child. Are you willing to be the means of separating the family hereafter?

How many happy hours you have had around your fire-side! Must they be remembered in eternity only to make you wretched? Unless your parents' God is your God, you must be separated from your parents at the judgment, to meet them no more for ever. God calls you into the ark of safety. He calls upon the eldest child to lead the way; and who will refuse that call under circumstances of so much mercy and danger? Accepting it now, all your family may go to heaven; rejecting it, there may be mourning amongst you at the judgment-seat of Christ.

Perhaps the reader is THE ONLY MEMBER OF A FAMILY WHO IS NOT A CHRISTIAN. Is this the case with you, beloved friend? All your family going to heaven—parent, brother, sister, all Christians, all in the ark of safety, and you still exposed to the last great tempest? Think of your condition, and flee from it, before it be too late. There will be weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, if you should see the family in heaven, and you yourself shut out.

You may belong to A FAMILY OF WHICH NOT ONE SOUL IS PIOUS. Consider the sad condition and prospects of such a house: father and mother leading the way, and children following them down to eternal death. What can be the

consequence but that the whole family will be lost? It is truly dreadful to think of a whole household spending eternity together in hell. Are you a member of such a family? Escape for your life, tarry not in all the plain, but flee to the ark of safety, lest you be consumed. Perhaps the rest will follow, but deliver *your own* soul.

#### A WORD IN CONCLUSION TO PARENTS.

One hundred and twenty years were allotted the family of Noah to prepare for themselves the ark of their safety. Not so with us. The ark for us is finished. How soon its doors may be shut we cannot tell. As the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, so has it waited long for you. As the day at last arrived when God brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly and condemned it with an overthrow, so will it one day be said, "The door is shut;" and your feelings will be joyful or terrible according as you and yours are within or without the ark. Seek admittance there without delay. God will notice with favor every one who, in the presence of his family, builds an altar and calls upon the name of the Lord. Take this first step, therefore, towards the salvation of your family, without further delay, and never rest till you are all in the ark. Then, when scenes exceeding the terrors of a universal flood and of a burning world are passing in the crowds of parents and children at the bar of God, your Judge and Saviour will say to you, "Enter *thou*, and *all thy house*, into the joy of your Lord."



## EARLY EDUCATION—LATE DEVELOPMENT.

FROM "HOME EDUCATION," BY ISAAC TAYLOR, AUTHOR OF "THE NATURAL HISTORY OF ENTHUSIASM," ETC.

The doctrine so much talked of, of late, and so eagerly followed by many, is that of DEVELOPMENT; and the question put on all sides is, "What are the readiest and the surest means of expanding the faculties at an early age?" But the very contrary doctrine is the one professed and explained throughout this work; for I am bold to avow my adherence to the principle of *repression* and *reserve* in the culture of the mind; and it is this principle which I would fain convince the reader may be put in practice consistently with the conveyance of really more information, or of information more comprehensive and substantial than is usually communicated.

The rule we have to recommend enjoins that excitement should be postponed, while *nutriment* is supplied; and, in a word, that the mental force should be husbanded rather than used.

Much more has been said and written concerning the *things that are to be taught*, and the *method* of teaching them, than concerning the *faculties of the mind* that are to be trained, and the natural order of their development.

## HAPPINESS OF CHILDREN.

Adults look for *external* means of enjoyment, and seek happiness in the gratification of specific wishes or desires; but an infant, simply protected from positive suffering, is happy from the stock of its own resources, and by the perpetual gush of joyful emotions.

The happiness of children is not a something to be procured and prepared for them, like their daily food, but a something which they ALREADY POSSESS, and with which we need not concern ourselves, any further than to see that they are not despoiled of it. This simple principle, if

understood, trusted to, and constantly brought to bear upon the arrangements of a family, would at once relieve the minds of parents from an infinitude of superfluous cares.

A child—let it not be deemed paradoxical—a child draws its happiness, with very slender aid of external means, from the boundless field of its own conceptions, and from the treasures of its own unspent emotions. A young person, on the contrary, asks large supplies of external excitement, and is ever eagerly in quest of extrinsic means of gratification. During the first period of life, the soul is occupied in evolving the elements of its happiness; during the second, in imbibing them; that is to say, in gathering new materials for future combination.

Let any one, familiar with children, analyze a child's tranquil felicity while amusing itself, for an hour or more, with nothing better than a crooked stick, or a handful of pebbles.

What can be the bare gratification of the sense of touch, or of the muscular power, or of the sight, which such objects can convey? It must be reckoned as extremely small; nor is it possible to watch the movements and countenance of an infant of fifteen months, or two years, whilst so engaged, and fall into the great error of supposing that its delights are chiefly animal.

It is the MIND, it is the rich, and grasping, and excursive human mind—such even in infancy—that is at work on the poor materials of its felicity. This crooked stick, or these pebbles, are symbols of many things we adults do not dream of in such a connection.

No. 388.

# CONVERSION

OF

## DR. CAPADOSE,

A JEWISH PHYSICIAN OF AMSTERDAM;

AUTHOR OF THE TREATISE "JEHOVAH JESUS," &c.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF AT THE REQUEST OF REV. PROF. PETTAVEL  
AND OTHERS, NEUFCHATEL, SWITZERLAND.

ABRIDGED FROM THE FRENCH OF THE SOCIETIES OF THE FRIENDS OF ISRAEL  
AT TOULOUSE AND NEUFCHATEL.

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No, my dear friends, I will no longer decline to meet your pressing demands, or to fulfil the engagement under which you have placed me, to relate to you how it pleased the God of all grace to call me to the knowledge of himself, and bring me from darkness to his marvellous light. My soul is vividly, is deeply convinced, that it has never of itself sought the Lord; but that the arm of his compassion was extended to it while in its lost condition. It would then be false modesty to refuse you that which, communicated in conversation, appeared somewhat edifying to many dear friends, who saw in it the Saviour's unspeakable love for so wretched a sinner, and felt themselves urged to glorify his name.

By birth a Portuguese Jew, I was, nevertheless, far from being a zealot in the cause of the religion of my ancestors. My education had been moral rather than religious, inspiring me with horror of vice, and love for what the world styles virtue; but the goodness of God alone preserved me from open impiety, somewhat later in life.

At an early age I was ardently engaged in the pursuit of literature and science: though living in society, and

enthusiastically fond of the theatre, balls, and all worldly amusements, I derived even greater satisfaction from study. In my youth, also, I became acquainted with the writings of Voltaire and Rousseau; but the insolidity, the infidelity, and, above all, the terrible consequences of their systems, unfolded to my eyes in the history of the French revolution, guarded me, through the grace that cometh down from on high, against their pernicious influence.

As I was destined by my parents for the profession of physic, I began to acquire the knowledge necessary for that vocation, although feeling a stronger attraction to the theoretical sciences and philosophical investigation. The circle of my acquaintance consisted of young persons, nominally christians; and our debates at the academy generally turned upon the antinomianism of Kant, or the philosophy of Plato; in short, upon all kinds of abstract questions.

The Lord had given me a friend (Mr. Dacosta) in the bosom of my kindred. Both of us Jews, and intimate friends from our infancy, we had similar views on many subjects, and the same circle of acquaintance. A "*savant*" of the academy of Leyden, (the celebrated Bilderdeck,) a man of extraordinary genius, a distinguished poet, an excellent historian, a profound philosopher, and, above all, a true disciple of Christ, assembled around him at that time a few studious young men. My friend, who had long known him, and I, were among the number of his auditors. He honored us with peculiar affection; and his conversations contributed not a little, under God, to direct my mind to serious contemplation. Though he never spoke to me of christianity before my conversion, he, nevertheless, exercised a great and salutary influence over my heart. The vivacity and fervor of his soul, the nobleness of his sentiments, the force of his logic, the depth and extent of his knowledge, joined to an ardent desire of being useful to youth, all concurred to enrapture us. But no love of a spiritual religion had yet entered my heart.

It is true that in early childhood, at the age of nine years, I felt the need of prayer ; and asked my Jewish parents for a prayer-book in the French or Dutch language, that I might be enabled to comprehend the object of my prayers. I urged my brother and sister to do likewise. This seems the more remarkable, since I had seldom observed those around me pray. From that hour I have not ceased to perform this duty, through all the changes of life ; and I may add, that this prayer formed my only worship up to the time of my conversion. This form ended with these remarkable words : “ I wait thy deliverance, O Lord ! ”

I have retained the book, and never cast my eyes on it without being melted, and adoring the goodness of the God of my deliverance, who hath deigned to give me, in maturer age, what the child of nine years ceased not to pray for every night, though ignorant of the meaning of his request.

During the period of my studies, these moments of peculiar emotion returned, leaving very deep traces in my mind. I remember that a poor woman was in the habit of singing psalms in the street on Saturday evening, to excite the compassion of passers by. More than once I left my books, when the singing of pious hymns reached my ears, being irresistibly drawn to the window, and there I remained fixed under the weight of sensations I could not define. The same thing occurred to me when, on Sabbath morning, I heard the melody of psalms rise from under the vaulted roof of a neighboring church.

I went frequently to the theatre. One evening, when “ Joseph in Egypt ” was represented, I had no sooner heard the first words of the morning hymn, in imitation of the Hebrew, than, full of patriotic emotion, I felt my tears flowing. Alas ! it was only an illusion before me ; and profound sorrow soon succeeded this sweet dream in which I had been absorbed.

At the synagogue, which I continued to attend for the

sake of decorum, nothing affected me in the least ; on the contrary, those heartless ceremonies, that want of respect, those shouts, those discordant songs, and the use of a tongue unknown to more than three-fourths of the assembly—all this spiritless and lifeless display so disgusted me that I no longer attended regularly ; for I had ever abhorred hypocrisy.

Nevertheless, to give us a change, and as if he had caught a glimpse of what was about to happen some years later, the tempter put it into the heart of my friend, and mine, to alter our mode of life. Both of us enemies to half measures, and not being able to suit ourselves with this modern Judaism, which had invented the art of taking up, or laying aside, according to convenience, the different injunctions of the Mosaic law, we firmly resolved to become true Israelites, rigid observers of every article of the law, intimidated by no authority, and compelling even christians to respect the Jewish nation.

National pride, that sentiment which in boyhood led me to say to my good mother, on seeing her afflicted, “ Be consoled, mother ; when I am grown up, I will carry you to Jerusalem ; ” increased amazingly at this epoch, and took the place of every other emotion.

It was in this disposition of heart, and with these resolutions, that we undertook the assiduous *reading of the Bible*. But, O disgrace ! O wretchedness of the unconverted soul ! we could go no further than Genesis ! Incessant irony, a spirit of mockery, and often even (Lord, enter not into judgment with us !) blasphemy was upon our lips while engaged in prayer. And this was carried to such a height that I ended by saying to my friend, that it were better to renounce our reading than to conduct it in this manner.

Our plans for eminence in the Jewish religion vanished like smoke. The termination of my professional studies was at hand : this was in 1818. I took my degree in mæ-

dicine, and left the academy where my time had not been altogether wasted. I returned to my native city, Amsterdam, full of high expectations for the future: a fair and honorable career seemed to open before me.

I had an uncle, one of the first physicians of Holland, a literary man, and justly esteemed by the best families. He possessed public confidence, not only as a physician, but also on account of his social relations. Without children, he took me home to be his *son and successor*. I was soon introduced to a rich circle of families; very worthy and honorable, doubtless, but with whom christianity was nothing more than an exterior profession, attended by a life altogether worldly.

Although for some years I had been oftener in the society of christians than in that of my fellow-religionists, I am sure that none ever spoke to me of christianity. My friends and young colleagues, with whom I often passed several evenings of the week, did not appear to have the smallest idea of religion. I remember that once, the conversation falling on christianity, they made a display of their infidelity, and spoke with very little respect of the Lord Jesus Christ. I expressed my astonishment; adding, that I, a Jew, did not believe in Jesus Christ; but that, in my opinion, every christian who, disbelieving that Jesus Christ is God, still continued to offer prayer and homage to him, was *an idolater*.

One of these young physicians was happily converted some years later: he recalled to my mind the conversation of that evening, and assured me how confused he had been, that so severe and yet so merited an apostrophe should be uttered by the mouth of a Jew. He is at this time one of my dear brethren in Jesus Christ, and walks with much faith and fidelity. How admirable are thy ways, O Lord! and thy judgments, how righteous!

Nevertheless, in the midst of daily increasing occupations, though surrounded by all the comforts of life, I was

far from being inwardly happy. The desire of knowledge, the thirst after scientific truths augmented within me, as worldly pleasures daily grew more sickening. But all my researches, all my studies, all my endeavors to satisfy the internal want that tormented me, continued fruitless, and left a frightful void in my soul.

During long sleepless nights, occasioned by an oppression of the chest, of which I had been a frequent sufferer in my youth, I asked myself, in the midst of sad reflections, why I was on the earth? "What is man?" said I to myself. "Should I not be a thousand times happier if I were only an inferior creature, an inhabitant of the air, a worm of the earth! It is true I should move in a narrower sphere; but then I should not undergo what I am now suffering in mind and body." Many a time, at the close of my evening prayer, which I uttered aloud, my heart added, "would that this were the last day of my life!"

I have preserved the correspondence that I held with two of my friends: the contents of their letters vividly recalls to mind my sufferings at that time. One of these letters commences with these words; "I cannot express to you, dear friend, the shock your letter has given me. Your melancholy seems to assume the character of despair; and what must be the consequence with a constitution so feeble and a heart so sensitive as yours? No, your body cannot hold out, dear friend; I fear that you will soon succumb," &c. Then follows some advice, which, though dictated by the kindest friendship, was yet wanting in what constitutes the spirit of all true consolation.

My mode of life dissatisfied me. Eager in quest of truth; seeking every where a certain principle, there was not a day of my life passed without, alas! the deplorable necessity of acknowledging the uncertainty of the science to which I was devoted. I enjoyed, indeed, the confidence of my patients; and, by the grace of God, was what is



called a fortunate physician ; yet I passed my days in painful constraint.

My uncle, the worthy old gentleman in whose house I was residing, fatigued by the numerous occupations of the day, was not pleased to see me consecrating the evening hours to study. Impatient to give myself up to some occupation more suited to my taste, I was free only at night, and thus contracted the habit of sitting up till a very late hour. Nevertheless, all this midnight labor left still existing in my heart the frightful void which so embittered life. It was not that I felt any disquietude for my sins ; assuredly not, for in that case I should have shuddered to demand death : I was under the weight and curse of sin, without suspecting it, or even seeking a remedy.

One day, going to see my intimate friend, who was just married, I found that he had received a letter from our celebrated professor, with whom he kept up a literary correspondence. " Will you listen to his letter," said he, " and hear with what fine verses he addresses me ?" Willingly, I replied. The lines, in which he described with energy and fervor the glorious hopes of Israel, were in truth sublime : they ended with this apostrophe :—" If thou, dear friend, the christian's name will take, contented I'll my spirit yield. My life were a small boon to give for thy soul's sake !"

At these words, pronounced in a low tone, I felt my indignation aroused ; it appeared to me that my friend had not been sufficiently shocked at them. " Take care," said I, " there is a plan formed to seduce us ;" and then hastily departed.

The whole day my mind remained absorbed and lost in meditation. I could not conceive how a man of such profound science could believe in the christian religion ; nor how one, who, for so many years, had kept up the closest intimacy with me, without ever speaking to us of christianity ; who even appeared to have so much respect for

the Old Testament, should suddenly resolve to speak to my friend in this tone. My heart, naturally inclined to mistrust, saw here only an adroit attempt to seduce us from our religion, and I suffered from the thought that my friend did not partake thoroughly of my indignation.

From that day *I took up the word of God with the intention of examining it.* My friend did the same; and afterwards, whenever we walked out together, our conversation turned on passages of Scripture that especially fixed our attention. Having begun with the Gospel according to Matthew, I was struck, in the commencement, on seeing how this evangelist, very far from reversing the authority of the Old Testament, rested upon it, on the contrary, as his basis, and proposed nothing more than to prove the unity of the two Testaments in the accomplishment of the prophecies.

In this way many months passed, when, more and more encouraged to pursue researches that daily afforded us greater interest, we resolved to effect what we had attempted some years earlier, though with a very different disposition of heart: it was to meet as often as possible, to read together and communicate our doubts and reflections to each other. To this effect we retired to a corner of the paternal mansion; and it is not without vivid emotion, nor without adoring the goodness and wisdom of God, that I recall the remembrance of those happy moments, those hours so agreeable and so blessed, that we passed together, as it were in the presence of the God of our fathers.

Our zeal and interest increased as we advanced. My mind, wearied with fruitless researches, beheld a vast and untried field open before it, into which it entered with an ardor and irresistible attraction that I recognized later as the expression of my heavenly Father's love, by which He draws to his dearly beloved Son the souls he would save. This meditation on the word of God became at length the most urgent want of my heart. It was not enough that I

knew the truth, I felt the need of possessing it and living on its substance.

Although I could not then discern clearly what was passing within me, nevertheless I remember to have had moments of rapture at the thought that I could perceive in my path visible marks of divine assistance and protection. One day, when my friend and I were together, occupied with our accustomed researches, my brother surprised us : he saw on the table, alongside of the open Bible, a Spanish author, the only work of human origin we perused with the word of God. He opened the book and read the title. It was "Defense de la foi chretienne;" ("a defence of the christian faith,") by Professor Heydeck. He read only these words: "Defense de la foi,"— ("defence of the faith.") "What are you engaged in every day together?" asked he, replacing the book; "do you desire to become Rabbis?" Then changing the subject, he left us. Here we saw the protecting hand of God; for if my brother had read the whole title, we should have been discovered; at least, the suspicion of our families would have rested on us.

On another occasion I was in my uncle's library, and ever eager to meet with something relating to that which occupied me incessantly, I ran my eye impatiently over a multitude of books, to find one that would tell me something in regard to christianity. At last I discovered a large folio, entitled, "The Works of Justin Martyr." Although this writer was at that time entirely unknown to me, the title of Martyr excited a hope that I should find in it something relating to christianity. I opened it, and the first paragraph on which my eye rested was the "*Dialogue with Trypho the Jew.*" I read it hastily, and found there a succinct exposition of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, which was very useful to me. Here was very evidently another interposition of Providence, and my heart was deeply touched with it.

One night I was reading the prophet Isaiah : when I came to the fifty-third chapter, the perusal of it made so vivid an impression upon me, and showed me so clearly, and, as it were, feature by feature, what I had read in the Gospel of the sufferings of Christ, that I actually thought some other Bible had been substituted in the place of my own : I could not be persuaded that this fifty-third chapter, which may be justly styled a Gospel in brief, formed a part of the Old Testament. On reading this, it seemed impossible for a Jew to doubt that Christ was the promised Messiah.

Whence came so strong an impression ? I had often read this same chapter, but this time I read it with the light of God's Spirit. From that hour I fully recognized in Christ the true Messiah, and our meditations on the word of God took a new turn. This was, as it were, the beginning, the aurora of a glorious day to our souls : the light continually spread more of its vivifying rays, enlightened our minds, warmed our hearts, and afforded me even then indescribable consolation. I began to solve the wherefore of many of the enigmas of life, that had occupied my mind, rather to weary and sadden, than to tranquillize and instruct me. Every thing around me appeared to possess new life ; the end and interest of my existence were entirely changed. Happy days, blessed by a sense of the Master's presence ! I shall never forget them ! It seldom happens, when I review the journey of the two disciples to Emmaus, that the recollections of those days when my friend and I met and walked together, do not come up afresh into my memory. Like them we can say, " Did not our heart burn within us while he talked to us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures ? "

I have remarked above, that, by the guidance of God, we had abstained from communicating to any person what was passing in our hearts ; and that, limiting ourselves to reading and comparing the word of God, we neglected every other book, excepting the work of Heydeck, which

we consulted regularly. This author had been a rabbi in Germany ; but having embraced catholicism, he was elected professor of the oriental languages at Madrid, where I believe he still resides. The work we had before us, written in the form of letters, possessed much of the spirit and knowledge of the Scriptures, and contained a defence of christianity against rationalism. The perusal of this was doubly useful to us, since we had occasion to remark how powerful the logic and how forcible the proofs were, when contending against the opinions of a Voltaire and a Rousseau ; and how weak they were when defending catholicism against the principles of the Reformation.

Whenever I had a leisure moment in the morning I always absented myself to read the word of God ; for I did not dare to do so in my uncle's presence. One day I had been more particularly engaged with this passage of the eighth chapter of Isaiah : " Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." I descended from the library, and found a Jewish physician, a friend of my uncle, waiting in the anti-chamber : he was turning over the leaves of a new edition of the Bible. " Here," said he, " is a fatal passage, that we can hardly wrest from the christians." It was the very passage of Isaiah on which I had been meditating. My mind was vividly touched, and I recognized again the hand of God.

" Ah ! why," replied I, " should we not acknowledge the truth ?"

In the meanwhile my uncle entered. It was the dinner hour. " What question are you debating ?" asked he. The physician informed him ; and knowing how versed my uncle was in the rabbinical writings, he inquired what our rabbins said of this passage. " Alas ! a heap of nonsense," replied my uncle, rising up. We entered an adjoining room where dinner was served. My heart beat strong, and I inwardly blessed the Lord for permitting me to hear even these words, much as they indicated his want

of reverence for the Divine oracles, from the mouth of a man whose rabbinical science gave him authority among the Jews.

All these circumstances, guided by the wisdom and goodness of God, concurred to convince me more and more that *the truth was in christianity alone*. But what, at the outset, was only the desire of my understanding, had become that of my heart. *Knowledge* no longer satisfied me; I felt the need of *love*. Then it was that the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, which rises upon us gradually, conveyed to me, with the light that illumined me, that vivifying and celestial warmth which gives us the life of God. I acknowledged that it was through love the Saviour came to seek me: I now began to feel the weight of my sins; or, to use a better expression, my total misery. But this sentiment was absorbed in that of divine love. I had found Christ my life, the central point of all my affections and all my thoughts, the only object capable of filling the immense void in my heart; the key of every mystery; the principle of all true philosophy, of every truth—“*the Truth*” itself.

By degrees, as the Spirit of God confirmed my faith, I felt more unhappy in the position in which I found myself, losing in my uncle's society so many precious hours and evenings that I could have desired to employ in further researches into the only subject that interested me on earth.

Every day I felt more and more deeply the necessity of coming to an open declaration of my sentiments; but my uncle, that uncle who had loaded me with kindness, who cherished me as a son, who saw in me the support of his old age—how could I resolve to avow to him what, considering his age and choleric temperament, could not fail to make an impression and occasion a shock, the consequences of which were incalculable? I can attest to the glory of God, that the certainty there was, in case I made the avowal, of losing a considerable inheritance that awaited me, a certainty which the event has confirmed, formed

no part of the grounds of my hesitation. All my fears were, lest I should compromise a life so dear to me ; and the idea that, by a word, I might give a fatal blow to this worthy old gentleman, deprived me of the strength and courage requisite to unfold my sentiments. Assuredly, with more faith I should have overcome every obstacle ; but in the state in which I then was, I could only sigh and groan in secret. During these seasons of inward struggle and conflict, my sighs rose continually to the God who had called me ; I conjured him to come to my aid and to open the way before me.

Acknowledge how attentive the God of compassion was to my cry, and how he listened to the voice of my supplication. My uncle was in the habit of reading the public journals aloud after dinner. One day, when I was seated at my customary place opposite to him, in a state of indescribable depression, I heard him reading a notice from a Hamburg journal, which ran thus : " We have just been witnesses of an interesting fact : a rabbi, after having publicly announced in the synagogue, that an attentive examination of the prophecies had given him a clear conviction that the true Messiah had come, has publicly confessed the christian faith in our city, and been received as a minister of the Gospel of Christ." Whereupon my uncle added these words, which my position rendered so remarkable : " You know my way of thinking : if this man has acted thus from any interested motive whatever, he deserves contempt ; if it is through conviction, he has a claim to respect."

Christians ! who happily compassionate the lively emotions of the heart of a fellow-being, I will not attempt to describe to you all that passed in mine at this solemn moment ! In a transport of joy, I replied, " Yes, uncle, God has given you these sentiments : know that he whom you love with paternal tenderness, and whom you call by the name of son, is in the same position as this rabbi !"

I pronounced these words with such a tone of voice,

and with so much agitation, that my poor uncle, speechless and alarmed, thought me deranged; and going out for a moment, as if to allow me time to return to myself, he re-entered and spoke of other matters. But my mind was too much absorbed and excited to listen to what he said: I was occupied with the God of my deliverance; for, on this occasion, I had felt him to be near. It was the presence of the *Adonai* (God) of my fathers that sustained me, and who from that day afforded my soul a consolation it had never experienced, a joy and energy it had never known.

Nevertheless, I saw clearly that my uncle, although troubled by this scene, had not attributed to my words the importance they merited. I resolved, then, in God's strength, to reiterate my declaration on the morrow. We were alone at the table, according to custom; my uncle appeared somewhat pre-occupied; he was, notwithstanding, on very good terms with me. After dinner I began, but this time with calmness and decision, by saying, I remarked, with regret, that my avowal of the preceding evening had not been clearly understood, which laid me under the obligation to repeat it, as if in God's presence, with the hope that he himself would one day acknowledge the truth.

There was no longer any possibility of illusion, and a most trying scene followed. He beat his breast—cursed his existence, and cried out, in the bitterness of his soul, that I was bringing down his gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. These reproaches pierced my heart; but the Lord strengthened, consoled, and gave me grace to show this dear, venerable old gentleman, marks of love and tenderness, which calmed him a little. The next day he communicated all to my parents, and it appeared that there was an understanding between them to treat me with tenderness. Who could tell, but that, by carefully avoiding all conversation upon this topic, these ideas might pass away? Nevertheless, my family were not slow to perceive that



this was impossible ; I began even to embolden myself, sometimes preaching the Gospel to them ; and whenever occasion offered, I no longer dissembled my sentiments.

My intimate friend, who had lost his father some months previous, enjoying more liberty, was at this time a great source of consolation to me. At last, my uncle seeing that mildness did not succeed in effacing my religious convictions, and fearing still more the open manifestation of my faith, had recourse to other means, which led, however, to results opposite to his expectation. There was not a sarcasm, humiliation, contempt, or severity even, that I had not to endure from him.

I do not complain of these trials ; on the contrary, I ought to consider this treatment, severe and painful to the flesh, in the light of real blessings from God, since it confirmed my faith, and was to me a new testimony of the truth of the Gospel, the open and full confession of which has ever been attended with every kind of persecution.

My family, also, were not in the least appeased, seeing me persevere in my resolution in spite of all that had been attempted to divert me from it, and the severity practised towards me went on increasing. This was the period of severest trial to my soul. Rarely did I meet with one of my relations, whether at my uncle's house, or in that of my parents, without enduring painful reproaches from them.

It may be conceived that this state of things could not last, and but strengthened my ardent desire to confess my Saviour. We were already the subject of public conversation. Very many of our habits were altered ; we no longer frequented the same society, and were very seldom seen participating in the pleasures of our friends. The cause was at length suspected, and called forth expressions of grief and regret on the part of our nation. They set some value upon us ; we were favorably known, and to national pride was added the flattery of the idea that I possessed, as a religious companion, such a man as my

friend, who, though young, had superior talents, and was versed in many sciences ; above all, was a poet, whose effusions, at that time published, had been received with universal applause.

I will not pass over in silence an interesting interview that we had about this time with a respectable Rabbi, a man of fasting and prayer, emaciated by hard diet, and esteemed for piety by the whole Jewish nation. He desired an interview, and gave us calmly some written objections. It was not difficult to refute them. Perceiving that his arguments did not persuade us, he attempted an appeal to our feelings. "Gentlemen," said he, rising up with solemnity, "in a few days all of our religion, in every quarter of the globe, will put on sackcloth and ashes, to celebrate the great day of propitiation. Then every Israelite who humbleth himself before our God, sincerely confessing his sins, is sure to obtain grace. I conjure you, gentlemen, to reflect seriously upon it ; and if, as Israelites, you humble yourselves with remorse for the design you have dared to form, you will be pardoned by our God." We were touched, vividly touched by his zeal ; but we reminded him, that, at any rate, *the blood of the Messiah alone* could wash us from all sin.

As he was on the point of departing, he added these remarkable words : "Well, gentlemen, I have acted in accordance with the command of duty ; now that we are about to separate, apparently never to meet again, I cannot conceal from you that I thank God for permitting me to find, even in our day, *persons who believe the Bible.*" We then separated, not without emotion on both sides.

At length the moment of final decision had arrived ; I could defer no longer. My friend, whose position was very different from mine, and who had met with hardly any opposition, his father dying before our secret transpired, desired to wait some time longer ; but my decision was taken ; he joined me, and I acquainted my family with my resolution.

They wished that I would postpone it, or at least that I would go into Germany, or elsewhere. Perhaps I might have yielded to this wish, but the fear of any appearance of shame in the step I was about to take, led me to reject every proposition of the kind; only we promised not to join any church in the city where our families resided, and, as it were, in the face of our uncle, who was chief of a commission charged by the king to take care of the interests of the Jews of Holland.

Our choice naturally fell on the city of Leyden, which had such sweet recollections in our hearts, and where that dear and excellent professor dwelt, with his worthy spouse, whose writings and conversation had exercised so marked an influence over our minds. We set out for Leyden in September—my friend, his interesting wife, who partook our convictions at heart, and myself. We were received with open arms, and an affection truly parental, by these worthy friends, who had taken so much interest in our conflicts. Who more deserving than they to participate in the celestial joy that flooded our hearts?

The 20th of October, 1822, was the day so ardently longed for, when we were solemnly received as members of the christian church; there, on our knees, before the God of our fathers, the true God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we had the ineffable happiness, we, unworthy, miserable sinners, to confess, in the midst of the christian church, the blessed name of that great God and Saviour who had sought us when lost. Glory be to his holy name!

The text selected by the pastor, as the subject of his discourse, was Romans, 11 : 5. "*Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*" *Election of grace!* This is the conclusion of what you have just read; it is an abridgment of the history of my conversion; it is that of all other gratuitous grace; grace that conducts, grace that illumines, grace that enables one to suffer for the name of the Lord, grace that consoles, grace that draws to Christ, grace that gives faith,

grace that justifies, grace that regenerates, that sanctifies ; finally, grace for grace, and to the glory of God, whose free and gratuitous election, made before the foundation of the world, is the only source and principle of all grace, of all felicity.

The day previous to our public entrance into the christian church, we took leave of the synagogue by letter. I addressed to the magistrates of the Portuguese Jewish nation a letter, in which, while authorizing them to consider me as no longer a member of the synagogue, I protested that *I remained an Israelite, but an Israelite who had found his Messiah, and who ceased not to offer the sincerest wishes that his brethren, according to the flesh, might speedily return to the Lord their God, and to David their king.*

A few days after my public renunciation of Judaism, I received a letter from my uncle, in which he announced to me, that, after what had passed and some new arrangements made in his household, *I could not, on my return to Amsterdam, dwell under his roof*; that he did not forbid my visiting him, but this was only under the express condition that I should never speak to him of my sentiments. On my return to Amsterdam I hired a small apartment on a third floor, where, alone with my God, I experienced a heavenly joy and peace that passed all understanding.

My dear brother, with whom I often conversed on the subject nearest my heart, and who weighed the considerations I urged with great seriousness, at length fell sick, and died suddenly, crying to me in a strong voice, and with great earnestness, "Call, call my mother ; call my sister ; I am dying—but *I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. I believe in Jesus Christ, my Saviour. He is Master—King of kings. All must come to him. Europe, Asia, Africa, and America belong to him. He must reign over the whole earth. Announce in the synagogue that I die in his name.*"

And now, MY BRETHREN IN CHRIST, it is to you I address myself in conclusion. If you have viewed with christian joy, how the Lord has, in his unspeakable goodness, graciously taken some little broken twigs to engraft them anew upon the "cultivated olive," forget not that in the whole world there are many of these scattered branches, now with neither form nor comeliness, neither fruit nor verdure, but possessing still the sap of the most glorious promises.

Forget not, that if they are still "enemies, as touching the Gospel, for your sakes," they are also "dearly beloved, as touching election, for the fathers' sakes; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Rom. 11 : 28, 29. Remember, that "as ye, in times past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy." Rom. 11 : 30, 31. Above all, forget not the immense privilege to which you are called, that you may be, by your prayers for Israel, and your charity towards them, co-operators with God, who desires to save Israel for his glory, yes, for his glory; "for if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" Rom. 11 : 15.

The day is not far distant, the happy day which the apostle hails from afar with rapture and adoration, when he exclaims. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11 : 33. "And it shall come to pass, when all these things are come upon thee, the blessing and the curse which I have set before thee, and thou shalt call them to mind among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath driven thee, and shalt return unto the Lord thy God, and shalt obey his voice according to all that I command thee this day, thou and thy children, with all thy heart and with all thy soul, that then the Lord thy God will turn thy captivity,

and will have compassion upon thee, and will return and gather thee from among all the nations whither the Lord thy God hath scattered thee. If any of thine be driven out to the outmost parts of heaven, from thence will the Lord thy God gather thee, and from thence will he fetch thee. And the Lord thy God will bring thee into the land which thy fathers possessed, and thou shalt possess it, and he will do thee good and multiply thee above thy fathers." Deut. 30 : 1-5. Yes, the Lord is faithful. It is by an oath that he promised Abraham that his posterity should one day possess Canaan "from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Euphrates;" Gen. 15 : 18; Exod. 23 : 31; Gen. 26 : 3; Ps. 105 : 9; and that this possession should be "for ever;" Gen. 13 : 15; "an *everlasting possession*;" Gen. 17 : 7, 8; "*for ever.*" 2 Chron. 20 : 7.

Behold the great promise, that, until now, has not been accomplished! Israel, it is true, has possessed the land of Canaan, but never with an extent of territory, nor for a period of time proportioned to the grandeur of the promise. Under the reign of Solomon alone have the limits of Israel's kingdom extended to the Euphrates; and this triumph was brief, for we find that the prophet Isaiah, in a touching supplication, in which he enumerates the blessings of the Almighty, and the numberless deliverances of which Israel had already been the object, calling to mind this promise of the inheritance of Canaan, exclaims, "Return, for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance. The people of thy holiness have possessed *it* (the country) *but a little while.*" Isaiah, 63 : 17, 18.

This promise of perpetual possession has not yet been fully accomplished; but it will be. Yes it will be under the reign of the true Solomon, of the promised Messiah, of the Lord of Glory, of the King of Israel, for he it is who shall rule "from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth." Ps. 72 : 8. Yes, it will be when the Almighty shall return unto Sion, and shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; when "Jerusalem shall be called a

city of truth, and the mountain of the Lord of Hosts, the holy mountain." Then the Lord shall say, "Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country, and I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God in truth and in righteousness." Zech. 8 : 3, 7, 8.

"There is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will sow the house of Israel and the house of Judah with the seed of man, and with the seed of beast. And it shall come to pass, that like as I have watched over them, to pluck up, and to break down, and to throw down, and to destroy, and to afflict; so will I watch over them to build and to plant, saith the Lord. Behold, the days come, that the city shall be built to the Lord, from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate towards the east, shall be holy unto the Lord; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down, any more for ever." Jer. 31 : 17, 27 28, 38, 39, 40.

Ah! if, by divine direction, these lines should fall into the hands of any of the children of Abraham, but who have not Abraham's faith—of those Israelites, my dearly-beloved brethren according to the flesh, who are now poor, but with the riches of the divine word in their hands, miserable, but having the blood of the prophets in their veins; despised and wandering over the whole earth, but with the promise of eternal glory, if they should be converted; may these lines remind them that this word, these promises, this blood of the prophets, urge them to examine attentively what these prophets have spoken, and

by whom their promises must have their accomplishment for them of whom this word is full.

Yes, may they speedily, by God's grace, acknowledge that this precious Bible, which they preserve, and upon which their faith as well as our own is founded, contains prophetically the entire history of the Messiah: his origin, his nature, his birth, his life, his death, his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of God his heavenly Father; his spiritual reign; his return to glory; finally his reign as King of Israel, priest and prophet.

Behold what I have been taught by my researches in the word of God. May these lines excite in them also the desire to seek after the truth! They will see that the Messiah promised to our fathers, must have been the only begotten Son of God, God eternal, one with the Father and Holy Spirit, according to the Scriptures; for He is called "God," and "the Son of God," by David; Ps. 45 : 6; Ps. 110 : 1; by Isaiah, "Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace;" Isaiah, 9 : 6; by Jeremiah, "The Lord our Righteousness;" Jer. 23 : 6; by Malachi, "the Lord;" Mal. 3 : 1; that this Messiah was to take our nature and be born of a virgin, according to the Scriptures; for he is called the seed of the woman, Gen. 3 : 15; "the child of a virgin;" Isaiah, 7 : 14; that this Messiah was to be the descendant of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, according to the Scriptures, for He is called "the seed of Abraham;" Gen. 22 : 18; that He was to be of the tribe of Judah and of the house of David, according to the Scriptures; for He is called "a Rod from the stem of Jesse; Isaiah, 11 : 1; "out of David a righteous Branch;" Jer. 23 : 5; that He was to be born in "Bethlehem," Mic. 5 : 2; that at that time "the sceptre should be taken from Judah," Gen. 49 : 10; that the Messiah should have Elias for his precursor, "preaching in the wilderness and preparing the way," according to the Scriptures, Isaiah, 40 : 3. Mal. 3 : 1; that the Messiah should accompany his preaching with



many miracles, Isaiah, 35 : 5, 6 ; that He should " enter Jerusalem upon an ass," Zech. 9 : 9 ; that He should appear poor and humble, " having no form nor comeliness, the despised and rejected of men," Isaiah, 53 : 2, 3 ; that one of his disciples should " betray him," Ps. 41 : 9 ; that He should be sold for " thirty pieces of silver," Zech. 11 : 12 ; that He should be " smitten with rods, reviled, spit upon," Isaiah, 50 : 6 ; that He should be " numbered with the transgressors," Isaiah, 53 : 12 ; " smitten, and afflicted of God, Isaiah, 53 : 4 ; but that these sufferings should be upon him " for our transgressions," Isaiah, 53 : 5 ; that He should be " crucified," Deut. 21 : 23 ; that they should " pierce his hands and his feet," Ps. 22 : 16 ; that He should be " reviled even on the cross," and made to drink " gall and vinegar," Ps. 22 : 7 ; 69 : 21 ; that they should " divide his garments among them, and for his vesture cast lots, Ps. 22 : 18 ; that " not a bone of him should be broken," Exod. 12 : 46 ; 34 : 20 ; that his death should be violent, Isaiah, 53 : 8 ; Dan. 9 : 26 ; that He should " make his grave with the wicked, and be with the rich in his death. Isaiah, 53 : 9 ; that He should " not see corruption," Ps. 16 : 10 ; but that on " the third day " he should " rise again," Isaiah, 53 : 10 ; Jonah, 1 : 17 ; that He should " ascend into heaven and sit down at the right hand of the Father, Ps. 68 : 18 ; and that thence He should " send his Holy Spirit." Joel, 2 : 28.

When you have thus united all these features of the promised Messiah, which the Almighty has traced so clearly, so distinctly, to the very minutest details, that Israel should not be deceived by any false Messiah ; when you have placed before you, as it were, face to face, the image of him upon whom your salvation rests, open, O my dear brethren in the flesh, open the New Testament, praying God to enable you to examine its contents with a sincere desire to know the truth, and the glorious light of the God of truth will lead you to acknowledge, with adoration, that all these characterizing features of the true

Messiah are to be found, with the most scrupulous exactness, in the person, the life, and death of Jesus Christ, that Saviour blessed for evermore, who will soon come in glory with his holy angels. Then Jerusalem shall be to him a name of rejoicing, of praise and glory among all the nations of the earth, who shall hear the good that he will do to Israel; for, "I will cause the captivity of Judah, and the captivity of Israel, to return," saith the Lord, "and I will build them as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." Jer. 33 : 7, 8.

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power; but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. Apocal. 20 : 4-6.

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Apocalypse, 22 : 17. Amen!

NOTE.—Rev. Professor Pettavel has annexed to the French edition a brief sketch of the history of Dr. CAPADOSE down to August, 1837. showing how he had been sustained in trials, especially the death of a beloved and christian wife; and the blessing that had attended the first part, and his completion of the second part of his 'Jehovah Jesus,' or 'Crowd of Witnesses to the Divinity of Christ the Saviour.'

## DO YOU FORGIVE ALL YOUR ENEMIES ?

THERE are many good reasons for doing so.

He who does not forgive his enemies, will often *mistake friends for foes*. Being revengeful, he will be suspicious. He will misconstrue men's actions, and misjudge their motives. Should any give him that rare token of valuable friendship which consists in affectionate reproof, he would esteem it unkind. For the same reason he would cherish jealousy, and would mark almost all actions with an evil eye. Turning friends into foes, in this way, is most injurious ; it is self-torment.

But suppose that some are your real enemies. Perhaps you have given them much provocation. If so, remember their fault does not cancel yours, nor can their sin be a cloak for your criminality. At least, be honest, and take as much blame to yourself as you ascribe to them.

Although your enemy wantonly intends to do you evil, yet *God may superintend to do you good*. So his hatred shall not hurt, and may even benefit you. Thus, the plotting of Joseph's brethren led to his promotion at the court of Pharaoh. The curses of Shimei were the precursors of David's triumphant return to the holy city. "Let him alone," said the royal fugitive, "and let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him. *It may be the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day.*" In like manner, when your enemies assail you, look up to God and say,

"When men of spite against me join,  
They are the sword, the hand is thine,"

and he will not suffer the sword to prosper against you.

*God commands* you to lay aside all malice—to put off anger, wrath, and bitterness—to recompense to no man evil for evil—to forbear, and to forgive. He who breaks God's commandments, must bear God's anger.

They who do not exercise forgiveness, *shall not receive it*. He who lives and dies unpardoning, lives and dies unpardoned. The true Witness hath said, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your tres-

passes." What terror these words bear to all the unfor-  
giving.

Not to forgive is a daring *assumption of the awful prerogative of God*. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth." Surely God will rebuke the intrusion of yourself into his judgment-seat. So the blow which you aim at your fellow-sinner and fellow-servant will return upon your own soul.

The *best and wisest men* in every age have practised forgiveness. When Stephen was enduring that dreadful death by stoning, he cried, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." All the martyrs followed his example. When reviled, they blessed. And saints of later times have done the same. How creditable it is to the memory of one of the reformers, that "he never forgot any thing except injuries." Who would not be like such a man?

To forgive the most bitter enemies is to be *like Jesus*, who, beholding the unfeeling cruelty of his enemies in mocking his dying agonies, yet in that dreadful hour not only prayed for their forgiveness, but framed an argument in extenuation of their guilt: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Would you not be like Christ? Can you ever be "satisfied" until you awake *in his likeness*?

You wish to be *great*. Then remember, that there is more greatness in ruling your own spirit than in taking a city. The poorest of all contrite souls has the preëminence over him who should subdue the earth to his sceptre, but should not subdue his own passions. "It is the glory of man to pass over a transgression." To err is human. To revenge is devilish. To forgive is divine.

It is a mark of peculiar guilt and folly not to forgive. The best authority teaches, that "anger rests only in the bosom of fools," and that to "hate a man is to be a murderer."

Forgiveness often *converts foes into friends*. It may thus affect your enemies. It would be very pleasant to secure the good-will of those who dislike you. But resentment will only irritate and enrage. No enemy is won by hatred. Leviathan is never thus tamed. "Grievous words stir up anger." It is "a soft answer" that "turns away wrath." Learn to overcome evil with good.

Remember, too, that *you are not much hurt until your soul is hurt*. The bitterness of enemies is not the bitterness of death. Who can harm you if you follow that which is good? Malignity in striking one dagger against the bosom of its object, buries ten in the heart of the assailant. The most expensive of all methods of being equal to your foe is to hate him. The cheapest mode of gaining a lawful and undoubted advantage over him is to forgive him.

He who does not forgive, must prepare for strife and every evil work. It is a wise rule to "leave off contention before it be meddled with." Defile not thy conscience, im-bitter not thy life with wars and fightings.

Besides, you and your enemy will soon *stand together at the same bar of omniscient judgment*. If he has to be judged, so have you. Nor can you deny that you have often and very wickedly sinned against God. Why should you not be merciful, that "you may obtain mercy?" You owe your Lord ten thousand talents. Why should you not forgive your fellow-servant fifty pence? If God bring you into judgment, you cannot answer for one of a thousand of your heinous sins against him. Does it then become you to be unforgiving respecting the few and slight offences committed against yourself?

Christianity is practically worth very little to him whom it does not enable to triumph over all sinful enmities. To embrace the bitterest enemy in the arms of holy benevolence is one of the earliest, and simplest, and grandest achievements of vital and evangelical piety. Shall your religion be worthless?

*Prayer* for your enemies will be much more likely to make them ashamed and miserable, until they cease their hostility, than any thing that revenge can inflict. Even persecution herself has been known to grow pale, and to quake under the influence of hearty prayer.

*Eternity is near*. Unconceived glories or terrors will soon strike awe into every soul of man. Then all the petty strifes among the potsherders will be divested of their unreal consequence; and many things on earth regarded as great, will consume away like the fat of lambs. Look at the grounds of your enmity. Can you justify it in eternity?

Thus are you called and urged to the duty of forgiveness. More sublime sanctions attach to no human obligation.

And now, *do you forgive all your enemies?* Perhaps you say, "I can forgive, but I can't forget." If you mean, that you cannot erase from the tablet of your memory all impression, so as to be wholly unable to recollect the offence, then you are not required to forget. In this sense Jehovah does not forget our offences. Yet he says, "Their sin and their iniquities will I remember no more." Now we are required to forgive *as* he forgives. When you are required to forget as well as forgive, the meaning is, that you must not willingly retain a remembrance of the offence—thoughts of it must not be cherished—the recollection of it must not awaken animosity; nor must the repetition of the offence rekindle old anger or hatred. You must also forgive, however often the offence be repeated, though it be "seven times a day," or "seventy times seven." You must love your enemy; pray for him; wish well to him; do him good; if he be hungry, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; if he be naked, clothe him. And you must do all sincerely, habitually, benevolently, willingly; not for a pretence, nor by constraint of the fear of hell. The sorrows and sufferings of your most cruel, unrelenting, and persevering foe must be no matter of joy to you. "He that is glad at calamities shall not be unpunished." You must "love your enemies." To do so is the badge of discipleship in the school of Christ, and the token and pledge of eternal life. If you find no such spirit in you, then you are a guilty, unpardoned, unholy sinner, in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Therefore you must be converted. You must be born again. In malice you must become a child. Without a thorough change of heart you cannot be saved. The alternative is regeneration or perdition. You must be born again, and your enmity slain, or you must sink to endless woe.

TO THE

## NEGLECTER OF RELIGION.

ONE of the most eminent female Christians of the last century, Lady Glenorchy of Scotland, lived to the age of twenty-three in a round of fashionable pleasure. Aroused by a threatening illness to serious reflection, she mused on the question, "What is the chief end of man?" "Is it to glorify God and enjoy him for ever? Have I answered the design of my being? Have I glorified God? Shall I enjoy him for ever?" Such musings convinced her of sin, and brought her to flee for refuge to the blood of Christ.

Let it not be thought, that, to be a neglecter of the Gospel, a man must be an infidel, or scoffer, or profane. Not to care for religion; not to ponder its doctrines and duties; not to seek its blessings; not to feel our need of a Saviour; not to live a life of prayer and obedience—is to be a neglecter of the great salvation. We urge on such an one some reasons for immediate attention to the religion of Christ.

*Multitudes of the wise and good* have estimated it as beyond price. Deliberate examination has convinced them, that while other religions are false, this is divine, and just such a religion as fallen man needs. A religion which offers mercy to the penitent, and yet sustains the honor of God's law; which provides for all the wants of the miserable, and yet holds forth powerful motives to holiness.

*Thousands have been made the better* by the possession of this religion. It has made them more sober and considerate; more reverent towards God; more guarded against sin; more submissive in poverty and affliction; stricter in moral duties; kinder as husbands and wives, parents and children, neighbors and friends; more humble, forgiving, and benevolent. Do you not wish these effects to be produced in yourself? Can aught but the Gospel do it? And can that Gospel, *neglected*, transform you by the renewing

of your mind, more than a book unread can add to your knowledge ?

As religion has made thousands the better, *irreligion has made thousands worse*. Look at those who are disturbers of the peace, corrupt in principle, deceitful, overbearing, and oppressive : do they possess the religion of Christ ? They all neglect it ; many of them speak lightly of it ; not a few openly revile it. Irreligion debases as well as corrupts them.

Without religion you must also be *a stranger to the calm and delightful satisfactions of a good conscience*. Possibly you may contrive, for a season, to escape the stings of an accusing conscience ; may cherish an erroneous conscience, which speaks peace where God has not spoken peace ; or you may have a stupid conscience, destitute of moral feeling ; but neither of these is a *good* conscience. Both are eminently dangerous. As the pious Henry well remarks, the greatest curse that can befall a man this side of a miserable eternity, is a dumb conscience that says nothing, a blind conscience that sees nothing, a dead conscience that feels nothing. That stupid conscience cannot sleep always, nor long. It *must awake* at last, to bite like a serpent. But what a solace is a good conscience, which has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Possessed of this, the storms of trouble may howl without, but all will be serene within. A statesman of a former age summed up the results of his experience in this : “ Seriousness is the greatest wisdom, temperance the best medicine, and a good conscience the best estate.” Such a conscience implies a heart reconciled to God through the blood of atonement, purified by his grace ; and that its possessor is living in dependence on his mercy, and endeavoring to bring forth the fruits of righteousness. This will sustain the soul in a dying hour. It was under the impression of such a preparation being *indispensable*, that the apostle Paul desired to exercise himself to “ have always a conscience void of offence.” Have not you as much reason to be afraid of the judgment as he ?

Neglect of Christ’s Gospel is also *an ill requital of his*



*dying love.* He saw you a perishing sinner; his bowels yearned over you; he came from heaven to earth to save you. When divine justice could not consistently pardon without an atonement, nor spare the surety without exacting satisfaction, he shed his own blood as the price of your redemption. He has given you the invitations of grace, the calls of ministers, the strivings of his Spirit. Even now is he ready to forgive and bless you on your repentance. No one, who came to him in faith, was ever cast out, as too young, or too old, or too guilty, or too degraded. That he has inclined you to read these pages, is a proof that he has not utterly forsaken you. Will you, after all, neglect his religion? Will you thus requite dying love? Imagine yourself to visit some distant world, and find in it only a single inhabitant; to learn that he was a sinner; that Christ had in mercy come to that world, and died for that sinner; and that he, notwithstanding, neglected Christ's salvation, grieved his Spirit, and refused to return his love. Would you not call him a monster of ingratitude? But has not Christ done precisely the same for you?

Consider, farther, that his religion can *overcome the dread of death*. This stamps it with unspeakable value. No other principle—no system of philosophy or infidelity can achieve for you this great victory. Death casts its gloomy shadow over the brightest paths of life, and dooms to the grave the monarch as certainly as the beggar. Well is it called the king of terrors. To social intercourse and earthly enjoyments it puts an end. It is natural for friends to wish to lie side by side; each, however, dwells *alone*, and has no more communication with neighbors, than if they were millions of miles distant. Death summons the soul to the bar of God to receive sentence; but over this dread enemy religion has given to thousands the victory. Leaning on the arm of Christ, they have gone down into the dark valley, fearing no evil; faith has kindled a light there, and brightened it with dawns of eternal day. Often have they been able to say with Watts, "I can close my eyes in sleep, not solicitous whether I awake in this world, or in the world to come;"

or with the pious Richard Turner, "Now I have but a few steps to my Father's house;" or with Brainerd, "I am almost in eternity, I long to be there;" or with Andrew Fuller, "I am not afraid to plunge into eternity;" or with Payson, "The celestial city is full in my view. Its glories beam upon me; its odors are wafted to me; its sounds strike upon my ears; its spirit is breathed into my heart. Nothing separates me from it but the river of death, which now appears but as an insignificant rill, that may be crossed at a single step whenever God shall give permission."

Lay it to heart, also, that the religion of Christ is *the only preparative for heaven*. Think what heaven is. No sin there; no error; no trifling or profaneness; no selfish, wicked dispositions; no opposition to truth, or reluctance to duty: all the redeemed in that world supremely love Christ, and have no other wish than to glorify God. Deeply sensible they are, that they were hell-deserving sinners, and that to God's mercy in Christ, not to their own merits, they owe all their happiness. Are you not conscious that you are now unqualified for admittance there? Can aught but true religion prepare you? "Ye must be born again." This is the *only* preparative, for "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Christ." Will you neglect the *ONLY* Saviour?

Such neglect involves *eternal ruin*. Irreligion is ruin, because it leaves the corrupt nature unchanged, the lusts of the flesh and mind unsubdued, the careless life unreformed. It induces you to rob God of the love, worship, and glory which are his due; to live, as some one has well said, "just as Satan would have you;" for he wants you to do nothing worse than *neglect* the Gospel. It leaves your sins unpardoned, and renders the exercise of mercy towards you, in your present state, inconsistent with the honor of the divine law. If sin become not your *grief*, it will prove your *ruin*. To turn to God and live, or not to turn and die, are the only courses set before you. Better neglect any thing than the soul. A man famous for business habits, being asked how he accomplished so much, replied, "Some things

*must* be done ; others it is desirable to do. I do what *must* be done, and as much *else* as I can." So should you consider the work of religion, as that which *must* be done, whatever else is left undone. If this remains undone, it will turn your very blessings into a curse. Time, health, Sabbaths, the Bible, and other means of grace, are in themselves blessings ; but better had it been never to have possessed them, than to abuse them and be a castaway. " Good had it been for that man if he had not been born." Thousands have felt, in the dying hour, that irreligion had been their ruin. Cardinal Mazarine, after a long life of ambition and pleasure, in which he had enjoyed the highest civil dignities of France, exclaimed at the close, " O, my poor soul, whither art thou going ?" If a man lose health, he has hope of recovering it ; if he lose property, perhaps he may regain it ; if he lose even character, possibly he may retrieve it ; but the *soul* once lost, is lost for ever.

O think not, that though the Bible threatens impenitence with ruin, there shall yet appear some way of *escape*. "*How* shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ?" Not, surely, by *resisting God* when he rises up to punish.

But possibly you are framing some plausible *excuse*. " Come," then, " and let us reason together, saith the Lord of hosts." Will you plead, that as you did not make your own heart, you are not to blame ? But do not your affections and acts of choice constitute, at least in part, your heart ; and dare you say you have no agency in making them what they are ? Will you say you could not convert yourself, and as God did not convert you, you are excusable ? But is your inability invincible and excusable, or vicious and criminal ? Has God, or has he not, promised to give, on your asking, the aid of his Spirit ? Will you allege, that if not elected, efforts for salvation will do no good ? You would think it impertinent to urge such an objection against efforts to cure a disease, or raise a crop on your field. Will you plead that you cannot think sin so great and aggravated an evil as the Bible represents it ? Alas, has it come to this, that you cannot frame an excuse without denying some important

principle of the word of God? Or will you take the ground, that God is too merciful to make any of his creatures finally miserable? This indeed carries an appearance of intending to honor God; but it is a strange way of honoring him, to suppose he is unfaithful to his own word, and has threatened what he never meant to perform. Or will you rely on the plea that it is unjust for God to punish you for ever for the sins of a short life? Who knows best what sin deserves, God or you? In a case where you are so deeply interested, are you impartial enough to be trusted as a judge? Are you wise enough? To know fully what sin deserves, requires a *perfect* knowledge of the worth of the soul, the excellence of God and his law, and the tendencies and results of sin eternal ages hence. None but God perfectly knows one of these things. He is the only being both wise enough and impartial enough to be a fit judge. Alas, your excuses for neglecting Christ will not stand the test. "The bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering narrower than that he can wrap himself in it."

Do you ask, *How shall I obtain* the blessings of religion? "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you." Call on God, and he can and will help you. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Be not discouraged by the difficulties of the strait and narrow way. True, a life of religion involves some sacrifices; you must renounce your sins and practice self-denial; it will cost, however, nothing but what you had infinitely better part with, than keep. Consider, too, what it will cost *not* to be a Christian—an uneasy conscience, an unhappy death, a miserable eternity. Count the cost on both sides.

On these great topics REFLECT. Let your reflections be serious, because of their importance; frequent, lest the whirl of business or pleasure efface them from your mind; and retired, that external objects may not intrude and distract your thoughts. It is a true remark, that as a small voice is more distinctly heard, and a little light more clearly seen in the night, so when the soul is retired from the throng of the

world, and outward objects are darkened, the still voice of conscience and of the Spirit is better heard, and the light of divine truth more clearly perceived. Would you spend but half an hour each day in solitary reflection and prayer, you could not live as you do. Tillotson tells us of a thoughtless youth, whom his pious father, on his death-bed, earnestly requested to retire each day and spend a quarter of an hour in solitude. He promised, and did so. Soon the season of retirement grew tedious; he wondered what his father meant by so singular a request, and began to think it was intended to enforce him to reflection. The expedient was, by God's grace, successful. Consideration made him resolve to change his course of life, and he was true to the resolution all his days. "Thus, consideration," added the archbishop, "is one of the best means to bring a bad man to a better mind."

Possibly some one who has neglected religion, *even to old age*, may cast his eye over these pages. How affecting the thought, my aged friend, that you have spent a long life in disregard of Christ. How much better might it have been spent. Many a youthful disciple, whose age is not a third part of yours, has repented of sin, formed the habit of prayer, borne the yoke of Christ, and done much for the salvation of others. These things you have left undone. The spring of youth is gone; the summer of manhood; time has sprinkled over your head the frosts of age, indications of the winter of death. But a span remains. Yield not to the despairing thought, that the divine mercy is clean gone for ever; think not, as some aged sinners have done, that it is too late to attempt any thing. Come as a penitent, at the eleventh hour, and you shall find acceptance. "Arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light."

Let *the young attend early* to the great salvation. To neglect it is not the way to make old age comfortable, death happy, and eternity blessed. Serve God in the morning of life, and he will not cast you off when your strength faileth. Youth commonly gives a stamp to the rest of life: what one becomes at the age of twenty or twenty-five, he is very likely to remain while he lives. It is dangerous to neglect

the Saviour a single day ; for what is your life ? Alas, let the graves of others tell. Persons of your age are apt to be delighted with “ the things that are seen,” the novelties, the pleasures, and attractions of the world. But, remember, there are things “ not seen :” an unseen God, an unseen eternity, an unseen judgment. Soon will the world have gone by—its glitter, its amusements, its business ; but millions of ages hence, there will be the same God, the same Christ, the same heaven and hell. Neglect not religion because many of your young associates do. Better to follow Christ without them, than go down to destruction with them. Even should youthful piety incur the sneers of the thoughtless, will it not be easier to bear these, than the eternal frowns of God ? Thrice happy the young Christian, who pursues the course which will enable him, in declining years, to say with good Obadiah, “ I thy servant fear the Lord from my youth.”

No longer, fellow-immortal, neglect the things of thy peace, “ lest they be hid from thine eyes.” Acquaint thyself now with God ; an hour too late may be an eternity too late. Your character at death, good or bad, you will carry into eternity. Death changes not the moral feelings of the heart. Are you willing to die in such a state, that, should your tombstone tell the truth, it must say, HERE LIES A NEGLECTER OF THE GOSPEL ? Soon will you be gone—your house and place be occupied by others—your very name forgotten—your grave levelled by the hand of time, and not the slightest memorial of you remain on earth. But your spirit, where will that be ; where, thousands of ages hence ? *That* will be determined by your embracing, or neglecting the religion of Jesus Christ.

## “I AM NO HYPOCRITE.”

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THIS is the inconsiderate declaration of many an individual, implying at once self-commendation and a reflection upon professors of religion. But they who join some church, are not the only persons who make professions. Those who join no church, profess, if not in words, yet in actions, that they are not Christians. And when they charge professors of religion with hypocrisy, and maintain that they themselves are sincere, they plainly acknowledge that they could not make a profession of religion without hypocrisy—that is, they profess not to be Christians.

When the Lord's table is spread, and church-members come around it, they make a profession of repentance, faith in Christ, love to God, and obedience to the divine precepts. Those who come not around this table, profess, as plainly as actions can speak, that they do not repent, believe, love, nor obey. And often, when they are asked, “Are you followers of Christ?” they plainly answer, “*No—but we are no hypocrites.*” Such persons differ from true Christians both in profession and in reality; but they differ from hypocrites only in profession. With this single exception they are alike. Both are destitute of true religion. If false professors are to be detested for their hypocrisy, ought those who profess to have no religion to congratulate themselves for their sincerity?

It is possible for a man to be *sincere* in embracing error and practising iniquity, as well as in embracing the truth and obeying it; and then, the greater the sincerity, the worse the condition. If what is *sincere* were always *right*, then sincere hatred to our neighbor would be right; and the murderer would do right in killing his neighbor, provided he only hated him sincerely, and was in good earnest in killing him. But let us pass to the consideration of some of those cases in which men profess to be sincere.

Perhaps you profess to be an *atheist*—an unbeliever in the existence of a Supreme Being, who created and governs

the universe. Now, some have doubted whether a sincere atheist ever lived; but your sincerity I will not for the present call in question. Let me ask, however, whether you have ever seriously thought of the absurdities embraced in your belief? Do you then believe that a watch makes, winds up, and regulates itself; or rather, that it exists and measures time, without ever having been made and regulated? This would be quite rational, compared with the belief of him who maintains that the universe, with all its grand, and varied, and complicated machinery, exists without a Maker. Men often become atheists because they "do not like to retain God in their knowledge." Romans 1:28. Whether this is the case with yourself or not, I suppose *you think it best* that the universe should be rushing on to its catastrophe, whatever that may be, without the superintendence and control of an almighty, all-wise, and good God. And would it be best that railroad trains and boats, laden with the rich treasures of human life and human industry, should be driven about, in every direction, by the mighty power of steam, without careful engineers to regulate and guide them? Are you indeed sincere?

Perhaps, however, you admit that a God exists, but *deny that the Bible contains a revelation from him*. The brief limits of these pages will not admit of my considering, or rather suggesting for your consideration, all the astonishing results of your sincerity; for I now suppose you to be sincere. Have you read Leslie, Jenyns, Paley, or Faber on the *Difficulties of Infidelity*? *Have you even read the Bible itself with care and candor*? Be not offended at this question. It is well known that many are *sincerely prejudiced* against the Bible, without knowing much about its contents. Why do you reject the Bible? Because it is a bad book? Is that a bad book which commands us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves? Mark 12:29-31.

If Christianity is not true, the apostles were either impostors or self-deceived. Would impostors incur poverty, and persecution, and death in its most horrible forms, by maintaining that which they knew to be false? If the apostles were self-deceived, can we any longer believe our own senses? What confidence can be placed in eyes and ears, if the apostles saw not Jesus perform miracles, and heard not the gra-



cious words which he spoke? How could they be deceived in the resurrection of Lazarus, for instance? John 11.

But *you are a sinner*, as are all other men. Of course, *you need pardon*. How do you expect to obtain it? By repentance, do you say? Does the light of nature teach that, or the very Bible which you reject? The light of nature proclaims law and penalty, but announces no pardon. Why persist, then, in closing the door of hope which the Bible opens for every trembling penitent—for *yourself*, through faith in a crucified Redeemer? Why prefer the rushlight of natural religion to the sun of the Gospel? Are you indeed *sincere* in choosing darkness rather than light?

I might make some remarks, in passing, upon the sincerity of those who profess to receive the Scriptures, and yet adopt opinions *at variance with some of their plainest declarations*. I allude particularly to Universalists and Unitarians. I might remind them that many, who profess to hold their opinions, renounce them when convinced of sin, or upon a dying bed; but this might seem like a reflection upon their sincerity. I will therefore here add only a single remark. It seems they *sincerely believe that Christ and his apostles spoke very unguardedly*; otherwise they would not labor so hard to show that they do not mean what they seem to mean, and what the great mass of the Christian world have always understood them to mean.

I now turn, with intense interest, to a very numerous class found in all Christian lands. I mean those who receive the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and profess to believe the doctrines which they teach, and yet *live in sin, impenitence, and unbelief*. They profess to have no piety—and they are *sincere*—and even *boast of their sincerity*; while they throw out the most unsparing insinuations of hypocrisy against professors of religion. Let us look now at this *sincere irreligion*, and see how it appears. God commands you to repent; but you do not repent. You love sin too well to part with it—and *you are sincere!* God commands you to believe on his Son Jesus Christ; but, as you love sin, you are unwilling to be saved from it, and therefore you reject “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world”—and *you are sincere!* God commands you to love and obey him; but you do neither. He commands you to strive to enter in at the strait gate; but you

strive not. In short, God requires you to be every thing that a Christian ought to be; but, you are no Christian; oh no, you are far from it; and, *you are no hypocrite!* O what horrible sincerity! Are you not ashamed of it? Does not conscience thunder an alarm in your ears while you think of it? Can hypocrisy itself be much more displeasing to God than such sincerity?

On earth, Satan is often a hypocrite, and appears as an angel of light; but in hell he appears as he is, a devil outright, all malignity; and his hatred to God and all good is sincere. Is he any better for his sincerity? And are you any the better for yours? Does God love you, because you are sincere in not loving him? How strange that sinners should boast of their sincerity.

But I must remind you, that if you are sincere, much more is *God sincere*. Men may lie: God cannot. You would be offended, if any body should doubt your sincerity. Offend not your Maker, therefore, by doubting his. *You are sincere in being unholy, impenitent, unbelieving. God is sincere in saying, "Without holiness, no man shall see the Lord." "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." "He that believeth not, shall be damned."* You are sincere, and God is sincere. What then must be the result? It will be seen in that "day when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." The Judge will then be sincere in pronouncing the final sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Will your sincerity in sin save you then? Ah no. You must go away into everlasting punishment.

"Down to hell, there's no redemption,  
Every Christless soul must go."

Oh, as you have been sincere in your impenitence, be sincere also in your humiliation. Repent of your wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. *But boast no more, while you live in sin, that you are no hypocrite.*

# COME AND WELCOME TO JESUS CHRIST.

BY JOHN BUNYAN.

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“ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME, SHALL COME TO ME; AND HIM THAT COMETH TO ME, I WILL IN NO WISE CAST OUT.”  
JOHN 6 : 37.

THE love of our Lord Jesus Christ to poor sinners, prevailed with him to lay aside his glory, to leave the heavenly place, to clothe himself with flesh, to be born in a stable, to be laid in a manger, to live a poor life in the world, to take upon him our sorrows, our infirmities, our pains, our sins, our curse, and the wrath that was due to man; and all this he did for a base, undeserving, unthankful people, yea, that were at enmity with him.

The coming to him, intended in this passage, is to be understood of the coming of the mind to him, even the moving of the heart towards him, from a deep sense of the absolute need of him for justification and salvation. What must I do to be saved? Lord, save me, or I perish.

Do you ask, IN WHAT WAY do they come? They come with weeping and with supplication; they come with prayers and tears. Jer. 50 : 4. A senseless sinner cannot come: he cannot pray; he cannot cry; he cannot come sensible of what he sees not, nor feels.

This coming to Christ, is called a running to him—a *fleeing to him* from the wrath to come. Fleeing is the last work of a man in danger. All that are in danger do not flee; no, not all that see themselves in danger. Men will consider if there be no other way of escape before they flee. When all refuge fails, and a man is made to see that there is nothing left him but sin, death, and damnation, unless he flees to Christ for life, then he flees; and not till then. He that comes to Christ, honestly and sincerely, *forsakes all for him*. Luke 14 : 26. He casts all behind his back;

he leaves, he forsakes all things that would stand in his way to hinder his coming to Christ.

Coming sinner, hear further what there is in this Saviour who inviteth thee. In Christ, there is a FULNESS of all that can make us happy. "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." Col. 1:19. The riches of Christ are unsearchable.

There is *light* in Christ, sufficient to lead out of all that darkness, in the midst of which men stumble, and fall, and perish. Man by nature is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goes, for darkness hath blinded his mind; neither can any thing but Jesus Christ lead men out of this darkness.

There is *life* in Christ, that is to be found nowhere else: life, as a principle in the soul, by which it shall be actuated, and enabled to do that which, through him, is pleasing to God. Without this life, a man is dead. However good in his own, or other men's esteem, there is no true and eternal life but in Christ.

Christ is he alone by whom poor sinners have admittance to, and *acceptance with the Father*, because of the glory of his righteousness, by and in which he presenteth them amiable and spotless in his sight. "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Christ alone can give *true peace*: "My peace I give unto you," peace with conscience, peace with God; "not as the world giveth, give I unto you:" the world's peace is but carnal and transitory; mine is divine and eternal.

This Saviour hath enough of *all things* spiritually good, to satisfy the desire of every longing soul. "Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," John 7:37; and "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

Are not these words, therefore, a sufficient ground to encourage any coming sinner? "HIM THAT COMETH," him whose heart begins to move after me, who is leaving all for my sake, him who is on his journey towards me. There is further to be gathered from this word "cometh,"

That Jesus Christ takes notice of *the first moving of the heart* of a sinner towards him. Coming sinner, thou canst not move with desires after Christ, but he sees the working

of those desires in thy heart. It is said of the prodigal, that, "when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." Luke 15 : 20. The prodigal had, probably, many a fear and doubt between the first step and the last of his journey. I said, I would go to my father; but what if, when I am come to him, he should ask me where I have been all this while, what shall I say then? If he ask me what is become of the portion of goods that he gave me, what shall I say then? If he ask me who have been my companions, what shall I say then? If he ask me on what my heart has been set all the time of my absence from him, what shall I say then? Yea, and if he ask me, why I came home no sooner, what shall I say then? Conscious that he could give but a bad answer to any of these questions, no wonder if he stood in need, first of all, of a kiss from his father's lips.

As Jesus Christ hath his eye upon, so he hath *his heart open to receive* the returning sinner. No sins of the coming sinner, however long he hath lived in them, shall by any means prevail with Jesus Christ to reject him. Coming sinner, thou art coming to a gracious Saviour. These words dropped from his blessed lips on purpose that the coming sinner might take encouragement to continue on his journey until he have indeed come to Jesus Christ. They that are coming unto Jesus, are often afraid that Jesus Christ will not receive them. But he says, "I will *in no wise* cast out."

Coming sinner, are not these words sufficient to dash in pieces all thine objections; and are they not dropped by the Lord Jesus for that very end, and to help the faith that is mixed with unbelief? It is, as it were, the sum of all the promises; nor is any unworthiness that thou findest in thyself so great, that this promise will not overcome.

"But I am a great sinner," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I am an old sinner," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I am a hard-hearted sinner," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I have served Satan all my days," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I have sinned against light," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I

have sinned against mercy," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. "But I have no good thing to bring with me," sayest thou: "I will in no wise cast out," says Christ. Thus I might go on, and show you that this promise was provided to answer all thy objections, and to ease all thy fears.

Many, like thee, have feared that the Saviour would not receive them. Dost thou desire to know the REASON OF ALL THESE FEARS? I will tell thee.

It is not for want of ground to stand upon; this text itself lays a sufficient foundation to encourage all that are coming to Jesus Christ: "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." It is not for want of invitation to come, for that is full and plain: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28. Neither is it for want of Christ's willingness to receive thee: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." John 7:37. It is not for want of solemn oath and engagement to save them that come; for, "because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Heb. 6:13, 17, 18.

Coming sinner, not one of these can be the cause: I will now tell thee what may be the real cause.

It is the *want of the knowledge of Christ*. Thou knowest but little of the grace and kindness that are in the heart of Christ; thou knowest but little of the virtue and merit of his blood; thou knowest but little of the willingness that is in his heart to save thee; and this is the reason of the fear that arises in thy heart, and that causes thee to doubt. Unbelief is the daughter of ignorance; therefore Christ saith, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe." Luke 24:25.

Slowness of heart to believe, flows from thy too little knowledge of Christ. The more knowledge of Christ, the more faith: "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." Ps. 9:10. He that began to come to Christ but the other day, and hath yet but little knowledge of him, feareth that Christ will not receive him; but he that hath been longer acquainted with him, is strong, and hath overcome the wicked one.

Let the coming sinner, therefore, seek after more of the good knowledge of Jesus Christ; press after it; "seek it as silver, and dig for it as for hid treasure." This will embolden thee—this will make thee grow strong. "I know in whom I have believed." "I know him," said Paul; and what follows? "I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12.

What had Paul committed to Jesus Christ? The answer is, he had committed to him his soul. Why did he commit his soul to him? Because he knew him; he knew him to be faithful, to be kind; he knew he would not fail him, nor forsake him; and therefore he laid his soul down at his feet, and committed it to him, to keep against that day.

Thy fears that Christ will not receive thee, may be also a consequence of thy earnest and strong desires after thy salvation by him. What a man most sets his heart upon, he often most fears he shall not obtain. Hear these words: "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not." Isa. 35:4.

The fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from a sense of *the exceeding mercy* of being saved. Sometimes salvation appears, to the eyes of him that desires it, so great, so wonderful a thing, that the very thought of its excellency awakens unbelief that it can be obtained, in the hearts of those who unfeignedly desire it. "Seemeth it to you," saith David, "a light thing to be a king's son-in-law?" So the thoughts of the greatness and glory of the thing proposed, as heaven, eternal life, eternal glory, to be with God, and Christ, and angels; these are great things, things too good, saith the soul that is little in his own eyes—too rich, saith the soul that is truly poor in spirit, for me. Oh, it is too big, it is too big; it is too great a mercy!

But, coming sinner, let me reason with thee: thou sayest, It is too big, too great; well, will things that are less satisfy thy soul? Will a less thing than heaven, than glory, and eternal life, answer thy desires? No, nothing less. Well, great and good as they are, God giveth them to such as thyself; they are not too great for God to give; no, not to give freely: be content, let God give like himself. Coming sinner, God can give his heavenly Canaan, and

the glory of it, unto thee; yea, none ever had it but as a free gift. He hath given us his Son; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.

Thy fear that Christ will not receive thee, may arise from those *decays* that thou findest in thy soul, even when thou art coming to him. There is such a one coming to Jesus Christ, who, when at first he began to look out after him, was tender, affectionate, and broken in spirit; but now is grown dark, senseless, hard-hearted, and inclining to neglect spiritual duties. Now he finds he cannot tremble at God's word, nor his judgments, neither can he, as he thinks, be sorry for these things. Now this is a sad situation. But Jesus Christ is the conqueror of the tempter, and a succorer of those that are tempted. Heb. 2:18.

Thy fears may arise from another cause: it may be, thou wast *given to slumber and sleep*, and therefore these temptations were sent to awaken thee. Take heed, lest Satan should gain advantage over thee.

Again, it may be thy graces must be *tried in the fire*, that the rust that cleaveth to them may be taken away, that they may be proved to be far better than gold that perisheth. Suppose the worst; suppose that thou art to this day without the grace of God, yet thou art to this day but a miserable sinner, that hath need of a blessed Saviour: this text presents thee with one as good and kind as heart can wish, and for thy encouragement saith, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out!"

Learn then, coming sinner, that faith and doubting may at the same time have their residence in the same soul. "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Matt. 14:31. Peter had a little faith in the midst of his many doubts. The same is true of many that are coming to Jesus Christ—they come, and fear they come not: when they look upon the promise, or a word of encouragement by faith, then they come; but when they look upon themselves, or the difficulties that lie before them, then they doubt. "Bid me come," said Peter. "Come," said Christ; so he went down out of the ship to go to Jesus, but his lot was to go to him upon the water—there was the trial; so it is with the poor desiring soul. "Bid me come," says the sinner. "Come," says Christ, "and I will in no wise cast out." So he comes upon the water, upon drowning difficulties; if,



therefore, the wind of temptation blow, the waves of doubts and fears will presently arise, and this coming sinner will begin to sink, if he has but little faith. Peter went so far as his little faith would carry him; he also cried, as far as his little faith would help, "Lord, save me; I perish:" and so with *coming* and *crying*, he was kept from sinking, though he had but a little faith. Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"

Coming sinner, happy for thee that thy "life is hid with Christ in God." Alas, the best of us, were life left in our hands, should forfeit it over and over; or, were it in the hands of another, we should by our often backslidings, so offend him, that at last he would shut up his mercy in everlasting displeasure against us. But now it is with One that can pity, pray for, pardon, yea, multiply pardons; it is with One that can have compassion upon us when we are out of the way; with One that hath a heart to fetch us again, when we are gone astray; with One that can pardon without upbraiding: blessed be God that our life is hid in Christ.

This doctrine of coming to Jesus Christ for life, informs us of *the evil of unbelief*, that chief hinderance of the coming sinner: by faith we come—by unbelief we keep away; therefore it is said to be by unbelief that a soul departs from God, because it was that which first caused the world to go off from him, and the same keeps them from him unto this day. It is unbelief above all other sins which weakens our prayers, our faith, our love, our diligence, and our hope.

Take the following as a more particular view of FAITH to assist the weak believer: Faith sees more in *a promise of God* to help, than in all other things to hinder; but unbelief, notwithstanding God's promise, saith, How can these things be? *Faith brings us near* to God, when we are far from him; but unbelief puts us far from God, when we are near him. Faith makes us *see the value* of Christ; but unbelief sees no form, beauty, or comeliness in him. Faith will make thee see *love* in the heart of Christ, when with the mouth he giveth reproofs; but unbelief will imagine wrath in his heart, when with his mouth and word he saith he loves us. Faith will help the soul to *wait*, though God

defers to give ; but unbelief will take offence and cast up all, if God makes any tarrying. Faith will give *comfort* in the midst of fears ; but unbelief causeth fear in the midst of comforts. Faith makes *great burdens light* ; but unbelief makes light ones intolerably heavy. Faith gives us *the victory* over the law, sin, and death ; but unbelief lays us open to them all. Faith will show us more *excellency in things not seen*, than in the things that are seen ; but unbelief sees more in things that are, than in things that will be hereafter. Faith makes the ways of God *pleasant* ; but unbelief makes them hard and heavy. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Once more, coming sinner, think of THE SAVIOUR who inviteth thee ; full of grace as well as of truth. He complaineth if thou come not ; he is displeased if thou call not upon him ; he can bear with thy weakness ; he can pity thy ignorance ; he can be touched with the feeling of thy infirmities ; he can affectionately forgive thy transgressions ; he can heal thy backslidings, and love thee freely. His compassions fail not ; he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax ; he can pity where no eye pities, and be afflicted in all thy afflictions ; he will bow his ear to thy stammering prayer ; he will accept the weakest offering, if there be in it but thy heart ; he hath strewed all the way from the gate of hell where thou wast, to the gate of heaven whither thou art going, with promises.

Behold how the promises, invitations, calls, and encouragements are mixed with the names of mercy, goodness, love, pity, and pardon. In his book they are fairly written, that thou, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, mightest have hope. Coming sinner, blessed art thou, for "flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but thy Father who is in heaven."

## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

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It shall be our endeavor to set before our readers a plain exposition of this great Christian doctrine, as taught in the holy Scriptures, and as generally held by sound Protestants.

We commence with some remarks on the *scriptural meaning of the word "justification,"* as a mistake here may spread darkness over the whole discussion.

The common acceptation of the word "to justify," in the Bible, is, to acquit from all charge, to declare the person to stand *right* in the eye of the law. It is the very opposite of "condemnation." And in this sense is the word commonly used among us. To "justify," is not, therefore, to infuse a principle of justice into the soul. It does not produce an inherent change of moral character. The import of this word is entirely distinct from that of "sanctification;" and this distinction must be carefully kept in view, if we would avoid error and confusion in the investigation of the subject.

That the word is commonly used in this declarative or forensic sense in the holy Scriptures, might be evinced by an induction of numerous passages; let a few, however, suffice. God is said to be "justified" when he speaks; that is, he appears to be just. Christ is declared to be "justified in the Spirit;" his true character was manifested and vindicated. "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked." Deut. 25 : 1. Here we have the true import of the word as

a forensic term, and standing in direct opposition to condemnation. And in Exodus 23 : 7, it is said, "For I will not justify the wicked;" that is, I will not pronounce the wicked to be just. And in Proverbs 17 : 15, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." But to render a wicked man inherently righteous, is so far from being an abomination to the Lord, that even to be the instrument of such a change is followed by a great reward.

In the same sense is the word employed, Isaiah 5 : 23, where transgressors are characterized as those who "justify the wicked for reward." Solomon, in his dedicatory prayer, 1 Kings, 8 : 32, says, "Then hear thou in heaven and do, and judge thy servants, *condemning the wicked*, to bring his way upon his head, and *justifying the righteous*, to give him according to his righteousness." Thus, also, is the word used by Paul: "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight." "Being justified by faith—freely by his grace." And in Romans 4 : 5, God is said to "justify the ungodly."

Let it be distinctly borne in mind, that a state of justification is *the very opposite of a state of condemnation*, and there can be no material mistake respecting the true import of the word. He who is condemned is considered as a transgressor of the law, whose sins are still imputed to him; he who is justified is viewed as having, though not of his own, that which satisfies the law—he has the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin, but to whom he "imputes righteousness without works."

The only method of obtaining the favor of God, which reason and conscience dictate, is, *doing the will of God*.

Moral agents, put on probation, if they persevere in obedience during the period of their trial, are "justified," and confirmed in a state of integrity and happiness.

When an accountable creature, or a race of accountable creatures, fails in obedience, the penalty of the law, whatever it may be, is incurred, and must be endured. Both justice and truth require the infliction of the punishment deserved, and threatened to transgressors. The justification of a sinner appears, therefore, at first sight, to be a thing impossible, in consistence with the divine attributes. To devise a plan by which sinners may be saved, and yet the law be maintained and justice satisfied, was beyond the wisdom of any creature; but what finite wisdom could not accomplish, the wisdom of God has found out; and to reveal this plan of salvation, and the terms on which the condemned creature may be made a partaker of it, is the great design of divine revelation. This is the mystery into which angels desire to look. It is the "good news" which the Gospel announces. It will be a theme of adoration and grateful praise in heaven, through eternal ages; and all who shall arrive at heaven by this method of salvation, will sing a song peculiar to themselves, in which no others of the heavenly host can join, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

To understand *how God can be just, and justify the ungodly*, let us contemplate the acknowledged circumstances of the case. God is a holy being, and his law is like himself, "holy, just, and good." This law cannot be set aside, or changed, in mercy to the offender, without reflecting dishonor on the Lawgiver. Better there were no law, than that its claims should be disregarded. Better that all creatures should cease to exist, than that any dishonor should be cast on the truth or justice of God. If the infliction of the penalty incurred was not a righteous act, such a penalty never

would have been annexed to the law. All hope of escape, founded on the idea that the law of God may be set aside, or its demands relaxed, must be vain; and all such hopes are impious, as they are founded on the supposition that God will "deny himself." Does not every transgressor, then, appear to be shut up to death?

Some may be ready to reply, that *God is merciful* as well as just, and the sinner may hope in his mercy; and that to insist upon the rigid execution of law, in all cases, would expunge mercy from the divine attributes. It will also be alleged, that to represent the supreme Ruler as inflexible in his justice, and requiring the utmost farthing of what is due from his frail creatures, is to exhibit him in an unamiable light.

This view of the subject seems plausible, and falls in with the prevalent opinions and feelings of men. But it ought to be considered, that if mercy be so essential to God that he cannot but exercise it unless he show himself severe and unamiable, then there is *an end of justice*. There can be no place for it in the dispensations of a merciful God. But "a God all mercy is a God unjust."

And let it be considered again, that upon these principles there was *no need of a Mediator* to expiate our sins, and propitiate an offended God. To the sinner God may indeed appear lovely, as divested of his righteousness, and equally good to the transgressor and the obedient subject; just as the criminal condemned by human laws, would esteem that judge amiable who pardoned his crimes, while upright citizens might view it to be inconsistent with his character as a righteous judge. But the inquiry should be, how would the divine character appear to intelligent and impartial spectators, if sin should go unpunished; how would this be viewed by the "holy angels?" And surely, with the word of God in our hands, we cannot hesitate to believe

that God is just and holy, and that he "will by no means clear the guilty."

But *do not the Scriptures represent God as a merciful being*; and are not all invited to take refuge under the wings of his mercy? Yes; this is undoubtedly true. No attribute is more frequently and emphatically ascribed to God than mercy; and by no other is his infinite and divine perfection more gloriously manifested. Throughout the holy Scriptures, we have set before us a God *both just and merciful*. Those attributes, therefore, as they exist in God, must be harmonious; and the exercise of the one must, somehow, be consistent with that of the other. Let us, therefore, endeavor to discover how they may be harmonized, how the great Creator can be at the same time both "a just God and a Saviour."

One remark, before we proceed further, seems necessary to prevent mistakes. There *exists not the same necessity* for the exercise of mercy as of justice. God is obliged by the rectitude of his nature, to be always, and in all cases, just; but he is not bound, in all cases where there are miserable sinners, to exercise mercy. The example of the fallen angels settles this question. Such an idea of mercy would destroy every idea of justice. There could remain no place for its exercise. Mercy, from its very nature, is free. To suppose any binding obligation to show mercy, destroys its nature; it would then be confounded with justice. The true ground of distinction between justice and mercy is, that while the first is *obligatory*, the last is *free*, and may be bestowed or withheld at the pleasure of him who exercises it.

The true principle on which justice and mercy may be reconciled is, that *the claims of justice must be satisfied* in order to make way for the exercise of mercy. If no plan could have been devised by which the demands of the law—

which are the same as the claims of justice—could be satisfied, then had the exercise of mercy been impossible in the government of a righteous God. But herein has the infinite wisdom of God been gloriously displayed by the plan of redemption: “Mercy and truth have met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.” According to this glorious plan, justice and mercy are both manifested, in the most conspicuous manner, in the obedience of Christ unto death. In the cross these divine attributes not only harmonize, but shine forth with brighter rays than anywhere else. Let it not be forgotten, that the difficulty in the way of the exercise of mercy to sinners, required to be overcome, was nothing else than *the demands of inflexible justice, and the truth of God pledged in annexing the penalty of death to the law*. No plan of reconciliation or justification, which does not provide for the removal of this difficulty, is admissible or possible. I wish this point to be clearly understood, and indelibly fixed in the memory of the reader; for otherwise he will be in danger of being misled by false theories.

Let us then take an accurate survey of THE CONDITION OF A SINFUL MAN, under the righteous government of God. We take for granted, that the demands of the law of God are neither annihilated nor diminished in consequence of his transgression. Fallen man is as much under *obligation* to love God with all the heart, mind, and strength, as innocent man. It is a dictate of reason, that the obligation of no law is removed by transgressing it. Neither does the fact that the sinner has fallen under the condemnation of the law, free him from the *obligation to obey it*. Although some have held this opinion to prop up a rotten system, nothing can be conceived more absurd. This supposes the enduring the penalty of the law to be a full equivalent for perfect obedience. According to this, the man who had



stood in the pillory for perjury as long as the penalty of the law required, would be as deserving of esteem and of a reward as the man who had completely obeyed the laws of his country. Then let it be distinctly kept in mind, that *on a transgressor the law has a double demand*: first, the original requisition of perfect obedience; and secondly, a demand that the penalty, according to the demerit of the offence, be endured. And before he can be justified according to this law, both these demands must be met and satisfied.

A mistake on this point has led many astray in regard to the nature of a sinner's justification. They have maintained that nothing else was necessary but that the Surety endure the penalty of the law, or make atonement for sin; and that nothing more is included in justification than the forgiveness of our sins. But if this were all, justification would leave the person in the same relation to the law in which Adam stood when created; that is, he would be free from the penalty, but would have no title to the reward of a righteous person. But the very word "justify" expresses much more. Strictly speaking, and excluding the merits of Christ, pardon and justification are incompatible; for the first supposes the person to have been a transgressor, the last that he has a righteousness fully answering the demands of the law; but when a sinner is *justified by faith in Christ*, while he receives remission of sins through his blood, he is accounted righteous, by reason of the perfect obedience, unto death, of his Surety, rendered in his behalf.

Those who deny the necessity of the active obedience of Christ, as included in the meritorious ground of a sinner's justification, are driven to the necessity of maintaining, that the person must acquire a title to eternal life by his own obedience; and they suppose that this doctrine is inculcated in all those texts which speak of believers being rewarded

“according to their works;” whereas, if eternal life was granted only in consequence of Christ’s obedience, they allege all would share alike, and there would not be different degrees of glory among the saints in heaven. But this is to confound the title to eternal life with the degree of happiness to be enjoyed. As to the title, all do stand upon a perfect equality. Heaven is as sure to the weakest believer as to the strongest; to the man who lived only to perform one good work, as to him that abounded in good works through a long life. But it does not follow from this, that the happiness and glory of all believers shall be equal. All, it is reasonable to believe, will not have the same capacity of heavenly happiness; and it is meet, that they who have labored most and suffered most, should enjoy most hereafter. This furnishes a good reason for what we find clearly taught by our Lord and his apostles, that in the day of judgment the good works of the righteous will be brought into public view; as well that they may furnish a measure of their respective rewards, as that they may furnish conclusive evidence of the sincerity of their profession.

Although the active obedience of Christ, as well as his sufferings and death, are necessary to a justifying righteousness; yet there is no necessity nor propriety in curiously endeavoring to separate the parts of our Saviour’s finished work. As has been well remarked by a profound theologian, “*In his sufferings he obeyed, and in his obedience he suffered.*” His mediatorial work, like his robe, cannot be divided into separate parts. Still, we can conceive of a distinction between that which was necessary to satisfy the precept, and that which was required to satisfy the penalty of the law. And if there were any uncertainty whether all the acts of Christ’s obedience were strictly vicarious, yet it would be our safe course to exclude nothing which God has not excluded. When the apostle says, “by

his OBEEDIENCE many are constituted righteous," no man has a right to limit the word, which is left in the holy Scriptures without limitation.

Having seen, that in order to a sinner's justification, the law demands a righteousness which shall answer both its precept and its penalty; let us next inquire, HAS JESUS CHRIST THE MEDIATOR PROVIDED SUCH A RIGHTEOUSNESS? And here it is comfortable to the convinced sinner to learn, that "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." That "He of God is made unto us righteousness," and is called, "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." And that "there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." That "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

But why may not a sinner be justified by *his own* righteousness? For the best reason in the world: because he has none which will answer the law's demand. All will admit, that the external obedience of an unrenewed man, whether to the moral or ceremonial law, cannot be a righteousness that a holy God can accept as the ground of his justification. Such a righteousness is, indeed, well described by the prophet, as "filthy rags." That which has no particle of real holiness in it, surely cannot answer the demands of that holy law which requires "truth in the inward parts," and perfect rectitude in every thought and desire. It is, therefore, universally agreed among Protestants, that "dead works," or mere external obedience, can justify no one.

Still, it is contended by some, that the "new obedience" of a sanctified soul may, by a gracious God, be received as a justifying righteousness. Others, to be more conformable to the language of Scripture, ascribe our justification to the

single *grace of faith*, or *act of believing*. But we will now show that no works of ours, nor any holiness wrought in us, is the ground of our justification.

The arguments from which it is evident that our justification is *not on account of inherent holiness, or good works proceeding from faith*, are these :

Justification is *a sentence according to law* ; but the law demands a perfect righteousness : the imperfect, though sincere obedience of the believer, is not a ground on which God, as a righteous Judge, can pronounce the sinner justified. Even if the believer could attain to perfection in this life—which none ever did—this would not answer for a perfect righteousness ; for when a man stands in judgment before God, he must answer for the whole of his life, and not a part only. The believer cannot be justified by his evangelical obedience, because this *follows* his acceptance with God, and cannot therefore be its cause. The ungodly are the persons whom God justifies ; therefore, they are not justified by their own obedience, for they remain ungodly up to the very moment when they are justified.

The justification of the sinner, according to the apostle Paul, *excludes boasting* ; but if a man is justified by his own works, of whatever kind, he has a ground of glorying ; therefore justification is not by “works of righteousness which we have done.”

Again, justification is entirely *gratuitous*, and therefore not by works of any kind. “Being justified freely by his grace.” Now, between works and grace there is, according to Paul, an irreconcilable opposition as it relates to the ground of a sinner’s acceptance. “And if by grace, it is then no more of works ; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace ; otherwise work is no more work.”

It *detracts from the honor of Christ* and the merit of

his mediatorial work, to ascribe justification, in whole or in part, to man's obedience. If it had been consistent with God's perfections to accept of an imperfect obedience from the creature, where was the need of a divine Mediator? Did Christ the Son of God come into the world and die on the cross, merely to render the imperfect obedience of the sinner acceptable? This supposition is not honorable to the divine Redeemer, neither is it in accordance with holy Scripture. There, *all* is ascribed to Christ's redemption—to his blood—to his righteousness—to his obedience. Christ is the foundation—the corner-stone—the way, the truth, and the life—the alpha and omega—the beginning and end of our salvation. He that glories, must glory in the Lord. The everlasting song of the redeemed will be, "Not unto us, but unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

And what says *the experience of the children of God*? Are they willing to trust for salvation to such a broken reed as their own obedience; and are they disposed to detract any thing from the glory of the Redeemer in their salvation? Is there one among them who would wish to put in a claim for any part of the honor of this work?

But what need is there to argue a point which is so explicitly and positively decided by the pen of inspiration? "Therefore," says Paul, "by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." And, as if to cut off all pretence that he meant the ceremonial law of Moses, he immediately adds, "for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Now, Paul tells us in another place *what law* produced in him the knowledge of sin, namely, the law contained in the ten commandments; "for," says he, "I had not known sin, unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." And this is given as a reason by the apostle, why there could be no justification by the law; for if a man was only

convicted of one sin by the law, it is evident that justification, to him, by that law, is as impossible as if he had violated every precept. As justification and condemnation are opposite states in relation to the law, he who is condemned, if it were only for one sin, and that the smallest, never can be justified by a broken law. For one sin incurs the penalty; as it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them."

Some dream of a new and milder law under the Gospel, by which believers are justified; but there is none such—there can be none such. The Scriptures never mention any other moral law than the law requiring perfect love, and which is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments. To this our Saviour continually appeals, as universally binding—as intended, originally, to give life to those who obeyed it; and as the perfect rule which all should follow. The apostles refer to no other law, as might be proved by numerous testimonies. Indeed, the very supposition of a change in the moral law is monstrous; it would imply a change in the Lawgiver, which is nothing less than blasphemy.

God does, it is true, accept from his people an obedience mingled with defects and imperfections; but not as their justifying righteousness: it is for Christ's sake, and because they are already "accepted in the Beloved." "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," they are adopted into the number of sons and daughters; and having his righteousness imputed to them, or set down to their account, there is no condemnation to them. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?" It is said of believers, that "they are passed from death unto life, and shall never come into condemnation."

But we are said to be JUSTIFIED BY FAITH: how is this to be understood? This doctrine stands out prominently in the New Testament, and the Reformers considered it the cardinal point, or the centre of the Christian religion. Luther, as far as doctrine was concerned, *commenced the Reformation by restoring this doctrine to its proper place*; and all true reformers, ever since, have placed justification by faith at the foundation of their system, and made it the burden of their preaching; and the neglect of this doctrine, or a disposition to explain it away, or not to maintain it in its simple and obvious meaning, is an evidence of a corrupt system of theology, and marks a deviation from the truth in other particulars. This doctrine is as essential in the system of divine truth, as the centre of gravity in bodies; in both cases these points must be firmly supported, or the system falls.

But we return to the important question, How does *faith* justify a sinner? Certainly not on account of any merit in the *act* of faith. They who maintain this, fall into no less an error than substituting an act of our minds for Christ and his righteousness. Faith may, in a certain sense, be called a work; but it is not *as a work* that it justifies, or it would never have been, as it is, placed in strong contrast with works. Though faith be an act of obedience to the law of God, it is not as such that it justifies. Hear what Paul teaches on this point: "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." To interpret this last phrase as though Paul intended to teach that *the act of believing* was the righteousness by which the ungodly are justified, would be to make him most palpably contradict himself;

for that construction would not only make faith *a work* in the affair of justification, but a *substitute* for all other works; whereas the apostle, in this passage, says, "But to him that *worketh not*, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly;" that is, who performs no works as a righteousness by which he expects to obtain the favor of God; but in regard to works, is considered, when justified, as an ungodly person—one who has no goodness of his own to plead, "*but believeth.*" Here faith must be considered as a mere instrument, or organ, by which Christ is received.

But why is it said to be "counted for righteousness?" For no other reason but because it is that act of the soul by which Christ, who is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, is apprehended, appreciated, and appropriated. A reprieve is obtained by a great price from the king; the benevolent person who procured it offers it to the condemned criminal, who eagerly stretches out his hand to receive it. If his acceptance were made the condition of his deliverance, the case would be a striking parallel to the offer of pardon and the divine favor to a sinner. The blessings of the Gospel are suspended on the act of believing. This is, in fact, the cordial reception of the blessing. But who would think of ascribing merit to the mere act of receiving a pardon by a condemned criminal? As little reason is there for considering the act of faith by which we receive Christ's righteousness as either meritorious, or as standing in the place of a perfect righteousness, and accepted as such, though manifestly very far short of being all that the law demands.

But *how can the righteousness of the Redeemer be available to the justification of the sinner?* To this I reply, that from eternity Christ undertook, in the covenant of redemption, to satisfy law and justice for all who were given to him by the Father in that covenant—all who should be-



lieve on him. When incarnate, he bore their sins, and for them fulfilled all righteousness—did all that was required as a satisfaction to law and justice. “As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made,” constituted, “righteous.” “He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” Now, if the union, by covenant between the first Adam and his posterity, was so close that by his fatal transgression they all died, why may there not be formed a union as intimate between Christ and his people? This is the very principle on which the apostle argues in the fifth of Romans. But the children of God are, “by nature, children of wrath, even as others.” They, in their natural condition, are under the curse of the law; for we read, that “Christ was made a curse for us, to redeem us from the curse of the law.” They continue aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, until, by the gracious intercession of their Redeemer, the Holy Spirit is sent to bring them to Christ. On their part, faith is the act by which they receive Christ. This consummates the spiritual union between him as the Head, and them as the members. This union is of such a nature, that, in law, whatever the Surety has done or suffered, can be set down to their account; or, as the apostle’s phrase is, “righteousness is imputed to them.” By having this perfect righteousness reckoned to them, they are instantly and completely justified. God is now reconciled to them through the death of his Son. All their sins are freely pardoned, and they are adopted as sons, and immediately made heirs of eternal life. Here then we see how faith justifies as an instrument of union and reception; and in what sense it is “counted for righteousness.” We also see how a contrast can be set up between faith and works—between grace and debt.

But although faith alone justifies, and justifies not as a

work, yet it is a *working faith* which justifies. It is the fruitful principle of sanctification, and of all evangelical obedience, or good works. And as there is a "dead" as well as a living faith, and many have been deceived by glorying in the former, while they were destitute of the latter, we should guard this point with especial care. The doctrine of justification by faith without works, is very liable to be perverted and abused by carnal men, who vainly dream of being saved *in*, not *from* their sins. This corrupt leaven began to ferment in the church in the days of the apostles. James wrote his epistle with a view to detect and expose this dangerous error. He seems, at first view, expressly to contradict what the apostle Paul had taught; for he says, "Ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." But when the context is impartially considered, the appearance of contradiction vanishes, and we find his doctrine harmonious with that of Paul; for he is speaking of a mere nominal "dead faith," which manifested itself by no good works. No man was ever justified by such a faith. He is not speaking of that justification which takes place when a sinner first believes—the only foundation of which is the merit of Christ—but he is speaking of that justification arising from the evangelical works of believers, *by which their faith is proved to be genuine*, and their profession is evidenced to be sincere; and with which acts of obedience God is also well-pleased, for he will not "forget the works of faith and labors of love" of his own dear children. The instances which he gives, especially that of Abraham, show his meaning plainly enough. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" But Abraham was in covenant with God, and of course justified a long time before he performed this act; but this proved his sincerity and the strength of his faith. By that extraordinary

act of obedience, in which Abraham, without hesitation or reluctance, offered up his only and well-beloved son at the command of God, he met the approbation of his Maker; and this approbation was publicly expressed; which expression of divine favor is, by James, without much departure from the usual signification of the word, termed "justification," and is of the same kind with that public approbation of the good works of the righteous which will take place at the day of judgment, which is also called justification by our Lord. "For," says he, "by thy words thou shalt be justified." Matt. 12 : 37. Many, however, in reconciling James with Paul, choose to interpret the word *justify*, as used by James, to signify the manifestation of the sincerity of our profession of faith in the sight of men; to which I make no objection, as this interpretation doubtless accords with truth, but I consider what I before stated as the precise meaning of this apostle.

As the word justification is borrowed from the proceedings of courts of justice, and is therefore said to be a forensic term, I will, by way of illustration and practical application of the subject, suppose the case of a *convinced sinner arraigned before the tribunal of God*, to be tried for the actions of his whole life. The Judge being omniscient and infinitely just, can neither be deceived nor biassed. The rule of judgment must be his own perfect law: no other standard of right can be admitted or conceived of in this court. The demands of this law are, perfect obedience in heart and life: all deviations from the law, even in thought and desire, as well as in word and deed, are marked as sins. If any man had uniformly done all that the law required, he might be adjudged to the possession of eternal life on account of his own obedience; that is, he would be justified by his own works. The language of the law is, "He that

doeth these things, shall live in them." "This do, and thou shalt live." "The law was given unto life."

But the person arraigned is *conscious that he is a sinner*, and therefore cannot possibly be justified in this way. While his conviction is partial, and his knowledge of sin indistinct, he very naturally makes efforts at amendment and reformation. His ignorance of the extent and spirituality of the law leads him to hope that he can make, by future obedience, a compensation for the past. But increasing light convinces him that these hopes are utterly fallacious; for he finds that no future obedience, however perfect, would have any effect to cancel the debt already contracted; and he now finds, by sad experience, that he cannot keep the law perfectly for one moment.

Under this conviction we suppose him to stand arraigned before the heart-searching Judge; and when confronted with the law and a list of his sins—of omission as well as commission—of thought, word, and deed, with all their aggravations—what plea can he offer; what defence can he make? Alas, he attempts nothing of the kind. *His mouth is stopped*. He stands speechless before his Judge. Or rather, he acknowledges every thing. He admits every charge to be true. He joins in his own condemnation; and justifies God for the sentence which he is convinced that justice requires him to pronounce. He sees no way of escape; for all his vain refuges in which he once trusted are now swept away. And he expects nothing else but that he shall be sent away into everlasting punishment. But under this awful conviction, he brings no complaint against the law which condemns him, nor against his righteous Judge. He takes all the blame and guilt to himself, and fully "accepts the punishment of his sins," as a just award. His language is like that of David, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou

mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

He has, indeed, heard of a proclamation of mercy; but though it excites a vague, trembling hope that relief is possible, yet *he sees not how it is possible for him to escape* from the grasp of inflexible justice in which he is held—for now he dares not even ask that the law which condemns him should be either set aside, suspended, or relaxed. Any thing of this kind his enlightened conscience correctly judges to be altogether out of the question. No doubt, this is an awful moment in the existence of the sinner, and he is ready to give himself up for lost.

But hold—AN ADVOCATE rises in the court, and offers to undertake his cause. And it is ONE who has the ear of the Judge, and who appears in the sinner's own nature. It is the incarnate Son of God, who says to the convicted sinner, "Commit your cause to me with confidence, and I will bring you off victorious. However deep your guilt, however multiplied your transgressions, a full and free pardon will be sure, the moment you *trust yourself into my hands.*" And then, to encourage confidence in his ability, he shows that he *has rendered an infinitely meritorious obedience* to this very law, and has in his own body endured the curse which it denounces upon transgressors; and that he has acquired the right to obtain the redemption of all to whom this righteousness shall be applied.

The convinced sinner sees, with joy and astonishment, that *there is a way* in which all his grievous sins can be pardoned, and he be restored to the favor of a justly offended God. Now he believes with all his heart. Now he accepts the kind offer of the Saviour to be his advocate. Now he commits himself, and all his soul's concerns, into the hands of a faithful Redeemer. Now his burden of grief is removed, and he rejoices in the riches of grace in Christ Jesus;

and his heart, hitherto so insensible, melts into love and gratitude. And now, though he may have confidence that his sins are all blotted out, and shall never rise in remembrance against him, yet his heart breaks with ingenuous relentings, and godly sorrow gushes out in a flood.

He can now look up with humble confidence to his Judge, and plead the perfect righteousness of his SURETY. He sees that God is propitiated by the meritorious sacrifice of his own Son; and feels that a blessed reconciliation has taken place between him and his God. For, on the part of God, his anger is appeased. He is well-pleased with his own dear Son, and with all who stand robed in his perfect righteousness: and as to his own enmity against God and his government, he finds that it is *slain by a view of the cross*; and already he begins to experience something of the sweet spirit of *adoption*, and the *hope* which maketh not ashamed springs up in his breast, never more to leave him, but to be, in all temptations, troubles, and storms, as “an anchor to his soul, sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil.”

Thus is the sinner actually JUSTIFIED BY FAITH in Christ Jesus. There is no longer any legal condemnation to him; for though he sin—and there is no man that liveth, and sinneth not—his ADVOCATE ever lives to intercede for him, and to plead, for his pardon, the complete atonement which he has made. And a soul once justified never can fall again under the condemnation of the law, unless Christ should cease to intercede, or should no longer apply to his benefit his own perfect righteousness. Clouds and darkness may often obscure his evidences of sonship, and his comfort may be greatly interrupted through his own remaining unbelief, and the temptations of the adversary; but none shall be able to pluck him out of the hands of his heavenly Father, nor out of the hands of his ever-faithful Shepherd.

After this account of the gospel method of a sinner's gratuitous justification, will any still bring forward the old stale objection, that by this plan we are overthrowing the obligation of the moral law, and *undermining the foundations of morality and good works*? If there be any such objectors, let Paul answer them: "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; nay, we establish the law." "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Some did, indeed, slanderously report of the apostle and his fellow-teachers, that they said, "Let us do evil that good may come." Concerning all who would say this, Paul declares, that "their damnation is just."

And what does uniform experience testify in regard to the lives of those who maintain this doctrine? Are they more loose in their lives than others? Have they not, in all ages, rather been the humble, self-denying, faithful imitators of Christ? So far are they from pleading any exemption from the law as a rule of life, or taking occasion to indulge in sin because grace abounds, that they "delight in the law of God after the inner man"—hunger and thirst after righteousness—and feel the remainder of sin dwelling in them to be their greatest burden and sorest affliction, which causes them to groan, and to exclaim with Paul, "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Justifying faith works by love, and love is the very spring and essence of all holy obedience. Gratitude impels the reconciled sinner to be zealous for good works. "The *love of Christ constraineth* him." He feels that being "bought with a price," he is "not his own," and should "glorify God in his body and spirit, which are God's."

SUMMARY OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.

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The Scripture doctrine of justification may be briefly summed up in the following particulars.

1. It is God that justifies.

2. Justification is wholly gratuitous, without merit and without any works of our own as its ground.

3. The merit of Christ, as Mediator, expressed in Scripture by his righteousness, his obedience, his blood, his death, his life, his sacrifice, is the true and only meritorious ground of a sinner's pardon and acceptance.

4. The justification of the ungodly includes the remission of sins, by which often it is expressed in Scripture; but it also includes their acceptance as righteous, for the sake of Christ's perfect righteousness reckoned to their account.

5. Justification is by faith, as the instrument of union to Christ, and the reception of his righteousness.

6. The faith which justifies is always a living, operative, fruitful faith. No one is justified by a faith which is *alone*, or unattended with good works.

7. Justification and sanctification, though inseparably connected, and equally necessary to salvation, are nevertheless distinct blessings of the new covenant; and the latter is the only certain evidence of the possession of the former.

8. Justification takes place at the moment of believing, and is as perfect at once as it can ever be, and there can be no place for a second justification in the sight of God, and in relation to his law; but there is a manifestation of the genuineness of our faith and sincerity of our profession, both in this world and at the day of judgment, which is also sometimes called justification.

9. No plan of justification which does not make a complete provision for the satisfaction of all the demands of law



and justice, is honorable to God or agreeable to Scripture. By this single test may all erroneous theories of justification be tried and condemned.

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The importance of the doctrine of a sinner's justification before God, is not exceeded by that of any other in the whole circle of divine truth. Without justification it is evident that no man can be saved. It is then a vital subject. Eternal life is involved in it. For let it be considered, that there is here no middle ground. He that is not in a state of justification must be in a state of condemnation; and if he continues in that state, he must perish for ever. One unpardoned sin will sink the soul to hell. What then must be the condition of sinners who are pressed down with the guilt of innumerable transgressions?

O reader, let me entreat you to apply this truth to your own case. You are, at this moment, either in a state of condemnation or justification. You are now either reconciled to God, and his adopted child, or his wrath abideth on you. If the latter, how can you be at ease? How can you sleep quietly in your bed? How can you partake, with any pleasure, of your daily food? Alas, your condition is far more dangerous, far more deplorable than any words are capable of describing. And now, while the moments pass, you are approaching nearer and nearer to the lake of fire.

And are you determined to take no warning, to listen to no advice? Will you shut your eyes against a danger so imminent and so dreadful? How will you regret this carelessness, when perhaps the day of mercy is ended. Those words of our Saviour to Jerusalem are most touching: "O that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the

things which belong unto thy peace ; but now they are hid from thine eyes." In a little time your eternal destiny will be immutably fixed. There is a limit beyond which the call of mercy and the strivings of the Spirit do not reach. When once the sinner has passed that awful boundary, his soul is completely lost ; his hopes are extinguished ; the blackness of darkness for ever lies before him. His sins will cluster round him like so many ghosts, to torment him. The fire which can never be quenched already is enkindled ; and the worm which never dies begins to gnaw his vitals. O wretched creature ! how dearly didst thou buy a little mirth and ease in the world ; how little profit hast thou now in all thy worldly riches and honors. They cannot purchase for thee one moment's relief, one drop of water for thy scorched tongue.

"Knowing the terrors of the Lord, we would persuade men." If you were now actually beyond the reach of mercy, it would be no kindness to disturb you ; but while there is life, there is hope. The sound of mercy is still heard, the door of hope is open, salvation is yet attainable. But there is no time to be lost. The least delay may be ruinous. Escape for your life. Flee from the coming wrath ; seek safety in the house of refuge ; press into the ark ; flee to the altar, and seize on its blood-sprinkled horns. This very day may be the accepted time, and the day of your salvation.

# CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY

## EXPLAINED AND ENFORCED.

EXTRACTED FROM "MAMMON, OR COVETOUSNESS THE SIN OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH."

BY REV. JOHN HARRIS.

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### SECTION I.

#### CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY EXPLAINED.

To assert that the cause of christian liberality exhibits no sign of improvement, would only evince insensibility to obvious facts, and ingratitude to the great Head of the church. Even the feeling which has called for "an essay, bearing upon selfishness as it leads us to live to ourselves, and not unto God and our fellow-men," is to be viewed as an indication that many a christian more than ever deploras that selfishness. While the ready assent which is generally accorded to every faithful appeal as to the necessity of increased liberality to the cause of God; the growing conviction of the church, that, compared with what will be done, we are at present doing nothing; the approbation with which every new expedient for augmenting the funds of benevolence is hailed; the streams which appear in almost every new channel of mercy as soon as it is opened; and the increase of funds which our great benevolent institutions have almost annually to announce—all concur to show that the church is not only dissatisfied with its past parsimony, but is gradually awaking to the claims of christian liberality.

But, pleasing as the circumstances are, it must be remembered that they are little more than *indications*

of improvement. All the great defects in the charity of the christian church remain, with very slight modifications. It is still adapted to a former state of comparative inactivity, rather than to the present period of christian enterprise. It waits for impulses and appeals. It wants calculation, proportion, and self-denial. It does not keep pace with the growing demands of the kingdom of Christ. It wants principle and plan. The great current of christian property is, as yet, undiverted from its worldly channel. The scanty rills of charity, which at present water the garden of the Lord, and the ingenuity and effort employed to bring them there, compared with the almost undiminished tide of selfish expenditure which still holds on its original course, remind one of the slender rivulets which the inhabitants of the East raise from a river by mechanical force to irrigate their thirsty gardens; the mighty current, meanwhile, without exhibiting any sensible diminution of its waters, sweeping on in its ample and ancient bed to the ocean.

By unwearied diligence, the art of *acquiring* money has been well nigh brought to perfection. Nor can we think of the thousand ways in which it is squandered and dissipated by artificial wants and worldly compliances, without deploring that the art of *wasting* it by the most expeditious methods should exhibit, as it does, the finish and completeness of a system. The art of *using* it, so as to make it produce the greatest measure of happiness, still remains to be practiced. This, indeed, the Gospel alone can teach, and has taught from the beginning. In the early age of the christian church, the heavenly art of embalming property, and making it immortal, was not only known but practised; but, like the process of another embalming, it has now, for ages, been practically lost. Not that its principles have been unknown; these have always presented themselves on the page of truth, in lines of living light. But though

benevolence has never been unknown as a theory, the perverting influence of a worldly spirit has been rendering it more and more impracticable as an art. So that now, when the obvious application of its principle is pointed out, and the necessity for carrying those principles into practice is daily becoming more urgent, we begin to be aware of the vast distance to which the church has been drifted from the course of its duty by the current of the world, and how difficult it will be to effect a return.

As an important preliminary to such a return, it should be our first concern to repair to the living oracles of God, and there, in an humble devotional spirit to *inquire his will on the subject*. This, of itself, would be gaining an important step. It would be proclaiming a wide secession from the world; for, while the ungodly act and feel as if their property were absolutely and irresponsibly their own, we should be thus acknowledging that we hold our property from God, and that we feel ourselves bound to consult his will as to the manner of using it. The unreflecting christian who is content with appearances and professions, no doubt imagines that this distinction between the church and the world exists already. Because he has heard, until the sound has become familiar, that all we have and are belongs to God, and has never *heard* the proposition contradicted, he fancies that, on this point, all is well. But it is precisely because christians generally have *practically* repealed this principle, and trampled it under foot, that the spirit of benevolence has almost been lost from the church. While the practical recognition of this single principle, simple as it is, familiar and admitted as it is in words, would of itself produce an unimagined change in favor of evangelical charity. Geologists tell us that were the poles of the earth to be shifted but a few degrees, the ocean would rush towards the new equator,

the most solid parts of the globe give way, and the earth assume an aspect entirely new. The solitary principle *that we hold our property as subordinate agents for God*, were it only felt, embraced, allowed to have unobstructed operation in our practice, would, of itself, be sufficient to break up the present system of selfishness, and to give an entirely new aspect to the cause of benevolence.

Let the christian reader, then, seek to have this principle wrought into his mind as an ever-present conviction. Let the recollection of his property, and the idea of God as its supreme owner, stand together in his mind in close and constant union. Let him remember that the supreme proprietorship of his property is in the hands of God as really as the salvation of his soul is; and that the will of God is law here, as much as in the more spiritual domain of faith. What would his conduct be, had he been left the executor of that property by a wealthy friend? Would he not have been frequently recurring to the *will* of the testator, that he might not misapply the least fraction? His *supreme Friend* has given him the use of certain property, accompanying the grant with a specification of his *will* concerning its application. Nothing but an humble, grateful, obedient heart is necessary in studying that will, in order to find that it descends to rules, limitations, and directions, of the most clear and minute description. And it is only by keeping these requirements constantly open before him, and returning to study them daily in that spirit, that the christian can escape the danger of appropriating and misapplying that which belongs to his Lord and Master.

In the scheme of evangelical charity, the *principle* which actuates the giver is of paramount importance. "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." The Gospel rejects alike the tax which is reluctantly paid by fear, the bribe which is given to silence importunity,

the sacrifice which is offered to a vain ostentation, and the price which is intended to purchase a place in the divine favor, or as a ground of justification before God. The only offering which it accepts is that which originates in a principle of love and obedience to Christ, and which hopes and asks for divine acceptance through him alone. It takes the christian to the cross, and there it aims to touch all that is tender and generous in his nature, while it says, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, for your sakes he became poor, that ye, through his poverty, might be rich." And having made its appeal at the cross, having provided and plied him with the grand motive of redeeming love, it will accept nothing which overlooks the constraining influence of that principle.

Familiarity with large sums of money may lead a person to make benefactions as munificent as the heart of charity could wish. Animal generosity may act the donor with all the promptitude and easy grace of charity herself. But "though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, . . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." The absence of evangelical love is the want of the incense which alone could impart to the sacrifice a sweet-smelling savor unto God. And while its absence would reduce the collected gifts of a nation to penury itself, its presence imparts to a widow's mite a value which God appreciates, and by which heaven is enriched. It turns "a cup of cold water" into a sacramental symbol; for it is given "in remembrance of Christ." Suspended from the throne of heaven, it transmutes the least gift that may be hung on it into a jewel destined to augment the glory of Him on whose head are "many crowns."

That which constitutes the superiority of evangelical piety, as a self-propagating and diffusive system, to every form of false and heterodox religion is, that it has for its great actuating principle *the love of Christ*. This

is "the seed in itself;" the leaven which shall never cease to ferment till it has leavened the entire mass of humanity. Hence, every thing which would obtain acceptance with God must exhibit marks of the assimilating and sanctifying power of this principle. Nay, every thing which would find favor in the eyes of the christian himself, even his own acts and offerings of charity, must bear evident relation to Christ, or receive the condemnation of his own grateful heart. In the exercise of a holy jealousy for his blessed Lord, he is led to scrutinize his motives, to trace his benevolence to its source, to examine whether or not it took its rise at the cross; and, if it did not, he finds cause for penitence and humiliation before God. Thus, while false religion makes his alms-deeds a substitute for piety, the Gospel heightens benevolence into one of the most spiritual and improving duties the christian can perform. For, by imbuing his heart with the love of God, it enables him to taste the godlike enjoyment of doing good; and, by teaching him to refer all his acts of benevolence to Christ, to perform them as expressions of gratitude to him, to hope for their acceptance through him, and to pray that they may tend to his glory, it keeps him near to the cross, in an atmosphere of spiritual and elevated piety. And when once he has become native to the element, when the expansive, delightful, irresistible power of the Saviour's grace has become his ruling motive, he would feel an inferior principle to be little less than degradation and bondage. He accounts the costliest sacrifice he can offer as poor; resents the limits which a cold and calculating selfishness would impose on his offerings, as chains and fetters; and if called to pour forth his blood as a libation on the altar of christian sacrifice, he would feel that he had rendered an ample explanation of his conduct, by saying, with the apostle, "The love of Christ constraineth us."



In order that our benevolence may become a valuable habit, *it must be provided with regular resources*. Nothing good or great can be effected without *plan*. In their own worldly business, men perceive the importance of method; and, if they would render their liberality efficient, they must adopt a system for that also. On this subject the Gospel itself prescribes—"Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come." "By which," saith Paley, "I understand St. Paul to recommend what is the very thing wanting with most men, *the being charitable upon a plan*; that is, upon a deliberate comparison of our fortunes with the reasonable expenses and expectations of our families, to compute what we can spare, and to lay by so much for charitable purposes."

To take indeed a *weekly* account how God hath prospered us, is not, in all cases, possible; but the spirit of the direction would be equally satisfied, if, on taking the account at other *stated* times, we only lay by for God as he hath prospered us. Owing to the want of a plan like this, the cause of Christ is often an unwelcome and an unsuccessful applicant; selfishness, which has always the advantage of being able to be the first claimant, squanders in superfluities what conscience would have devoted to God; and many, it is to be feared, from not having wherewith to answer the calls and impulses of charity as they arose in the heart, have at length lost the very disposition to do good. While the advantages arising from the adoption of such an arrangement are numerous, we are under less temptation to withhold our charity; our duty is made more *convenient* by rendering it thus in easy installments; our love to Christ is more gratified by being able to present him in the end with a larger offering; the hand of God is regularly recognized in our worldly affairs; his presence is invited, so to

speak, into the very heart of our prosperity, whence the world is most anxious to exclude him, invited to audit the account of our gains; our offerings are presented with cheerfulness, because they come from a fund designed expressly to no other end than charity; and the cause of benevolence, no longer a dependant or precarious charity, is welcomed and honored as an authorized claimant, a divine creditor, while what we retain for our own use is divinely blessed by the dedication of the rest to God.

Nothing that is good or great, we repeat, can be effected without plan. Business, to be successful, must be conducted on system; and why should not the book which records the occasional and the regular contributions of charity be kept and inspected as carefully as the ledger of trade? Covetousness plans for selfish purposes; and why should not benevolence counterplan, and organize its resources for objects of divine philanthropy? Political economy plans for national purposes; and why should there not be an ecclesiastical economy to systematize its resources of that kingdom which is not of this world? We desire not a revival of sumptuary laws to restrain extravagance in diet and dress, but a tax self-levied on all the luxuries and indulgencies of life. We ask not for an inquisitorial Roman *census*, but for a conscientious assessment of all the property of the christian church, so scrupulously made and regularly repeated, that, like that ancient republic, we may have accurate returns, from time to time, of all the statistics of the christian empire, and may know our resources for war with the kingdom of darkness.

But what *proportion* of our income ought we to devote to charitable uses? If christian love be permitted to answer this question, and assign the amount, there is no reason to fear a too scanty allowance. On the other

hand, if selfishness be suffered to decide, there is ground to fear that even an inspired reply, could such be obtained, would be heard only to be overruled. Besides which, the Gospel of Christ, in harmony with its great design of establishing a reign of love, leaves its followers to assess themselves. It puts into their hands, indeed, a claim upon their property, but leaves the question, *how much?* to be determined by themselves. In assisting them to fill up the blank with the proper assessment, the only step which it takes is to point them to the cross of Christ; and, while their eye is fixed there in admiring love, to say, "How much owest thou unto thy Lord?" "Freely ye have received, freely give."

It must be quite unnecessary to remind the christian, that a principle of justice to man must be laid as the basis of all our calculations on this subject. "For I the Lord love judgment, I hate robbery for burnt offering." To present him with that which his own laws of justice would assign to another, is to overlook the claims of even ordinary honesty, and to make him the patron of unrighteousness. But, while the worldling looks on justice as the only claimant on his property, and concludes that when *that* is satisfied, he may warrantably sacrifice the whole remainder to himself, the christian views it only as a preparation for sacrificing to God.

It is observable that Abraham and Jacob, on particular occasions, voluntarily devoted to God—what afterwards became a Divine law for the Jewish nation—a *tenth* of their property. Without implying that their example has any obligation on us, we may venture to say, that *one tenth* of our whole income is an approved proportion for charity, for those who, with *so* doing, are able to support themselves and families. For the more opulent, and especially for those who have no families,

a larger proportion would be equally easy. For some, one-half would be too little; while, for others, a twentieth, or even a fiftieth would require the nicest frugality and care. Indeed, of many among the poor it may be said, that if they give *any thing*, they give their *share*—they *cast in more* than all their brethren.

But, in determining the proportion to be made sacred to God, the christian would surely rather exceed than fall short of the exact amount. *With whom* is he stipulating? *For whom* is he preparing the offering? Well may the recollection put every covetous thought to instant flight, tinging his cheek with shame at the bare possibility of ingratitude, and impelling him to lay his all at the feet of Christ. Only let him think of the great love wherewith Christ hath loved him; only let him pass by the cross on his way to the altar of oblation, and his richest offering will appear totally unworthy of Divine acceptance. When Christ is the object to be honored, the affection of the pardoned penitent cannot stop to calculate the value of its alabaster box of precious ointment—that is an act to which only a Judas can stoop—its chief and sole regret is, that the unction has not a richer perfume, and a higher value. When a Zaccheus finds himself standing, a sinner saved by grace, in the presence of the Being who has saved him, he exclaims, “Behold, Lord, *the half* of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man by false accusation, I restore unto him four-fold.” Covetousness, a moment before, was enthroned in his heart, but now it is beneath his feet. A moment ago wealth was his idol; but now its only value consists in furnishing him with an offering of love to Christ. *What things were gain to him, those he counted loss for Christ.*

And as the great principle of love to Christ will not allow the more opulent to give scantily, so neither will it permit the poorest to come before him empty. It was

one of the Divine enactments even of the legal dispensation—*None shall come before me empty.* But that which was matter of law with the Israelite, the christian will seize as a golden opportunity for evincing his love to Christ; and will bring, though it be only a grain of incense for an offering, or a leaf for that wreath of praise and honor which the church delights to lay at the feet of Christ. Whatever Scripture example others may profess to copy, he will select the example of the benevolent widow; and, while others content themselves with only admiring it, he will often reflect on its imitableness. Nor will the language of the apostle be ever heard by him but as an address to himself, "Let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." "These hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. — have showed you all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Agreeably with these sentiments, the man who, at one time, imagined that his poverty quite exempted *him* from the obligations of charity, and only rendered him an *object* of it, is no sooner made the partaker of grace, than he feels himself impelled to place some offering on the altar of christian benevolence; and, with the ready eye and hand of affection, he soon detects, for this end, some small superfluity which can be retrenched, or some leisure time which can be profitably employed. And when his mite-like offering, the fruit of hard self-denial, or of the sweat of his brow, is presented, nothing could inflict on his grateful heart a deeper wound than to see that offering rejected on the ground of its comparative insignificance, or of his supposed inability to give it. It is the offering of a sinner's gratitude to a Saviour's love, and heaven rejoices over the oblation.

A well-digested scheme of charity will be considerate in the selection of its *objects*. The benevolence which has not prudence for its almoner, may create the evils which it meant to destroy.

If there be any danger in this respect, in the present day, it does not lie so much in the choice of wrong objects, as in the neglect of some right ones. The principles of benevolent institutions are now so well understood; every new candidate for patronage is so open to inspection, and the streams of charity so steadily watched from their rise to the point of their destination, that there is little more than the bare possibility of any benevolent institution existing long in a state of abuse, or so as to generate more evil than good. Whatever danger now exists, arises from the rapid multiplication of new objects, and the consequent liability of the old ones to desertion; and still more, perhaps, from the liability of those minor objects which relate exclusively to the bodily welfare of man, being eclipsed by the surpassing grandeur and magnitude of such as relate to the infinite and the eternal.

If, fifty years ago, a patron of the benevolent institutions of that day could have been foretold of the number, the magnitude, and the revenues of the great evangelical societies which at present adorn our land, he might surely have been excused for fearing that the objects of *his* regard would, in consequence, be displaced and forgotten. But the event has shown that his fears would have been unfounded. Experience demonstrates, that the heart which responds to the cries of a world perishing through lack of knowledge, is the heart which most readily thrills at the cry of bodily want; that those who care most for the souls of the heathen, are among the most active agents of patriotic and local charities; that genuine christian charity, while it leaves no object unattempted on account of its vastness, overlooks none on

account of its minuteness. Copying, in this respect, the example of Him, who, in his way to the cross to save a world, often stood still to give health to the sick, and to wipe away the tears of the mourner; sowing, at each step, the seeds of those various institutions of mercy which are still springing up in his church; and who, while suspended on the cross, in the crisis of human redemption, still thought of his filial relation, and tenderly provided for a mother's comfort.

But the limited resources of the christian philanthropist, compared with the number and diversity of the objects soliciting his aid, render selection indispensably necessary. On the one hand, he must not confine his regards to objects purely religious, though of the loftiest and most comprehensive order, to the neglect of that charity which draws out its soul to the hungry, and which visits the fatherless and widow in their affliction; and, on the other, he must not limit his attentions to the wants of the life that now is, and remain an uninterested spectator of the efforts which are made around him to save a world from perdition. The two classes of objects should be combined in his regards. By descending to the one class, he will be keeping his benevolent feelings in a healthy, active, vigorous state; and, by ascending to the other, he will be giving them scope and expansion, diffusing and multiplying them over the whole field of mercy. By a wise distribution of his means he may connect himself with all the objects of beneficence, from the casual relief of the mendicant, to the combined, systematic, and mighty project of the christian church to make the Bible the book of the world. And as he marks the graduated scale of christian charities, which stands between these two extremes, he will conscientiously consider which are the charities that call for his especial aid, and the proportion of support which each demands.

But who does not feel that the era of effective christian benevolence has yet to commence? Let him sketch the most simple scheme of benevolence which the Gospel can approve, and he will perceive, at every step, that he is writing the condemnation of the church. Compared with the time, indeed, when next to nothing was contributed to the cause of Christ, we may now be said to give much; but compared with what *ought* to be, and with what we are persuaded *will* be, consecrated to God, we are still contributing next to nothing. The sentiment of the church on the subject of property, is, as yet, very little elevated above that of the world; deep-rooted worldly notions have yet to be eradicated; and the right use of wealth, in its relation to the cause of Christ, to be taught and enforced as an essential branch of christian practice. The great lesson taught by our Lord's voluntary selection of a state of poverty, is yet to be fully understood; the application of many plain passages of Scripture to be made; doctrines, startling to selfishness, to become familiar and welcome; sentiments, already familiar, to be enlarged and practically applied; the word *benevolence* itself to be differently understood; the demon of covetousness to be cast out of the church, and the whole economy of benevolence to be revised.

And who, with the word of God in his hand, but must feel that an era of enlarged christian liberality is hastening on? Prophecy is full of it. As often almost as she opens her lips on the subject of Messiah's reign, the consecration of the world's wealth forms part of her song. "To him shall be given of the gold of Sheba." "The merchandise of Tyre shall be holiness to the Lord; it shall not be treasured nor laid up." "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God."



“Kings shall bring presents unto him;” “they shall bring gold and incense;” and into his kingdom “they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations.” Wealth, which for so many ages had robbed him of his glory, and which in so many idolatrous forms had been erected in his stead, shall be brought to his altar, and employed as the fuel of a sacrifice in which the heart shall ascend as incense before him. It will then be felt that the highest use to which wealth can be applied, is to employ it for God; that this is the only way to dignify that which is intrinsically mean; to turn that which is perishing into unfading crowns and imperishable wealth. As if the image and superscription of Christ instead of Cæsar—as if the hallowed impress of the cross itself were visible on all the currency of earth, his people shall look on all their wealth as the property of Christ, and be constantly meditating the means of employing it most advantageously for his glory. In wedding his church, it shall then be felt that he wedded her wealth also; and, bringing it forth, and placing it at his feet as a part of her poor unworthy dowry, she shall wish that, for his sake, it had been ten thousand times ten thousand more.

Now, the only distinction is between him that gives a little, and him that gives nothing; then a new classification will have obtained. There will be no one in the church who gives nothing; his place will be occupied by him who only gives little—by which will be meant him who, whatever the *amount* of his gift may be, gives only from his superfluity; while the honorable title of the *benevolent* will be reserved for such only as deny themselves in order that they may give more. Self-denial, if not synonymous with benevolence, will then be considered an essential part of it. He who gives nothing, will be looked on as an avowed enemy to the cause of Christ; he who only gives a little from his su-

perfluity will be considered covetous; and he only who adds to his superfluity the precious savings of self-denial besides, will be honored as truly charitable.

The christian will then look on himself in the light of a channel between God and his fellow-creatures—a channel prepared expressly for receiving and conveying the overflowings of the fountain of goodness to those around him; and, accordingly, he will be “ready to distribute, willing to communicate.” Not content with the slender supplies of his own property, he will seek to excite the liberality of others; to become their almoner; to swell the streams of his own charity by the contributions of others. And thus he will at once be the means of keeping the benevolence of his brethren in activity; of bringing greater glory to God, and of doing greater good to the world.

The christian parent will not then be content with teaching his children the art of getting money most easily and respectably, or of spending it most advantageously to themselves; he will train them to habits of benevolence; impress them early with “the value of money” for the cause of Christ; show them, that in its subserviency to that cause consists its chief value; that they should labor with their hands rather than be destitute of the means of giving. He will make it an indispensable object of their education to render them proficient in the art of employing their substance to the glory of God.

As far as his means enable him, he will pray only to give, and give only to pray. His every prayer will contain a petition for a more abundant outpouring of the spirit of christian liberality and dedication; and the very feeling which impelled him to utter the petition, shall impel him, when he rises from his knees, to devise liberal things. And then, having gratified the divine impulse to the utmost extent of his means, he will hasten

to unload his grateful heart before God, and to say, "Who am I, that I should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee." Nay, could he command and set in motion all the benevolent agencies in the universe, the same godlike motive which led him to do so, would then impel him to the throne of God to obtain *his* efficacious blessing upon the whole. Having put all human agency in requisition, he would labor and wrestle in prayer, to engage the infinite love and power of God.

He will receive every accredited applicant for the cause of Christ, as a messenger deputed from Christ himself. And, as if his blessed Lord were standing before him, and saying, "I am hungry, will you not feed me? I am thirsty, will you not give me drink? I am a stranger, will you not take me in? My cause is languishing for want of support, will you not aid it?" He will hasten to bring forth his all, and say, "O Lord my God, all this store cometh of thine hand, and is all thine own." In doing this, indeed, he would only be copying the example of the benevolent widow; but though that example received the sanction of Christ, and as such was intended to be *more than admired* by his church, yet who could imitate it at present, without incurring, not from the world only, but from the great majority of christian professors also, the blame of great improvidence? But, then, her conduct shall be regarded as *exemplary*; and the Saviour himself will undertake the defence of her imitators, and say, "They loved much, for they have much forgiven."

Now, the christian professor too commonly allows his *regular contribution* to check his liberality, to prevent his giving more than the stipulated sum, though there are times when his benevolent impulses would prompt him to exceed that sum; then he will regard his subscription only as a pledge that he will *not give*

less, but as leaving his liberality open to all the impulses of an unrestricted benevolence. Now, he is too often disposed to shun the applications for charity; and if he is overlooked and passed by, to view it as a fortunate escape; but then he will do good *as he hath opportunity*—creating the opportunity which he cannot find already made to his hands. Now, his ability exceeds his inclination; but then his inclination will be greater than his ability; like the Macedonian christians, of whom the apostle testifies, “I bear them record, that to their power, yea, and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves.” Instead of being charitable only on comparative *dstraint*, he will often anticipate application, and surprise the agents of beneficence by unexpected gifts; thus strengthening their faith in God, and inciting them to enlarge their designs for the kingdom of Christ: like the same believers, of whom the apostle records, that, instead of needing to be solicited, they entreated him to accept their contributions—“praying us with much entreaty to accept their gift.” Like the happy parent of a happy family, he will hail every new-born claim on his resources, and cheerfully deny himself in order to support it. And instead of giving, as he now does, as scantily as if he only aimed to keep the christian cause from famishing, he will then act on the persuasion that his own enjoyment is identified with its growth and prosperity.

And let it not be supposed that, during that happy period, it will be necessary to the support of the christian interest, that its friends should live in a state of *comfortless* self-denial. The *prevalence* of the benevolent spirit will render this superfluous. When the thousand drains of selfishness are cut off, the cause of Christ will easily find an abundance from his friends, and will leave an abundance to them all. When every man brings his all to Christ, every man will be able to

take away with him again an ample supply for his most comfortable subsistence. When every fresh convert to Christ becomes a willing supporter of his interest, the accession of numbers will increase its *supplies* more rapidly than its *wants*.

O, happy period! Holiness to the Lord shall be written, not only on common things, but on those which men have been accustomed most jealously to withhold from God, and to consider their own. Even the mines of the earth shall, in a sense, be ceded to Christ; "the God of the whole earth shall he be called;" and "every one shall submit themselves unto him with pieces of silver." *He* shall be considered the wise man, not who keeps most, but who gives most to God; and the happiness of bestowing shall be rated above the pleasure of acquiring. Happy period! when men, instead of making gold their god, shall make God their gold: and when the principles of benevolence shall be looked on as a science taught from heaven, the practice of which is necessary to conduct them to heaven. The living law of benevolence written in the heart will operate more powerfully than all the sumptuary laws which were ever enacted to restrain the extravagance of society. The cause of Christ will be viewed as the only safe repository of wealth; as the great INTEREST in which the affluent will invest their abundance, and in which the poor will deposit their mite, assured that it will thus augment to a treasure exceeding their powers of computation. And wealth, the pernicious influence of which some of the wisest of men have feared so much that they have prohibited the use of it by law—wealth, the great embroiler and corrupter of the world, will be employed as one of the leading means of restoring mankind to union and happiness; and thus Christ will triumph over the enemy in its own home and with its own weapons.

## SECTION II.

## CHRISTIAN LIBERALITY ENFORCED.

And why should the delightful period to which we have adverted, when the Gospel theory of christian benevolence shall be realized, be deemed remote? The duties of that period are the duties of every period; and, therefore, of the present. The obligations which will be binding then, are binding at this moment. No new incitements to benevolence will be furnished from heaven. The great considerations with which the Gospel has long since made us familiar, are the identical motives which will then reign and triumph. Remote, therefore, as that era may be to the eye of the indolent and the selfish, the consistent believer will not think of waiting for its arrival before he begins its duties; he will feel that those duties are all present and urgent. May a review of the tender and weighty considerations by which they are enforced fill him with generous and grateful purposes, such as he never felt before; and may God, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of love and grace, condescend to breathe on him the breath of a new life, that he may henceforth live only to carry those purposes into effect to the glory of Christ his Redeemer!

In every question of duty, your first inquiry, christian reader, will naturally respect the will of God. Before listening to any other consideration, you will lift up an imploring eye, and say, "Lord, what wilt *thou* have me to do?" Now there is no subject on which God has more clearly or fully revealed his will than on the duty of christian liberality.

Think of *the right which he has in all you possess*. There is a sense in which no man can be said to pos-

sess an exclusive and irresponsible right in property, even in relation to his fellow-creatures. The land which he calls *his own*, is still guarded and watched over by a public law which would hold him responsible for its destruction. But if man thus claims a common interest in the most independent description of property, how much more does God hold a right in your possessions? He created them at first; and hence he has an original and supreme property in them. The world is his, and the fullness thereof. He continues them in existence every moment; and is thus every moment asserting afresh his original right, and establishing a new title to dominion over them. You have not brought into existence a single mite; all that you have done is to collect together what he had made ready to your hands. And whence did you derive the skill and ability to do this? "Thou must remember the Lord thy God, for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." Hence he cautions you against the sin of saying in your heart, "My power, and the might of mine own hand, hath gotten me this wealth," lest you should fall into the consequent sin of forgetting that he is still the supreme proprietor of all you possess. And hence, too, he solemnly reminds you that your enjoyments are his *gifts*, only in the sense that you had nothing wherewith to purchase them, and not in the sense that he has given away his right in them; that they are deposited with you as his steward, not alienated from him and vested in you as their master; that both they and you are his, to do with as seemeth good in his sight.

The moment you lose sight, therefore, of his absolute right to all you possess, you are embezzling your Lord's property, and realizing the character of the unjust steward. You are provoking God to resume his own, and to transfer it to more faithful hands; whereas he looks to you to assert his dominion in the midst of

an ungrateful and rebellious world. The purpose for which he created you at first, and for which he has created you anew in Christ Jesus, is, that you might show forth his praise before a world laboring to forget him; that while *they* are sullenly and impiously appropriating every thing to themselves, as if he had ceased to reign, and even to exist, you might continually consecrate and offer up your substance before their eyes as an oblation to his glory, and thus daily vindicate his claims, as the fire perpetually burning upon the Jewish altar protested daily against the idolatry of the world, and proclaimed the one living and true God. And will you not do this? Surely you will not go over and join the party you are intended to condemn. Surely you will not betray your Lord, and enable his enemies to triumph. Then hasten to his throne, and acknowledge his right. Take all that you have into his presence, and dedicate it afresh to his service. Inscribe his blessed name on all your possessions.

*Think of the great goodness* you enjoy at his hands. His tender mercies are over *all* his works; but how many of those mercies has he caused to meet upon your head! "He daily loadeth you with his benefits;" and will you bear them all away from his presence, to consume them upon yourself? Will you distribute none of the precious load among the numerous applicants he has placed around you? "He *crowneth* thee with his loving-kindness and tender mercies;" and wearing the crown of his royal favor, his sovereign love, will you confine its light to yourself? Will you not proclaim and honor the royalty of your descent by humbly imitating his regal munificence and grace? He has placed you in a world of which his own description is, that it *is full of his goodness*—the treasury of the material universe. Men have filled it with sin; but he, notwithstanding, keeps it filled with his goodness. The



overflowing fullness of the ocean—the amplitude of the all-encompassing air—the unconfined plenitude of the light—all conspire to attest the infinite exuberance of his bounty, and to surcharge your heart with corresponding sentiments of goodness. To be selfish in such a world is one of the greatest triumphs of sin. Covetousness cannot move in it without being rebuked at every step. Had your life been spent till to-day in the solitude and darkness of a dungeon, and had you now just come forth into the open theatre of the vast creation, and awoke for the first time to the full consciousness of all this infinite goodness, would not your heart enlarge and expand with all warm and generous emotions? Could you speedily indulge in selfishness in a world which you found supported by charity, and by charity so abundant that the Divine donor seems to have aimed to make the sin impossible? His rain would surely subdue you into the spirit of love; his sun would melt you into kindness. This is why he sheds them both upon the just and the unjust. And will you not aspire to be like him? Will you not become the servant of his love to his creatures? Can you live, day after day, in this region of his goodness—can you have the ennobling conception of his goodness occupying your mind year after year—can you actually call yourself a son of this good and gracious God, an heir of his infinite goodness, and yet retain a narrow, selfish, and contracted mind? The Lord Jesus himself calls on you to be merciful, even as your Father in heaven is merciful.

But, hitherto, we have been standing only on the threshold of the temple of his goodness. The *great* display, the “unspeakable gift” remains within. Your misery, as a sinner, had excited his compassion; your guilt demanded a sacrifice; your spiritual destitution had nothing to offer. Approach the altar of sacrifice,

and behold the substitute which his grace provides. "God *so* loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." "Herein is love!" The universe is crowded with proofs of his beneficence; but here is a proof which outweighs them all. How much he loved us we can never compute; we have no line with which to fathom, no standard with which to compare it, but he *so* loved us that he sent his only begotten Son to be the propitiation for our sins. "Herein is love!" "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

And while you are standing in the presence of this matchless display of love, "what doth the Lord require of thee?" For yourself, he invites you to accept that love and be happy. And in relation to your fellow-men, he only requires that the stream of gratitude, which his great love has drawn from your heart, should be poured into that channel in which a tide of mercy is rolling through the world, and bearing blessings to the nations. He who for your sake gave his Son, asks you for his sake to give of your worldly substance to the cause of human happiness. He asks you, christian, to cast in your mite into that treasury into which he hath given his Son, and poured all the blessings of his grace.

Nor is this all: he invites you to advance from the altar of sacrifice to the holiest of all within the veil; in other words, he hath given you Christ, that he may give you himself. It was by wandering from him that man first became selfish and unhappy. It was by losing him that man was reduced to the necessity of looking for happiness in the creature. And, because no single kind of created good can satisfy the soul, man sought to accumulate all kinds, to monopolize every thing—he became selfish. He is disposed to look on every thing which another enjoys, as so much lost to himself; as so much taken away from what might otherwise have fallen to his own share; and thus he is selfish. But the blessed

God, by offering to bring you back again to himself, is offering to make you independent of all inferior things; to put you in possession of a good which shall enable you to look down with disdain on those things about which others are selfish; to lead you to an *infinite* good; a good, therefore, about which you *need* not be selfish; for were all the universe to share and enjoy it with you, it would still be an unexhausted, infinite fullness of happiness.

Now, let the most miserly individual come suddenly into the possession of great wealth, he would be conscious, at least for a short time, of kind and generous emotions. What then should be your emotions at discovering, that, through Christ, you have found a God? and think, *what* a God he is! Enumerate his perfections; call up in your mind his exalted attributes; recollect some of the displays of his glory, the splendors of his throne, the amplitude of his dominions, the angelic orders of his kingdom, the richness of his gifts, the untouched ocean of happiness yet in reserve for his people; and when your mind is filled, repeat to yourself the wondrous truth, "This God is my God for ever and ever." And then think what it is to have him *for your God*: it is to have a real, participating, eternal interest in all that he is; to have him for your "all in all;" to be "filled with all the fullness of God."

Christian, are you aware of your wealth? Have you yet awoke to a conscious possession of your infinite wealth? and is it possible that you can still cleave to the poor and perishing dross of the earth? What, shall the accession of infinite wealth make no difference in your conduct? Will you be as covetous with a God as without? Do you not feel, rather, that you could give away the world itself as a trifle, while you stand and gaze at these infinite riches? All who have truly and fully returned to God have felt thus. They lost their

selfishness. They gazed on this glory, and the world was eclipsed; they thought of it, and their heart became too large for earth; they reached after it, and the world fell from their hands, from their hearts. Having found the true source of happiness, they would fain have had all mankind to come and share it with them. And when he commanded them to call the world to come to him and be happy, they gave away every thing, even life itself, in the noble employ, and from love to his name.

The obligations, which his love has laid *you* under are as great as theirs. But how much less, it is to be feared, have you felt them. And yet *they* felt them less than their magnitude would have warranted. For when their emancipated spirits had ascended from the scene of martyrdom to heaven—when they there awoke to a clear perception of the hell they had escaped, and the glories they had reached—even he among them who on earth had been most alive to a sense of his obligations, would feel as if he then felt them for the first time. And is all that weight of obligation at this moment resting upon *you*? O, where are the numbers which shall compute it? What is the period long enough to recount it? “What can you render unto the Lord for all his benefits?” What sacrifices can you devise costly enough to express your sense of them? Christian, could you have supposed that your property would be accepted as one of those sacrifices? Had he not condescended to invite the offering, could you have imagined that any amount, or any employment, of earthly wealth would have been accepted by him? It is one of the lowest expressions of love you can give; yet he accepts even that. Though there is no proportion whatever between the debt you owe him, and all the wealth of the world, he yet condescends to regard the smallest fraction of that wealth as an expression of your love to his name. Let this, then, dignify wealth in your eyes: value it henceforth

on this account, that the Lord will accept it at your hands as an offering of love. Rejoice that you have found out an oblation which he will accept short of the sacrifice of your life. Be thankful, though you may have but little with which to present him. Practise self-denial, that you may make that little more. Seek out the right objects for it, the objects which you deem to be the dearest in his sight. Give to them all you can ; for could you give ten thousand times more, your obligations would go on increasing infinitely faster than your gifts. They are multiplying on you even while you are in the act of giving. Give under a grateful sense of your obligations ; and you will feel that giving itself is a benefit ; that it is an act in which you *receive* more than you render.

But to increase your incentives to charity, your heavenly Father has laid on you *his divine commands*. He charges it upon you that you "do good unto all men;" that you "put on bowels of mercy;" that you "abound" in the grace of "liberality;" that you "be ready to distribute, willing to communicate." And in saying this, he is only commanding you to be happy, and to communicate happiness. He has often represented charity in his word as equivalent with relative righteousness ; by which he would intimate that it is a principal part of such righteousness. Where the second table of the law is abridged, and its duties summed up in a few words, charity is not only never omitted, but always takes the lead. In all general descriptions of piety, the practice of this duty is specified as a chief element. It is declared to be the most acceptable expression of our love to God. The choicest blessing, blessedness itself, the essence of all blessings combined, is promised to it. And in the last great day, when the Son of Man shall sit in judgment on the world, the presence or absence of christian benevolence is described

by our Lord as determining the destinies of men. Now these are only so many methods by which God would render the expression of his will the more emphatical, and urge us to obey it.

In consecrating your substance to him, then, you will be not only gratifying your sense of obligation, you will feel also that you are obeying the will of your God on a subject on which he is most earnest and express. And what should furnish a stronger impulse, or yield you higher delight, than this? In heaven *his will* is the only motive to obedience which is necessary. And will you not rejoice in an occasion which joins you with angels in "doing his commandments?" Hasten, then, to take your offering before him: he is waiting the presentation of your gift. The hand of his holy law is laid upon a portion of your property; surely you will not think of taking any of that portion away; rather, add to it; let him see that your love is not so easily satisfied as is his law; that your gratitude goes beyond his command; that were it possible for his law to be repealed, the love which you bear to his blessed name would still be a law constantly demanding fresh sacrifices for his altar.

In its inculcations of beneficence, the Bible appeals to a *principle of well regulated self-interest*. Instead of taking it for granted that we should be enamored of duty for its own sake alone, our heavenly Father evinces the kindest consideration of our fallen condition, by accompanying his commands with appropriate promises and blessings. He graciously allures us to cultivate the tree of christian charity, by engaging that all its fruit shall be our own. "He who soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." "God is not unrighteous, to forget your work and labor of love."

The most marked interpositions and signal blessings even of *earthly prosperity* have attended the practice of christian liberality in every age. Volumes might easily

be filled with well-attested instances of the remarkable manner in which God has honored and rewarded those who in faith and obedience have devoted their property to him. Alas! that the christian church should feel so little interest in recording such instances to the glory of its Lord! that we should be so slow of heart to believe them when they are recorded!—for what do they prove, but only that God is not unrighteous to forget his promises?—and that his people should give him so little opportunity of illustrating his paternal character by trusting their temporal affairs more completely to his hands!

*Spiritual prosperity* is inseparable from christian liberality. For “God loveth a cheerful giver: and God is able to make all grace abound towards you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” As often as you practise this duty in an evangelical spirit, you must be conscious that the best part of your sanctified nature is called into exercise; your heart is partially discharged of its remaining selfishness; your mind is braced more for christian activity; your sympathy causes you to feel afresh your alliance with man; your beneficence enables you to rejoice in your union of spirit with Christ, and adds a new bond to that power of affection which binds you to his cause. And while other duties bring you nearer to Christ, this may be said at once to place you by his side, and to exalt you into a real though humble imitator of his divine benevolence.

The christian, moreover, is assured that the property which he devotes to God is so much treasure laid up in heaven, so much seed destined to fructify into a harvest of eternal enjoyment. Christian, would you render your property *secure*? place it in the hand of omnipotent Faithfulness. Retain it in your own possession, and it is the proper emblem of uncertainty; but devote

it to God, and from that moment it is stamped with his immutability, his providence becomes your estate, and his word your unfailing security. Would you *enjoy* your substance? "Give alms of such things as you have; and, behold all things are clean unto you." The oblation of your first fruits unto God will cleanse, and sanctify, and impart a superior relish to all you possess. Like the first christians, you will then eat your meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Would you *increase* your property? "Honor the Lord with thy substance, so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine." "For this thing the Lord thy God shall bless thee in all thy works, and in all that thou puttest thine hand unto." Sow your substance, then, as seed in the hand of Christ, *that* hand which fed the multitude with a morsel, and which multiplies whatever it touches with its own infinite bounty. Would you *grow in grace*? in love and likeness to Christ? Would you increase with all the increase of God? and abound in the fruits of the Spirit? "The liberal soul shall be made fat, and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." Would you be *rich for eternity*? Would you cultivate "fruit that may abound to your account" in the invisible world? Invest your property in the cause of Christ; and he engages to requite you,—not, indeed, as of debt; this the *magnitude* of the requital shows, but of his own exuberant munificence,—he promises to repay you a hundred-fold in the present life, and in the world to come life everlasting. As much of your property as you have already devoted to him, however humbly you may think of it, is regarded and watched over by him as "a good foundation laid up against the time to come, that you may lay hold on eternal life." And all that you may hereafter cast into his treasury, shall certainly precede your arrival in heaven, and there be converted for you into



incorruptible treasures "to the praise of the glory of his grace."

Is the welfare of your posterity an object? The parent who makes this an excuse for robbing the cause of God of its due, is defrauding his offspring of God's blessing, entailing on them the divine displeasure, leaving them heirs of the punishment which his own robbery of God has deserved. This is improvidence of the most awful kind. But let your regard for *their* wants be combined with a proportionate regard for the claims of benevolence, and you will be demising to your offspring that rich, that inexhaustible inheritance, the inheritance of God's blessing. Providence will look on them as its own wards; will care for them as its own children.

Do you desire to be remembered, to enjoy lasting fame? "The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance." "The memory of the just is blessed." And here, by the *righteous* and the *just* is to be understood especially the bountiful. His memory is followed with commendations into the presence of God. His character is embalmed in its own piety. His name passes with commendation through the lips of God, and that gives it immortality. His benevolence resulted from the grace of God; and, as such, the honor of God is concerned in making its memory immortal.

Would you acquire a right in your property? a right which shall justify you in calling it your own? By withholding it from God, you are forfeiting all interest in it, and laying yourself open to the charge of embezzlement and fraud. But by devoting it to his service, you would be acquiring an everlasting interest in it; for you would never cease to enjoy the good resulting from its divine employment. Hence the solution of the epitaph of a charitable man, "What I retained I have lost, what I gave away remains with me."

By the practice of christian liberality, *the glory of God*

*and the credit of religion are promoted* ;—and what object should be of more precious and abiding concern to the believer than this ? “The ministration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God : while by the experiment of this ministration they glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ, and for your liberal distribution unto them and to all men.” The new-born liberality of the first christians for the support of their needy brethren threw the church into a holy transport of delight. It was bringing the benevolent power of christianity to the test ; and, as a masterpiece of human mechanism, when tried and found to exceed expectation, fills the beholders with delight—the result of “the experiment of this ministration” was such as to call forth songs of exultation to the glory of God. It displayed the Gospel in a new aspect, brought to light its benevolent energies, showed them that much as they knew of its virtues, it contained hidden excellencies which it would require time and circumstances to evolve and display : it filled the church with a chorus of praise to the glory of God.

For what but his grace could produce such liberality ? it was supernatural ; the apostle, therefore, emphatically denominates it *the grace of God*. So spontaneous and munificent was it, that it resembled the gifts of his grace. So purely did it result from love to the brethren, from the overflowings of tender compassion for their wants, that it was truly godlike. So unparalleled and unworldly an act was it, that the grace of God alone could produce it. It was grace from the Fountain, flowing forth in streams of liberality through the channels of his people. As if it were the noblest form that the love of God could take in his people, he confers on it this crowning title, *the grace of God*. And, indeed, it would be easy to show that there is scarcely any duty

so purely the result of grace as genuine christian liberality; that the practice of it on any thing like the primitive scale, requires more grace, and exercises and illustrates a greater number of the principles of piety, than almost any other duty. The church cannot witness it without being strongly reminded of her high descent, her unearthly character—without falling down afresh before the throne of Him whose constraining love thus triumphs over the selfishness of humanity. The world cannot witness it without feeling its own selfishness condemned, without secretly bowing to the divinity of religion.

Christian, would you enjoy the most endearing evidences of your heavenly Father's love? place your property at his disposal, and daily trust him for daily provision. If his character be paternal, your character should be filial; and the leading feature of *that* is unlimited dependence. Would you honor him in his church? copy the example of "the churches of Macedonia" in their abundant liberality; and you will provoke some of your fellow-christians to emulation, and send others with grateful hearts into the presence of God, and assist in enlarging the sphere of evangelical labor, and raise the standard of christian piety, and cause the church of Christ to resound with the high praises of his constraining love. And would you glorify God before the world? Let the light of your christian liberality shine before men. Not only practise the duty, but practise it on such a scale as shall proclaim to them the existence of a superintending Providence, and convince them of your reliance on its care. Devise liberal things for the cause of God, and you will thus be asserting the controversy of your heavenly Father with an unbelieving world; vindicating and attesting the faithfulness of his word, the watchfulness of his love, and the benevolent power of his holy Gospel. With-

draw your trust from those goods in which the ungodly confide, resign them to God, and you will be affording him an occasion for displaying his paternal love. He charges you to be careful for nothing, that he may evince his carefulness of you.

Of the poor it is said, that he who oppresseth them reproacheth his Maker;—charges God with injustice for permitting them to be poor, and for devolving their maintenance on him; insults God in the person of the poor, by refusing to charge himself with the care of them, though sent to him with promises direct from God. And thus, though God meant to employ the rich as his agents for the poor, to bind them to each other by the constant interchange of gratitude and benevolence, and to illustrate and honor his providential government, the selfishness of man frustrates his plans, and turns his honor into a reproach. In a very similar manner he has devolved the christian interest on his people, and the world is watching their conduct in relation to it. If they treat it as a burden, God will deem himself reproached; but let them meet its demands, and enrich it with their liberality, and the power of his Gospel and the wisdom of his arrangements will be seen, the world will render him the homage of its silent admiration, and his church will triumph in every place.

The great Gospel argument for christian liberality is *the divine example of the Redeemer's love*. "Hereby perceive we his love,"—as if every other display of love were eclipsed by the effulgence of this; as if all possible illustrations of love were summed up in this,— "Hereby perceive we his love, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" How *can* the love of Christ inhabit

that bosom which is a stranger to sympathy for his people? Ill indeed does *he* pretend readiness to *die* for Christ, who will not give a little money towards the support of his cause and people.

When the Apostle Paul would enjoin the Philippians to "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others," he points them to "the mind which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and, being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." He does not content himself with merely stating the fact of our Lord's condescension and death; but, as if he loved to linger on the subject, he traces it from stage to stage: as if the immensity of the stoop which Christ made were too great to be comprehended at once, he divides it into parts, and follows him downwards from point to point, till he has reached the lowest depth of his humiliation. As if he felt convinced that the amazing spectacle, if duly considered, could not fail to annihilate selfishness in every other heart, as it had in his own, the only anxiety he evinces is that it should be seen, be vividly presented before the eye of the mind. Having carried our thoughts up to that infinite height where Christ had been from eternity in the bosom of the Father, he shows us the Son of God divesting himself of his glory; and then, he detains our eye in a prolonged gaze on his descending course; condescending to be born; voluntarily subjecting himself to all the humbling conditions of our nature; taking on himself the responsibilities of a servant; still humbling himself, still passing from one depth of ignominy to a lower still; becoming obedient unto death; and that death the most humbling, the most

replete with agony and shame, the death of the cross.

Christian, can you ever contemplate this wonderful exhibition without renewed emotions of love? without feeling afresh that you are not your own? And say, ought such grace in Christ to be requited with parsimony in his followers? Ought such a Master to be served by grudging and covetous servants? Ought such a Saviour to have to complain that those who have been redeemed, and *who know* they have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but with his own most precious blood, are so much attached to that corruptible wealth, that they will not part with it, though urged by the claims of that most precious blood? O, shame to humanity! O, reproach to the christian name! Be concerned, christian, to wipe off the foul stain. Bring forth your substance, and spread it before him. Were you to give up *all* to him, would it be *very* reprehensible, or *very* unaccountable, considering that he gave up all for you? At least, economize for Christ. Retrench, retrench your expenditure, that you may be able to increase your liberality. Deny, deny yourself for his cause, as you value consistency, as you profess to be a follower of him, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree."

In his second epistle to the Corinthians we find the apostle enforcing the practice of christian liberality; and various and cogent are the motives which he adduces to excite their benevolence. But we might rest assured that it would not be long before he introduced the motive of our Lord's example. The love of Christ was the actuating principle of his own conduct; it influenced him more than all other motives combined. If ever his ardor in the path of duty flagged for a moment, he glanced at the cross, thought of the great love wherewith Christ had loved him, and instantly girded on his zeal afresh. In addressing others, therefore, he never

failed to introduce this motive ; he relied on it as his main strength ; he brought it to bear upon them in all its subduing and constraining force.

And how tender, how pointed, how melting the appeal which he makes ! “ *Ye know* the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” *You know* the height from which he stooped. You know the depth of humiliation to which he descended ; that he found no resting-place between his throne and the cross. You know for whom he did this—for his enemies, his destroyers. You know that he did this voluntarily ; that he was under no necessary obligation to endure it ; that his own love was the only obligation ; that he welcomed each indignity, invited each pang ; made them a part of his plan of condescension. You know how earnestly he prosecuted the work of our salvation ; that in every step he took he was only gratifying the compassionate yearnings of his own heart ; that he assumed life for the express purpose of laying it down ; that though he saw, as from a height, the whole array of duty and trial which awaited him, the only emotions which he evinced at the sight were a self-consuming ardor to reach the cross which stood at the end of his path, a holy impatience to be baptized with that baptism of blood. You know the object for which he did it all—for your salvation ; that he might pour his fulness into your emptiness, his riches into your poverty ; that he might raise you to heaven, and share with you the glories of his own throne.

You know this ; not, indeed, in the sense of comprehending it ; that is impossible, for it is a love which passeth such knowledge. But you know it by report ; you have heard of it. It is the theme of the universe. Heaven resounds with it ; the church on earth is full of it ; the eternal Father commands it to be published

throughout the world. And so amazing is it, the bare announcement of it should be sufficient to transform selfishness itself into disinterested love. But *you* know it experimentally. You can look back on a time when you were in a state of alienation from God bordering on perdition; you have been plucked as a brand from the burning; and now you are looking forwards to eternal life, with Christ, in heaven; and you know that you owe your deliverance and all your hopes to the grace of Christ. You know what he endured for your redemption; that he loved you, "and gave himself for you;" and will you withhold from him any thing in your possession? Can you believe that he died for *you*? that, in dying, he wore *your* name upon his breast? that his heart cherished the thought of *your* happiness? that he made himself poor to enrich *you*? and will you not freely contribute of your worldly substance to diffuse the knowledge of his grace?

Did he employ his heavenly powers solely for your salvation? lay himself out for your happiness? Yes, saith he, "For their sakes I sanctify myself. I set myself apart, I appropriate all I have and am to the work of their salvation." And he did so. When did he ever go about but to do good? When did he ever open his hand but to bless? or weep, but in sympathy with human wo? What object did he ever pursue but that of benevolence? imparting life to the dying, pardon to the guilty, purity to the depraved, blessings to all around him. "Let the same mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." He was the author of riches, and the heir of all things; but all he possessed he gave for your salvation, and all that you possess you should employ for his glory. You enjoy a portion of this world's goods; consider the use which *he* would have made of it, and copy his divine example.

Did he not only employ his heavenly powers, but



actually deny himself, suffer, die for your happiness? He pleased not himself. He endured the cross, despising the shame. He poured out his soul unto death. *Himself* he would not save. He would not come down from the cross. O! how did he, for a season, annihilate himself! How did he take our place, take our curse, and endure it all! That *was* compassion. That *was* looking on the things of others. That *was* benevolence—disinterested, unparalleled, matchless benevolence. Let this mind be in you. Never can you hope to *equal* it, for it is infinite—the grace of a God: but so much the greater your obligation to approach it as nearly as you can.

Christian, you know his grace—you feel it. How much owest thou unto thy Lord? Do you ever attempt to compute the mighty sum? Endeavor to realize the idea; and if then you feel any reluctance to consecrate your substance to him, it can only be on the ground of its utter insignificance. But he asks for it as an expression of your love—yes, he asks for it. He comes to you every time an appeal is made to your christian liberality, and, as he turns on you a look of benignity and love, he inquires, “Lovest thou me?” And as he points to that portion of your property which ought to be devoted to his cause, he asks you again, “Lovest thou me more than this?” If so, devote it to my cause, consecrate it to my service. And he saith unto you the third time, “Lovest thou me?” If so, feed my lambs, feed my sheep; support my poor; aid my interest in the world; encourage every effort made to bring home my wandering sheep; think of the millions of them that are perishing, millions for whom I died; shall my love be defrauded of them? shall I not behold in them the travail of my soul, and be satisfied? By the love you bear to me, and by the infinitely greater love I bear to you, imitate my love; and you know the extent of *that*,

“you know the grace of your Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might be rich.”

O, christian, study your obligations at the foot of the cross. If you would imbibe the disinterested and self-sacrificing benevolence of your blessed Lord, take your station daily at the cross. Never till you do this, will you feel the claims which he has upon you. But when you there see the great love wherewith he hath loved you, we will defy you to be covetous, inactive, selfish in his cause. You cannot fail to love him ; that love cannot fail to constrain you ; and, constrained by *that*, you will be turned into a pains-taking, self-denying, devoted servant of Christ ; to whom he will say, daily, “ Well done, good and faithful servant,” till the day when he will sum up all his grace by adding, “ Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

If you are truly a christian, you have felt that you are not your own, that you are bought with a price : in other words, you see so clearly, and feel so strongly, that you owe yourself to Christ, that you have gone to his feet and implored his acceptance of your soul. But *the dedication of yourself includes the surrender of your property.*

It is related in Roman history, that when the people of Collatia stipulated about their surrender to the authority and protection of Rome, the question asked was, “ Do you deliver up yourselves, the Collatine people, your city, your fields, your water, your bounds, your temples, your utensils, all things that are yours, both human and divine, into the hands of the people of Rome ?” And on their replying, “ We deliver up all,” they were received. The voluntary surrender which you, christian, have made to Christ, though not so detailed and specific as this formula, is equally comprehensive. And do you not account those your best moments when you feel constrained to lament that your surrender com-

prehends no more? Can you recall to mind the way in which he has redeemed you, the misery from which he has snatched you, and the blessedness to which he is conducting you, without feeling that he has bought you a thousand times over? that you are his by the tenderest, weightiest obligations? And when you feel thus, how utterly impossible would it be for you at such a moment to stipulate for an exception in favor of your property!—to harbor a mental reservation in favor of *that*!

Can you think of the blessedness attending the act itself of dedication to God,—that you are wedding yourself to infinite riches, uniting yourself to infinite beauty, allying yourself to infinite excellence; giving yourself to God, and receiving God in return, so that henceforth all his infinite resources, his providence, his Son, his Spirit, his heaven, he Himself, all become yours, to the utmost degree in which you can enjoy them,—can you think of this without often repeating the act? without feeling that had you all the excellencies of a myriad of angels, his love would deserve the eternal devotion of the whole? Realize to your own mind the nature of christian dedication, and the claims of Him who calls for it, and, so far from giving penuriously to his cause, you will take every increase of your substance into his presence, and devote it to his praise; you will regard every appeal which is made to your christian benevolence as an appeal to that solemn treaty which made you his, and you will honor it accordingly; you will deeply feel the penury of all riches as an expression of your love to him; Lebanon would not be sufficient to burn, or the beasts thereof an offering large enough, to satisfy the cravings of your love.

Think, moreover, of *the high design for which God condescends to accept your surrender*. Not that you may live to yourself, but entirely to him. Having disposed and enabled you to give yourself to him, he would then bap-

tize you in the element of divine love, *and give you to the world.*

“God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son” to redeem it. The object, indeed, for which *he* was given, was, like himself, infinite; an object which never *can* be shared, and which never need be repeated. But the office to which God designates every man from the moment of his conversion is meant to be a new donation to the world. The relation in which he places him to the world is meant to be a fresh expression of the same infinite love which prompted him to give Christ; it is to be viewed as nothing less than a symbolical representation to the world of that *unspeakable gift*. He is not *that* gift, but is sent to bear witness of that gift; not merely to announce it with his lips, but to describe and commemorate its fulness and freeness in his own character. Like his blessed Lord, he is to look upon himself as dedicated to the cause of human happiness, dedicated from eternity.

Christian, you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,—might the world infer the existence of his grace from your conduct? Is your benevolence worthy of him, who, “though he was rich, for your sake became poor?” He turned himself into a fountain of grace and love, and called you to be a christian, that you might be a consecrated channel of his grace to others. He requires all the benevolent agency of heaven and earth to be put into motion, in order to do justice to the purposes of his love; and he has called you into his service in order to increase that agency. Surely you are not, by the love of money, frustrating that design. As well for the perishing world had he never died for its salvation, if his appointed and consecrated agents neglect to make him known. Surely you are not, by living only to yourself, by wasting your property on yourself as fast as he gives it to you, leav-

ing the world to infer that his character bore any resemblance to yours; and leaving it, besides, to perish under your eye, because an effort to save it would incur expense. You have not, you cannot have so learned Christ. But what then are you giving? more than the heathen to his idol-god? more than the votary of a corrupted christianity to the object of his superstitious regard? or more than the irreligious worldling devotes to pleasure and self-indulgence? "What do ye more than others?"

Consider also *the happy influence which a spirit of christian liberality would have on your own enjoyment.* By taking from the flesh the means of self-indulgence, it would be exalting the spirit. It would be enlarging your heart, and ennobling your character, and identifying you with all things good, and glorious, and happy in the universe. Much as it might benefit the cause of God, it would still more minister to the welfare and happiness of your own soul.

*Devise liberal things, and by liberal things you shall stand.* Taste the luxury of doing good, and you will regret that you began so late. Select for imitation the loftiest examples—the few distinguished names whose praise is in all the churches—and you will be conscious of a delight which an angel might be grateful to share. God himself is the happiest being, because he is the most benevolent; and you would then in the most exalted sense be holding fellowship with him; you would understand experimentally the saying of our Lord Jesus Christ, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive;" you would make all the beneficence of the world your own, by the complacency with which you would behold it exercised and enjoyed.

But the motives to christian charity are endless. *The state of the world requires it.* How vast its multitudes; how urgent and awful their condition; how brief the

hour for benefiting them ; how mighty the interest pending on that short hour ! Look where you will, your eye will encounter signals to be active ; myriads of objects, in imploring or commanding attitudes, urging you to come to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

*The church calls for it.* It has many an agent of mercy to send forth, if you will but aid to furnish the means. It has many a generous purpose in its heart, many a long-cherished and magnanimous project ready to leap to its lips, if your liberality should encourage it to speak. It burns with a holy impatience to reap the vast harvest of the heathen world, which Providence seems to have prepared and to be keeping for its sickle :—will you not aid to send forth more laborers into the harvest ? It has been slumbering at its post for ages ; it is now awaking to an alarmed consciousness of its neglected responsibilities, and, as it counts up its long arrears of duty, it hastens to atone for the past by instituting one society, and adopting one remedy after another, and sending its agents to plead for help from its members, in the name of Christ,—and will you not help it in its straits ? A proportion of its guilt is lying upon you ;—will you not aid it to retrieve the past ? and assist it to recover and present to the world its primitive aspect of love and zeal ?

*The christians of apostolic times call for it.* Benevolence was their characteristic. A selfish christian was a contradiction of which they were happily ignorant. For such an anomaly their church had provided no place ; they would have cast him forth from among them, as a disgrace. They had the grand secret of giving up all for Christ, and yet accounting themselves rich ; the art of taking *joyfully* the spoiling of their goods ; the principle of finding their happiness in living to God, in spending and being spent in his service. It would have

been difficult to convince them that they were in danger of giving too freely to the cause of Christ; that they were *denying themselves* in giving so much to him instead of consuming it on their own lusts, when they felt they were gratifying themselves by so doing. It would have been difficult to convince them that their interest was distinct from the interest of Christ; or that they had any occasion for tears while his kingdom was prospering, or any reason to exult in their own secular prosperity if it did not subserve the advancement of his cause. They could not be depressed; for their Lord had arisen, and was reigning on the throne of heaven. At that thought, they not only rejoiced themselves, they called on the universe to rejoice with them; for they saw, in his exaltation, the pledge of the world's salvation, and of an eternity of happiness with him in heaven. What, to them, were a few intervening days of trial and pain? They thought not of such things! What, to them, was a question of property, whether much or little? Not worth the price of a thought! If they had it, they gave it to that service to which they had given themselves. If they had it not, they did not for a moment speak of it as a *want*, or think of asking the cause of the world's salvation to stand still while they were engaged in a scramble with the world to obtain it. The vision of heaven was in their eye; and, until they reached it, their Lord had engaged to provide for all their wants, and had engaged to do this solely that they might give their undivided attention to his service. Of doubts and fears about their personal interest in his love, they appear to have known nothing; *that* is a disease peculiar to the morbid and selfish piety of modern days. The element of activity and benevolence in which they lived, secured them against such a malady, and produced a race of christians, vigorous, holy, and happy.

And is it from such, christian, that you profess to have descended? do you claim relationship to them? profess to represent them? Bending from their seats of blessedness above, they urge, they beseech you to cast off the worldly spirit in which you have hitherto indulged, and to take up their fallen mantle. They entreat you no longer to disgrace their name, nor the infinitely dearer name of Christ; to renounce it at once as the greatest homage you can pay to it, or else to follow them as far as they followed Christ. They all expect this from you; they will demand it at your hands when you meet them at the bar of God.

*The promises and prospects of prophecy invite it.* Muse on the prophetic paintings of the latter-day glory, that day without a cloud; the enemies of man subdued, the disorders of the world hushed, all its great miseries passed away. Christ on his throne, in the midst of a redeemed, sanctified, happy creation. All things sacred to his name; all tongues rehearsing for the last great chorus of the universe; all hearts united in holy love, and in that love offering themselves up as one everlasting sacrifice ascending before him in its own flames; new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And is it possible that your agency can contribute to accelerate that blessed period? These glimpses of its glory are afforded you expressly to engage your agency in its behalf. Not only is your instrumentality desirable—there is a sense in which it is indispensable. All things are waiting for it. All things are ready but the church of Christ; and until its prayers, its wealth, all its energies and resources are laid at the feet of Christ, all things must continue to wait.

O, then, by the mercies of God; by the riches of his goodness towards you in nature, providence, and grace; by the sacredness of the commands which he has laid upon you; by a legitimate regard for your own well-



being ; and by the credit of that religion whose honor should be dearer to you than life,—we beseech you, christian, to dedicate your property to God. By the love of Christ ; by the compassion which brought him from the bosom of the Father ; by his painful self-denial and deep humiliation ; by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross ; O, by that mystery of love which led him to become poor that he might make you eternally rich—ask yourself, while standing at the cross, “ How much owest thou unto thy Lord ? ” and give accordingly. By the tender and melting considerations which led you at first to surrender yourself to his claims ; by the benevolent purposes which God had in view in calling you to a knowledge of himself ; and by the deep and holy pleasure to be found in imitating his divine beneficence,—look on your property as the Lord’s, and give it freely to his glory. By the cries of the world perishing in ignorance of Christ ; by the earnest entreaties of the church yearning to save from destruction, but wanting your aid ; as you profess to admire the unparalleled benevolence of the first christians, and to be actuated by the same principles ; and as you hope to behold the consummation of your Saviour’s glory in the salvation of the world—we entreat, we adjure you to look on your property as given you by God to be employed in his service, and from this day to employ it accordingly. He who gave his only-begotten Son for your salvation,—he who redeemed you from the curse of the law by being made a curse for you,—he who has breathed into you the breath of a new life, and is preparing you for heaven,—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, unite in urging you to bring forth your property and lay it upon the altar of christian sacrifice.

And now, christian, what shall be the *practical effect* of the truths which have been made to pass before you ? Allow me, in conclusion, to suggest what it ought to

be ; and may God the Holy Spirit give you grace to carry it into practice.

Have you, while reading the preceding pages, felt a single emotion of benevolence warm and expand your heart ? *Instantly gratify it.* Let it not pass from you in an empty wish ; but immediately bring forth something to be appropriated to his glory.

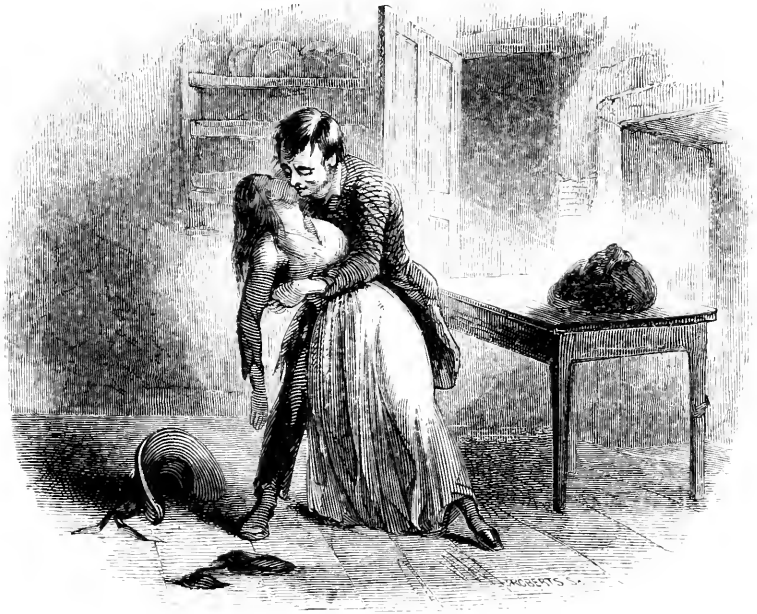
Is your benevolence destitute of plan ? Then, unless you can gainsay what we have advanced on the necessity of *system, lose no time in devising one.*

Are you a stranger to self-denial in the cause of charity ? Then, remember that benevolence, with you, has yet to be begun ; for, on christian principles, *there is no benevolence without self-denial.*

Here, then, is *an object to take you at once to the throne of grace.* O, christian, let it lead you to pour out your soul in prayer before God. Confess *that* selfishness by which you have hitherto absorbed so much of that property in worldly indulgences, which ought to have been spent in his service. Ask him for the grace of self-denial ; that your offerings may henceforth bear a proportion to the magnitude of his claims. Beseech him to pour out his Holy Spirit upon you and upon all his people, as a spirit of christian liberality, that "Holiness to the Lord" may soon be inscribed on all the property of his church. "He who soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly ; and he who soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. And God loveth a cheerful giver."

THE END.

THE  
 EVENTFUL TWELVE HOURS;  
 OR,  
 THE DESTITUTION AND WRETCHEDNESS  
 OF  
 A DRUNKARD.



“IT is a sorrowful heart,” said I to myself, as I raked over the dying embers upon the hearth to throw a transient gleam of light over my dreary cottage—“It is a sorrowful heart that never rejoices; and though I am somewhat in debt at the *Blue Moon*, and the landlady of the *Stag* has over and over again said she’d never trust me, still she has not yet refused me, only at first. Many’s the shilling I have paid them both, to be sure,” said I, rising involuntarily and going to the cupboard: “I had better take a mouthful before I go out, for it’s no use to wait any longer for Mary’s return.”

Just at this moment the eldest of my two children inquired in a piteous tone, "if that was mother." "Your mother? no," said I; "and what if it was, what then?" "Because, father," continued the child, "I thought perhaps she had brought a loaf of bread home, for I am so hungry." "Hungry, child," said I; "then why did you not ask me before you went to bed?" "Because, father, I knew there was no bread. When mother sent me to get a loaf this morning at the grocer's, Mrs. Mason said our last month's bill had not yet been settled, and she could not trust any more; and so we have only had a few potatoes. When mother went out to look for work, she promised to bring a loaf home very early." "Why, Jane," said I, "this is a new story—what, is there nothing at all in the house?" "No, father, nothing; and that is not all, father; mother cried this morning about it when she went out; and though she never uses bad words, said something about cursed drink: she said she should be back before dark, and it has now been dark a long time, and hark, how it rains."

The fire flickered up a little, and at this moment the latch of the door clicked; I peeped up through the gloom, a pang of conscious shame stealing through my frame; but it was not my wife, as I of course supposed—it was Mrs. Mason. I was surprised and confused. "Where is your wife, James?" said she, in a mild, firm tone. "Is that mother?" said my child again, in a rather sleepy tone; "I am so glad you are come, I am so hungry." "That child," said I, "has gone to bed without her supper to-night," fumbling about at the same time upon the mantel-piece for a bit of candle, which I could not find. "Yes," said Mrs. Mason, very gravely, "and without its dinner too, I fear; but where is your wife, James? for I am come to see whether she brought any thing home with her for herself and family; for I could not feel comfortable after I had refused your child a loaf this morning, just as I know the

refusal was." I now stammered out something about "sorry," and "ashamed," and "bad times." "But where *is* your wife, James?" "She is, perhaps, at neighbor Wright's," said I, briskly, glad to catch an opportunity of a minute's retreat from my present awkward position; "I'll just step and see. Jane, get up, child." "No, James," said Mrs. Mason, in a tone not to be misunderstood; "no, James, I wish she was sitting by their comfortable fireside; I called in there just now, as I came along, to pay a little bill, and they spoke very kindly of your wife, and hoped she might be enabled to rub through this winter—but I will call again in half an hour: Mary will have come home, I hope, by that time."

The door closed upon her, and I remained in a kind of half stupor; my month's unpaid bill, my public-house scores, my destitute home; these and a thousand things connected with my situation, kept me musing in no very comfortable frame of mind, when the latch again clicked, the door opened, and through the half gleam of one flickering flame, I just caught the glimpse of a form, that in the next instant, cold and wet, sunk lifeless in my arms. It was Mary. As she sunk down upon me, she just said, with a shudder, "Cold." Shall I stop to tell you of the agony of my mind? Shall I endeavor to relate a portion of the thoughts that chased each other with a comet's rapidity through my brain; the remembrance of our past comforts, and our happiness too? Recovering after the lapse of an instant, I called, "Jane, Jane, get up, and make haste; your mother is come home, and is very ill and faint; get a light"—she was quickly at my side—"get a light," for the little unfriendly flame had ceased to burn.

"But where are you, mother?" said Jane. "Jane, child," said I, angrily, "your mother is here; get a light directly." "We haven't a bit of candle, father." "Then get some wood out of the back room—break up some little bits—O, do make haste." "We haven't a bit of wood,

father." "Child, child—" "Yes, father, but we haven't any." My poor wife at this moment gave a kind of sob, and with a slight struggle, as if for breath, sunk heavier in my arms. I tried to hold her up in an easier posture, calling to her in a tender manner, "Mary, my dear Mary;" but my sensations and my conscience almost choked me. In this moment of anguish and perplexity, my wife, for aught I knew, dead in my arms—without light, without fuel, without food, without credit, Mrs. Mason returned. Jane had managed to make the fire burn up, just so as to disclose our wretched situation. "Your wife ill?" said Mrs. Mason, hastily stepping forward—"very ill, I fear, James, and wet and cold—run hastily, James," reaching herself a broken chair, "and call in Mrs. Wright, and place your wife on my lap." This I immediately did, and as I opened the door to go out, I heard Mrs. Mason ask Jane to get a light—and shame made me secretly rejoice, that I had escaped the humiliation, for the present, of confessing that we had not even a bit of a candle in the house.

Mrs. Wright was preparing for supper: they were regular and early folks, and my heart sunk within me when, in my hurry, I unceremoniously opened the door—I mean the contrast I saw between their cottage and my own; a clean cloth was laid, with spoons, and basins, and white, clean plates, and knives and forks, with every other necessary comfort. Wright was sitting with his back towards the fire, with a candle in one hand and a book in the other, reading to his wife, who was leaning forward, and just in the act of taking a pot off the hanger, in which it would be easy to guess, was something warm for supper. The fire and candle gave a cheerful light, and every thing looked "comfortable." "My wife is taken very ill," said I, "and Mrs. Mason, who has just stepped in, begged me to call in your help." "Mrs. Mason at your house now?" said Mrs. Wright; "come, Wright, reach me my cloak, and let us make haste and go." We were all at the door, when Mrs.

Wright said, "What, come to fetch us without a lantern? and ours is at the glazier's. What are we to do?" "The distance is very short," I said. "Yes," said Wright, "but long enough for an accident; how I do like necessaries;" adding, in an undertone, as he pulled his wife along, something about "enough for *tavern debts*, but nothing to buy *necessaries*."

On opening my cottage door, I called out—for no one was in the room—"Mrs. Mason, are you up stairs? how is Mary? here is Mrs. Wright; shall I come up?" No one answered, and Mrs. Wright passed me, going softly up stairs, saying, in a low tone, as she ascended, "James, you had better make up a good fire, and get some water heated as fast as you can." Again I was aghast. "Get some water heated," said I; and the wretchedness of our bedless bed and furnitureless room crossed my mind at the same time. Mrs. Mason, at this moment, leaned over the banisters, and said, in a soft voice, "James, fetch the doctor, and lose no time; make haste, for life may depend on it." My wretchedness seemed now complete; the very fire of delirium and confusion seemed to seize upon my brain; and hastily calling out to Jane to attend upon Mr. Wright, I snatched up my hat, and pushed by my neighbor without heeding some inquiries he had begun about the necessaries that were then so much required.

It rained, and was very dark; the road to the doctor's was not the best, and he lived rather more than a mile off; it was impossible to proceed faster than a slow, cautious walk. I was now alone, and, in much bitterness of spirit, began to upbraid myself, and those companions of my folly who had led me on to habits that had first disgraced, and then brought me to severe ruin. With what vivid brightness did the first year of our marriage, its comforts and its hopes, again pass before me; and when my mind led me on through all its changing scenes, up to the moment when Mrs. Mason, in her low, subdued tone of voice, called to me

to fetch the doctor, and to mind I lost no time ; I could only realize my wife as dying, and myself the cruel tyrant who had, by neglect, ill usage, and partial starvation, brought her to an untimely end.

When I entered the doctor's house, "Is that you, James King?" said he, sharply; "do you want me?" "Yes, sir," said I; "my wife is very ill, and Mrs. Mason, who called in just at the time she was taken, desired me to come and to request your attendance upon her. I am afraid, sir, it is no little affair." "Mrs. Mason, Mrs. Mason," said the doctor; "I am inclined to think Mrs. Mason has better drugs in her shop for your wife's complaint, than my shop affords, and I expect I shall have to tell her so." I hung down my head with shame; I understood what he meant. He then moved towards the door, putting on his greatcoat as he walked along. "But stop," said he, just as we got to the outer door, "how did you come—no lantern?" "I can carry your lantern before you, sir," said I. "Yes," said he, "and *I* may bring it back." "But I will return with you, sir; my wife will most likely want some medicine." "Yes, James," said he, "and if she does, I shall want the money longer still." I had no word to reply, it was no time to begin being independent. The doctor's large glass lantern was brought, and our journey back was quickly performed. I should have thought a great deal of giving 7s. 6d. for such a lantern, if I had really required just such an one; yet I had paid as many pounds on my scores, and thought nothing at all about it.

On getting home, I found that somehow it had been managed to make up a good fire, and the tea-kettle was boiling, and Mrs. Mason was just making a little tea. "How is Mary?" said I, hardly daring to look Mrs. Mason in the face. "Well, Mrs. Mason," said the doctor, "pray what is the matter?" and as the doctor spoke, Mrs. Mason took up the jug of tea she had made, conversed with the doctor in an undertone for half a minute, and both walked up



stairs, leaving me again to reflection, in fact, taking no notice of me. I sunk down heavily upon the chair that was beside the fire, in a state of exhaustion, and while I was wondering where all this would end, was aroused by the cry of "James, James, the doctor says your wife must put her feet into warm water ; so bring up some directly, James, in a large pan or bucket, or any thing that is handy ; pray, make haste ;" and before I could reply, for I doubted whether there was either, the door was shut, and again I was placed in a new difficulty. However, I found an old leaky pail and an old broken pan ; so I set the pail into the pan to catch the leakage, and together, they did tolerably well ; but I felt considerable shame as I handed this lumbering affair up stairs, well knowing it would call forth some remark.

I had just again seated myself at the fire, when the doctor, in no very gentle tone, called out, "James, here, man, take this paper to my office ; Mr. Armstrong will give you some physic for your wife, and then it will be twice given, for I suppose you will never pay for it." I stared at him, or rather paused and hesitated—who could tell why ? was it the taunts I was thus obliged to endure ; or was it bodily exhaustion ? I had eaten all the food my poor Mary had put into my basket for my breakfast ; and, as it appeared, all she had in the world ; yet I had managed to borrow sixpence at noon, intending to buy me a loaf and cheese, and half a pint of beer for my dinner ; but venturing upon half a pint of beer first, I called for another ; and, becoming thirsty, for a pint ; and so my dinner and my afternoon's work were both lost together. It must now have been nearly ten o'clock, and I had tasted no food, as I said before, since breakfast. I felt faint, and well I might ; however, with a heavy step and a heavier heart, taking up the doctor's lantern, and looking round upon the empty wretchedness before me, I again set out for the doctor's. And did I not also think over neighbor Wright's comforta-

ble, cheerful room, and his boiling pot; while I, who had that day spent a borrowed sixpence upon beer, had not even a crust of bread for myself or family? And did I forget the pence, and then the shillings, and then the pounds I had paid at public-houses; selling, and pawning my bed from under me, and my clothes from off my back, and all to gain misery and want, and lose my good name?

Mr. Armstrong was a kind-hearted young man, and soon prepared the medicines, and by kind and cheerful hopes concerning my poor Mary, and a little civil conversation, raised my spirits, and I walked back somewhat lighter of heart; but I was thoroughly wet, and the cold rain pierced my very marrow, for I was wearing summer clothing in the winter season—I had no other. Cold and wet, exhausted and miserable, I once more lifted the latch of my own cottage door. The candle was dimly burning. My fears arose, and my heart sunk within me: “Is Mary worse?” said I. “She is no better,” said Mr. Wright, who was sitting over the dying embers—“no better—heavy work, James.”

I placed the medicine upon the table, and sat down, exhausted and wretched. Whose situation so low, could he have known all, that would not have pitied me? Wright rose, and carried the medicines up stairs; and in another minute all was the stillness of death. I could have borne any thing but this—at least I so felt—but under this oppressive stillness, my feelings gave way in torrents of tears, and every moment brought a fresh accusation against myself for my past doings; and again I looked around me, as well as my tearful eyes and dimly-lighted room would allow, and contrasted all with John Wright’s. “So comfortable,” said I, involuntarily. Indistinct sounds and cautious step-pings were now heard above; and while I was raising myself up to listen, in order to catch, if possible, something that would acquaint me with the state of my poor Mary, the bedroom door opened, and down came Wright and his

wife, the latter carefully lighting the doctor, Mrs. Mason being close behind him. I tried to recover myself a little, and to assume something like the appearance of courage; and in a half-choked, coughing voice, said, "How is my poor wife, sir?" The doctor, with a severity of manner, and imitating my manner of speaking, replied, "You should have coughed sooner, James;" then turning to Mrs. Mason, said, "Remember, *quiet* is the best medicine *now*; indeed, it is food and medicine in her present state; don't teaze her about any thing; at half past, mind—and again at twelve, until the pain subsides, when sleep will follow."

I shrunk back at the words "half past," which reminded me that I had not even a twenty-shilling clock in the house.

"James," said the doctor, "have you no time in the house?" "No, I suppose not," he answered himself. "Well, then, you must guess at it; oh dear, bad work indeed. Come, James, put that bit of candle into the lantern; I hope it does not rain now."

Wright opened the door, and I walked out with the lantern, the doctor following, and, buttoning his coat closely round him, remarked upon the darkness of the night. I walked on with an unsteady step, feeling as if every yard of ground I strode over would be the last. But, urged on by my situation, I reached the doctor's house without any remark from him upon my wearied step, and pulled his bell in rather a hasty manner.

"You are in a hurry, James," said he, "you forget the time of night; a gentle pull would have waked the attendant without disturbing my family. *My* family are very regular, James, and I make it a rule never to disturb them when it can be avoided; perhaps you think such things of no consequence: regularity, James, and sobriety, are two very principal things in a family."

By this time the attendant appeared, and, giving him the lantern and thanking the doctor for his kind attention, I left the door to return home. The door closed, and my

situation was a very painful one; the sudden change from light to utter darkness obliged me to stand still a few minutes before I could venture to move, but a world of sensations ran through my mind, and distracted me more than ever; the weakness of my body prevented my checking its sensations; and, could I have weighed in the balance of reason, to say nothing of religion, at this moment, all foolish, sinful pleasures—falsely so called—of drinking, with the distress of mind and weariness of body I then endured, and had endured on this one single night, how light would they have seemed. Yes, even if I had not included the loss of positive property and health.

Once again, then, I reached my home. All was still; but soon Mrs. Mason came down. Before I could speak, she said, "Mary is better, James; she has fallen into a nice sleep." She spoke kindly, and looked kindly. I tried to answer her, but my feelings choked me; and seeing my effort to suppress them, she continued, "God has dealt very mercifully, James, towards you, in so blessing the means that have been used; but you have had no supper; you will find some nice warm soup by the side of the fire there; Mrs. Wright sent it in for you, by her husband, when she returned home: come, James, eat it while it is warm, it will do you good; your little girl and boy have both had some, and they are now warm in bed and fast asleep."

"Mr. and Mrs. Wright are very kind," I added, "and you are kind; what should I have done but for you and them?"

"Done, James?" said she mildly; "done, James? see how God orders his dispensations; 'in the midst of wrath he remembers mercy,' and I trust he has purposes of mercy in this event towards you and your family; but beware, James, for the Bible expressly says, 'My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord;' and again, 'whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth.' But eat your supper; I will step

up stairs and see if your wife is still sleeping, and if she is, I will come down and chat a little with you."

As she went softly up stairs my eyes followed her, and I said to myself, This is one of your religious ones, is it, that I have so often joined in jeering at? Surely I ate my supper with a thankful heart, and was much strengthened by it. Mrs. Mason soon returned, and stepping into the back room, where Jane lay, and her little brother, brought out three or four billets of wood, and a cheerful fire was soon made; so that with my warm, nourishing supper, the cheerful fire, and Mrs. Mason's mild and cheerful countenance and manner, I regained my spirits, and a considerable portion of my strength. After a little pause, she said,

"James, when Mary recovers, if it should please God to order it so, great care will be required lest she should relapse. You would not wish to lose her, James; she has, I believe, been a kind and affectionate wife to you, and a tender mother to your children. When you were first married every thing went well with you, and it was a remark I often made of you as a neighbor, that you wanted nothing but the true fear of God in your heart, and faith in our blessed Saviour, to make you a pattern to all around you. I used often to say a few words to Mary, and she always received them meekly, but I seldom saw you, and your manner never gave me any encouragement to talk to you on religious subjects. James, experience has enabled me to make one remark, that *absence from divine worship*, as a regular or customary thing, is an almost unerring sign of the absence of religion from the heart; and it is indeed seldom that I have seen you in your place on the Sabbath-day. The Sabbath is a blessed day when it is spent aright." So leaving me, she again went up stairs, remarking that Mr. Wright had been home to her house, to explain the cause of her absence, (and as I tolerably well guessed, this partly explained the mystery of fire and candle, and tea and sugar, and bread,) adding, "Mrs. Wright will come in at

daylight, and will stay with Mary, and that will allow me to attend to my morning's business: you know, James, the Bible says, 'diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.'"

I longed to go and see my poor Mary, but I was not asked, and I supposed it right that it should be so. I now thought of my poor children; and going into their room, I felt distressed to find them so badly provided with bed-clothes. I kissed them, and secretly prayed, in a kind of way, that I might be spared to care more for them than I had lately done. I sat down, and began to reflect upon all the circumstances of the past day, and of this eventful night; but I soon fell into a sound sleep, which continued until Mrs. Mason awoke me, informing me that it was nearly daylight, and reminded me of her intentions to return home to her duties as soon as Mrs. Wright should arrive. "And why wait for Mrs. Wright, madam?" said I; "surely I can attend upon Mary now, or at least until Mrs. Wright does come." "It is very natural," said Mrs. Mason, "that you should desire to attend upon your wife, and think yourself capable of doing so; but my most particular directions from the doctor were, not to allow you to see your wife, if I could prevent you, until he had seen her once more; and you may remember, James, in how grave a manner he directed she might not in any way be teased, nor—but, James, to deal honestly with you, and rightly as I consider it, whatever may be your future conduct to your wife, your behavior to her for these last three years has not been quite kind; and as grief and depression have very much to do with her present illness, we are all of opinion that you had better refrain from going to see her until she is more composed. You have bruised, James; seek now to heal."

I was touched with the reproof; I was, perhaps, more touched by the manner. Mrs. Mason was one who sought to win souls: she won my esteem and confidence, and I felt that if Mrs. Mason could talk to me thus, I had still

something to lose. I went to call Mrs. Wright. On my return, Mrs. Mason was up stairs, but she had placed nearly a whole loaf and a piece of butter on the table, and some tea and sugar, and the kettle was singing by the fireside. These were times of deep thought to me. On Mrs. Wright's arrival, I thanked her for her great kindness, and hoped better times were in store. "Yes," she replied, "better times may be in store for you; I hope they are; you have certainly bought your corn at a very dear market lately, but you *may* find a better one to go to yet." Mrs. Mason now appeared, and ready to go home; the morning had just fully dawned. "Come, James," said she, "you must go with me; I want to send back a few things to Mary; and mind, you must not leave the house to-day after your return, and your little girl ought to be sent to account for your absence from work—that is, James, if—"

"If, madam?" said I quickly; "if what?"

"Yes, James, if you think you can maintain a new character, and desire really to become again, what I well remember you once was, a respectable man; yes, James, a respectable man; for remember, that word is the just right of every man who acts as every man ought to do. The word seems to surprise you: it is a sad mistake that seems insensibly to have crept into common acceptance in these days, that respectability must mean something belonging rather to riches and rank, than honesty and uprightness of character; respectability is as much the birthright of yourself as of young 'squire Mills; indeed, I may say that on this point, you both started in life exactly equal: his father was indeed respectable in every sense of the word; and your father was certainly nothing behind him; both faithfully discharged the duties of that station 'into which it pleased God to call them,' and this I consider, from the king to the cottager, is to be *respectable*; but, James, the young 'squire is as respectable a man, I am happy to say, as his father was, and why should not you become as re-

spectable as yours? I have lived to see many changes, but the change I most mourn over, is the change of principle in my neighbors. Their respectability seems to be exchanged for finer clothes and fewer fireside, fewer home comforts; and I happen also to know, that if very much of the grain that has been made into poisonous beer and whiskey had been made into good wholesome bread, both you and I, James, should have been better off, I think, than we are now, for I have had my struggles as well as you; so have many others. I have worked early and late, taking care of *the pence*, to maintain my respectability; yet, let me again repeat it, your father and mother were respectable to the day of their death, and many in this village would gladly see their only child following their footsteps, and seeking the same inheritance they now possess 'in mansions in the skies.' But the road leads down hill to vice and folly, and I might add, the gulf of ruin lies at the bottom; you may be far down it; I fear you are, yet there is a hand that even now beckons to you, and says, 'Turn, turn, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth; wherefore turn and live:' but, James, you are not ignorant of your Bible."

I tried to conceal my emotions, for it was a very long time since I had heard such words as these. My Bible and the house of God had been long entirely neglected. Mrs. Mason perceived that I was affected, and moving towards the door, said, "Yes, James, it is a slippery, down-hill path that leads to ruin, and many there be that walk therein. Heaven may be said to lie upward, yet 'its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.' But come, it is broad daylight, and I must hasten home."

As we passed neighbor Wright's cottage, I had not forgotten the comfort that was within, and I said secretly, "I'll see what's to be done." The arrival of Mrs. Mason at home seemed to give to all the liveliest pleasure and satisfaction; and their inquiries after my poor wife were made with a kindness of manner that surprised me. "They respect



her," said I to myself; they took little notice of me, yet treated me with more civility than I had a right to expect. Mrs. Mason soon put up a few little things and directed me to give them to Mrs. Wright, and weighing me a pound of bacon, and putting a large loaf and half a pound of cheese into the basket with it, with some soap and candles, said, "I shall charge *these* to your bill, James. Patty, go into the garden and cut James a couple of nice cabbages; I dare say he will know what to do with them." Having had this unexpected provision made me for the day, and receiving parting words of encouragement from this kind friend, I returned home. I found my children up and washed, and breakfast ready. Mrs. Wright had kindly done this. Jane looked cheerful, and my little Harry came edging towards me, as if he did not know what to make of all this. "Mother's so ill, Jane says, father—is she; is she, father?" looking up in my face as I sat down, "is she?"

"She is better now, my boy," I said.

"Better, father? who made her ill? *you* didn't make her ill, did you, father?—nice bread, father—did mother bring this nice bread home, father? speak, father, you don't speak."

I could not trust myself to answer; so I rose, for I was much affected at the thought that Mrs. Mason had cared for these babes and their mother, but I had neglected them, and foolishly squandered away their comforts and even their necessary bread.

Mrs. Wright went home; but returned soon after we had finished breakfast; and by the time I had put things a little to rights, the doctor called. His "Well, James," filled me with no very pleasing sensations. "I hope we shall have a change, eh, James?" and passing on, went up stairs. Ah, thought I, I hope so too, for I know what you mean. He soon came down; said my wife might get up if she liked, taking a little care, and, "after to-day, give her a pill every noon for dinner off a loin of mutton, eh, James?"

A few more broiled pills for *her*, and a pint less of liquor for *you*, and your old father and mother would soon come to life again. *Your* savings' bank is at the tavern, and the landlady of the Stag keeps your accounts, I believe, eh, James? I shall charge you nothing for this." This was the doctor. I received his reproofs humbly, and certainly thought, you have been very kind, but I also thought, you are not Mrs. Mason.

Soon after this, my poor Mary came down stairs, and I at once confessed my sorrow for my past conduct, and my determination to *drink no more*; and, to conclude, my wife slowly recovered, and, I may add, I recovered also; but I was very far down the hill, and consequently found it a long and hard tug to get up again; but Mrs. Mason encouraged me, Mrs. Wright helped me, the doctor cheered me, Mr. Armstrong praised me, our kind minister instructed me, my wife assisted me, and, as a crowning point of all, the blessing of God rested on me. I worked hard, I prayed in my family, I paid my debts, I clothed my children, I redeemed my bed, I mended my windows, I planted my garden and sold garden stuff, instead of buying; I bought me a wheelbarrow, I mended my chairs and table, I got me a clock; and now here I am, but never shall I forget John Wright or his wife, how long soever I may remember my other kind friends, and most of all, Mrs. Mason. But there were no temperance societies in those days, or I think I should have been reclaimed sooner.

## ARE YOU

## A SABBATH-SCHOOL TEACHER?

FROM "NEVINS' PRACTICAL THOUGHTS."

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If you are, you are engaged in a good work. Yes, it is good, both as acceptable to God, and as profitable to men. It is good in its direct operation, and good in its reflex action. It is not merely teaching the young idea how to shoot, but, what is still more important, it is teaching the young and tender affection what to fix upon, and where to entwine itself. Nothing hallows the Sabbath more than the benevolent employment of the Sabbath-school teacher. It is more than lawful to do such good on the Sabbath-day. It has great reward. Continue to be a Sabbath-school teacher. Be not weary in this well-doing. Do not think you have served long enough in the capacity of teacher, until you have served life out, or until there shall be no need of one's saying to another, "Know the Lord." What if it be laborious? It is the labor of love, in the very fatigue of which the soul finds refreshment.

But perhaps you are not a Sabbath-school teacher. "No, I am not," methinks I hear one say; "I am not a professor of religion. You cannot expect me to be a teacher." You ought to be both, and your not being the first is but a poor apology for declining to be the other. The neglect of one obligation is a poor excuse for the neglect of another. You seem to admit, that if you professed religion, it would be your duty to teach in the Sabbath-school. Now, whose fault is it that you do not profess religion? But I see no valid objection to your teaching a class of boys or girls how to read the word of God, though you be not a professor of religion. I cannot think that any person *gets harm* by thus doing good. Experience has shown that the business of teaching in the Sabbath-school is *twice* blessed—blessing the teacher as well as the taught.

“But I am not a young person.” And what if you are not? You need not be very young in order to be a useful Sabbath-school teacher. We don't want mere *novices* in the Sabbath-school. If you are not young, then you have so much more *experience* to assist you in the work. Do Sabbath-school teachers become *superannuated* so much earlier in life than any other class of benefactors—so much sooner than ministers and parents? There is a prevailing mistake on this subject.

But you are “married,” you say. And what then? Because you have married a wife or a husband, is that any reason why you should not come into the Sabbath-school? Many people think that as soon as they are married, they are released from the obligation of assisting in the Sabbath-school. But I do not understand this to be one of the immunities of matrimony. As well might they plead that in discharge of the obligation to every species of doing good. Such might, at least, postpone this apology till the cares of a family have come upon them. And even then, perhaps, the best disposition they could make of their children on the Sabbath, would be to take them to the school. I wonder how many hours of the Sabbath are devoted to the instruction of their children by those parents who make the necessity of attending to the religious culture of their families an apology for not entering the Sabbath-school; and I wonder if their children could not be attended to in other hours than those usually occupied in Sabbath-school instruction; and thus, while they are not neglected, other children, who have no parents that care for their souls, receive a portion of their attention. I think this not impossible. But perhaps the wife pleads that she is no longer her own, and that her husband's wishes are opposed to her continuing a teacher. But has she ceased to be her Lord's, by becoming her husband's? Does the husband step into all the rights of a Saviour over his redeemed? If such an objection is honestly made, it is very clear that she has not regarded the direction to marry “only in the Lord.”

But perhaps you say, “There are enough others to teach in the Sabbath-school.” There would not be enough, there would not be any, if all were like you. But it is a mistake; there are not enough others. You are wanted. Some five or six children, of whom Christ has said, “Suffer

them to come to me," may grow up without either learning or religion, unless you become a teacher. Are all the children in the place where you live gathered into the Sabbath-school? Are there none that still wander on the Lord's day, illiterate and irreligious? Is there a competent number of teachers in the existing schools, so that more would be rather in the way than otherwise? I do not know how it is where you live, but where I live, there are boys and girls enough, aye, too many, who go to no Sabbath-school. It is only for a teacher to go out on the Sabbath, and he readily collects a class of children willing to attend; and where I reside, there are not teachers enough for the scholars already collected. Some classes are without a teacher; and presently the children stay away, because, they say, they come to the school, and there is no one to attend to them. He who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not," knows this; and he knows who of "his sacramental host" might take charge of these children, and do not. They say every communion season, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord replies, "Suffer the little children to come to me," and there the matter ends.

I visited recently an interesting school, composed of colored adults and children. It is taught partly by white persons, and partly by intelligent colored persons. It is languishing now for want of teachers. There were present some twenty-five or thirty females, and only *two* female teachers. I wondered to see no more than two there, especially of those who were last at the cross and first at the sepulchre.

But I hear one say, "I *was* once a teacher;" and do you not blush to own that you became weary in this species of well-doing? "But I think I taught long enough." How long did you teach? Till there were no more to learn? Till you could teach no longer? Are you dead? If not, you are resting from your labors rather prematurely. This excuse resembles one which I heard of, as from a lady of wealth, who, having for several years been a subscriber to the Bible Society, at length ordered her name to be stricken off, alleging that she thought she had done her part towards disseminating the Bible. The world was not supplied; O no, not even the country; and her means were not ex-

so careful to instruct his household in the way of the Lord, did not neglect to pray with them. And *David*, I am quite confident, prayed in his family. It is said of him on one occasion, that "he returned to bless his household." No doubt there were both prayer and praise in that family. Certainly *Joshua* must have prayed in his house. How otherwise could he have fulfilled his resolution, that his house, as well as himself, should serve the Lord? What, resolve that his house should serve the Lord, and not join with them in supplication for grace to serve him? That is not at all likely.

Now I would ask, if it is not proper and right that every head of a family should adopt the resolution of him who said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord?" But can there be religion in a house without prayer? Is there not inconsistency in saying, "I and my family will serve God, but we will have no family altar nor offering?" Is not prayer an essential part of the service of God? Did any one ever live who supposed that family prayer was not more pleasing to God than the omission of it? Did any one ever omit it for fear of being guilty of will-worship, or through dread that it might for some reason offend God? Did the practice of family prayer ever distress any conscience? The omission of it has troubled many.

It is admitted, I believe, to be the will of God that we should pray to him *socially*. The Lord's prayer was constructed for *social* use. The disciples were directed to use it when they should pray together; and it is accordingly in the *plural* number: not *my* Father, but "*our* Father." Now, is God to be socially worshipped, and yet not worshipped in that first, most permanent, and most interesting form of society—the form of society instituted by God himself—the family? Is that to be believed? But the Lord's prayer seems not only intended for social, but for *daily* use. "Give us *this day* our daily bread," is one of its petitions. It does not contemplate the morrow. It asks

supplies but for one day. Now if, as it appears from this reasoning, social prayer should be *daily*, where but in the family, the society which is abiding, and which a single roof covers, can it with propriety be daily? Should there be public religious services daily, or daily prayer-meetings for this purpose? Then how suitable it is, that those who together share their "daily bread," should together daily ask it.

How *reasonable and comely* is household religion—family worship! Common blessings, such as families daily share, call for common thanksgivings. Common wants, such as families together feel, call for common supplications. Is it not fit that families, in retiring to rest at night, should together commit themselves to the divine keeping; and in the morning, unite in praising the Lord for having been their protector? It is a clear case, it seems to me. Besides, fathers are directed to bring up their children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But can they do this while they pray not with them and for them? I do not know how we are to comply with the apostolical exhortation to pray "everywhere," unless we pray in the family, as well as under other circumstances.

Is any one in doubt whether the practice, or the omission of family prayer, will be the more pleasing subject of *retrospect* from the dying bed and the eternal world? Parents should not forget, that presently will come the long-deferred and greatly dreaded season of taking the last look, and the last leave of those whom their decease is to make orphans. O then, what a sweet thought it will be to enter into the dying meditation, that they have been in the daily habit of bowing down with their children in prayer, and commending them to the care and grace of their heavenly Father, and that they may now indulge the confident hope, that he will infinitely more than supply the parental place which they are to leave vacant.

But what need of more argument? I suspect every

one secretly admits the obligation of family prayer. I judge so from the trouble many are at to apologize for the neglect. It tries them not a little to satisfy even themselves with an excuse. The usual plea is *inability*. They have not the *gift*, they say. What gift? Can they not collect their family together night and morning? Have they not so much authority in their own house as that? And then can they not read a portion of Scripture to them; and kneeling down, express their common desires to God? If they cannot frame a prayer at the moment, yet can they not use a form? It requires no great gift to read a prayer in an audible voice. But what if it be hard at first; it will soon be easy, if persevered in. The beginning of almost every good habit is difficult. The most of those who make this apology, *presume* on their inability. They say they cannot, before they have tried. But until they have tried, they do not know whether they can or not. What if some have tried once, and failed? One failure should not dishearten them, nor two, nor even twenty. Demosthenes tried speaking many times before he became an orator. Besides, how do those who presume on their inability to conduct family worship, know what assistance they might receive from God, if they were to make an humble and faithful experiment?

If any one shall condescend to read this, who does not pray in his family, I advise him to commence immediately. He knows that he will never be sorry for it, if he does; but he is not so sure that he may not be sorry for it, if he does not. If there were no other reason in favor of the practice, this alone would be sufficient. I think it is *Jay* who says, that a family without prayer, is like a house without a roof—it has no protection. Who would like to live in such a house?



THE  
LOST MECHANIC RESTORED.



NEAR the close of 1831, says Mr. C——, of Hartford, Conn., I was requested by a pious and benevolent lady, to take into my employ a young man who had become intemperate. I objected that the influence of such a man would be injurious to my other workmen, and especially my apprentices. But the kind-hearted lady urged her request, saying that he was willing to come under an engagement not to drink at all, and to conform strictly to all the regulations of the establishment; that she received him into her family when a boy, and felt a deep interest in his welfare; that he had learned a trade, and was an excellent workman; had become hopefully pious, and united with one of our churches; had married a very worthy young woman, but his intemperance had blasted his fair prospects. He was now sensible of his danger; and she believed his salvation for this, if not for a future world, would turn on my decision.

I consented to make the trial; and he came, binding himself, by a written contract, to receive no part of his wages into his own hands, and to forfeit whatever should be due to him, in case he became intoxicated. He succeeded remarkably in my business, was industrious and faithful, and strictly temperate and regular in all his habits.

But in the summer of 1832, he was by some means induced to taste again an intoxicating drink, and a fit of drunken insanity ensued, which continued about a fortnight. Knowing that his wife had some money, he gave her no peace, day nor night, till he got possession of it. He then took the boat for New York, spent the money, and after bartering some of his clothes, returned, a most destitute and wretched object.

After he had become sober and rational once more, I happened to meet him in the street, and asked him why he did not come to work as usual. With a voice trembling and suppressed, and with a look of grief, self-reproach, and despair that I shall never forget, he said, "I can never come into your shop again. I have not only violated my contract with you, but I have treated you with the basest ingratitude, proved myself unworthy of your confidence, and destroyed the last hope of my reformation."

I assured him of my increased desire for his welfare; he returned to his employment, and his attention to business evinced the sincerity of his confessions.

But not more than three months had elapsed before he was taken again in the toils of his old deceiver; and at this time he was so furious and unmanageable, that he was arrested and committed to the workhouse. He was soon released, and engaged once more in my business. He continued for about two months, when he fell again; and after a frenzy of a week, came to me and begged me to take him to the workhouse, as the only means by which he should get sober. He remained there a few days, and then returned to his work.

Such was his history: a few months sober, industrious, and obliging in my shop; kind, attentive, and affectionate in his family; then a week furiously drunk, absent from my shop, violent and abusive in his family; then at the workhouse; and then sober, and at home again.

He had already been excommunicated from the church for his intemperance, had become a terror to his wife, who

frequently sent for me to protect her from his violence, and seemed to be utterly abandoned.

In the month of May, 1833, he was again missing; and no one, not even his wife, knew what had become of him. But in the course of the summer she received a letter from him, in which he said he had got employment, and wished her, without informing me where he was, to come and live with him. She accordingly removed to his new residence, and I heard nothing from either of them.

About two years and a half after this, he came into my shop one day; but how changed. Instead of the bloated, wild, and despairing countenance that once marked him as a drunkard, he now wore an aspect of cheerfulness and health, of manliness and self-respect. I approached, took him by the hand, and said, "Well, —, how do you do?" "*I am well,*" said he, shaking my hand most cordially. "Yes," said I, "well in more respects than one." "*Yes, I am,*" was his emphatic reply. "*It is now more than two years since I have tasted a drop of any thing that can intoxicate.*" He began by abstaining from ardent spirits only; "But," said he, "I soon found that what you had so often told me was true; that I could not reform but by abstaining from all that can intoxicate. I have done so, and you see the result."

I then inquired after the health of his wife and child: his reply was, "They are well and happy." I asked him if "his wife made him any trouble" now. "Trouble," said he, "no; and never did make any: it was I that made the trouble. You told me so, and I knew it at the time. *But what could I do?* So long as I remained here, I could not turn a corner in your streets without passing a grog-shop. I could not go to my meals without coming in contact with some associate who would try to entice me to drink with him; and even the keepers of these shops would try every artifice to induce me to drink; for they knew that if they could get me to taste once, I should never know when to stop, and they would be sure to get a good bill against me.

"I have now come," said he, "to tell you why I left you. It was because I knew that I should die if I did not leave off drinking, and I saw distinctly that I could never leave off while I remained in Hartford. My only hope was, in going where liquor was not to be had."

About two years and a half after this, he applied to me for further employment, as the business he was following had failed. I told him there was no man whom I should rather employ, but I could not think of having him encounter again the temptations which he had so miraculously escaped. He very pleasantly replied, "I am a man now, and do not believe I have any thing more to fear from the temptations of the city than you have."

I told him that I had confidence in the firmness of his purpose, but feared to see it put to the test. Yet, as he was out of business, I consented; and no man that I ever employed did better, or was more deserving of confidence and respect. He continued with me till spring, when he proposed to take his work into the country, so that he could be with his family: the arrangement was made, and I employ him still.

On the fourth of July last, (1839,) the Sunday-schools in the town where he resides made arrangements for a celebration, and I was invited to be present and address them. As I looked upon the audience, the first countenance that met my eye was that of this very man, *at the head of his Sunday-school class*. The sight almost overwhelmed me. Instead of a loathsome, drunken maniac—a terror to his family and a curse to society, whose very presence was odious, and his example pestilential—he was then, in the expressive language of Scripture, "clothed, and in his right mind;" and was devoted to the heavenly work of guiding children to Christ and salvation. He had made a public profession of religion, which he was daily honoring by a life of Christian meekness and sobriety.

O, who can comprehend the tide of domestic joy, of social happiness, and of Christian consolation which flows through the heart of this man and his family, in consequence of this change in his habits?

Now, what was the cause of this surprising change? What wrought this wonderful transformation in this individual? The whole story is told in one short line. *He went where intoxicating liquor was not sold*. Had he remained in this city, he would probably long since have been laid in the drunkard's grave.

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN THE BIBLE AND A SINNER.

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*Bible.* "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways." Hag. 1 : 5.

*Sinner.* I am not so bad as some others.

*B.* "They that compare themselves among themselves are not wise." 2 Cor. 10 : 12.

*S.* I hope I am not so bad as to go to hell.

*B.* "The wicked shall be turned into hell." Ps. 9 : 17.

*S.* But God is merciful.

*B.* "Let every man take heed how he buildeth ; for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Cor. 3 : 10, 11.

*S.* Is there no mercy out of Christ ?

*B.* "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4 : 12. "Jesus saith, I am the way : no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14 : 6.

*S.* I hope I do some good.

*B.* "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." Psalm 14 : 3.

*S.* Is every thing that I do wicked ?

*B.* "The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord." Prov. 15 : 26. "The ploughing of the wicked is sin." Prov. 21 : 4.

*S.* I am sure I have some good thoughts.

*B.* "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Genesis 6 : 5. "Out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders." Mark 7 : 21.

*S.* If my heart be so wicked, what shall I do ?

*B.* "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, and make you a new heart and a new spirit ; for why will ye

die?" Ezek. 18:30, 31. "Give ME thine heart." Prov. 23:26. "They first gave their own selves to the Lord." 2 Cor. 8:5.

*S.* I try to be honest, and pay my debts.

*B.* "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law." Gal. 5:4.

*S.* What is the law?

*B.* "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. 22:37, 39.

*S.* Surely I have kept the law in some measure.

*B.* "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

*S.* But did not Christ do away the moral law?

*B.* "Think not that I am come to destroy the law—I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matt. 5:17. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Galatians 3:10.

*S.* How, then, shall I be delivered from the curse of the law?

*B.* "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." Gal. 3:13.

*S.* Will all, then, be saved?

*B.* "He that believeth, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16:16.

*S.* I do believe.

*B.* "The devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19.

*S.* How, then, shall I go to work?

*B.* "This is the work of God, that ye BELIEVE on him whom he hath sent." John 6:29.

*S.* What is it to believe?

*B.* "With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness." Rom. 10:10.

*S.* I have been trying to do my best.

*B.* "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Heb. 11:6.

*S.* I have been praying and reading my Bible, etc.

*B.* "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." Prov. 28:9.

*S.* Ought I not to pray?

*B.* "Men ought always to pray." Luke 18:1. "I

will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting." 1 Tim. 2 : 8.

*S.* But will not God hear if I pray the best I can, though I have not a new heart, and do not believe?

*B.* "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Rom. 14 : 23. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." Ps. 66 : 18.

*S.* What must I do to be saved?

*B.* "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16 : 31.

*S.* Is Christ able to save me?

*B.* "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7 : 25.

*S.* But I am so unworthy I am afraid he will not accept of me.

*B.* "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6 : 37.

*S.* Why, then, am I not saved?

*B.* "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." John 5 : 40.

*S.* I think I am willing, I cannot believe that I am unwilling to come to Christ.

*B.* "He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us ETERNAL LIFE; and this LIFE is in his SON." 1 John, 5 : 10, 11.

*S.* I will believe, but cannot now.

*B.* "God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Acts 17 : 30.

*S.* I must wait God's time.

*B.* "The Holy Ghost saith, To-DAY if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. 3 : 7, 8. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6 : 2. "Come, for all things are now ready." Luke 14 : 17.

*S.* How can I come now?

*B.* "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22 : 17.

*S.* If I am spared, I will try soon; perhaps to-morrow.

*B.* "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of

thee." Luke 12 : 20. "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow ; for what is your life ? it is even a vapor." James 4 : 14.

*S.* What would you have me do ?

*B.* "Be reconciled to God." 2 Cor. 5 : 20.

*S.* But do I hate him ?

*B.* "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Rom. 8 : 7. "Now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." John 15 : 24.

*S.* I never thought I hated God.

*B.* "The heart is deceitful above all things." Jer. 17 : 9. "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Prov. 28 : 26.

*S.* Well, what must I do ?

*B.* "Repent, and believe the Gospel." Mark 1 : 15. "Except ye repent, ye shall perish." Luke 13 : 3. "He that believeth, shall be saved ; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16 : 16.

*S.* What can I do more ? I have done all I can.

*B.* "Ye shall find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Jer. 29 : 13. "Let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." Isa. 27 : 5.

*S.* But may I be saved now ?

*B.* "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in thy heart, thou shalt be saved." Rom. 10 : 9.

*S.* Is this promise for me ?

*B.* "The Spirit and the bride say, Come ; and let him that heareth say, Come ; and let him that is athirst come ; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. 22 : 17.

*S.* I do believe with all my heart.

*B.* "Go thy way ; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee." Matt. 8 : 13. "Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee." Luke 8 : 39. "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto THY NAME give GLORY, for thy MERCY, and for thy TRUTH'S SAKE." Ps. 115 : 1.



## DO THYSELF NO HARM.

Look at the harm you have done yourself already.

1. In regard to your *character*. A most precious gift of God is your reason. Its dictates would have led you to God in sweet obedience and confiding love; but they have not been obeyed. You are a moral being, and capable of noble and delightful emotions towards all holy beings, similar to those that fill the bosom of angels; but all the impulses which would have led you to harmony of feeling and character with God and all the good, have been resisted. Dependent, too, as you have been, on the divine kindness for every blessing, you have yet been a stranger to pious gratitude. The noblest motives that ever invited a rational being into the service of his Maker, have been addressed to you in vain. You may stand fair before the world; but every tie that has bound you to God, has been broken. Can you look on the map of life and point out any spot, and say, "There I sincerely and cordially sought to glorify God?" Men may praise you; but were all the holy beings in the universe to give their decision, you would sink overwhelmed by the unanimous voice of condemnation. Nothing stamps a rational being with such dishonor as sin, and in your case there is not one act of holy obedience to relieve the dark picture.

2. See, too, the harm done your *happiness*. You have been a stranger to the pure and holy joys of God's service. You might have seen the world in which you dwell radiant with the beauty and glory of God, and might have tasted the sweetest pleasures from the vision, had you not suffered sin to darken and pervert your mind. Your early acceptance of Christ would have opened a fountain of holy joys, and the streams issuing from it would have run along parallel with the whole path of life. But *directly* have you done your happiness harm. You have violated the laws of your moral nature by disobeying God. The wounded flesh does not more certainly insure pain than the wounded spirit. Suffering treads in the footsteps of transgression. You have felt the painful rebukes of a guilty conscience. You

have realized an aching void in your soul, which all you have gained of the world has not been able to fill. You may have drank of the sweets of earthly bliss; but they have been often turned to bitter waters by the consciousness that you were starving an immortal mind.

3. See, too, the harm you have done your *usefulness*. Had you followed the first impulse you felt to a life of piety, by yielding your heart to the Gospel's first appeal, what a blessed influence you might have shed around you. What salutary rebukes you would have administered to evil-doers, and what joyful and animating encouragement to fellow-disciples. Your example, prayers, and labors, might have turned many from sin and death. One and another, now departed, might have gone exulting into eternity, praising God for your happy influence over them, and be now waiting to welcome you to the same happy home in heaven.

4. Most of all, consider the peril into which you have brought your soul. Here has been a dreadful desolation. By resisting all the holy and reasonable will of God, you have obliged him to become a consuming fire against you. Look at this awful attitude of his holy government: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Now look at another more terrific still, if possible: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" All the holy universe would approve the instant infliction upon you of the sentence of eternal banishment from the presence of God. Its immediate execution nothing but sovereign mercy prevents.

Have you not, then, already done yourself harm? Linger now, for a moment, on another point. You are the *sole author* of all this evil. The combined agency of all the wicked in the universe could not have done you this injury, irrespective of your own will. Who but yourself debased your noble powers to the service of sin? What hindered you from exerting the best influence on the best welfare of others, but your love and practice of iniquity? What has robbed you of the joys of holy obedience, but your refusal to obey? And your soul's peril, at whose door but your

own does that dreadful responsibility lie? No hand but your own has fired the train that threatens everlasting burnings. Accuse whom you may, the charge refuses to cleave anywhere but to your own soul.

But the harm already done will be greatly *increased by continuance in sin.*

1. In respect to *character*. All the dark hues of guilt will grow darker. Actions dishonorable to you as a rational being, and such is every sin, are rapidly accumulating; and each adds a deeper shade to the already melancholy picture. One sin blasted the honor of the angels that fell, and banished them from heaven. One sin drove our first parents in ignominy from the garden of Eden. If one sin stamps the soul with ignominy, what is done when increasing years of guilt multiply sins by millions? To what a depth, O sinner, are you plunging. You are sinking in the view of God and all holy beings. And to such a point is the matter rapidly hastening, that God, in awful justice, will suffer you to sink where the shame of sin shall be *eternal*.

2. See, too, the increasing harm to *happiness*. Sin is hastening to consume every form of it, like a devouring fire. The last draught from the cup of worldly pleasure will soon be taken, and sin will leave your soul incapable of any other. It has already cut you off from happiness in God, and when the poor joys of this life are over, the cup will be empty for ever. There is no destroyer of happiness so terrible as sin. It cuts off the branch and tears up the root, and burns them both together.

3. Go on in unrepented sin, and the spiritual and eternal *welfare of not one human being* will be promoted by your earthly existence. How melancholy the thought, that you should complete your career on earth under the accusation of having never exerted the smallest direct and holy influence to turn a perishing sinner to God. Persisting in sin will involve you in the guilt of knowing that multitudes around you are in danger of everlasting burnings, and yet leaving them unblest by a single prayer in their behalf, or a single warning of their danger. Useless, Oh think of it, amid the most exciting motives to do good known anywhere in the creation of God. Useless, when God has revealed, that every sincere effort for man's salvation, shall

meet a gracious, an eternal reward. Useless, when, through divine grace, you might have turned many to righteousness, and with them have shone "as the stars for ever and ever."

4. Go on, sinner, and the harm will be fully done in the RUIN OF YOUR SOUL. The danger is not in the fact of past guilt, vast as that guilt has been. Your madness and folly have indeed fired your dwelling, but you need not perish in the flames. The devouring woes of the law's vengeance may be repelled by "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," and all your guilt washed away in his atoning blood. No past sin necessarily seals your doom; it is the commission of another, *the rejection of the Lord Jesus Christ*. Here is the dreadful peril. "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." All that is tender, and all that is terrible in an appeal to a sinful soul, is embodied here. In the name of every thing blessed in your redemption, I charge you, do not thyself the everlasting harm of rejecting the blessed Redeemer.

Let the *benevolence* of this warning touch your heart. Paul's cry to the Philippian jailer stayed his hand, and saved him from the guilt of self-murder. The same language now bids you beware of the horrible guilt of murdering your immortal soul. The jailer heard, and lived. Hear, and you shall live. God, though dishonored and provoked by your sins, yet sends you, in infinite love, this message to prevent your knowing the harm of the second death. It is full of kindness.

It is, too, a *timely* warning. Had Paul's voice reached the jailer a moment later, it would have found him weltering in his blood. But it came in time. So does this. The ship is indeed sinking, but has not yet gone down into the dark grave of waters.

It may be the *last* warning. Think of that. God's patience has been amazing towards you; but it has a boundary. Your rejecting of this warning may be the only drop wanting to fill the cup of iniquity. Oh that you would heed the appeal, perhaps to be repeated no more,  
DO THYSELF NO HARM.

## TEMPTATIONS OF YOUNG MEN.

It is the misfortune of man to be wise too late. When involved in ruin, he finds that had he "pondered the path of his feet," all his ways would have been ordered aright. We are subject to frequent and dangerous temptations, and it is imprudent and criminal to disregard them. "Happy is the man that feareth always; but he that hardeneth his heart shall fall into mischief." "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." In view of these divine admonitions, we solicit the serious and candid attention of young men to some of the temptations by which they are surrounded; for if in early life we fail to resist the allurements of sin, we subject ourselves to its grievous and degrading bondage, not only in succeeding age, but in eternity.

1. A large class of young men are strongly tempted to *scepticism*. Not to a settled disbelief of Christianity,—for very few, if any, are so hardened as to be harassed with no fears of its truth,—but to a state of doubt and unfixedness, which, as surely as the deepest infidelity, leads to the practical rejection of the Bible and its professed blessings.

Among the prominent CAUSES of scepticism may be mentioned the *perverted spirit of our free institutions*. We exult in that liberty with which God has blessed us above other nations; and swayed by ingratitude and pride, suppose that, as we are free from the oppressive domination of man, so we are free from the law and government of God.

Another cause is the *want of consideration*. The knowledge of God must be obtained by diligent search.

Partaking of the activity of the age, and immersed in business, young men acquire such habits of indifference or aversion to religion, that they neglect or resist its claims.

We may mention also, in this connection, *intellectual pride*. Men adopt erroneous opinions and cherish them with ardent affection; and, without examining the evidences for the authority of the Gospel, find that it interferes with their notions, rises above their comprehension, checks their speculations, demands submission to God's will as the rule of life, and refuses its blessings to all who are not humble and penitent. If they receive it, they must discard their much-loved opinions; their pride will not permit this, and they reject the Gospel.

But the most fruitful cause of scepticism is *immorality*. Men delight in courses of life which the Bible forbids. To admit its authority, would be to condemn themselves. They will not renounce their sins, and in consistency and self-defence make an effort to disbelieve the Bible: not because its requisitions are injurious or unjust; but for the reason that Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, disliked the true prophet of the Lord, "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." 1 Kings, 22: 8.

As an ANTIDOTE to scepticism, look at its *origin*. It is the child of sin. Opposition to the Bible proceeds not from the unbiassed decisions of the understanding, but from the depraved feelings of the heart; and would cease to exist if the divine threatenings against sin were removed. Hundreds of speculative difficulties vanish, when the heart is renewed by grace. "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." John, 3: 19.

Scepticism is not the result of *reason*. No man ever has proved, or can prove, the Bible untrue; and each new effort made against it only serves to strengthen the

conviction of its truth. But scepticism has never offered a defence against the attacks upon it. It has no settled principles to defend, and its constant resort has been to gather up old, and stale, and often-answered objections; and present them with a pertinacity and boldness worthy a better cause. When Gibbon and Paine attempted to undermine the foundations of the christian system, a large number of replies, some of them by men of great standing and ability, were published. They did not notice one of them. Why were they silent? Why has no answer ever been attempted to the works of Paley and Jenyns, Leslie and Watson, and the host of able defenders of the christian faith? The conclusion must be, scepticism is indefensible, and the evidences of Christianity unanswerable.

The *effects* of scepticism are such as might be expected from its origin. It would destroy whatever is fair, and lovely, and productive of temporal and eternal good in the christian system, and give us nothing in its place. It permits and encourages practices which subject the body to premature decay and death; it impairs and sometimes paralyzes the intellect; it debases the affections; turns the soul from the fountain of light and happiness here, and presents it nothing but darkness and misery hereafter. It saps the foundations of all belief, and leaves no resting-place between Christianity and the horrors of atheism; for the dispositions and modes of reasoning by which it rejects the Bible, will lead to the rejection of any system claiming to be revealed, and even of natural religion itself. Every objection against the truths of the Bible may be made with equal force against the constitution and course of nature; and the very reasoning which would prove the Bible unworthy of belief, would require us to believe that the world has neither a Creator nor moral Governor.

Let the sceptic, then, *examine the evidences* of the Gos-

pel. Each one is strong by itself, and all combined constitute a solid mass which no force or ingenuity can overthrow. The public and unequivocal miracles wrought by the Saviour and his apostles—prophecy verified at the present day in the fulfilment of its predictions—the rapid and triumphant propagation of the Christian religion when met by the most violent opposition—the unexampled and perfect moral purity of the doctrines and precepts of the Bible—the life and character of Jesus Christ, unparalleled in the examples of virtue among mankind—and the adaptation of his religion in every part of it to the wants of human nature—all conspire to attest the truth, inspiration, and excellence of the Scriptures. But chiefly let *the Bible itself* be read; it is the best book on the evidences of Christianity ever written: ignorance is the fruitful cause of objections to it, and when read with an humble, docile, and honest heart, its divine origin shines on every page.

2. But some are too enlightened and conscientious to be sceptical, and yet *unwilling to submit fully to the Gospel*. They are tempted to seek some half-way point, where sin can be indulged, and enough of the form of religion obtained to pacify conscience; and unfortunately various systems of error afford the desired refuge. Some errorists warmly protest that they alone know the truth; and are deceived, because with much that is false they mingle much that is true; for error is dangerous as it is mixed with, or resembles the truth. Others, impressed with false ideas of liberality, suppose there are no essential or fundamental principles in religion; and that there can be no important difference between the conflicting creeds of those who profess to be christians. They believe there is truth in science, medicine, law, and politics, and that error in any one of these must be injurious; but that on the subject which relates to man's eternal destiny, it is immaterial what he believes,



provided he be sincere. If it be asked what views are erroneous? We answer, those which disagree with the great essential truths revealed in the Scriptures, and professed by all evangelical christians: such as the fallen and utterly lost condition of man: his redemption by the grace of God, through faith in the merits of a Divine Saviour: and his regeneration, and preparation for heaven, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, and the instrumentality of the means of grace. These are known to be true, because they accord with the plain and obvious meaning of the Bible, and, when really believed, produce the fruits of righteousness.

As a guard against error or laxity of opinion, let it be borne in mind that *the truth may be known*. It is throwing contempt on God to admit that he has made a revelation of his will, and yet left it so unintelligible that we cannot discern between what is right and what is wrong. We are responsible for our belief. Our opinions excite our feelings, and our feelings impel us to action; and if we are guilty for doing wrong, we are also guilty for adopting the opinion which leads us to do so. Error is poisonous to the soul. Its effects may be slow and imperceptible, but ultimately will be certain and awfully destructive. It may be cherished during life, and may delude even in death; but at the judgment we shall meet the God of truth, and he must condemn all who refuse to believe and love it. The sincerity and confidence with which erroneous sentiments are avowed are no proofs of their correctness; God has declared that when men will prefer error to truth, he will judicially abandon them to their chosen courses, make their bands strong, and let them await their recompense hereafter.

3. False notions of *personal independence* often fill the minds of young men. The early age at which they come into active life, a deficient education, and the driving spirit of the times, render them vain of their strength;

and they consider it an evidence of manliness to break over old and ordinary restrictions, and deviate from the beaten path before them. They imagine they must think for themselves, and therefore differ from every one else. Some have been religiously educated; they received their fathers' faith without investigation; in the world they hear it assailed, they listen to objections against it, never examine the evidences for its truth, and finally break what they call the trammels of education, and neglect or despise that religion whose sweet influences made their paternal home an abode of happiness, and moulded their early habits to virtue and truth; and which those most dear to them, living and dying, valued above all earthly treasures. Having avowed their opinions, they feel bound to maintain them, and thus fix themselves immovably in some system of unbelief. Let all such recollect that it is far more safe to be distrustful than vainly confident. The faith they so independently reject has been the chosen portion of the wisest and best of earth; and when philosophy, and literature, and science have bowed with reverence to religion, it ill becomes inexperienced youth to cast it away.

The writer of these pages was, a few years since, called to the bed-side of a bold and daring infidel. The near approach of death convinced him of his need of preparation, but his bodily sufferings prevented his giving the short and distracted attention of his dying hours to the concerns of his soul. During a slight intermission of pain he requested prayer to be offered. It was done, and he was pointed to the Saviour. He replied, "I have been a most wicked and incorrigible opponent of the whole Christian system, and I know not why I was so but for *the pride of opinion*." The consolations of that religion which he neglected and scorned in life were denied him in death, and he went to eternity a sacrifice to a false independence and pride of opinion. "Rejoice,

O young man, in thy youth ; and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes : but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Eccl. 11 : 9.

4. There are some, however, who, *from the want of a true spirit of independence*, fear to take an open and decided stand in favor of the truth. The mutual dependence which exists in society, and a false estimate of the wisdom and right feeling of mankind, deter many from expressing or changing their opinions, from breaking off bad practices and vicious associations, and from discharging important and acknowledged duties. Ridicule and misrepresentation are also employed to keep men from religion. A rational conviction of truth, on good evidence, is characterized as credulity ; while belief, without evidence, is free thinking. A sincere attachment and obedience to the truth is represented as bigotry ; while a disregard of correct principles is liberality. The fear of God is denominated superstition ; and a reckless course is manliness. An honest zeal for the best interests of mankind is called fanaticism ; and a selfish and careless mode of life reputable. A serious deportment is styled hypocrisy, and levity and dissipation only innocent pleasure. It is difficult to break the force of such perversions. The friends of true religion are willing to submit its evidences and doctrines to candid investigation, and to test its practical utility by its fruits ; but they cannot refute a laugh, or disprove a sneer.

Let each young man esteem his soul too valuable to be exchanged for so low a price as the ribaldry and scoffs of the profane. The law of God, and not the opinions of men, is the rule of life.

God holds each individual personally responsible for his opinions and conduct ; others may entice him to sin, but they will not, and cannot relieve him from

punishment. A straight forward, independent attachment to what is right will alone be pleasant and safe. The approbation of the world is never sincerely given to the fearful and compromising; it is very changeable, worth but little at the best, and can but poorly repay the loss of the friendship of God.

5. We naturally admire what is great; and as the humble followers of Christ embrace "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble," some are prone to *regard the Gospel as adapted only to weak and inferior minds*. True possessors of religion feel their need of it, and give it the attention it demands; while rejecters, lifted up with pride, feel no necessity, or are so engrossed with other things, that they do not attend to it; and its acceptance or rejection has ever turned on other causes than the strength or weakness of the intellect. Christianity was evidently designed rather to make men *good*, than great. She comes to supply the moral necessities of mankind, and needs no adventitious support. But there is more in her truths, when cheerfully received and obeyed, to make men truly great, than can be found any where else. She implants those moral qualities which are necessary to give the intellect its greatest vigor. She directs attention to the welfare of the undying soul, an object of more importance than empires or worlds. The Bible reveals truths which the greatest minds of antiquity sought in vain. It has afforded subjects for the noblest efforts of the pencil, and themes for the loftiest strains of eloquence and song; the most profound maxims of jurisprudence, and the most comprehensive and excellent rules of private life. Those expanded minds who have conferred the greatest blessings on mankind, have delighted to study its truths; and Christianity should not be associated with littleness when she numbers among her sincere friends and advocates such philosophers as Newton and Euler,

such physicians as Rush and Good, such lawyers as Sir Matthew Hale and Chief Justice Marshall, and such statesmen as Washington.

6. *The high and ardent feelings* of youth often lead them to place too great a value on the things of the world, and indulge expectations from it which can never be realized. Unmindful of the experience of others, they press on with eager desire to obtain its fancied blessings, till repeated and bitter disappointments convince them of their folly. The great end of existence is to glorify God, and prepare for an immortal state. The world, if kept in its appropriate place, and pursued from right motives, will be no hinderance; but if permitted to engage supreme affection it must disappoint. Its best gifts are short-lived, often attended with satiety and followed by sorrow. The votary of pleasure has mourned the day when he bartered his soul for vanity and songs; the man of wealth has found his gold too poor to buy a reprieve from affliction or death, and the recipient of the world's applause has felt the unmitigated remorse and despair of a dying hour. God alone is the satisfying portion of the soul. Earth's fading distinctions cannot be contrasted with the imperishable crown of glory, nor its riches with the incorruptible and undefiled inheritance above.

7. The temptation to consider religion simply a matter of general interest, and *postpone to a more convenient season* the requisite attention to its claims, is a common and fatal one. The welfare of the soul is a direct personal concern, and we should banish immediately every thought of neglecting it. Young men would shudder at the suggestion of postponing it for ever; and in nothing is the ingenuity of the great destroyer more manifest than the manner in which he secures the neglect of present opportunities with the promise of attending to the subject in future. But the engagements of the future

will be as numerous and pressing as those which occupy us now; the work will be entirely deferred, and the delaying soul perish a victim to good intentions. "God *now* commandeth all men every where to repent." Acts, 17:30. He says, "Behold *now* is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. 6:2. He offers no mercy to the future penitent, nor can he consistently; and if any of our pursuits forbid immediate obedience to his claims, they are sinful and should be abandoned. Business and care will multiply with years, bad habits may be inveterately formed, and the power and pollution of sin will increase. Circumstances now favorable may be changed, and existing difficulties become more formidable; and should you not descend to an early tomb, by the repeated neglect of your privileges you may tempt God to withhold the influences of his Spirit, and there will then remain no hope for you. You will live a ruined man—you may move cheerfully in society, but will be as certain of perdition as if you were at this moment in the midst of its agonies and woes.

8. Young men are often deeply injured by reading *works of fiction*, and attending *theatrical representations*. We class these together because both appeal to the imagination. Novels form a large part of the literature of the present day, and the theatre professes to be a good school for the study of morality and human nature. They are hurtful, as they give an undue predominance to the imagination, and weaken and depress the other faculties of the mind. The beautiful harmony of the intellectual powers is destroyed, and mental imbecility and deformity ensue.

The love of *fiction*, and a spirit of deep, patient, philosophic investigation, cannot be united. The disproportionate exercise of the imagination is prejudicial to the health and development of the physical system, and tends to shorten life. It expels true social affection from

the heart, and renders it cold, obdurate, and selfish. "No cloak of selfishness," says the author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, "is more impenetrable than that which usually envelopes a pampered imagination. The reality of woe is the very circumstance that paralyzes sympathy; and the eyes that can pour forth their floods of commiseration over the sorrows of the romance or the drama, grudge a tear to the substantial wretchedness of the unhappy. This kind of luxurious sensitiveness to fiction is not unfrequently conjoined with a callousness that enables the subject of it to pass through the affecting occasions of domestic life in immovable apathy: the heart has become like that of Leviathan, 'firm as a stone, yea, hard as a piece of the nether millstone.'" It also unfits the individual for the sober business of life; inevitably weakens and deadens moral principle; strengthens vicious propensities; leads to a rejection of the Gospel, and prepares the soul for a world where its delusions and dreams will be exchanged for the most appalling realities.

The *theatre* adds to these evils others of a fearful character. It is supported by intemperance and licentiousness, and the immorality of its actors is well known. It has ever been hostile to those virtues which make society happy; and it is distressing to think of the many who, in attending it, commenced or prosecuted a career which has ended in the loss of health, property, reputation, life, and heaven. Let young men be on their guard. Books of travels, history, science and religion, will furnish rich food for their minds, and the various institutions designed for the advancement of the temporal and eternal welfare of man will afford ample scope for the cultivation of all the virtues which adorn humanity.

9. The temptations to *intemperance* still beset the unguarded. From the large army of drunkards a detach-

ment of several thousand is every year consigned to death. But the army does not decrease : the young men of the country crowd in as volunteers to fill the vacant places, and the unbroken host moves on to ruin. While danger is altogether unsuspected, a taste for intoxicating drinks is gradually formed ; repeated gratifications increase it, and soon the deluded victim of this vice becomes abandoned. When entering on active life, animated with hope and cheered by the devoted attachment of friends, the youth would think as complacently of ending his life in a dungeon or on a gibbet, as of dying a drunkard ; and yet many, deceived by the insidious approaches of intemperance, have gone down, through a life of wretchedness, to a death of infamy and an eternity of wo. Young man, awake to a knowledge of your state. You may be approaching that tremendous whirlpool whose waters have engulfed many vessels as fair and staunch as your own. Listen to its fearful roar ; look beyond and see the shore covered with the drifted wrecks of human genius, and greatness, and excellence ; venture not even to its outmost verge. Your security consists in total abstinence from the intoxicating agent.

10. Many are tempted to *gambling*. In this we include betting in every form, encouraging lotteries, and the irrational practice of playing at games of chance. Property is a trust conferred on its possessor, and for its use God will hold him responsible. The unprofitable servant, who only buried his talent, was condemned to outer darkness ; with how much severer punishment must he be visited who, by betting, throws away, without the least return, the possessions committed to his charge ? Lotteries are extensive legalized systems of fraud, by which a few are enabled to possess themselves of the hard earnings of the many ; and with all other games of chance, even such as are resorted to for amusement, are wrong : they involve an impious appeal to the



divine throne, and are a wanton profanation of the lot, which is an institution of God for special religious and moral purposes. There is no such thing as chance. "God's kingdom ruleth over all." Ps. 103 : 19. "The lot is cast into the lap ; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord ;" Prov. 16 : 33 ; and the repeated reference to his providence on the most trivial occasions must be displeasing to him. If there were no playing for amusement there would be no gambling. Those who begin without any anticipation of injury, are seduced from step to step, till they become occasional gamblers, and some go so far as to make it a profession. The lowest avarice, and the most disgusting passions, rule in the hearts of such as give themselves up to this vice. The endearing ties which bind the man to his family and society are sundered, he becomes an outcast from all holy and restoring influences, an associate of such as he despises, and a prey to those whose tender mercies are cruel. "Touch not—handle not," should be the governing motto of every one who would escape this evil.

11. A temptation must now be mentioned which stands more in the way of the salvation of young men than perhaps any other. It is one which, from the depravity of our nature, operates universally ; and though the effects of yielding to it are not always apparent, they are not therefore the less ruinous. It is the temptation to licentiousness. It may exist unaccompanied with overt acts of transgression : "I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matt. 5 : 28. To describe its extensive and injurious influence would be impossible. Where it is simply confined to the heart, it weakens and vitiates the intellectual and moral powers ; and where practised outwardly is fatal to all virtue and happiness. It produces neglect of the means of grace, leads to scepticism, and makes man "earthly,

sensual, devilish." It commences in unguarded impurity of heart, continues in debasement of life, and ends in a shattered constitution, early death, and ceaseless pain hereafter. If the fire is not already burning within and consuming him, let the young man bear in mind that he carries in his bosom combustible materials, and he must keep away the spark which would inflame them. Let him "keep his heart with all diligence," Prov. 4: 23, restrain his imagination, guard against idleness, shun all vicious associations, and seek the purifying and strengthening influence of God's grace ever to be with him.

12. The present age offers remarkable facilities for accumulating wealth; and one of its most alarming evils is the general tendency to *covetousness*. This word is unpopular, and frequently misunderstood; but so far is it from designating an imaginary evil, that the haste to be rich witnessed on every hand, is but a development of it. What a heathen poet calls "the cursed thirst for gold," seems to bring into subordination, or swallow up, all other interests. The value of wealth, wisely used, cannot be denied; but it can never be admitted that God's chief design in the glorious works of creation, providence, and redemption, was to enable his immortal creatures to hoard up treasures which cannot bless them in eternity, which even here may take to themselves wings and fly away, or from which death may tear them at any moment. On no pursuit has he more clearly marked his disapprobation than this, when carried to excess. It may appear more reputable, because free from the grosser consequences which attend other evil courses, but is more to be feared on that account. It robs its possessor of self-respect, and the respect of others. It withers his sympathies and murders his conscience. It produces habits which destroy all susceptibility for the enjoyment of riches when ob-

tained. "The love of money is the root of all evil," 1 Tim. 6:10, and much of the war, murder, theft, dishonesty, slander, quarrelling, dissipation, and licentiousness which has cursed the earth, originated in it. The Scriptures plainly declare that "covetousness is idolatry," Col. 3:5; and class it with adultery, and all the principal sins which exist in the world. It is a disposition unprecedented in the character of any of the children of God mentioned in the Scriptures. One spoke unadvisedly; another, influenced by fear, cursed and swore; a third was betrayed into a passion; a fourth was guilty of adultery—but not one was covetous.

But its crowning and most deadly act is that it steals the heart from God; permits his day of gracious visitation to pass unimproved, and brings upon those who would be rich in this world, everlasting and irretrievable poverty. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life." John, 6:27. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." Mark, 8:36, 37.

Other temptations might be mentioned, but these are the most common and dangerous. A general remark must suffice for the rest. God will be your final Judge, and his estimate of your character will determine your destiny. What he approves is right, what he forbids is wrong. Whatever would lead you away from him will bring guilt upon you, and pierce you through with many sorrows. No circumstance can ever justify sin against him. If you would have his approbation, shun the very appearance of evil. Indifference to temptation, or dallying with it, will lead you to sin, and "sin when it is finished bringeth forth death." James, 1:15. Your undying soul is in danger. If fire consume your dwelling, you can rebuild it; if disease waste your health, you

may regain it; if slander blight your reputation, you may repair it; but if your soul is lost, *all* is gone. *Once lost, you are lost for ever.*

Young men! by your weighty obligations to your country, be entreated to guard against sin, for it is "righteousness" that "exalteth a nation." By your solemn responsibilities to your fellow-men, be induced to exemplify in your lives the purity and excellence of the Gospel. By your dearest and most important interests, be excited to "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise." Eph. 5 : 15. By the solemnities of the last day be persuaded to make the needful preparation to meet God, through repentance for sin and faith in Jesus Christ. By all the glories that cluster around the Redeemer's cross, be constrained to "yield yourselves to God." Rom. 6 : 13. Seek, before every thing else, his friendship through the merits of his Son. This will bring you lasting peace and substantial happiness; will cheer the darkest hour of your earthly pilgrimage; strengthen you under the heaviest trial which awaits you; convert the bed of death into a scene of triumph, and link the last pang of expiring nature with the first rapture of never-ending joy. Engrave upon your hearts the advice of the dying king of Israel to his royal son, and let it be the guide of your existence: "Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind: for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him he will cast thee off for ever." 1 Chron. 28 : 9.

(This Tract was prepared and published in compliance with the dying request of the widow of the lamented HARRIAN PAGE, of New-York city.)

## COUNSELS TO A YOUNG MAN.

A YOUNG MAN!—How interesting the character to the christian philanthropist! In him he contemplates a spirit immortal, intelligent, accountable, just commencing an endless existence amid special advantages and peculiar dangers. And he sees pending on the first direction of its course, infinite results! Let me then affectionately speak to the youthful reader of the snares and temptations to which he is exposed. These are both *internal*, resulting from the perversion and corruption of the intellectual and moral powers by sin; and *external*, arising from surrounding objects of sense. The latter, however, derive their chief power from their alliance to the former. It is its own native depravity that has thus brought the soul into subjection. The immortal part is controlled by that which is mortal; the spiritual, by the animal nature. Such is the melancholy effect of the apostacy, and hence the dangers which so constantly beset us. In the ardent season of youth, the peril is the more imminent with the increased force of temptation.

The *imagination* is the medium through which our insidious adversary presents some of his most fatal snares, and whatever can minister aliment to a vain and vicious imagination should be most vigilantly shunned.

Of this nature are most of the *fictitious publications* of the present day. The perusal of these you ought to consider as a dangerous snare. At no former period, perhaps, has the press poured forth so profusely this class of literature. Decked in gaudy attire, and embellished with all that can render them attractive, these vehicles too often of licentiousness and infidelity, are scat-

tered through the land, and not unfrequently form the ornaments of the parlor and drawing-room. There they are enshrined, supplanting the useful productions of genius and science, and captivating the mind and heart by their fascinating but destructive influence. Through these polished magazines of temptation the youthful fancy loves to rove, feasting on its poisonous sweets, and eagerly pursuing every new production both as an incentive and a gratifier of its wayward inclinations. That some of these productions bear the impress, and merit the applause of great mental accomplishments, is not to be denied. But it is the impress of talent perverted and abused. And,

While on their pages genius smiles,  
*Religion* di:ops a tear.

Intellectual effort not being required to any considerable degree in their perusal, the mind becomes impoverished amid these repeated reveries of the imagination, and the deluded youth is gradually unfitted for the sober realities of life ; disqualified either to perform its relative and social duties, to enjoy its rational comforts, or to endure its necessary and common afflictions. The world is thus contemplated through a false medium, by which "beauty is painted in colors more charming than nature, and happiness described which man never tastes ;" and as quickly as the vision is ended, does the mind become dissatisfied with itself, and disappointed in all with which it finds itself connected. I have watched the process of this mental and moral contamination. I have seen young persons of respectability and promise, with their attention riveted to a volume which their consciences condemned, and which they felt constrained to conceal from their parents. But so fascinated were they with its attractions that, like the bird fluttering beneath

the fangs of the basilisk, or like our first mother in Eden, they could not extricate themselves.

I forbear to expatiate on the prevalence and the baleful influence of publications more directly cherishing licentiousness and atheism, and the more than questionable exhibitions of statuary and painting. "The numbers of the poet, the delightful melody of song, the fascinations of the chisel, and the spell of the pencil, have been all volunteered for the moral ruin of unhappy man." The following resolution of an accomplished gentleman and orator, who feared God,\* affords a safe rule for guidance on this subject. Permit me to recommend it to your attention and adoption, with reference to this whole class of temptations: "*I will not read any book which I should be unwilling to have it known that I had read, or the reading of which I shall probably recollect with regret on my dying bed.*"

*Theatrical representations* are also a powerful auxiliary to the great tempter and destroyer. The mind especially that has been entranced with fiction in private, will desire to see the scenes of unreal mirth and wo with which it has been conversant, personified upon the stage. Hence novels are often converted into plays. The theatre has been called a "school of morals," and its false exhibitions of joy and sorrow, "useful." But this, in truth, is the language of *irony*. You are probably aware that the theatre originated under the government and rites of heathenism, and that it was denounced even by heathen moralists. "Plays," said Plato, "raise the passions and pervert the use of them, and are dangerous to morality." Theatrical exhibitions have ever been condemned in christian countries as highly immoral in their tendency. Even the infidel Rousseau, though he wrote for the stage, resisted the

\* Rev. Dr. Porter, late of the Theological Seminary, Andover.

attempt to introduce this amusement into Geneva, on the ground of its deeply corrupting influence. It may justly be styled a "*school of licentiousness*," for within its unhallowed precincts infatuated youth of both sexes learn to witness without a blush, and to hear unshocked, what would not be endured in a private social circle of the least respectability. To say nothing of the avenues to intemperance, gaming, and crime which surround the theatre; there, as in the writings of fiction and romance, the mind becomes familiar with scenes in which virtue is oppressed, and vice triumphs and is vindicated under every false and deceptive plea. The annals of crime furnish the most melancholy facts in countless detail, to illustrate its destructive influence on the character, the prospects, the hopes, in short, the welfare, temporal and eternal, of the young.

The passions and appetites, operating and acted upon through the medium of the senses, form another fruitful source of temptation; their predominance over the reason and judgment is almost characteristic of early life, and is the cause of a large proportion of the follies, crimes, and wretchedness, which mark the temporal if not the everlasting ruin of many of the young. Through the influence of an excited imagination, perverted by such instrumentalities as are already noticed, the arch-deceiver presents the enticements of sensual pleasure. Hence the multiplied warnings of experience in the fate of innumerable victims are generally as powerless and unheeded as are those so faithfully and graphically drawn on the sacred pages. Alas, too often the syren song of pleasure has more charms for unsuspecting youth than the voice of heavenly wisdom. They first listen to her delusive strains, and then yield themselves living sacrifices to her tyrannical and destructive sway. Loss of character, friends, employment, health, and life follow in her train; but what are these, compared with that quenchless rag-



ing of desire, that indelible stain of guilt, and those endless stings of remorse, treasured up against that day, when the results of such a career, however secret, will be felt in eternal banishment from all purity, and the destruction of both soul and body in hell! If you would shun the vortex, "keep thy heart with all diligence." "Be temperate in all things." Avoid every avenue of temptation. "Touch not, taste not, handle not," under any form, the cup of intoxication. Be employed in some profitable study or useful business; for idleness is the fruitful parent of vice—the handmaid of every temptation.

Your *social feelings* likewise expose you to many temptations. You are fond of society—a trait in the human character designed to be a source of our highest earthly enjoyment, and which, when rightly controlled and directed, especially when governed by the principles of piety in the heart, is still promotive of much of our comfort and aid on life's pilgrimage. But it is a painful truth, that our social nature has been rendered, by sin, an instrument of mutual corruption and ruin, through the force of example. Such is the depravity of the heart, that it gives to *vicious* example, and *evil* communications, a cordial reception. The soil is adapted to the seed; and having contracted such an intimacy with others as to yield to them your confidence, the seeds of vice and infidelity may be easily and thickly sown in your heart when you are least aware. When persons meet but seldom, and in public or among strangers, a natural caution, or motives of policy, may induce an artificial demeanor which disguises their true characters; yet even in such circumstances evil example is not without its influence. But the intimacy of private friendship and frequent social intercourse, in which restraint is thrown off, and secret feelings and sentiments are disclosed, affords the greatest facilities to the tempter. You will, I presume, readily admit that such intimacy

with a bold profligate, or one who is under no influence but that of an unsubdued will and unbridled passions and appetites, is extremely hazardous to a young man. And I trust you have contracted no such friendships, or if you have, that you will immediately abandon them, as you value your moral character and immortal welfare.

The example and influence of open profligacy, however, though very corrupting, is not the most ensnaring; for it often counteracts itself by its shocking impiety, and disgusts rather than allures a reflecting mind. It is the companionship of those whose frivolity, practical infidelity, and supreme devotedness to pleasure, are blended with much amiableness of disposition, attractiveness of manner, refinement of taste, mental cultivation, and propriety of outward deportment, that wins the confidence of the youthful heart. They often profess and manifest much respect for the institutions of Christianity, and not unfrequently maintain a "form of godliness." The following lines present the general features of their portraiture :

" Mine be the friend less frequent in his prayers,  
" Who makes no bustle with his soul's affairs,  
" Whose wit can brighten up a wintry day,  
" And chase the spleen of life's dull hours away;  
" Leaves saints to enjoy the mysteries they teach,  
" And plucks the fruit placed more within his reach."

If your feelings and preference in the selection of your companions accord with this language, you may soon place yourself, if you have not already done so, within the fatal vortex of licentious dissipation. All the temptations which I have specified will throng around you with increased power, from the influence of such associates. The restraints of conscience and a religious education, if you have been blessed with one, will be gradually thrown off. You will be tempted in the out-

set to dismiss those serious thoughts which are essentially connected with the future welfare of the soul. Your facilities for poisoning the mind and hardening the heart through the imagination will be augmented; and from the more refined works of fiction and folly you will soon be introduced to an acquaintance with the grosser productions of licentiousness and infidelity. When thus your imagination has become corrupted and your conscience seared, if not before, you will feel no reluctance in a frequent resort to the scenes of dissipation.

Among these, in addition to the theatre, are *the chamber of mirth* and *professed parties of pleasure*. I mean such pleasure as expels seriousness and even reflection, unfits the heart for devotion, and renders it averse to self-scrutiny and meditation in solitude; *pleasure*, which reason as well as the Bible condemns, for its inconsistency with the character and circumstances of man as a sinner, and with his destiny as an heir of immortality; *pleasure*, in the pursuit or enjoyment of which you cannot pray, and dare not die. Whatever has such an influence over the mind and heart, must, in its very nature, be dangerous to your highest interests, although it may receive from the world the stamp of innocency. To these scenes of dissipation you may be often allured, and, ere you are aware, become devoted.

Under this overwhelming influence from the "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," there is another tendency of the youthful heart which adds strength to temptation—its proneness to *overrate or form a wrong estimate of worldly happiness*. Reason teaches that our natures require sources of enjoyment more exalted and enduring than the transient objects of time. Experience seconds the admonitions of reason. The pathway of the young is guarded with beacons, rising amid the wretchedness of the unhappy victims to amusement and illicit pleasure, warning of the impending danger, while the

oracles of God present the same caution, both by precept and example, on almost every page. They denounce as pernicious and destructive to the soul, every scheme and object in the pursuit of happiness, which is at variance with the divine commands, and with an habitual preparation for death and the scenes beyond it. Yet notwithstanding these counsels from reason, experience, and revelation, there is no truth which the young seem so reluctant to accredit, as that mere worldly happiness, from whatever object it is sought, lies chiefly in anticipation; and, when attained, is transient and unsatisfying. They still pursue the visionary chase, urged onward by the example and influence of others, until personal experience alone brings them to reflection.

Let me also caution you against those appeals which may be made to your *pride*, your *curiosity*, or your *love of variety*, to draw you into the snares which the world presents under the disguise of happiness. These appeals are usually made through the medium of *fashion* or the prevailing customs and opinions of society. The power of fashion in the dissemination of vice is very manifest. You may have observed with what self-complacency the youthful disciple in the school of intemperance calls for the social dram with his companions; utters the half-learned epithets of fashionable profaneness; and relates his adventures in some Sunday frolic or scene of fashionable dissipation. With what an air of self-consequence does he spurn parental authority, if indeed he has ever been made acquainted with it; and with what aping of manhood and "swelling words of vanity" does he talk about the *prejudices of education*! Perhaps through no medium does the force of ungodly example harden the heart and sear the conscience more rapidly than that of fashion. To say nothing of the pecuniary risks and embarrassments to which her extravagant demands in *dress*, *equipage*, and *style of liv-*

*ing* tempt her votaries ; they are gradually unfitted for usefulness, and even for the enjoyment of their own schemes of happiness. You cannot guard too cautiously against the influence of fashion over your social feelings, and against the temptations which are thus so thickly spread around you to overrate and inordinately pursue worldly happiness.

The following is not a solitary, nor even a rare occurrence : A youth of pious education and of promise, becomes intimately associated with an amiable, intelligent, and genteel libertine, until, attracted by his fascinating manners and generous disposition, he prefers his society and yields him implicit confidence. His seducer recites some of the less appalling feats in his own career ; perhaps the pleasures of the race-ground, the frolics of the chase, or the fascinations of the ball-room or theatre. With the aid of romance the youth is next induced to draw an invidious contrast between the restraints of home and the libertinism of his mis-named *friend*, until his prejudices are enlisted against the former and in favor of the latter. Having heard with interest the description, he is easily tempted, and soon brought within the giddy whirl of amusement.

As he is borne onward from one scene of dissipation to another, he is brought to the *gaming-table*, under some one of its more *genteel* forms, and, at first, merely as a means of diversion. Accustomed from childhood to associate gaming with crime and infamy, he is startled at the temptation. But the presence of his associates, and especially the influence of his *friend*, (who may have also secured him in the fetters of *pecuniary obligation*,) embolden him to throw off these " prejudices of the nursery." Thus the check which an enfeebled conscience attempted to give, is stifled, and that faithful monitor is resisted into silence. He becomes a skilful gambler, and finds the midnight hours too

short for his engagements. Fatigue and exhaustion afford a ready apology for tasting the *cup of intoxication* in the shape of *wine, cordial*, or some other of its more inviting forms, and he retires from the scene entranced with its fascinations. He is now of course an easy prey to these temptations. He soon becomes a *manager* in these sports of ungodliness; and at length, through covetousness or pecuniary embarrassment, is led to employ the gaming-table in all its forms as a source of unjust gain, and ultimately as an altar on which he sacrifices all his temporal prospects. Disappointment and pecuniary ruin now render any intoxicating draught a welcome solace. The haunts of idleness and infamy become his habitual resort, and his associates are now the abandoned and the vile. Reduced to penury, stript of character, and corrupted by sensuality, he becomes the victim of disease, or the reckless perpetrator of crime; and the dram-shop, the brothel, the prison, the gallows, or some other miserable end, form the waymarks of his course to perdition. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Stand aloof, I beseech you, my young friend, from the companionship of the libertine, the free-thinker, and all who evince by their conduct that they "fear not God, neither regard man."

Another general class of temptations to which you are peculiarly exposed at the present day and in this country, are those which arise from THE GENIUS OF OUR GOVERNMENT, AND THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

The current of popular feeling is strongly towards natural liberty, or the removal of *all coercion* from individual passion and inclination. It is on this feeling that infidelity fastens its cold and iron grasp, and enslaves the mind under the pretence of *free-thinking*.

The disposition which cannot brook the restraint of faithful domestic government, or has never been subdued by such restraint, is that which sets at defiance the law of God, and ultimately, civil authority. The same influence which would tempt you to obliterate the impressions of early religious instruction, and to resist those salutary monitions of conscience which result from such instruction, will, if cherished, soon destroy your confidence in divine revelation and the truths of the christian religion.

You are beset with temptations also, in the multiplied, various, and often conflicting objects of attention, all claiming the sanction of religious obligation, which, through the freedom of the press, are constantly presented to the public mind. When I reflect on these influences, and the boldness of the advocates of infidelity, who say "Our lips are our own, who is lord over us?" I feel that you stand in jeopardy every hour. Guard especially against that spirit of self-confidence, which, in connection with this feeling of scepticism, will tempt you to arraign God's revelation at the bar of *reason*, as the umpire not only of what it does, but of what it ought or ought not to contain. "Thus saith the Lord, ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls."

*The spirit of enterprise and of change* which characterises the present age, is likely to generate a *lawless ambition*—an eagerness for preferment—that is reckless of the means employed to obtain it. Such a disposition can be cherished, and such a course of conduct pursued, only by the abandonment of all moral principle, and the sacrifice of the soul to a fickle popularity. Under a government like ours, where the offices of trust and authority are open to all, and the aspirants are multiform and numerous, the temptations to such a dereliction of moral principle are powerful and dangerous. It

is not necessary to specify the practiced arts of bribery, deceit, intrigue, hypocrisy, falsehood and perjury, or to point you to examples of such sacrifice of character and principle, which are more than sufficient to warn you against this class of temptations.

The production in the heart of an *inordinate love of gain*, is another tendency of the prevalent spirit of enterprise. At no period of our country's history, perhaps, have the temptations which the love of money presents to a young man, been so numerous and formidable. He is surrounded by the example of his superiors in age and experience, who may be accumulating thousands by the transactions of an hour or the throw of a die, and by the multitude incessantly driving forward in the competition for wealth. Amid this current of example, and especially if intimately associated with those who, though they may *profess* better things, are "making haste to be rich," you are exposed to become a devotee of *mammon*; and as such you will be tempted by some of its numerous snares to barter your soul for money! Passing by, at present, the fearful warnings of the Bible on this point, which declares a supreme devotedness to wealth to be an insuperable barrier between the sinner and heaven—more difficult to overcome than for "a camel to pass through the eye of a needle"—let me specify a few of these temptations.

Under the plea of "enterprise" the inordinate pursuit of wealth will tempt you to adopt and practise measures for its attainment inconsistent with the principles of strict justice and equity. "As honest as the times will admit," is a phrase, too frequently expressive of real character. Your *business* may be one which is at variance with the interests of your neighbor, as the manufacture and sale of intoxicating drink, the vending of lottery tickets, or the furnishing of other means of gaming and dissipation, and thus indicate that you



have lowered your standard of morality down to a palpable violation of the Saviour's golden rule of equity.

Or if your business be in itself proper and respectable, an excessive thirst for gain may tempt you to some of those "tricks of trade," so called, which heap guilt upon the conscience and ruin the soul. Of this nature are the concealment of defects in articles sold; extravagant and false recommendations of their qualities; exorbitant and extortionate charges; unjust depreciation of the goods of another; oppression of the hireling in his wages; unjust weights and measures; adulteration and deception in those articles which are susceptible of it, both in their original manufacture and subsequently, and other similar practices. In some forms of business, breaches of trust, or speculations on borrowed capital, may tempt you to leave your creditors pennyless, while you live secure from want, if not luxuriously, but with "a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation."

I might speak of usury, avarice, and a host of other temptations, incident to the inordinate love of pecuniary gain. But they are innumerable. *Neglect of the means of salvation, and a desecration of the Sabbath to secular purposes, are not the least among them.* "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of *all* evil." Mark this declaration. Success in the pursuit of wealth is not necessary to bring you within its ensnaring and ruinous influence. The supreme *love* of mammon may be as fatal to the soul amid the entire defeat of its wishes, as under the noon-tide of prosperity. *Ungratified* covetousness, especially when incited by the demands of dissipated habits and love of sensual indulgence, exposes its subject to the temptations of *fraud, theft, forgery*, and other similar

crimes, which result in ruin even for the present life. Your best safeguard on this subject is the acquirement and preservation of that frame of mind which, in submission to the divine will, prompted the prayer of Agur: "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me. Lest I be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain"

I will allude to but one other class of temptations to which you are peculiarly exposed. This is especially an age of revivals of religion, or of *the mission of the Holy Spirit*. You will be surrounded by these gracious movements, and may sometimes feel their influence on your own mind. You will therefore be tempted to sin against this blessed agent in these his vital operations, and thus seal your own death-warrant for eternity. Guard, I entreat you, against every emotion of levity or indifference, to say nothing of contempt and ridicule, which at any time may arise in your mind on this subject. Avoid treating with similar feelings, or even with neglect, the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the holy Scriptures, and other means which God has appointed and blessed for human salvation. Rather give them the place they merit in your esteem and attention; and above all other things, welcome and strive to secure to your own soul the abiding influences of the Spirit of grace, as your only basis for hope, and your only security against the many snares which beset you on your pilgrimage to the grave.

And now, my dear young friend, I must bid you farewell, with the parting exhortation to remember that you are travelling to the grave, and to an endless retribution. If death should spare you, you will soon pass the *spring-time* of your existence, which, if wasted or neglected, can never be redeemed. Your character and destiny, for this world and the next, depend on the stamp,

virtuous or vicious, which that character now receives. Your preparation to meet and sustain the responsibilities connected with your approaching domestic and civil relations in life, is closely connected with your avoidance of the snares which are so thickly spread around you. Yield yourself up to any one of them—make the fatal resolve to test by your own experience the truth of these warnings, instead of trusting to them—and you make shipwreck of virtue, character, influence, happiness, all that renders life valuable or even supportable. Your character forms rapidly; your habits “grow with your growth and strengthen with your strength.” Think of this, if you are looking forward to old age, that your “bones” may not be “full of the sin of your youth.” Beware of every thing by which impurity and licentiousness of thought, imagination, or design, may be awakened in the mind. Avail yourself of the moral seed-time of youth to “sow to the Spirit, that you may of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

Remember “it is rare to see the gray hairs of devotion silver the head which was not *early* taught of heaven;” and that “*early* scholars in religion are the best, for they have less to unlearn.” There is reason to hope that in your case the work of eradicating evil habits and of forming those of holy love and obedience, *if begun now*, would not be like the Ethiopian’s changing his skin and the leopard his spots. If it is necessary to “seek the Lord while he may be found;” how cheering the declaration, “They that seek me *early shall find me.*” And yet the same inspired word forbids postponement to old age. Its promises are limited to a *present* compliance with the terms of salvation.

Keep your mind fixed on your destiny as an heir of immortality. Reflect on the eternal progressiveness of the soul. There will be a point in its existence when it may enjoy or suffer in a degree equal to all human en-

ioyment or suffering in time. How important that now, at its setting out, there be implanted in its deathless nature those principles of thought, feeling and action, which will bear thus to be continued and expanded. Think of pride, hatred, revenge, envy, lust, jealousy, covetousness and similar passions, carried forward into this fearful, this amazing expansion! Think of the power of *conscience* to inflict its stings, when it shall have accumulated strength from this wasteless experience. Think of the indelible impressions of *memory*, from the first moment of its activity to that imaginary point in its course of retention: impressions unnoticed perhaps as they pass, as if written with sympathetic ink, but which will be brought out in full transparency by the light of eternity.

And how terrible the thought, that these eternally legible impressions should be those of impurity and guilt, derived from the written and oral communications, or the pictorial representations and actual scenes of licentiousness! Surely this will be aliment to the worm that dieth not, and fuel to the fire that never shall be quenched. Such impressions may now be made as easily as on wax, but they will endure as if graven in eternal brass. "Keep thyself pure." Guard your immortal mind from every thought and purpose which you would not have retained and reflected for ever. Let your prayer ever be, "Lead me not into temptation." "Cleanse thou me from secret faults." "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me." "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

A wish expressed on the dying-bed of the widow of the late HARLAN PAGE, of New-York, led to the preparation and issuing of the above.

## “IF ANY MAN THIRST, LET HIM COME UNTO ME AND DRINK.”

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SOME years ago I spent the summer at ——— Springs. Standing one day by the fountain where the crowd gathered to drink health-giving water, I was forcibly reminded of these gracious words of our blessed Saviour: “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink.”

Multitudes were pressing to obtain a draught of water. Every age, sex, and condition were represented. The old tottered to the spring, and raised the glass with a trembling hand. The young stood there in the flower and beauty of youth, with light hearts, and laughing eyes, and cheeks that blushed with health and happiness. The sick were supported on the arms of friends, and as they drank, the sunken eye was lighted with the hope of returning life. Some were there from the far south, and some from foreign shores; some rolled along in their splendid carriages, and some came leaning on a staff. A mixed multitude gathered, as the crowds of old around the pool of Bethesda.

I thought again, if, in some distant and almost inaccessible spot, a spring should be discovered whose waters possessed the power of conferring *immortality*, with the bloom of beauty and youth, the strength of manhood, and the wisdom of age, on all who should come and drink, what crowds would gather there, that they might taste and never die. How the news of the discovery would spread from city to city, from land to land. From every kindred, and people, and tongue under the whole heaven, they would come and “take of the water of life freely.” No expense of time and money would prevent millions from flying thither.

Again, the sound of a Saviour’s voice, with the tenderness of heaven in its tones of love, seemed to fall on the ear as it said, “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” This is the spring that confers immortality on those who drink.

A daughter of Samaria came to draw water, and the Saviour of the world sat resting on the well. He asked her for that water of which if a man drink he shall thirst again;

but he offered her water from the well of eternal life. Here at the springs the sons and daughters of pleasure, and the children of sorrow and care, were coming to draw water, and I longed to cry in their hearing, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

These words of the prophet and those of the Saviour are figurative, but they are as full of meaning as they are of beauty. Dwell on them, dear reader, and admire them, for they are addressed to thee; and happy shalt thou be if thou dost yield to the sweet invitation, and drink and live for ever.

Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. To make their salvation possible, he poured out his blood like water, and opened a fountain for the cleansing of sin. That fountain he presents under the striking emblem of water, to show its cleansing power, its health-imparting influence, its freeness and inexhaustible abundance. For such as you he opened this fountain, and had his eye on just such sinners, when he cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink."

It is a precious invitation. Heaven never sent a sweeter. Accept that invitation, and you will secure *the forgiveness of your sins, and justification before God*. You need pardon. You are a great sinner. This your conscience tells you. This your Bible tells you. Your sins are in number like the sands on the sea-shore, or the stars in heaven. They are very great: committed against great light; you knew your duty, but did it not: committed against great love; you knew the blessed Saviour died on the cross for poor sinners, but you slighted his dying blood and despised his bleeding love. You deserve to be punished for such sins. You will be punished unless you are pardoned. The holy and inflexible law of Jehovah, whose penalty is eternal death, you have broken, and you must die unless another die in your room. Jesus Christ offers to become the justifier of him who believes. He becomes his substitute. His sufferings under the law of God will be accepted in the stead of yours, if you will come and trust in him. Thus the law will be sustained, and the sinner saved. God can be just, and justify the ungodly who believeth. This is a

simple plan—the gospel plan. It commends itself to you as the only plan by which you can be delivered from the curse of the law.

But beyond all this, if you come to Christ he will grant *the sanctification of your soul*. When your past sins have been forgiven, the work of sanctification is begun, and only begun. Your heart is yet full of uncleanness. It is vile, and abominable, and offensive in the sight of God. Its desires are impure, and rebellious, and wicked. And with such a heart you cannot be happy here, and could not be happy in heaven. You must be made holy, or you cannot be made happy. Christ Jesus offers to make you holy. His “blood cleanseth from all sin.” The redeemed in heaven were made white in the blood of the Lamb. Saul of Tarsus washed in that fountain. The vilest sinners that ever lived have come to Christ, and drinking of the water he offers, have been sanctified and saved.

Thus you will be pardoned, justified, sanctified; and to these mercies will be added *eternal life*. “Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” You must be delivered from the power of sin, or lie down in eternal burnings. This is the second death. In its eternity of woe it includes the wrath of an angry God, the torture of a guilty conscience, the gnawings of the worm that never dies, and the torments of the fire that is never quenched. But “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” In Christ is deliverance from death. In him is eternal life. Come to him, and you may be clothed with unfading youth, raised to the enjoyment of God, and crowned with glory, and honor, and immortality.

These blessings flow to those, and those only, who *come* to Christ; and when he stands and cries, “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink,” he invites you to partake of these infinitely precious gifts.

There is *no limit* to this invitation, “If *any man* thirst, let him come.” The fulness of the fountain justifies the unbounded offer. Millions have drank till their souls were satisfied. But the fountain is yet full. Jews and Gentiles, bond and free, are alike welcome. Come one, come all, and drink of the water of life freely.

Reader, perhaps you are young, and gay, and thought-

less. You are in search of pleasure. You drink of the waters of this world's pleasures, and are not satisfied. Amid the gayest scenes of life your soul is yet unblest. Come to Jesus. In him there is bliss the world knoweth not of. In his presence there is fulness of joy; at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Perhaps you are sick, or sinking in years, and the world is fading and failing. In the Saviour's blood is the fountain of health and life. Here, where sickness, and infirmities, and pains, and trials beset your path, you would not wish to live always. Eternal life in such a world as this would scarcely be a blessing. But the life which this fountain gives, is life in a better and brighter world. Drink of this, and the disease of your soul, the malady of sin, will be healed, and you shall enter on the enjoyment of heaven. There "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

You may be a vile, abandoned profligate; but the chief of sinners Jesus came to save. The more unworthy you *feel* yourself to be, the more willing he is to have mercy.

But mark one thing more. Although this offer is made so freely, and urged with so much love, it is addressed to those, and those only, who thirst. "If any man *thirst*, let him come." But let not this deter *you*. Have you no desire for the water of life; no desire to be pardoned, and saved from hell, and raised to heaven? You have broken God's holy law, and are now sinking beneath its blighting curse. Just ready to perish, you behold the water of life presented; and have you no desire to drink? The Saviour offers it without money or price; and do you not desire to taste and live?

Yes, O sinner, I am assured you desire, you thirst. Accept the invitation without one moment's delay. Tomorrow it may not be extended. You may not *thirst*, if it is.



# I HAVE NOT TIME.

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THERE are many, who, when pressed by Christian entreaty to become reconciled to God and secure the salvation of the soul, are ready to urge the plea, that they *have no time* to attend to it. I speak of those who acknowledge the importance of religion, and who purpose, before the close of life, to give it their serious attention, and make their peace with God.

This plea, though often urged merely to silence the voice of Christian love, or to stifle the admonitions of conscience, is no doubt often made under the impression that the cares of life, a constant pressure of business, and the support of a dependent family, are inconsistent with that attention to religion which the salvation of the immortal spirit demands. I have a man now in my mind—amiable, upright in his dealings, a constant attendant in the sanctuary, and acknowledging the importance of vital piety. He had always been an industrious man, and having been unfortunate in business, with an expensive and dependent family, he seemed honestly to believe what he replied to the earnest and affectionate entreaty of a Christian friend, pleading with him to seek his own salvation: I HAVE NOT TIME TO ATTEND TO IT NOW. Poor man! he has since gone into eternity, and it is to be feared that an appropriate inscription on his tombstone would be, “He found no time to be a Christian.”

Dear reader, are you one of those who have been wont to insult God and peril your own soul by this plea? If so, be assured, that of all the excuses by which the claims of God and the convictions of conscience are outraged, no one is less entitled to regard than this. It is without foundation in truth: it is built upon the sand. A want of time is not the true reason why you are at this day the enemy of God, and exposed every hour to drop into eternal perdition. Stop

a moment and consider a few thoughts on this subject, infinitely important to the interests of your undying soul.

*For what purpose has God given you time?* Is it that you may spend it all in hoarding those riches which

“Will leave thee twice a beggar at thy death?”

Is it that you may spend it in one unending round of toil to secure “the meat that perisheth?” Has the infinitely blessed God thrown thee into a world where all thy time is needed to secure the interests of a frail and perishing body, while the interests of the immortal spirit are sacrificed? No, it is not so. God has given you time to glorify him in preparing for a blessed immortality. Rather, he has given you your being that it may all be devoted to him. “Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, *do all* to the glory of God.” “Holiness to the Lord” must be written on all in which you are engaged. He has enjoined upon you the twofold duty, “not slothful in business,” and yet “fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;” and so doing, he has not only promised eternal salvation, but that, through the overflowing of his mercy, your temporal wants shall also be supplied. He has kindly said, “Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you;” “for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.” It was the remark of a wise man, made long since, and verified substantially in every age, “I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.” But again,

*How much time will it take to become a Christian?*

How much time to become reconciled to God, when *you are ready* to renounce your own righteousness, and your unworthy, selfish purposes, and trust alone in the blood and merits of a crucified Redeemer? God is waiting to be gracious; and as soon as you yield yourself to him, pursue his glory as your aim, and obey his commands with all your heart, he is ready to forgive and to save. Then you may pursue your calling—if it is an honest one—with renewed diligence;

consecrating your business, with yourself, to God. How long did it take the "dying thief" on the cross to repent and secure, through grace, the assurance of a seat in paradise? How long was it after Zaccheus first saw Jesus, that salvation came to his house? How long was it after the wicked and suicidal jailer at Philippi began to ask "what must I do to be saved," before he was an accepted believer? How much time is needed for a rebellious child, who really wishes to be reconciled to his parent, to become penitent, and obedient? But if a long time is necessary for you to turn to God, who makes that necessity? Ah, sinner,

"'Tis thine own heart makes grace delay,  
And hides a pard'ning glorious day;  
Thou hast not wish'd God's will to meet,  
Nor lain submissive at his feet."

*God has commanded you to dedicate one seventh part of your time to religious duties*—and you have not *time* to become a Christian! You have lived, it may be, twenty-one years—then three years of that time have been Sabbaths. One whole year in every seven. What has become of those Sabbaths? Are you still the enemy of God, and have had no time to become reconciled to him? Where are those years of Sabbaths? What report have they borne to heaven? Hast thou made those precious seasons by misimprovement only the means of thy greater guilt and deeper doom? And wilt thou still say, "I have no time?" Oh no; thy plea is vain; thy excuse will no longer serve thee for a hiding-place from the arrows of truth. Dear reader, thou hast time, time enough, precious time. But fleeting time is speeding its onward course:

"While we procrastinate, Time urges on  
His rapid flight, and death draws near;"

and if Christ is still despised by thee, and thy soul neglected, soon time with thee shall be no more. But,

*Thou must find time to die.* Poor, busy, bustling man, full of worldly cares, thou hast no time now for reflection, to

think upon thy God, to seek his pardoning mercy, to secure a Saviour's love and the salvation of thy soul. Busy worldling, hurried on from morning to night, and from day to day, pursuing the phantoms of life that continually elude thy grasp and mock thy fond expectations, *thou* must find time to die. He whom I mentioned, who "had no time," found time to die. His business pressed him hard, but death paid no regard to those claims. I heard that he was ill, and called to see him. I asked him of his eternal interests, his hopes beyond the grave. "Oh," said he, "I have given too little attention to that subject." A few moments of religious conversation was all the time he had. Soon after I left him, his reason was affected by his disease, and so continued until death. He found time to die, but a dying bed afforded him no time to become a Christian.

Dear reader, thou too must find time to die. Death will soon call thee from thy eager pursuit of worldly good. Thou must exchange the busy scenes that occupy thy time and thoughts, for the stillness and the solemnity of a dying bed. The shroud and the coffin shall enclose thee, and the dark grave contain thy dust until the Archangel's trump shall call thee forth to give thy last account.

"Vain man, thy fond pursuits forbear ;  
Repent, thy end is nigh :  
Death, at the farthest, can't be far ;  
O think before thou die."

## ‘‘CUT IT DOWN!’’

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“LET IT ALONE THIS YEAR ALSO!”—Thus spoke the dresser of the vineyard in behalf of the barren fig-tree. Year after year the owner had sought fruit thereon, and found none. Despairing, at length, of rendering it fruitful, he orders it to be cut down: “*Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?*” But the vine-dresser “answering, said unto him, ‘Lord, let it alone this year also—and if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down.’” Luke 13 : 6–9.

For you and me, dear friend, the Saviour spoke the parable. We are the trees which his own hand has planted. From us he desires and seeks fruit. When, at the close of the last year, he came to you with this intent, how justly, “after so long a time,” might he have said, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” But no, he would not; the greatness of his compassion pleaded in your behalf, and cried, “Let it alone this year also.”

It was a blessed reprieve. This it was that has kept you, day by day, in your lying down, and rising up—in your going out, and coming in. Like others, you may have sickened, but not unto death. Others wasted, fell, expired. But death had no power over you. Not until the last hour of the period which God appointed had passed away, could you “be hurt of” either the first or “the second death.” Disease and death are obedient to Him who said, “Let it alone this year also.”

“AND IF IT BEAR FRUIT, WELL.”—The tree had been planted, not for its own sake, but for the expected fruit. For this the soil had been chosen, dug, enriched, enclosed; the tender shoot had been planted, watered, nourished, and pruned. For this, too, the tree is spared another year. He does not yet give it up. Another year it may yield abundantly.

On the same condition, dear friend, your reprieve was based. You were spared, that opportunity might be given you to repent, and “bring forth fruits meet for repentance.”

Year after year have you received the kind attention of Him who made you. So abundant, so incessant have the proofs of his care been, that he can now most justly ask, in respect to you, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" Enough, and more than enough he has done, to have warranted long since the expectation of your conversion and fruitfulness. With the knowledge of your guilt and danger, he has shown you the way of pardon and salvation through faith in his Son; has given you his word, which is "able to make you wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus;" has extended to you the privileges of the sanctuary, and the blessing of an able, pious, zealous, and faithful ministry; has surrounded you with numerous tender-hearted, benevolent, and praying friends; has put it into the hearts of his people, to afford you special means of grace; has poured out his Holy Spirit on them and you, and thus his own "still small voice" has urged you to press into the kingdom of Christ. In thousands of cases, less means have proved successful. Why, then, should not the Saviour have sought fruit from you a year ago?

But another year has been added to your term of probation; another opportunity given you, with perhaps increased advantages, to repent. And how have you improved it? It may be, that, in some serious moment, you promised God, that if he would spare you—"let you alone this year also"—you would become his obedient servant. Have you remembered your promise? Have you fulfilled it? Has the fruit appeared? "*If it bear fruit, WELL.*" Then, "blessed art thou, for thou hast found favor with God."

"AND IF NOT"—if you have not improved the past year, have not repented, and turned to God—But can it be? can you again have slighted the calls of divine mercy, trifled with the offers of grace, and turned away from all the admonitions and entreaties of your God? Has all his love, so rich, so free, so long-continued, failed to melt your heart? That promise—have you forgotten it? A twelve-month since, it may be, the Master came and sought the promised fruit. But finding none, he said, "I will 'let it alone this year also.'" Ought you not to have repented within the year? But it has gone, and you are yet in your sins, perhaps on the brink of the grave, without even a

hope of heaven. There is less prospect than ever of your being reclaimed. Thousands, during that period—some of them, perhaps, your own friends and kindred—have, with no better advantages than you have enjoyed, sought and found the Lord. Why has it not been so with you?” “Wherefore,” saith the Lord, “when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?” Oh, that you had been wise, had understood this, had considered your latter end. Then it would now have been well with you; “if it bear fruit, well. And if not, then—

“AFTER THAT THOU SHALT CUT IT DOWN.”—If, at the year’s end, no fruit should be found upon the tree, the keeper of the vineyard would give it up. And why not? Why should it any longer cumber the ground? The trial will then have been made—an ample trial. Nothing more can be done for it.

The year expires, and still there is no fruit. For the fourth time the owner comes seeking fruit, and finds none. Who now will plead, “Let it alone this year also?” Not the vine-dresser—he gives it up: he pleads no longer. And if not he, who then? None—none. It must perish. “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?”

Has not all this, dear friend, a fearful application to yourself? Your reprieve may have now expired. Again the Master comes seeking fruit, and finds none. You are yet in your sins. Labor has been bestowed on you without avail. Why should the reprieve be renewed? Why should he spare you any longer? already he has done for you vastly more than you deserve—more than for multitudes who have perished in their sins. What, then, can *you* expect more? Who can say that more will be of any avail; that it would effect any thing else than an aggravation of your guilt, an increase of your condemnation? Why should he not also say of you, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?”

If that reprieve be not renewed, then the time draws nigh that you must die. Short as your life has been, you must die. Little as you have accomplished of your projects and purposes, you must die. Much as you may wish to live, for the sake of yourself or others, yet there is much cause for you to believe, that “*thus saith the Lord, THIS YEAR THOU SHALT DIE!*” Alas, how much have you been

deceived in your expectations of earthly pleasure. How much reason have you to repent of your idleness, folly, waste, thoughtlessness, disregard of duty—nay, of your whole life. And how much have you to *do*. If this must be your last year, month, or day, how precious to you is every moment. You cannot afford to lose a moment in idleness, or in mere worldly pursuits. Others may deem it needful to lay up for future years. Not so with you. If God has said of you, "this year thou shalt die," then the next year you will want neither house nor shop, equipage nor furniture, dress nor food. The grave will be your house, the dust your bed, the coffin your furniture, the shroud your dress, the worms your covering. Long enough have you labored for this world. Be persuaded now to labor for another. Discard all trifles. Be in earnest. Seek now the Lord. Resolve to make a desperate effort "to enter in at the strait gate." Set out for heaven. Begin this day. Press on, and on, let who will cry, "stop." Like Bunyan's pilgrim, stop your ears, and run, "crying, *Life! LIFE! ETERNAL LIFE!*"

Perhaps it may not yet be too late. If you wait not now; if you give over trifling; if you forsake your sins, calling on God; if you turn to the Lord with all your heart, casting yourself on his mercy through Jesus Christ; if you do this, it is not yet too late. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Then hear his voice. This day he renews the call. "TO-DAY, if you will hear his voice, harden not your heart." This day resolve to turn to God. Let this very day be the date of your new birth. Let not this sun go down, and leave you "dead in trespasses and sins." Let there be "joy in heaven" to-day, on your account, while the shout ascends, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."



## PRIVATE DEVOTION.

The Lord Jesus, in that greatest sermon that ever fell on mortal ears, enjoins, "*Thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet.*" Not that he would confine *all* prayer to the closet; for he himself prayed publicly and socially. And Paul exhorts to "pray always with *all* prayer;" that is, as is generally understood, with all *kinds* of prayer. It is our duty to pray stately in the sanctuary, and in the family; and occasionally in the social meeting, by the side of the sick bed, and in the house of bereavement and sorrow. But in addition to all these kinds of prayer, the Saviour's injunction points us to the *closet*, where we shall be alone with God.

This vital duty the Saviour sanctions by his own example. How often do we trace his footsteps to some secluded spot,—the declivity of the mountain, the garden, the sea-side, for the purpose of private prayer. Isaac was wont to retire "to meditate in the field at the eventide." David communed with his own heart, in the night watches: "seven times a day do I praise thee." Daniel knelt three times a day in his private chamber. Peter went up to the house-top to pray about the sixth hour. And if we consult the history of men who have adorned the church in all ages, we find them often on their knees before the throne of God in their closets.

The object of these seasons of retirement is, prayer to God, united with the reading of the word, and self-examination. Separated from the world and its cares; with no eye upon us but that which seeth in secret; with the law and the testimony, the only rule of faith and practice, before us; with our secret sins and presumptuous faults set in order before our minds, we are to unbosom our souls before our heavenly Father, with the utmost freedom and fullness, through Christ our atoning Intercessor. How expressive the appeal of the Psalmist in such an interview! "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."

This duty should be performed *punctually at regular appointed seasons*. Few, in maintaining a close walk with

God, will be satisfied with less than *two* seasons of retirement for each day; and regularity in this duty is as needful to the health of the soul, as the regular reception of food to that of the body. The habit should be so established that the allotted season cannot pass unimproved without awakening the deep-toned remonstrances of conscience.

But this is a duty *liable to be neglected*. And this for the obvious reason that it is a *private* duty. The eye of the world follows you not to your closet. If you go not to the house of God, meet not the friends of Zion in their appointed seasons of prayer, aid not the spread of the Gospel by your contributions, you, of course, can have no good reputation for piety in the eyes of men. But you may neglect your closet and not forfeit such reputation, provided you pay a decent regard to the more public duties of religion. But this is not all. The active bustling habits of the times are wofully hostile to the noiseless, retired, unostentatious duties of the closet. Beware that you become not so swallowed up in any of the exciting enterprises of the day as to neglect your own heart and your closet. For, be assured, if these enterprises are ever made to subserve the great purposes which they are adapted to promote, it will be, under God, through the counsels and guidance of those who seek for wisdom and grace daily in secret places. If the church shall ever become united, and happy, and prosperous in her onward march to the conquest of the world to her Redeemer, it will be by the instrumentality of such as pray for the peace of Jerusalem in the retirement of the closet.

These pages will fall into the hands of those who are known as *the professed followers of the Saviour*. To such I would say, let the interest you feel in your daily secret devotions stand before you as the thermometer of your spiritual state. Other motives than the love of Christ *may* carry you abroad and open your mouth in public, and light up your zeal for the extension of truth and righteousness; but I can assure you that the closet will be the last place where you will go daily and punctually from any other consideration than a pure desire to meet God and enjoy the smiles of his reconciled countenance.

O ye, who have opened your mouth unto the Lord, draw around the sanctuary of your private devotions a barrier so strong that no vain amusement, no secular cares, no social avocation, shall intrude upon them. How can you keep a conscience void of offence toward God and man as you mingle with the world—how can you control your temper, and hold in subjection every native propensity, and have your conversation always “seasoned with salt”—unless you go forth under the fear of that all-seeing eye before which you have just knelt in secret?

I appeal to *men of business*, who are ready to say, “We have no time to spare for this object.” But is this a valid excuse? Do you not live each day and hour through the forbearance of God? And is it reasonable that you should give all your hours to business and none to him, or to the eternal interests of the soul? No time to pray? Think of the king of Israel, with his armies abroad, and his extended empire at home to occupy his mind and exhaust his energies, yet he could find time to call upon God, “evening, morning, and at noon.” Think of Daniel, with the affairs of an hundred and twenty provinces resting on his mind, yet finding time to go into his chamber three times a day, that he might pray and give thanks to God. Think of Wilberforce, whose life was spent amidst the conflicting and dissipating scenes of parliament, yet never allowing the hurry of a nation’s business to prevent his stated seasons of devotion. No time to pray? For what was time given you, if not that you should “seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness?” If your heart were right with God you would find time to pray, though it might oblige you to abridge your meals, or invade the allotted hours of sleep.

I address some who are *in advanced years*. Does life begin to wear heavily upon you? Is the grasshopper a burden? So that you begin to find yourselves yielding to discontent, irritability, distrust—evils which are so apt to creep in and imbitter declining years? The best antidote I know, is secret prayer. Nothing is so softening to the asperities of temper—nothing so well calculated to beget a submissive, child-like simplicity and

amiableness of disposition. But more: You are soon to pass through the cold floods of Jordan. Do you desire the Divine "rod and staff to comfort you," as you go trembling down its brink? Then be much in prayer alone. You may never again be favored with the privilege of going to the sanctuary or the communion-table, but you have the throne of grace and the Bible to which you can resort.

I address those *who are young*. Are you aware that you live in a world of temptation—that all along your path some bait is held out to decoy you and render you the victim of vice and crime? And do you know that you have little strength of your own to resist these enticements? I come to you as a friend and offer you a sure antidote. Daily secret prayer will cover you with a triple shield, through which no dart of the adversary will penetrate. I mean not simply "saying your prayers," but sincerely and devoutly praying on your knees every day you live. But though young, you *may die*. Can you hope it will be well with you in death and eternity, when you never call upon God in health? The voice of God comes to you from many a youthful grave, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?"

I address those *who are living without God and without hope*. Are you not, amidst all the business, and toils, and gratifications of an empty world, like the dove sent out from the ark, wandering to and fro and finding no resting-place for the sole of your feet? "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" Let me say to you, that after so long a time, the King of heaven invites you to an interview with himself. This very hour he waits around your secret chamber to listen to your sigh of penitence. Have you not one broken-hearted petition to breathe into that condescending ear? Can you, dare you, venture on the slumbers of another night without prayer? Shall days, weeks, and years pass, and find you still living without God? Prayerless soul, what wilt thou do in the judgment of the great day?

## SELF-DEDICATION TO GOD.

FROM DODDRIDGE'S RISE AND PROGRESS.

MY DEAR FRIEND—You have felt your lost condition as a sinner against God. You have felt your need of the atoning blood of Christ. You know that blood can be available for you, only by your believing in him—trusting in him—dedicating yourself to him, through the promised aids of the Holy Spirit. To this act of dedication you are now urged by conscience, by the word of God, and by the strivings of the Spirit. And it may be of great use to you, not only to form in your heart the purpose of surrendering yourself to God, but expressly to declare it in the divine presence. Such solemnity in the manner of doing it, is certainly very reasonable in the nature of things; and surely it is highly expedient for binding to the Lord such a treacherous heart as we know our own to be.

Do it therefore; but do it *deliberately*. Consider what it is that you are to do, and consider how reasonable it is that it should be done cordially and cheerfully; “not by constraint, but willingly,” for in this sense, and in every other, “God loveth a cheerful giver.” Nothing can be more evident than that we, the product of his power, and the price of his Son’s blood, should be his, and his for ever. If you see the matter in its just view, it will be the grief of your soul that you have ever alienated yourself from the blessed God and his service: so far will you be from wishing to continue in that state of alienation another year, or another day, you will rejoice to bring back to him his revolted creature; and as you have in times past “yielded your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin,” you will delight to “yield yourself unto God as alive from the dead.”

The surrender will also be as *entire* as it is *cheerful* and *immediate*. All you are, and all you have, and all you can do—your time, your possessions, your influence over oth

ers—will be devoted to him, that for the future it may be employed entirely for him, and to his glory. You will desire to keep back nothing from him; but will seriously judge that you are then in the truest and noblest sense your own, when you are most entirely his. You are also, on this great occasion, to resign all that you have to the disposal of his wise and gracious providence; not only owning his power, but consenting to his undoubted right to do what he pleases with you, and all that he has given you.

Once more, let me remind you that this surrender must be *perpetual*. You must give yourself up to God in such a manner as never more to pretend to be your own; for the rights of God are, like his nature, eternal and immutable; and with regard to his rational creatures, are the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

I would farther advise and urge, that this dedication may be made with all possible *solemnity*. Do it in express words. And perhaps it may be in many cases most expedient, as many pious divines have recommended, to do it in writing. Set your hand and seal to it, “that on such a day of such a month and year, and at such a place, on full consideration and serious reflection, you came to this happy resolution, that, whatsoever others might do, you would serve the Lord.”

Such an instrument you may, if you please, draw up for yourself; or, if you rather choose to have it drawn up to your hand, you may find something of this nature below, in which you may easily make such alterations as your circumstances may seem to require. But whatever form you use, weigh it well, meditate attentively upon it, that you may “not be rash with your mouth to utter any thing before God.” And when you determine to execute this instrument, let the transaction be attended with some more than ordinary religious retirement. Make it, if you conveniently can, a day of secret fasting and prayer; and when your heart is prepared with a becoming awe of the divine Majesty, with an humble confidence in his goodness, and an earnest desire of his favor, then present yourself on your knees before God, and read it over deliberately and solemnly; and when you have signed it, lay it by in some secure place, where you may review it whenever you please; and make it a rule with yourself to review it, if possible, at cer-

tain seasons of the year, that you may keep up the remembrance of it. And God grant that you may be enabled to keep it, and in the whole of your life walk according to it. May it be an anchor to your soul in every temptation, a cordial in every affliction, and may the recollection of it give strength to your departing spirit, in a consciousness that it is ascending to your covenant God and Father, and to that gracious Redeemer whose power and faithfulness will securely “keep what you commit to him unto that day.”

#### AN EXAMPLE OF SELF-DEDICATION.

“Eternal and ever-blessed God, I desire to present myself before thee, with the deepest humiliation and abasement of soul, sensible how unworthy such a sinful worm is to appear before the holy Majesty of heaven, the King of kings and Lord of lords, and especially on such an occasion as this, ever to dedicate myself, without reserve, to thee. But the scheme and plan is thine own. Thine infinite condescension hath offered it by thy Son, and thy grace hath inclined my heart to accept of it.

“I come, therefore, acknowledging myself to have been a great offender; smiting upon my breast, and saying with the humble publican, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ I come, invited by the name of thy Son, and wholly trusting in his perfect righteousness, entreating that for his sake thou wilt be merciful to my unrighteousness, and wilt no more remember my sins. Receive, I beseech thee, thy revolted creature, who is now convinced of thy right to him, and desires nothing so much as that he may be thine.

“This day do I, with the utmost solemnity, surrender myself to thee. I renounce all former lords that have had dominion over me; and I consecrate to thee all that I am, and all that I have: the faculties of my mind, the members of my body, my worldly possessions, my time, and my influence over others; to be all used entirely for thy glory, and steadfastly employed in obedience to thy commands, as long as thou continuest me in life; with an ardent desire and humble resolution to continue thine through all the endless ages of eternity; ever holding myself in an attentive posture to observe the first intimations of thy will, and ready to spring forward with zeal and joy to the immediate execution of it.

“To thy direction also I resign myself, and all I am and have, to be disposed of by thee in such a manner as thou shalt in thine infinite wisdom judge most subservient to the purposes of thy glory. To thee I leave the management of all events, and say without reserve, ‘Not my will, but thine be done,’ rejoicing with a loyal heart in thine unlimited government, as what ought to be the delight of the whole rational creation.

“Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as an instrument of thy service. Number me among thy peculiar people. Let me be washed in the blood of thy dear Son. Let me be clothed with his righteousness. Let me be sanctified by his Spirit. Transform me more and more into his image. Impart to me, through him, all needful influences of thy purifying, cheering, and comforting Spirit. And let my life be spent under those influences, and in the light of thy gracious countenance, as my Father and my God.

“And when the solemn hour of death comes, may I remember thy COVENANT, ‘well-ordered in all things and sure, as all my salvation, and all my desire,’ 2 Sam. 23 : 5, though every hope and enjoyment is perishing; and do thou, O Lord, remember it too. Look down with pity, O my heavenly Father, on thy languishing, dying child. Embrace me in thine everlasting arms. Put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the abodes of them that sleep in Jesus, peacefully and joyfully to wait the accomplishment of thy great promise to all thy people, even that of a glorious resurrection, and of eternal happiness in thine heavenly presence.

“And if any surviving friend should, when I am in the dust, meet with this memorial of my solemn transactions with thee, may he make the engagement his own; and do thou graciously admit him to partake in all the blessings of THY COVENANT, through Jesus the great Mediator of it; to whom, with thee, O Father, and thy Holy Spirit, be everlasting praises. Amen.”



# I MUST PRAY IN SECRET.

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THAT I must *pray*, is a moral axiom—it is self-evident—it needs no proof. It is as much the instinct of my nature, as it is the command of Heaven. Prayer is my communion with God. It is my language of worship, as a man; of dependence, as a creature; of submission, as a subject; of confession, as a sinner; of thankfulness, as the recipient of mercies; of supplication, as a needy being. As a Christian, I find it “my vital breath, my native air.” Without it I cannot live. *I must pray*; for if I do not, I shall spiritually suffocate; I shall starve and die.

But not only must I *pray*—pray in the family, in the social circle, in the walks of business, winging my thoughts in aspirations to the heavens, but *I must also pray* IN SECRET. Some *place* I must have that I can call “*my closet*”—some place where I can go away by myself, and shut out the world, and be alone with my God. Some place, it must be, where, like Isaac in the field, and Peter on the house-top, and Daniel in his chamber, and the blessed Saviour on the mountain, I may “pray to my Father which is in secret.” I must have a *time* for this duty, and a *stated* time; for if I have not, it will never become a *habit*; and if not a habit, I shall be apt to neglect it, and it will not become inwoven with my spiritual existence, as a part of my soul’s life, nor will it have that power of association, that current and glow of feeling, without which duty is never delightful. *Often*, too, must I attend to this duty—often improve the delightful privilege of private converse with heaven. An eminent statesman, with all the cares of empire upon him, used daily to retire for secret prayer; and Daniel, when prime minister of a kingdom, was three times a day found in his closet. They did not pray *too much* in secret. I had

better pray more, rather than less. Like them, like all eminent saints, *often* must I be found in my closet, with serious reflection, with self-examination, with the Bible open before me, in solemn, and fervent, and wrestling communion with God. Yes, *I must often pray in secret.*

I must pray in secret, *for God commands it.* "Enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret." This is *God's* command, and I *may* not, I *dare* not disobey it. "He seeth in secret," and if in secret I do not pray to him, he will be grieved and angry with me; while, if I do, he, as he has promised, "will reward me openly."

I must pray in secret, *for of all communion with heaven, that which is secret is the sweetest.* The dearest converse of earthly friends, is that which is most private, that which most shrinks from the gaze, the almost profaning gaze of others. Much enjoyment may bosom friends find in the general mingling of the social circle; but the highest of their social joys would be at an end, if there were no subsequent and private hour, when they could sit down together, and talk over the incidents of that circle, and every thing that was of most and dearest interest to themselves. And so it is with the Christian. Public communion with God he may richly prize and enjoy. But sweetest of all, is his communion with him in secret; when in the sacred retirement of the closet, with no earthly eye upon him, he can pour out his soul in solitude to his Maker. From the very instinct of his nature, of all prayer, that which is *secret* is dearest to him. Prayer, in every form, is his joy, his strength; but secret prayer is a luxury to his soul.

I must pray in secret, *for as an individual I have secret and peculiar necessities.* I have secret and peculiar sins to confess, which it would be improper to acknowledge in public, and yet to God I can unfold and deplore them all. My temptations are peculiar, and to him I would go for peculiar strength. I have secret trials and sorrows which

the world may never know, and yet to God I can pour them forth, knowing that he will never reveal them; knowing that he will sympathize with them all; that in all he will cheer, and aid, and direct me. If a parent, I can pray for a child; if a friend, for a friend; if a minister, for each of my people according to their peculiar case. In public, joining as I there do with others, I can only say, "*our Father*"—can only ask for *general* blessings. But, blessed be God, in secret I can say, "O *my Father*, if it be possible, let *this* cup pass from me;" let *this* temptation be removed, *this* blessing be granted, *this* evil habit be broken, *this* trial which rends my heart be taken away. In *this*, let the way of duty be made plain; in *this* grace let me grow; let *this* enemy be forgiven; let *this* friend be blessed. In such *particular* prayer, I find my nearest approach to my Saviour, the clearest views of self, the most vivid light of God's countenance, the deepest sense of personal obligation, the mightiest strength, whether to resolve, or to do, or to suffer.

I must pray in secret, *for if I do not, I shall not grow in grace*. Of all the means of spiritual growth, none do I find more efficient or blessed than this. In secret communion with God, I feel as if he were *personally* with me; and this gives strength and vividness to every obligation. Distinctly confessing my sin—then, if ever, I avoid it. Asking for distinct blessings—then, if ever, do I earnestly strive for their attainment. The thought that I have been with God—this, I find, has an abiding effect on the life. After this, truth is more impressed, temptation has less power, the world less influence. Coming with David from the closet, with David I am able to say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed." Mine is that "calm and heavenly frame" which elevates above the world, and fills with the Spirit of Jesus, and girds for every holy effort. Coming from the closet—then, if ever, am I firm in duty, cheered under sorrow, strengthened against sin. And so with every child of God. Never was there one who *loved* his closet,

who *lived* much in it, that was not a spiritual, a growing Christian.

I must pray in secret, *for if I sin by neglecting my closet, I shall soon be left to other sins.* Declension, inconsistency, formality, backsliding, all begin in the closet, in the neglect of secret prayer. "Away from God's presence," he will "take his Holy Spirit from us." Going away from him, neglecting communion with him, he will leave us. And left of him, spiritual darkness, if not spiritual death, will be upon us. Neglect the closet, and next the family altar will be neglected, and then the circle of social prayer, and then the Bible, and then, perhaps, the sanctuary, and all the means of grace. Neglect the closet, and you know not where or how far you may wander; you know not when, if ever, you will return. *Neglect* the closet, and soon you will *abandon* it; *abandon* it, and soon you will be left of God to dark, if not to damning sin—perhaps to endless ruin.

I *must*, then, *I must pray in secret*; statedly, frequently, earnestly. God enjoins it. My highest enjoyment, and my individual and peculiar necessities demand it. I must do it, that I may grow in grace—may not decline in spirituality—may not wander from God. To pray in secret! It is a solemn duty, a glorious and blessed privilege, thus to hold converse with the Most High; as a child with a father, as a friend with a friend, thus to commune with him, and breathe his spirit, and receive his impress, his image, upon my heart. O may I ever prize—may I ever improve it. By divine grace, I will. God's grace, God's Spirit assisting me, *I will pray in secret.* Daily and faithfully will I do it, till from *prayer on earth*, I am raised to *praise in HEAVEN.*













