

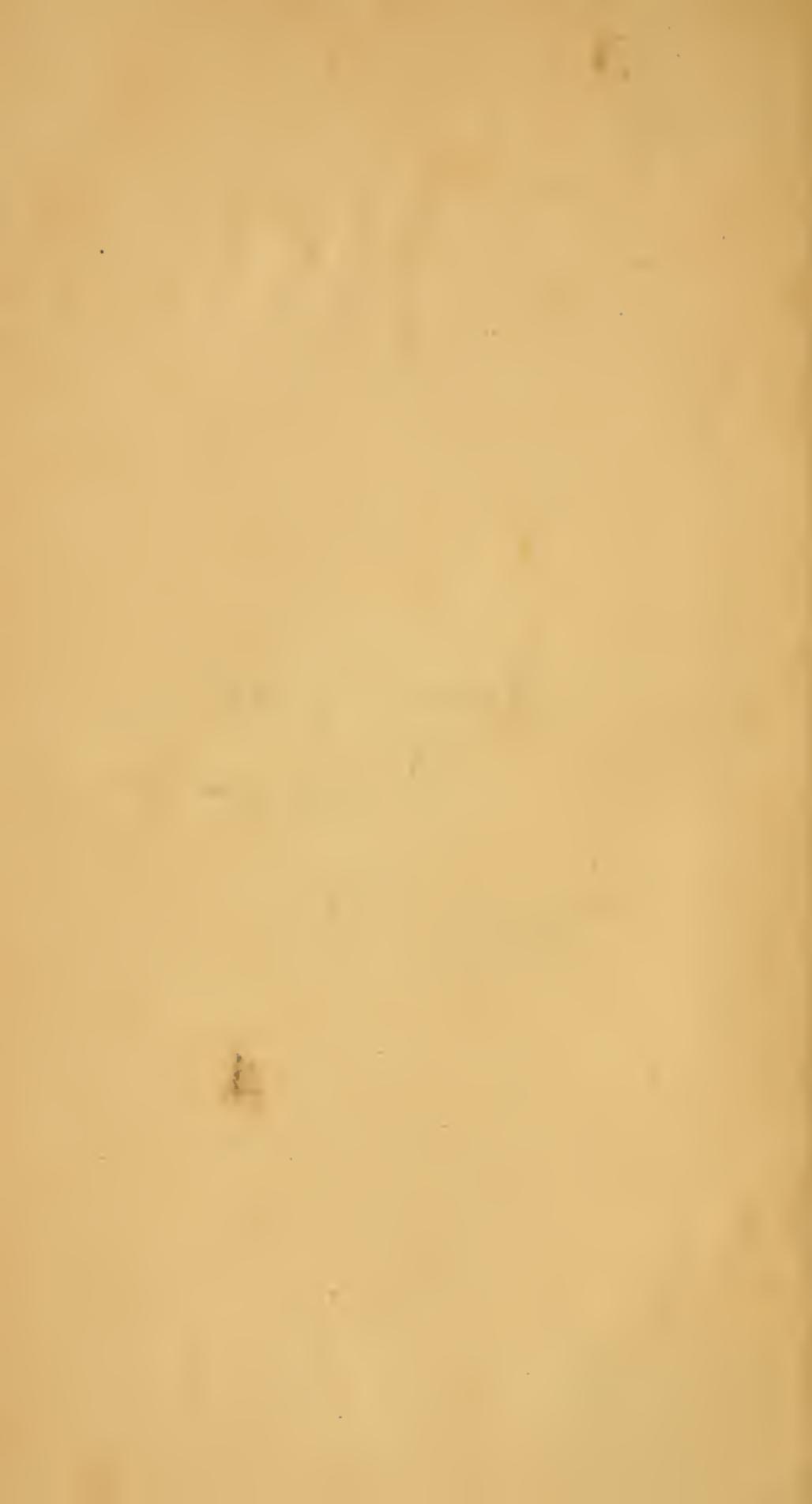
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“WE MUST LIVE.”



A LADY who was engaged as a Sabbath-school teacher had reason to suspect that her scholars often bought sweetmeats on the Lord's day. On inquiry, she ascertained this to be the fact; and having found out the shop at which the little girls supplied themselves, she called on the woman who kept it, and spoke seriously to her on the impropriety of her conduct; observing to her, that she not only broke the commandment of God by following her business on the Lord's day, and deprived herself of the privilege of attending the

house of prayer, and listening to the blessed Gospel, but that she was guilty of tempting many others to do wrong—in particular, those Sabbath-school girls to whom her open shop presented an occasion of sin, and led them to slight the instructions they received.

The woman seemed to feel what was said to her, and promised she would speak to her husband, and try if they could not shut up shop and attend public worship on the morning of the Lord's day; at the same time observing, that they were not Sabbath-breakers so bad as many; for there were many shops kept open all day, but she always made a point of "keeping her church" in the afternoon.

"As to that," replied the lady, "the conduct of others is not our rule; nor will it justify us to compare our conduct with theirs. What is wrong in itself is forbidden to us; and if we do it in ever so small a degree, we must answer for it. If a man were taken up and tried for stealing a few shillings, the judge would not let him off because there was another man who had stolen a hundred pounds. And if a man had committed murder, it would be no excuse for him to say, that he had only killed one person, while there was another who had killed two or three."

The woman admitted the truth of this reasoning, and again said she would try what could be done.

"I am quite sure," replied the lady, "that if you try in sincerity, and beg of God to give you grace to stand firm against what is sinful, it is very possible for you to succeed. There are many hard-working people to whom a shilling is quite as much as it is to you, who yet live without breaking the Sabbath, because they know it would be sinful; and what is possible to them is possible to you. No person is obliged by circumstances to sin against God."

On taking leave, the lady gave her Tracts on the importance of keeping holy the Sabbath-day, and begged her to read them with serious consideration, to forsake every sinful way, and turn to the Saviour of sinners; reminding her that

Sabbaths, and seasons of grace, and offers of mercy, would soon cease for ever.

The next Lord's day, as the lady was returning from the Sabbath-school, she observed, to her great sorrow, the shop open, and the sticks of peppermint, and the glasses of candy, and trays of gingerbread set forth in as tempting display as ever; and two of her own little scholars were indulging themselves with a look, though they assured her they had no intention of buying. She told them that it was wrong to go in the way of evil; and that even to look upon and wish for things that it is not right for us to have, is committing sin in our hearts. She desired them to look at the 3d chapter of Genesis and the 6th verse, and the 7th chapter of Joshua and the 20th and 21st verses, and there see what sad mischief came from looking on forbidden things; and she promised in the afternoon to talk over with them these portions of Scripture. Then bidding them hasten home, she opened the shop-door, and at the sound of the little bell forth came the mistress of the shop, expecting to meet a customer. The woman's countenance expressed shame—that of her visitor, sorrow.

"I am truly grieved, Mrs. C——, to find your shop still open. I had hoped, from our conversation the other day, that you would have made up your mind to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy."

"Why, yes, ma'am, I did mean to do so. I am really very sorry to keep open shop; but you know we MUST LIVE—and we take more on Sundays than on any other day in the week."

"But we are told in the Bible, that 'the blessing of the Lord maketh rich,' Prov. 10 : 22; and we cannot expect his blessing, if we act in disobedience to his law. On the other hand, those who have trusted God, and acted in obedience to his will, and in so doing have seemed to sacrifice their present interests, have not only enjoyed peace of mind and spiritual profit, but have even found in keeping God's com-

mandments a present temporal reward. He has the hearts of all men in his hands, and he has often so ordered it, that when people have begun conscientiously to do what is right, instead of being losers by it, they have from that very time prospered more than ever. I have heard and known of many such instances."

"Yes, ma'am, I don't doubt it. I am quite sure that those who keep the Sabbath are much happier; and I do hope that when we get on a little, we shall be able to do so too; it is quite my wish to do so."

"But suppose you should not live to get on a little, or to get so much as you would think necessary to justify you in shutting up your shop on the Sabbath?"

"It is to be hoped we shall, ma'am; we are but young beginners, as one may say."

"The more reason that you should be careful to begin in the right way. Besides, if I mistake not, you are now in mourning for a sister younger than yourself."

"Yes, ma'am, I lost a brother and a sister near together. My sister was not married; but my poor brother left a widow and three small children."

"And suppose you should be called away by death, would it not be a poor plea to give at the bar of God, that you intended to obey his laws when you had got on a little more in the world; and a poor consolation for yourself, when your soul was ruined, to say that you neglected it because you had other things to attend to first? Jesus Christ has commanded us to 'seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness;' and to expect that all other needful things shall be added thereunto." Matt. 6:33.

The woman's husband then came from an adjoining room, and joined the conversation, saying, "I wish, with all my heart, there was a ten-pound penalty for keeping open shop on Sundays. I should be glad enough to shut up ours, if every body else was obliged to do the same."

"My friend," replied the visitor, "will you allow me to

say, that that very wish proves you to be under the influence of two great and ruinous mistakes. In the first place, you seem to think there are no penalties but those inflicted according to human laws and by earthly magistrates, and forget that God has enacted penalties for breaking his laws, infinitely more dreadful than the severest which human judges can inflict. 'The wages of sin is death.' 'The soul that sinneth, it shall die.' 'Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.' Rom. 6 : 23 ; Ezek. 18 : 4 ; Matt. 10 : 28. How is it that the loss of a trifling sum of money, or a few days' imprisonment, or a little disgrace among our fellow-men, should be thought so much of, while the threatenings of God are set at naught ?"

"Why, you know God is very merciful."

"Indeed he is, my friend ; and because he is so, you and I are not consumed, but are yet living, and within the sound of the blessed Gospel, and where the Son of man has power to forgive sin. Mark 2 : 10. But do not let us abuse this great and glorious truth, as if God were too merciful to do as he has said, and punish the sinner who rejects and makes light of the only way of mercy. The mercy of God has provided a Saviour—a gracious and an all-sufficient Saviour ; and mercy through him is freely offered to sinners ; but if one goes his way to his farm, and another to his merchandise, and refuses to come when Jesus calls, what can be expected but that they should be for ever shut out from the blessings they despise ? Your mistake, my friend, evidently arises from want of faith, from not believing that the God of truth really means what he says, and that the things which are not seen are as real as the things which are seen, and infinitely more important. The promises of God to those who obey and trust him, are far more certain and valuable than any thing that our fellow-creatures can confer upon us, or than any thing that this world can afford ; and the threatenings of God are as sure as his promises, and far more terrible than all the sufferings and punishments that

earthly magistrates can inflict. Now, if you really believe this, surely it is reason enough for you to leave off what you acknowledge to be sinning against God."

"Why, very true; but what is to be done? You know WE MUST LIVE. But, as I said before, if other people would shut up their shops, I should be willing and glad to shut up mine."

"This is the other mistake to which I referred. You seem to think that you should be willing to obey God, if it did not at all interfere with your worldly interests—if you were quite sure that you should lose nothing by it. Now, I can easily think it must be very trying for a conscientious shopkeeper to shut up his shop, and see his neighbors open theirs, and customers flock to them; or for a workman to lay aside his work and know that others pursue theirs, and make seven days' profit while he makes only six. But all our transactions with God must be carried on in the way of faith and obedience, and these very things are trials whether or not we do love, and believe, and serve him. We must expect sacrifices in the way of duty; for our Lord has said, that whosoever will not deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow him, cannot be his disciple. Luke 9 : 23. You say that you *must live*; but what does Jesus Christ say? 'Whosoever will save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' " Matt. 16 : 25, 26; Luke 14 : 26, 27.

Another case may be mentioned.

John H—— was the son of a hairdresser, and assisted his father in the business. After living to the age of two or three-and-twenty in carelessness and irreligion—spending the early part of the Sabbath in pursuing his worldly calling, and the afternoon and evening of the day in gay company and sinful pleasures—he was brought under the sound

of the Gospel. The word came with power to his heart. Under the Holy Spirit's teaching, he was led to see himself a sinner. He was directed to the only way of salvation, through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he became a new man. He now perceived that the things he had long pursued were trifling, worthless, and mischievous; and that he had neglected the "one thing needful." The things that were gain to him, he now counted loss for Christ. The world was crucified to him, and he to the world; and his chief concern was to "win Christ, and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law," and which he knew could never justify him; yet desiring to walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless; to show forth the praises of Him who had called him out of darkness into marvellous light; and to "walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing." 2 Cor. 5:17; Luke 10:42; Phil. 3:7-10; Gal. 6:14; Luke 1:6; 1 Pet. 2:9; Col. 1:10.

This change of character in the young man was by no means pleasing to his ungodly parents. When they found that, instead of spending the Sabbath evening as he had been used to do, at a tea-garden or some place of amusement, he was either reading his Bible, or listening to the preaching of the Gospel, or holding converse with such as feared the Lord, Mal. 3:16, they mocked and jeered him, and said he was beside himself; but yet indulged a hope that he would soon lay aside these new fancies, as they called them, and return to his old practices. It seemed to tell well for this young man's sincerity, that he was struck with the sin of spending what he had been used to reckon his own time in *sinful pleasure*, before he thought of the sin of working on the Sabbath morning for his father's profit. However, it was not long before he was convinced of this also; and, as new desires were awakened in his mind, as he thirsted to know more of Jesus, and learned to esteem the Sabbath "a delight, holy of the Lord, and honorable," he desired to de-

vote the whole of it to the holy purposes for which it was set apart. This wish he respectfully intimated to his father ; and entreated that he might be excused from attending in the shop, or going out to dress hair, on the Lord's day morning.

At this his father was enraged beyond measure, and threatened to turn him out of doors if he heard any more of his puritanical nonsense. "WE MUST LIVE," said the father ; "other people in our line wait on their customers on a Sunday, and you very well know that we take more money on that day than on any other day in the week. We might as well shut up shop altogether as shut it up on a Sunday. Would you have a good business thrown away for your whims ; a business which is likely, sooner or later, to be your own ; and a business on which your poor mother and all these helpless children"—John was the eldest of a numerous family—"depend for support ? If your religion teaches you to disobey your parents and expose your family to injury, it is not worth much."

These arguments distressed and for a time silenced the young man, though he felt conscious that he loved his family far more than he had ever done before, and would cheerfully have worked for them night and day. But though he could not at once show the hollowness of his father's reasonings, he was not convinced by them, and he was miserable when he went into the shop in obedience to his father, for he felt that he was acting in disobedience to God. In a short time, however, it pleased God farther to enlighten his mind, and to give more consistency to his views, and more decision to his purposes ; and he was then enabled to see that he "ought to obey God rather than men," Acts 5 : 29, and that not even the wishes of his father or mother, any more than personal interests and inclinations, must be allowed to stand in the way of obedience to Christ. Luke 14 : 26, 27.

Having in vain attempted to effect such an arrangement with his father as would allow him to carry out his convic-

tions, J. H. declared he must leave his father's roof and seek employment elsewhere. He went, and passed through many trials and privations in consequence of his conscientious determination, and of his father's unkindness and bitterness against him; for he declared that his son should never again enter his doors.

Meanwhile his place in his father's shop was filled by a dashing young man, quite free from any conscientious scruples about pursuing either business or pleasure on the Lord's day; and for a time matters went on swimmingly. But not many months had elapsed before it appeared that the young man was too fond of pleasure, that he made no scruple of wasting his master's time on the week-days and neglecting his business. Some of the best customers became displeased, and called loudly for the return of the steady young man who had waited on them so satisfactorily. The master, who still continued inexorable towards his son, waived the intimations of his customers, reprimanded his assistant, and paid more than ordinary attention to the business himself. But it could not escape observation, that his assistant spent more money on dress and pleasure-taking than his regular earnings could at all justify; and there was reason to suspect that the till and show-glasses were taxed to supply the deficiency.

At length some instances of neglect and impertinence in the young man so offended one principal and influential customer, that he called on the master to say he would be no longer waited on by his assistant, and desired, in plain terms, to know why he was deprived of the services of his former attendant. "Why, sir, to say the truth," replied the hairdresser, not doubting that his customer would fully concur in his decision, "it was impossible to keep John at home any longer. He became righteous overmuch, and would not work on Sundays; and you know, sir, it would not do for us to disappoint gentlemen on a Sunday more than any other day. WE MUST LIVE; and we must mind our business,

or it will not mind us." "But," replied the gentleman, "if the appointment were altered there would be no disappointment. Though I am not so particular myself as I ought to be, I do not blame the young man if he is scrupulous. As far as I am concerned, if he comes back, I shall be willing to accommodate; and, most likely, others would do the same. But, Mr. H., I must say, if you continue to employ this upstart, I must seek elsewhere for some one to serve me." The hint was sufficiently intelligible and emphatic. The assistant was forthwith dismissed, and John returned home, with an express engagement that no Sunday work should be required of him.

John's religion taught him to be conscientiously diligent and obliging where no sacrifice of principle was involved, as well as conscientiously firm where it was. His consistency gained him respect and good-will, and softened prejudice. Difficulties are much more easily surmounted when they are opposed in earnest, than when they are merely speculated upon; and at no very distant period from John's return, the shop was entirely closed on the Sabbath, and the whole family were seen flocking to the long-neglected courts of the Lord's house.

But it is not Sabbath-breakers only who fancy they are obliged to do what God has forbidden, or that which tends to evil. There was a farmer who labored hard to support a numerous family by cultivating a few acres of land, and did support them in comfort and respectability, all the labor of the farm being performed by himself, with the assistance of his elder boys. He had a notable wife, too, and a tidy, industrious daughter, who managed between them all the in-door operations; while a group of little ones might be seen playing around the cottage. The family and the dwelling always appeared clean and decent, and the children were remarked for civility and good behavior, and especially for constant and punctual attendance at the Sabbath-

school. Still, there is no doubt that they found enough to do to get along, with so large a family to maintain and a heavy rent to pay.

In an evil hour it was suggested to them that it might answer their purpose to open a beer-shop. "It is not exactly what we should have chosen," said they, "but WE MUST LIVE; and it may be as well to turn an honest penny that way as any other. It is very different from selling beer to be drunk on the premises; *that* we would not do on any account. No—it would spoil the comfort of the family to have people sitting in the house to smoke and drink; and it would be very injurious to the children. We certainly should not think of doing that."

After a few months' trial it was found that they did not make enough to give them a living. By and by they became less scrupulous, and determined to "open the house," as they called it; that is, to obtain a license for selling beer to be drunk on the premises. Both the parents declared themselves very reluctant to take the step; but they reconciled themselves to it by saying, WE MUST LIVE; and by declaring their fixed intention that their children, especially the eldest girl, now sixteen or seventeen years of age, should never be permitted to wait upon company, or even to come into the room used for their reception. This was three years ago; and how is it now? As some of the customers chose to have spirits, it was found necessary to have a spirit license, "for," said they, "WE MUST LIVE; and in order to do this, we must please our customers." Some customers chose to sit late at night, and to sing vulgar songs; and the father of the family is often diverted from his regular employ to keep company with his guests; and the mother, when busy and harassed, often calls her daughter to assist her in waiting upon them; and the girl had much rather be going in and out with beer, and catching a part of the song or the conversation, than doing house-work. Now, too, the Sabbath is abused; for if they intend to *live by the house*, as they

sometimes observe, they cannot shut the doors on Sunday against those who enter them every other day of the week. The Sabbath-school is altogether deserted, and public worship nearly so. The boys have learned rude and profane expressions; they have cast off their former civility, and have been known to rob the gardens which formerly they protected. The daughter has become giddy, pert, and bold in her manners. The whole family has, in every particular, sunk lower in respectability and comfort with every step taken at the suggestion of worldly policy, and at variance with better judgment and feelings, and which required the vague apology—"WE MUST LIVE."

Nor is this specious but hollow plea confined to the humbler classes of society. There are many individuals of ample resources or high standing in the world, and some even in the Christian Church, who adopt it. What says the merchant, when remonstrated with on the certain and well-known effects of his merchandise in spreading vice and misery through the community? "I am sorry for it. I do not wish a bad use to be made of what I sell; but people will have it; and if I do not make money by it, somebody else will; and I and my family *must live*."

Has not a religious *bookseller* been heard, with perfect complacency, to say of certain infidel, profane, or licentious publications which he keeps for sale, "What an immense run they have had; how many I have sold." And he, too, if reminded of their corrupting tendency, regrets that the public taste is not rectified. He would much rather sell as many books of an instructive and pious tendency, and derive as good a profit from them; but what he does in the way of trade is not exactly a matter of choice, he "*must live*."

A *landlord* knowingly lets his premises for the purpose of carrying on some pursuit either absolutely criminal in itself, or confessedly and extensively injurious in its effects; but what is he to do? A good rent is offered, and the re-

monstrances of conscience are silenced with, "We must turn our property to good account; WE MUST LIVE."

In a word, lucrative employment, however morally objectionable, is sought, and "tricks of trade," as they are called, however questionable, are adopted and justified by the plea, "WE MUST LIVE."

It is readily admitted, that Christians ought to exercise charity and candor towards one another, and judge not, that they be not judged. It would not be easy or right for one to prescribe the exact line of conduct that another ought to pursue, in matters that are at all questionable; but those who sincerely desire to approve themselves to God, who trieth the heart, will impartially examine themselves whether they really do what duty requires, and to the fullest extent that circumstances will admit.

A chemist and druggist lately remarked to the writer, "There was a time when I used to court business on the Lord's day; and sheltering myself under the alleged necessity of being at hand to supply medicine in case of illness, I employed myself in preparing a quantity of tinctures, weighing packets of soda-water powders, and many such things, not because they were needed, but really for the sake of saving time on other days. At that time I took more money on the Sabbath than on any other day, not a penny in a shilling of which was for matters of real necessity. When I began to see it my duty to refuse to sell, on the Sabbath, perfumery, cigars, and other matters of mere luxury and fancy, I offended a few of my customers, and expected to find that I had seriously injured my business; but in a little time people fell into my arrangements, and left off coming for such things. I now enjoy my Sabbaths undisturbed, except in cases of real need, to which, of course, I readily attend. Every customer whom I would wish to return, has come back to me; and, taking into account the saving of Sunday expenses, which almost invariably countervail Sunday gains, I can say, with hum-

ble thankfulness, that my prosperity is now greater than ever."

This example is worthy the notice of those whose calling seems; in any way, to require them to pursue a questionable line of conduct. It is one thing to be compelled to do what we would not; it is another to choose to do what we need not.

Reader, perhaps you have, in some shape or disguise, admitted this plea either deliberately or inadvertently. Will you give the matter a moment's consideration? Take yourself to task; allow and invite conscience to speak out; endeavor to enlighten it by referring to "the law and the testimony," and to rouse and stimulate it to fidelity by realizing the presence and scrutiny of a heart-searching God.

You "MUST LIVE." But when you are tempted to secure a livelihood, or even life itself, by sinning against God, bear in mind that you are entirely dependent on his blessing for success; and that every act of injustice, wicked policy, or sin of any kind, has a direct tendency to provoke him to withhold his blessing and blast your best-laid schemes and most diligent endeavors. "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," Psalm 127 : 1; and alas for that city, or house, or project, that is built under his curse. Josh. 6 : 26; 1 Kings, 16 : 34. Even success, which, when it crowns a lawful enterprise, pursued by lawful means, is to be traced to the blessing of God, must be regarded as a curse when it attends a bad cause, or the employment of wicked measures. See Psalms 78 : 29-31; 106 : 14, 45.

You "MUST LIVE : " yes, and you *will* live all the days of your appointed time; but it is not necessary to your being, or your well-being, that you should live in a certain style, or accumulate a certain amount of property. A little, with the blessing of God and a good conscience, will go a great way. "Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right." Prov. 16 : 8. "A little that a righteous man hath, is better than the riches of many wicked." Psa. 37 : 16.

You “MUST LIVE.” Nay, it is not absolutely necessary even that you should live. A great man once said, when pressed by his friends not to set sail in prospect of a storm coming on, “It is necessary that I should sail; it is not necessary that I should live.” A consistent Christian will reckon even his life second to his duty; and there is no sacrifice, however great, if made in obedience to the clear commands of God, that will not be abundantly recompensed.

You “MUST LIVE.” There is something more certain. You *must die*. And what value will you then set on all that you have gained by disobedience to God? You will feel towards it as Judas did towards the price of iniquity— anxious to cast it away, and to get your hands washed from the guilt of having grasped it. It would be well, whenever a gainful temptation presents itself, whenever an inclination is felt to pursue a practice which needs some apology, to think for a moment, “How should I feel towards this temptation if I were on my dying bed? Should I be satisfied with this reason, this apology for my conduct, if I were sure that this very night I should be called to give in my account to the Judge of all?”

You “MUST LIVE.” Yes, you must live for ever. And how, and where will you live? If you persist in a course of sinning against God, you will inevitably be the subject of his wrath for ever and ever; for “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Eccles. 12:14. “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Cor. 5:10. “The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.” Psalm 9:17.

But if you forsake what is evil, and conscientiously endeavor to act in obedience to God—how then? Can you thus insure a life of eternal happiness? No; you have already sinned, and forfeited heaven, and deserved the loss

of your soul ; and, though you have destroyed, you cannot save yourself. There is but one Saviour, and one way of salvation : it is by casting yourself, as a poor perishing sinner, on the mercy of God, in and through his dear Son ; it is by a simple dependence on the righteousness and death of the Lamb of God, who died that sinners might live. There is no salvation to be found elsewhere ; but he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. If you are joined to him by a living faith, your faith will work by love, and lead you to choose and practise those things that are pleasing in his sight. Thus, and thus alone, can you realize the happy experience of living to Christ on earth, and living with Christ in endless glory in heaven. Then, to you to live will be Christ, and to die, gain.

O where shall rest be found—

Rest for the weary soul ?

'Twere vain the ocean depths to sound,

Or pierce to either pole.

The world can never give

The bliss for which we sigh ;

'Tis not the whole of life to live,

Nor all of death to die.

Beyond this vale of tears

There is a life above,

Unmeasur'd by the flight of years ;

And all that life is love.

There is a death whose pang

Outlasts the fleeting breath :

O what eternal horrors hang

Around " the second death."

Lord God of truth and grace,

Teach us that death to shun,

Lest we be banish'd from thy face,

And evermore undone.

Montgomery.

THE OX SERMON.

AMONG the laws given by the divine Lawgiver through Moses to the Jews, was the following : “ If an ox gore a man or a woman that they die, then the ox shall be surely stoned ; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. But if the ox *were wont to push* with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but he hath killed a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death.” Exod. 21 : 28, 29.

The principle of this law is a very plain one, and a very broad one—here applied in a specific case, but extending to ten thousand others. It is this. Every man is responsible to God for the evils which result from his selfishness, or his indifference to the welfare of others.

Ages before this law was given, God says to Noah, “ Your blood of your lives will I require : at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man.” A stigma shall be fixed upon man or beast that shall destroy him who is made after the similitude of God. But why, in the case first supposed, is the owner quit, or guiltless ? Simply because the death is not in any way the result of his carelessness or of his selfishness. From any thing within his knowledge, he had no reason to expect such a result. But if the ox hath been *wont to push* with his horns, and he knew it, he shall be responsible for the consequences, whatever they may be ; for he had every reason to expect that mischief would be done, and took no measures to prevent it. And if the ox kill a man or woman, the owner hath done the murder, and he shall be put to death. Why ? The death was the result of his selfishness, or his indifference to the lives of others. And according to the law of God, his life shall go for it. The principle of this law is a principle of common-sense.

You see a fellow-creature struggling in the water. You know that he can never deliver himself. And you know

that a very little assistance, such as you can render, will rescue him from a watery grave. You look on and pass by. True, you did not thrust him in. But he dies by your neglect. His blood will be upon your head. At the bar of God, and at the bar of conscience, you are his murderer. Why? You did not kill him. Neither did the owner of the ox lift a hand. *But he shall surely be put to death.* You had no malice, neither had he. You did not intend his death—at the very worst, you did not care. This is just his crime. He did not care. He turned loose a wild, fiery, ungovernable animal, knowing him to be such; and what mischief that animal might do, or what suffering he might cause, *he did not care.* But God held him responsible.

Every man is responsible for evils which result from his own selfishness or indifference to the lives of men. In other words, to make a man responsible for results, it is not necessary to prove that he has malice, or that he intended the results. The highwayman has no malice against him he robs and murders, nor does he desire his death, but his money; and if he can get the money, he does not care. And he robs and murders because he loves himself and does not care for others; acting in a different way, but on the same selfish principle with the owner of the ox; and on the very same principle is he held responsible.

In the trial of the owner of the ox, the only questions to be asked were these two: Was the ox *wont to push* with his horn in time past? Did the owner *know it* when he let him loose? If both these questions were answered in the affirmative, the owner was responsible for all the consequences. This is a rule which God himself has established.

IS INTOXICATING LIQUOR wont to produce misery, and wretchedness, and death? Has this been testified to those who make and deal in it as a beverage? If these two things can be established, the inference is inevitable—they are responsible on a principle perfectly intelligible, a principle recognized and proclaimed, and acted upon by God himself.

Turn then your attention to these two facts. 1. Intoxi-

cating liquor *is wont to produce misery*. 2. Those who make or traffic in it, *know* this.

1. Upon the first point it will be sufficient to remind you of the hopes which intoxicating liquor has blasted, and the tears it has caused to flow. Let any one of us count up the number of its victims which we have known—consider their character and standing in society—their once happy families and prospects, and what a fearful change has a few years' use of strong drink produced. Very few but remember twenty, thirty, fifty, or one hundred families ruined in this way. Some of them were once our intimate friends—and their story is soon told.

They drank occasionally, for the sake of company, or merely for exhilaration. The relish for stimulants was thus acquired, and habits of dissipation formed. They became idle, and of course uneasy. And they continued to drink, partly to gratify taste and partly to quiet conscience. They saw the ruin that was coming upon them, and they made some earnest but ineffectual struggles against it. But the resistance became weaker and weaker—by and by the struggle is ended—they float with the current, and where are they? One has been found by the temperance reformation, a mere wreck in property, character, body, and mind, and reclaimed. Another is dead: his constitution could not bear his continued dissipation. Another died in a fit; another was found by the road-side one cold morning, a stiffened corpse. Another was thrown from his horse, and is a cripple for life, but still can contrive means to pay a daily visit to the dram-shop. Another is a mere vagabond, unprincipled and shameless—wandering from shop to shop, a fit companion for the lowest company, a nuisance to society and a curse to his kindred. Another is in the penitentiary for a crime which he committed in a drunken frolic.

Go into the crowded court-house and you may see another; his countenance haggard and ghastly, and his eye wildly rolling in despair. What has he done? One night, after spending all his money for drink, and loitering about till all the shops were closed, he returned to his miserable

habitation. He found a few coals on the hearth, and his wife and children sitting by them. He threw one child this way and another that, for he was cold. His wife remonstrated, and withal told him that what little fire there was was none of his providing. With many a horrid oath he declared he would not be scolded after that sort. He would let her know who should govern, and by way of supporting his authority, beat her brains out with the last remaining stick of wood. He did not mean to kill her. Her dying struggles brought him to his senses, and he stood horror-struck. He would give almost any thing that the deed were not done. If that could restore her to life, he would be almost ready to give a pledge never to taste intoxicating liquor again. Now look at the wretchedness of his family. For years he has made very little provision for them ; they have lived as they could, half naked and half starved, and not educated at all—with a most wretched example before their eyes. What encouragement had the wife or the children to attempt any thing—to make any exertion ? The children are abused and trampled on at home, and they grow up without self-respect, without shame, and without principle. Can any thing good be expected of them ? And if they do rise, it must be through a world of difficulty.

How many thousand families have been ruined in some such way as this. The father was a drunkard, and the mother—what could she do ? She endured, hoping against hope—and for the children's sake bore up against the current ; and many a time disguised a sad despairing heart under a joyful countenance, till at length she died of a broken heart, or died by the hands of him who had sworn to protect her.

These, and things like these, are the effects of intoxicating liquor—not casual, accidental, but common, natural effects, seen everywhere, in every town, in every neighborhood, and in every connection. Look which way we will, we see some of these effects. The greatest wretchedness which human nature in this world is called to endure, is connected with the use of inebriating drink. There is nothing

else that degrades and debases man like it—nothing so mean that a drunkard will not stoop to it—nothing too base for him to do to obtain his favorite drink. Nothing else so sinks the whole man—so completely destroys not only all moral principle, but all self-respect, all regard to character, all shame, all human feeling. The drunkard can break out from every kind of endearing connection, and break over every kind of restraint; so completely extinct is human feeling, that he can be drunk at the funeral of his dearest relative, and call for drink in the last accents of expiring nature.

Now look at a human being, whom God has made for noble purposes, and endowed with noble faculties, degraded, disgraced, polluted, unfit for heaven, and a nuisance on earth. He is the centre of a circle—count up his influence in his family and his neighborhood—the wretchedness he endures, and the wretchedness he causes—count up the tears of a wretched wife who curses the day of her espousals, and of wretched children who curse the day of their birth. To all this positive evil which intoxicating liquor has caused, add the happiness which but for it this family might have enjoyed and communicated. Go through a neighborhood or a town in this way, count up all the misery which follows in the train of intoxicating liquor, and you will be ready to ask, Can the regions of eternal death send forth any thing more deadly? Wherever it goes, the same cry may be heard—lamentation, and mourning, and woe; and whatever things are pure, or lovely, or venerable, or of good report, fall before it. These are its effects. Can any man deny that “the ox is wont to push with his horn?”

2. *Has this been testified to the owner?* Are the makers and venders aware of its effects? The effects are manifest, and they have eyes, ears, and understandings, as well as others. They know that whatever profit they make is at the expense of human life or comfort; and that the tide which is swelled by their unhallowed merchandise sweeps ten thousand yearly to temporal and eternal ruin. But this is not all. The attention of the public has been strongly turned to this subject. The minds of men have been enlightened,

and their responsibility pressed home upon them. The subject has been presented to them in a new light, and men cannot but see the absurdity of reprobating the tempted, while the tempter is honored—of blaming drunkards, and holding in reputation those whose business it is to make drunkards.

But are the makers of intoxicating liquor aware of its effects? Look at the neighborhood of a distillery—an influence goes forth from that spot which reaches miles around—a kind of constraining influence, that brings in the poor, and wretched, and thirsty, and vicious. Those who have money bring it—those who have none, bring corn—those who have neither, bring household furniture—those who have nothing, bring themselves and pay in labor. Now the maker knows all these men, and knows their temperament, and probably knows their families. He can calculate effects, and he sends them off, one to die by the way, another to abuse his family, and another just ready for any deed of wickedness. Will he say that he is not responsible, and like Cain ask, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” He knew what might be the result, and for a mere pittance of gain was willing to risk it. Whether this man should abuse his family, or that man die by the way, so his purpose was answered, he did not care. The ox was wont to push with his horn, and he knew it; and for a little paltry gain he let him loose, and God will support his law by holding him responsible for the consequences.

But a common excuse is, that “very little of our manufacture is used in the neighborhood; we send it off.” And are its effects any less deadly? In this way you avoid *seeing* the effects, and poison strangers instead of neighbors. What would you say to a man who traded in clothes infected with the smallpox, and who would say by way of apology, that he sent them off—he did not sell any in the neighborhood? Good man! he is willing to send disease and death all abroad; but he is too kind-hearted to expose his neighbors. Would you not say to him, you may send them off, but you cannot send off the responsibility? The eye of God goes with them, and all the misery which they cause will be charged

to you. So we say to the man who sends off his intoxicating liquor.

“But if I do not make it and traffic in it, somebody else will.” What sin or crime cannot be excused in this way? I know of a plot to rob my neighbor; if I do not plunder him, somebody else will. Is it a privilege to bear the responsibility of sending abroad pestilence and misery and death? “Our cause is going down,” thought Judas, “and a price is set upon the head of our Master, and if I do not betray him somebody else will. And why may not I as well pocket the money as another?” If you consider it a privilege to pocket the wages of unrighteousness, do so. But do not pretend to be the friend of God or man while you count it a privilege to insult the one and ruin the other?

Says another, “I wish it were banished from the earth. But then what can I do?” What can you do? You can keep one man clear; you can wash your own hands of this wretched business. And if you are not willing to do that, very little reliance can be placed on your good wishes. He that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much. I can hardly conceive any thing more inconsistent with every generous feeling, every noble principle, than the traffic in intoxicating liquor at the present day. The days of ignorance on this subject have passed by; every man acts with his eyes open.

Look at the shop and company of the retailer. There he stands in the midst of dissipation, surrounded by the most degraded and filthy of human beings, in the last stages of earthly wretchedness. His business is to kindle strife, to encourage profanity, to excite every evil passion, to destroy all salutary fears, to remove every restraint, and to produce a recklessness that regards neither God nor man. And how often in the providence of God is he given over to drink his own poison, and to become the most wretched of this wretched company. Who can behold an instance of this kind without feeling that God is just. “He sunk down into the pit which he made; in the net which he hid is his own foot taken.”

Another will say, "I neither make nor traffic in it." But you drink it occasionally, and your example goes to support the use of it. You see its tremendous effects, and yet you receive it into your house and bid it God speed. As far as your influence supports it and gives it currency, so far are you a partaker of its evil deeds. If you lend your influence to make the path of ruin respectable, or will not help to affix disgrace to that path, God will not hold you guiltless. You cannot innocently stand aside and do nothing.

A deadly poison is circulating over the land, carrying disease and desolation and death in its course. The alarm has been given. Its deadly effects have been described, seen, and felt. Its victims are of every class; and however wide the difference in fortune, education, intellect, it brings them to the same dead level. An effort has been made to stay the plague, and a success surpassing all expectation has crowned the effort. Still, the plague rages to an immense extent. What will every good citizen do? Will he not clear his house, his shop, his premises of it? Will he not take every precaution to defend himself against it, and use his influence and his exertions to diminish its circulation and thus diminish human misery? If he fears God or regards man, can he stop short of this? Can he, in his recklessness and selfishness say, "Let others take care of themselves—I'll make no promises—I'll not be bound—I am in no danger?" If he can speak and act thus, and stands aloof, and continues to drink, is he not guilty, and with the distiller and vender accountable to God for the perpetuation of these mighty evils, which but for his coöperation and agency must soon cease to exist? "I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say."

THE

MISSIONARY LEGACY.

IN one of those lovely and fertile vales with which England abounds, resided an aged and godly mother. She had trained her children for the service of Christ, and was at length laid on the bed of affliction. There she exemplified the power of the Gospel in a meek submission of herself and hers into the hands of God. She was ripening for glory about the time the missionary cause was first coming into notice. She had heard of the benevolent project of those pious men who broached the then ridiculed scheme of sending salvation to the heathen; and just before her death, she called her daughter to her bedside, and said, with all the solemn, but elevated feeling of a dying Christian, "*Here are twenty pounds; I wish to give it to the missionary cause. It is my particular desire, that after my death you will give it to that cause; and depend upon it, you will never have any reason to be sorry for having given it.*"

This dying bequest the daughter, who had much of her mother's spirit, carefully and conscientiously fulfilled.

At length the first-born son of this daughter, as he grew up, gave symptoms of a state of mind and heart as opposite to that of his mother and grandmother as can well be imagined. As he approached man's estate, he became very profligate, utterly unmanageable either by tenderness or authority, and brought heart-rending trouble upon his mother. He threw off all regard for his friends—forsook them—entered into the army, and vanished altogether from their knowledge.

The providence of God, however, at length brought him to India. Here, after some time, he fell into the company of a missionary. The man of God dealt faithfully with the youth, who was much impressed, and could neither gainsay nor get rid of the good man's words. At length his convictions prevailed, and divine grace subdued his heart. He became an altered man, and gave such evidence as satisfied the missionary of his true conversion to God.

After a prudent trial of his steadfastness, the missionaries, influenced by a truly liberal and christianlike affection for the young man, procured his discharge from the army, and took him under their own immediate care. At length, so satisfied were they of the devoted piety, the zeal, and the talents of this young convert, that they encouraged him in the design of dedicating his talents to the missionary work, and this youthful warrior became a humble soldier of the cross.

He soon wrote to his afflicted and bereaved mother, stating the great change that had taken place, and detailing as well the merciful dealings of the Lord with his soul, as the singular change in his employment. All this was accompanied with the most humiliating expressions respecting himself, and with entreaties for the forgiveness of that kind and pious mother, whose affection he had neither appreciated nor improved. Let a parent conceive the mingled emotions of joy and surprise, of rapture and astonishment, which filled the mother's heart when she received this letter—when she read her profligate son's repentance, and his prayer for her *forgiveness*. "Forgive you, my son," she cried out; "O how easy it is for me to forgive you." What a moment was that; what a gush of feeling overcame the good woman when she thought of her dying mother and the *twenty pounds*. It was like Joseph's being sent into Egypt to prepare corn for the famished house of his father and brethren. Here was an answer to many prayers; here was a return indeed, more than a hundred-fold, poured immediately into her own bosom. It was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in her eyes.

But this good woman had a younger son, who in his early life seemed likely to be the stay of his father's house, and the prop of his mother's age. Alas, he also was lured into the snare which ruins so many promising youths—evil company. He fell into profligate habits, and resolved to go to India.

All this occurred before any information reached the family respecting the first son. Of course, the loss of a second was enough to break the heart of such a mother. The announcement of his resolution to go to India was like tearing away the tenderest strings that were entwined around her heart. One already lost to her, and a second

treading in his steps. It was almost too much for nature to bear, even though supported and secured by grace. All that a mother could do she did. She wept, she prayed, she entreated—but all in vain. The youth was resolved, and it was hopeless to attempt to bring him to a better mind. When things were arrived at this point, she gave him up, indeed, as lost to herself and his family, but as still in the hands of a merciful and gracious God.

Like a mother, however, whose heart yearned over the son of her womb, dear, though fallen, she sent him a small sum of money, with as many needful articles as she could procure, to render him comfortable, and left him to wander far from the peace and simplicity of his native vale. He sailed, he arrived in India, without any knowledge of what had befallen his brother, or even of what part of the world he might be in.

This youth had not been long in India, before he, too, was brought in contact with some of the missionaries. After a short time, the sight and conversation of these good men reminded him of scenes at home. He recollected his father's house, the Gospel, the good instruction of his mother, her prayers and tears of love. The seeds sprung up, though in a foreign clime, and though a long and threatening winter had passed over them. The result was a decided change of heart and conduct. Soon after this change, it became evident that the climate disagreed with his constitution. His health and strength rapidly declined, and it became manifest that he would never return to tell his afflicted mother what the Lord had wrought for his soul. In this situation he was affectionately attended by the missionaries, who did all in their power to carry forward the work of grace in his heart. They earnestly sought the peace of his mind and the good of his soul; and they had the unspeakable happiness of reaping a rich reward of their labor.

A mysterious and most gracious Providence now directed the steps of the elder son to the very place where his brother was dying. It will be readily conceived that these two brothers, now united by the strong ties of Christian affection as well as by those of nature, would feel an indescribable satisfaction, the one in administering, the other in receiving the attention and services which such circumstances dictated. The eldest continued to the last administering to his youn-

ger brother all the comfort both for body and soul which was in his power; and the younger continued to receive, with unutterable delight, the brotherly attentions and the spiritual assistance which had been so mercifully provided him in a strange and heathen land. At length he died, and the surviving brother wrote to his bereaved mother, announcing the peaceful end of her son, and consoling her by the description of the happy days they had been permitted so unexpectedly and almost miraculously to spend together.

Before the contents of this letter were known, a report that her younger son was *dead* reached the ear of his mother, and filled her heart with sorrow. "My child is dead," she thought—"dead in sin against God; dead in a foreign land, among strangers, heathens; not one to speak a word of divine truth, to tell him of mercy, of a Saviour's dying love, of hope for the chief of sinners; no kind Christian friend to pour out a prayer for his forgiveness, or to direct his departing spirit to that throne of grace where none ever plead in vain."

Describing her feelings at this juncture, she says, "I could not weep, I could not pray; I seemed to be stupefied with horror and agony. At last the letter of my surviving son informed me that the brothers had met; that the eldest had witnessed the last moments of the younger; and that this my second son had been met by the missionaries, and by them turned from the error of his ways; that there was no doubt of the safety of his state, and that he had died in his brother's arms. O," said she, "it was indeed a cordial to my soul. How marvellous are the ways of Heaven, that both my sons, after turning aside from the ways of God, and from every means of instruction at home, should be converted to God in a heathen land. O the twenty pounds," she thought, "and the last declaration of my dear dying mother. O what blessings to me were hidden in that *twenty pounds*. What do I owe her for that saying, 'You will never have cause to repent of giving it to the Missionary Society.' Could I have foreseen all this, what would I not have given."

NAPOLEON'S ARGUMENT

FOR

THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST,

AND

THE SCRIPTURES,

IN A CONVERSATION WITH GENERAL BERTRAND, AT
ST. HELENA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

“ True, Christ offers to our faith a series of mysteries. He commands us authoritatively to believe, and gives no other reason than his awful word, *I am God*.

“ True, this is an article of mere faith, and upon it depend all the other articles of the christian system; but the doctrine of the divinity of Christ once admitted, and christianity appears with the precision and clearness of algebra; it has the connectedness and unity of a science.

“ This doctrine resting upon the Bible, best explains the traditions prevalent in the world. It throws light upon them; and all the other doctrines of christianity are strictly connected with it, as links of the same chain. The nature of Christ's existence is mysterious, I admit; but this mystery meets the wants of man—reject it, and the world is an inexplicable riddle—believe it, and the history of our race is satisfactorily explained.

“ Christianity has one advantage over all systems of philosophy and all religions: christians do not delude themselves in regard to the nature of things. You cannot reproach them with the subtleties and artifices of those

idealists who think to solve profound theological problems by their empty dissertations. Fools! their efforts are those of the infant who tries to touch the sky with his hand, or cries to have the moon for his plaything. Christianity says simply, 'No one hath seen God but God. God reveals what he is; his revelation is a mystery which neither imagination nor reason can conceive. But when God speaks, man must believe.' This is sound common sense.

"The Gospel possesses a secret virtue of indescribable efficacy, a warmth which influences the understanding and softens the heart; in meditating upon it, you feel as you do in contemplating the heavens. The Gospel is more than a book; it is a living thing, active, powerful, overcoming every obstacle in its way. See upon this table this book of books, (and here the emperor touched it reverently;) I never cease reading it, and always with new delight.

"Christ never hesitates, never varies in his instructions, and the least of his assertions is stamped with a simplicity and a depth which captivate the ignorant and the learned, if they give it their attention.

"Nowhere is to be found such a series of beautiful thoughts, fine moral maxims, following one another like ranks of a celestial army, and producing in the soul the same emotion as is felt in contemplating the infinite extent of the resplendent heavens on a fine summer night.

"Not only is our mind absorbed, it is controlled, and the soul can never go astray with this book for its guide.

"Once master of our mind, the Gospel is a faithful friend, our father, and truly our God. A mother has not greater care for the infant on her breast. The soul, captivated by the beauty of the Gospel, is no longer its own. God occupies it altogether; he directs its thoughts and all its faculties; it is his.

"What a proof it is of the divinity of Christ, that, with

so absolute an empire, his single aim is the spiritual melioration of individuals, their purity of conscience, their union to the truth, their holiness of soul.

“ My last argument is, there is not a God in heaven, if a mere man was able to conceive and execute successfully the gigantic design of making himself the object of supreme worship, by usurping the name of God. Jesus alone dared to do this; he alone said clearly and unflinchingly of himself, *I am God*; which is quite different from saying, *I am a god*, or *there are gods*. History mentions no other individual who has appropriated to himself the title of God in the absolute sense. Heathen mythology nowhere pretends that Jupiter and the other gods themselves assumed divinity. It would have been on their part the height of pride and absurdity. They were deified by their posterity, the heirs of the first despots. As all men are of one race, Alexander could call himself the son of Jupiter. But Greece laughed at the silly assumption; and so in making gods of their emperors, the Romans were not serious. Mahomet and Confucius merely gave out that they were agents of the Deity. Numa's goddess Egeria was only the personification of his reflections in the solitude of the woods. The Brahmas of India are only deifications of mental attributes.

“ How then should a Jew, the particulars of whose history are better attested than that of any of his cotemporaries,—how should he alone, the son of a carpenter, give out all at once that he was God, the Creator of all things. He arrogates to himself the highest adoration. He constructs his worship with his own hands, not with stones but with men. You are amazed at the conquests of Alexander. But here is a conqueror who appropriates to his own advantage, who incorporates with himself not a nation but the human race. Wonderful! the human soul with all its faculties becomes blended with the existence of Christ.

“And how? by a prodigy surpassing all other prodigies he seeks the love of men, the most difficult thing in the world to obtain; he seeks what a wise man would fain have from a few friends, a father from his children, a wife from her husband, a brother from a brother; in a word, the heart; this he seeks, this he absolutely requires, and he gains his object. Hence I infer his divinity. Alexander, Cæsar, Hannibal, Louis XIV, with all their genius, failed here. They conquered the world and had not a friend. I am perhaps the only person of my day who loves Hannibal, Cæsar, Alexander. Louis XIV, who shed so much lustre upon France and the world, had not a friend in all his kingdom, not even in his own family. True, we love our children, but it is from instinct, from a necessity which the beasts themselves obey; and how many children manifest no proper sense of our kindness and the cares we bestow on them,—how many ungrateful children! Do your children, General Bertrand, love you? you love them, but you are not sure of being requited. Neither natural affection nor your kindness will ever inspire in them such love as christians have for God. When you die your children will remember you—doubtless while spending your money; but your grand-children will hardly know that you ever existed. And yet you are General Bertrand! And we are here upon an island, where all your cares and all your enjoyments are centered in your family.

“Christ speaks, and at once generations become his by stricter, closer ties than those of blood; by the most sacred, most indissoluble of all unions. He lights up the flame of a love which consumes self-love, which prevails over every other love.

“In this wonderful power of his will we recognize the Word that created the world.

“The founders of other religions never conceived of this

mystical love, which is the essence of christianity, and is beautifully called charity.

“Hence it is that they have struck upon a rock. In every attempt to effect this thing, namely, *to make himself beloved*, man deeply feels his own impotence.

“So that Christ’s greatest miracle undoubtedly is the reign of charity.

“He alone succeeded in lifting the heart of man to things invisible, and in inducing him to sacrifice temporal things; he alone, by influencing him to this sacrifice, has formed a bond of union between heaven and earth.

“All who sincerely believe in him taste this wonderful, supernatural, exalted love, which is beyond the power of reason, above the ability of man; a sacred fire brought down to earth by this new Prometheus, and of which Time, the great destroyer, can neither exhaust the force nor limit the duration. The more I (Napoleon) think of this, I admire it the more. And it convinces me absolutely of the divinity of Christ.

“I have inspired multitudes with such affection for me that they would die for me. God forbid that I should compare the soldier’s enthusiasm with christian charity, which are as unlike as their cause.

“But after all, my presence was necessary, the lightning of my eye, my voice, a word from me; then the sacred fire was kindled in their hearts. I do indeed possess the secret of this magical power which lifts the soul, but I could never impart it to any one; none of my generals ever learnt it from me; nor have I the secret of perpetuating my name and love for me in the hearts of men, and to effect these things without physical means.

“Now that I am at St. Helena; now that I am alone, chained to this rock, who fights and wins empires for me? Where are any to share my misfortune? any to think of

me? Who bestirs himself for me in Europe? Who remains faithful to me? where are my friends? Yes, two or three of you, who are immortalized by this fidelity, ye share, ye alleviate my exile."

Here the emperor's voice choked with grief.

"Yes, my life once shone with all the brilliance of the diadem and the throne, and yours, Bertrand, reflected that brilliance, as the dome of the 'Invalids,' gilt by me, reflects the rays of the sun. But disasters came, the gold gradually became dim, and now all the brightness is effaced by the rain of misfortune and outrage with which I am continually pelted. We are mere lead now, General Bertrand, and soon I shall be in my grave.

Such is the fate of great men! So it was with Cæsar and Alexander, and I too am forgotten! and the name of a conqueror and an emperor is a college theme! our exploits are tasks given to pupils by their tutor, who sits in judgment upon us, awarding us censure or praise.

"How different the opinions formed of the great Louis XIV. Scarcely dead, the great king was left alone in his solitary chamber at Versailles—neglected by his courtiers and perhaps the object of their ridicule. He was no more their master. He was a dead body, in his coffin, the prey of a loathsome putrefaction

"And mark what is soon to become of me—assassinated by the English oligarchy, I die before my time, and my dead body too must return to the earth to become food for worms.

"Such is soon to be the fate of the great Napoleon. What a wide abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved, adored, and which is extending over all the earth! Is this death? is it not life rather? The death of Christ is the death of a God."

The emperor paused, and as General Bertrand did not answer, the emperor resumed :

“ You do not perceive that Jesus Christ is God ? then I did wrong to appoint you general ! ”



The above is translated from a French Tract, printed in Paris, with the title “ Napoleon.” The narrative is confirmed by a letter from the Rev. Dr. G. de Felice, Professor in the Theological Seminary at Montauban, France, in a communication inserted in the New-York Observer of April 16, 1842.

Professor De Felice states, that the Rev. Dr. Bogue sent Napoleon at St. Helena a copy of his “ Essay on the Divine Authority of the New Testament,” which eye-witnesses attest that he read with interest and satisfaction. He also states that similar witnesses attest that he read much in the Bible, and spoke of it with profound respect ; and further, that there was a religious revival among the inhabitants of St. Helena, which extended to the soldiers, who prayed much for the conversion and salvation of the noble prisoner. Professor De Felice closes his communication by translating from a recent French Journal the following conversation related by *Count de Montholon* the faithful friend of the Emperor.

“ I know men,” said Napoleon, “ and I tell you that Jesus is not a man ! ”

“ The religion of Christ is a mystery which subsists by its own force, and proceeds from a mind which is not a human mind. We find in it a marked individuality, which originated a train of words and maxims unknown before. Jesus borrowed nothing from our knowledge. He ex-

hibited in himself the perfect example of his precepts. Jesus is not a philosopher; for his proofs are miracles, and from the first his disciples adored him. In fact, learning and philosophy are of no use for salvation; and Jesus came into the world to reveal the mysteries of heaven and the laws of the Spirit.

“ Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne and myself founded empires; but upon what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon *force*. Jesus Christ alone founded his empire upon *love*; and at this hour millions of men would die for him.

“ It was not a day or a battle which achieved the triumph of the christian religion in the world. No, it was a long war, a contest for three centuries, begun by the apostles, then continued by the flood of christian generations. In this war all the kings and potentates of earth were on one side: on the other I see no army but a mysterious force, some men scattered here and there in all parts of the world, and who have no other rallying point than a common faith in the mysteries of the cross.

“ I die before my time, and my body will be given back to the earth to become food for worms. Such is the fate which so soon awaits him who has been called the great Napoleon. What an abyss between my deep misery and the eternal kingdom of Christ, which is proclaimed, loved and adored, and which is extending over the whole earth! Call you this dying? is it not living rather? The death of Christ is the death of a God!”

DON'T BE OFFENDED.

“*So he turned and went away in a rage.*” And why did Naaman go away from the prophet in a rage?

He was a great and honorable man at the court of Syria, a mighty and victorious general, and a favorite of the king; *but he was a leper.* In compliance with the advice of a little captive Jewess, he took princely gifts and went to the prophet Elisha to be cured. Arriving in state at the prophet's dwelling, where he expected to be received with deference and respect, Elisha simply “sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.” Then it was that “Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, he will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage.” 2 Kings, 5 : 11, 12.

The directions of the prophet, and the manner of conveying them, were *mortifying to his pride*, and therefore Naaman was offended. Had it been the poorest servant of my household, thought Naaman, with no retinue, no rank, and not a shekel of silver to call his own, he could not have been received with less distinction, and would have been equally able to obtain a cure on terms such as these.

Again, the directions given were entirely *different from his preconceived notions* of obtaining a cure, and therefore he was offended. He had made up his mind that he was to be cured like a great man, and he had brought his talents of silver and pieces of gold to pay for it. But no, instead of simply standing still and receiving his cure from the hands of the prophet with *an unhumbléd heart*, he must lay aside all his lofty notions, and *do an act* which should prove *that his heart was humbled*, and his pride subdued. He must go and wash seven times in Jordan.

And more, if Naaman was displeased with this mode

of cure, *there was no alternative* presented, and therefore he was offended. He must either go and dip himself seven times in Jordan, or he must live and die a leper. Surely, he thought, Elisha might come out and listen to me, that if I should object to this way of cure, he might tell me of one more congenial to my feelings. "So he turned and went away in a rage."

Ah, says my dear impenitent reader, "This was very foolish in Naaman, to reject for such reasons the means of escaping so dreadful a disease."

Bear with me, then, while I say, as Nathan to David, **THOU ART THE MAN.** Thou art afflicted with a disease worse than that of Naaman—*the leprosy of sin*; and unless thou art healed by the only means which Christ the good Physician has prescribed, the result will be, not the death of the body merely, but the ruin of the never-dying soul.

As Naaman was told by Elisha how to be cured of his leprosy, so have you been told that "there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of Jesus Christ. Acts 4 : 12. You have been told that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life;" and that while "he that believeth on the Son hath life, he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but *the wrath of God abideth on him.*" John 3 : 16, 36. And while you have heard the only way of salvation faithfully proclaimed, and the consequences of neglecting it solemnly pointed out, perhaps, like Naaman, you have been offended and gone away in a rage.

The terms of the Gospel are *mortifying to the pride* of the natural heart. "What," say you, "though I am a rich man, and an honorable man, and a learned man, cannot I purchase salvation with my money or my fame, but must I come and crave it upon the same terms as the poor beggar?" Or, if neither rich nor learned, you have said, "What, though I am an honest man, a sober man, a respectable man, a moral man, must I come upon the same terms as the thief, or the drunkard, or the profligate?" And while you have been told that all your respectability, all your morality, all your self-righteousness can avail nothing in the matter of justification; that the blood of Jesus Christ, and *that alone*, cleanseth from all sin, and that you must either wash

in that fountain for sin, or remain a poor miserable leper for ever, you have been offended, and, like Naaman, gone away in a rage.

But Naaman had prudent servants, and they reasoned with him kindly and wisely. When he was turning away in a rage, they said to him, "My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" Happy for Naaman that he was blessed with these kind advisers, and that he listened to their advice. He followed the directions of the prophet, and was healed of his leprosy, so that "his flesh came again like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

In like manner I entreat you, go to Jesus, wash in the "fountain filled with blood," and be at once healed of the leprosy of sin. Why, like Naaman, should you turn away in a rage? My brother, my sister, my father, if thou wert commanded to do some great thing, wouldst thou not do it to obtain eternal life? how much rather when it is only Wash, and be clean—believe, and be saved—give up doing, that thou mayest merit salvation, and simply trust in Christ, who has done all—and rely upon his atonement and righteousness as the only and sufficient ground of hope and dependence for thee, a poor, perishing, and guilty sinner.

The writer was once as much offended with salvation by grace as thou canst be, till he saw that his best deeds were defiled by sin, and that if not saved by free grace manifested through Christ the Saviour, he could not be saved at all. Will you be offended with *him* for urging and entreating you, by all that is momentous in eternity, and heaven, and hell, to fly to Christ for mercy, that your precious soul may be saved?

Is it with *that once dear relative* you are offended; that wife, or sister, or daughter, who has left you alone to tread the road you once travelled together, the road that leads to death? Oh, do not be offended. If you will destroy your own soul by rejecting the only way of salvation, do not require her to do the same. Be content to go down to hell alone, without requiring one who was once dear to be your companion on that doleful journey. But you need not be separated; accompany that dear friend in the road that leads to heaven. Trust in the same precious Saviour, and you shall meet in the same heaven at last.

Is it with *the truth* you are offended—the truth, that you are, by nature, a lost and guilty sinner—that except you repent, you must perish—that salvation, if obtained at all, must be, not through your own merits, but the merits and sufferings of another, and that the honor of that salvation will belong not to you, but to Christ, who gave himself a ransom for many? I am aware that these truths are as offensive to the unrenewed heart as were Elisha's directions to the proud Naaman, and many who hear them, like him, go away in a rage. But O, my dying fellow-sinner, do not be offended. These are Bible truths, whether you believe them, or whether you reject them; and remember, that your unbelief or your anger does not alter their nature, *they are truths still*; and if you do not believe it before, you will find them to be truths when it is too late to avail yourself of that knowledge. O solemn, solemn words; and yet they are the words of Christ: *He that believeth not, shall be damned.* Mark 16 : 16.

Is it with *the Lord Jesus Christ* you are offended? From the evident unwillingness to hear his name mentioned, displayed by some, no less than from the open enmity exhibited by others to Christ and his religion, it is, alas, too manifest that there are many who are offended with Christ himself. But why offended with the precious Saviour, who left his throne to suffer and agonize on the cross to provide a way of salvation for thee, poor sinner? O do not be offended with HIM who shed his precious blood to open a fountain for sin and uncleanness. Rather come to him as a poor, weary, heavy-laden sinner, crying for mercy; for he has invited thee in those blessed words, “Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matt. 11 : 28.

Remember, if you, like the Syrian leper, go away in a rage, *yours will be the loss and the ruin*. Suppose Naaman had had no faithful servant to expostulate with him, and had finally left the prophet in a rage, who would have been the loser? Without doubt, he would have lived and died a poor miserable leper. So, my fellow-sinner, will it be with thee. *If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself; but if thou scornest, THOU ALONE shalt bear it.* Prov. 9 : 12.

TRAINING CHILDREN

FOR

THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.

If the rising hopes of the church be not destined to disappointment, if the anticipated conversion of the world be not to linger in abeyance and the efforts for its accomplishment to expire, the next generation must surpass the present in the devotedness of their piety, the fervency of their prayers, and the extent, vigor, and success of their enterprises in God's service. The expectation of such an advance, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, enters as an essential element into all the calculations of the church for the speedy conversion of the nations; if it be not realized, these calculations will be confounded. Let the church, then, ask, before giving loose to her winged hopes, what indications can be found in the actual condition of the rising generation that they will surpass their predecessors in spiritual power? What efforts are made suited to secure this result? If none, then the hopes of the speedy triumph of the Gospel, based on the supposition of this approaching improvement, are illusory—mere dreamy hopes, unsupported alike by reason and by facts. The coming generation will be, under God, what the present generation shall make it. Hence the duty of training children for the conversion of the world is essential to the success of the missionary enterprise.

In considering this duty, the attention must, in the outset, be directed to THE QUALIFICATIONS INDISPENSABLE

IN THE GENERATION THAT SHALL SPREAD THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE WORLD.

The present generation of christians, like the Israelites led out of Egypt by Moses, have been so long ground in bondage to worldliness, and corrupted with prevailing spiritual idolatry, as to be unfit to endure the toil or to enjoy the blessings of entering the promised possession of the church. They are indeed led to its borders. They have sent out their missionaries to explore it, and might enter it in triumph if they would. But while here and there a Caleb and a Joshua are ready to go forward, the majority look at the Anaks in the land, and the cities walled and very great, and seem likely for their supineness and unbelief to die in the wilderness. The christians that are to be the instruments of renovating the world must possess qualifications of which the church is at present destitute.

They must vastly exceed the present generation *in the extent and vigor of their benevolent enterprises*. Glorious as have been the results of modern missions, yet, when compared with the conversion of all mankind, the work accomplished seems scarcely more than pulling away a little moss in the attempt to remove the Andes. Considered as the beginning of continually increasing efforts, the result is encouraging and glorious; considered as a stationary influence, it is utterly disheartening. By the united efforts of all the Protestant churches in christendom not more than 1,500 ordained missionaries are sustained among the heathen, while from year to year scarcely enough are sent out to fill the places of the dead; little more than two and a half millions of dollars are annually contributed for the object; and not one quarter of the stations are occupied where Providence has opened the way for successful missionary operations. Efforts on this scale will never evangelize the world.

The church must be ready to encamp on every spot where the guiding pillar of cloud may rest, until the

world is filled with the knowledge of the Lord; and that, although to supply one pastor to every 3,000 of the 600,000,000 heathen will require 200,000 men, a number more than ten times as great as that of all the evangelical clergy in the United States. Nor is this an impossible undertaking; for arithmetical calculations demonstrate that the church, even with its present resources, might, without great sacrifice, accomplish the work in a quarter of a century. But what the present generation only speculate about, they who shall spread the Gospel through the world will do. They will send the living preacher to every town, and the Bible and schools to every family on the globe—a work, which, however it may be accelerated by native preachers, will still demand an enterprise and an energy of the possibility of which the church as yet has hardly become conscious.

Conceive now of the church engaged in benevolence on a scale adequate to supply the whole world with the means of grace within a quarter or a half of a century; picture to yourself the numbers employed, the resources applied, the activity and self-denial elicited, and you will see a new aspect of christian society; you will see the bustle of worldly enterprise rivalled by the activity of missionary business; you will see a christian community in which every hamlet resounds with the preparations of benevolence; you will see a church actuated by the spirit, though not called literally to imitate the conduct of the primitive christians in selling all and devoting it to Christ; a church ready to bind all that they have, as Abraham bound Isaac, and lay it on God's altar; a church whose whole existence may be described in the words of the apostle, "For me to live is Christ."

Pre-eminent piety is a qualification necessary for the generation that shall evangelize the world. God has promised it: "He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David, and the house of David as the angel of the

Lord. The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun sevenfold." It is necessary in order to sustain the enlarged operations of the church. When Zion "lengthens her cords" she must proportionally "strengthen her stakes." It is easy to cypher out how many dollars, and presses, and men will evangelize the world; but without God's Spirit all means and appliances are to the heathen world but as clothing to the corpse, neither warming it nor preserving it from decay. It is a law in the economy of grace as well as in that of miracles: "The power of working mighty works goeth not forth but by prayer and fasting." This law cannot be evaded. The efficiency of a given force cannot be increased by the addition or improvement of machinery beyond a certain limit. The conviction is seizing thoughtful minds that the piety which now propels the benevolent operations of the church has nearly reached that limit. Something may yet be gained by extending and improving the machinery. But to expect by that means to evangelize the world, without an increase of the holy love which propels the work, is expecting a perpetual motion, unattainable alike in physical mechanics and in spiritual. The churches must receive a new baptism with the Holy Ghost.

The piety of the generation which shall convert the world must be marked by *deep inward experience*. The "form of godliness" without the power thereof may be as real and as ruinous in bustling activity as in superstitious ceremonies. The activity of the church, inadequate as it is, has unquestionably advanced more than the spiritual experience of the heart. This disproportion is betokened by the instability of many, the fitfulness of their zeal, the languor of their prayers, their readiness to be discouraged, and the necessity of stimulating them continually with pungent appeals in order to secure their charities. Deep religious experience wrought by God's Spirit is "the power of godliness." It alone can enable any generation

of christians to meet and vanquish the gigantic difficulties of spreading the Gospel through the world. The strength of the church lies in the hidden emotions and struggles and prayers of individual souls. Then will the tree of the Lord flourish at the last, when every little tendril of the root, hidden in its fitting place in the soil, is perpetually drawing up nutriment for the trunk and boughs. Then will the church be strong and fruitful, when every closet is a hidden duct, conveying always spiritual nutriment to the system. Then will there be emotions intense as Paul's when he cried, "I have great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart," and prayers will pervade the church, fervent as that of Knox, when he cried, "Lord, give me Scotland, or I die;" fervent as those of David, and Jeremiah and Daniel, when they wept rivers of waters for the dishonor done to God. Then the efforts of the church will spring from the deep humiliation which has learned the extent and bitterness of guilt, from the sense of sin which bewails its prevalence in the world as the sorest of evils, from the experience of human weakness which leads to entire reliance on God, from the love which many waters cannot quench, and the faith which says, "I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me."

The generation that is to evangelize the world *must better understand than is usual with christians, and more consistently practise the principles of the Bible*. If many scriptural principles are to be interpreted by the prevalent conduct of the church, their force is gone. In the common customs of christians is a *Talmud* to the church, which, worse than the traditions of the Rabbins, makes the command of God of no effect. Two or three exemplifications must suffice.

The Bible commands, "Whatever ye do, do all for the glory of God." Can he be obeying this command who forgets his religion in the excitement of politics? who regulates his mercantile transactions by the principles of

selfishness and the maxims of the world? who shuts out his piety from his common conversation? who puts on his sacred robes, like Aaron, when he goes to the temple, and casts them aside when he goes to the field or the shop? who "cantons off a little Goshen" in a corner of the day and admits on it the light of Scripture and of prayer, but leaves the rest in Egyptian darkness? whose guiding principle is not, "What saith the Lord," but, "What is tolerated by common custom?" and who screens with his religion the wicked institutions, the genteel corruptions, and the fashionable follies of society? If such a religion were spread through the world, what would it avail but to gild its iniquities without removing them?

The Bible says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." How does the worldly professor explain this? Ask his thoughts and they will testify, "We were directed to God a few minutes this morning, though even then scattered and wandering; but all day we have been fixed on worldly schemes." Ask his desires and they will testify, "On rare occasions we are fixed on things above, but day by day we fasten with all our might on worldly acquisitions." Ask his tongue and it will testify, "My conversation savors of this world." Ask that highest of his faculties, reason, and her testimony is, "My common business is to devise plans for worldly advantage." His lips profess that he seeks first the kingdom of God; his whole life testifies that he seeks first the world.

The Bible says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Does he obey this, who, for enjoyment and luxury, spends fifty dollars on himself as often as he gives one to save the whole human race? who shrinks from every effort that is not pleasant and convenient? who refuses every sacrifice that involves real self-denial and crosses pampered self?

Very differently must the generation that shall evangelize the world apply these and kindred texts. They must

live so that their daily practice shall declare that they are not their own; so that one will need only to look at their conduct to know that they live not to lay up treasure on earth, but in heaven.

They will need to possess IN MASS the character of reformers. Such is the character which Paul exemplified, which Wesley, and Knox, and Luther, and Martyn more or less imperfectly exhibited. When God has had a great work to be done, he has raised up such men as these to perform it. But the conversion of the world, the most stupendous of all reformations, immeasurably surpassing that of Luther, and demanding a proportionally greater development of spiritual power, is not to be the work of an individual. It demands a whole generation of reformers: a whole church animated as a mass with the burning energy, the uncompromising steadfastness, the heroic benevolence, the glowing love of the truth, and the deep piety, which animated Luther and Paul. In times of revolution, when great interests are at stake, great principles defended, and great changes in progress, the people as a whole exhibit an intensity of feeling and effort which, at another time, would be extraordinary in a single individual. The conversion of the world is to be the greatest of all revolutions, accomplished gradually and in quiet, but pulling down the most massive of the old strongholds of error, and changing the whole aspect of the world. The actors in it must exhibit the intensity of feeling and effort which such an era demands. The cause must go down deep into men's hearts; love to God and men must underlie and heave the christian community throughout; and the church, with all the fire of revolution, and all the energy of the mightiest reformation, and all the love, humility and faith which become the disciples of Christ, must throw themselves into the work as the one business of life, as the vital interest of society, as the end of all heroism, the sum of all greatness, the grand object of the existence

of the world. At present, low spiritual attainments are the characteristic of the church, pre-eminent piety the exception; before the world will be converted, pre-eminent piety must be the characteristic, low attainments the exception.

The present tendency of all benevolent efforts to association is an indication of the design of Providence to spread the Gospel through the world, not by one or two distinguished reformers, but by the energy and prayers of the mass of the church. When about to lay the foundation of civil and religious liberty, and of his kingdom in the new world, he raised up, not a Luther or a Paul, but a whole race of Puritans, a whole generation of reformers. When about to convert the nations to himself, he will raise up a yet nobler and a godlier race as actors in it.

Such are some of the indispensable qualifications of the christians who shall evangelize the world, or who shall even commence operations on such a scale as will, within a reasonable period, secure the result. All christians, who expect the spread of the Gospel through the world, are expecting that ere long such a character will be exhibited by the church.

But as yet THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT THESE EXPECTATIONS ARE ABOUT TO BE REALIZED. The present generation of christians exhibit no evidence that they are about to rise to higher piety and to discharge their hitherto neglected duty to the perishing world. We discover no such cheering indications in those that are coming upon the stage. *The young are not converted.* To select at random a single instance, here is a church numbering 305 members, only 28 of whom are under 21 years of age. Connected with this church is a congregation comprising 159 families, in 120 of which one or both of the parents profess religion. Thus while three fourths of the families enjoy the counsels of a pious parent, almost all of the youth are living in impenitence. This instance is far from being

an unfavorable specimen of the state of the churches generally. What does the fact argue but a serious defect of some kind in the training of children, that, while so considerable a proportion of parents are professedly Christ's disciples, yet, with all the co-operation of pastors, Sabbath-schools, maternal associations, and publications for the young, so few throughout the country become christians in early life? And the young who do experience religion *are not rising to any higher piety or putting forth more strenuous efforts than their predecessors.* What then is the ground to expect that the church will be better qualified to evangelize the world thirty years hence than at present, or will do any more to accomplish it? Facts, so far as the present condition of the young is concerned, compel the answer, none.

Whence, then, is to come the generation pious and energetic enough to send the Gospel to all mankind? **THE CHURCH MUST TRAIN HER CHILDREN FOR THE WORK OF EVANGELIZING THE WORLD.** The dreamy expectation of a rapid growth in piety, while no preparation is made to effect it, is as ruinous as it is delusive; it satisfies the church with inaction through the vague hope of miraculous improvement. Shall we supinely fold our hands and wait for God to raise up helpers—to send us Gideons and Samsons? Will the Lord open windows in heaven to make this thing be? Away with expectations so indefinite, presuming and irreverent. One Jonathan and his armor-bearer, meeting the foe in the strength of the Lord, may expect to conquer; but thousands supine in their tents look in vain for victory from Jehovah. It dishonors God to rely on his now-working miracles to endow the church with the high qualifications indispensable to secure the salvation of mankind. We have no right to expect the rising generation to attain these qualifications without sedulous, systematic, persevering education. Without

this, according to the whole course of human events, the church in *their* day will be as small, as inefficient, and as worldly as in our own. It is, then, the business of the church to begin and to prosecute with all her energy the work of training her children to save the world.

Christians have no alternative. If they will not give up their cherished hopes, if they mean not to suffer the opportunities every where opening for the spread of the Gospel to remain for another generation unoccupied, and the calls for help which every breeze sweeps to our ears to remain unheeded, they must train their children for the conversion of the world. Living, as we do, at a time when the foundations of idolatry are tottering, when the iron gates of the nations are shaken open, and changes are sweeping over the world with the swiftness and power of the whirlwind, we must leave to our children the sublime but dangerous legacy of deciding the most momentous questions in the progress of society, of fighting the most decisive battles for the truth, of improving the noblest opportunities for spreading the Gospel, which ever signalized the history of the church.

Never was a trust more solemn committed to men than that now committed to the church, the training through infancy to manhood of those who are to be the decisive actors in the momentous scenes about to open on the world. Wo to the church, if she so train her children that, like the ill trained sons of Eli, they take the ark out into the most momentous of conflicts only to abandon it to the foe. Wo to her and to the world, if she so neglect her children that, through their want of qualifications for their responsibilities, the nations shall stretch out their arms in vain to God, idolatry shall crumble into atheism, emancipated mind become the enemy of piety, superstition enlarge her shadow, corrupt Christianity consummate her usurpations, and for untold years worldliness, like a new deluge, roll its waves over the earth. Standing as she

does on the verge of great events, hearing the note of preparation, the cry for deliverance, the defiance of enemies, and seeing the hand of God moving the nations as of old he moved the tops of the mulberry trees as a signal to advance, the church must not only do her utmost in her own person, but must with all her might train her children for the conversion of the world. The fact that the revival of the missionary spirit was accompanied by the introduction of the Sabbath-schools and other modern institutions for the religious training of children, is a remarkable coincidence by which Providence is pointing out the indispensable connection between such training and the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

The family is the school in which this training must be accomplished. High as are the qualifications for evangelizing the world, every parent is under obligation to make it his grand object in the education of his children to secure to them these qualifications. Pastors and teachers, and all interested for the young, should indeed have the same objects for their efforts and prayers; but the great responsibility rests on parents; it cannot be transferred from them; they must bear it to the judgment. If christian parents would earnestly engage in this work, God would bless it with success. If, as we expect, the mass of children will, in a future age, be converted in their childhood, it will not be by a miracle, but by God's blessing on faithful training and earnest prayer. This is the very object for which the world is divided into families, that each child may have the training which, as an immortal being and a servant of God, it needs. God's promises of a blessing on such efforts are full and explicit. Facts corroborate the promises. The established connection between means and ends would be broken, if the church, making the conversion of the world the first object in training her children, should systematically, prayerfully, and earnestly pursue it, and yet fail of success.

Let every pious parent regard his family as a little school for the church, and act as a teacher designated by the Savior on purpose to train the children for his service, and we shall see the glorious result. Let parents neglect this duty, and their children will prove incompetent to meet the responsibilities awaiting them, and the parents must answer for the ruin that will ensue. The laws of Lycurgus required that all the children of Sparta should be trained for the state. Jesus teaches his subjects to believe that children are a heritage of the Lord, and to train them for the church. The laws of Lycurgus were obeyed; and generation after generation of hardy soldiers grew up and made their little city mistress of all Greece. And if the laws of Christ be obeyed, will there not grow up soldiers of the cross, ready, like Paul, to suffer the loss of all things that they may win Christ; and able to push the triumphs of the cross to the ends of the earth? Training children for the state made Sparta irresistible: can the church be conquered when her children are trained to her service, when "her sons shall come from far, and her daughters shall be nursed at her side?"

THERE MUST BE SOME PREVALENT AND CULPABLE DEFICIENCY IN TRAINING THE CHILDREN OF THE CHURCH. This is evident, because so large a proportion of them are living in impenitence, and so few appear to be pressing on toward the qualifications needed for the duties which await them. Some of these deficiencies will be mentioned.

1. Parents *aim at nothing higher than the conversion* of their children. The burthen of their anxiety, their prayers, their conversation as to the spiritual concerns of their children is that they may be converted: when this is gained they feel that their prayers are answered, their work done. It is indeed a solemn responsibility that the parent must be chiefly instrumental in deciding for heaven or for hell the destiny of the immortal beings committed

in a state of helplessness to his care. It is a blessed reward to the parent who has seen a child die in the hopes of the Gospel, to believe that he has given being to one of the angelic choir of heaven. But to train a child with no higher end than its own conversion will never fit it to act its part in the renovation of the world. Christ requires the parent to train his child to do good; to make it his first and constant desire, and prayer, and effort to qualify his children to accomplish the utmost of which their energies are capable for the advancement of the church.

This deficiency is a grand reason why children are not converted. A desire only for the child's salvation from hell, may be selfish, actuated, however earnest, by little more than natural affection. Ought the parent to expect prayers to be heard, aiming only at the welfare of a dear child, not at the advancement of Christ's cause?

Many parents have a secret fear that their children will become missionaries. This fear hangs as a millstone on their prayers and efforts to train their children for the conversion of the world; it makes them teach them with a stammering tongue, if at all, that they are not their own; it makes them use many limitations and qualifications in teaching the duty of living solely for God, and of counting all things but loss for him. If such a fear exists, the parent ought to doubt his own sincerity in consecrating the child to God, yea, and his own piety; for Christ has said, "He that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me."

We are not, however, to train our children merely to be missionaries and ministers; all are not called to these offices; nor yet are we merely to select one and train that for the ministry, while the rest are trained for the world. We are to train all to the missionary spirit and the missionary work; to train all to feel that they are placed on earth, not to enjoy themselves only, not to acquire property and honor, not to get a living, but to serve

God and do good; that to this end all other pursuits must be made subservient, all needful labor and self-denial endured. We need men like Harlan Page among laymen, as much as men like Payson and Martyn among ministers and missionaries. There are a few in almost every church who, when removed, are missed and mourned by the whole church, scarcely knowing how to get along without their efforts or their prayers. But there are too many who can easily be spared. Parents should aim to train their children so to be *pillars* in the temple of God, that their removal shall be a manifest breach upon the church.

2. Parents *do not make it their first object*, in training children, to prepare them to serve God. If the conduct of parents is a key to their feelings, the most, even of those desiring the salvation of their children, make their temporal welfare the first object, the salvation of their souls secondary, while the object of fitting them for eminent usefulness is sunk almost out of sight. In selecting their places of education, their trades and professions, their places of settlement, parents usually regard chiefly, if not solely, the temporal welfare of their children. Not only the child's usefulness and his conversion, but even his moral character is often made wholly secondary to the regard to worldly advantage. The maxims on which parents educate their children are the maxims of the world: whatever their precepts, they insensibly accustom them to be influenced primarily by regard to worldly acquisitions, to worldly honor and popularity. Truth compels the declaration, that worldly advantage is the first object for which the majority of parents train their children; if not first on their lips, it is first in their thoughts and first in their plans. Truth equally demands the declaration, that he who educates his child on these principles is recreant to his Maker, false to his trust, faithless to his child, regardless of his vows and his duty to the world.

The first duty of a parent to his child is to train it *as*

an immortal being. Let the whole world cry shame on the parent who has received from God an immortal being helpless and ignorant, and abuses his superior knowledge, abuses his office of teacher and the trust reposed in him by his unsuspecting child, to make it lose the crown of glory which it might win, to train it to seek its portion in this life of vanity, to leave it untaught as to the glorious service of God.

The fundamental principle of christian education is, "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God." In all the parent's plans and wishes for the child from infancy to manhood, he must seek first the advancement of Christ's kingdom; he is never to swerve from that object to secure to himself more enjoyment from the child, or to secure to the child greater worldly advantages. The guiding question from first to last must be, how can I do most good through this child? Said a Spartan mother, as she waited at the city gate, to the messenger from the army, "How has gone the battle?" "Thy three sons are slain," was the reply. "Sir," cried the woman, with indignation, "I asked not for my sons, but for my country: How stand the arms of Sparta?" With a nobler spirit let every christian parent feel that his children belong to Christ; let his first solicitude be that they do their duty to him in upholding and promoting his cause.

To secure this object should elicit the *strongest* desires which the parent ever feels for his child. Mark the emotions of that parent whose child is very sick; mark the anxiety of that parent whose child is just entering a new business, or commencing active life for himself. It is infidel, it is heathenish to feel less for the safety of the soul than of the body; less for the child's faithfulness and success in serving God than in serving the world. If parents would train their children to convert the world, the object must be imbedded in the centre of their hearts. Then will their feelings and prayers be like what Jeremiah en-

joins on parents amid the distress of Jerusalem, "Arise, cry out in the night; in the beginning of the watches pour out thy heart like water before the Lord; lift up thine hands toward him for the life of thy young children."

After all that has been done for missions, the church seems yet scarcely awake to the reality and grandeur of her duty; she has not yet grasped her new responsibilities and relations, nor become really conscious that on her is actually devolving the conversion of the world. In the midst of a new era she is clinging to the habits of former times; as if an army should bring the quiver and the bow into the fields of modern warfare. Let the disciples of Christ awake to the sublimity of their position; let them understand that they are not private men and women only, buried in the retirement of the country or the crowds of the city, delving life away solely in their own petty concerns, and stretching their thoughts no farther than the street on which they live; let them understand that "the Lord hath given a banner to them that fear him, that they may display it for the truth;" that the banner is in their hands, and they must give account why it floats not over the nations; let them feel that they live in a period in which every individual of the church must be able to say with the apostle, "For me to live is Christ;" then will they feel that their children, the dearest of earthly treasures, belong to God, and it will be their first desire that they may live to promote his cause.

3. *The conduct of parents and teachers contradicts their instructions.* It may not, perhaps, be too much to say that the present system of education, as a whole, is in contradiction to the professed object of the church in training her children. Religion should be the foundation and the evident end of all instruction; but it is introduced into schools mostly as an appendage, and even that introduction is contested. Education ought to be the handmaid of religion; we regard it as a triumph if reli-

gion is permitted to be the handmaid of education. Religion should be the foundation of the whole system, and we scarcely succeed in bringing it in as a cornice or a moulding. And is this educating children for the conversion of the world? Can children believe that to advance Christ's cause is the one business of life, while day after day and year after year they are toiling in pursuit of an education in which religion never appears as the origin and end of all their efforts? Can they believe that this is a preparation for a life to be wholly devoted to spreading the Gospel and doing good? The great business of a child for years is usually going to school; and if the religious influence of the school be confined to reading the Scriptures once a day, how can the child avoid the conclusion that religion has little to do with the main business of life; that it may be crowded into corners and yet receive its full share of attention? The subject is one of difficulty, but one which demands the consideration of the church. If christians ought to educate their children for the conversion of the world, the whole system of education should be such as not to belie the professions and teachings of the parent, such that in all its practical operations from day to day the child may feel an influence, speaking louder than words, that he is not his own, but is trained for Christ. The history of one large school may be cited, the cherished object of whose Principal is to train the pupils for usefulness in the church, in which, with the most successful pursuit of study, the most animating religious results have been exhibited. Of the eight years of its existence, four have been years of revivals, in one of which all, and in the other three of which nearly all, of the pupils who entered without religion became hopefully pious; no year since the first has passed without numerous conversions; and elevated purposes and habits of benevolence have been formed. It may be added, to our reproach, that Mohammedans and the heathen educate their

children, if at all, entirely on the basis of their religion.

The parent may contradict his own instructions by fitfulness in religion, at one time burning with zeal for his children's salvation, at another buried in worldliness; he may do it by formality in family worship, by secular conversation and by sloth on the Sabbath, by absence for slight causes from the sanctuary and the place of social worship, by conformity to worldly maxims and fashions, by anger and revenge; he may do it by worldliness, by accumulating his gains on the principles of selfishness and never denying himself to secure the means of giving to the Lord; he may do it by excusing himself from contributing to the spread of the Gospel in order to lay up property for his children to inherit. Let it be understood that children are not educated merely or chiefly by set admonition and instruction; there may even be too much religious exhortation, producing weariness and disgust. They are educated by the exhibitions of feeling which they witness, by the conduct of their superiors, by the conversation which they overhear, and by the varied incidents on which instruction may be grafted. The child is never out of school; every day his education advances; and if the every day operations of the school and of the family teach worldliness, whatever the instruction of the lips, the child will learn the lesson of the conduct. The child, therefore, cannot be trained for the conversion of the world, unless the conduct as well as the lips of the parent habitually proclaim, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God." But it is impossible for the parent to make it *appear* to the child that it is his first purpose to train the child for God, unless it really is so. Hence the grand deficiency in the way of training children for the conversion of the world is the deficiency of parental piety. To train children to live not for themselves but for others, to practise self-denial, to devote all with supreme devotedness to God, demands the same character of the parent, a heart

full of love, an untiring watchfulness and diligence, and a life of holy obedience and humble prayer.

4. Parents *do not begin to train their children for the conversion of the world early enough.* They often do not expect their conversion till they are ten, or twelve years old. Previous to that time their efforts and prayers are all prospective. But it is evident children may be converted at a very tender age. President Edwards describes the conversion of a girl four years old, who adorned the christian profession during a long life. Mrs. Huntington records that she distinctly recollects deliberating, at the age of three years, whether she would give her heart to God then or defer it, and deciding to defer it. In respect to their very infants, parents should feel that *now* is the accepted time, and their prayers should be for their immediate conversion. The missionary Williams relates that the mothers in the South Sea Islands, even before a child was born, used to go to the temples with the requisite offerings, where the priest performed the ceremony of infusing "the spirit of the god" into the child. After its birth the same rite was repeated. The same writer tells us that the mothers in New Zealand used to thrust little gravel stones down the throats of their children to give them hard hearts and to make them dauntless warriors. Would that christian parents were in earnest that their children should be filled from their birth with the Spirit of Jehovah and their stony hearts made soft in regeneration.

The church demands the early conversion of children as essential to her progress, that long indulgence may not give to sin strength to hamper through life the renewed man's efforts to do good, and compel him to expend in combating overgrown sinful propensities the strength which is needed for the service of Christ; the church demands it, that, by long discipline, the young may be trained as veterans in the army of the Lord. If we expect the Spirit to renew hearts hardened by half a lifetime of sin.

why not much more the heart that is in the tenderness of childhood? Why must men spend twenty or thirty years in pulling down the church before they begin to build it up? What but the too successful delusions of the adversary thus secures to him the services of the young for years before they begin to serve Christ, gains a vantage ground for sin in their hearts which will embarrass all their future efforts to do good, and persuades the church to believe that it cannot be otherwise? Let parents feel as Hannah felt, that every child is a gift from the Lord, and desire, as she did, to "give him to the Lord *all* the days of his life."

5. *Parents and teachers fail to make children acquainted with the wants of the world and the operations of missions.* The whole of history should be studied in the light of the grand scheme of redemption, as showing in all the revolutions of the nations the hand of God overturning, overturning, overturning in order to establish the kingdom of Christ. Fully to accomplish this end, all history would need to be rewritten; for from the writings of the most of historians the scholar learns nothing of the relation of all events to God's grand design of establishing the Mediatorial kingdom. The present condition of the world should be studied as to its miseries, its wickedness, and its need of the Gospel. The efforts of christians to spread the Gospel, the obstacles, the success, the present condition of missions should be familiar to the youthful mind. This knowledge is as essential to an education for the conversion of the world, as a knowledge of arithmetic; and yet it is knowledge which both parents and teachers in the church are, to a lamentable extent, unable to impart, because, although it lies within the reach of all, they have never been interested themselves to learn. A single sign of this deficiency may be found in the fact that few of the children of the church are usually found at the monthly concert. Question them on missionary subjects, and their ignorance will too generally show that the church is not

training her children for the conversion of the world.

6. Children are not trained to act *habitually* for the conversion of the world. A little girl who once gave to the missionary cause a pair of mittens of her own knitting, had awakened in her heart a benevolent interest in the cause which nothing but her own action in its behalf could have excited. The heathen accustom their little children to act in the services of idolatry: when the car of Juggernaut is drawn, the hands of children seize the rope. Look at the following picture of a man carrying his offering to the idol: himself carries a fowl; his oldest son, six years old, carries three sweet potatoes; his daughter, three years old, carries a cocoa-nut; then follows the mother with a brass plate full of rice, and the little infant, one year old, bearing a plantain in its tiny hands. So let christian parents train their children to *act* for Christ.

But it is not enough for a child to carry his mite now and then to the treasury of the Lord; although many, even of the children of the church, are not taught to do that. The theory of training children for the conversion of the world, is that they must be taught to regard this as the grand object of the whole life. But if the child's own efforts for this object come only at rare and distant intervals, practice and theory are in collision; if the child has spent all his childhood scarcely doing any thing to convert the world, how can it be expected that, all at once, when he becomes a man, he will live for this object and subordinate to it all his plans and all his powers? Yet the most of children will scarcely find any thing in their daily pursuits to teach them, "Ye are not your own." Here is a radical defect; the church is teaching her children that doing good *will be* the business of life; she should *make it their business now*. Like Christ when, at the age of twelve, he said to his astonished parents, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" children should be employed in doing good. Every day there

should be something about their pursuits practically to impress the great lesson, "Ye are not your own."

It is, therefore, a mistake merely to give children money to deposit in the contribution-box. This only makes them carriers of the gifts of others, like the plates which are circulated for the charities of a congregation. Let them be trained to appropriate of their own little treasures; to labor for the procurement of money, or to make articles for the needy; to deny themselves what they really value for the sake of doing good; in a word, to have on foot some plan of benevolence which shall daily occupy their thoughts or their hands; let what they give and what they do be of their own; and let them be not forced to do this, but trained so to feel for the perishing as to do it voluntarily and with spirit. Nor should they feel that *giving alms* is the only way of acting for the renovation of mankind; let them be taught to *live to do good*; to make it their daily object to spread all the happiness that is possible through the whole sphere of their influence. Thus, both in theory and practice, they will be taught that to do good is the object of life, and habituated, as their powers and opportunities of usefulness enlarge, to feel the obligation of improving them all for the benefit of mankind.

Christian parents, are you hoping, praying, laboring for the conversion of the world? Do your hearts thrill with the crowding signs of great events to come? In your hands, under God, is the fulcrum on which the scale shall turn. On you, as instruments, rests the responsibility of furnishing and disciplining the soldiers of Christ, and thus of deciding whether victory or defeat awaits the church. On you rests the destiny not only of the hundreds of millions now living in heathenism, but of the generation that is crowding upon the scene of action. Be entreated to be faithful to your trust, and train your children to save the world.

For their sakes do it. It is a law of God's universe, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Would you do your children good? forget not this inviolable law. In heaven love prompts all to seek the good of all, and all are blessed. On earth, where men are grasping rather than giving, is wretchedness. You cannot train your child to blessedness but by training it to benevolence. It has been said that "hell is the only thing that is always receiving and never giving;" but selfishness bears this very mark of the bottomless abyss. Train your child otherwise than to supreme benevolence, and you make its heart a vortex of selfishness, an all-absorbing hell. As well cast your child with the heathen into the Ganges, as plunge it in the abyss of selfishness; as well make it pass through the fire to Moloch, as doom it to pass through the fires of covetousness and rapacity into the fire that never shall be quenched.

Nor is there conceivable a nobler destiny than that which awaits your children, if you train them as God demands. Abraham was the father of the Jews; in answer to Daniel's prayers they were liberated from Babylon; Paul preached the Gospel in many nations; Luther was the instrument of the Reformation; but more honored than all, the generation which God shall use to convert the world, the generation before whose efforts God shall finally smite down the strong holds of irreligion through the earth. If we may judge of heavenly things by earthly, it would seem as if that generation must be signalized in heaven, while in the distant ages of eternity they shall point them out among the myriads of the blessed and say, "There is one of the generation by whom the Gospel triumphed through the earth." O christian parents, fail not to train your children for this honor—an honor surpassed only by the ignominy awaiting them if they meet their peculiar responsibilities only to neglect them, and occupy the fairest opportunity of completing the triumph

of the church only to make shipwreck of her hopes.

Let the woes and sins of the world urge you to train your children to save it. Can you endure the thought that another whole generation of heathen shall march in slow procession across the stage of life, and plunge unwarned and unenlightened into the abyss? Yet so it must be if the young be not trained to save them. The destiny of the world hangs on the children of the church.

For your own sakes, train your children for Christ. God has intrusted them to you as a precious talent; you have consecrated them to him and vowed to train them for his service. How will you stand in the judgment, if you have received a child in trust from God, and are training it for the world, training God's child for the world, sacrificing one of Christ's little ones to the devil, fitting God's child for perdition?

For God's sake, train your children for Him. They belong to God. You have no right to train them for aught but his service. What if you succeed in training them to the most successful pursuit of wealth and honor, you are robbing God. All the capacity and power, the shining ability and successful enterprise which your training has elicited for the world, all is stolen from God; it is all due to building up his cause. Christian parent, do you love the God who made you?—the Savior who redeemed you?—the church to which you have consecrated your all? How then can you fail to train solely for that God, that Savior, that church, the children God has given you? Hear the voice of the Redeemer; he calls you each by name, "Lovest thou me?" Does your soul answer, "Yea, Lord!"—then heed your Savior's message, "Feed my lambs."

A premium of \$50, offered by a benevolent christian, was awarded to the author of this Tract.

PRAYER FOR COLLEGES

AND

LITERARY AND PROFESSIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

THE number of colleges in the United States exceeds one hundred, and the number of their students exceeds ten thousand. Besides, there are more than seventy institutions of theology, law, and medicine, with upwards of five thousand students. Add to these, 164,159 pupils, of both sexes, in 3,242 academies and grammar-schools, as reported in the census for 1840, together with the instructors in all the institutions mentioned, and we have an aggregate of the taught and teachers amounting to not far from two hundred thousand.

With these facts before us, our appeal is to Christians of all denominations, on the duty and importance of prayer for the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit upon our literary and professional seminaries. Christian, fix your eye upon them; consider their number, their location at points of influence all over the land; the number of immortal minds in them, and the powerful minds acting upon them in the work of instruction. What shall our young men do in future years to save souls or destroy them, to honor or to dishonor God who made them? What shall be their eternity; blissful among the redeemed, or wretched among the lost? They are soon to act upon the increasing millions of minds in our country. Few of them, probably, are yet prepared by divine grace to exert influence for good. Is not this then a subject to drive the Christian into his closet, and to keep him long and earnestly wrestling with "the angel of the covenant," on behalf of these sons of learning? Without the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, unconverted students are never renewed; Christian students are not spiritually prosperous. Is it not then a duty to implore His blessed and mighty influence upon our seminaries of learning?

The scene has been presented in several past years, of many of the churches of our country assembled around "the throne of grace," to pray for the visits of the Spirit to these seminaries. The reasons for "continuing instant in prayer" for them, abide in full force. Let it be considered by every Christian, that they stand closely connected with the prosperity or the declension of Zion; that the subjects of prayer, impressed by the Holy Spirit on the minds of Christians, cannot be guiltlessly neglected; and that Christians must act on that direction of the word, "pray for all men," in its application to those who are in a course of education. Let it be remembered how God has heretofore shown himself ready to bless, in granting his Holy Spirit in a remarkable manner upon our seminaries; especially that in one year—a year of college revivals peculiarly—fourteen of these institutions were thus graciously visited.

Let an argument also be drawn from the scenes of college revivals, of the intense interest of which none know so well as those who have lived among them. Thoughtful solemnity has been visible in the countenance of many a young man. The conflicts of rivalry and ambition have been repressed; the revels of dissipation, the laugh of thoughtless mirth and gayety, and the scoffs of youthful unbelief silenced. The chapel has been the place of "prayer ardent, opening heaven;" the recitation-room a scene of seriousness; the students' walk a season for tender and anxious thought, for conversation with some associate on eternal things, perhaps for sweet communion on the Christian hope. Christian instructors and students have seen young men become inquirers, of whom they had scarce dared to hope for such things; have heard from lips accustomed to ribaldry, jesting, profaneness, the inquiry, "What must I do to be saved?" have witnessed with wonder and delight the solemn stillness pervading the college prayer-meeting and conference, and rejoiced with "the angels of God" over many a young student repenting. The seasons of sacramental communion have been rendered interesting and tender by young men of talent, scholarship, promise, confessing Christ before men, and taking upon them vows of consecration to his service; while, with tears of gratitude and sacred joy, Christians have exclaimed, "What hath God wrought!" Interesting as are the scenes of revival in a congregation, sur-

passingly so are revival scenes within the walls of college, when "the Lord is there."

Additional to these motives of appeal to Christians on this subject, there are some which we would press more especially.

I. Revivals of religion in our seminaries of learning, *bring many young men to consecrate their talents and attainments to the service and glory of Christ.* The converted student has found the truth that he is "not his own," but "bought with a price;" and that he is bound to "live no more unto himself," but "unto Him who died for him and rose again." What more delightful spectacle than to see the educated young man coming forward to lay all his attainments at the feet of Christ Jesus his Lord; and whether in the Christian ministry or any other profession, acting on that instruction, "Glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's." In contrast with this, can there be a more melancholy sight than that of unconsecrated, perverted, abused, wasted talents and education; poisoned perhaps by religious error or infidelity, debased by vice, or disgraced by indolence and uselessness? Whatever may be his profession, the opinions, habits, and example of the man of liberal education, will be felt by men around him. Indifference to religion and decent and respectable impenitence, or unbelief and rejection of the truth, will either of them insure him followers, imitators, and company in the way to destruction. But if, while in his course of education, he has entered on the Christian life—if he goes up into successive positions of public influence with "the love of God" in his heart, "the Spirit of Christ" in him, a man of prayer, of living faith, of decided Christian example, he will be, in his influence as a Christian upon his fellow-men, an unspeakable blessing. The great day of the revelation of secret things alone can declare all the good he will have done.

II. *The literary and professional institutions of our country furnish the great proportion of men for the various stations of responsibility and usefulness.*

1. The *Christian ministry* is one of these. They who, as in the sacred office, will lead immortal men to heaven or to hell, are in these seminaries. Is an irreligious man fit for the holy ministry? Can talents, learning, morality, amiableness of social character, fit any one for such a work?

Who feels safe in committing himself to the guidance of such a one as a religious teacher? Who can be willing to seat his family, Sabbath after Sabbath, for years, before a pulpit where an unconverted man, in the pride of talent, and perhaps in the flippancy of unbelief, delivers the maxims of a heartless morality, or the sickening sentimentalism of sober ungodliness, or the announcements of "damnable heresy?" What considerate man, even without religion in his own heart, can be willing to see clerical ordinations only the putting of men into the office of the ministry that they may "eat a piece of bread;" the laying of ordaining hands on ungodly heads; and thus what should be a devout religious solemnity turned to be the profane setting apart of men to the solemn service of the devil, as "blind leaders of the blind?" That this may not be so, we must pray that the grace of God may preside over the minds of our young men in the seats of science when they make choice of their professions, and that such may be the tone of piety, and such the prevalent views of obligation to God, that no young man shall trust himself a moment to think of the ministry as his profession, except he have evidence to believe himself a Christian, and is conscious of "desiring the office of a bishop" from love to God and to the souls of men. "Good ministers of Jesus Christ" are unspeakable blessings to the church and the world. Ungodly ministers are a curse to both. And that institution, whether literary or professional, in which unconverted young men are countenanced in their entrance into the ministry, cannot be other than a place on which the eye of God is fixed in righteous indignation.

2. Serious and devoted piety is needful to the man in the *legal* profession, to make his influence salutary upon men around him. He has intercourse with men of all classes in society. If indifferent or unfriendly to religion and the doctrines of "the cross," no man can oppose them in the circles of the legal profession more successfully than he. A great man upon the bench, with aversion in his heart to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith, in his social intercourse with lawyers, has it in his power to enlist strong minds against "the faith of Christ" to an extent most fearful. A great man, on the other hand, who has learned in his early life and studies to reverence and love the religion of the Gospel and its truths, and to practise and honor its

precepts, can do an amount of good to his brethren of the profession, in which the minister of the Gospel himself may not surpass him.

3. Personal religion is a most desirable qualification in the *physician*. His intercourse is with the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the learned and the ignorant, and with people at all periods in life, and this too at times and under circumstances when he has some of the best possible advantages for doing good to their immortal spirits. The physician who thinks of the sin-diseased soul as well as the frail body of his patient; who enters the sick room with a prayerful spirit; who commends his professional work habitually to the blessing of the great Physician; who can sympathize with the sufferer under his care, not only as in one sense a creature of a day, but in another sense a being of eternity: a physician who, as a Christian, can "rejoice with them that do rejoice," and "weep with them that weep;" such a physician is an inestimable gift of Providence to a community. What a contrast to such a one is he who never lifts a prayer to God for his patients; who forgets their immortal spirits and all their interests in eternity, and who, perhaps, unites with professional skill and general morality and respectability of character, the dangerous faith of false doctrines, or the gloomy scepticism of infidelity.

4. The Christian excellence which has sometimes been manifest in *men of official and political stations* in our country, has done something to make us desire that more such men may be found. It ought not to be asked that every young man who becomes a subject of divine grace shall of course be a preacher of the Gospel. A prosperous religious condition of our seminaries would prepare the way for our being blessed with Christian legislators, judges, and rulers. Dangers beset public men at every step, against which there is no adequate protection but the grace of God in their hearts. Their dependence on popular favor, and the temptations under which they are, amidst the conflicts of parties and the excitements of competition and ambition, render them liable often to do wrong from "fear of man," when they should do right in "the fear of God." Religion in the heart alone can prepare them to carry into official stations a living and serious consciousness of responsibility to God; and whether in the work of legislation or of administration, to maintain a

sacred regard for the decisions of the statute-book of the Lord Jehovah.

5. The *profession of teaching* in the various departments of science is one of high importance, and needs to be sanctified by religion in those who engage in it. Men of literary eminence and enterprise, loving religion, and "living according to God in the spirit," are inestimable blessings to our country. They commend things heavenly and divine to their pupils. They set them the example of the devotion of talents and learning to the service and honor of God; they teach how to bring the resources of science to aid in spreading the knowledge of God in the earth. Without accompanying grace in teachers, education is liable to become the handmaid of error, and painfully efficient in poisoning our fountains of learning. The spirit and habits of our literary men may become deadening to the interests of religion—cold, speculative, proud, adventurous, sceptical, demoralizing. Woe to the religious interests of our country, when the spirit of unsanctified literature in our faculties of instruction shall have ascendancy over the spirit of piety. The supplications of the people of God must obtain the interposition of divine grace to prevent this.

6. Other stations, generally filled from the ranks of educated men, and in which grace is desirable to sanctify talents and learning, we have room only to mention. The editor, the professional author, the artist and man of practical science, the agent of Christian benevolence, the trustee and visitor of a literary institution, the traveller upon enterprises of literary and scientific research; in short, the man of education, wherever he may be placed, needs to have the grace of God in his heart. He can everywhere nobly help or disastrously hinder the progress of Christian truth and the salvation of men. Earnestly to be desired is it, that the men in all the walks of literary life may "walk with God;" that their spirits may commune with the Holy Spirit; that they may have it in their hearts as faithfully to watch for the souls of men as for the advancement of their minds in knowledge; and that they themselves may be educated, not only for the employments of "the life that now is," but for the service of God in a blessed eternity.

If, then, our academies, colleges, and professional seminaries are to furnish men for all these stations and employ-

ments, what fountains of good or evil they are to be to the church and to the world. With what constancy should the Christian keep his eye on them, and carry them on his heart when he goes to the throne of grace. In what faith should he commend them to the Spirit of truth and grace for his guardianship and his sanctifying influences.

III. We have another argument on this subject, as it involves *the spiritual prosperity of pious young men in a course of education*. Christian students are not safe from the danger of spiritual decline while in the pursuits of learning. Not even the theological seminary, where the studies have direct reference to preparation to preach the Gospel, is certain to be the place of the spiritual thrift of souls. The spirit of sacred literature even may outstrip the spirit of piety, because study is pursued as an intellectual affair simply. Christians should know that the dangers of spiritual declension are as great in a theological seminary, as in a church or any other body of religious men. The Christian student, in the college or the professional seminary, may suffer as much as any other Christian, from religious languor, from spiritual darkness, perplexity, doubts concerning his good estate; may live with very slender comfort; go trembling through his collegiate course, and through his professional course, and may even go into the ministry in a state of spiritual lassitude, and consequently do his work under the disadvantages of much abridgment of his comfort and of the energy and decision of his Christian example. Christian, pray for the residence of the Holy Spirit in our seminaries, for the sake of the spiritual prosperity and enjoyment of your young brethren in Christ there; and that, as prosperous Christians, they may exert the better influence upon their associates in study, and be gathering spiritual strength for the duties which will devolve upon them in professional life.

IV. One more argument on this important subject we draw from *the wants of both the church and the world*. Twenty thousand ministers of the Gospel are needed at this moment for our own country. To prosecute the great enterprises of Christian benevolence in unevangelized lands, superadded thousands and tens of thousands are wanted. From the north and the south, from the east and the west comes the cry of dying men for "the bread of life" and "the waters of salvation." Men of education and talent, without grace,

will not hear, feel, and answer these appeals for help. Look, Christian, at the low and alarming state of religion in almost every college and other seminary in our country, and ask whence are to come the men who will consecrate themselves, whether at home or abroad, to the world's conversion, in the labors of missionary love. While we faint in prayer, the work of spiritual destruction keeps on among men, with all the efficiency which can be given it by the energy of sin, and the untiring activity of the adversary of souls. "It is high time to awake out of sleep." God has heard prayer for our seminaries in other years, and rich have been the bestowments of his grace. Still will he hear, "if we call upon him." Let us think day and night of the institutions of learning with which our country is dotted, of the spiritual declension which reigns in them, of the two hundred thousand immortal minds in them, or presiding over them, all needing either the converting or the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit. Not alone for these either, but for the institutions of learning throughout the whole Christian world, the hope of the church and of perishing men, "let us lift up our hearts with our hands unto God in the heavens," to Zion's King, "who alone doeth wondrous things."

Many have observed the last Thursday in February as an annual season of prayer for our seminaries; but, Christian, do not wait for that day before you awake to this duty. "The concert for colleges" should last the year round, in the closets, the families, the assemblies of Christians for prayer. For it is written of all the subjects of prayer, and this among them, "*Pray without ceasing.*" "PRAY WITHOUT CEASING."

WHY ARE YOU NOT A CHRISTIAN?

1. It is not, that to be a Christian *is no privilege*. "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Piety accords with the great laws, and design, and necessities of our being. The Christian graces embody a compliance with duty and the will of God, demanded by reason, satisfying to conscience, and giving a peace unknown before. It is a privilege to receive forgiveness of sins, to inherit the promises, to possess the spirit of adoption, to share the covenant protection of God in life, to catch sweet foretastes of heavenly bliss in the midst of earthly trials, to have a hope that survives the grave, and when we die, to be admitted to the rest that remaineth for the people of God. Why then are you not a Christian?

2. It is not, that you are not *at liberty* to be a Christian. In the atonement of Christ, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, are found all the riches of grace that the wants of your soul can require. You are not obliged to continue in sin, and live estranged from God. No law of God or of his providence constrains you to remain in disobedience and under the condemnation of sin. No framework of your being shuts you out from the privilege of repentance and reconciliation to God. You were made to love and serve him, and the lamentation is, that you have declined his service so long, and are impenitent and unpardoned now.

Think you that you are forbidden to return in penitence to God and the portions of his children? Does he fence in the pastures of grace, that you may not enter, and refuse you the waters of life? Does he close against you the avenue to his favor and kingdom, and doom you to a life of sin, a death of despair, and an eternity of woe? *May* you not repent, trust in his grace, and be pardoned and saved? Yes, yes, you may. We utterly mistake his character, and word, and the laws of our being, to think otherwise. Rest assured that no bar is across the pathway of your return to God, no impediment from the throne interposes. You may

admit the full pressure of your sins and necessities, urging you to seek delivering grace. Under the deepest conviction of the guilt and hopeless wretchedness of a state of disobedience, you may know that the way is open to the mercy-seat, and that the redemption which is in Christ awaits your coming to it. You need not live in exile from the city of God. You are under no necessity of continuing an alien and a stranger to the kingdom of grace. You are not obliged to bow down your back alway under sin, and be left to its poor inheritances in this life, and its bitter wailings in the next. Another course lies open to you. Other auspices offer themselves in your behalf. Other voices crowd on your ear; and it only abuses the principles of your moral being, and wrongs the sources of help around you, to remain unpardoned in your sin, and fail of the grace of God. Why then are you not a Christian ?

3. It is not, that you *ought not to be one*. Duty and privilege unite in saying this. Conscience is on the side of religion. It would have you be what God and duty require, and its voice you ought to obey. Its approbation you have not now, and if you hold out in impenitence till probation closes, it will be to you the worm that never dies. You are waging an unnatural war on this great principle of your being, while you remain in disobedience to God, and doing violence to its most solemn dictates. You know that you ought not to obey sinful lusts, and let them urge you on against the remonstrances of wisdom, and plunge you in despair. Duty is clear, obligation pressing; truth, like sunlight on the way of your return to God. Why then are you not a Christian ?

4. It is not, that you *have not need* to be one. Have you never sinned ? Are you in yourself perfect before God, like the angels ? Are you excepted from the common apostasy of our race, from its guilt and condemnation under law, and its dependence on the grace of God to justify and save ? Are you not, on the other hand, conscious of sin, and of the wants of one who is without righteousness, and needs propitiation ? Can you hope for the favor of God, except through forgiveness and looking to Jesus, that only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we can be saved ?" If our own heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. The short-comings of your life, and the wanderings of your heart from rectitude, every se-

cret sin or open iniquity, all unhallowed desire and forbidden lusts, all impiety towards God or wrong against your fellow-men, incur the penalty of law, and show how much you need forgiveness. They shut you up to the remedy of grace. They point to Calvary. They plead for atoning blood, and poise the question of your eternal life on the issue of your fleeing for refuge to the hope set before you in the Gospel. God has no other way of saving sinners: failing of this, you must meet the penalties of law. They lie directly before you, and unless you retrace your steps, and gain shelter in Christ, the universe cannot save you from the perdition of ungodly men. Why then are you not a Christian?

5. It is not, that *all good beings would not have you be one*. Their sympathies and counsels lie along the pathway of your return to God. All on earth who have tasted the sweetness of forgiving love, would beckon you to the fountain of mercy in the Gospel, saying, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good." Angels in heaven unite in this harmony of the good to gain you. They are ministering spirits sent forth to this intent. They seek after you, as the shepherd his "sheep which is lost." "Verily I say unto you, there is joy in heaven, in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth." Or would you listen to the entreaties of the throne itself, as they break in mercy over you, and call you from the ways of sin? "As I live," saith God, "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his wicked way, and live." So the Son, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" and the Holy Ghost saith, "To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Why then not a Christian?

In the name of truth, righteousness, heaven's mercy, and the urgent necessities of your case, *why not?* What hinders? what obstacle lies in the way? what is the Achan of trouble in the camp? what the fell destroyer that withholds your voluntary submission to God, and prolongs your alliance with sin and the second death?

Whatever it is, it can have no good foundation, no justifying principle. Whether it rises out of the obliquities of your own heart, or from malignant influences around you, its complexion is the same. It is an enemy still, by whatever arts it beguiles and deceives. It is unworthy of you.

It belies reason, wounds conscience, resists the Spirit of God, and betrays the peace of the soul. You ought not to be in subjection to it, "no, not for an hour" or a moment. It is from the kingdom of darkness; its nature is disobedience, its work perfected is woe. Why, then, yield to it? That you have hitherto, is your sin. Corrupt lusts, or influences from this world, or from the pit, are not meet to be the guides of the immortal mind. They do but "drown men's souls in destruction and perdition," and you have many helps to break away from them.

All good influences in the universe are in correspondence with the legitimate principles of your own being, to throw off the empire of sin, and bring you benignly into the liberty of the Gospel. Truth pleads, reason accords, conscience prompts, the Spirit of God strives with you, and all good beings in heaven and on earth are ready to welcome you to the mercy-seat; and why "yield yourself the servant of sin unto death," and not "of righteousness unto everlasting life?" "The Spirit and the bride say, Come;" and why not come? "Behold, I stand at the door and knock," says the benevolent Saviour; and why not "open the door," and let him come in? Even the throbbings of your own spirit demand this of you, and put in the constraining plea of the "soul immortal," to be at peace with its God.

And shall these conspiring influences, and this plea avail? Are they the voice of God to you, and do you say, it is enough? Are the repentings of your heart enkindled, and do you get strength to give up the controversy, and submit to God? As one come to himself, do you surrender to truth, to conscience, and the Spirit of all grace, and as a lost sinner, do you look to the Lamb of God which taketh away sin, and in penitence and submission of soul, do you believe upon him? Here lie the promises, and doing this, they are yours.

THE

HIDING-PLACE.

WE want a hiding-place from *care and trouble*. There are times of trial, days of adversity, through which we must all pass. If we may not hope to escape scenes of trial, it is a great thing to be assured of support while passing through them. God is known in the palaces of Zion as a refuge at such times. He has said, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." His people have felt their need of a hiding-place in the dark and cloudy day of adversity, when the waves of trouble have rolled in upon them.

We need a hiding-place from *the anger of God*. It is the testimony of Scripture, that "God is angry with the wicked every day;" and he declares, "Ye have kindled a fire in mine anger, which shall burn for ever." Jer. 17 : 4. And again, "A fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell." Deut. 32 : 22. If there be any truth in Scripture, the sinner has reason to fear the displeasure of God. There is a day coming when "upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." Psa. 11 : 6. From this tempest the sinner needs a covert—a hiding-place from Jehovah's anger.

We need a hiding-place from *conscience*. This is inseparable from the sinner's self. It will go with him where he goes, and remain with him where he remains, and make him miserable. True, in this world it may be quieted; it may be lulled to sleep; it may be seared; but it is not dead, it only sleepeth. The time will come when it will awake, and then it will bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder. The reproaches of others we may endure; but who can bear the reproaches of himself, and that for ever?

We need a hiding-place from *hell*. That is, sin, conscience, and the wrath of God combined, and enduring for

ever. To it every impenitent sinner is exposed ; for “ these shall go away into everlasting punishment.” Matt. 25 : 46.

It is clear, then, that we *need* a hiding-place. We are sensible of our need. We know our exposure ; and there are times when we feel it, and when, perhaps, we are disposed to inquire for a place of safety. Is there, then, a place to which we may flee and be safe ? Yes,

JESUS CHRIST IS OUR HIDING-PLACE.

He is our hiding-place in times of *trouble*. Though persecuted, we are not forsaken ; though cast down, we are not destroyed. 2 Cor. 4 : 9. He hath said, “ When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee.” Isa. 43 : 2. Flee to this refuge, ye afflicted ones, and “ He shall deliver thee in six troubles ; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.” Job 5 : 19. He “ will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.” Heb. 13 : 5.

He is our hiding-place from the *wrath of God*. He is so because he has borne that wrath for us, and we by faith in him are delivered from condemnation. “ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Gal. 3 : 13 ; Rom. 5 : 1, and 8 : 1.

He is our hiding-place from *the reproaches of conscience and from hell*. He, and he alone can deliver from hell-torments ; and he is able and mighty to save. Says the Psalmist, “ Thou art my hiding-place ; thou shalt preserve me from trouble ; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.” Psalm 32 : 7.

We want a hiding-place that is *safe and accessible* ; and Jesus Christ is just such as we need, and all we need.

He is a *safe* hiding-place. He is possessed of all power. He is the infinite and eternal God, as well as man—God manifest in the flesh. 1 Tim. 3 : 16. All creatures, all elements, all worlds are under his control ; and they who flee to him are safe. Do troubles arise, he

“ Can make each cloud of care,
And e’en the gloomy vale of death,
A smile of glory wear.”

Do enemies stand up against his chosen ? “ He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh : the Lord shall have them in derision. He shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex

them in his sore displeasure. He shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psa. 2 : 4-9. Do their own sins entangle, and Satan accuse, and conscience condemn? In Jesus Christ they are safe; for "there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Rom. 8 : 1. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8 : 34. Their deliverer is mighty. They trust in a divine Redeemer. They have taken refuge in a hiding-place that can never fail—a covert which no tempest can overthrow. His blood cleanseth from all sin. 1 John, 1 : 7.

He is an *accessible* hiding-place. It is open to all, and available to all who will enter. "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6 : 37. Not only is Jesus Christ accessible because of his *divinity*, by which he is everywhere present, and ever able to succor them who flee to him; but he is also accessible because of his *humanity*, as it is by the possession of our nature that he is qualified to be our Saviour—our merciful and faithful High-priest. It is as a man that he is presented to us by the prophet: "A man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest." Isa. 32 : 2. It is also written, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." 1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6. And in another place, "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren; that he might be a merciful and faithful High-priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted." Heb. 2 : 14-18. "For we have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4 : 15, 16. Being a man, and having been tempted as a man, and having suffered as

a man, he knows our frame, and can sympathize with his people in all their trials and temptations. He can be touched with their infirmities, and so is peculiarly accessible to them. For the same reason he is also accessible to sinners. He died for sinners. He came to seek and to save the lost. Matt. 18 : 11. They approach a Redeemer who, while he is mighty, is at the same time possessed of human sympathies—the friend of sinners. Are you inquiring what you must do to be saved? Look to Jesus Christ—flee to this hiding-place, for it is available. Jesus has a human heart as well as divine compassion. “The Son of man—a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief,” is our hiding-place and covert. Embrace him, and you shall find rest to your soul; and his rest is glorious. Matt. 11 : 28–30; Isa. 11 : 10.

Jesus Christ is an *eternal* hiding-place. It will endure for ever. He ever liveth—“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” Heb. 7 : 25, and 13 : 8. They who flee hither shall never be left exposed. They trust in one who will shield them in every hour of danger; who will be their defence in every storm; who will hide them in his pavilion, in the secret of his tabernacle, and take them to everlasting mansions. Psa. 27 : 5; John 14 : 2, 3.

Jesus Christ is a hiding-place *in all respects adapted to our wants*; for he is both divine and human, God and man in one person. There is no want in our natures or circumstances which is not met by his all-sufficiency. Whatever may be our sense of need, we may go to Jesus with full confidence of its supply and relief. Poor dejected and desponding saint, look to this hiding-place, enter in, and be safe and happy. Poor, miserable, perishing sinner, look to this hiding-place, flee to it, and receive remission of sins, and a title to heaven.

Dangers impend on every side. O sinner, the storm gathers around you, and where will you look for safety, if not to Jesus? And will you look to him? O why will you die? Why continue exposed to the storm of wrath with a place of safety full in view? Why perish when Jesus invites you to his arms? Lift up your eyes. Behold the Lamb of God. See the hiding-place; and enter ere you die. Ezek. 33 : 11; John 1 : 29; Heb. 4 : 11.

WHY YET IMPENITENT?

Is not an atonement made for man in sin, a fountain of grace opened in his behalf, and the invitation sent forth, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters?"

Does not impenitence incur the displeasure of God, exclude you from the joys of his presence, and from the inheritance of his kingdom? Is it not manifestly a state of sin and wrong, without justification or excuse, opposed alike to your duty to yourself, your fellow-men, and to God?

Are you not at full liberty to repent and be reconciled to God? Have you not, indeed, many helps thereto, under the light of the Gospel and the riches of divine grace?

Would not Christians on earth and angels in heaven rejoice over your repentance, and the triune God welcome your return as the father his prodigal son, saying, "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found?" Why then are you impenitent? Why yet in a state of alienation from God? What are the special occasions of this? Your own consciousness can best detect them, and are you willing to inquire?

May it be, that *you do not fairly examine the subject of religion*, and come to deliberate and candid conclusions respecting it? But this is not worthy of you, or wise. The great facts of true religion exist independently of us; it has bearings upon us, whether we willingly respond to them or not. Its claims cross our path, go where we will, and are charged with interests too deep and lasting to be neglected. They live to reward us or to be a swift witness against us. They involve our relations to God, to duty, to grace, to the judgment-day, and eternity. The life or death of the soul is the issue which religion makes, and it is unworthy of us not fully to investigate its claims, and form conclusions respect-

ing it by which we intend to abide. Results will come, whether we are ready for them or not; and the part of wisdom is, to foresee the evil, and hide ourselves.

Or is it that *you resist the convictions of your own judgment* on the subject of religion? In the light of truth, and against the voice of reason, do you hold out in the way of your own heart, and refuse the mercy of the Gospel? But would you deliberately do this in any other interest? Or are your relations to God and the salvation of the soul the only point on which you will belie all your serious convictions? To do thus, would bring ruin in any other relation, and you must not expect to escape it in the government of God. In such a course, if God is on the throne and will do right, you can have no hope.

Or do you harbor *some specific wrong*, which hinders you, notwithstanding your convictions, from becoming reconciled to God? Give up, then, that wrong. Forego that indulgence. It will in the end "bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder." Break away from it, at whatever cost. God will make his love better to you than any form of sin can be. If even "thine eye offend," and lead thee into sin, "pluck it out, and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

Or have you imbibed a prejudice against *spiritual* religion? But all religion, to be of any value, must be spiritual. Reason teaches this. What would you think of a friendship which is not from the heart? And must we not love God with all the heart, and in newness of life keep his commands? Is not this right? Should we not yield all that is impure and unholy, confessing and forsaking our sins, and turning to the Lord in supreme affection of soul? Would you fellowship hypocrisy, and make a mock at sin? Besides, who is he that shall harm us, if we be followers of that which is good? Cannot God take care of his own children,

and cast his everlasting arms around those who fly for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them in the Gospel ?

But is the point of your hinderance this, that *you wrong conscience* on the subject of religion ? Through fear of the truth, or from any cause, are you acting the part of a traitor to your own deliberate convictions ? By resort to worldly amusements, vain company, light reading, or doctrinal error, are you seeking to check the serious tendencies of your own mind, and to turn a deaf ear to the remonstrances of that monitor within you ? If so, you are doing a fearful work ; you are laying the axe at the root of all your prospects for immortality. You are preparing a bed of scorpions, to fasten for ever upon your destroyed and withering soul.

In thus wronging conscience, *you are resisting also the influences of the Holy Spirit*, and trifling with the last provision of mercy in your behalf. By withholding your eyes from the truth, seeking to cover your sin, and stifling your own solemn convictions of duty, you are “doing despite to the Spirit of grace,” turning aside the only hand that can reach you, shutting yourself out from the way of life, and sealing the doom of your immortal spirit. There is “no more sacrifice for sin” to be made, no other economy of mercy to save you. Resist the truth, stupefy conscience, and quench the Spirit, and the deed is done ; there remains only the “certain fearful looking for of judgment,” and that “fiery indignation” which must be the portion of the lost soul.

Do you yet cling to the hope, that possibly you may in some way escape, though you “neglect so great salvation ?” How can you escape ? It would involve the giving up of truth, the surrender of right, and the triumph of sin against the throne of God. God will not deny himself, nor mar the peace of the universe, nor abandon his promise to those who take refuge in his mercy, that he may screen impenitent men from their just doom. Flee then from this last resort of a deluded mind, and before conscience is seared and the

Spirit has left you, seek Him who is the refuge from the storm, and the hiding-place from the tempest.

But here you say, and with solicitude it may be, I do *not know what it is* to repent and be reconciled to God. Suppose you do not; yet on this point you can be advised, and it is the point on which your everlasting well-being turns. God is not a hard master, nor are his commands grievous. By the prophet he addresses you: "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God." "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall have mercy." And can any thing short of this extract the barbed arrow from your bosom, give you peace of conscience, and assure your heart before God? In contrition of spirit, then, confess your sins to God, imploring forgiveness through the atoning blood of Christ. In brokenness of heart yield up all that is wrong in you, and fall at once and without reserve into the arms of divine mercy. Look at the prodigal son, as in want he comes to his father, saying, "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." See that publican in the temple, as he smites on his breast, and cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Go and do likewise, lifting your eye in faith to "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This, reason demands—to this, conscience prompts, and the Spirit of God moves the soul. Doing this, you yield to the agencies sent from above to help you, you meet the terms of forgiveness, and wake up in newness of life in Christ Jesus. Thus repenting and believing, you gain the sweet consciousness of doing right, the burden of sin is removed, you are reconciled to God, and get foretastes of that "joy unspeakable and full of glory, which fadeth not away."

THE

INFIDEL RESTORED.

MR. NATHANIEL L. COOMBES was a printer in the city of New York, and for several years was a reputable member of a Christian church. He was honest and honorable in his business transactions, cautious in selecting his associates, careful of the reputation of others, and watchful to maintain an unimpeachable character for morality and integrity.

But he was called to meet unexpected trials and difficulties, from which he found a temporary relief in the use of alcoholic stimulants, and to these he soon resorted with a most dangerous frequency. He also conceived the idea of writing a popular novel, and for some months devoted to it all the time he could command, including, at length, the hours of the holy Sabbath; and by degrees he deserted the sanctuary, rejected the Bible, and became confirmed in intemperance and infidelity. So decided was his rejection of evangelical truth, that he left the printing-office in the Tract Society house, where he had been engaged for some years, assigning as the only reason, that he could not conscientiously aid in printing religious works. He was often very unhappy, and would sometimes say to his employer, "I am a miserable being, looking forward to annihilation. I would give the world if I could believe as you do. I see that your religion makes you cheerful; but it is all a delusion. I know that you are wrong, and that I am right." In this state of mind he continued for some years.

At the introduction of what is called the Washingtonian Temperance Reformation, he was among the first to sign the pledge, and became an able advocate of total abstinence; but he remained an enemy to religion, and was as free to make known his infidelity as his conversion to temperance.

At length, about the year 1843, the hand of God was laid upon him, and, in connection with the approaches of a premature old age, he found that his bodily strength was failing. He was led to reflection. He "thought on his

ways." Yet it was not until after many months that his enmity to God appeared gradually to yield to the force of truth, under the power of the Holy Spirit.

At this point in his history one of the missionaries of the New York City Tract Society called upon him at the request of a person who cared for his soul. Mr. Coombes received this friend with a cordiality and an expression of pleasure that much encouraged him. "I am glad to see you," he said; "I want you to pray for me. You are a happy man; but I am unhappy. O that I could feel as you feel! you derive comfort from the Bible; but—"

"But what?" said his friend.

His reply was, "I cannot receive all that the Bible contains."

This presented a subject for conversation which was long continued, his friend saying, as he was about to leave him, "This much you can understand, you are a sinner, and you need a Saviour; let this, and this alone occupy your mind." Prayer was then offered, previous to which he was asked if there was any thing which he particularly desired.

"Do beg of God," said he, "to hear prayer for me; *I want light.*"

During prayer he was much affected, and after the interview he wept aloud, and exclaimed, "I wish that I was a Christian. Oh how can I become a Christian? How must I pray for it? If constant desire be prayer, then there is no lack of prayer with me."

The anxiety of his mind became intense; he felt his sinfulness, and one day said to a friend who was about to pray with him, "You say that your Saviour is able to save the chief of sinners, do then ask him to save me." Such, indeed, was the depth of his conviction of sin, that he felt that he must perish without hope.

But the day of deliverance came. As two friends sat by his bedside, he was asked, "How is it with you now, Mr. Coombes?"

"I am happy," was his reply.

"And what makes you happy?"

"I have found the right foundation, and all my happiness is built upon it."

"Do you now receive Jesus Christ as a divine Saviour?"

"I do," said he.

This avowal of his faith deeply affected all who were present, and they united in singing the beautiful hymn,

“Amazing grace!—how sweet the sound—
That saved a wretch like me:
I once was lost, but now am found—
Was blind, but now I see.”

From this time it was pleasing to discover in him every day some new evidence of the reality of the blessed change. He had been extensively known, and many gathered around him, to whom he spoke decidedly of the reality of religion, and the change which he hoped had been wrought in him. Among those who called was his former employer. He saw the grace of God, and was glad.

It was particularly observable, that he had a deep sense of the sin of his wayward life, and an earnest desire as far as possible to undo the evil he had done. On one occasion he said, “I have done much injury in the world by my infidelity, and wounded the minds of many good people; but could I live my life over again, it should be all devoted to God: I would seek to be a second Whitefield.”

Of a pious lady he made this request: “Will you examine all my books and writings, and destroy whatever may be tinged with infidelity? Will you promise me this, and whatever may be the feelings of others, obey my wishes in this respect.” The promise was given—he then was satisfied.

His relatives had heard him rail against religion as an imposture, but now when some of them were present he thus addressed them: “I am fifty-eight years of age: twenty-three years I have been an opposer of the religion of Jesus Christ—the religion that He established who is the only Saviour of the world. For two years past, I have been very unhappy concerning this matter. One day the question came into my mind all in a moment, ‘What am I?’ I then said to myself, Many of us do not acknowledge the immortality of the soul, and try to believe that man dies like a brute, and sinks into annihilation. It is an awful thought. Man is above the brute, and has that which the brute has not. God must have some plan respecting his intelligent creatures, and it is for man that he keeps the world in ex-

istence. I then felt that he was my Creator, but I still felt much opposed to prayer. After some time I resolved to try the efficacy of prayer. I then prayed to the Lord to lead me in the right way. I continued to pray for three weeks, and then the way was made plain to me. Light broke into my mind. The heavy load with which I had been burdened was then gone. I no longer feared to die, but wished to do whatever might please God. I now expect soon to die; but death will be to me a welcome messenger, whenever my Saviour sees fit to call me."

"You now are clothed, and in your right mind," said one. "Yes," said he, "I am clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and he is able to save." Something was said to him concerning a Christian friend, when he exclaimed, "Poor wretch that I was, how often have I ridiculed that man; but now I love him as a brother."

He endured great pain, yet did not murmur. With calm resignation he would sometimes say, "God's messengers are coming, but he does not see fit to hasten them, for my work is not yet done." Then after meditating, he would exclaim, "O Love divine, what hast thou done." During the last week of his life his sufferings increased. When in extreme agony his faith triumphed, and he cried out, "Let the storm rage, and all the powers of darkness come against me; they cannot harm me, for the eternal God is my refuge." To his wife he said, "You need not fear passing through the dark valley, if you have HIM to lean upon that I have. If I can glorify God by suffering, I am willing to suffer." In this state of mind he continued; his soul was happy; he feared no evil, for the Lord was with him: and trusting in the merits of Christ, he died in holy triumph.

DIVINE COUNSEL,

FROM THE BOOK OF PROVERBS.

THE fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge ; but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother : for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck.

My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee ; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thy heart to understanding ; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding ; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures ; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart ; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding : for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies : and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand ; and in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

Take fast hold of instruction ; let her not go : keep her, for she is thy life. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. For they sleep not, except

they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall. For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence. But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

My son, attend unto my wisdom, and bow thine ear to mine understanding: that thou mayest regard discretion, and that thy lips may keep knowledge. For the lips of a strange woman drop as a honey-comb, and her mouth is smoother than oil: but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. Lest thou shouldest ponder the path of life, her ways are movable, that thou canst not know them. Hear me now, therefore, O ye children, and depart not from the words of my mouth. Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house: lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel: lest strangers be filled with thy wealth, and thy labors be in the house of a stranger; and 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!

My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck. When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee. For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life: to keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after her beauty in thy heart; neither let her take thee with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon

hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbor's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; but if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman, lacketh understanding: he that doeth it, destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonor shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away.

My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart. Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman: that they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. For at the window of my house I looked through my casement, and beheld among the simple ones, I discerned among the youths, a young man void of understanding, passing through the street near her corner; and he went the way to her house, in the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night: and behold, there met him a woman with the attire of a harlot, and subtle of heart. (She is loud and stubborn; her feet abide not in her house: now is she without, now in the streets, and lieth in wait at every corner.) So she caught him, and kissed him, and with an impudent face said unto him, I have peace-offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows. Therefore came I forth to meet thee, diligently to seek thy face, and I have found thee. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning: let us solace ourselves with loves. For the good-man is not at home, he is gone a long journey: he hath taken

a bag of money with him, and will come home at the day appointed. With her much fair speech she caused him to yield, with the flattering of her lips she forced him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. Hearken unto me now, therefore, O ye children, and attend to the words of my mouth. Let not thine heart decline to her ways, go not astray in her paths. For she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. Counsel is mine, and sound wisdom: I am understanding; I have strength. By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth. I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honor are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul: all they that hate me love death.

My son, if thy heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things.

Prov. 1:7-9; 2:1-5; 3:5, 6, 13-17; 4:13-18; 5:1-12; 6:20-33; 7:1-27; 8:4, 14-18, 32-36; 23:15, 16.

THE
NAVY SURGEON;

OR THE

CONVERSION OF DR. CHA'S H. BROUGHTON,

LATE OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY.

Although educated in a christian community, the subject of the following pages had for many years neglected "the one thing needful." Possessed of a cultivated mind and an amiable heart, he attracted to his friendship many of the young and the gay, among whom he moved as an object of peculiar endearment. In the midst of earthly loves however, he forgot the love of God, and seldom, if ever, lifted his eye from the circle of friends around him, to seek that Friend "which sticketh closer than a brother."

In the winter of 1842 it pleased God to pour out his Spirit in a remarkable manner upon the congregation in N——, Virginia, to which his parents were attached. The old and the young, the moral and profane, were alike made the trophies of redeeming grace. Our young friend, in the mean time, had been ordered by Government to the Gulf of Mexico. An account of the work of God was communicated to him by a devoted sister, who also informed him of the conversion of many of his old associates, and among them some of the members of his own family.

This intelligence seems to have been the special means employed by God, in arousing his attention to spiritual and eternal things. God is also the hearer of prayer, and *his Spirit* can reach at once the family at home and the youth in a distant port.

The following extracts from his letters will exhibit the interest he felt when hearing of the revival in his native place.

“I was deeply affected, you may be sure, by the interesting intelligence contained in your last letter; and had wealth beyond the dreams of avarice become ours, I should have rejoiced less than at the news of an awakening in our own family and town.”

In a letter dated Key West, April 15, he says, “Pleasant and sweet as the voices of those I love were the messengers from home, that came to me by the last mail. They were full of comfort, and raised my heart to the Giver of all good, that even here, where there is no sound of Sabbath bell, where the servants of the Lord are not, and where the wicked seem to strive without restraint, he has provided such rich banquets for me in the gratulations of distant friends, and in their sympathy and advice. To know too, that nearly all the members of my family have, through Christ, been accepted of God, to know that His Spirit is still spreading and extending among the people of my native town, and that many friends, out of the family, but still dear to my remembrance, have felt his influence and forsaken evil, to hear also that the circle of his operations is spreading farther and farther about the country—Oh what rapture, what overflowing of eyes and heart did all this cause me! What praises too do I not owe to the Judge of all the earth, that he has not suffered me to harden my heart in the midst of all these wonders, but has answered the intercessions made in my behalf with the effectual operations of his Spirit?”

The struggles and conflicts through which his mind passed, when under the special teachings of the Spirit, together with his ultimate acquiescence in God's plan of saving sinners, are stated by himself in two letters bearing date March 4, and April 15. In the former he says—

“I hasten to answer your solicitous inquiry—‘Do you feel yourself a poor, lost sinner, with no hope but in Christ, and no joy but in his love?’ I do indeed humbly and earnestly trust that the Spirit of God has purged my vision to the beholding of the wickedness of my own heart, and shocked and sickened me with the loathsome spectacle. By that operation I have beheld and comprehended the web of sophistry in which sin had entangled my soul, in the hour of temptation lulling my conscience into security by crying peace, peace, when there was no peace, and with all the serpent’s subtlety persuading me, ‘Thou shalt not surely die,’ when God had said, ‘*Thou shalt die.*’

“Oh how clearly did I see its treachery and deceit, its wickedness and folly, and how gladly did I turn from the Syren I had listened to, to trust in the Lord, and to wrestle with him for the hope that is in Christ! But oh, how hard it was to turn—to close my ears to the eloquent pleadings of sin and Satan—to believe that the Savior could pity and love a wretch who had so often witnessed the wonderful works of his Providence, yet went straightway and sinned again! Yet He remembered ‘that we are but flesh—a wind that passeth away and cometh not again,’ and graciously condescended to bruise the head of the serpent that had beguiled me, so that I now hope that ‘old things have passed away, and all things have become new.’

“And how differently now do this world and this life appear! What to me are the cold and unsympathising regards, the unwilling praise that might be wrung from the world by a life spent in its service, to the joy that is in heaven ‘over one sinner that repenteth?’ What are the cares and sorrows of worldly ambition, compared with the love, desire, faith and hope that fill the heart in meditating upon the goodness of God, and in reading his word with spiritual discernment? Surely ‘the evidence

of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for, are joys that surpass all the joys that flow from sensual objects.

“I need no further evidence of my sinful nature than that even now I transgress daily, having cause often to grieve that the fear of the Lord is not always before my eyes, that my faith is too weak, and that I am liable to be influenced by the fear of ridicule and the habits of those around me. My eyes have been opened, however, to see that this results chiefly from the neglect of some christian duty, and I am thus warned to *be earnest at all times*; for I find that nothing but God’s Holy Spirit strengthening me, can so work upon my heart as to destroy the influence of its old habits and associations: nor is this ever withheld when I seek it.”

In his second letter his statements are more minute, and the exercises of his mind are given in a more graphic and interesting manner.

“The means God has made use of in drawing me to himself, are to me inconceivable. I understand but this, that ‘whereas I was blind, now I see.’ There was sorrow following the known commission of sin—there was the desire for reformation—there was the sharp conflict between conviction and depraved but rooted natural habits—there was the frequent triumph of the latter—there was the deep feeling of wounded pride, self-abasement, and complete humiliation, in consequence of my own will not being sufficient for reformation—there was the consciousness that I should perish except I did repent—there was the agony with which I looked upon eternity, dark and cheerless, without joy and without even hope—there was the anxious inquiry, ‘What shall I do to inherit eternal life?’—and then, thank God, there was gushing prayer, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner’—then came answers like revelations from heaven—then did I seem to hear, ‘ME for him, life for life I offer; on me

let thine anger fall; account me man. I for his sake will leave thy bosom, and this glory next to thee freely put off; and for him lastly die.'

"It seemed to me as if God 'reasoned with me,' so quickly were my questions answered, so fully were my doubts removed. Then did I feel,

"The sweet comfort and peace
"Of a soul in its earliest love.'

(Thank you for that hymn, I have it literally *by heart*.) How mysterious do my former blindness and my present light appear! I used to feel quite *secure*; imagined that I loved God, and that God loved me. I worshipped him in the self-righteous spirit of Socrates, or as the Indian worships his Manitou, or the Turk confides in his destiny; knowing nothing of natural depravity and enmity to God, and the inevitable necessity of a Savior; knowing not that without Christ 'we can do nothing,' and that salvation is not of ourselves, but the gift of God. '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!'

"And now, what a blessed thing it is to know and love this Savior! 'Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, separate me from the love of Christ?' I trust not, with the help of God. Though troubles and trials surround me here as a fiery furnace, there is One walking with me like the Son of God, as with the Jewish youths, and the smell of fire shall not pass upon me. How beautiful is the following verse in Isaiah, 'Fear not, for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name, and thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.'

“These things are my comfort, my very present help in time of need. For the daily duties of a heavenly life, I have that best of guides—*the Bible*, read by the light of the Spirit; and for my commentator I have Baxter’s *Saints’ Rest*—a book filled with the breath of active hope and love, as if, to use his own words, ‘the things written there had been engraved on his heart by a beam from the face of the Son of God.’ The Tracts you sent me are very appropriate and please me much, especially those entitled, ‘Do I grow in grace?’ and ‘Advice to young converts.’ My companions, I dare say, think me less of a ‘good fellow’ now than they did; but the christian who acts consistently with his faith, must command respect from all but fools, and the esteem of such, or indeed of any, is of small value compared with the love of God. ‘I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.’ These things, however, God has tempered to me, and I go on my course without exciting the opposition or ridicule of those around me. Generally, and I speak it in their praise, my brother officers, though caring for none of these things themselves, respect the feelings and opinions of others, and have the good sense to distinguish between disinclination for their occupations, and dislike for themselves.”

The following extract from a letter dated Key West, March 16, furnishes many pleasing evidences of the thoroughness of the change which had taken place in the heart of Dr. Broughton. It also exhibits the groanings of his soul while situated amid influences adverse to its spiritual advancement and comfort.

“It is a source of regret to me that I cannot be more alone, to indulge in pious exercises and reflections with greater ease and freedom; and to escape the conversation of the persons around me, I have sometimes gone ashore in a savage country with a musket to protect me, that I

might be alone with God. Yet even the conduct and conversation of my messmates teaches me humility, inasmuch as I, 'knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, have not only done the same, but had pleasure in those that do them.' Thus when I see ignorance and folly in others, far from feeling any self-complacency, I derive the lesson that the good I may have is not of myself, but from the grace of God.

"Blessed be God too, that the new desires and impulses he has planted in me, he has not forgotten to water and increase. I felt not shame but joy, a few days ago, when appealed to to decide an argument about the propriety of some pleasurable sin, to hear its advocate exclaim, 'Oh the doctor takes *his* morality from the Bible.' And yet, not a long time has elapsed since I should have been ashamed to have him see me with the Bible in my hand!

"I have been always fond of acquiring knowledge; but latterly, how changed is the motive. Once, every fact that I added to my hive, every new idea that flashed upon my mind, every labor that was undertaken, and every task performed, was but a snare to my feet, a temptation in my path. Ostentatious display was the motive, and self-conceit the result. And great indeed was the barrier of pride and self-reliance with which I had thus fortified my heart. The grace of God, however, has been greater, and the knowledge of Christ is now my highest aim, my chief hope. A mine of wisdom has been opened to me in the Gospel by the light of grace, where I had previously groped about in darkness.

"In the wonders of scientific research I now can hear the voice of God, and see his hand. In the history of the past I can watch his providence working out its own ends, and so disposing events as to make them work together for his own glory and the advancement of his king-

dom. Even my imagination, that enemy to truth and heightener of sinful lusts has, under the gentle influence of Christ, become an associate with faith and hope and love, in strengthening my convictions and quickening my perceptions of heavenly things. There are sins, alas too numerous, that do easily beset me, and which sometimes bring the fear that my 'goodness is as the morning cloud,' that I am still under the dominion of sin and Satan, and that the hope of eternal life with me is a mere delusion.

"I endeavor to forsake sinful pleasures, for I have ceased to delight in them. An easy disposition however often induces me to yield. May God forgive me, and strengthen me by his grace to hold on in 'patient continuance in well doing'—to trust less in myself, and more in Christ—to watch and pray lest I enter into temptation. Your prayers, my dear sister, I am sure I have. I have written a long account of my feelings upon religion. It is a subject that engages my thoughts continually, and which has precedence of every other, so that I should not tire were I to write ever so much more. You will feel with me and for me, and can fully appreciate my situation."

When a soul is converted it is impossible for it to be idle. Salvation may *begin* with itself, but can only *end* with *all who need it*. The feelings of Dr. Broughton on this subject are exhibited in a communication, dated Indian Key, May, 1842.

"It is the high privilege of my vocation not only to minister physical relief to suffering man, but also in the ear of him who thought to die hopeless and unpitied, to speak words of sympathy, comfort and peace. Of what priceless value then—and at what small cost—is a simple pressure of the hand, accompanied with a whisper of that love that requires of the most hardened sinner the exercise of faith alone for salvation.

“I have for some time past been deeply interested and affected by the accounts that reach us of the revival of religion, and the progress of temperance at the North. They surpass all human conception, and ought alone to convict sinners, as the great light from heaven did Saul. How visible are the workings of God’s Spirit! I look with wonder and confidence to these movements and the missionary cause, as the setting of the tide towards the kingdom of heaven universal upon earth. Inquiries into the future, farther than depends upon the promises of God, are generally vain and useless. But these *promises* should urge christians onward—not to ask, ‘Are all things ready?’—but earnestly to *labor* that the knowledge of salvation may be spread abroad, and freely to *give* as they have freely received, the glad tidings of ‘good will to men.’

“I am perhaps carried beyond the humility proper for me, in thus expressing my opinion; but these are matters that I feel zealous about, and my mouth speaks out from the fulness of my heart. I feel my benevolent sympathies expand the more, the more they are gratified. Like the circle in water that starting from one point spreads itself over the whole surface, so charity with me, by God’s blessing, though beginning at home, did not stop there. My first desires were for myself, then my family, my friends and acquaintances came next, then my country, then all human kind; and, glory to God, his work seems to prosper in all. Please tell Thomas, that as he is my purser I make him my almoner also, and commission him to make an offering for me at the concerts of prayer for missions, and also for Sabbath schools.”

Converted on board a man of war, and separated by his situation from the privileges of the sanctuary, the heart of Dr. Broughton, like that of David panted for

the courts of the Lord's house. His feelings, together with his high appreciation of the Holy Scriptures in his temporary exile from the house of God, may be learned from a letter dated Indian Key, June 17, 1842.

“God knows what is best for me, but I cannot feel here, while surrounded by persons whose associations and habits influence me somewhat, as if I had given my whole soul to Christ. Too often do I feel bowed to the dust with shame that having understood so great salvation, I have not buckled on the whole armor of God to guard it against all assaults of the enemy of souls. I sometimes fear that my peace has been presumption, so liable am I to be led away from the Spirit by trusting for strength to myself. Oh for the sympathy and companionship of christian friends! Oh for the benefit of pious example and conversation, for holy Sabbath days and the enforcement of the Gospel by teachings, persuasions and alarms!

“Yet God has stood by me in the greatest straits, and every fresh conviction of sin and unworthiness has been joined with fresh conviction of the necessity of a Savior. Like Pilate, I used often to ask, ‘What is truth?’ and like him, too often I would not wait for an answer. I used to think that truth was something that people wished or imagined to be so; that every man's notion of what was true depended upon prejudice, and that all questions might have as much said upon one side as on the other. But how different is *Revealed Truth!* He that has it knows it, feels it, it is *his*. The combined powers of the world and of Satan cannot take it from him; it is a part of him—the sure ‘evidence of things not seen.’

“Oh, I have felt my whole frame tingle and my hands clasp in ecstasy, as in the Bible the Spirit of truth and love has revealed to me mighty and wonderful things, such as I could have never known or even dreamed of. And I have hated the flesh, whose sluggishness, whose

passions have made us to see these things 'in part' only. Certainly nothing can be more powerful than this truth, to comfort, to exalt, to redeem. I cannot refrain in my letters from pouring out my feelings to you on this subject. They find here no other earthly vent, and you, I am sure, will be interested by them, while it is a relief to me."

In a letter dated August 12, we find the following consolatory language in reference to some afflictions in the family.

"You must have had a season of distress, but I am sure you all have found that it was good to be afflicted. How forcibly, when I think of it all, am I impressed with the truth 'that affliction cometh not forth out of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground.' No human prudence can foresee or avoid them—no human skill can remove them, or even understand the manner in which they cease to operate. God alone can wound or heal, can break or make whole again.

"And is it not wise and just in Christ to take us up into the wilderness to be tempted as he was, to fast and to pray as he did, and to drink with him the bitter cup; as well as to permit us to eat of his body and drink of his blood? Are 'the sufferings of this present time to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us?' But alas, alas, how little can I myself feel or practice these convictions. When God withdraws his face to try me, how soon do I fall into hopelessness and hardness of heart; and it is only his abundant mercy that brings me back to his favor, and makes my errors and sins cover me with humility, imparting the consciousness that Christ is the only refuge for the soul, and the only object worthy of love and abiding confidence.

"If, too, when I have 'done all commanded,' I am still an 'unprofitable servant,' how much more so when I transgress daily, if not in open sin, at least in the ne-

glect of the proper exercises of faith and love—in sinful and perverse thoughts, words and affections? But there is One who ever liveth to make intercession, and the merit of whose atonement will remove the imperfections and make acceptable the services of him who is vile and despicable in his own eyes.”

But a short time after this the vessel in which Dr. Broughton had been an involuntary exile from the means of grace, was ordered home. What were the emotions with which he met his parents, brothers and sisters, can better be imagined than described. During his absence his father, three brothers, a sister, a brother-in-law and himself, had all been hopefully converted to God. The family had become indeed a *christian* family, and the very ark of God seemed to have taken its abode within its walls. Nor was this all. Almost all his acquaintances and old friends were now members of the church. Oh how great a change in so short a time. And how agreeable were all these things to the young convert from the everglades of Florida!

But there was another joy for the heart of this young disciple. Long had he been panting and sighing after the ordinances of God. Long had he been groaning in spirit while in a desert of the means of grace. But now the sweet Sabbath shines around him; the church-bell drops its notes upon his ear; thronging multitudes crowd the still streets, and the sanctuary is open for his reception. High privileges these—holy seasons these! And as he entered the house of God, and there sat among his people; as the commingling voices of the worshippers began to arise; as the accents of prayer and public instruction were uttered; and especially as the cloud that had sheltered him in the wilderness re-appeared in God's temple, diffusing all around a spiritual baptism—how truly did the heart of our young friend unite with that

of the pilgrim at Luz, "This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!"

Nor did he delay to fulfil the vow he had made in a distant land, of dedicating himself *wholly* to the service of God. On November 27, 1842, together with four others, one of them a converted Roman Catholic, he made a public profession of the faith of the Gospel, and for the first time sat down at the table of Christ among his people.

‘ How sweet and awful is the place,
 ‘ With Christ within the doors,
 “ While everlasting Love displays
 “ The choicest of her stores !”

And sweet no doubt our young brother felt it to be—a day of espousals—a day of communion with Christ and his people—a day never to be forgotten.

For several months after his connection with the church our young friend held the office of surgeon on board a ship of the line, then lying in port. He now enjoyed the privilege of attending the sanctuary regularly, and of mingling his christian sympathies with those of his brethren. His pastor has often noticed the steady fixedness of his dark eye, and the animated glow of his earnest countenance under the preaching of the word. His ardor was amazing, and yet it was so internal, so deep as not to be noticed by any save his most intimate friends. He often visited his pastor in his study to converse about spiritual and eternal things. On most of these occasions he would replenish himself with Tracts, which he distributed among the sailors as he had opportunity. For the seaman he felt a deep sympathy. He knew his destitution, and had a heart to relieve, so far as he could, the inconveniences to which he was subject.

A judicious friend of his having suggested to the

writer that his talents might probably be available for the pulpit, the Tract entitled, "Call and qualifications for the Gospel Ministry," was put in his hands. This Tract he read carefully and with much prayer. It laid before him a field of usefulness larger than had previously occurred to his mind. Many difficulties, however, arose. He was in his country's service. He was in not only an honorable but a useful profession. Change was uncertain. He might not be qualified—he might not be *called*. All these objections arose. His desire for usefulness, however, had well nigh conquered them all when he was suddenly ordered by government to a cruise among the West India Islands. This circumstance placed his mind in great trouble. As a conviction of duty, however, he obeyed his country's call, saying to me as we parted, "I hope to have my mind made up by my return."

It appears from his letters afterwards that he altogether relinquished this idea of preaching. His humility, his consciousness of the greatness of the work, together probably with the disadvantageous situation he occupied to decide such a question, brought him to this result. Still, he "being dead speaketh;" and the writer earnestly hopes that even his *quenched desire* may excite the heart of some other of *like spirit* to fill his place in publishing salvation to a lost world.

The first letter received from Dr. Broughton after his departure was dated Nassau, New Providence, Jan. 20, 1843. In this he writes—

"I feel much ashamed of the despondency I exhibited just before leaving home. I knew that I was about to be subjected to trial and privation; and looking only to myself I felt discouraged and afraid of sinking. The Lord, however, has graciously stretched out his hand to me though of little faith, and so far I have had blessed

experience that he will not forsake those who look to him for help. I am amazed at myself that I have had so little faith. If God's ways were as our ways, or his thoughts as our thoughts, I should long ago have fallen from his favor. But while Christ *ever liveth* to make intercession, Oh who or what shall separate us from the love of God?

"I feel happy to think that, though far away from you all, we meet together morning and evening at the throne of grace, and that our Sabbaths, our God, and our Savior are the same. You must write to me all the new things which occur in the church, and what the result may be of the season you expect in February. Send me on also, to Pensacola, your numbers of the *Missionary Chronicle* when you shall have finished reading them, and give my affectionate regards to the many and kind friends that God has given me."

The following letter dated Matanzas, Cuba, Feb. 20, will be read with interest.

"One could scarcely imagine a situation more unfavorable than mine for reading and meditation, and yet I am surprised to find that I can acquire and digest knowledge here as well almost as under more convenient circumstances. The frivolous conversation that is often carried on around me creates a want of occupation, and books and self-study come kindly in to supply it. My slothful flesh tries hard to wheedle me into the belief that there is 'a lion in the way,' and that it is useless to try to read; but I am otherwise constrained to make the effort, which is generally successful. I also find much time when the officers are asleep or keeping their watch on deck. I have thus read Scott's 'Force of Truth,' Newton's 'Life and Letters,' 'Mammon,' several Tracts, and have made progress in familiarising myself with our larger catechism.

“Passages of the Bible are sometimes brought home to my heart with great force, though generally my conceptions are not so clear as I could wish. This, however, is an incentive to perseverance and diligence. Mammon is a very scrutinizing book, and I trust it has done me good. It has certainly opened my eyes to behold a beauty in economy, which the phlegmatic maxims of Franklin could never bring me to perceive. Newton, too, I have enjoyed much. One of his letters seemed to take scales from my eyes, and gave me a clue to understand how, through a dark period of doubt and distress, an unseen hand had been keeping alive the fire in my heart which Satan was striving to quench. I can now bless the hand that chastened me, and own with wonder and admiration that he doeth all things well. Now I know, not because of what was told me, but because ‘I have seen him and heard him myself.’

“I see the hand of God in many of the events of my past life, how he has been before me as a refiner of silver, waiting for me with compassionate forbearance, and wooing me to take his image while I have been heaping dross in the way, and my neck has been a sinew of iron, and my brow brass. And what is man’s heart, that God should love it so, and be resolved to win it? It is strange enough that he should stoop to save us; but how much more wonderful is it that he should draw us to him against our efforts!

“You would scarcely believe me, were I to tell you what narrow conceptions I had formed of God’s love, and how ignorant I was of his ways. A short time before I left home I read in Pilgrim’s Progress the description of the man in the iron cage, and my heart feared that the case was mine; it was so much like what I *felt*, it was so much like what I *deserved*. Like David I was afraid lest I should one day perish. But He who knoweth our frame sustained me by his word which preached

perseverance in so many places that even unbelief was convinced, and I was enabled calmly to wait for him who 'has the words of eternal life.' Since then I trust I am prepared to say, in whatever frame I am, 'Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him.'

"It is a great source of comfort to study the providence of God towards me, and to see in many apparent evils how much good can be extracted. He has disappointed hopes that I had formed of earthly happiness, only that I might seek and prize the more the 'rest' that 'remaineth.' He has placed me here amid trial and privation that I may learn my own weakness, and be taught to rely solely on him. He has taken me, so young in grace, from those means and ordinances by which his mercy refreshes others, that I might look *immediately* to him without helps and aids. .

"One thing at first distressed me much, the limited sphere of usefulness in which I live. I am now sure, however, that there are few situations on earth in which a conscientious christian cannot make himself useful. Even in the midst of worldly associations he can observe the specious arguments by which unbelief hides itself in the natural heart, and knowing himself to have been similarly deceived, he can endeavor to convince others that Eternal Life consists not in vain speculations about 'fixed fate, free will, fore-knowledge absolute,' nor in the adoption of the mere forms of church worship; but in repentance unto life and faith in the atonement of Christ. This, to be sure, is looked upon as puritanical; and human reason will rather delight itself in measuring eternal truth by its own standard, than in considering itself imperfect, and that faith in God's revealed word is the only true wisdom.

"It is something, however, to tell such that they are wrong, and to have good books at hand which they will sometimes read, if from no other motive, to fill up

the vacancy of their time. I have also an additional privilege. The captain has requested me to read prayers on Sundays; and then I can select what parts of Scripture I wish to read, and with God's help I shall not be wanting in a word of exhortation, though not a prophet nor a prophet's son."

We have already noticed the fact that Dr. Broughton when leaving home had serious thoughts of preparing for the christian ministry. The following letter from Pensacola, dated April 24, alludes to this subject, and also exhibits the deep interest he felt in the spiritual welfare of seamen.

"The denunciations of the Bible against time unimproved and duty unperformed, and the promises held out to even feeble attempts, had filled my mind with the desire to devote myself to a cause in which I might hope, by the Divine blessing, to be in some humble degree useful. But my charity was unwilling to begin where it should have done. Sloth and selfishness magnified the difficulties I should encounter among those around me, till it seemed a matter almost impossible that I should be useful here; and I am ashamed while I make the confession, that the privations I must endure in my present position, and the constant need for caution and watching lest the cause of Christ should suffer reproach through my weakness, may have had some influence in clouding my understanding and directing my thoughts to the sacrifice of myself that I proposed to make.

"I had not then experienced how prone the heart is to pervert the leadings of the Spirit, by mixing with them the desires of our own foolish and fond imaginations. Nor had I then reflected that many sailors were themselves heathen, so far as the lack of Gospel preaching, and minds darkened by ignorance and superstition, and hearts under the dominion of Satan could so be considered

But now that christian philanthropy has opened her heart to them, and persons unconnected with them are seeking their welfare, it certainly became *me*, from my relation to them and from the peculiar opportunities I possess, to take up *their cause* and to endeavor to help it forward by whatever means the Lord has given me."

In another letter, June 16, he says, "I have seen no reason to regret the conclusion I was brought to on the subject of the ministry: on the contrary, in a letter from Mobile containing information that a present of the Evangelical Library had been made to the crew of the B., I have been encouraged by the expression that 'the moral advancement of the seamen around me was the noblest of all ends;' and I hope to make it my chief concern hereafter to be conscientious in the discharge of this duty."

A short time after this we find his vessel again cruising among the West India Islands. While at Havana he fell in with a congenial spirit, a young physician from the United States who was "exerting himself as far as he had the power, to spread the knowledge of the truth around him," of whom he says, "The doctor's company was a great comfort to me, and has strengthened and encouraged me not a little."

In writing from Cienfuegos, under date of Sept. 11, he thus alludes to the religious condition of the place.

"The fooleries of the Catholics have lost nothing in the hands of the people of this place. Friday, the 8th, was the feast of the nativity of the Virgin Mary; and her image, bedizened with silk and spangles, was to have been paraded through the streets in procession, but the succession of rainy weather has put a stop to the mumery. Yesterday (Sunday) evening was however celebrated by a ball, I presume in honor of 'nuestra Señora,' (our Lady.) To this, in common with the officers, I re

ceived a card in which 'Señor Dr. B.' was informed that the committee of arrangements, desirous of eclat in the discharge of their office, solicited his assistance. Whether the efforts of the committee unassisted by Dr. B. were sufficient to make the entertainment a brilliant one, I cannot decide. My country is welcome to the honor of the invitation, no doubt intended in all decency and courtesy; but while I may be gratified to have her honored abroad by the civilities of strangers, I cannot but pity the poor deluded souls who are taught to 'reject the commandment of God that they may receive the tradition of men.' Of a truth, from what I learn, the curse of God is upon them. They prostrate themselves before Vice and Ignorance with the willingness of the worshippers of Juggernaut. No social ties are sacred, no virtues are practised or respected. It is indeed a nation that has drunk deep of the wine of the fornication of the beast. Soul sickening are some of the accounts I have heard of the state of morals here."

With the exception of a small note, the following is the last of Dr. Broughton's letters, dated Pensacola, Nov. 2, 1843.

"Ere long I hope and believe that God will direct my way to you all, though I must say that the pleasurable anticipations I had formed of this event have been not a little diminished by the painful intelligence you communicate of the apparently declining state of religion in the church. My great desire of returning among you was, that I might have my faith increased and strengthened by the example and counsel of faithful christians, that I might be better able to make known among men the ways of God. I trust that the hope of increasing mere selfish comfort and enjoyment was only a secondary motive, for I have learned in part to bear with contentment the privation of these, in the belief that an *eternity*

of enjoyment will be sufficient to satisfy my most longing desires.

“Wherever I go, the cry of creation groaning under the curse enters my ear, and the voice within me whispers, ‘What art thou, O atom? that thou shouldst regard thyself; that thou shouldst bury God’s talent in the ground, or consume his Spirit on thy lusts!’ Feeble indeed have my efforts been, but God despiseth not ‘the day of small things.’

“Since God has enlarged my confidence in him, I am less perplexed with the superiority of others in natural endowments, and I can argue in a spirit of more candor than formerly, being now more desirous of elevating the truth than of exalting myself. I have so often failed when venturing in my own strength to defend the truth of God, in consequence of the greater ability of some of my associates, that I am now quite willing that God should defend his own truth, and content myself with opposing ‘the sword of the Spirit’ to the lovers of the world, trusting that its Author will cause it to smite where he willeth that they should have repentance and the knowledge of Him. There are many kinds of voices in the world which speak of God to these men, and though they have least disposition to listen to the plainest one, yet all the others are but the echoes of this, and with proper light may be known to depend upon it. It is in this way that conversation upon almost any subject may be brought home to the word of God, and thus rendered profitable.

“But let me tell you of *one* application I made of the texts you quoted in your letter. Since God has enlarged my confidence in him, I have discovered my relationship by grace to a much larger family than that to which I am bound by nature, and although his Spirit has prompted me to pray with much earnestness for the enlargement and establishment of his kingdom upon

earth, yet I have been led to regard with *special interest* in prayer my own family and church. This I know is often with you all a subject of prayer, and we must pray *in faith*, that God may grant our requests. I believe that he does answer prayer thus offered, not only from his word and the experience of christians of whom I have read or with whom I have conversed, but also from indubitable evidence in my own experience. I think too, that the experience of churches is the same with that of individual christians, and that sunshine and clouds are necessary to the perfecting of faith in both.

“We are all short-sighted, but experience has taught me, at no small cost, what I dare say it must teach all, that in the day when the candle of the Lord shines upon us, we are prone to be satisfied with ourselves, and to use your own words, ‘to think it impossible that we should ever get back to our former cold state.’ We are apt in this condition to imagine that we have a *supply* of God’s grace, which will last us at least for some time to come, and thus grow careless about the use of the means of sustaining our spiritual life. The manna, however, that is so covetously laid up, corrupts, and we discover by sad experience that as natural life must be supported by *daily* food, equally true is it that only *daily* supplies can sustain the life and vigor of our faith. If the means are used with the belief that God will deliver us, even our temporary decline will become a blessing, for in overcoming it we shall have greater strength and confidence than before. *Perseverance in effort* is the kind of faith that I have found to remove mountains. It is not *sighing* but *running* that wins the race. I have found no remedy for suffering and for distressing thoughts like *doing*. Active obedience is the evidence of that faith which quenches all the fiery darts of Satan. If then we who are members of an unhealthy church are patient

and faithful, we can confidently expect that God will answer our prayers, and that bread thus cast upon the waters will return after many days.

“I am afraid, from consciousness of my youth and want of wisdom, that what I have written may have been written with the haste of presumption, and may be so considered by you; but it has been the result of experimental reading of God’s word and of prayer, and I have expressed myself thus, not because I think I know the truth more or better than others, but because I think that the ways of God to me have been wonderful, and that the experience of the humblest child of God may be read by others with profit.”

But a short time after the date of the above Dr. Broughton commenced his voyage homeward. While stopping a short time in the West Indies he was seized with fever. It was principally of a nervous character, and seemed to threaten his life. He reached home, however, early in the next month. He was emaciated, and his appearance excited the sympathy of all who saw him. He survived about two weeks. On the 22d of December, 1843, he breathed his last, calmly reclining on the bosom of God his Savior.

His exercises on his death-bed were deeply interesting, but were frequently interrupted by mental aberrations. On one occasion he said to his mother, “I saw myself all pollution and sin; and it seems to me that just a drop of a Savior’s blood fell on me, which removed all my pollutions and gave me acceptance with God.”

Just before he expired he leaped up in the bed exclaiming, “Where is Abraham’s bosom? Where is Abraham’s bosom?” The physician in attendance replied, “Doctor, Abraham is not here.”—“Abraham not here!” he exclaimed with amazement—“Abraham not here!” and fell back upon his pillow and died! Thus vanished

into the light of heaven this blaze of piety, which God had so wonderfully created and sustained.

On the next Sabbath his funeral was attended by a very large concourse of citizens and naval officers. The sermon was preached from Heb. 11 : 4, "He being dead yet speaketh." The impression was deep and solemn, and all seemed to be amazed at the wonderful example of his grace, which God had produced on the coasts of Florida without the ordinary means of salvation. We followed the hearse to the silent grave where, within walls of brick and amid rows of ever-blooming cedars, we deposited the body of our dear beloved Broughton with christian and military honors. Venerated parents, brothers and sisters, and a large circle of friends commingled their tears at his tomb, remembering his virtues, and mourning his early loss.

"But no, he is not lost—
"In heaven his spirit shines,
"While here, the frame once tost,
"In hope of life reclines.

"He is not lost—a ray
"From e'en his tomb ascends,
"Which marks to bliss the way,
"And Jesus recommends.

"That way may others tread,
"Upon that Savior trust,
"And find, as he, the dead
"Have comforts in the dust."

COL. DAVID MACK,

THE

FAITHFUL STEWARD.

“It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.” Every man is a steward of God, the universal Proprietor. Men are not their own, but his; and their bodies and souls, their time and influence, their wealth and children, all belong to him. These are talents committed to their care, with the command, “Occupy till I come.” It is therefore Atheistic and rebellious to say, “I and these possessions are mine: who is Lord over me?” And it is disloyal to feel and conduct, as if we and our possessions were to be disposed of according to our own good pleasure. But, on the other hand, it is angelic and Christian, both in word and deed, to feel and to say as did King David to the King of kings, “All things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.” This is right; and though it be not so with the creatures of God generally on the earth, there are some who, like Moses, are faithful in all their house; men who, like Abraham, command their households after them; men who, like the primitive saints, say not that aught of the things which they possess are their own.

To such a man would we direct the reader of these pages—a man known to many in our land, and worthy of being known to more, and imitated by all; for his memorial is among the just, who shall be in everlasting remembrance. He was a man remarkable in his ancestry and

early training ; in his own family ; in his influence on society ; in his acquisition and use of intelligence and wealth ; in his general benevolence and interest in the spiritual welfare of others ; in his growth in grace, long life, peaceful death, and eternal glory.

We speak of Colonel DAVID MACK, of Middlefield, Massachusetts, who died March 24, 1845, being more than ninety-four years old. He was born December 10, 1750, in Hebron, Connecticut. He was of Puritan descent : his ancestors were noble ones, for the blood of the Pilgrims ran in their veins, and the love of the Pilgrims' God burned in their hearts. His great-grandfather, Josiah Mack, came from Scotland, and settled in Lyme, Connecticut ; his grandfather, Deacon Josiah Mack, removed from Lyme to Hebron ; his father, Elisha Mack, followed his son David from Hebron to Middlefield, not long to enjoy his new home, being suddenly killed in the fifty-sixth year of his age. Colonel Mack's mother was Mary Ellis, daughter of John Ellis, of Sandwich, Massachusetts, who died in 1819, aged eighty-six. His wife was Mary, daughter of John and Abigail Talcott, to whom he was married April 24, 1774. She was born in Hebron, and died in Middlefield, July 11, 1827, at the age of seventy years. These all had not only the names of the ancient worthies, but like them they lived and "died in faith," satisfied with long life, and blessed with the heritage of the Lord—a numerous posterity. Colonel Mack and his wife had each fifteen brothers and sisters ; and Jabez Ellis, his maternal uncle, lived till he was one hundred years and forty days old, and was connected with his wife in marriage seventy-six years !

In those days, family government had not changed hands : children were subject to their parents. But not so all. there were some who, like the sons of Eli, made themselves vile and were not restrained ; and it was among such that Colonel Mack was situated in his youth. But his parents prevented him from running to the same excess of

riot. They absolutely debarred him from attending the fairs, horse-races, dances, and other amusements in which his neighbors freely indulged. And when David—feeling, as he did, that this separating him from all associates was unreasonable and unjust—ventured to remonstrate with his father, as they were together in the field, the reply of the good man was, “My son, I do this to save you from ruin; for mark me, those young men will assuredly come to a bad end.” This prophetic speech was sadly and literally fulfilled: three of them expiated their crimes on the gallows, others were sent to the state prison, and all came to a lamentable and disgraceful end. Companions of fools, they were destroyed.

Not so with him who was trained in the way he should go, and did not depart from it when he was old. He honored his father and mother, and his days were long in the land which the Lord gave him; and that too, notwithstanding imminent exposure to death.

As he removed his family from Hebron to Middlefield, in crossing the river at Norwich, the unexpectedly high water swept them rapidly down the current to the point of being carried over the dam; when looking for death, and the spectators giving them up for lost, Providence, at the moment of despair, ordered a way for their escape safe to land.

Afterwards, as he was hunting in the deep snows in pursuit of a large deer, the animal suddenly turned on him, pressed its antlers against his breast, and set its fore feet on both his snow-shoes, holding him fast; and thus crippled, it was with difficulty that he got in hand his hunting-knife, and with his utmost remaining strength drew it across the deer's throat; when the animal struck him with the hind foot a terrible blow upon one of his temples, which completely stunned, and almost killed him. As near as he could judge, he lay senseless about an hour. On recovering, his first thought was, “I am dead!” but rising

up, he found that the deer was dead, and lying prostrate at his feet.

Thus was he delivered out of his distresses, that he might serve his generation by the will of God, and that God might fulfil the promise of long life to one who honored his parents, not only while they lived, but long after they had departed this life. "He once desired me," says his minister,* "to go with him to the graves of his father and mother, for which he had just obtained new monuments. As we stood there, I said to him, 'You seem by this act to renew their memory, as if they had died but yesterday.' 'Yes,' said he, 'I wish to do all I can, while I live, to honor the name of my father and mother. But for them, I should have been a poor wretched outcast upon the earth.' And the old man of ninety years, in the full possession of his faculties, shook with emotion and wept like a child." Blessed are the parents who, more than half a century after their death, can draw such a tribute from an aged son. Their names are not widely known on the earth, nor need they be; it is enough that they sit down with Abraham, the father of the faithful, and Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of God.

And not only did Colonel Mack honor his parents: "he rose up before the hoary head, and honored the face of the old man." While yet a youth, an aged man of choleric temper had, from some unknown cause, contracted towards him a strong dislike. Meeting him one day, Mr. Mack saluted him respectfully, but received only the unkind reply, "Don't speak to me." "I shall speak to you," said he, "for I have always been accustomed to respect age, and I always intend to do it." This changed his churlishness towards him ever after into civility; thus exemplifying the

* Reverend Edward Clarke, to whose sermon delivered at Colonel Mack's funeral, we are indebted for a number of facts embodied in this sketch.

truth, that "A soft answer turneth away wrath." It may be remarked in passing, that this respect for his parents and the aged was a result of parental fidelity. They were obedient to their Heavenly Father, and revered the "Ancient of Days" in securing the obedience and reverence of their son; and they who honor me, saith God, will I honor.

The son, thus faithfully dealt with, was in his turn faithful in all his house. He too ruled well, having his children in subjection. "My father," says one of them, "excelled in government. He never inflicted punishment without fully setting forth the criminality of the offence and its evil consequences, calmly and coolly, without excitement or passion; but he did not desist till there was a perfect yielding, a full confession and promise of amendment; and would often add, 'It is because I love you that I punish.'" No doubt it was, for "he that spareth the rod hateth his son, but he who loveth him chasteneth him betimes."

"We were," he continues, "kept in on the Sabbath, and taught the catechism, and had other religious instruction, which he faithfully imparted. He never allowed his children to be absent in the evening without his permission, and he required their return by nine o'clock. And not only did he command his children, but his household. He had for several years twenty or more in his family in the summer; and in the most hurrying time of business he insisted that all under his care should be present at family devotions, and attend public worship on the Sabbath. If a hired man persisted in using profane language, he dismissed him.

Such fidelity in the stewardship God crowned with his blessing. He gave him thirteen children, three sons and ten daughters, all of whom lived to be married, and twelve of them became members of the church of Christ. They are honored of God and their country, and their children

in their turn are rising up and calling them blessed. His descendants, living and dead, were, at the time of his decease, about two hundred: there were eight or ten of the fifth generation, his grandchildren's grandchildren.

These, as well as his other relatives, he regarded as a high trust concerning which God would require an account of his stewardship. For their temporal and spiritual welfare he labored, prayed, and counselled. As evidence of this, and of his general Christian character, a few extracts will here be given from letters written in the later period of his life; for he brought forth fruit in old age.

Writing to a child, December 10, 1824, he says, "By the grace of God, I have been carried through the various stages of manhood, and am this day seventy-four years old. I have set apart this day for prayer, and have been reading the forty-second Psalm. I have enjoyed in some measure the light of God's countenance. O, it is good to draw nigh to God, for he has styled himself a prayer-hearing God; and never said to the seed of Jacob, seek my face in vain."

"December 12, Lord's Day. I had great desire to enjoy the light of God's countenance, for which I attempted to pray; and I think my poor feeble attempts were not in vain. My enjoyment continued through the day and evening. Thanks to Almighty God, that he can subdue the hardest heart, and bring such sinful rebels as I am to bow before him. When I look back on my life, and see how I have lived more than forty years since I experienced religion, if indeed I ever did, I have reason to blush and be ashamed, and repent in dust and ashes. I feel that I have more reason to be thankful to God than any of the sinful race. If he should see fit to continue me in life, my prayer to him is, that he would make me more faithful in his service, and that the remainder of my days may be filled up with duty and usefulness to God and man."

In 1832, he writes, "Alas! my dear children, with shame and confusion of face I am often confessing before

the throne of grace, that when I would do good, evil is present with me ; that while I delight in the law after the inner man, I am so drawn aside by my indwelling corruptions, the snares of the world, and Satan's temptations, that were it not for a strong belief that I have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins and the sins of the whole world, I could have no confidence towards God, being condemned by my own heart. In short, I can do no other than allow that all my best services are defiled with sin, and need to be washed in that fountain which the Lord has opened for sin and uncleanness."

In 1835, he wrote to a brother: "For many years I have thought much on the importance of being prepared for death ; but it appears to me that during the last year I have grown more in the knowledge of Christ than in any previous year of my life. I can say in my most favored moments, *I know him, I love him, I am his, and he is mine.* No name awakens such tender and interesting feelings in my mind as his ; nor is there any being in the universe whom I so much delight to honor, or desire to see. And why should it not be so ? We are under greater obligations to him than to all the world besides. We have more to do with him every day of our lives than with any other being in the universe. No being in heaven is so much beloved as he is ; none has manifested such love towards us as he has. No wonder that our heart and flesh should cry out for him.

"My dear brother, if you and I are what we profess to be, we shall in a short time be with him, where he is, to behold his glory which he had with the Father before the world was. Although my health is good, my reason tells me the time I have to stay here is short. I often look over my life, to see if I have done anything on which I could place the least dependence, viewing it as righteous in the sight of a holy God ; but comparing my life with his holy word, I

am constrained to say, that in all things I have come short of my duty. I have nowhere to go but to God through Christ, and plead for mercy in his name."

Again he writes, December 10, 1835: "My dear children, I am this day eighty-five years old. I have spent most of the day in calling to mind the numerous blessings of which God, in his holy providence, has made me the unworthy partaker, and in reading and meditating upon the 25th and 29th chapters of Genesis, the 34th chapter of Exodus, 32d of Deuteronomy, and the two last chapters of Joshua. I enjoy good health, and have attended meeting every Sabbath this season. When I call to mind what God has done for me, and what miserable improvement I have made of his numerous mercies, I have great reason to be humbled before him."

"December 31. In the good providence of God, I am brought to the close of another year. There is no closing year in eternity. The solemn influence of this season is among the means of grace connected with a probationary state. Before the close of another year the writer, or the reader of these lines, may be where all such influences will cease, and leave them to the unchanging retributions of eternity. The Spirit of God will strive mightily with many at this solemn season. As we look back on time from another world, we shall find that every such opportunity of religious impression was designed to bring us to repentance. The history of another year of probation for eternity is about to be sealed up for the judgment. The glass that marks off another precious portion of our state of trial is about to be turned. It may be, that many will remember this closing season in eternity, as the period when the Spirit of God was resisted for the last time, and took his everlasting flight.

"My dear children, it becomes you and me faithfully to examine the foundation of our hope, and see to it, that we are not deceived; that when God shall call us hence we

may be prepared for the summons; our work done, and well done, for which 'the time is short.'"

"January 1, 1836. I have been loudly admonished the year past by the deaths of many aged friends. They have fallen on my right hand and on my left. I am the oldest man in town—there is not one living who was here when I came. In one sense I am almost alone; in another, I am not alone. I enjoy the presence and smiles of my Saviour in my room, which is the best of company. I have great enjoyment on the Sabbath in going to the house of God, in hearing the Gospel, and in visiting my Christian friends on week days. If I am not deceived, my evidences for heaven are brighter, and my faith stronger, as I advance in life. Yet many times I see myself to be so great a sinner, it seems impossible I should be of that happy number whose sins are forgiven. And yet I do not despair of mercy on account of the greatness of my sins, for I firmly believe that the atonement which Christ has made is sufficient to atone for my sins and for the sins of the whole world. He 'came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,' such as *feel* themselves to be sinners, *old sinners.*"

In 1836, he thus addressed his grandchildren. "My dear and much esteemed grandchildren: God, in his holy providence, has lengthened out my unprofitable life much longer than I expected. He has bestowed upon me many blessings. My health is as good as it ever was. I can read with spectacles, and some without. My hearing is perfect. Although my health is good, my reason tells me I have but a short time to stay in this world of trouble and sin. May I so live, that when God calls me home to be here no more, I may be found watching, and enabled, through grace in Christ Jesus, to give up joyfully my spirit to him who gave it.

"It is uncertain whether you will ever hear from your aged grandfather again in this way; will you therefore, my dear grandchildren, allow me to give you a few words of

advice? I have great concern for your temporal and spiritual good; and knowing, as I do from experience, how liable young people are to go astray from the commands of God into forbidden paths, I would warn you of your danger. May you not be tempted to sin; or if tempted, may you be supported and delivered, and be kept from the vanities and sensualities of this evil world. 'Hear counsel and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.' Be careful what company you associate with, for such will be your character. 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise, but the companion of fools shall be destroyed.' 'The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with.' 'He that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster;' therefore be industrious in some honest calling.

"Never marry for riches or beauty, for 'beauty is vain,' and 'riches take to themselves wings and fly away.' Exercise judgment. Be well acquainted with the temper and disposition of your intended bosom friend before you decide. Lay hand suddenly on no one. When you commence housekeeping, be careful to erect the family altar. If you are blessed with children, and desire that they may be a blessing to you, do your duty faithfully to them; pray with and for them; train them up for God.

"Let me enjoin it upon you, as an incumbent duty, often to read your Bible, with prayer to God for a right understanding of what you read. It is of infinite importance that we understand the truths contained in that holy book, for by them we must be judged at the last day, and by a Judge that cannot be deceived. 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' Be always ready to do your part in supporting the Gospel. The man who is not willing to support the Gospel, cannot with propriety be called a good member of society. 'Despise not the poor because he is poor.' The great object of our existence is to glorify God, in whom we live and have our being, and who bestows all

our comforts. Take heed that you faithfully perform all the duties and business of life from a regard to his commands and with reference to his glory. We are placed in this world to labor for him, (not to become rich and great,) and to do all the good we can. Let it be your aim to have the glory of God as your ultimate end in all you do, that you may answer the end of your creation. I should be glad once more to see you all, but I do not expect to. I desire to commit you to, and leave you with, the Father of all mercies and God of all grace.

“That you may be directed safely through an evil world to God’s heavenly kingdom, is the sincere prayer of your aged grandfather,
DAVID MACK.”

By such counsels as these, and a corresponding example, and fervent prayers, he was a faithful steward in the care of the children which God gave him, and also of his children’s children; and this labor was not in vain in the Lord, for most of his grandchildren are hopefully pious. How great his reward on earth, and in heaven! “Well done, good and faithful.”

Not only was Colonel Mack a patriarch in the family relation; he was a prince among the people. His active piety was allied to that knowledge which is power; and in the improvement of his mind we see the fidelity of the steward. His early advantages were very limited, for previous to his marriage he had been to school but six weeks. He once expostulated with his father, because he did not give him more opportunity to attend school. His father replied, “David, I never went to school but three weeks in my life; you have been six, and ought to be satisfied!” But this did not satisfy him. He afterwards went to the common school of those days with his own children. His eldest son, the Honorable David Mack, of Amherst, Massachusetts, was six years old when he went to school with his father and spelled in the same class. And he often exulted,

in true childish emulation, when he was able to get above his father in spelling.

Thus improving his mind, Colonel Mack made his one talent ten; he increased in understanding, for he laid fast hold of instruction. He became wise and walked with wise men. He kept along with the progress of the times. He was a friend and patron of learning, and gave large sums in aid of public seminaries. He assisted indigent young men in their studies, and offered his three sons a liberal education. Two of them were obliged to relinquish their studies in consequence of the failure of their health; the third, Honorable Elisha Mack, of Salem, graduated at Williams' College. In all this, faithful over a little, God made him ruler over much.

With the improvement of his intellectual powers there came another talent, *Influence with others*. This reward of well-doing he employed as a fresh trust faithfully to be used. A clergyman who knew him well, remarked, "Colonel Mack is one of the most perfect examples of nature's noblemen: having surmounted all obstacles to his advancement in life, he combines the most far-seeing sagacity, with the greatest amount of practical wisdom, and all guided and controlled by elevated and incorruptible principle."

His life is identified with the entire history of the town in which he lived; in his prime he was prominent in all its public affairs, constantly filling some office of trust and honor, as selectman, assessor, justice of the peace, representative to the Legislature, colonel of the militia, and deacon of the church. To this last office he was early appointed, and served in it acceptably until he resigned at seventy-five years of age.

With his military honors there is connected an incident which illustrates his patriotism, decision, and magnanimity. At the time of "Shay's insurrection," he was captain of a company of militia, and a requisition was sent to him to appear in Springfield with a certain number of men, and join the governmental force. He accordingly drafted his

men, and gave orders for their appearance next morning prepared to march. But in the mean time the company met, appointed new officers, and declared in favor of the insurgents; they surrounded and entered his house, declaring him to be "a prisoner of war." Captain Mack conducted himself with his usual self-possession. After exerting himself to the utmost to persuade them to desist from their course of folly and treason, he asked for a furlough of three days, which they granted. At their request he wrote it, and having secured the signatures of the newly appointed officers, he put the document in his pocket and hastened to Springfield, repaired to head-quarters, presented himself to General Shepard, and exhibited his furlough. After examining it, the general said, "Captain Mack, as you have no men to fight with you, you may go home: we shall attend to the men who have signed this paper." And this the general did, by lodging them in Northampton jail, where in their distress they earnestly and humbly besought Captain Mack to use his influence in procuring their release. With a magnanimity which delights in blessing enemies, he exerted himself in their behalf, and secured their pardon.

It was principally by his agency that Middlefield was incorporated into a town, the advantages of which were from the first foreseen by him. Having obtained a knowledge of the region while hunting, and defined the boundaries for a new town, he called a meeting of the citizens to consider the matter. They approved the object, but dreaded the expense and the opposition of the interested towns. He told them he would undertake the business: if successful, they should defray the expenses; if he failed, the loss should be his own. They consented, and he succeeded. The act of incorporation was granted March 12, 1783. It was also mainly through his agency that the meeting-house was erected, in 1791. Previous to this, religious meetings were held in his barn and large chambers of his house, and town meetings in his kitchen. He occupied the

pew in which he was first seated, fifty-four years, during which period more than thirty, who were at different times his seat-mates, deceased.

He attended constantly on divine worship. He was not afraid of the snow and vapor, the stormy wind, rain, or distance; and obstacles which would keep at home two-thirds of a congregation of common Christians in the prime of life, were no impediment to him at fourscore years and ten, a period when even "the grasshopper is a burden." But "love knows no burden," and hence it was easy for him to go to the house of the Lord, for he "loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." The Lord, his treasure, was there—his heart was with his treasure, and his body went with his heart. He was glad to go; he was joyful in God's house; he sat there with great delight, and the preaching seemed better and better. This is the secret of being always able to go to church; while it is no secret at all, that those who are easily discouraged because of the way, are the ones who have no heart for it.

Colonel Mack had a heart for it; and for years, until there was a religious society in Middlefield, he attended divine worship at Chester, whither he went on foot six miles during a great portion of the year. And in the winter's cold on those mountains, where God "giveth snow like wool and scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes," he frequently went with an ox-sled carrying his own and his neighbors' families. This occupied him from sunrise to sunset, and frequently longer. In all this, he was a faithful steward, and the "Lord of the Sabbath" gave him almost five thousand Sabbath days, to prepare for the "rest which remaineth"—each one of them more precious to him than a thousand days in the palaces of sin. Thus he honored God, and God honored him with influence with others, so that "men gave ear unto him, and waited, and kept silence at his counsel."

Another talent which God commits to men as his stew-

ards, is *wealth*. This he gave to Colonel Mack; not in money by inheritance to the amount of a penny, but simply the "power to get wealth," in a strong constitution, good health, a keen discernment, sound judgment, and untiring industry. Besides the land on which he settled, then a wilderness, he used facetiously to say, that when he removed to Middlefield his property consisted of a poor horse, an axe, and his wife and child. He purchased his land at Becket, in 1773, for a horse valued at forty dollars, when returning from his first trading adventure, which was among the Indians on the borders of Lake Champlain. He cleared two acres which he sowed to grain, and built a log-house in the summer of 1774, which was preparatory to his removal the following year; and he said, the first crop he gathered was the largest he ever saw; and that a kind Providence continued to give the most bountiful returns to the labor of his hands.

He frequently walked six miles through the woods to another settlement, to do a day's work for a little money or meat; and once, when he lost his way in the woods, he climbed a tree to avoid the bears and wolves, and there spent the night. While clearing his land, he returned to Hebron to work a month in the hay season, for ten dollars, an extra price for those days.

It was six years after he began to clear his farm before he owned a yoke of oxen, and these he bought with the skins of deer which he caught in the hard winter and deep snows of 1780—a winter "of which our fathers have told us." And then needing some iron-work to make his new team available, as he could not pay down and would not ask a stranger to trust him, he went to a blacksmith with whom he was acquainted, living sixty miles from his home, and settled the bill the next spring with maple sugar; and all this too, when (in the time occupied for the journey) sixty miles were as long as, in many cases, six hundred miles are now!

Thus it was not much that he had to begin with; and

he made it, like the faithful steward, to gain five and ten ; and then again it was increased to hundreds and thousands in return for his fidelity in a little. "His root was spread out by the waters, and the dew lay all night on his branch." He was industrious, economical and faithful ; so prompt in the payment of his debts that no one, in any instance, during his long *business life*, called for money due from him without his paying it : a peculiar excellence and worthy of all imitation.

He found that honesty was the best policy at all times and places, and that the only thing needful for an enterprise which could not prosper by integrity, was its discontinuance. He was a merchant as well as a farmer ; and he established many young men in the mercantile business in the adjacent towns. He also established in business the first blacksmith, the first boot and shoemaker, and the first saddle and harnessmaker, who followed their respective trades in Middlefield. It was his rule to take an account of stock yearly, and to keep an accurate account of each branch of his business ; and when any proved unproductive, it was relinquished. In this way, from small beginnings, he rose to affluence ; his basket and store were replenished, and his barns filled with plenty.

And what did he do with it all ? Did he spend it for display, and the indulgence of vanity and pride ? No. Did he lay it up for his children ? No. When they left the paternal roof he gave them a respectable outfit ; but not enough to make them indolent, or lax in their efforts. If they wanted more, like him they must labor for it. The rest of his property, except what he needed to support him in old age, was employed in objects of benevolence.

This is the more remarkable, as in his day it was the custom less than now, to promote benevolent enterprises. In this he was, as a good steward must always be, in advance of the times in which he lived. In large sums he bestowed more than eighteen thousand dollars ; and his

smaller offerings, here a little and there a little, to promote human welfare, are supposed to have been not less than eighteen thousand dollars more. He was one of the founders of the Hampshire Missionary Society; and he made himself, by his contributions, a life member of twelve benevolent societies; and, at a period when it was regarded as doubtful whether all the missionary societies in the country could support one missionary in a foreign land, he removed that doubt by a donation of one thousand dollars, which at that time was an almost unparalleled act of liberality.

In his charities he sought not the praise of men; he imparted from love to Christ and the souls for whom Christ died: he remembered how the Lord Jesus had said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He did it because he wished to be a faithful steward, both in doing good to those who are far off, and to those who are nigh.

He aided very many young persons in attending school, and others in acquiring a liberal education. He was fond of distributing Tracts when travelling, and within a few years circulated many volumes of the Evangelical Family Library. In the year 1814, he presented each of his children with a set of Scott's Family Bible, which cost him three hundred and sixty dollars. He left for the church and society of which he had so long been a member, a fund of three thousand dollars for the support of the Gospel in all coming time.

He made two wills at an interval of twenty-eight years, in which of course he appointed another as the executor, but he lived to be his own executor, paying his bequests, and settling his accounts to the uttermost farthing; so that, in fulfilling his last testament, nothing remained to be looked after when he was gone, but his wearing apparel, the large Bible, Scott's Family Bible, a Psalm Book, the case in which he had kept them, and the spectacles with which he had read them. Not a pound—no, not a penny, has been found hid in the earth or laid up in a napkin.

Such is a brief view of his stewardship in the use of his Lord's money. He obeyed the command, "Occupy till I come." He was not weary in well-doing; but was steadfast, abounding unto the end. The writer of this recollects hearing him say, not long before his death, to a merchant who thought of buying his wool, "You must give me for it what it is worth, for, if you do not, you will defraud the Lord; it is his, and what I receive for it is to be placed in his treasury."

It is refreshing to find a man in this lost and selfish world with a just and generous heart. It is delightful to find among the stewards of God, as all men are, one who feels the force of that relation, bows to its claims, fulfils its duties, and receives the crown of the faithful. We rejoice that so many of the dead leave behind them a blessed memorial; that light gilds their track, and that we may speak of them as being in heaven, with the feeling that they are in their appropriate sphere. "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." What a gracious and glorious reward!

Colonel Mack was not too faithful. He did not do too much for the Saviour who died for him. He felt that he had done too little, that he merited nothing, that he was saved by grace. His hope was in Christ, and in him alone. This is evident from his letters already noticed, and the same feeling attended him till he finished his course.

His eldest son, speaking of a visit made him a year or two before his departure, says, "As I was about to take leave of him, he took me by the hand and said, 'My son, I may never see you again in this world. I wish you to pray much for me, but do not pray that I may live any longer. I have lived long enough in this wicked world.' I asked him if he felt prepared to die? 'I think I do; I have no righteousness of my own; it would be just in God

to cast me off forever. If I ever get to heaven, it will be through the atonement that Christ has made.'

"At that interview he said, 'The Scriptures never appeared so precious as they now do. Every sermon our minister preaches is better and better. The society of Christian friends was never so precious. It seems a great part of the time that the Saviour is with me in my room, and communion with him is delightful. I have great enjoyment in my bed; when I awake in the night my Saviour is precious to me. I have not for a long time allowed myself to close my eyes in sleep, until my mind was in such a frame as I was willing to awake with in eternity.' He continued in the same state of mind most of the time until he died. His end was peace. He left the world, relying solely on the merits of Christ for acceptance with God."

Such is a brief and imperfect sketch of a steward "found faithful;" a man remarkable for a pious and venerable ancestry; early trained in the way he should go; himself ruling well, and religiously instructing his children, and others under his care; improving his mind, with almost no instruction, till he became wiser than his teachers; from nothing to begin with, accumulating an estate, and at the same time quietly dispensing it like the light and the dew—thousands on thousands in the broad deep river, and in the small rain on the tender herb; owing no man anything but love, (unless others preferred that he should be in their debt,) for he never once said, "Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give," when he had it by him. His policy was honesty; and his integrity firmer than the granite of the mountains on which he lived: that has been *blasted* and *moved*—his integrity never. He was a man of stability, always in his place every day, as he was on the Sabbath day, for fifty-four years, regularly in the same pew in the house of God!

And after all was done, his hope was in Christ alone. He felt himself to be nothing but a sinner saved by grace;

and like Paul, preëminent among sinners so saved, as being chief. His days were prolonged, not only while a thousand fell at his side, and ten thousand at his right hand, but while twenty-five hundred millions of our race died!

He lived till satisfied with long life. When his pastor asked him near its close, if his life seemed short, he did not say, like Jacob, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," but he said, "When I look at my life, taken as a whole it seems short, like a handbreath before me; but when I look at the gradual and astonishing changes which have taken place, and when I trace them from the commencement to the great result, and when I look at my posterity, my children's children, I almost feel that I have lived forever!"

Though his hearing was yet perfect, and his eye scarcely dim, and his natural force not much abated, he did not wish to live longer:—his days were full, his work was done, he chose to depart; "and he was not, for God took him." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

That it may be so, my friends, with you, live as he lived. Make the most of your various trusts. Save yourselves and your children from the way to ruin. Cultivate your minds. Let your influence be all on the side of virtue and religion. Devote your hearts and possessions to the service of God, and learn that the way to be stewards of more, is to "honor the Lord with your substance and the first fruits of all your increase." "Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house, and prove me herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And ye shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels!"

DIVINE GRACE ILLUSTRATED.

I FIRST became acquainted with Mr. G—— in 1840. He was at the head of a numerous and interesting family : a professed Universalist, a gambler, a drunkard, and awfully profane. He kept a large and splendid hotel in one of the county-towns in Pennsylvania. Circumstances led him to quit the public-house and the vending of intoxicating drinks, and engage industriously in mechanical business. In a revival of religion which occurred in the village during the spring of 1842, he and his excellent lady were hopefully converted. In a few months they publicly professed Christ, and in the presence of many witnesses were received into the church then under my care. The occasion was one of deep interest to the numerous audience, especially as they were well acquainted with his former character.

Previous to his being awakened, he treated the Bible with levity, and Christians with marked rudeness. As a friend and neighbor, I called to see the family when Mrs. G—— was evidently in a degree serious. The conversation took a religious turn. He was rude and insulting, while I expressed a trembling solicitude for his soul, and the fear that it would be lost—lost for ever. In reply to her inquiries respecting the interview, he afterwards said to his lady, “I thought I would try and get him angry.”

Soon after that visit, Mrs. G—— became more anxious for her salvation, and found peace in believing. Such was her joy, and such the preciousness of Christ to her, that she could not refrain from speaking *even to him* of the exquisite happiness she found in her Saviour ; and as he came in one day, she exclaimed, “Oh, Mr. G——, I have found the Saviour precious to my soul !” This was uttered with all the emotion of a bursting heart in its first love. He replied, “Have you ? I am glad of it.” He took his seat, and sullenly said within himself, “Ah, I’ll soon bring her about.”

As he returned to his business, he reflected upon the sen-

timent, "Ah, I'll soon bring her about;" and a feeling of self-condemnation, and *even horror*, came over his mind. His conviction of sin was truly pungent. A few days passed by. His wife felt that their neglected family must be called together for worship, and taking the opportunity when all were present, she proposed the subject to Mr. G——. The astonished and affected group were seated, and she read a chapter and expressed a wish that he would lead in prayer. The family bowed, and amid unutterable emotion and flowing tears, Mr. G—— offered supplications to that God whose name he had so often and so awfully profaned. Still, his anxious mind found no comfort. He studied the Bible, and prayed in secret. His mind was filled with anguish when he thought of the past, the present, and the future.

He went to meeting and listened to the Gospel, and on one occasion, opportunity being given for any one who might wish to speak, he arose, and with quivering lips and trembling voice, addressed the crowded audience to this effect: "Friends and neighbors, I fear that my day of grace is past. Oh what a sinner I have been. But if there is no hope for me, I would entreat you to attend to religion and prepare to meet God. Oh be in earnest to secure salvation." This was said with deep emotion and solemnity, and it came with peculiar power.

Soon after that memorable meeting, Mr. G—— found a calm and sweet peace in Christ. It was marked by no bursting rapture; but it was a deep, unostentatious love to God, to the Bible, to prayer, and to immortal souls. His life was the exhibition of a uniform, humble, all-pervading, amiable, decided piety. The change was *so great* that all could see, and even Universalists could not question the genuineness, sincerity, and excellence of his piety.

His disposition, naturally quick and fiery, became, by the grace of God, truly meek and patient. In this respect the change was wonderful. A fierce lion and a gentle lamb will express the contrast in his character. During the year after his conversion till his death, he was an ornament to the church. I frequently visited him in his last sickness. He highly prized the society of Christians and their prayers. Communion with a soul so ripe for heaven, as it was about to spread its pinions for the upward flight, was indeed a precious privilege. Fully sensible that his time had arrived, he

rejoiced to go from this world of sin to the immediate presence of his Redeemer above, where he should awake with his perfect likeness.

A little before he died, I inquired of him what were his feelings respecting *Universalism*. He said he never felt entirely satisfied with it—it was wrong—it was false. I learned that, previous to his conversion, he had twice prepared to take his own life. But grasping the weapon to give the fatal stab, he seemed to hear a voice saying, “Stay thine hand, for *eternal punishment may be a reality!*” And he could not commit the deed. Thus he was saved from ruin, and his family from the consequent agony. He offered most earnest and touching prayers in his sickness for a brother-in-law who was a Universalist preacher. Said he, “O that brother P—— could have my feelings on this subject.”

On the morning of his departure, he expressed a wish that he might see the rising sun in his bright beams before he should go to gaze upon the Sun of righteousness, and be ravished with the splendors of his noontide glories. He requested that Mrs. G—— would raise the curtain, that he might see the light. At first it was raised a little. He desired her to raise it still higher. She did so, and a strong light shone in upon him. “That will do,” said he, and in a few moments he slept in death. His “day-star from on high,” that precious hope inspired by the Gospel, went not down “behind the darkened west,” nor was it “obscured among the tempests of the sky.” No; but it melted “away into the light of heaven;” and I trust that his soul now shines, a precious gem, in his Redeemer’s crown.

In conclusion, let it be distinctly noted and remembered, that the subject of this narrative was not frightened into religion, nor was he thrown into a frenzy of excitement. His deep emotions and thorough change of life were the result of a conviction of sober, momentous truth, through the Spirit of God.

Others may be tempted to imbibe the sentiments which wellnigh brought Mr. G—— to a suicidal death, and from which he was twice rescued by an imagined voice from heaven, saying, “Stay thine hand, for *eternal punishment may be a reality!*” But our particular desires or beliefs respecting future awards will not annihilate the retribution

with which a righteous God threatens the impenitent. Its fearful reality is unchanged. "The soul that sinneth, *it shall die.*"

Blessed be God, salvation is freely offered, through Christ, to the chief of sinners. Believe on him, and thou shalt be saved. Oh salvation, ample, rich, glorious, eternal! All who will, may take the water of life *freely*. And, fellow-immortal, have you tasted that pure stream of life and love issuing from the throne of mercy? Oh, be in earnest to secure salvation for thy soul, thine immortal soul, compared with which worlds are valueless. Heaven speaks in melting tones, saying, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." And what, O what is the response of thine heart? Does it welcome a bleeding Saviour as the portion of thy soul; or does thine heart turn away with cold indifference from that glorious Redeemer who is the song and rejoicing of all the heavenly hosts? Ah, look upon the victim of the cross as he is fainting, and groaning, and dying, for the redemption of thy soul from eternal ruin; behold the sympathizing tombs bursting, rocks rending, and the heavens robed in mourning. And look, again, to a future judgment, and behold the worlds passing away with a great noise at his frown, and the elements melting with fervent heat, and reflect, What wilt thou do, and how wilt thou feel, when HE shall make inquisition for blood?

But he is now on the throne of mercy, waiting to be gracious. And wilt thou still trifle with his authority and love, his compassion and grace, and destroy thy blood-bought soul? If so, truly thou canst never reproach him with thy ruin. Nor will he alleviate the untold anguish of remorse which shall fill thy cup of trembling in eternity. O that you understood this; that you would consider your latter end. Look unto Jesus, who is exalted to give repentance and remission of sins. Believe in him, trust in his mercy, and obey his will, and you shall live for ever.

T H R E E W O R D S .

MR. F——, a merchant of C—— county, Pennsylvania, was accustomed to answer all who remonstrated with him on the sin and danger of his ungodly life by saying, that he only wanted, before death, time enough to say *three words, Lord, have mercy!* and all would be safe for eternity. A short time since, he was suddenly killed. He had turned a drunkard out of his store; and while both were greatly excited, partially intoxicated, and awfully profane, the drunkard seized a stone, and killed him on the spot. He breathed a few times after the fatal blow, but never spoke again. The three words which his blinded and foolish heart imagined would, like a charm, draw down the divine blessing, he was never permitted to utter.

Delay is dangerous, are three words which the providence and the book of God call on all prayerfully and seriously to consider. “Boast not thyself of to-morrow.” Who can tell what a day may bring forth? “The night,” the night of death “cometh, when no man can work” for eternity. This night you may die—this night the lamp of life may be put out. This night you may lie down on a bed from which you shall rise no more, till you are “carried out to be buried.” To-day, you may “inquire of the Lord,” and find mercy; to-morrow, your doom may be sealed, and the grace you have spurned be utterly withdrawn. It was the sad saying of a dying king, “I must now die before I begin to live.” Alas, for those who, when the hand of death is upon them, are far from the city of refuge; and even when an opportunity of uttering a cry for mercy is afforded, find, too late, that the grace they have abused is in justice withheld, and the door of mercy closed against them for ever.

As you would be happy here, and safe for eternity, *beware of delay*. Say rather, "What is to-morrow, that I should boast of it, or trust in it? It may perhaps be my neighbor's, but may never be mine. And what then? Shall I suspend heaven, eternity, the life of my soul, on an uncertainty? Can I lie down and sleep unconcerned another night, while God is my enemy; and when I know not but ere to-morrow dawns, the storm of wrath may burst upon me? Time enough to-morrow, to have the pollution of the soul washed away? Time enough to-morrow, to seek the repeal of my sentence of death, when this night the executioner death may do his office? Awake, O my soul, to a sense of thy danger. Plead for mercy. Flee from the wrath to come. The Judge standeth at the door."

And dream not that a dying prayer, a few deeds of kindness to your neighbors—your charity, your morality, will save you. No matter to what refuge you have fled, or on what plea you are depending, if you have not fled to Jesus, and sought shelter under his blood, all, all will be swept away with the lost soul, when the storm of God's displeasure breaks on a wicked world. Your refusing to believe the truths of the Bible, will not make them false. Your refusal to believe in the coming judgment, will not delay its approach. Why, O why, then, will you choose death? You may yet escape. *To-day*, if you will hear his voice, you are safe for eternity. O, harden not your heart. Sleep not another night in your sins. Their wages, their dreadful wages may, before to-morrow dawns, be the winding-sheet of your soul. Woe is me for you, if, covered with guilt, and in danger of eternal death, you yet turn away from the offer of mercy. Will you not humble yourself before the throne of the injured, insulted Lamb of God, and pray to him for your life, your soul's life? If you will not plead this night for mercy; if, after this warning in the name of a neglected God, you can lie down on your bed, without bending your knees before him, and supplicating

pardon through the blood of his Son ; then, to-morrow you may be left with a seared conscience, and your day of mercy ended—you may be where pardon will never be found.

But, dear reader, I hope better things of you ; and therefore, in the name of that God who will judge both you and me, I entreat you to hear his voice, saying, “ *Believe the Gospel.*” *Three words*, addressed to you now from your Creator and Judge, before whose tribunal you must soon answer for the manner in which you regard them. “ *Believe the Gospel,*” proclaiming peace and pardon by the Messiah, the eternal Son of God : believe in his name, rely on his righteousness, and receive salvation and eternal life, as the fruit of his purchase, and the free grace of God :

To obey this command of God is, to believe in the true and proper deity of the Lord Jesus Christ ; to receive him, and see the soul’s need of him in all his offices, as our Prophet, our Priest, and our King ; to see how, by his atonement, the claims of justice against the believing soul are blotted out, and the sentence of death cancelled. It is, to trust in him as the *only* Saviour ; to rely on him, as an *all-sufficient* Saviour, able to save to the uttermost, and his blood to cleanse from all sin. Acts 4 : 12 ; 1 John, 1 : 7 ; Heb. 7 : 25. You must rely on him as *your own* Saviour. A heartless belief that Christ died for others, will not save you. Devils and hypocrites have such a faith, and yet perish eternally. Bread will not nourish you, if you do not eat it. “ *Wine and milk,*” the blessings of salvation spread before you in the Gospel, will not save, if you do not yourself eat and live. “ *God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” John 3 : 16.

This giving of the Son of God by the Father, in the offer of the Gospel, warrants you to take Jesus as your own Saviour, your Lord, and your God ; and to say, “ *He loved me, he gave himself for me.*” Yes, on the ground of this gift, and the offer made by the God of truth, you may con-

fidently say, "I believe that I may thus take and appropriate Christ as my own Saviour: not because, by my repentance, or by any works of my own, I have merited this mercy; but because I am poor and miserable, ready to perish, and far from righteousness; and because Christ declares in his word, that *he died for such*. I believe this testimony; I am perishing with hunger; the God of mercy offers to all the bread of life, and I will not 'make him a liar,' by refusing to believe that he means me. The free offer of the bread of life to all, is warrant to me to take it, and live for ever—to eat, and never die. 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' I take him at his word: I have nothing of my own to merit his favor. 'Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.'"

Go to him in earnest and persevering prayer, that you may feel your need of an interest in Christ, and be enabled to cast yourself wholly on his mercy; renouncing all dependence on your own righteousness for pardon; fleeing from all other refuges, as utterly vain, to him who alone is able and willing to give life and relief. Do you say you cannot ask, you cannot pray aright? The Bible tells you, yea, commands you to go instantly to Jesus; to receive and rest on him; and with him the Holy Spirit will be given—yea, faith, repentance, love, and every saving blessing. All are the purchase of the blood of Christ: all are free gifts—gifts, God for Christ's sake only will bestow—gifts, thus given for the asking, free as the air you breathe—free as the running stream. Come, then, as one utterly worthless and helpless, to receive salvation as the purchase of the precious blood of Jesus: thus come to God, through the Son whom he spared not, and heaven is yours.

PROCRASTINATION.

IT was in the closing week of April that I visited a man about thirty years of age, upon whom consumption was just finishing its work. "I have sent for you," said he, "because time seems to be getting short with me. I suppose that I am a sinner, though whether worse than others, or not, I do not know: to be sure, I have run into almost every sin that a man could commit; so I may as well confess that I am a great sinner. I have been confined here ever since last May, and now I think it is nearly over with me—so I want you to prepare me for death."

"My friend," I replied, "no man can prepare you for death; but God can do it. I can pray for you, but this will not avail you, unless you pray for yourself. Listen to me, then, and I will endeavor to show you what your condition is in the sight of God, and the only way in which you can obtain salvation."

I then told him that all men have a sinful nature, and are wilful transgressors of the holy law of God; that they are, therefore, under condemnation, and righteously deserve to suffer; that it would be inconsistent with divine perfection to pardon sin, unless such satisfaction were given as would magnify the law and make it honorable; that no man could give such satisfaction on his own behalf, nor could it be given for him by another, unless he that gave it were both God and man; that for the Almighty to provide a Mediator who should "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," was an act of condescension of which man was altogether unworthy; yet "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," and that now they who come to God as guilty, condemned, ruined, and helpless sinners, casting themselves upon the merits of Christ, obtain forgiveness and a new heart; and this, although their sins were of the deepest dye; for "Jesus Christ is able to save,

even to the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

After endeavoring to unfold these interesting truths with all possible simplicity and tenderness, I prayed with the sick man, and left him to meditate upon the things he had heard. The next morning he died; and as I looked upon his lifeless remains, my mind was agitated by the question, Where is the departed spirit? "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" I saw in this man no deep conviction of guilt, no hatred of sin, no love of holiness; nothing but that desire for safety which may proceed from dread of punishment; and this so faint, that during eleven months' sickness he sought no ministerial counsel, until death was knocking loudly at the door. He erred exceedingly: while he had health, he neglected to serve God, and trusted to A DEATH-BED CONVERSION. Was he singular in this? -

It is the common practice of unconverted persons. He that puts off the commencement of a life of piety for any period, however short, puts it off until he may be on a bed of sickness, or even in the arms of death. Yet this is done by men in all their progress to the eternal world. The youth is admonished to remember his Creator, and he perhaps resolves to do it; but he puts it off until he has finished his course of study. Then, fascinated by worldly pleasure, he puts it off until settled in life; but he has then many cares, and his time is occupied; yet he hopes soon to have more leisure, and then to become a Christian. But as he advances in age, cares increase, and one postponement of this great work follows another, until the snow of winter falls upon his head, and even then he will look forward to the future, and hope that a death-bed conversion may suffice. At length he is prostrated by sickness, but it produces no salutary effect, and he goes on dreaming of time enough yet, until his spirit leaves the body, and the solemn realities of eternity force themselves upon his attention in all their terrific magnitude. "Procrastination is the thief of time," and while men thus lose their time, they lose their souls.

It is unwise. The more important any affair is, the more prompt should be the attention given to it. But here is an affair, as much more important than all others as eternity is longer than time, habitually neglected, and this under the vain delusion that another time may be more convenient than the present. But depravity strengthens by age, and the heart grows harder and less susceptible of impression, every hour that neglect is continued.

It is sinful. It is withholding from God the obedience due to him. It is perversely adhering to the service of Satan. It is criminally neglecting the great salvation that divine mercy has provided. By it, talents are abused, time is wasted, conscience is seared, the strivings of the Holy Spirit are resisted, guilt is increased, and wrath is treasured up "against the day of wrath."

It is dangerous. How do they who thus trifle with divine forbearance, know that, at a future season, God will grant them repentance unto life? I visited a young man whose days were evidently drawing to a close, but he mistook the shades of evening for passing clouds; and when urged to spend his few remaining hours in preparing to meet his God, replied, "You suppose that I shall die; but I shall recover, and there is time enough yet." About forty-eight hours afterwards he was sitting in an easy-chair, when his friends noticed a change in his appearance, and prepared to lay him on a bed. While thus employed, one of them asked him if he was prepared to die. He answered, "No," and it was his last word, for he died in their arms. I have visited persons in the flower of their days who have been infatuated by the like delusion, and died in a similar manner. Often have I visited the aged when about to die, and found that the habit of putting off was never more strong than then. Often have I visited the sick of different ages, and found them so insensible that they could neither converse nor unite in prayer; and often in that precarious state, in which calling their attention to any subject was strictly forbidden by their medical attendants.

Why do men act thus? Not because religion is a hard

service, for the yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden is light; not because it is gloomy, for its ways are pleasantness, and its paths are peace. Nor is it because God will not requite such conduct; for, upon those that persevere in neglecting salvation, he will, most assuredly, execute that sentence, "Because they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord; they would none of my counsel; they despised all my reproof; therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices." No: the reason why they act thus is, "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and that is the mind by which they are influenced.

What awaits them? They love not holiness, but perseveringly avoid it. Death will not reverse this state of mind, for then they that are holy will be holy still, and they that are unholy will be unholy still. In eternity, therefore, they cannot enjoy the society of God, or angels, or glorified spirits, for all these are holy; nor can heaven be their home, for its atmosphere is holy, and utterly uncongenial to their spirits. Holiness and happiness are inseparable, and so are their opposites. Unholy souls, therefore, must necessarily be driven away in their wickedness, far from God, far from happiness, and far from hope; while the reflection that they have been their own destroyers, will for ever add intensity to their sorrows.

Dear reader, *What are you doing?* Have you experienced that change of heart, without which you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven? If not, hazard no longer your eternal safety. Repent and be converted to-day, for to-day you may be saved. But delay not till to-morrow, for the Bible contains no promise that God will save you then.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

DANCING,

AS

A SOCIAL AMUSEMENT.

“GOOD-WILL towards men” is the distinctive and loveliest feature of the Gospel. Its original is far back in the bosom of eternal love. Its brightest illustration was seen in the life and death of Him who “is the image of the invisible God.” Its impress is upon every Christian heart, and that alone is truly a Christian life which exhibits it.

Natural religion, or pagan philosophy even, may require and forbid, to a limited extent, the same as the Gospel. But from this, their highest common level, rises clear and shining, as the golden tower from the dark, massive wall, the distinctive trait of our religion. A peculiar tenderness of regard to the welfare of others, distinguishes the religion of the Gospel from all other religions, and the true from the false disciple. When this feature is seen, the glory of the Gospel appears. When it is obscured, our religion, shorn of its peculiar excellence, sinks undistinguished in the darkness of false religions. Hence the frequency and earnestness with which the precepts of the Gospel harmonizing with this peculiarity, are urged.

“*Abstain from all appearance of evil,*” is one of them. Other religions may enjoin abstinence from evil: the Gospel, in the fulness of its “good-will towards men,” requires us to abstain from the *appearance* of it. Actual evil will injure ourselves; the appearance of it may injure others. Selfishness may restrain from self-injury; but in the self-denial of avoiding what might otherwise be proper, lest the appearance may injure another, is the purest benevolence. And the moment the Christian life fails to exhibit this, it is

lowered from its heavenly elevation to that of the mere moralist; the brightest gem is struck from the Saviour's crown, and the Gospel is presented to the world stripped of its distinguishing excellence.

"*Giving no offence in any thing,*" is a connected precept, pointing only to another development of "good-will towards men." But it is one of the most lovely and important. So close is the sympathy between Christian hearts, so pure and delicate the bonds which unite them, that he who touches them rudely, feels the vibration of sadness in his own bosom. No appeal so tests the genuineness of a Christian spirit, as that which comes from a brother beloved, yet grieved by us. And in no way is the religion of the Gospel exhibited in its surpassing excellence, more than by the carefulness it enjoins to avoid "*offence in any thing.*" Though "it must needs be that offences come," yet Christ sealed up the history of a false disciple by the solemn denunciation, "Woe to him by whom the offence cometh."

"*Let your light so shine,*" is another gospel precept laid along the whole Christian life, touching it at every point. So perversely susceptible is the impenitent heart to impressions against religion, so easily are its prejudices against those who profess it awakened, that the life cannot be too carefully guarded. Every eye is fixed upon it. As he who holds a torch is distinctly seen by the crowd who stand at a distance in darkness, so in him who is robed in a luminous profession, every movement is noticed. By it irreligious men will be drawn to Christ, or repelled from him. Hence the earnest injunction, "*Let your light so shine before men.*" It is for the good of those who behold. Every ray of it is to be directed to this single result, that they may "*glorify your Father which is in heaven.*"

What these precepts require, is just what the spirit of this world will not do. It will seek its own. Nothing save the spirit of Christ, in himself, or in the renewed heart, will

breathe such tender and self-denying regard for the feelings and welfare of others. But how brightly it shone in him. Never did he offend the pious sensibilities of the humblest disciple. Never did his example lead astray, or peril the soul even of his bitterest enemy.

How the same spirit illumined the life of Paul. When the question of eating things offered to idols arose, yielding personal rights, convenience, and gratification, how promptly did he say, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." Though it was not, in his estimation, in itself sinful, yet like his Master, "he pleased not himself," lest he should "hinder the Gospel of Christ." He would "abstain from the appearance of evil," would give "no offence in any thing;" and would and did let his "light so shine before men," as to evince the sincerity of his "heart's desire and prayer to God," that they might be saved.

Fellow-Christian, will you ponder these precepts of the religion you profess, and then follow me in the inquiry, whether the practice of DANCING, by CHURCH-MEMBERS, is consistent with the life of "holy conversation and godliness" they require.

1. Has it the "*appearance of evil*?" To this there can be but one honest reply. There is a remarkable confession made by those who advocate the amusement of dancing, when they plead that it is not *in itself* evil. That it has the appearance of it, is virtually admitted, in the very plea that it is in *appearance* only. Let this, then, its main defence, be admitted to the full: still, does there not remain, unjustified, the very thing which the spirit and letter of the gospel precept forbids? Why do Christians feel misgivings in the indulgence? Why shrink from the public gaze? Is there not herein the unspoken confession of an apparent inconsistency?

Take God's word in your hand as you go, and read,

“Be not conformed to this world.” Then enter the low haunt of revelry, or the private dancing-party, or the ball-room of the giddy and godless. Then suppose a number of devout and living Christians mingle in the dissipating scene you behold. Stop, and muse a while. Think of the holy calling, the professed godly life of some you see there. Look upon those called the sons and the daughters of the Lord Almighty. Remember, that they have solemnly promised to “walk worthy of God,” who hath called them to his kingdom and glory. Take with you the most consistent Christian you know, or the most candid impenitent man. As you stand with them at the entrance to these scenes, will not the Christian be shocked, and the impenitent man ask, “What do ye more than others?” And can you shake off the conviction from your own conscience, that there is at least the “appearance of evil;” and as such, that it is most expressly and solemnly forbidden by the religion you profess?

2. Does it *give offence to Christian brethren?* Without an inquiry of them, we might safely reply. But we have their own full testimony. Were it only the few, and these the weakest of the flock, who are grieved, still it would indicate the mind of Christ, and our duty, as those possessing “the same mind.” Hear his own words: “Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.” But not to the few merely, is the offence. “A voice as the sound of many waters,” is heard in reply. The great mass of the most worthy and devoted ministers and private Christians believe dancing to be utterly inconsistent with a profession of the religion of the Gospel. They are grieved, deeply grieved, that a few continue it.

The appeal is full of tenderness. It comes from those who mourn over the reproach of Zion. It comes from

broken-hearted parents, whose children have been drawn away from the fold of Christ. It comes from pastors, weeping over many a ruined lamb of the flock, the first step in whose downward course was taken in the ballroom or private dancing-party. Had the same appeal been made to Paul, what would he have done? If no evil, save in appearance only, yet, knowing the offence to Christian brethren, would he not have instantly resolved not to repeat it, "while the world standeth?" And on what principle can any Christian do otherwise? Can that be a renewed heart, on which the appeal falls powerless, and from which the loved indulgence repels it?

3. Does it *prevent the light of a Christian life from so shining as to lead men to glorify God?* God is glorified when the power and excellence of his grace appear. The artist is honored by every perfect specimen of his skill, and disgraced by that which is marred or tarnished. Every professed Christian is before the world as an illustration of what God's grace can do. If presented in a false light, He is dishonored. "Do all to the glory of God," is the grand direction of the renewed heart and life. Is this the design of dancing? Does the grace of God shine forth in the ballroom? Do its gayety and dissipation "show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light?"

God is glorified when, by a blameless example, fellow-Christians are kept from temptation, and led up to higher attainments in piety. It shows his own workmanship more perfect and lovely. But is such the influence upon those who follow you to the ballroom? If safe for you, may not the weaker, or the younger, fall into sin, started in their course by your example? This is a view of great solemnity. No man goes wrong in this matter, alone. He draws others with him, and they are generally those who need all the power of a better influence. Many a pastor's heart bleeds

to-day over the young and the inexperienced, thus fallen into the wiles of the destroyer.

God is glorified, when wicked men are forced to confess the great difference between a truly Christian life, and their own. The sentiment is utterly false, that partial conformity will secure the favor of the world. Men love consistency, and full well they know, that no other life is conformed to the Gospel, but that which is kept "unspotted from the world." Captain Wilson, of missionary memory, after his conversion, still lingered with his gay and wicked associates. He hoped, by partial indulgence in their pleasures, to conciliate their favor towards religion. But he soon learned his mistake. In the experiment he had offended God, and perilled his own soul; and what was the result? His associates only laughed him to scorn as a hypocrite, and despised his religion. "I see Christians most forward and eager in amusements," said a youth, as he lingered on the brink of apostasy. Hardened and repelled by the view, he plunged into the dark gulf—a specimen of many similar sad results from the same cause.

Irreligious men do, indeed, love to meet the Christian where his inconsistency will most fully appear. Every artifice is employed to draw him there. Great esteem towards himself, and an unusual tenderness of regard for his religion, are sometimes expressed. It is feared that his influence will be diminished, or that religion will be thought gloomy, if he declines what they call innocent recreation. But, like the traitor kiss, all is deceptive. The moment he yields, they exult over him as fallen. His light becomes darkness. Their diseased eyes are no longer pained by it. Conscience is quieted—prejudices strengthen—souls are ruined.

Fellow-Christian, in view of these results, you will not, you cannot hesitate for a moment, as to your duty. You have bound your soul to God, by a solemn oath, to conform your life to the precepts of the Gospel. Can you do it, as

you indulge in that which all confess has the "*appearance of evil?*" Can you do it by continuing a practice which Christian brethren "have told you often, and now tell you, even weeping," offends and most deeply grieves them, and by which your light can never "*so shine before men,*" as to lead them to "*glorify your Father which is in heaven?*"

To complete the view, only a single point remains to be noticed. A duty we owe to God, and expressly enjoined by him, is to be done, however it may be viewed by others, or whatever the probable results. Peter was to visit the centurion of Cesarea, though his brethren were offended that he went "*in to men uncircumcised.*" Abraham was to take the child of promise to Mount Moriah, though it appeared so unnatural, and the consequences so ruinous to the hope of Israel, and the kingdom of the Messiah. But in these and all similar cases, a duty was enjoined. God expressly commanded. The neglect would have been sin. Is, then, dancing a duty God expressly requires? Is there sin in neglecting it?

Two kinds of dancing are mentioned in the Bible. One was a *religious act*, expressive of grateful joy for some signal deliverance, and in the performance of which the sexes did not unite. See Exod. 15 : 20 ; Judg. 11 : 34 ; 1 Sam. 18 : 6 ; 2 Sam. 6 : 14 ; Psa. 30 : 11, and Jer. 31 : 4. The other was a *social amusement*, to which a religious service had been perverted ; and those were deemed vile and impious who indulged in it. Three instances are mentioned. The "*vain fellows,*" and shameless, to whom Michal alludes, 2 Samuel, 6 : 20. The irreligious families whose "*children dance,*" and who are represented as saying to God, "*Depart from us ; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*" Job 21 : 7-14. And finally, that scene of impieties which commenced with the dancing of Herodias' daughter, and ended with the rash promise of Herod, and the murder of John the Baptist. Matthew 14 : 6.

If, then, "a time to dance" is any thing more than a simple expression of joy in contrast with "a time to mourn," to which of these kinds of dancing does it refer? If to the first, it has no application to our inquiry. We are considering, not a religious service, but a social amusement. If it refers to the second, it cannot imply either a command or permission even; but is simply a declaration of what is done by men. It no more implies commendation, than the declaration, "a time to lose," does of the gambler's hazards, by which he loses all. But the very opposite is true. For the only instances of social dancing to which the Bible alludes, are so mentioned as never to indicate approval, but usually distinct disapproval. The propriety of it is left as little doubtful as that of Noah's drunkenness, or the causing a son or daughter "to pass through the fire to Moloch."

Instead of permitting, therefore, God's word pointedly condemns dancing as a *social amusement*. But if it were not so, one thing all confess: it is not a Christian duty, *the neglect* of which would be sin. That God does not forbid it, is the most for which any contend. And in this very plea there is the implied confession, that he does not require it. And if there is no sin in *not doing* what so obviously violates the precepts of the Gospel, and is so connected with evil results to others, must there not be sin in *doing* it?

By the performance of duty, a certain effect is produced upon the feelings of the Christian heart. By sinful indulgence a different effect is produced. Tell me, my brother, which of these effects follows from dancing? Have you returned from the place of

"Revelry, and dance, and frantic song,"

with a heart light, and full of sweet confidence in God? Have you then bowed in your closet devotions, assured of his approving smile? Or have you neglected, or hurried through them, as if conscious of the solemn mockery? Has your

heart shrunk from approaching God, until the vividness of the scenes in which you have just mingled has passed away? Have you found that "the end of mirth is heaviness?" Has any such effect resulted from abstaining from the indulgence? Which, then, is duty? Which injures, which benefits your own soul?

Chosen pleasures reveal the state of the heart. "Only let me be assured that one is truly religious," said an eminent divine, "and I will not object to his dancing;" so confident was he that a real Christian would have no heart for it. And is it possible, that one who abides in Christ, and is with him "crucified to the world," can indulge in that which is so hostile to the life of God in the soul? Like the fabled flower of antiquity, it may cause pleasant laughter upon the lips, but is at the same time conveying deadly poison to the vitals. It checks the current of the spiritual life, chills the affections, and tears the heart away from Christ. O, is it possible, that one in the robes of heaven should plunge down so low; that one who has tasted the joys of the redeemed, should ever again relish the frivolity and empty pleasures of the ballroom; that one who professes to labor "together with God," in the salvation of perishing souls, should do what is so hazardous to his own soul, and so certainly injurious to others?

Let us inquire, now, if it is consistent for Christians to teach THEIR CHILDREN that which is so inconsistent for themselves? The precepts of the Gospel are here also to be our guide. They are binding, not only in some relations, but in every relation you sustain. And not in a part merely, but in all these relations you are connected with the church of Christ. As a *Christian parent*, you are bound to Christ. In this very relation you are in covenant with Christian brethren. And not only is the church deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of your children, but the dearest interests of other Christian families will be vitally affected

by the manner in which you train your own. It is clear, then,

1. That what has the "appearance of evil" in yourself, will have the same appearance when allowed to your children. Although the indulgence be not your own, the approval of it is. If there is evil in the one case, there is in the other. For approval of sin, is sin. So it appears to Christian brethren. So it appears to their children. So it appears to other parents, who profess to be bound by no such holy precepts as you acknowledge. Some of them fear to follow with their children, where you lead yours. They cannot believe that dancing is any part of "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." O think, Christian parent. Pause, and pray long and earnestly, and you will never consent that a child of yours shall be seen in the ballroom. "*Their children dance,*" is a characteristic, not of Christian families, but of those asking, "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?"

2. Brethren are grieved, when you teach your children that which grieves them when done by yourself. It may affect them even more deeply. Their families may be influenced more by the example of your children, than by your own. What can inflict a deeper wound upon a Christian father's heart, than your allowance of sinful amusements to your family? His children point to it in their importunity. They tell him that you are a church-member. He must yield, or, by refusing, be compelled to seem severe and bigoted. He must be silent, or reply that your example is unworthy a Christian parent. This is the torturing dilemma into which you bring other parents. Some have yielded, and fallen into sin. Others have stood firm, while their children have broken away from parental control to follow yours, and been ruined.

O could all the sorrows of a single mother's heart be whispered in your ear—or could you follow a single youth,

led thus into temptation, entering this outer edge of the whirlpool, to be borne in narrower and swifter circles, until he plunges down the boiling centre, and disappears for ever, you would understand why a parent's heart so pleads with you now.

3. That which prevents the light of a Christian life from so shining in you as to glorify God, will do the same when taught to your children. Your example is to be not only that of a Christian, but that of a *Christian parent*. Training your household in the fear of God, should be one of the brightest rays of that light which is to "shine before men." In nothing does the grace of God more distinctly appear. In nothing can it be more easily obscured. Through you it is to shine for the guidance of other parents and households. But is dancing any part of the "nurture and admonition" the grace of God teacheth? Does not the most thoughtless trifler with things divine, know the ballroom to be a place preëminently "without God?" Do not its scenes glare out upon the world, as destitute of any thing Christian as the most godless could wish?

But when all this is admitted, one plea remains. It is said, that when more privately done, the evils of dancing are avoided. Were this true, can it be so done? However privately begun, can it be kept so? Are not its outward tendencies sure? The flame may be concealed when first kindled, but it will burst forth unless speedily extinguished. Set up a theatre in your own dwelling, and will not your children, true to the vitiated taste you have nourished, seek more public gratification? Indulge them in the social glass at home, and will they not seek it elsewhere? So the social dancing-party is the private entrance to all the dissipation of the ballroom. How often, by this deceptive process, do parents draw forth a passion they cannot control, and which, "when it is finished, bringeth forth death." When will they learn, that the *end* over which they mourn, is but the

natural consequence of the *beginning* they approved. It is like giving your children poison, and then weeping in bitterness over them as they are seen sick and dying

How many are pained that their children are so thoughtless of God. But why should they not be thoughtless? What are the influences thrown around the youthful heart, just when there is most hope of its being drawn to Christ, and yet most danger of its being hopelessly hardened? How are all the thoughts engrossed in preparation for the gay assembly. What feverish excitement while in it. When it is passed, how is the heart sealed against serious reflection. By a succession of these scenes, though separated by long intervals, the choicest years of youth are wasted. The soul is ruined; for how often their probation and dances end together. By parental, but cruel indulgence, the process was commenced. The entrance was flowery, the end shrouded in eternal darkness. A parent who does this, seems like the heathen mother, pleasing her infant with flowers, that she may drop it a smiling, and therefore a more acceptable sacrifice, into the arms of the monster opening a fiery furnace within to consume it.

Christian parent, you know not what you do when you draw out the latent passion of your child for this amusement. It may soon spurn all control or persuasion. That of the gambler is not more insatiate.

“I was once called,” says an aged pastor, “to visit a young lady who was said to be *in despair*. She had, at some time previous, been serious, and had, it was hoped, resolutely set her face Zionward. In an evil hour, some of her former associates called on her to accompany them to a ball. She refused to go. The occasion, the company, the parade and gayety, were all utterly dissonant from her present feelings. With characteristic levity and thoughtlessness, they employed persuasion and ridicule; and finally so far prevailed, that with a desperate effort to shake off her con-

victions and regain her former security, she exclaimed, 'Well, I will go, if I am damned for it!' God took her at her word. The blessed Spirit immediately withdrew his influences, and instead of the anxious sigh, and longing desire to be freed from the body of sin and death, succeeded, by turns, the calmness and the horrors of despair.

"The wretched victim knew that the Spirit had taken his final leave: no compunctions for sin, no tears of penitence, no inquiries after God, no eager seeking of the 'place where Christians love to meet,' now occupied the tedious hours. Instead of the bloom and freshness of health, there came the paleness and haggardness of decay. The wan and sunken cheek, the ghastly, glaring eye, the emaciated limb, the sure precursors of approaching dissolution, were there. The caresses of friends, the suggestions of affection, were all unheeded. The consolations of piety, the last resource of the miserable, were to her but the bitterness of death. In this state of mind, I was called to visit her. When I entered the room, and beheld her pale and emaciated, and reflected that the ravages of her form *without* but faintly shadowed forth the wreck and desolation *within*, I was almost overpowered. Never had I conceived so vivid an idea of the woe and misery of those who have 'quenched the Spirit.'

"I proposed prayer. The word threw her into an agony. She utterly refused. No entreaties of friends, no arguments drawn from the love of God, or from the fulness and freeness of atoning blood, could prevail to shake her resolution. I left her without being able to find a single avenue to her heart, or to dart one ray of comfort into the dark bosom, which, to all human view, was soon to be enveloped in the blackness of darkness for ever. Never shall I forget the dreadful expression of that ghastly countenance, the tones of that despairing voice. The impression is as vivid as though it had been but yesterday. O that all the young, gay, thoughtless ones, who stifle the convictions of conscience,

and repress the rising sigh, and *dance* along the brink of utter reprobation and despair, would read, and lay to heart the warning." O that every parent would ponder the awful results of cherishing a passion in the youthful bosom, which may be used by Satan and wicked associates so fearfully to ruin the soul.

An eminent divine, of great experience in the work of God's grace, was accustomed to regard *the use of ardent spirits, and dancing*, as two of the influences most hostile to the soul. With great solemnity, he used to allude to the case of a young man, a leader in the ballroom. To shield himself from the influence of a revival, at the time in progress, he sought to multiply dancing-assemblies, and to draw others into them. But he could not escape God's *judgments*, if he could his *mercies*. He was suddenly laid upon a bed of sickness. Death seemed near. In awful distress, he begged for the mercy he had before despised. When thus borne down, hopeless of recovery, he seemed penitent, became exceeding joyful, and earnestly and solemnly warned his associates; and it was thought by pious friends a most remarkable case of death-bed conversion.

But unexpectedly he recovered. With returning health, his religion so rapidly disappeared, that the first thing he did was to persuade his associates to make arrangements for another ball. Godless as they were, they were shocked at the proposal. But his persuasion overcame their scruples. The evening came, and in the midst of the glare and revelry of its scenes, he fell to the floor as if touched by the finger of an offended God—was borne a raving maniac to his home, which he had scarcely reached, when death sealed up his history for the final judgment. The passion for dancing held firm yet concealed possession of his soul, even when death stood by, and friends supposed he had forsaken all. It had been cherished in early youth, had grown with his growth, and strengthened with his strength. O with what

agonies would parental hearts have answered our inquiry, bleeding at that hour over a ruined child! Reader, may God in infinite mercy spare you from such experience; but *will he*, if you allow your children in that which produced it?

Had that youth died when joyful in a false hope, his passion would have been developed in eternity, beyond our sight. But God spared him, that it might be done here—a solemn warning to parents who cruelly allow a passion to be cherished in their children, which first deceives, and then throws its chains of darkness around the soul for ever.

Now, professed disciples of Jesus, our appeal is to you. The religion you profess has, for its distinctive feature, a tender regard for the good of others. As such, you are to exhibit it to the world by abstaining from the “appearance of evil,” by giving “no offence” to Christian brethren, and by the light of a holy example, *so* shining that God may be glorified. This you can never do by mingling with the world in an amusement which you must confess has the “appearance of evil,” which your brethren assure you, with tears, most deeply grieves them, and which so certainly is *not* done “to the glory of God.” It cannot be among things indifferent. If not a positive duty, the neglect of which would be sin, then the indulgence must be guilty, deeply and dreadfully so.

Beloved brethren, “Be not deceived.” Review the considerations which have been suggested, in your closet. Pray that God will direct you. If dancing be a duty, implore his grace to aid you in its faithful performance. Do you hesitate? Why? Is conscience in conflict with your desires? Are there misgivings in your heart? O pause, reflect. Will you deliberately do that in which you *cannot* ask God to bless you? Wait not until the temptation comes. But now, alone with God, before you turn your eye from this appeal, *decide*. Let it be now fixed, changeless—a decision which

will give present peace, and which shall come up in joyful remembrance at a dying hour.

Christian parent, let the heart of a parent plead with you, All the reasons for abandoning the sinful indulgence yourself, are equally clear in showing that you cannot allow it to your children, and be blameless. There is a higher and holier than natural affection. What more dear to us than the souls of our children? What responsibility like this? The soul of your beloved child seems laid upon your own. With what sacred, guardian care, should it be protected from every poisonous influence. The young know not the danger of slight beginnings. We do. And shall we cruelly leave them to wind around themselves the soft and silken web, which may harden into bonds of iron upon the soul?

But you hope it will not end thus with *your* children. So have others hoped, who are now bowed down beneath parental sorrows. Will you, then, lead your children into temptation, in the presumptuous hope that God will save them from it? O plant not thus your dying pillow with thorns. Will you, as you are dying, regret that your children have been no more faithfully trained to the dance or ballroom? Or, as you close the eyes of a beloved child in death, will you have bitter reflection in the remembrance that he has been guarded from all these ruinous influences? O say, will not all your *sorrows* have a different source, and your sweetest consolation come from this? O then be wise—wise for *yourself* and wise for your *children*. Let your authority and affection as a parent encircle them. Herein is a saving influence God has intrusted to your hands. Be faithful to your children now. They will hereafter rise up and call you blessed for it; and your decision to-day may be among your most precious remembrances, when Christ shall present them, with you, “faultless before the presence of his glory, with exceeding joy.”

POOR WILLIAM.

THE grace of God is displayed no less in the depths of poverty and ignorance to which it descends, than in the higher walks of life of which it forms the brightest ornament. This truth has a pleasing illustration in the following narrative of WILLIAM PHINNEY, who was born in Lebanon, Connecticut, about the year 1740; and whom, though more than a century has since elapsed, the writer well knew.

He was lame and deformed, and could never stand upright or walk unless supported by two staves. His parents were poor; he had not strength of limb to use the implements of husbandry; he could scarcely express himself so as to be understood by strangers; and his mind and memory were so weak, that all efforts to teach him to read were unavailing. He was cross, intractable, mischievous, perverse. He seemed almost destitute of reflection, or consciousness of right and wrong: he gave way to an uncontrolled appetite, whether for food or strong drink; he often used the most profane, obscene, and opprobrious language; and thus exhibited without restraint, and in its most fearful aspects, the native depravity of the human heart. He gave no indications of religious influence on his mind, or any just apprehension of God, or the future world; and could be controlled only by the fear of corporal punishment.

Young children, who were weaker than himself, it was his pleasure to annoy, by attempting to run after them, or throwing sticks or stones at them; so that he became a terror to those sportive and happy groups, which so often give life and joy to the family and the social circle. Few human beings, probably, have had less in them that was attractive or hopeful as to the present or the future world. Thus poor William continued till near middle life, loving no one, beloved by no one, deformed in soul and body, and verifying that

appalling description of the apostle, "hateful and hating one another."

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?" "Then may they also do good who are accustomed to do evil," and, by the power of superabounding grace, vile, degraded William may yet "shine above the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."

A little before the war of the revolution, when the state of religion throughout the country was generally low, the presence of the Holy Spirit was enjoyed by the people among whom William dwelt; many promising youth were brought to Christ, and in the fervor of their love and joy they sometimes, between the public exercises of the Sabbath in summer, gathered under the shadow of a tree near the house of God, where they conversed, read, and sung hymns of praise. One day poor William, who generally attended the sanctuary, strolled in among them; and the Holy Spirit there reached his heart, arousing his conscience, alarming him on account of his sins, and drawing his attention to the concerns of his soul.

His feeble mind, which never before was known to be permanently affected by any thing that did not appeal directly to his senses, now became fixed on the subject of his salvation and preparation to meet his final Judge. Terrified in view of the wrath of God, and of his own dark and hopeless condition as a sinner, he earnestly implored instruction; nor was he satisfied with any thing until Christ, the great atoning sacrifice for sin, the "one mediator between God and man," was clearly set before him. His pastor spared no pains to pour the simplest gospel truths into his dark mind; and most evidently that blessed and invisible Agent who awoke his conscience, led him by faith to the crucified Redeemer, and thus gave peace to his troubled spirit.

From that time no profane or irreverent language escaped his lips; he was no longer perverse and mischievous; he was now easily controlled in respect to the evil habits he had formed, and became submissive and gentle as a child. He

feared and loved God. Nothing delighted him more than to hear Christians talk of Christ, the riches of his mercy, and all he has done to save lost men. His wild countenance assumed a milder aspect; his temper became peaceful and happy, and little children flocked to him, and delighted in him as a companion in their harmless sports. The transformation was observed by the older and more discerning with astonishment, for they saw in him marked evidence that he had indeed become "a new creature in Christ Jesus."

It was at first doubted by some, whether one so weak in mind should be received into the church; but he publicly professed his faith, and was admitted to full communion. He showed a peculiar love to the people of God; and when he learned that others were seriously inclined, would visit them, and inquire after their state with a simplicity and seriousness often truly affecting. His faithful pastor was especially endeared to him. Hearing of the good man's death, William, though then some miles distant, hastened to attend the funeral, accosting the mourning son of the deceased, whom he met at the door, in this singular language: "They tell, Mr. S—— dead—I be glad on't:" that is, he rejoiced that he had "kept the faith," "finished his course," and gone to receive the "crown of righteousness reserved for him against *that day*."

William's Christian walk was generally consistent. In a few instances he was known to exhibit a wrong temper, but his sorrow for it was most sincere. On one occasion, before the present principles of total abstinence from intoxicating drinks prevailed, a designing young man, being alone with him, gave him a sweet mixed liquor, by which he was intoxicated. When he came to himself, and knew what had been done, he cried and wept bitterly, and gave the most satisfactory evidence of true repentance before God and man.

Generally, he was happy in the enjoyment of God and the anticipation of heaven. Sometimes he was clouded with fears and temptation, but he would say, "The devil come, pick me all to pieces—I cry—pray—pray hard to my blessed

Master—the devil then go away.” Thus William pursued his course till advanced years, when the Master called him to sit down in his kingdom.

An aged pastor, Rev. S—— B——, in whose father’s house William long resided, says, “I well remember this poor, rich man. What I have seen in him and heard from his lips, showing his love to every one who he thought loved Christ; his love to the word of God, though he could not read it, and to the house and the ordinances of God; his reverence for the names of God and the titles of Christ; and his interest in every case of the hopeful conversion of a sinner, were such as carried conviction to my mind and heart that he was one of the most wonderful instances of the power of divine grace. Notwithstanding the deformity of his person, there was a sweetness in his voice when he spoke of sin in himself, or of the Saviour, or the Bible, of his pastor or other Christian friends, of the ordinances of God, or of heaven, which carried demonstration, both to the friends and enemies of Christ, of the reality of his conversion from the love of sin to the love of holiness.”

Can deniers of the Bible, and of those truths distinguished as *evangelical*, produce, in all their annals, such an example of moral elevation as was effected in poor William? Did Deism or Universalism ever work such a change? Such results are effected only by the word and Spirit of God.

Is the reader, with all his superior advantages, living “without hope and without God in the world?” Let not poor William stand in the judgment a witness against you. “Christ” must be formed “in you the hope of glory,” you must trust his merits and receive him into your heart, or to that blessed world where poor William is uttering the praises of Jehovah, and is exalted in splendor far more bright than ever clothed an earthly monarch, you can never come.

[Prepared by Rev. TIMOTHY STONE, Cornwall, Connecticut.]

BEWARE OF BAD BOOKS.

WHY, what harm will *books* do me? The same harm that personal intercourse would with the bad men who wrote them. That "A man is known by the company he keeps," is an old proverb; but it is no more true than that a man's character may be determined by knowing what books he reads. If a good book can be read without making one better, a bad book cannot be read without making one worse.

Lord Bacon makes the pithy remark, that "In the body there are three degrees of that we receive into it, aliment, medicine, and poison; whereof aliment is that which the nature of man can perfectly alter and overcome; medicine is that which is partly converted by nature and partly converteth nature; and poison is that which worketh wholly upon nature, without nature being able to work at all upon it: *so in the mind, whatsoever knowledge reason cannot at all work upon and convert, is a mere INTOXICATION, and endangereth a dissolution of the mind and understanding.*"

Bad books are like ardent spirits; they furnish neither "aliment" nor "medicine"—they are "*poison.*" Both *intoxicate*—one the mind, the other the body; the thirst for each increases by being fed, and is never satisfied; both ruin—one the intellect, the other the health, and together, the soul. The makers and venders of each are equally guilty and equally corrupters of the community; and the safeguard against each is the same—*total abstinence from all that intoxicates mind or body.*

Here we have a definition of what we mean by "*bad books:*" whatever books neither feed the mind nor purify the heart, but *intoxicate the mind and corrupt the heart.* Works of science, art, history, theology, etc., furnish "aliment" or "medicine:" books of fiction, romance, infidelity, war, piracy, and murder, are "*poison,*" more or less diluted, and are as much to be shunned as the drunkard's cup. They will "bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder."

Books of mere fiction and fancy are generally bad in

their character and influence. Their authors are commonly bad men, and wicked men do not often write good books. A stream does not rise higher than its fountain. Their principles are often corrupt, encouraging notions of chivalry, worldly honor, and pleasure, at war with the only true code of morals. They insult the understanding of the reader, by assuming that the great object of reading is amusement. The *effects* are such as might be expected. Familiarity with popular fiction gives a disrelish for simple truth; engenders a habit of reading merely for amusement, which destroys the love of sober investigation, and blasts the hope of mental improvement; renders scientific and historical reading tedious; gives false views of the perfectibility of human nature, thus leading to disappointments in the relations of life; and dwarfs the intellectual and moral powers, except the imagination, which is rendered morbid and unhealthy by constant excitement. The Bible becomes a wearisome book; spiritual classics, like those of Baxter, Bunyan, Flavel, and Doddridge, though glowing with celestial fire, become insipid and uninteresting; and the influence of the pulpit is undermined, by diverting the attention from serious things, and lessening the probability that truth will take effect upon the conscience; or if it does for a time, the bewitching novel furnishes a ready means of stifling conviction and grieving away the Spirit of God. A merchant in H. was under conviction for sin, during a revival of religion. A pious friend called, and, to his surprise, found him engaged in reading a worthless novel. To his remonstrance against such trifling, he replied, "I'm so interested in this book, I must finish it; and *then* I will attend to the affairs of my soul." He finished the book. He attended to the concerns of his soul—never! Thousands have perished by similar seductive influences.

Beware of the foul and exciting romance. All that is said above will apply with tenfold intensity to this class of reading, for which it paves the way. The writer of modern romance chooses his scenes from the places of debauchery and crime, and familiarizes the reader with characters, sentiments, and events, that should be known only to the police. Licentious scenes and obscene imagery are unblushingly introduced, and the imagination polluted by suggestions and descriptions revolting to the pure in heart. "*Public poi-*

soners" was the title long since justly given to writers of this class. It was lately testified in open court, by the father of one whose guilty course has brought ruin upon herself, disgrace upon her family, and death upon her lover, that all was occasioned by his daughter's "reading the impure works of Eugene Sue and Bulwer." To yield to such a hellish charm, is like the voluntary sacrifice of one's body and soul on the drunkard's altar. *Mental delirium tremens* is as sure a consequence of habitual intoxication from such reading, as is that awful disease the certain end of the inebriate. Beware of it!

Beware of infidel books, and of all writings which ridicule the Bible. You will meet them, with a more or less guarded avowal of their object, in the newspaper, the tract, and the volume. Infidelity is a system of *negations*; it is nothing—believes nothing—does nothing good. Beware of it, in whatever form it approaches you, as you value temporal happiness and prosperity, the peace of society, and eternal well-being. No man enters eternity an infidel.

Beware of books of war, piracy, and murder. The first thought of crime has been suggested by such books. The murderer of Lord William Russell confessed on the scaffold, that the reading of one such book led him to the commission of his crime. Another, who was executed for piracy, was instigated to his course by a book of piratical tales. The state-prisons are filled with criminals who were incited to crime by similar means. They stimulate the love of adventurous daring, cultivate the baser passions, and prompt to deeds of infamy. Away with them!

Do you still need to be persuaded to beware of the poison that would paralyze your conscience, enervate your intellect, pervert your judgment, deprave your life, and perhaps ruin your soul?

Beware of bad books, because if *you*, and others like you, *will let them alone, they will soon cease to be published.* Every such book you buy encourages the guilty publisher to make another. Thus you not only endanger your own morals, but pay a premium on the means of ruining others.

Beware, because *your example is contagious.* Your child, your servant, your neighbor, may be led to read what will be injurious for time and eternity; or not to "touch the unclean thing," as your example may prompt.

Beware, because *good books are plenty and cheap*, and it is folly to feed on chaff or poison, when substantial, healthful food may as well be obtained.

Beware of bad books, because *they waste your time*. "Time is money;" it is more—it is *eternity!* You live in a sober, redeemed world, and it is worse than folly to fritter away the period of probation in mere amusement. God did not bring us into being, and sustain that being—the Redeemer did not shed his blood a ransom for our sins—the Holy Spirit has not bestowed upon us the book divine, that we might flit from flower to flower like the butterfly, neglecting all the ends of rational and immortal being, and go to the judgment mere triflers.

Beware of bad books, because principles imbibed and images gathered from them *will abide in the memory and imagination for ever*. The mind once polluted is never freed from its corruption—*never*, unless by an act of boundless grace, through the power of the Spirit of God.

Beware of them, because *they are one of the most fruitful sources of eternal destruction*. They are read in solitude. Their ravages are internal. Foundations of morality are undermined. The fatal arrow is fixed in the soul, while the victim only sees the gilded feather that guides its certain aim. He is lost, and descends to a hell the more intolerable, from a contrast with the scenes of fancied bliss with which the heart was filled by the vile, though gifted destroyer. The precious book of life was given to show you how you might secure the enrolment of your name among the saints in light; but you chose the book of death, with present fascinations of a corrupt press, and the surest means of securing a dreadful doom. If your epitaph were truly written, the passer-by in —— graveyard would read,

"M—— ACQUIRED A TASTE FOR READING BAD BOOKS, DIED WITHOUT HOPE, AND 'WENT TO HIS OWN PLACE.'"

Shall this be your epitaph, dear reader? If not, make this pledge before God: "*Henceforth I will beware of bad books, and never read what can intoxicate, pollute, or deprave the mind and heart.*"

THE
SPIRIT OF CHRIST,EXEMPLIFIED IN LABORS FOR THE CONVERSION OF
THE WORLD.

OUR blessed Lord, when on earth, collected around him a little band of disciples, whom he instructed in the things of his kingdom, and imbued with his own spirit, and to whom, when he left the world, he gave this explicit command: *Go ye, and disciple all nations.*

They went forth at his bidding, and labored faithfully to fulfil this command of their Master; and by his blessing on their efforts, they greatly increased the number of his disciples. These again prosecuted the same object, and from that time to the present, though at some seasons the number of these disciples has been small, and their influence limited by their want of faith and zeal, there always have been some who have loved their Divine Master and his cause, and who have, with more or less diligence, labored in their appropriate work of fulfilling his command.

To this company of disciples, you, my brother, profess to belong. You say, by your Christian profession, that you are a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ—that you have been bought with his blood, sanctified by his Spirit, and justified by his grace. You acknowledge that you “are not your own,” that you have been “bought with a price,” and that you are bound to “glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are his.” You admit the entire conclusiveness of the Apostle’s reasoning, when he says, “We thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.” And you further admit, if you have understandingly assumed the station and responsibilities of a disciple of Christ. that the command,

“Go ye, and disciple all nations,” is binding on you, to the extent of your influence and means. To be devoted to the service of Christ, you have, in your public profession of religion, given a solemn pledge. And now, if your pledge was an honest one—if your profession, in your own view, means any thing—you frequently inquire, *How shall I show the spirit of my Saviour, in labors and sacrifices for the conversion of the world?* To answer this inquiry is the object of this Tract.

1. If you would *show* his spirit, you must *HAVE* his spirit. Your first care relates to the state of your own heart. The spirit of benevolence, of love to God and love to man, must have a home in your own bosom. This was the distinguishing trait in the character of Christ, while he was on earth; and if you would be his follower, and manifest his spirit, you must be like him in this respect.

You must cultivate *a deep and thorough acquaintance with the Bible*. This holy book must not only be read, but studied. Its language, thoughts, and spirit must become the food and delight of your own soul. Thousands of professed Christians read the Scriptures as though they read them not. They pass their eye over the pages of the sacred volume, but do not think intensely on what they read—do not drink long and full draughts at this fountain of truth and holiness. By such reading you will never attain or cherish the spirit of Christ. There must be a searching for truth as for hid treasure. There must be a “thirsting for God, for the living God,” while consulting his word.

A spirit of prayer must be maintained. Jesus was a man of prayer; and no man can possess and exhibit his spirit, who does not, in this respect, imitate him. If you would honor him, and be useful in his work, you must hold habitual communion with him in prayer. Your closet must be the place where you gain strength to maintain your spiritual conflict, and fight the battles of the Lord. There, under His view, and with His help, you must gird on the armor,

and prepare yourself to maintain and promote His cause. Never, no, never neglect your closet. If you fail here, you will fail everywhere.

2. *Let your EXAMPLE be such as to impress on others the conviction that you are honest in your religious profession.* The great influence of example all admit; and yet, probably, few professed Christians are aware how much *their own* example is concerned in advancing or hindering the progress of religion on earth. The force of example is the great power which the professed disciple of Christ wields, either in building up or subverting the kingdom which he professes to love. And every member of the Christian church, whatever may be his station, wields this power with present and eternal effect, on the destinies of the immortal souls around him. By it he contributes, with a direct and powerful energy, to form their characters and put the stamp of eternal salvation or reprobation upon them. If you would show the spirit of the Saviour, and build up his kingdom, your example must be *good*.

It is not enough for you to know that your example is not directly and positively bad; that no immoralities are allowed to cleave to you in your conduct and intercourse with your fellow-men. If your notions of morality are indistinct and loose; if your conscience can easily tolerate a departure from the rules of strict integrity in your dealings with others; if you manage your worldly business on worldly principles and maxims, and allow yourself, because others do, to pursue a course which your conscience does not approve—*what do you more than others?* In such a case, it is not only certain that your example is not good, and that you will not advance the Saviour's cause by the most powerful means you possess; but it is clear, also, that your own soul is in danger, and you have fearful reason to apprehend that you are a stranger to the spirit of Christ, and have no part in his salvation.

If you would show the spirit of Christ in efforts to con-

vert the world, your example must be positively good. It must be healthful on those who feel its influence. In your spirit and movements you must exhibit a pattern which it will be safe for others to imitate. Unless this is true of your example, you will not do what you are bound to do, and what you have promised to do, in extending the Saviour's kingdom.

Are you at the head of a family? Your first duty, in endeavoring to show the spirit and do the work of the Redeemer, is to set before your household a visible pattern of Christian life. In the domestic circle, the influence of your example will be first and most powerfully felt. The companion of your life, the children of your love, and the inmates of your dwelling, will see and feel, and, to some extent, imitate your example. The prattling child whom you dandle on your knee, or who plays about the room in seeming thoughtlessness, while you, in the unrestrained habits of the domestic circle, are showing the ruling temper of your life, will soon catch something of its parent's spirit, and feel the effects of your example. And your children from six to twelve years of age, cannot be deceived respecting the ruling principle of your life. They may not be able to analyze your motives, or to describe the attributes of your character, but they *feel* the influence of your example. They feel whether your treasure is in heaven or on earth. They feel whether your religion consists in mere family devotions and a regular routine of services performed at stated intervals, or is carried into all the business of life, and is the ruling principle which controls all your conduct. They may not be able to say whether or not you are a true Christian; but they will *feel*, in the influence on themselves, whether you are a true Christian or not.

Let the child see that his parents are worldly-minded, frivolous, or pleasure-loving; let him see that their conversation, plans, pursuits, and solitudes, are respecting the things of time; let him see little or none of the spirit of

religion breathed forth in the domestic circle, or in the daily business of life ; and let him see that the religion of his parents consists in some forms of worship at stated seasons ; and the tendency of their example will be, to make him either a religious formalist or a careless scorner.

Quite a different influence from this must your example, my brother, exert on your household, if you would show the spirit of the Saviour in efforts for the world's conversion. Your children must be made to know and feel that the high and controlling purpose of your life is to honor Christ and save the souls of men. They must learn this from what they see of your spirit and plans and movements. They must learn it from your prayers, your conversation, your doings. They must learn it from the papers and books which you furnish them to read ; from the manner in which you employ your time ; from the object which you hold up before your own view and their view as the *end* of your industrious attention to your secular business ; and from the manner in which you dispose of your property. Your example must be such that, if your children should embody their thoughts in language, they would say, " Our parents labor industriously, live economically, and deny themselves—not to hoard up wealth for our use when they are gone ; not to aggrandize themselves and us, by endeavoring to outshine our neighbors in the elegance of our dress, or the splendor of our establishment ; not to afford us the means of living without industry ; but that they may do good in the world ; that they may educate us to be useful, and that they may have the means of contributing for the extension of the Saviour's kingdom."

You can impress such sentiments as these on the minds of your children ; and unless you do it, you fail in your duty ; you do not, where it is most needed, and where it will be most effectual, exhibit the spirit of your Saviour in efforts to extend his kingdom. The thing is practicable. And this, it may be repeated, is your *first* duty with reference

to the conversion of the world. Children, educated in this manner, will follow the footsteps of their parents, and be efficient agents in the world's renovation.

You are a member of the church. This relation you sustain, whether you are at the head of a family or not; and in this relation your example will be of incalculable benefit or injury to the cause of Christ. I say, it *will* be, for it cannot be otherwise. The spirit you breathe, the habits you adopt, and the course you pursue, will be felt by your brethren. Say not, as an excuse for any negligence in duty, that you are but one, and among the weakest. There never can be a member of a Christian church, whose example will not exert a direct influence on the state of the church, and, of course, on the cause of Christ. You have given a solemn pledge to walk with your brethren in a course of Christian duty; and to combine your influence with theirs in building up the kingdom of the Redeemer. See that you redeem this pledge, by setting an example which it will be safe for your brethren to follow.

On a certain Sabbath it is announced that your usual meeting for prayer is to be held on a specified day during the week. Arrange your worldly business so as to attend that meeting—and *always attend it*, whether it occurs monthly or otherwise. But perhaps you will say, "My worldly business presses, I cannot attend this week, I cannot attend habitually without a sacrifice." So much the better. One reason why you ought to attend is, that it will cost you a sacrifice; and your example in being willing to make this sacrifice, is what your brethren need. It will do them good. It will show them that you expect your profession of religion to *cost* you something; and it will encourage them to do likewise.

But perhaps—if you are but half a Christian, as too many professors of religion are—you may ask, "What can be the harm in my staying away from the meeting?" Your minister will not be encouraged and animated by

your presence, when he wants to see all his flock together. Your Christian brother will notice your absence, and feel a degree of despondency. Your children or your associates will see, or think they see, that you care more for your worldly business or pleasure, than you do for the interests of the church and the salvation of the world. Your ungodly neighbors, who know that the meeting was appointed, will notice that you pay no regard to it, and their inference will be, that your profession exerts little control over you, that you are as worldly as themselves. Say not, then, that there can be no harm in your neglect to attend the meeting. Your example is seen and felt by many, in the church and out of it. Unless Providence prevents, you should *always* be present at the meetings of the church.

The season of the monthly concert of prayer is come. Do you purpose to attend it? Do you always attend? If not, you fail in duty, and are not doing what you can to exhibit the spirit of Christ, and to convert the world. Do you say that a determination always to be present, at these deeply interesting and important seasons, would subject you to some inconvenience and loss? Very well, so let it be. When you gave your solemn pledge to be a servant of Jesus Christ, and an agent in building up his kingdom, did you mean to do no more than what your worldly convenience would allow? Then you are dishonest, and are none of his. When you made your public vow to deny yourself, and take up the cross and follow Christ, did you not expect that it would *cost* you something to keep that vow? If you did, now there is an opportunity to show your sincerity, and to prove that you were honest in professing subjection to the Lord Jesus Christ. The monthly concert of prayer is one of the most important means for the conversion of the world. Unless prevented by Providence, you have no right to be absent from that season of special prayer for Zion's interests.

You should be present for your *example's* sake, that you may encourage your pastor and your brethren by the pres-

erence of one on whom they may rely as a persevering helper in the good work. You should be present for *your own* sake, especially if you are obliged to make some sacrifice to go, as it will teach you self-denial, warm your heart, and quicken your determination to be devoted to the cause of Christ. You should be present for your *neighbor's* sake, that you may take away from the ungodly the occasion of saying, "There is a professor of religion who cares nothing for the conversion of the world; for, while his brethren are together for prayer, he is eagerly pursuing his business."

Christian professor, remember that your example is seen and noticed and felt by many; by your family, your pastor, your brethren, and by the irreligious world around you. See to it, then, that you exhibit a good example. It must be good, or you do not show the spirit of your Saviour, in efforts to extend the influence of the gospel. It must be good, or you are false to your public pledges and covenant vows. It must be good, or you do, under the garb of friendship, traitorously betray the interests of Jesus Christ.

3. *Engage in systematic, zealous, and untiring EFFORTS to convert your fellow-men.*

Jesus "went about doing good." Are you a follower, an imitator of him? Then his example marks out the course of your duty. You must labor habitually and perseveringly to do good—to save the souls of men. By his labors, the Saviour conferred rich and everlasting benefits on the human family. You, my brother, though you are feeble, and though "without Him you can do nothing," must resolve, in his strength, that the world shall be the better for your living in it. There is no arrogance in this. Such a resolution may and should be made in full view and under a deep sense of your own insufficiency and weakness. Though you might adopt the language of the Apostle and say, I am "less than the least of all saints;" yet, with the same Apostle, you may say, "*I can do all things through Christ*

which strengtheneth me.” Determine then, looking up to him for aid, that the world shall feel your influence. Determine that, Christ assisting you, you will be instrumental in saving many of your fellow-men.

To prepare you for this work, reflect that Christ saves his people that they may *serve him*, not merely that they may *be saved*; not mainly that they may be happy in the world to come, and have a harp of gold and a crown of glory in heaven, though this, if they are faithful, is their sure reward; but he saves them that they may do his work, be his representatives among men, the instruments of saving others and of renovating the world. This is their appropriate business, and for this purpose, mainly, the Saviour calls them into his family. For this object you, my brother, have been called, if you are indeed a disciple. And your most solicitous inquiry should be, How shall I fulfil the purposes of my high calling?

Labor systematically. Place your object distinctly before your mind, and then pursue it with steady, undeviating purpose. Many professed Christians seem to act at random in whatever they do to promote the cause of Christ. They have no settled principles of action—no fixed purposes. They wait for some unusual impulse, and while they feel it, throw themselves into a course of Christian effort, and labor, it may be, very strenuously, but without plan or system, and of course with little good effect. When the impelling influence is removed, when the gale ceases to blow, they sink down again into listless inactivity; perhaps, into criminal backsliding. Such short and fitful efforts are the bane of Christian influence. They give an inconsistency to the character of professors of religion, which is the greatest obstacle to their usefulness and the world’s conversion. Be not like unto them.

Fix deeply in your mind that you are to labor constantly, earnestly; and do all you can for the building up of Christ’s kingdom. Then adopt your system, and lay your

plans accordingly. Christians operate in different spheres and departments; yours is one, and your neighbor's, perhaps, another. But each of you has an appropriate work. And there are duties devolving on all, to the discharge of which, if you would show the spirit of the Saviour, you must feel sacredly and irrevocably devoted.

1. *Labor for the conversion of your children.* This, if you are at the head of a family, is your first duty with reference to the world's conversion. I have already spoken of your example before your children. I now speak of your direct efforts for their conversion. Adopt it as a truth taught in the word of God, and corroborated by experience, that if you are faithful in this work, you may expect to be successful. Let your children see and know that you have this object in view. Let your conversation, your teaching, your prayers, your family government, show plainly what your object is. Let them see that your heart is set upon it, and that you cannot rest till they are brought into the fold of Christ. The means you adopt must vary in some degree with the age and circumstances of your children. Much kindness, care, and skill are necessary in selecting these means. But if your heart is unalterably fixed on the object, its promptings, guided by the word of God, will supply you with means and motives and persevering diligence. Never, never give up, nor lose sight of this object, till it is attained.

The Christian who is the instrument of saving his own children, and who forms them to be active agents in saving others, performs his first great duty towards the conversion of the world. He, in this way, not only exerts a present influence for Christ, by adding his own sons and daughters to the company of believers, but through them he extends his influence to succeeding generations; and many will hereafter regard him, not only as their natural progenitor, but as their spiritual father, through whose efforts they were made servants of Christ on earth, and joyful saints around his throne on high.

But if the professed Christian, by negligence or sloth, should fail in this work, as he is very likely to do, if, under some of the forms of religion, he trains up his children to seek their portion in this world, he begins, and takes measures to perpetuate, a mischief of incalculable amount and eternal duration. These partly Christian-taught worldlings often present a more brazen front and determined opposition to spiritual religion, than the children of irreligious parents. They are, in almost all communities, among the most formidable obstacles to the salvation of souls and the conversion of the world. They learned from their parents that a profession of religion did not mean much, that it might be held in connection with a worldly spirit and a heedless neglect of others' salvation; and now they are mere nominal Christians, exerting the same deadly influence themselves; or they live in utter neglect of religious duties, which parental influence led them to despise.

Christian parents, set your hearts on the conversion of your children. Pursue this object as your first business on earth; and pursue it till it is effected, or you die in the attempt. You will not, if your heart be full of this object, labor in vain. God will bless your efforts. His word says, *Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.*

2. Whether or not you have children of your own—whether you are young or old, your neighbors have children, many of whom need your efforts to bring them into the fold of Christ. *Engage, then, in vigorous and untiring efforts to save the children and youth of your neighborhood.* Have you a Sabbath school? Aid it constantly by a cheerful, stirring, energetic agency. Have you no Sabbath school? Then form one. Whether you are old or young, rich or poor, male or female, begin a school. If no one, at first, will assist you, and if you cannot get together more than two scholars, commence a school. In either case, stand always ready to act as a teacher, or as a visitor to collect

scholars, or as an agent of some kind, ever prepared to do any work to sustain these nurseries of Christian knowledge and piety. Labor either in or for Sabbath schools, as long as God gives you strength to do it. And labor directly for the conversion of the members of the school. You can bring some neglected child or wayward youth into the school. Do it. Then do it again, in another case. And say not that you have the spirit of the Saviour, unless you are willing to "go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that his house may be filled."

Remember, too, that there are thousands of children and youth within the limits of our extended country, who are not brought under the influence of Sabbath school instruction, whose welfare, though you cannot visit them personally, you can effectually promote. Combine your influence and efforts with others, to extend the blessings of these institutions to every city, village, and township of our land.

Engage, also, in other plans for the benefit of the rising generation. Exert your influence to have the *right kind of teachers* employed in common schools. Let any and every judicious plan for the intellectual and moral improvement of youth have your cordial approbation and your willing support.

In short, manifest the spirit of the Saviour in being devoted to the work of seeking the salvation of the rising generation. Deny yourself—as you are bound to do by the terms of your discipleship; engage in faithful and persevering efforts to spread the beauty of holiness over the youth of our country. Show yourself a Christian and a patriot, by your exertions for this purpose; and never omit them, till your Lord calls you into his upper kingdom.

3. Are there not many of adult age around you, with whom you have intercourse, who are living in a state of impenitence? *You are bound, by your allegiance to Jesus Christ, to make direct and continued efforts for their conversion.* What, my brother, are you *doing* for them? Do

you ask, What shall I do? *Speak* to them about their eternal interests. Urge them affectionately and earnestly to attend to the salvation of their souls. Do it repeatedly, and do it with a heart overflowing with anxiety on account of their carelessness, guilt, and danger. It may be—it has often been in such cases—that by these means you may awaken solicitude in their bosoms, and thus save souls from death.

Do any of your neighbors neglect public worship? Try to persuade them to attend. Afford them all the facilities for doing it that you are able to do. Offer them a seat, and sit in the aisle yourself, if there is no other place for you. At any rate, do something to get reluctant individuals into the house of God, and thus to save the dying souls around you.

When you take a man into your employment, make it an invariable condition that he regularly attend public worship. Have no such arrangements in your dwelling as to prevent your household from going habitually to the house of God. Go without your dinner on the Sabbath, rather than keep any of your family employed in cooking. And if you are a wealthy man, and ride to church in your carriage, let it be so arranged that your coachman may attend the public service. If this cannot be done, then go to your place of worship on foot. Never keep a being, *who has a soul*, away from public worship, to contribute to your temporal comfort, unless you are sick upon your bed.

Not only converse privately with your impenitent friends and neighbors, and urge them to love and serve God, but go also, at least once a week, with one or two of your brethren, and hold a meeting for prayer and conference among those who are living estranged from God. Here collect as large a number as you can, and talk and pray in such a manner that they will believe you are in earnest for their salvation. This can be done. This must be done far more extensively than ever it has been, or the

Gospel will never be preached to every creature. Make no excuse. *Do it.*

The systematic circulation of religious Tracts and books, affords a very favorable opportunity for doing good—for conversing with your neighbors on their eternal interests. Neglect not to avail yourself of this means of enriching your own soul with the active graces of the Christian life, and of imparting the bread of heaven to the famishing around you. Imitate the Saviour by going about doing good in this manner. But perhaps you live where no such effort has been commenced. Then commence it. Get some of your friends to join you, and begin the distribution in your village, or township, or city. And if nobody will join you, select a district yourself, and buy the Tracts, and present one monthly, or oftener, to every family in that district. If you are so poor that you cannot spend twenty or ten cents for Tracts, once a month—and it may be so, for many who are rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom, are, nevertheless, poor in this world—then go to some wealthy professor of religion, and beg him to furnish you the money, and pledge yourself to distribute the Tracts. If he refuses to aid you, and you can find none in your neighborhood who will furnish the money, then sit down and write to the Tract Society, stating the circumstances, and requesting a grant of Tracts. If you do this, with your heart full of the object, you will be supplied with Tracts for your benevolent work. If you are ready to bestir yourself with zeal and energy in this work, you will not long be destitute of the means.

Let every reader of *this* Tract do another thing. Having read it yourself, take it in your hand and go to some brother in the church. Perhaps you may find one who is not sufficiently awake to the duty of manifesting the spirit of the Saviour, in efforts to convert the world. Go to such an one. Do not leave the Tract in his house, and depart, saying nothing about it. Perhaps he has already one of

the same kind, which he has not read. But sit down with him; read it over; converse about it, and endeavor to kindle in his soul, and your own too, a glowing desire for the salvation of men. Do this in another case, and then in another. By this means you may awaken a new and better spirit in some of your brethren, and thus increase the number and the activity of the agents in the Saviour's cause. If you quicken a Christian in duty, you increase the means for the world's conversion.

4. "*The field is the world.*" Lift up your eyes, my brother, and look over this field. Its extreme limits only should bound your efforts for man's salvation. The millions in Christian lands, who are destitute of the privileges of the Gospel, and the hundreds of millions in the heathen world, who have never heard of a Saviour, should come in for a large share in your liveliest sympathies and most strenuous efforts. It is too late for you to ask, How can I benefit those afar off? You know, or might know, how you can do it. You can aid efficiently in sending Tracts, and the Bible, and missionaries of the cross, to all the destitute on the globe. You can prosecute your worldly occupation with the fixed determination to glorify God and save the souls of men with the avails of your business. You can labor on your farm, or toil in your shop, or traffic in your merchandise, or pursue the business of your profession, or manage your already accumulated estate, with the supreme and unalterable design of devoting a liberal portion of your property to the object of converting the world. And this you are bound to do, by the very terms of your discipleship, and by all the obligations of your oath of allegiance to the Son of God. And if you utterly fail to do this—if you feel no obligations binding you to faithfulness in this respect—you are a traitor to his interests, an Achan in his camp, a Judas among his disciples!

There are many professed Christians who are willing to give something to the various benevolent objects of the day,

if they are *called upon* to do it; that is, if some brother comes and solicits their subscription or donation; but at the same time, they are very willing that the collector should not come; and if not thus called upon, they will give nothing, except perhaps a trifle at congregational collections, from one year's end to another. Be not, my brother, like unto them. Have a regular system of giving. Comply with the spirit of the inspired direction: "*Upon the first day of the week, let EVERY ONE of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him.*" Lay your plans beforehand. At the beginning of the year, determine how much you will give, if God prospers you, at each monthly concert of prayer, and then always go to that meeting and carry the money yourself. If at any time Providence hinders your going—and let nothing but Providence hinder you—hand your donation to the receiver during the month, or take double the money in your hand to the next meeting. Determine, also, how much you will give to the Bible, Tract, Foreign and Domestic Missionary, and Education Societies. Give liberally to each; and if no collector calls, go and present your money to some one who will forward it to its destined object. Regard the apostolic rule, and "make up your bounty beforehand, that the same may be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness." Be cheerful in your giving, remembering that "God loveth a cheerful giver." And as it regards the amount, remember the inspired statement, "He that soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully."

I pretend not to determine how much any person must give. His own means and his own conscience must decide this question. Every Christian is bound to give something—to give *liberally*, according to his means. Some general rules, however, for deciding this question, may be given. Under the Old Testament dispensation, God required of his people *a tenth* of the yearly growth of their

fields, and of the increase of their flocks and herds, to be devoted to religious purposes. Can he require anything less under the New Testament dispensation? Another rule: By your profession of religion, you have come under obligations to do all you can for the conversion of men. This you owe to Him who bought you with his blood. Does not this obligation require you to *give* all you can for the conversion of the world? It certainly does. Let the question then be, How much *can* I give, in consistency with my plain and unquestioned duty to myself and family, for the purpose of supplying this fallen world with the means of salvation? This is the true question.

But, my brother, in deciding this question, consult not your selfish and worldly feelings; take no counsel of the flesh; reject the temptation to indulge in this or that unnecessary expense for the aggrandizement of yourself and family. What right has a Christian to indulge in an expensive style of living, in golden ornaments, in expenses for unnecessary travelling, in costly furniture, dazzling equipage, or a splendid establishment. Is it not better for you to live without these things, than for your fellow-men to live without the means of salvation? And are you not bound to "love your neighbor as yourself?" Do you not profess to be a disciple and follower of Him who, when on earth, "had not where to lay his head?" O Christian, if you have a disposition to indulge in unnecessary expenses and an extravagant style of living, or to hoard up your gains in order to be rich, let shame and blushing cover you. Look at the example of Jesus, and repent. And when you would decide how much you ought to give for building up the kingdom of Christ, go into your closet, cast yourself on your knees before Him *who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor*, and ask him how much it is your duty to give. If you do this in honest sincerity, with an earnest desire to know your duty, you will be guided aright.

Immediately connected with this subject is another, of

vast importance in the work of evangelizing the world. To sustain our various and necessary religious enterprises, requires the active agency of many hands, in moving forward the different parts of the diversified system. Collectors, committees, active officers of benevolent societies, and a prompt attendance on their public meetings, are all needed.

Some Christian professors, who do not refuse to give their money, when called upon, are criminally unwilling to give a portion of their *time* to agencies of this sort. They always beg to be excused; having many pleas of the pressure of business, and the want of time. My brother, for what was time given you? Was it that you might attend exclusively to your own private business or pleasure, and neglect the interests of Christ's cause? Was this what you meant, when you entered into solemn covenant with Jesus Christ, to be his servant, to deny yourself for him, and to be an agent in building up his kingdom? If *you* so understood the matter, *He* did not; and he will hold you responsible for fulfilling your obligations as *he* understands them. Examine this matter again. No *time* to give to these agencies! What if Jesus had said that he had no time to come down to earth on his message of mercy? What if apostles had pleaded a want of time, when commanded to go forth and preach the gospel? What if the active Christians of modern days, who have organized and sustained all our plans of benevolent effort, and who have labored, most of them without compensation, to awaken the attention of others to the object, and to enlist the services of their fellow-Christians in the work of converting the world—what if these had excused themselves from the good and necessary work for want of time? Many of them might have made this excuse with as good reason as you. Never, my brother, make this excuse again. You have time to do all your duty.

If you have no inclination—and this is the true secret of your reluctance—then go to your closet, and stay there on

your knees before God, till you get an inclination, and a warm heart to engage actively in his service. And then go forth to duty ; cheerfully assume the responsibilities of a committee-man, or collector of funds, or any other agency which God requires you to sustain, and it will surprise you to learn how he will enable you to *redeem time* to engage in his work, while you neglect not your own appropriate worldly business. Try it faithfully, and learn for yourself.

And now, my Christian brother, I must take my leave of you. But I am unwilling to do it, till you have given a new pledge to the Lord Jesus Christ to be faithful in his service, and to devote to the advancement of his cause the entire energies of your being. What say you—will you do it? For your encouragement, look around you. See the field already white to the harvest. See the laborers entering this field ; one toiling in this part of it, another in that. Some have entered on this work amidst the snows of Greenland and Siberia ; others are toiling on the sultry plains of India. Some are erecting the standard of the cross in the land where the Saviour lived and toiled and died ; others are unfurling the banner of salvation on the distant islands of the sea. Some have gone to the neglected and abused tribes in our western wilderness ; while others expend their efforts in circulating the Bible and Tracts, in establishing Sabbath schools, and in building up the walls of Zion in waste and destitute portions of our own Christian land. See, also, how the Saviour fulfils his promise to be with them and give success to their efforts: See “the wilderness and solitary place glad for them, and the desert blossoming like the rose.”

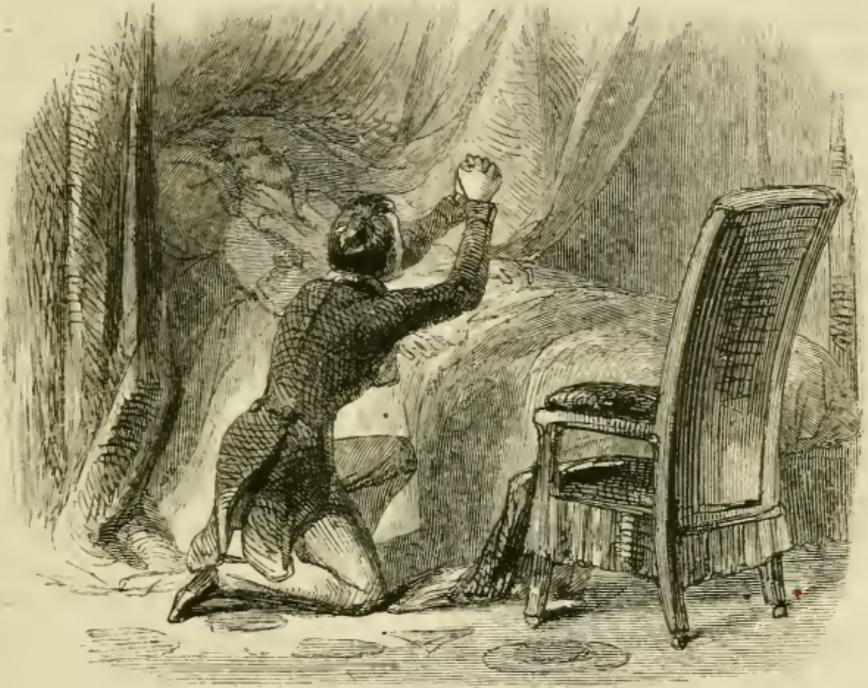
To sustain these laborers in foreign and domestic fields, and to increase their number a hundred fold, every Christian man and woman is called upon to arise and help. Blessed be God, many have heard the call, and have consecrated themselves to the work. By their prayers and contributions, with ready hands and willing hearts, they

have a fixed purpose to sustain this benevolent enterprise as long as they live. They feel it to be their first and great business. They have "opened their mouth to the Lord," and they will not go back. The Lord increase the number of such church members a thousand fold!

And will you, my brother, keep back from the work? Will you permit your brethren to toil without your ready and efficient coöperation? Will you withhold your example, your influence, your active efforts, your money? Or will you give in stinted measures, and grudge the time you spend in this blessed work? No—if you are a Christian you will not do this. You will come up "to the help of the Lord against the mighty." You will gird on the harness, and never put it off till you go home to glory. Do it, Christian brother, and the Lord will bless you. Do it, and you will cheer your fellow-laborers and hasten on the work. Do it, and you will see that the agency of man, blessed and rendered efficient by the Spirit of God, will carry salvation through the earth. Do it faithfully—do it till you die; and then, whether or not you hear the song on earth, you will hear it in heaven, and unite in it, and help to swell the triumphant strains of the loud chorus: "*The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*"

THE

HORRORS OF REMORSE.



D—— Y—— was a young man of highly respectable and wealthy parentage—the pride of his father, and the boast of his family. Having finished his classical education at U—— college, he commenced the study of the law in the city of ——, in the state of New York.

The gentleman with whom he was engaged in the pursuit of legal science, was given to the occasional indulgence of the cup, and was, withal, strongly inclined to sceptical views on the subject of Christianity. Our young student, although piously educated—for his father was a devoted

man of God—admiring, in common with others, the talents of his master, could easily apologize for his corrupt habits, as the result of infirmities not uncommon to great men; while he was prepared to look upon that independence of spirit, which could dare to call in question the divine authority of a religion which had received the sanction of ages, as indicative of altogether a superior order of mind. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that he should begin to look with a jealous eye upon the religion of his father. Such was the fact. He gave himself to the reading of the infidel books which were current at that time—it being now about thirty-five years since—and became, as he supposed, a confirmed infidel.

He did not disclose his views to his father, until some years after he had completed the study of the law, and had himself engaged in the active business of life. The disclosure, when made, was deeply painful to the heart of his good old father. But he was his darling son; he was a man of talents, highly respected, of fine manners, and high promise. By those modest, and seemingly honest suggestions of doubt, on certain points connected with the Christian system, as the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, he would work his insidious way to his father's heart, and so far stagger the good man's faith, as often to fill him with the deepest gloom, and agonize his soul with despairing apprehensions about the great subject of his immortal hopes.

In this manner some three or four years passed away. The son laboring to work his father over to infidelity, and the father struggling to maintain his hold on God. At length the painful conflict of faith with infidelity was brought to a close. The father sickened, and with a countenance beaming with the hope of glory, and his eye fixed on Jesus as the resurrection and the life, died.

No sooner had the spirit of the father fled, than floods of conviction, torrents of deep and overwhelming anguish, rolled upon the son. In his distress he cried to God, confessed his infidelity, blessed the memory of his father, and thanked God who had kept him steadfast unto the end. His scepticism vanished in a moment. He felt that his soul was left naked and utterly defenceless before that mighty One of Calvary whom he had affected to despise.

The sins of his life seemed to concentrate into two points.

The one, that he had contemned Jesus Christ; the other, that he had labored to persuade his father to abjure his religion. With reference to each of these points, he viewed himself with the most profound abhorrence and detestation. He had been filled with the pride of intellectual superiority. His mind was altogether above the influence of what he would term "the superstitious notions" which controlled others. He had himself accumulated a fortune, and he anticipated a large inheritance from his father; but all these things were annihilated from his view, when the Spirit of God set his sins in order before him.

His mental agony, at times, seemed almost insupportable. He often prostrated himself on the carpet in his room, in presence of the writer, and would call over the name of his father, and speak of his virtues and his prayers. "Yes," he would say, "prayers for your base, your unnatural son D—— Y——, who, but for the interposition of a merciful God, had persuaded you, O my father, my father, to abjure your blessed Saviour." At the mentioning of the name of the Saviour, he would break forth in prayer, and pour out his soul to all but utter exhaustion, in the depth of his agony. Often when walking the floor, he would cry out, in the anguish of his spirit, "Wretch that I am: I have denied my Saviour—I am guilty of the sin of damning my father's soul; because it *would* have been damned, if God had not held him up. *I wanted* to make my father an infidel, and in *that desire* I had the spirit of a devil."

The writer went with him, on a certain occasion, to visit a friend who was employed in conducting a furnace. We were in the establishment at the time the workmen were pouring out the melted ore, like liquid fire. After having looked at it for a few moments, he turned to me, and with trembling lip, his face pale as death, said,

"My friend, were that lava to be poured upon my flesh, the pain it would inflict would be less than the agony, and anguish, and horror of mind which I experience almost incessantly during my wakeful moments, and which often fill my nightly visions. There is no need that hell should be composed of elemental fire, as a means of punishing the ungodly. Sir, *God has let my conscience loose upon me*, and that is more painful to me than if I were bathed, as to my body, in that liquid element. The fire that burns within

fastens upon the soul, the spiritual portion of man. The agony which it occasions, is the agony of an *immortal nature*, and God has chosen the most highly adapted elements in the material world to convey to our minds, as far as the nature of the case admits, some appropriate idea of the inconceivable intensity of that anguish which the soul will feel when he shall leave it to *prey upon itself* to all eternity."

A man who had so sinned against the instructions of his youth, who had so much and so long troubled the faith and darkened the hopes of a pious father, and poured such contempt on the cross of Christ, might well be expected to endure no ordinary conviction. Under the anguish of mind which has here been but feebly portrayed, he continued for the space of nearly three months, when it pleased God to beam upon his soul with the mild influence of hope. He became a most devoted disciple of Jesus, and a bold defender of his cause. His voice was heard in the conference-room, and in the social praying-circle, in humble acknowledgment, as being one born, like Paul, "out of due time," and brought back, by the hand of sovereign mercy, from the very mouth of hell. He has, some years since, gone to his rest, where, doubtless, he has met the sainted spirit of his father, and where, amid the mighty company of the redeemed, we trust he is contributing, to the full extent of his immortal powers, to swell the tide of heavenly song.

Let it be remembered, that it is one thing to scout at the idea of an elementary hell, as many infidels and Universalists do, under the persuasion, cheering to an impenitent heart, that now they may indulge in sin without the apprehension of danger—and that it is quite another, to break away from the control of that mighty God, "who *knows how to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished.*" Let the experience of the subject of this narrative be remembered, and the import of that solemn declaration be well weighed: "SIR, GOD HAS LET MY CONSCIENCE LOOSE UPON ME."

WHY WILL YOU DIE?

It is the expostulation of infinite Love. With a compassion and condescension which angels can never measure, the Lord of glory bends from his throne to warn you of your danger, and invite you to turn and live.

Will you not hear Him, your Creator, speaking to you in a voice so solemn and so tender? He knows that you must die, unless you turn. His honor, justice, truth, and the interests of the universe demand it. He would tarnish the lustre of his throne, he would lose the reverence and confidence of angels, he would cease to be God, should he save you without repentance. It is therefore a settled, eternal principle of his throne—the sinner must turn, or die. In the nature of things it is certain. Sin, persevered in, must destroy you, in whatever world you may be placed. Were you before the throne of God, amid the glories of heaven and the songs of angels, sin, cherished in the heart, would make you wretched. By the very laws of your being, therefore, you must turn or die.

But why will you die? Why will you not turn? Are the pleasures of sin too great to be relinquished? Are they sufficient to counterbalance the pains of death? What are the pleasures of sin? The excitements of an impure imagination, of unhallowed passion, of depraved appetite—transient as the morning dew, and diminished by every repeated indulgence—unsatisfying and vain. Have you not found them so?

But what are the pains of death? What is it to die? I speak not of the death of the body. That you cannot avoid. It comes alike to all. There is another death infinitely more dreadful—the *death of the soul*. Not its annihilation. That were comparatively a blessing. It is to lose the favor of God, to be shut out of heaven, to be consigned

to the darkness of the bottomless pit, to lose every vestige of virtue, to be abandoned to the unrestrained rage of all unholy passions, to the cravings of ungratified desire, to the just wrath of God, to the horrors of remorse, to the companionship of fiends, and the agonies of despair. This is to die. This is the second death. And it is death eternal. The pleasures of sin "are for a season." But the pains of death are for ever. "The worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Will you rush upon such a death?

Do you say, there is no danger, that your ways are not evil? But are they *holy*? You know who has said, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," and "he that is not with me, is against me." If you have not sincerely repented, if you have not cordially received the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, if you have not been renewed in the spirit of your mind, you are most assuredly walking in the way to death. But perhaps you feel this, and go to the other extreme.

Is it, then, the recklessness of despair? Is there no hope? Has God "in anger shut up his tender mercies?" Have you adopted the unbelieving language of ancient Israel, "If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?" God has indeed uttered awful denunciations against transgressors. But does he therefore delight in their death? Hear his own declaration—his solemn oath: "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."

God is love. Can infinite Benevolence delight in suffering? God is your Creator, your Father. Can a tender father take pleasure in the death of his children? You instantly repel the horrid thought. Can God then take delight in your death? What has he not done to convince you that he takes no such delight? Has he not given his only begotten Son, has he not given you his word, his Sabbath, the ministry of the gospel? How many tender calls, how many blessed influences has he sent after you. What

more could he have done to show you that he has no delight in your death, but rather that you turn and live ?

Is it his fearful justice that discourages you ? Well it might but for that wonderful expedient which his own infinite wisdom devised. The claims of justice have been met by the death of his beloved Son. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He was made a curse for us. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree. He gave himself a ransom for many." Justice and mercy are now reconciled, are glorified. God can "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth." Why then will you die ?

Are you holden by the cords of your iniquity ? I know that the chains of sin are strong, and that you in yourself are weak. But is there not One able to help you, and does he not proffer his aid ? He who commands, Repent, is also "exalted to give repentance and remission of sins." He who says, Return unto me, invites you also to say, "Turn me, and I shall be turned." Go to the work with sincere and earnest effort, trusting in him to "work in you to will and to do," and you will not fail.

The way, then, is plain ; the encouragement ample. "All things are ready." If you die, it will be *because you choose to die*. But why will you die ? Why spurn the *only* life suited to your nature ; the only happiness that can fill an immortal mind ? Why will you *destroy that soul*, so noble in its origin, so sublime in its nature, so wonderful in its powers, so vast in its capacities ! Restored to the perfection and beauty of the divine image, it might shine before the throne of God an angel of light. In its ever-increasing knowledge, in the contemplation of the divine glory, in the exercise of all holy affections, in the smiles of divine favor, in the fellowship of angels, and amid the pure and lovely scenes of heaven, what immeasurable happiness might it realize in the progress of unwasting ages. Oh, why will you despise such boundless bliss ? Why rush upon death ? Why plunge that immortal spirit into utter and irretrievable ruin, and quench its lustre in everlasting night ?

Is it any wonder that the Son of God should weep over such a scene? You cannot die without most fearful guilt and aggravated condemnation. What motives must you despise, what cords of love must you break, before you can perish! The light of divine truth, the compassion of a dying Saviour, the instructions of the sanctuary, the warnings and entreaties of friends, perhaps the counsels, examples, and prayers of pious parents, and it may be their injunctions pressed home upon the heart around the dying bed, the warnings of conscience, and the strivings of the Spirit—these are the sacred influences that have been cast around you to keep you from ruin. Why will you break through them all, and urge your way down to death? If you perish, yours must be a doom deeper than that of common sinners. Why then will you die?

Still the tender exhortation is heard. It comes from the garden of Gethsemane, from the hall of Pilate, from the hill of Calvary, from every bleeding wound of the expiring Saviour, from the tomb of Joseph, from the throne of glory, from the harps of angels, from the songs of the redeemed; it is repeated by saints on earth, reiterated in the soul by conscience and the Spirit; it comes back from the grave, and from the bar of judgment; it comes up from the bottomless pit, amidst the wailings of the lost, with piercing cry, *Why will you die?*

And now, fellow-sinner, *will* you die? Will you not turn and live? Has any feeling of tenderness been awakened in your bosom by this appeal? Oh, cherish it. Do not defer the subject, as you have often done before. Beware how you grieve the Spirit. Go immediately to God, throw yourself at his feet, and with a broken heart confess your sins, implore his forgiveness, and resolve, trusting in his grace, henceforth to live to his glory. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

CARS READY!

“*Cars ready!*”—“*Boat ready!*”—“*Stage ready!*” What traveller has not felt the stirring influence of these words, especially when he has been delayed upon his journey? Having been thus detained several hours at one of our great railroad *dépôts*, I was led to reflect upon the scene, and I hope not without some personal benefit.

Beneath the large upper room where the passengers waited, the railroad tracks from the East and the West, the North and the South, centred. The hall was large and comfortable; provided with abundant refreshments, and opportunity was afforded for reading and conversation. Yet none seemed contented; all waited impatiently for the signal to be off, not even laying aside their hats and outer garments; and some standing for hours at the windows, to catch the first glimpse of the cars that were to carry them on. And whenever a steam-whistle or engine-bell was heard, all would rush towards the windows; nor could they suppress a murmur of disappointment when they found that only a freight train had arrived, or engines were manœuvring about the *dépôt*. After a time the hall bell rang, and the announcement came, “Cars ready for Boston and Albany!” when all sprung to their feet, and more than half instantly disappeared. But the rest were obviously disappointed that their turn to go had not come. Nor did it come till a dark and stormy evening had set in. But when the signal was given, “Cars for New Haven ready!” I did not see that any of us were less anxious to go, through fear that, out of the regular time as we were, and dark as it was, a collision with other trains might occur, which did in fact take place, with loss of limbs and life.

As I witnessed these scenes, What a striking representation have we here, said I to myself, of this world! As travellers are almost constantly arriving at this *dépôt*, and as often departing, so it is with those entering life and passing into eternity. In both cases their stay is short. Arriving at this spot, they ascertain when the train starts upon the

route they wish to travel ; and having secured their tickets, they take care to be ready when the signal is given—satisfied if, in such circumstances, they can snatch a hasty meal. The end of their journey, especially if going home, engrosses their attention so much, and promises so much, that they cheerfully submit to many inconveniences by the way. Alas, here the analogy fails. The traveller to eternity seems to feel as if he had reached a permanent home, and as if his main business should be, to adorn it and make it pleasant and attractive ; and the thing which he is most apt to neglect is, to secure a passport for the final stage of his journey. He too often puts off the preparation as long as possible, and frequently till it is too late, and he is forced to go unprepared ; for go he must, when the summons comes. And instead of watching and waiting for the signal, it too often startles him out of a delirious dream, and overwhelms him with anguish.

As I saw some standing, hour after hour, at the windows of the dépôt, watching for the opportunity to go, I could not but inquire, why the real Christian should not, in like manner, be waiting always for the chariot of his Lord to convey him to his heavenly home ? Does he not love that home better than this world ? Are not his dearest friends there, ready to welcome him ? And even though he must pass through the dark valley and shadow of death to reach the place, yet will not holy desire, and strong hope and faith urge him on ? Some such saints there certainly have been. Says Jacob, “I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.” “All my appointed time will I wait,” said Job, “till my change come.” “I have a desire,” said Paul, “to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” But alas, how few do not shrink back in anguish, when disease or danger rings in their ears the warning of departure. What a severe rebuke to most Christians it is, to see all the crowd at a railroad dépôt ready and anxious to depart, while they cling to their meagre accommodations and enjoyments on earth, and shudder and draw back when summoned to their home in heaven. Can it be that they really love that home, and the bright and glorious spirits congregated there ?

At the dépôt men act rationally and consistently ; and therefore usually succeed in their plans. But suppose it necessary to place a class of men along our railroads, whose

sole business should be to persuade travellers to secure tickets, and be ready when the cars should start. Suppose these persons should be continually exhorting all around them, not to forget whither they were going ; nor to omit securing their regular tickets and seats. And suppose that, in spite of these efforts, more than half of the travellers should disregard their warnings and entreaties, and as a consequence be left behind, or be thrown into inextricable difficulty by the way. We could not but regard all this as proof of strange infatuation. And yet this is a course like that which is taken by most men in regard to eternity. As they hurry on from one stage to another of the journey of life, there is a class of men meeting them at every turn, whose business it is to warn them of their need of preparation for their last journey, and of securing a passport that will carry them through the dark valley, and be acknowledged at the portals of heaven. But with how little success do these men labor. The great majority, in spite of their warnings and persuasions, pass on with no such preparation ; and when death rings his piercing note in their ears, they awake to their condition only to learn that it is too late. And yet, among men, except a few devotedly pious, this infatuation is never blamed ; nay, it is thought to be sober reason. Oh, that the lesson taught on this subject at a railroad *dépôt*, might not be lost.

Traveller in the railroad car, the steamboat, or the stage, have you considered that you are also a traveller to eternity ? That journey you must perform, willing or unwilling, prepared or unprepared. And, without preparation, that journey will be disastrous in the extreme ; but with it, the end will be *joy unspeakable and full of glory*. The preparation may all be summed up in one short sentence : A NEW HEART, AND FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST. Have you become a new creature in him ? You do not complain that certain conditions are rigorously insisted on in our public conveyances, even though you cannot see the reason of them all. Is it not much more reasonable, that you should submit to the terms fixed by an infinitely wise and merciful God, on which you can be conducted to the heavenly city ; and does it seem a hard saying, that you must be born again, or you cannot see the kingdom of God ? Yet it may be, that while you act so reasonably in promptly complying with the terms fixed on the railroad, or the boat, or the stage, you have

hitherto neglected acquiescence in those only conditions of the infinite God, on which you can be saved.

My friend, there is one circumstance that renders this neglect of yours perilous in the extreme. When you have ascertained the hour of departure of the car, the boat, or the stage, you can safely use the intervening time for business, or pleasure; neglecting to secure a ticket till a few moments before you start. But in respect to the time of leaving the world, you can make no such calculations. "As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them." When you enter the car, the steamboat, or the stage, remember that a collision, an explosion, or an upsetting, may hurry you in an instant into eternity. The only security, then, consists in being always ready for your departure. Your passport must always be carried, not in your pocket, but in your heart. If not obtained till you hear the summons to go, the case is almost hopeless. And God has wisely hid from you the hour when it will come.

The infatuation of such neglect appears more manifest, when we reflect upon the infinitely greater importance of being prepared for eternity, than for any worldly change. If a man is left behind by the car, the boat, or the stage, he does not usually experience an irremediable loss; and even though he thus fails to secure most important worldly objects, his loss can usually be more or less repaired; at least, it can be computed. But to go out of the world unprepared, is to sustain an infinite and eternal loss. It can never be remedied—never made less. Such a man loses the favor of God, and of all holy beings; nay, the unspeakable joys of heaven. Still more, he is plunged into perdition that has no relief, and no end. Can it be that he who reads these pages is in such a condition? As he hears the summons, "Cars ready!" "Boat ready!" "Stage ready!" let him be reminded how soon a more startling summons will break upon his ear: "Prepare to meet thy God." And let him not rest easy another hour, till, "by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," he is prepared to say, whenever he hears his heavenly Master call, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!"

THE

AURORA BOREALIS.

BUT few that saw it will ever forget the Aurora which occurred in the winter of 1836-7. It was pronounced at the time the most brilliant and general that had been seen by any living man. It was not confined, as it usually is, to the northern section of the heavens. The whole horizon was illumined by arches of fiery hue, from which columns and sheaves of light shot up towards the zenith, forming there a fiery coronet of the most transcendent beauty. The agitation of these columns and sheaves was sometimes very great. Of a sudden these agitations would cease, and the light would die away; but in a moment these columns would shoot up again in increased size, and with greater splendor, giving an appearance of brilliancy and grandeur to the heavens which called forth the acclamations of the admiring beholders. For some weeks previous the earth had been covered with a deep snow; and such was the effect upon it of the Aurora, that streets, fields, and houses looked as if they were covered with blood. This remarkable phenomenon only disappeared from the sky as the morning light began to dawn.

Soon afterwards I observed, on Sabbath evening, and on the evening of the weekly lecture, in a corner of my lecture-room, a female who was a stranger to me, and, obviously, to the place. Her attention was marked; her attendance became regular. Weeks passed away without my knowing who she was. I received a request to visit a family where was a woman anxious about her soul. As I entered the door I was met by the stranger I had seen in the lecture-room. Taking my seat by her side, and hearing her frank and simple account of her feelings, I asked her if she understood the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. Her reply was, "I am afraid I do not."

"Then, madam," said I, "will you permit me to explain it to you in a brief and simple manner?"

“That,” said she, “is the very thing I want you to do.”

“Well, then,” said I, addressing her personally, and applying every word to herself, “you are a sinner in heart and in life. God is angry with you every day. Every sin you have ever committed deserves eternal banishment from God. So that you deserve to die as often as you have sinned. From the guilt and punishment of sin you cannot relieve yourself—nor can man or angel relieve you—nor can baptism or the Lord’s supper, or any other rite, relieve you. And such is the nature of your sin, and of the justice and government of God, that you cannot be saved unless law and justice are satisfied for the many sins you have committed.”

Looking at me with a tearful eye, she replied in a subdued tone, “I feel all this in my soul. My fear of the anger of God, which my sins have kindled, is so great that I cannot sleep or eat. My tears flow day and night.”

“But,” said I, “there is a way of escape from the guilt and the punishment of sin. You are a sinner; and Jesus Christ has died for sinners. He bore the sins of all who ever have, or ever will believe upon him, in his own body on the tree. The law requires us to be righteous, in order to enter heaven; and Christ Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes upon him. If you feel yourself to be a sinner, you have nothing to do but to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved. If you repent of sin, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—if you believe what Jesus teaches, if you do as he commands—if now, without a moment’s delay, you can trust your soul and its concerns in the hands of Jesus Christ, without waiting until you are either better or worse, he will certainly save you; for he says, ‘Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.’”

With her eye fixed upon me, she drank in every word that I uttered; and when I concluded, she promptly replied, “This is just the way that suits my case.” “Are you willing now,” said I, “to believe in Christ, to take him to be your Saviour from all sin?” “Yes,” said she, with all eagerness, “yes, I take him now to be my Saviour; I cast myself now upon the merits of his atonement.”

I prayed with her. I felt that there was a new trophy to redeeming grace and love before me.

I now felt desirous to know something about her history the leading incidents of which she gave me with great frankness. She was born and educated a Roman Catholic. Though well educated, she was on the subject of religion extremely ignorant. Although now in mid-life, all the attention she ever gave to her soul was to go to mass and to confession; and even that she had given up for years, convinced of their utter worthlessness. And up to the evening of the Aurora Borealis, she never had a conviction of her sinfulness. With thousands of others she gazed upon the brilliant heavens, and the apparently crimsoned earth. The thought of the final conflagration, and of her utter unfitness to meet that dread scene, seized her mind, and she retired to her room deeply impressed with the greatness of God, and her own sinfulness and ingratitude. Then was made the first of those impressions which resulted in her conversion.

Her husband was a Frenchman, of Protestant parentage, but utterly regardless of religion. When he returned home, she told him of my conversation with her, and its effects upon her mind and heart. She read to him from the Bible, and prayed with him. With his consent she erected the family altar. Her fidelity to him created some restiveness, and he refused to hear her. In the deepest distress she sought my advice. I told her to increase her supplications for him in private, but to do nothing that would fret his mind, as that would be to defeat her great object. She retired, resolved to follow my advice.

Some weeks had passed away without my knowing any thing of what was going on in this little family. On a Sabbath evening, and when with a dejected spirit I was thinking that I had spent my strength for naught, she appeared in my study with her husband. She narrated her conversation and prayers with him, and he frankly confessed his opposition of heart to her change of mind, and especially to her conduct towards him in pressing religion upon him on all occasions. "But," said he, "her prayers and tears have broke my heart."

"I told John," said she, "that if you would tell him what you told me, he would love God too, and that he would feel better in his mind and heart. I have strove to tell him all, but he does not understand me well enough, and I wish you to tell him about Jesus Christ." After hearing with

intense interest their narratives as to each other's conduct, I spread out before John the plan of salvation, essentially as I had done a few weeks previous before his wife. When I got through, I asked him, "How does this plan appear to you?" His reply was, "It is the very one for me—I can now and cordially embrace it." I prayed with them; and when we rose from our knees, John seemed a changed man. Before he left my study, he felt that he could rejoice in Christ as his Saviour.

Not long after, they professed their faith in Christ, and although for years beyond the bounds of my ministry, I believe they yet live to adorn that profession; and their conversion may be traced up as a means, under God, to the Aurora Borealis.

How plainly this narrative teaches the following truths.

1. The means of God for impressing the minds of sinners, and leading them to himself for pardon and salvation, are exhaustless.

2. A clear understanding of the plan of salvation through a Saviour—of its freeness and fulness—of its sovereign efficacy when truly relied on, is the only sure way of securing peace to the anxious sinner.

3. How important that the believing wife should labor for the salvation of the unbelieving husband, and the believing husband for that of the unbelieving wife.

A word to the reader of this narrative. Are you a careless sinner? If the Aurora so impressed the mind of this woman, what will be your impressions when the elements shall melt with fervent heat—when the earth with all that it contains, shall be consumed? Are you an anxious sinner? Then Jesus died for sinners; and he died for you, because you are a sinner. To be saved, you have only to believe upon him. Are you a Christian? Then rise from the perusal of this narrative with the resolution to labor for the conversion of some soul, as this woman labored for the conversion of her husband, and yours may not be a starless crown.

THE HAYMOW.

My first settlement in the ministry was in a valley in one of the middle states, beautiful beyond description. A broad and winding river enters it at the north, and after a course of fifteen miles, makes its exit at the south. The valley seems as if expressly made for the home of the Indian; and for moons beyond the power of his arithmetic to calculate, the red man fished in that river, and planted his corn in that rich bottom, and sought his game upon the mountains. And before he could be compelled to yield it, he made the white man feel the power of his anger in many a dreadful surprise.

Early in the history of the settlement of this valley, a church was collected there, which continued a feeble existence until 18—, when I became its pastor. Young, ardent, and without experience, I here commenced my ministry, in a community proverbial both for its intelligence and its disregard of religion, amid external opposition, and with a church small, and rent by internal discords.

I entered on my duties with zeal, and was diligent in their performance. I prepared my sermons with care, and thought them conclusive; but few heard them, and none seemed convinced by them. I felt deeply, but my hearers seemed unmoved. My preaching seemed more to excite the opposition of the wicked, than the prayers of the pious. I seemed to labor in vain.

There was among my people a man in mid-life, a German by birth, and a remarkably simple-hearted, pure-minded Christian. Whoever was absent, he was always present at the place of prayer. One evening, early in December, as I was about retiring to rest, I heard a knock at my door, and my German friend was introduced, his countenance full of emotion. On taking his seat, his first words were these: "My dear pastor, I have come to tell you that the Lord is about to revive his work here." Surprised at his appearance and language, and at the lateness of his visit, I

asked him, "Why do you think so?" He replied as follows: "About eight o'clock this evening, I went up to my haymow to give hay to my cattle; and whilst there the Spirit of God came upon me, and has kept me there praying until now. I feel that God is about to revive his work, and I could not go in to my family until I told you." The entire simplicity and earnestness of the good man convinced me that God had vouchsafed to visit his servant. After some conversation we parted, mutually agreeing to pray and labor for a revival of religion, and to engage as many as we could to do the same.

A few days convinced me that the spirit of prayer was on the increase. Meetings for prayer were numerously attended. The church on the Sabbath became more full and solemn. And a few weeks after that evening of wrestling with God on the haymow, found me in the midst of the first revival of my ministry, and one of the most precious I ever witnessed.

Permit me to narrate a few incidents which occurred during the progress of this revival, and which illustrate some great truths that should not be forgotten.

Among the first that expressed seriousness, was a fashionable and well-educated young lady, belonging to one of our richest families. She was the pride of a mother whose ambition it was to have her shine in elegant society. Miss E—— expressed a hope in Christ. In a few days she was sent to spend the winter in one of our principal cities, with some gay friends, who were directed to take her to all the fashionable amusements. She yielded to the temptation; and when she returned in the spring seemed farther from the kingdom of heaven than ever. Another refreshing was soon enjoyed, when the former feelings of this young lady returned; she became hopefully pious, and in a few months the wife of a godly minister. And her large family, perhaps influenced by her example, followed her into the fold of Christ.

There was in the place a young man, a profane, but yet an industrious mechanic. Like Nicodemus, he came to me by night to know what he should do to be saved. His visits were often repeated. He thought he understood and could joyfully embrace the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ. Yielding to the influence of one wicked companion, in a few

weeks he forsook the house of prayer and the people of God. As long as I knew him afterwards he was amongst the most obdurate men I ever knew. He ripened for ruin; and not long ago, with one stroke, as the woodman removes the sapling out of his way, God cut him down. It is a fearful thing to quench the Spirit.

Mr. C—— was a pleasant, moral, and interesting man. Under the prayers and conversations of a pious mother, he grew up a friend to the institutions of religion. His mind became deeply interested. But a more convenient season was always an excuse for the putting aside of present duty. In the midst of the revival, when some of the sturdy cedars of Lebanon were bowing, his aged mother, with tears, besought him to make God his portion. "Mother," said he, "you are dependent upon me for a subsistence, and so are my motherless children. To provide for you all is my pleasure and my duty. I am now engaged in a very profitable work among the mountains, and when I have made enough to support you all comfortably, in connection with my own industry, I promise you I will attend to religion. But you must excuse me now." And with a solemn warning against the folly of such reasoning from the lips of his aged mother, he hastened to his business among the mountains. In a few days he was brought back to that mother, and was laid at her feet a mutilated corpse. Before he could escape its track, a log of timber rolling down a steep precipice, caught him, and rolling over him, almost ground him to powder. And as we laid him down in the grave, I heard that mother exclaim in the bitterness of her sorrow, "Would to God I had died for thee, my son, my son." O the folly of boasting of to-morrow, as we know not what a day may bring forth.

Some of our pious people undertook the circulation of religious Tracts. The Tract, "The Way to be Saved," was selected for the purpose of placing in the hands of our people a plain and simple guide to the Saviour of sinners. One of these was placed in the shop of a mechanic who was noted for his profanity and vulgarity. Blotting out the word "saved" in the title of the Tract, he wrote in its place "damned;" so that the title, thus altered, read, "The way to be damned." Now, tearing it nearly in two, he flung it into the street. It was soon picked up by a young woman deeply serious, who carried it home. She read it with care;

she pasted the torn leaves together, and read it again and again. She went as directed, and found peace and joy in believing. And in a conversation with her about her hope, she drew from her bosom this mutilated Tract, saying, "This is the little book that told me the way to the cross." Thus it is that God often makes the wrath of man to praise him.

These incidents teach us,

1. That when faithfully and prayerfully discharging duty, ministers must not be unduly discouraged by unpropitious external circumstances. If they go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, they will return again with rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.

2. They teach us the power of prayer. It moves the hand that moves the world. That revival, with its consequent blessings, I have ever traced, under God, to that prayer on the haymow. The prayer that God inspires, he will answer.

3. They teach us the awful guilt of parents who sacrifice the souls of their children at the shrines of worldly ambition. And alas, how many such parents there are.

4. They utter warning notes in the ears of those who quench the strivings of the Spirit, or who postpone the duty of submission to God *now* to an uncertain future.

5. They teach us, that even pearls cast before swine may not be in vain. Through the wickedness of the wicked, God is ever accomplishing his purposes of love. How invincible the combined agencies of mercy, when even one mutilated Tract becomes the instrument of life from the dead to a human soul.

Years have passed away since this revival occurred. Some of its subjects have already entered on their reward. That simple-hearted, pious German, has gone up to his Saviour. But the influences of that prayer on the haymow will live for ever. Good men never die. They rest from their labors, but their works do follow them. May our churches never want members like him who wrestled and prevailed with God on the haymow.

“THE DOOR WAS SHUT;”

OR,

THE CRISIS OF THE IMMORTAL SOUL.

IN the well-known parable of the ten virgins, Matthew 25, it is recorded that, “while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage; AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT.” So to every man living there is a moment, somewhere between the cradle and the grave, when “the door is shut,” either including or excluding him for ever. “Afterwards came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, *I know you not.*” When once the door is thus shut, it can no more be opened. Saved, or lost for eternity, is the result. It is the crisis of the soul, which has then passed from a state of probation to one of fixed and changeless retribution. And this doom of the unpardoned sinner may be passed by an offended God when the subject of it is unconscious of the fact, is in the midst of life, and perhaps is least apprehensive of such an overwhelming decision. Are there, then, any indications in the word of God, or in the facts of his providence, by which we can learn when we are, for the last time, approaching the open door of heaven?

Look at the history of wicked men in the Bible. When the blood of his brother cried to God from the ground against Cain, God did not kill him, but he set a mark upon

him, and sent him out a vagabond and reprobate upon the earth. So with the old world: God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh is come before me." Gen. 6: 13. Yet it was a hundred years from the issuing of that decree and the command, "Make thee an ark," to the terrible catastrophe; and all the while Noah preached, and wept, and vexed his righteous soul for them; and they bought and sold, they planted, they builded, they married and were given in marriage; but they were doomed. So it was with Pharaoh. God sent his wonders upon him, to manifest his own glory; at the same time saying to Moses, "Pharaoh will not hear thee." There was no more hope for Pharaoh when the rod of Moses became a serpent before him, than when ingulfed in the Red Sea. So with Saul, when the Spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. So with Ephraim, and the Israelites on many occasions.

But in the New Testament, and under the plain and authoritative teaching of the Lord from heaven, we have the most decisive examples on this point. Towards the latter part of his ministry, our blessed Lord was accustomed, when a crowd of scribes and Pharisees were about him, to impart his divine lessons in parables publicly, and afterwards to explain them to his disciples. And when it was inquired why he did so, he made this memorable reply: "That seeing, they may see and not perceive; and hearing, they may hear and not understand." When he had wrought wonders before them, they ascribed it to his intimacy with demons; and when he had spoken plainly, and as never man spake, they were enraged rather than converted; they had passed the point beyond which mercy would ever reach them. They were given over to judicial blindness, and consequent perdition. To them, as a class, he had but one more address to make. That was when he went up to Jerusalem for the

last time, and stood in the temple at the great feast—the Jewish nation assembled around him—and pointing to the scribes and Pharisees, as they sat in Moses’ seat, he portrayed their character, and eight times reiterated the terrible sentence, “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!” “Fill ye up, then, the measure of your iniquity. Ye serpents! ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?” “The door was shut.”

On the same occasion, as he looked upon the city of Jerusalem, he wept and exclaimed, “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.” Luke 19: 42, 44. “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.” Matt. 23: 38. This was *forty* years before the city was destroyed; but “the door was shut.”

In accordance with these facts, are numerous warnings of the Bible. “There is a sin unto death.” 1 John, 5: 16. “For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.” Heb. 10: 26. “It is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” Heb. 6: 4.

That which the word of God so unequivocally declares and illustrates, HIS PROVIDENCE also still continues to affirm. None who have stood by the death-bed of impenitent men, doubt that there are still multitudes who outlive their day

of grace, and become vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction. Nor is it the abandoned profligate alone that takes up the lamentation: he who has "heard gladly" and "done many things," as well as the reckless sinner—the nominal believer as well as the scoffing infidel—is suddenly destroyed, and cries out in agony, "He will not hear me—it is too late—too late!"

Nor is it certain that this crisis may not be reached long before the period of *old age*. It appears from the bills of mortality, kept in the most healthy portions of our land, that one half of all who are born, die under seventeen years of age; and of those who live, the mass of church members are received in youth. To them "the door is shut," and shuts them in, if they are true disciples. In almost every revival of religion the body of converts are from the circles of youth. In a revival of religion in Jackson county, Ga., in the summer of 1846, out of eighty hopeful conversions, sixty-three of whom united with the church, not more than three or four were past the age of twenty-five. In the great work in Athens, which followed, there was a similar proportion of youth. In other revivals in the same state, in 1845 and 1846, including in all not far from five hundred additions to the churches, at least as large a proportion were from twelve to twenty-five years of age; and these facts are perhaps a fair average throughout the country. Ponder it, ye who are putting far off the evil day, and trusting to advanced life to enter the gate of heaven!

There is another view by which many seek to shield themselves from the arrows of truth. They are disposed to say, "If this crisis comes before death, and even early in life, it will be *in the commission of some atrocious act of wickedness*, or course of abandonment to sin. I am surely in no danger, in the calm, unruffled pathway of a moral life." But beware, lest a fatal delusion be practised upon

you by the father of lies. Look at one or two illustrations of this matter. A greater distance can scarcely be conceived between two mere men, than there was between George Washington in his last days, and a robber on the gallows. But what was the crisis with each of them?

With the robber, it was not when he presented the pistol to his victim's breast, in that last act of infamy for which he was condemned to be hung. When the chaplain inquired of him, what had brought him to that dreadful end, he replied, "When I was a schoolboy, I stole a gold pin; and O," said he, "I would have given the world, the moment it was done, if it had been back again. But I was not detected, and did not return it. I was emboldened in sin. I next took a knife; then a roll of cloth, etc., and here I am." The struggle of conscience was in his first act of transgression, and he was lost to virtue from that hour.

Look now at Washington. How glorious his career in the Revolution, and how transcendently so the hour when he stood before Congress to deliver up to them his sword, his commission, and his authority, and return to his farm. But that was not the crisis with him. With his character, he could not have done otherwise on that occasion. We must look far back into the nursery to find the moment that formed him for unparalleled greatness. When he confessed his fault in the matter of the cherry-tree; or ordered his trunks brought back, when his heart was set upon going to sea, saying, "I will not grieve a mother's heart;" then were established in him the principles of his future renown.

In like manner, the soul may receive its character for immortality far back of those marked external acts which make it apparent to the person and the world.

Let it also be considered, that every sinner is *dependent upon the Spirit of God*, which may at any time leave him to himself.

In this respect, he may be compared to a ship upon the Niagara river, between lake Erie and the falls. The calm, still waters of the lake are above it, the thundering precipice below, and all the way between a constantly increasing current, bearing it downward; while a propitious breeze is blowing towards the lake, sufficient to overcome the power of the current and waft it upward to the lake. But the sails are all furled; the captain and all on board wish to enjoy the pleasant scenery around them. Some doubt whether there is any cataract; others think there is, but that it is so far off that it need not be feared yet; they *can turn at any time*. Thus they float merrily along, amid wine, and song, and dance, and revelry, so intent upon their pleasure that for hours they do not notice a fearful fact, that *the wind has ceased to blow*. At length they are roused from their dream of security, and look out upon the calm, blue heavens: not a leaf moves. They are filled with dismay. The captain cries out, "About ship—put on all her canvass." "Ay, ay, sir," replies the helmsman, and the helm is "hard up." The sails are spread, but they flap against the masts. There is no power in the helm. She turns her prow to the lake of safety; but it is only to float backwards down the stream. The current increases; they shriek aloud for help; but help cannot come. They ply their oars, but there is no perceptible check to the descent. Islands and green banks seem to be gliding past them like magic; the thundering roar of the cataract is heard; now they enter the curling and eddying rapids; a few moments of agonizing cries of despair, and a few of breathless, silent, shivering expectation, and the noble ship plunges into the abyss, and is dashed to atoms. But *when* was that ship lost? Not merely when it struck the foaming flood, but when *the wind ceased to blow* upon it, as it floated quietly on that smooth stream; when the only agency that

could possibly arrest its downward course, ceased to act; then destruction was as *sure* as at the last moment.

In like manner, the soul that God has left may float down the stream of time, and dream of safety and future repentance, while it is *lost*. Its day of merciful visitation is passed. "The door is shut."

If, then, we are liable at any moment to pass the boundaries of hope, and those bounds are not always made obvious by the commission of heinous acts of wickedness, how important is the inquiry, What circumstances indicate its approach?

The general principle is clearly laid down in the Bible. It is when one is brought, under the united energy of all the influences that God has appointed to affect the heart, to the very threshold of heaven's gate, and there deliberately decides to enter, or not to enter. He is enlightened—instructed in the Gospel—made to taste of the heavenly gift—to feel the reality of an atoning sacrifice—partakes of the influences of the Holy Ghost, and thus is convinced of sin. His conviction sends him to the good word of God for additional instruction; that word lays full before him the powerful realities pertaining to the world to come. Thus, with the voice of conscience quickened by the Spirit of God, the cross of Christ, death, judgment, heaven, and hell before him, he decides, and that decision may be for eternity. It may be God's last call; and if slighted, these influences may never be renewed so as to lead that soul to repentance. But while the general principle is plain, its application is as various as the pursuits and characters of men. We will, therefore, look at some of the most common forms in which persons are brought to such a decision.

Many pass this crisis when brought **ALMOST TO THE PURPOSE OF GIVING UP THEIR CHOSEN FORM OF SIN.**

With some, the *love of money* is the ruling passion. With them gold is god, and gain is godliness; but there comes a time when the voice of Christ is heard, saying, "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Such a man was D——, a merchant in Indiana. He had been most ardently devoted to the attainment of wealth, and none too scrupulous of the means of increasing it. But his attention was awakened to the interests of his soul. Like Nicodemus of old, he came to the writer by night to inquire upon the subject. He said he knew his soul was in danger; that religion was necessary; "but," said he, "if I become a Christian, I must give up my store, for no man can do business here upon Christian principles and make money." There he stood, with his store in one scale, and God and eternity in the other, deliberately weighing one against the other. Long and fearful was the struggle, for the scales were equipoised, and it was his *crisis*; but at length, by the grace of God, his hold upon the world was relinquished, and he closed with the overtures of mercy. "The door was shut," and shut him in. He has since gone to his rest.

On the other hand, look at the young man in the Gospel. He came to Christ with candid inquiries after the way of life; he was eminently moral and amiable, so that the Saviour said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of heaven;" but he was rich, and his heart was fixed upon his wealth; and when the searching requisition of Christ was addressed to him—"Go, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor; and come, follow me"—he was brought to the same awful moment. His riches were in one scale, and Christ in the other. He lingered, and sorrowed, but he *went away*, and we never more hear of his coming to the Saviour, or approaching the kingdom of God.

So multitudes of the votaries of wealth, when conscience

speaks and the Spirit moves, pause and hesitate, and *almost* determine to leave all and follow Christ. It is the *crisis*. They reluctantly, but deliberately cleave to their worldly enterprise and treasures; God gives them up, and "the door is shut." They pass on, perhaps, through years of prosperous business, and surrounded with numerous sources of earthly joy, till in an unexpected moment they are summoned to the bar of judgment. Then they cry, "Lord, Lord, open unto us;" but there is none to hear.

Again, with others, *ambition* is the ruling passion—to be deemed great and distinguished among men. Avarice to them is a sordid passion; money is freely sacrificed at the altar of fame. But there comes a period when they sigh for immortal blessedness.

Two lawyers in I—— were awakened under the same means of grace; and the truth, applied by the Holy Spirit, came home with power to their consciences.

One of them had been somewhat sceptical, and great pride of character stimulated him to resist. He tried to absent himself from the house of God, but a resistless agency impelled him to go. He feigned indifference, and struggled to parry off the shafts of truth; but they sunk deeper and deeper into his heart. The conflict became intense. Present reputation in one scale, and life and death in the other. At length he *decided*; rushed to the minister to inquire the way of salvation; threw aside the garb of feigned indifference, and found peace in believing.

The other had been religiously educated, was a nominal believer in the evangelical doctrines, and knew well the position which he occupied; but he was a candidate for the legislature. When conversed with, he said, "I know that I have a more important election to secure than that for which I am a candidate here. But I have concluded to defer attention to the subject till after the political question is

settled, and *then* I intend to make the salvation of my soul my great object until it is secured." He was reminded that he was saying to the Spirit, "Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." He acknowledged it was so, but remained resolute in his determination to do it. He plunged into the turmoil of a political struggle, the more dangerous because in a region and at a time when success required him to open the floodgates of intemperance for the corruption of the people. He failed in his election; and instead of seeking the salvation of his soul, he sought the intoxicating cup to drown the shame of defeat—and became a sot!

Now look at those two men, standing side by side at the open door of heaven, almost persuaded to enter. How similar their situation! Who would not have regarded the prospect of the nominal believer as the most encouraging; but in a few moments "the door was shut;" one had entered, and the other was upon the outside. How fearfully have their paths since separated! How much more so will they separate in all coming eternity!

But with the young, among whom this hour of decision is usually passed, *pleasure* in some form has usually more charms than either wealth or fame.

Two young men, who were intimate friends, were pursuing an academical course of study together, when their attention, with several of their schoolmates, was called to the subject of religion. They continued for some time deeply and similarly impressed, and were brought apparently near to the kingdom of God. To all human appearance one was as likely to become a Christian as the other.

At length one of them yielded the controversy, accepted of salvation through grace, and was made partaker of the heavenly gift. He is now a beloved and devoted minister, near Lake Michigan, and from him this account is received.

The other continued to resist, though the tears and entreaties of his friend were now added to other influences. He had been a votary of worldly pleasure, and he still looked with longing eyes to the ballroom. At length, as they walked one moonlight evening, and the powers of the world to come were set before him, they came to a large stone, upon which they sat. While Mr. K—— pressed his friend to an immediate decision, he rose, and lifting up his hand to heaven, exclaimed, "*I swear, I will have the pleasures of this world, come what may!*" "The door was shut." All Mr. K—— could do was to note the progress of his friend in silent anguish. He had deliberately rejected God, and God rejected him. He cast off fear, and restrained prayer—gave himself up to the riot and the dance with redoubled eagerness. But he was soon smitten with a disease, that crippled one of his limbs. He would then hobble to the ballroom and dance upon his crutches. The Lord smote his other limb, and disabled them both. He would then beg to be carried to the room, that he might see the gay company, and be a spectator of their mirth. The Lord sent the same disease to his eyes and destroyed his sight, so that he was obliged to be confined in a dark room for several years, where every beam of light was like a lance piercing his head. There he lingered, a poor, blind cripple till he died, reckless about eternity—all his chastisements having made no impression on his obdurate heart.

The same point was strikingly illustrated in the history of two brothers in Massachusetts. Together they were seeking salvation. They continued for several weeks, and often renewed a covenant, never to give over till they had obtained the religion of Jesus. Suddenly, one of them neglected meetings, and shunned the company of his brother. Soon after he received an invitation to a ball, and determined to accept it. His brother with tears endeavored to prevail

on him to change his purpose and attend a prayer-meeting, which was to be held on the same evening. He still adhered to his determination to attend the ball, but expressed a decided resolution to make a business of seeking salvation as soon as it was over. The time came, and the brothers went; one to the prayer-meeting—the other to the ball. Soon after the meeting commenced, the one who was present was brought to rejoice in the hope of pardoned sin. About the same time his brother was standing at the head of the ballroom, prepared to lead down the dance with the hand of a young lady; and, while the musician was tuning his viol, without a moment's warning, he sallied back and fell dead on the floor! "The door was shut" to both—the one taken, and the other left.

Even the blooming and delicate young lady is not exempt from this peril. Emily ——— was a member of a Bible class in Philadelphia. Many of the class were awakened and hopefully converted while she was quite young. Her own heart was deeply impressed, and she was sometimes almost persuaded to be a Christian. For many weeks she continued serious; but, at length, she began to be remiss and absent herself from the class, and after much entreaty to be more attentive, she left the class entirely. She went into the company of giddy associates, became fond of dress and amusements, and hardened her heart against every serious consideration.

When about seventeen years of age, she was seized with a rapid consumption. She awoke to a consciousness of her condition, and found herself unprepared to die. The pastor called and found her pale and emaciated, in the last stages of consumption, which had made dreadful ravages upon her constitution. She was greatly affected at his visit, and exclaimed, "O, father S——, have you found me at last! I have often avoided seeing you, but I can fly no more.

Here you find me dying. I have no expectation of recovery, and I have no hope. I have lived without God and without hope, and now I must die the same. O, sir, what a dreadful condition I am in! Five years ago, I had pardon and salvation offered me. Five years ago, when Ann —— and Eliza H—— gave their hearts to God, the Spirit strove with me powerfully. I was almost persuaded to be a Christian; and O, what a blessed thing it would have been! But I left the class, went into wild company, and followed the fashions of the world. Thus I grieved away the Holy Spirit. But my heart has never been at rest: I have had no happiness in sin; and now what I feared has come upon me. My heart is so hard I cannot repent, and, (bursting into tears,) like Esau, I have sold my birthright. I am a reprobate. I must lie down in everlasting sorrow. I cannot pray; and if I could, I should not be heard."

When it was proposed to read the Bible, she said, "It will do no good." "Shall we pray with you?" "*It will do no good.*" When conversed with, she still replied, "*It will do no good.*" The next day about noon she failed so fast, that her hands and feet began to grow cold, and when she felt the chill of death, she began to cry aloud, "O, I can't die; I am not fit to die; you must not let me die. If I die, I am lost for ever. O, send for the doctor; can't he save my life? O, must I die in my guilt!" Her cries were heard through the neighborhood. Her little brother burst into tears, and said, "O, Emily, why don't you pray to God? why don't you pray for mercy?" "O, there is no mercy for me: I have abused mercy. When God offered me mercy, I rejected it. Now there is no mercy for me. I have 'shut the door' of mercy against myself!" Thus she continued her cries, growing weaker and weaker, till her voice was hushed in death.

The diary of every minister of much experience would

present similar cases ; and when the great book of God shall be opened, and the history of all be exhibited, what affecting scenes will be presented to view !

On the other hand, how glorious the result of a different decision. Geo. L—— was a young man of great intellectual power and promise. While a senior in college, he staid at home one Sabbath day to devour a novel. But the Spirit of God met him, and produced such overwhelming conviction, that he was almost driven to a phrenzy of despair. When the tumult of his feelings had subsided, his reflections were still keen and painful. He relinquished his studies, and returned to his friends. He prayed and wept night and day in secret, afraid to disclose his feelings to any one. He suffered his minister to pass him without daring to speak. At length, by a mighty struggle, he called a pious sister aside, burst into a flood of tears, and disclosed his convictions. She threw her arms around his neck and wept for joy at such intelligence. Still, there was a deadly struggle between the convictions of conscience and his love of the world.

As if to let temptation exert its utmost power over him, he stole out by night, under all the pressure of his convictions, and took his way to a ballroom, where an assemblage of his well-known companions were engaged in the dance. He entered the hall, brilliant with lights and glittering with the attractions of beauty and fashion. He was welcomed with the smiles of the young and beautiful. "Can I give this up?" he asked himself: it was a moment big with eternal consequences. The scales were equiponderant. One decisive act was to settle his immortal destiny. "*I will give up the world—I will decide for God,*" he thought within himself, and, turning round, rushed out of the room, never more to join the fascinating dance.

He sought his chamber, while deep waters still broke

over him. There he found a letter from his pastor, and as he read it, his heart melted, he dropped on his knees and poured out his soul unto God. A flash of glory from the cross burst upon him, and Christ appeared a precious, *precious* SAVIOUR. "The door was shut." Having been long in the ministry, he is permitted to reckon more than a thousand hopeful conversions, as the fruit of his labors.

Thus unnumbered multitudes pass the crisis of the soul, when called by the Spirit of God to weigh deliberately their chosen objects of sinful pursuit with the claims of God to their supreme love and obedience.

But others approach STILL NEARER the door of mercy, and never enter. They feel that they would gladly give up all for Christ; earth has lost its charms; its transient pleasures have become tasteless; they sigh and mourn in secret places, but find no rest. The difficulty is, they have met a cross, which, in some form, lies directly across their path, and they are not quite willing to take it up. It may be some positive religious duty, humbling to the pride of the natural heart. Perhaps the man is the head of a family, and has never acknowledged God, or worshipped him with his household.

A farmer in M—— had lived to be the father of three children, while buried in the cares and toils of the farm. He seemed to care more for his oxen than his soul, and think more of his calves and lambs than of the spiritual welfare of his children. When his eldest daughter was about six years of age, his attention was called to the interests of his soul; and, as he was at work in the door-yard one morning, that little daughter came to him, and with the artless simplicity of childhood said, "Pa, why don't you pray with us?" As he made no reply, she continued, "We never heard you pray, pa—wont you pray with us?"

That simple appeal sunk into his heart. He went to his field, and; as he followed the plough, the question seemed to ring in his ears, "Why don't you pray with us?" It awoke unutterable reflections. He looked over the whole period that he had been a husband, and saw that he had done nothing for the spiritual welfare of his family. He remembered that he had taken far greater pains to sow good seed in his field, than in the hearts of his children. His tears fell in the furrow. When the toils of the day were ended, and he sat by the evening fireside, with the little group around him, that awful question came rushing upon him again, "Pa, why don't you pray with us?" A tempest of conflicting emotions raged within him. "I ought," he said to himself; "but can I? they know how worldly I have been—how wicked: my sins ——" It was the *crisis of his soul*. Almost weighed down to the earth, he took his Bible, read a portion of Scripture, and prostrated himself before the Lord. Having taken up the heaviest cross that lay in his way, it was easy to surrender all and enter upon the discharge of every Christian duty. He rose with a calm submission to the will of God, and determination to follow Christ. He has long been an active member of the church.

But others have not the responsibility of families, and to them the cross comes in another form. Perhaps it is in *disclosing their feelings upon the subject*. They wish to become Christians, but they would do it secretly—not even their dearest friends must know it, till they are fully established in Christian hope and joy.

The writer will never forget the emotion produced at a religious meeting, during a revival in N——, by the following narrative, related by Rev. Joseph Whiting, now gone to his gracious reward. Said he, "During a revival of religion in Yale College, several years ago, two young men were awakened at the same time. One of them had been re-

markably correct in his general deportment, and was amiable in his disposition: the other was a wild, frolicsome, sportive youth. As they walked one evening, they agreed to call upon the professor of theology and make known to him their anxiety, and seek advice. They came to the gate, when the amiable young man leaned over the fence and said, 'I believe I wont go in; I don't know as it will do me any good.' His companion replied, 'You can do as you please; but, for myself, I feel that I need all the counsel that men of experience can give: I am resolved to go in.' Here they parted. The former passed on. He smothered the flame in his own breast, and shrunk from the cross and from Christian counsel. He was soon found to be declining, not only in religious feeling, but in correctness of moral deportment; and before the time to graduate arrived, he had wandered so far as to be expelled from college for immorality: he sunk rapidly in vice, went to the West Indies, and there died, not long after, a miserable sot. The other went in, opened his heart, and received direction in the way of life. He soon found peace in believing, entered the ministry, and *now stands before you*, a redeemed sinner, saved by grace."

Thus unnumbered multitudes pass the crisis when standing at the very threshold of heaven. Our limits would not allow an illustration of every form in which this cross is presented: it may be the confession of an injury to the person, character, or property of another; it may be forgiveness of an enemy; it may be to make restitution for some fraudulent transaction, or renounce a favorite system of belief; but whatever it is, heaven is only to be entered by taking it up, and the soul stands and trembles in agony, till the awful decision is made, and "the door is shut." So terrible is the conflict, that often strong men, educated, able, honorable men, having great pride of character to be

slain, are deprived of physical strength and prostrated on the earth.

With many, the scale is turned by the *influence of friends*. Christ has said, "He that cometh to me, and hateth not (that is, comparatively) father and mother, and wife and children, he cannot be my disciple;" but the test is a severe one, and multitudes make shipwreck of their souls upon it.

Mr. and Mrs. —, very respectable people in New York, were awakened to feel the terrors of the world to come, but could not be prevailed upon then to decide for Christ, for fear of offending Mrs. —'s parents, who were Universalists. They expected soon to remove to Ohio, and intended then to become religious. Soon after their removal they were surrounded by a powerful revival. Their impenitent friends and neighbors were converted, and added their entreaties to those of the church and pastor, mingled with prayers and tears, that Mr. and Mrs. — would join them. They replied that they were left of the Spirit of God, to a hard heart and a reprobate mind. They continued indifferent to all around them, manifesting the utmost recklessness in regard to the realities of eternity. Shortly after, Mrs. — was brought to a dying bed. "I called to see her," says the pastor, "and found her more hardened than before, and in that awful state she was hurried unexpectedly into the presence of her Judge. Mr. — is still living, and to all human appearance, a vessel of wrath fitted to destruction."

How different the result with the daughter of an English nobleman. When her attention was directed to the salvation of the soul, she forsook every worldly pleasure and gave herself up to serious consideration and retirement. Her father, a doting parent, but a Christless worldling, was filled with grief and mortification that his daughter should relin-

quish all her prospects of worldly preferment and become a gloomy Christian. He resorted to every device to allure her back to the gayeties of life, but in vain. At length, he invited a few select young ladies to his house, with the intention of beguiling her into a performance upon the piano, in which she was very distinguished, with the hope that some animating waltz or hornpipe might reclaim her to the world. Her young associates all understood the plan, and united in the effort. The evening was passing in pleasant conversation when music was proposed; one and another of the young ladies were called upon, and gratified the company with their enchanting strains. At length the *daughter* was called for: all was expectation; to refuse would be a violation of good manners; to comply, they thought the accomplishment of their wishes. She took her seat at the instrument, and ran up and down the keys as none but she could do. The noble lord looked certain of success; when, mellowing down the thrilling tones of her voluntary into a rich and melodious accompaniment, she sung with a clear, seraphic voice, the hymn of which the following is a part:

“No room for mirth or trifling here,
 For worldly hope or worldly fear,
 If life so soon is gone :
 If now the Judge is at the door,
 And all mankind must stand before
 Th’ inexorable throne.

No matter which my thoughts employ,
 A moment’s misery or joy ;
 But O, when both shall end,
 Where shall I find my destined place ?
 Shall I my everlasting days
 With fiends, or angels spend ?

Nothing is worth a thought beneath,
But how I may escape the death
That never, never dies :
How make my own election sure,
And when I fail on earth, secure
A mansion in the skies."

It was a victory, but not such as the nobleman expected ; for, as she turned from the piano, at the close of the song, he was bathed in tears, and from that time became a zealous advocate of the cause which he had so heartily despised. She was not only established herself upon the rock, but permitted to draw her beloved parent with her.

In other cases this crisis is brought about by special providences. A college classmate of the writer, the son of a wealthy gentleman in P——, was a miserable devotee of pleasure. The bowl, the dance, the jovial club, were his chief delight. He resisted the efforts of Christian friends for his salvation, and few wished to make themselves the butt of ridicule by attempting to talk with him about his soul. All the hallowed influences of a little season of refreshing in college, made no sensible impression upon him. Even the prayers and tears of a pious mother seemed to be lost.

At length C——'s seat at the college exercises was empty ; and it was understood that he was summoned away to stand by the bedside of that mother, apparently drawing nigh to death. Several weeks elapsed before his return ; and when he arrived, the badge of mourning evinced that a sore earthly bereavement had befallen him. Sadness sat upon the brow that had been a stranger to care and grief. "Is it the effect of his affliction, or is it a discovery of himself?" was the anxious inquiry of all who felt for his salvation. Nor did that inquiry long remain unanswered. "Where is your prayer-meeting to-night?" inquired he of an humble follower of Christ, that before he would have disdained to

greet with respect. He was pointed to the room. When the hour arrived he was there; and never shall I forget the interest of that hour, when the proud Edward C—— bowed the knee with us in that upper chamber. There he told us that the dying counsel and prayers of his mother, together with her joyful and triumphant death, had wrought, through grace, that change in him which all other means had failed to do. He is now a devoted minister of the Gospel.

But how *hopeless* the condition of those who at such a moment hesitate, and turn their backs upon the open door of heaven. Even the heathen have a proverb, that "Whom affliction will not soften, the gods abandon as desperate." Thousands look back to such a period, as shedding the last ray of light upon their darkened way. When stripped of worldly wealth, laid upon a bed of anguish, or weeping over the cold remains of some cherished child, companion, or friend, they felt the transitoriness of all earthly joys, and were almost persuaded to be Christians.

But once more: untold multitudes pass this fearful crisis in seasons of *special attention to the subject of religion* in the community where they live. The thousands who at such times are sealed to the day of redemption, may be known by their public avowal of Christ; but the thousands who seal their everlasting ruin, will never be known till the great book of God is opened. What is the general aspect of such a season? When the Spirit is poured out upon a people, the house of God is crowded. Breathless stillness pervades the assembly. Truth penetrates more or less deeply the mass of the congregation. Many are awakened, and perhaps many converted; but what becomes of the remainder? They sink back into indifference, and few inquire, "Will it be possible to renew them again unto repentance?" Before another season of refreshing comes, many have passed away; and when it comes, they who

felt most deeply before, are not the persons to feel most deeply again. Ministers of the largest experience upon the subject, give it as the result of their observation, that persons hardly ever are awakened after passing through two or three seasons of the outpouring of the Spirit. At such a time, all the instrumentalities provided by Infinite Benevolence to affect the heart, are brought to bear upon it. The Gospel is preached with earnestness, power, and frequency; Christians pray much and with strong faith; private conversations are frequent, pointed, and faithful; friends and associates are converted, and add their solicitations with all the ardor of their first love. It becomes the universal theme of conversation; the tide of worldliness is arrested; the Spirit breathes upon the soul: and if all this proves insufficient, and the stubborn heart resists, is it wonderful that the Master of the house should rise up and "shut to the door?"

Having now traced some of those forms in which this crisis is met, let us pause and contemplate the scene before us.

How *critical the position of a serious, reflecting sinner!* He stands upon the summit of a hill, pondering which side he will descend. It is said that the waters of the Missouri and Columbia rivers originate within a few yards of each other, upon the top of the Rocky mountains. As the rain descends upon that lofty point, how slight a breath of air from east or west will waft the drops to one side or the other; but when they have commenced their downward course upon the mountain side, how hard to arrest their progress. They mingle with other streams, dashing and foaming over precipices, and through dark ravines, till they are merged in the deep current of a mighty river, rolling with resistless power towards the ocean. Those upon the west side are borne out to be rocked upon the ever-heaving

bosom of the broad and calm Pacific. Those upon the east, are hurled into the raging billows of the stormy Atlantic, to be made the sport of a thousand tempests. At their commencement, how near and how much alike; but in their end how widely separated!

Impenitent friend, in whose bosom a faithful monitor is *now* heard, saying, "Listen to the voice of wisdom; enter, while you may, the gate of life," it may be that you now stand upon the top of that mountain. On the one side of you, far out of sight, lies the ocean of God's love, with which the river of life is connected—an ocean shoreless, cloudless, pacific; on the other side, the foaming billows of his wrath, equally shoreless, sunless, tempestuous; and a muddy stream rushes from your feet into that bottomless abyss. A breath may convey you now to one of these streams or the other. A heedless word, a look, a laugh, a sneer, an amusement, a trifling book, a business call, may waft you to the declivity towards that boisterous ocean. A tear, a sigh, a kind word, a pressure of the hand of Christian sympathy, a verse of the Bible, a page of pious reading, under the blessing of the Spirit, may bear you to the other side. O, beware, for your soul's sake beware, to what influences you yield at this moment. Decide for God and heaven while you may. Embark upon that river of life, and drink of its soul-refreshing waters. Linger not on that fearful summit, where one step may plunge you into that tide whose dark waters will bear you to a hopeless, returnless distance from God, from peace, from heaven!

And how responsible the position of those associated with a sinner at these crises of his being. The weight of a finger may push him over the brink of endless woe. A word, an act, a look of Christian solicitude, may win him to glory and to God. At such a moment how cautiously should the Christian guard his life, his tongue, his heart, that no move-

ment of his may weaken the claims of God upon the sinner's conscience. How agonizing to the Christian will be the reflection, "My son, my daughter, came to the open door of heaven, and were just ready to enter in; but my levity, or worldliness, or silence, discouraged them. They have passed by, and that door is shut for ever!" "My impenitent husband, or friend, was almost persuaded; he seemed dejected and reserved, and I attempted to *cheer* him, but not with pious counsel and tears. He has passed the crisis, and is shut out of the kingdom of God!"

May the Holy Spirit awaken you, dear reader, to know the time of your merciful visitation, and attend to the things that belong to your peace before they shall be hid for ever from your eyes!

THE

INFIDEL'S CONFESSION.

A NARRATIVE,

FROM THE CONNECTICUT EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

AT a meeting for prayer and religious conference, the conversation turned on some of the great doctrines of the Gospel, when a man present, who had long been known as an opposer of religion, made the inquiry, whether a person who is truly seeking after God, has a fear that any purpose of God will prevent his salvation. The question being answered in the negative, with explanations, he replied, to the surprise of all, "I am satisfied."

On the next Sabbath, this man made to the congregation the following public declaration in writing.

"It having pleased the kind Sovereign of the universe to open my eyes, in some measure, to see the depravity and poison of my own heart; to see my desperate situation while opposed to God, and to the way of salvation by a kind Saviour; to see my total inability to rectify my own heart, or recover myself from the fatal disease of sin and death; to see, if I am ever relieved from the plague of a proud and vitiated heart, and made to rejoice in the salvation of Christ, it must be wholly owing to the forfeited mercy and unmerited grace of a compassionate Redeemer: with these things fastened on my mind, and to abide, I hope, as long as I live, I would wish to make some communications to this religious assembly, which I hope may be kindly received by them.

"For several years past my mind and affections have been much alienated from the new and living way of salvation by Jesus Christ. I have fallen into the most uncomfortable doubts of his divinity; have doubted the authenticity of the blessed word; have embraced irreligious and hateful errors; have turned my back on the blessed Redeemer, while his friendly hand has reached out a pardon to me, and urged me to take it, even while his head was filled with the dew,

and his locks with the drops of the night. I have run away from the blessed God, while his tender mercies were all around me, and with a sweet voice saying unto me, Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die? I have lived in dreadful security, and stopped my ears against the most melting invitations of the Saviour of the world. I have spent much time in reading books which were calculated to shake my belief in that holy word, which, had I sincerely believed, would have given me great comfort in God, and served in a great measure to smooth the rugged path of life. I have been guilty of many errors in sentiment, and in practice. I have slighted the blessed religion of Jesus Christ, the ministers of the Gospel, and professors of religion. I have spoken lightly of the religious attention in this place, and have neglected to attend religious conferences, which, by God's Holy Spirit, are undoubtedly instrumental of true conviction. I have been given to many open immoralities, and have not been circumspect in my behavior, to set a good example before those who took knowledge of me.

“And now, in every instance wherein I have offended my heavenly Father and mankind, I would freely acknowledge my great sin and numerous transgressions, imploring the forgiveness of that Almighty Being, against whom I have unreasonably, and without the least provocation, so often transgressed, and who only can bestow pardon and eternal life on the chief of sinners. It appears one of the most distinguished mercies, that when people have run into error, and marred themselves by sin, there is a Being to whom they may apply, with broken hearts, and who will blot out their sin with his own blood, and give them to eat of the bread of life. ‘He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.’ Certainly there can be no exchange so happy as this: to part with a proud and wicked heart for a humble and sanctified one; to resign our enmity for love, our selfishness for benevolence, our filthy self-righteousness for the spotless robes of a glorious Mediator, and our love of sin and death for holiness and eternal life.

“With the foregoing considerations on my mind, I will implore a prayer-hearing God to lend a listening ear to my requests, which I pray God to help me make with sincerity. O God, my first desire is for a rectified heart, to have sin

slain, and a principle of true holiness and love to God implanted in its stead, and a heart of constant repentance and unfeigned sorrow for sin. I pray God to grant me, all my life, a deep sense of my own unworthiness and ill desert; I pray to realize it as long as I live; to lie in the very dust, at the feet of the great Sovereign of the universe; to extol, magnify, and glorify the riches of his moral rectitude, his glorious attributes, his infinite perfections; to entreat of him, for Christ's sake, to give me his blessed Spirit, to lead and guide me into all truth, to make me steadfast in a life of religion, to save me from unbelief, from backsliding, and apostasy; and finally, to engage me to resolve, in the strength of the great Redeemer, to take his yoke on me, which is easy, and his burden, which is light, and learn of him, who is meek and lowly, that I may find rest to my soul.

“I hope that God, by his great mercy and rich grace, has given me to hunger for the bread of life, and thirst for living waters; that he has given me to see that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and that there is salvation in no other way. And now, before God and this solemn assembly, and I hope with a broken and sincere heart, I renounce the heart-tormenting and heaven-provoking principles of infidelity, so dishonoring to God and pernicious to mankind. But before I close this writing, I must drop a few hints to those with whom I have associated in infidelity for some years past.

“You will not view me as reflecting on you, for I sincerely pity you. I tremble for the fatal mistake you are making. Is deism a good scheme to embrace in death? Is there comfort in it of a happy immortality? Will it make a dying hour serene and joyful? Can you expect to find a smiling God out of Christ? Can you be satisfied that infidel principles are calculated to humble the proud and rebellious hearts of mankind, and to exalt the Most High? Will you not be persuaded to abandon a scheme which excludes prayer and shuts out all heavenly contemplation? Can you bring up your dear children, and never pray to God for them, nor mention a word concerning religion and the great God, for fear their minds may be prepossessed in favor of a scheme, of which, if they had come to riper years, they would discover the fraud, and disbelieve it for themselves? When your offspring come before you with wishful countenances, asking for bread, do you never think of the bread of life;

that their souls are famishing while their bodies are nourished?

“I will mention but one more consideration, and that a dreadful and awful one. You must meet your beloved children before God’s bar, and there answer how you have conducted towards them. Should they, in consequence of your total neglect to instruct them in religion, be doomed to a dreadful hell, will they not shriek out these heart-rending words, with horrid emphasis, ‘Father, you never told me of this dreadful place—you never told me of a glorious escape, a glorious relief by Jesus Christ—and must I lie in this dismal burning lake? O unhappy, that you was ever made an instrument of my existence!’ Now, will you come to the loving Saviour, and bring your whole families with you? There is bread enough in our Father’s house. I pray God that he will in great mercy be pleased to open your eyes, to discern wondrous things in that law which you have rejected, and to see ineffable beauty in that Saviour whom you have disowned.”

The above communication was exhibited, Lord’s day, April 14, 1799, to a numerous audience. Many of them were much affected, and most of the infidels alluded to were also present. The author of the communication says, that being at meeting on the Lord’s day, hearing the names of ten persons called, who were propounded to join the church, his mind was struck with the cutting idea, that an eternal separation was about to take place between people of the same congregation, neighborhood, and family. And as there was room enough, he could see nothing to hinder him from coming to Christ too, but his own unwillingness. These were about the first of his impressions. His convictions continued, and increased for a number of weeks, until he was brought, as he confessed, to see his desperate situation, while opposed to God, and the way of salvation by a kind Saviour; and to see that Christ was “the way, the truth, and the life,” and cordially, as he hopes, to accept of him.

JEREMIAH HALLOCK.

WEST SIMSBURY, August 18, 1800.

APPEAL IN BEHALF

OF THE

CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

BY S. S. SCHMUCKER, D. D.

FELLOW-CITIZENS—We address you as those whom the Creator has invested with the power of moral agents, and to whom he has granted free institutions; as those, on whom he has devolved the high but arduous duty of self-government. No despot controls our civil interests: no bigot has power to infringe our rights of conscience. We are as yet secure in the enjoyment of life, liberty, and the pursuit of temporal happiness, under the progressive lights of reason and science; and in the prosecution of our higher, our immortal interests, according to the dictates of our own consciences, none daring to molest us or make us afraid. Both these interests, however, need to be guarded against dangerous enemies, and both are materially affected by the institution to which we now invite your serious attention. We therefore need no apology for addressing you on the subject of the CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

The word of God, we believe, inculcates the divine obligation to consecrate one day in seven to rest from secular toil, and to exercises of religious devotion. This was enacted at the end of the creative week, for reasons equally applicable to all nations and all generations: "Because in six days the Lord created the heavens and the earth, and rested on the seventh from all the works which he had made." And as he created the heavens and the earth, not for the

Jews only, but for all nations, so the example of his resting and sanctifying the seventh day, must also have been designed for all. Here we find the original and formal institution of the Sabbath. In Exod. 20: 8-11, it is evidently spoken of as already existing and known. The language, "*Remember* the Sabbath day," etc., implies a previous acquaintance with it. The same is true of Exod. 16. Moreover, the declaration of the Saviour, that the Sabbath was made for *man*, forbids the idea of its restriction to the Israelites alone, and implies that it was intended for all mankind, and therefore appropriately instituted at that early day. That the Sabbath was appointed at the time just stated, is moreover sustained by the fact, that the division of time into weeks was found among the most ancient nations, as far back as history and tradition extend. It was found among the Egyptians, Assyrians, Phœnicians, Ancient Chinese, Indians, Arabians, and others. No other rational account of the general prevalence of the hebdomadal division of time in the earliest ages of antiquity can be given, than that it was spread by tradition from the family of Noah, who had derived it from our first parents.

We claim not that the identical hours must be observed over the whole earth; for, unless the night were employed, this would be physically impossible. Had the popular theory of antiquity proved true, that the earth is an extended plain, the same twelve hours might have been observed for the active duties of the Sabbath by all men. But how can the inhabitants of a revolving sphere, illuminated from one fixed point, all have their Sabbath *day*, or any other *day*, at the same time? We need scarcely remind any of you, that if colonies had simultaneously emigrated from Eden, and proceeded half round the globe, they would have been involved in midnight, whilst the meridian sun illumined their starting point: and if they continued their progress till they completed the circuit, each having faithfully kept

the seventh day as Sabbath, they would find themselves observing different days. But though the simultaneousness of sabbatic observance will be conceded as unnecessary, it is evident, that whilst these divergant colonies might both regularly observe the seventh day, counting from the time they started, yet when they met, as they would be observing different days, they must either have two conflicting Sabbaths, or one of them must change its day and adopt that of the other. Since the Creator has made it physically impossible to observe the same hours, or even, in some cases, the same day ; does he not thus evidently teach us, that it was not unalterably the *seventh* day of the week, but the religious observance of the *seventh portion* of time which essentially constitutes his Sabbath ; while, in the Old Testament dispensation, the seventh day was confessedly appointed ? During the Mosaic dispensation, the same proportion of time was reiterated, with various ceremonial injunctions, and the Sabbath, like the rainbow of old, employed as a type or sign to the Israelites, without altering its primitive relation to other nations. This ceremonial character and its appendages, which were peculiar to the Mosaic economy, and “were shadows of things to come, of which Christ is the body,” Paul tells the Colossians (2 : 16) were abolished in the New Testament, with the other types and shadows of the old ; but the primitive design and obligation remained to sanctify the seventh portion of time. The inspired apostles, doubtless for wise reasons, selected the day of our Lord’s resurrection, the first day of the week, for their stated seventh-day religious services, perhaps to connect the Saviour’s triumph over death and the powers of hell, with the perpetual public devotions of Christians, and possibly to prevent the ceremonial aspects of the Jewish Sabbath from becoming connected with that of Christians, to which there would have been a constant tendency, if the same day had been retained.

That the inspired apostles, and primitive Christians under their guidance, selected the first day for their regular weekly public exercises, we think, needs no labored argument. Luke the evangelist, not only tells us, that the disciples came together on the first day to break bread, that is, to celebrate the communion, but he says, on the first day of the week, *when* they came together for this purpose, Paul preached to them; implying that it was their custom so to convene. Paul also directs the Christians of Corinth and Galatia to hold their charitable collections on the first, or, as St. John calls it, "the Lord's day," for the obvious reason, that then they were assembled. 1 Cor. 16: 1, 2. Indeed, the resurrection of Christ was so decidedly the culminating and crowning scene in the work of redemption, it was so obviously the day of triumph for Christ, for Christianity, and for Christians, that the disciples from the beginning very naturally regarded it as the day most closely connected with their religion and worship, and observed it as such. And the divine Saviour himself seems to have evinced his approbation of the practice. We have no account of his having met with them after his resurrection on the Jewish Sabbath; but every instance of his appearance to them was on the first day of the week, on the Lord's day. It was on this day that he favored their assembly with his presence, and pronounced his benediction, "Peace be with you." It was on this day that he poured out his Spirit upon them, and bestowed the gift of tongues; and it was on this day, also, that he revealed himself and the prophetic history of his church to St. John at Patmos. Luke 24: 36. Levit. 23: 15, 16. Acts 2: 1.

That this day was religiously observed by Christians, in regular succession during the first three centuries, is evident from the testimony of Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Cyprian. Eusebius, of the fourth century, tells us that Christians were so well known

by the fact of their observing the Lord's day, that the heathen, when wishing to know whether any person was a disciple of Christ, decided by his answer to the inquiry, *Dost thou observe the Lord's day?* In the fourth century, Constantine, the first Christian emperor, enacted civil laws, requiring abstinence from secular labor on the Lord's day; and from that time to the present, similar prohibitions, more or less stringent, are embodied in the code of every Christian nation.

Nor do these United States form an exception. It is true, our national constitution provided that Congress shall not give the preference of legal establishment to any form of religion, by which is meant form of Christianity; for Christianity was at that time legally acknowledged in all the colonies, and in several of them, one or other Christian denomination was established by law in preference to all others. But though they made no formal enactment either of Christianity or the Christian Sabbath, by implication they acknowledged both. The constitution did not revoke the well-known existing acknowledgment of Christianity in the State governments, and itself provides that Sunday shall not be counted in the ten days, within which bills are ordinarily to be returned by the President. And the same men who framed that instrument, also decreed that all the public offices of the Legislative, Judicial, and Executive departments of government shall be closed on that day. The government also directs all chaplains in the navy to perform service twice on the Lord's day, and even prescribes the infliction of penalties, if any members of the crew are guilty of disorderly conduct on such occasions. In many States of our Union, where the day of the Lord is grossly desecrated, the legal provision is satisfactory, if faithfully executed. It is only the negative observation of the Sabbath, abstinence from secular labor, that civil government has a right to enforce: far be the day, when our rulers shall venture the

dictation of any particular religious exercises ; and should the attempt ever be made, we trust there will be patriotism enough in the land to defeat it. While yet a British colony, as early as 1705, the service of civil process was prohibited by law, in Pennsylvania ; and about ten years after our independence was achieved, in 1794, a general prohibition of all worldly employment on the Lord's day was enacted. Similar laws were passed by other State Legislatures at an early day. It remains for you, fellow-citizens, to give efficacy to these laws as well by your faithful example, as by the infliction of their penalties on transgressors.

And can it be questioned, at this late day, whether this recognition of the Christian Sabbath was the dictate of wisdom in our fathers ? Can it have been the result of weak-headed superstition ; or rather, was it not the product of matured civil wisdom, and enlightened political philosophy ? Do we not recognize in it the action of minds capable of rising above the clouds of prejudice and sense, and enjoying a pure and just perception of the highest interests of humanity, not only present, but prospective, and eternal ?

To decide this question, let us inquire what are the influences of the Sabbath on all the cardinal interests of man, in his physical, intellectual, and moral nature. What are called our physical wants and comforts, constitute by far the larger portion of the necessities and happiness of the mass of the community. Whether the observance of the Sabbath tends to relieve the one and secure the other, therefore, presents itself as a most pertinent inquiry to every friend of his country and humanity.

This is not simply a theological or political question, but a vital topic of personal and individual economy. Physicians of great eminence and number have attested that the necessity of a Sabbath is a law of our physical nature, written by the finger of God on our mental and bodily constitution. The Sabbath is emphatically the poor man's boon : it relieves

the laborer from worldly toil, from corroding cares of business, and from incessant physical efforts; thus promoting health of body, and vigor of mind. Experience has clearly proved the universal necessity of something like a hebdomadal recess for permanent health and vigor; has evinced the claims of the seventh day of rest to be founded in nature as well as revelation. The bow, never unstrung, loses its elasticity. Labor unremitted consumes the vital powers of body and mind. If, therefore, man has no right to commit suicide, he is not authorized to labor on the Sabbath, for by so doing he must abridge his life. God, who knows what is in man, compels us to daily intermissions of labor, by the alternation of day and night. But this being insufficient, he has also appointed one day of rest in seven, by which the recuperative powers of the system are preserved, and life prolonged.

Dr. Harrison says, "Incessant toil wears out the energies of man's limited strength." All experience is expressive of this universal proposition, that a longer life and a greater degree of health are the sure results of a careful regard to the commandment, "*Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.*" Dr. Mussey, of Ohio Medical College, a close and enlightened observer of nature, affirms, "There cannot be a reasonable doubt, that under the due observance of the Sabbath, life would, on the average, be prolonged more than one-seventh of its whole period." Dr. Farre, in his testimony before the Committee of the British House of Commons, maintains these two positions: 1. "That men who labor but six days in a week, will be more healthy and live longer, than those who labor seven; and 2. That they will do more work, and do it in a better manner." And the distinguished Dr. Warren, of Boston, confessedly standing in the foremost ranks of his profession, says, "I concur entirely in the opinion expressed by Dr. Farre, whom I know to be a physician of the highest respectability." Scores

of other physicians of the first rank in our country and in England, have testified to the same positions.

Thus it is evident, that the religion of the Sabbath secures the temporal as well as the spiritual interests of man, by reinvigorating his physical energies. But it also advances the same object by increased moral impulse. With motives drawn from eternity, it enforces those habits of integrity, industry, frugality, and forethought, in "providing for them that are of our own household," which naturally secure the comfort of families and the prosperity of nations. Does the amount of our profits depend on the labor performed by us and those in our employment? It is the observance of the Sabbath which enables us to accomplish more than its neglect. Does the success of our business depend on the honesty and trustworthiness of those to whom portions of it must be confided? What can better promote this object than the ordinances of the Sabbath, by which they and all their doings through the week are statedly brought under the all-seeing eye of Jehovah, and fidelity is impressed on them by the anticipated retributions of eternity? How many thousands of dollars are lost by employers, in little petty sums, purloined by laborers and clerks, who would never allow themselves such liberties, if their consciences were quickened by the stated ministrations of the Sabbath! And how many thousands of cases of gross dishonesty, of larceny, and even robbery, may be traced to the neglect of the restraining influence of the Sabbath! This sacred institution has therefore a just and urgent claim on all the laboring and business classes, and ought to receive their hearty and efficient support.

But man is an intellectual as well as a physical being; he partakes of the nature of angels as well as of the lower animals, and it becomes us as philanthropists and as Christians to inquire, how this second department of our interests is affected by the Sabbath. So intimate is the connection

between soul and body, so various and constant the reciprocal influence of the one upon the other, as to have led Dr. Rush to maintain, that for all the purposes of medical practice, they may be treated as one. Without admitting the philosophical absurdity, which he does not affirm, that matter and mind, that flesh and thoughts are the same, the intimacy of their connection, the strength of their sympathies, and the constancy of their reciprocal influence, are matters of daily observation. Does not that which fatigues the body, also disqualify the mind for action? And is not occasional stated rest as much a matter of constitutional necessity, as deeply engraven as a law of nature and of God on the structure of the mind as of the body? All the testimony we have adduced for the necessity and advantage of bodily rest, is equally applicable to the mind. Indeed, if there is any difference, the necessity for occasional mental relaxation is greater. The neglect of Sabbath rest, not only impairs the efficiency of those who are guilty of violence to this law of their nature, but has often unhinged the most powerful intellects, and prematurely extinguished the most brilliant lights of literature and science. Among the former we may mention, as a melancholy example, Lord Castlereagh of England; and of the latter, if we are rightly informed, a late eminent jurist of Pennsylvania, whose lifestrings seem to have been snapped by over-tension, unrelieved by Sabbath intermissions. Do not such solemn cases present a powerful appeal to the sons of genius, in the different professions? If they neither fear God nor regard man, yet for their own sakes ought they not to regard this divine institution? Nor are these cases rare. The nervous system especially, requires rest. "The sacred quietness of the Sabbath," says Dr. Harrison, "takes off from the brain that excessive fulness of blood, which the mental and bodily exercise of six days is calculated to produce." "And the working of the mind," says Dr. Farre, "in one

continued train of thought, is destructive of life in the most distinguished class of society, and senators themselves need reform in this particular. I have observed many of them destroyed by neglecting this economy in life."

But the whole of man is not discussed, when his physical and intellectual nature has been viewed. The highest, the noblest, the moral powers yet remain: those which, rightly improved, make the good man kin to angels; those which give proper direction to all his energies on earth, and qualify him for taking his place in the ranks of the ministering spirits in heaven. It is these powers that the Sabbath is especially calculated to cultivate. These it elevates and links in sympathy to the throne of God, and by thus bringing our whole life into near relation with eternity and heaven, diffuses the fragrance of the better world over the occupations and enjoyments of this. The faithful consecration of the Sabbath gives a higher direction to the efforts of the individual; it purifies and elevates the intercourse and enjoyments of the domestic and social circles; it is a balance-wheel to the nation amid the heavings and commotions of the political elements; it promises to bind nations together in the bond of one united brotherhood; and it conducts the Church universal, as the light of the world, through the wilderness of life, to that eternal Sabbath in heaven, of which it is on earth the delightful emblem. Let us contemplate these influences a little more in detail.

Must we not all concede, that man, as an individual, has various adverse influences to contend with? Do not his passions naturally tend to earth? Is he not in danger, in the pursuit of earthly enjoyments and possessions, to forget his eternal destiny? Amid the fascinations of pleasure, the delusions and infatuation of wealth and honor and power, is he not in danger of regarding these as ends instead of means, and mistaking them for his chief good? How necessary and salutary to him must be the influence of the Sabbath,

which, by statedly interrupting his career, and inviting him to the house of God, teaches him the guilt and danger of his error, shows him the proper use of every earthly good, and points him to that hereafter where he must render an account, not only of all the earthly advantages he possessed, but also of the manner in which he acquired them!

How many individuals, through neglect of Sabbath ordinances, have had the sense of moral obligation effaced from their minds, and, in an hour of temptation, have fallen into dishonesty or other crime, involving themselves and their family in ruin and disgrace! In how many Sabbath-breaking families are there discord and envyings and jealousy, which the ordinances of God's holy day would allay! What can be better calculated to commend to husband and wife mutual forbearance and affection, to teach children to love and obey their parents, to cultivate mutual affection for each other, and thus to make the family on earth, in some humble measure, resemble the family in heaven? May not many unhappy families here see the cause of their misfortunes? Need parents wonder at the disobedience, or dishonesty or dissipation of their children, if they have withheld from them the restraining, purifying influence of Sabbath ordinances, if they have taught them by their own example, that the doctrines and duties inculcated by religion are of no importance?

What better corrective can be applied to the corrosions of envy, jealousy, and strife in social circles, than to have their members statedly convened in the house of God, and to sit under the purifying, harmonizing, elevating influence of the Gospel? There the rich and the poor are brought together, where the distinctions of riches are forgotten. There all are taught humility in the presence of Jehovah, whilst the infinite sublimity and elevation of the Creator over his creatures, throws into the shade the little hair-breadth differences between the creatures themselves. There

rulers are taught to feel on an equality with those they govern, to feel that they have a ruler over them, to whom they must render an account for their public and official, no less than their private actions. In short, the interests and influence of the Sabbath are identical with those of religion itself, and of the church of God. Well did the French infidels understand this connection, when, during their reign of terror, they abolished the Sabbath, and substituted the tenth day for a time of rest, as the surest method of obliterating Christianity itself from the minds of men.

Far be it from us to stigmatize as infidels all who differ from us on the sanctification of the Sabbath ; yet it cannot be denied, that just in as far as they promote its desecration, they actually undermine one of the main pillars of the Christian church, and sacrifice the highest interests of our race. Is it not mainly by the exercises of the Sabbath, that sinners are converted from the paths of error and added to the people of God ? That members of the church are instructed in their duties and quickened in their discharge ? That they are taught to feel their high and holy calling to be the salt of the earth and the lights of the world ? In short, is it not by the stated ordinances of the Lord's day, that the Christian church publishes and extends those high and holy principles of moral purity, benevolence and charity, of good will towards men and glory to God in the highest, by which the family of man are to be united in one universal brotherhood ; by which all violence and oppression, and wars and rumors of wars are eventually to be banished from the earth, and this world of sin and misery to be brought under the benign and happy reign of the Prince of Peace ? Surely, then, the highest interests of all men are wrapped up in the proper consecration of the Sabbath, nor can he be regarded as their enlightened friend, who allows himself directly or indirectly to lend his aid to bring into disrepute that ordinance of heaven, "*Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy.*"

If these views be correct, fellow-citizens, how greatly is it to be deplored, that so many in our land yet act in violation of them! Of the openly vicious, who spend the day in rioting and drunkenness, we do not now speak. They can be effectually restrained only by the arm of the law. But how many, who are otherwise moral men and good citizens, desecrate this holy day! How many merchants travel to or from the marts of business! How many farmers on the highways deny to themselves and their teams that rest which God designed for them, and which they have no right to withhold from the irrational animals that toil for their benefit! And are there not great men who have lent their influence to Sabbath desecration? Do not some dignified judges employ the Sabbath in reaching their place of business, thus lending their potential example to promote that immorality which they are wont officially to deplore? Yea, are there not some professed disciples of him who was the Lord of the Sabbath, who allow themselves, for other than works of necessity and mercy, to invade the sacred hours of that holy day? We implore all of every class who feel guilty, to reflect upon the influence of their example. If it is allowable for you to disregard this holy day, why is it not equally so for all others? And what would thus become of the Lord's day, of the order of society, of the stability of our civil institutions, of the church of God, of the best interests of our race? The conservatory influence by which alone the Sabbath can be rescued from continued desecration, cannot be expected to emanate from the unprincipled and irreligious. It is therefore to those otherwise virtuous, to the disciples of Christ, and especially to ministers of the Gospel, that we make our appeal. We beseech you to unite your influence in sustaining the laws which prohibit all secular labor on the Sabbath, and to extend and deepen the popular conviction of the importance, benevolence, and salutary tendency of the proper observance of that day of rest.

Especially, also, should you exert your influence to rescue the public works throughout our land from being perverted to Sabbath desecration. Is it not a melancholy fact, that the spirit of moral anarchy which is abroad in the world, has seized the grandest inventions of the age, and made the discoveries of science tributary to the cause of iniquity instead of holiness, of Satan instead of God ; and instead of erecting them into pillars to support the fair temple of our liberties, has converted them into battering rams to shatter its walls ? Yes, is it not true, that our public works are vast engines of Sabbath desecration ? Are not our railroads and canals, with few praiseworthy exceptions, so many great channels through which a regular stream of Sabbath desecration, week after week, flows throughout the length and breadth of our land ? This need not, and ought not to be so. The laws of many States neither require nor justify it ; and all friends of our country should unite in respectful but urgent appeals to canal commissioners and railroad companies for speedy reform. If further legislative action is deemed requisite, all true patriots and Christians should cordially coöperate in obtaining it.

Amongst the most fruitful sources of crime in our country is Sabbath desecration. Of one hundred men admitted to the Massachusetts state prison in one year, nine out of ten had been habitual violators of the Lord's day and neglecters of public worship ; and the keeper affirms that hundreds of convicts have lamented their desecration of the Sabbath, as the first and fatal step in their downward progress to ruin. Self-interest, therefore, as well as patriotism, philanthropy, and religion, call on us to be active in removing these prolific sources of human misery and crime and public expenditure. The proper observance of the Sabbath will do more to suppress criminal offences, and to secure the rights of person and property, than all the jails, penitentiaries, and gibbets in the land. For the Sabbath was designed,

not only to vindicate the rights of God to our adoration, love, and obedience, but also to promote the security and happiness of man, and the requisite repose even for irrational animals in our employment; which, if permitted to rest one day in seven, will do more work in the remaining six, will live longer and enjoy better health.

Nor are we without encouragement in this enterprise. The God of the Sabbath has smiled on the efforts of his children. Great progress has been made in waking up public attention. Numerous conventions have been held in different parts of the country, and the first intellects of the nation have brought the tribute of their influence and prayers. Sabbath mails have been stopped on about 100,000 miles of road, and thus thousands of persons previously employed on the Lord's day have been restored to its rest and privileges. Sabbath-breaking, by travelling and other secular pursuits, is becoming more disreputable. Steam-boats, canal boats, and stages have been discontinued on some routes; and there is every reason to believe, that if the wise and good and patriotic of our land persevere, and especially, if ministers of the Gospel generally bring the influence of the pulpit to bear on this subject, the day is not far distant when, by the blessing of the God of the Sabbath, the greater part of our nation will be at least externally a Sabbath-keeping people.

But let us remember at every step of our progress, that abstinence from secular employment does not constitute the whole of Sabbath consecration, though it is all that the arm of civil power can or ought to enforce. Let us at the same time, by the light of our example and by the kindly influences of moral suasion, invite our fellow-citizens to the higher, the spiritual consecration of the day of God. Especially, let the attractive influences of the Christian pulpit exert their power and carry on the blessed work, by diffusing intelligence, by inculcating correct principles, and,

through the aid of the Spirit, by cherishing that love to God and love to man which constitute the best worship of the Creator. Thus combining external with internal consecration, we shall yield acceptable obedience to the command of Jehovah, to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy; individual and domestic happiness will be diffused throughout our borders, the pillars of our government will be strengthened, the Church of God in all her branches will prosper, and our nation enjoy the blessedness of that people whose God is the Lord!

Thine earthly Sabbaths, Lord, we love,
But there's a nobler rest above:
To that our longing souls aspire,
With ardent love and strong desire.

No more fatigue, no more distress,
Nor sin, nor death, shall reach the place;
No groans shall mingle with the songs
Which warble from immortal tongues.

No rude alarms of raging foes;
No cares to break the long repose;
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon.

O long-expected day, begin!
Dawn on this world of woe and sin:
Fain would we leave this weary road,
To sleep in death, and rest in God.

DODDRIDGE.

TRUE CONVERSION.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN HOPEFUL AND CHRISTIAN.

FROM BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

CHRISTIAN. How came you to think at first of doing what you do now ?

HOPEFUL. Do you mean, how I came at first to look after the good of my soul ?

CHR. Yes, that is my meaning.

HOPE. I continued a great while in the delight of those things which were seen and sold at our fair ; things which I believe now would have, had I continued in them still, drowned me in perdition and destruction.

CHR. What things were they ?

HOPE. All the treasures and riches of the world. Also I delighted much in rioting, revelling, drinking, swearing, lying, uncleanness, Sabbath-breaking, and what not, that tended to destroy the soul. But I found at last, by hearing and considering of things that are divine, which, indeed, I heard of you, as also of beloved Faithful that was put to death for his faith and good living in Vanity Fair, that the end of these things is death, Rom. 6 : 21-23 ; and that for these things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience. Eph. 5 : 6.

CHR. And did you presently fall under the power of this conviction ?

HOPE. No, I was not willing presently to know the evil of sin, nor the damnation that follows upon the commission of it; but endeavored, when my mind at first began to be shaken with the word, to shut mine eyes against the light thereof.

CHR. But what was the cause of your acting thus under the first workings of God's blessed Spirit upon you?

HOPE. The causes were, 1. I was ignorant that this was the work of God upon me. I never thought that by awakenings for sin, God at first begins the conversion of a sinner. 2. Sin was yet very sweet to my flesh, and I was loath to leave it. 3. I could not tell how to part with my old companions, their presence and actions were so desirable unto me. 4. The hours in which convictions were upon me, were such troublesome and such heart-affrighting hours, that I could not bear, no, not so much as the remembrance of them upon my heart.

CHR. Then, as it seems, sometimes you got rid of your trouble?

HOPE. Yes, verily, but it would come into my mind again; and then I would be as bad, nay, worse, than I was before.

CHR. Why, what was it that brought your sins to mind again?

HOPE. Many things: as, 1. If I did but meet a good man in the streets; or, 2. If I have heard any read in the Bible; or, 3. If my head did begin to ache; or, 4. If I were told that some of my neighbors were sick; or, 5. If I heard the bell toll for some that were dead; or, 6. If I thought of dying myself; or, 7. If I heard that sudden death happened to others. 8. But especially when I thought of myself, that I must quickly come to judgment.

CHR. And could you at any time, with ease, get off the guilt of sin, when by any of these ways it came upon you?

HOPE. No, not I; for then they got faster hold of my conscience; and then, if I did but think of going back to sin—though my mind was turned against it—it would be double torment to me.

CHR. And how did you do then?

HOPE. I thought I must endeavor to mend my life; or else, thought I, I am sure to be damned.

CHR. And did you endeavor to mend?

HOPE. Yes, and fled from, not only my sins, but sinful company too, and betook me to religious duties; as praying, reading, weeping for sin, speaking truth to my neighbors, etc. These things did I, with many others, too much here to relate.

CHR. And did you think yourself well then?

HOPE. Yes, for a while; but at the last my trouble came tumbling upon me again, and that over the neck of all my reformations.

CHR. How came that about, since you were now reformed?

HOPE. There were several things brought it upon me, especially such sayings as these: "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Isa. 64: 6. "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Gal. 2: 16. "When ye have done all these things, say, We are unprofitable," Luke 17: 10; with many more such like. From whence I began to reason with myself thus: If all my righteousnesses are as filthy rags, if by the deeds of the law no man can be justified, and if, when we have done all, we are yet unprofitable, then is it but a folly to think of heaven by the law. I farther thought thus: If a man runs a hundred pounds into the shop-

keeper's debt, and after that shall pay for all that he shall buy; yet if his old debt stand still in the book uncrossed, the shopkeeper may sue him for it, and cast him into prison, till he shall pay the debt.

CHR. Well, and how did you apply this to yourself?

HOPE. Why, I thought thus with myself: I have by my sins run a great way into God's book, and my now reforming will not pay off that score. Therefore I would think still, under all my present amendments, But how shall I be freed from that damnation that I brought myself in danger of by my former transgressions?

CHR. A very good application; but pray go on.

HOPE. Another thing that hath troubled me ever since my late amendments is, that if I look narrowly into the best of what I do now, I still see sin, new sin, mixing itself with the best of that I do; so that now I am forced to conclude, that notwithstanding my former fond conceits of myself and duties, I have committed sin enough in one day to send me to hell, though my former life had been faultless.

CHR. And what did you do then?

HOPE. Do! I could not tell what to do, until I broke my mind to Faithful; for he and I were well acquainted. And he told me, that unless I could obtain the righteousness of a Man that never had sinned, neither mine own, nor all the righteousness of the world, could save me.

CHR. And did you think he spake true?

HOPE. Had he told me so when I was pleased and satisfied with my own amendments, I had called him fool for his pains; but now, since I see my own infirmity, and the sin which cleaves to my best performance, I have been forced to be of his opinion.

CHR. But did you think, when at first he suggested it to

you, that there was such a man to be found, of whom it might justly be said that he never committed sin?

HOPE. I must confess the words at first sounded strangely; but after a little more talk and company with him, I had full conviction about it.

CHR. And did you ask him what man this was, and how you must be justified by him?

HOPE. Yes, and he told me it was the Lord Jesus, that dwelleth on the right hand of the Most High. Heb. 10 : 12-21. And thus, said he, you must be justified by him, even by trusting to what he hath done by himself in the days of his flesh, and suffered when he did hang on the tree. Rom. 4 : 5 ; Col. 1 : 14 ; 1 Pet. 1 : 19. I asked him further, how that man's righteousness could be of such efficacy, to justify another before God. And he told me he was "the mighty God," and did what he did, and died the death also, not for himself, but for me; to whom his doings, and the worthiness of them, should be imputed, if I believed on him.

CHR. And what did you do then?

HOPE. I made my objections against believing, for I thought he was not willing to save me.

CHR. And what said Faithful to you then?

HOPE. He bid me go to Him and see. Then I said it was presumption. He said, No; for I was invited to come. Matt. 11 : 28. Then he gave me a book of Jesus' inditing, to encourage me the more freely to come; and he said concerning that book, that every jot and tittle thereof stood firmer than heaven and earth. Matt. 24 : 35. Then I asked him what I must do when I came; and he told me I must entreat upon my knees, Psalm 95 : 6 ; Dan. 6 : 10, with all my heart and soul, Jer. 29 : 12, 13, the Father to reveal him to me. Then I asked him further, how I must make

my supplications to him; and he said, Go, and thou shalt find him upon a mercy-seat, where he sits all the year long to give pardon and forgiveness to them that come. Exod. 25 : 22 ; Lev. 16 : 2 ; Num. 7 : 89 ; Heb. 4 : 16. I told him that I knew not what to say when I came; and he bade me say to this effect: God be merciful to me a sinner, and make me to know and believe in Jesus Christ; for I see, that if his righteousness had not been, or I have not faith in that righteousness, I am utterly cast away. Lord, I have heard that thou art a merciful God, and hast ordained that thy Son Jesus Christ should be the Saviour of the world; and moreover, that thou art willing to bestow him upon such a poor sinner as I am. And I am a sinner indeed. Lord, take therefore this opportunity, and magnify thy grace in the salvation of my soul, through thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHR. And did you do as you were bid?

HOPE. Yes, over, and over, and over.

CHR. And did the Father reveal the Son to you?

HOPE. Not at the first, nor second, nor third, nor fourth, nor fifth, no, nor at the sixth time neither.

CHR. What did you do then?

HOPE. What? why, I could not tell what to do.

CHR. Had you not thoughts of leaving off praying?

HOPE. Yes; and a hundred times twice told.

CHR. And what was the reason you did not?

HOPE. I believed that it was true which hath been told me, to wit, that without the righteousness of this Christ, all the world could not save me; and therefore, thought I with myself, if I leave off, I die, and I can but die at the throne of grace. And withal this came into my mind: "If it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, and will not tarry."

Hab. 2 : 3. So I continued praying until the Father showed me his Son.

CHR. And how was he revealed unto you ?

HOPE. I did not see him with my bodily eyes, but with the eyes of my understanding, Eph. 1 : 18, 19 ; and thus it was. One day I was very sad, I think sadder than at any one time in my life ; and this sadness was through a fresh sight of the greatness and vileness of my sins. And as I was then looking for nothing but hell, and the everlasting damnation of my soul, suddenly, as I thought, I saw the Lord Jesus looking down from heaven upon me, and saying, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16 : 31.

But I replied, Lord, I am a great, a very great sinner : and he answered, " My grace is sufficient for thee." 2 Cor. 12 : 9. Then I said, " But, Lord, what is believing ?" And then I saw from that saying, " He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst," John 6 : 35, that believing and coming was all one ; and that he that came, that is, that ran out in his heart and affections after salvation by Christ, he indeed believed in Christ. Then the water stood in mine eyes, and I asked further, " But, Lord, may such a great sinner as I am be indeed accepted of thee, and be saved by thee ?" And I heard him say, " And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." John 6 : 37. Then I said, But how, Lord, must I consider of thee in my coming to thee, that my faith may be placed aright upon thee ? Then he said, " Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." 1 Tim. 1 : 15. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes. Rom. 10 : 4, and chap. 4. He died for our sins, and rose again for our justification. Rom. 4 : 25. He loved

us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. Rev. 1 : 5. . He is the Mediator between God and us. 1 Tim. 2 : 5. He ever liveth to make intercession for us. Heb. 7 : 25. From all which I gathered, that I must look for righteousness in his person, and for satisfaction for my sins by his blood : that what he did in obedience to his Father's law, and in submitting to the penalty thereof, was not for himself, but for him that will accept it for his salvation, and be thankful. And now was my heart full of joy, mine eyes full of tears, and mine affections running over with love to the name, people, and ways of Jesus Christ.

CHR. This was a revelation of Christ to your soul indeed. But tell me particularly what effect this had upon your spirit.

HOPE. It made me see that all the world, notwithstanding all the righteousness thereof, is in a state of condemnation. It made me see that God the Father, though he be just, can justly justify the coming sinner. It made me greatly ashamed of the vileness of my former life, and confounded me with the sense of mine own ignorance ; for there never came a thought into my heart before now that showed me so the beauty of Jesus Christ. It made me love a holy life, and long to do something for the honor and glory of the name of the Lord Jesus. Yea, I thought that had I now a thousand gallons of blood in my body, I could spill it all for the sake of the Lord Jesus.

CHRIST IN HIS MEMBERS.

“I was hungry, and ye gave me meat;
 I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink;
 I was a stranger, and ye took me in;
 I was naked, and ye clothed me;
 I was sick, and ye visited me;
 I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”

MORE than thirty years ago we had a near neighbor, intelligent, naturally amiable, and affectionate. Her husband was young, active, industrious, and enterprising; in good business, of regular habits, and promising fair to become one of our most useful citizens. In the year 1814 she was evidently renewed by divine grace, and became a lovely Christian. Often did the sweetness of her first Christian love cheer the hearts of the pious, and presage a peculiarly happy and useful life. On the 25th of December of that year, she openly declared herself to be on the Lord's side, by a public profession of religion. Three lovely children cheered the family circle and enjoyed her affections. Pleasant and happy were those days, with a bright prospect of many more to come. But “clouds and darkness are round about thee,” O Jehovah. “Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.”

In the autumn of 1815, while all her hopes were in their freshness, God was pleased to send mortal sickness into the family, which took first the youngest of her three children, then the second, and then, in a few weeks, the husband and father. She followed her husband to the grave, leading her little son, the only survivor of her family. We can scarcely say she wept. Her grief was too deep for tears. But she bowed in humble submission, saying, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the

Lord." Her solitary dwelling was indeed "the house of mourning."

Could there be an additional ingredient in her cup of sorrows? In the untimely and forced sale of property, she and her orphan son had not a house where to lay their head. She went her solitary way, with her only surviving dear one, and took up her abode in a hired dwelling. But she leaned on the arm which supports the widow and the fatherless. We never heard of a murmuring word. She was happy in her God and Saviour. Her friends sympathized in her afflictions, though not able to afford much pecuniary aid. Her shears and her needle furnished supplies for her wants; while humble gratitude and praise for the blessed consolations and glorious hopes of the Gospel, ceased not to flow from a heart smitten by the hand of a Father.

After a few years, she began to be distressed with pains in her head. These continued long, and resulted in deafness incurable, and mental derangement. Her cup of sorrows was full, and the waves rolled over her. All the attention and kindness of friends could not keep her from wandering. The asylums for the insane and the poor were not then as they are now. Great were the grief and anxiety of friends and neighbors, as they watched her, or followed her from place to place. At length she wandered into a neighboring county, and was humanely taken care of in a poor-house. After several months, she was found by an officer of the church of which she was a member. He was deeply affected at the interview. Marks of suffering were found upon her; not imputable to unkindness in the keepers, but to the want of means and skill in the proper care of the deaf and insane. She entreated him not to leave her. Nor did he, till he had given assurance that he would return again. The church met. Her case was stated. And more than one, in thinking of her character and condition, could not bear the thought of leaving this disciple of Christ in

the poor-house. It seemed almost as though the Master himself were suffering there. Our sister had not forfeited her Christian character, nor even brought a stain upon it. She had always, even in her insane wanderings, so far as we knew, maintained her love to Christ, to the Gospel, and to the Church. She was a real, though a deeply afflicted Christian. She could not be left in the poor-house.

“She sued so humbly for relief,
That we could never say her nay.”

During ten or twelve years she has been sustained chiefly by the contributions of the church. She says and does unreasonable things; but she fears to do wrong. Those who hear her pray, bear witness to her composure, and propriety, and earnestness in the exercise. She always prays for the church, and for her pastor. When she enjoys ordinary health, she labors diligently in the work which she can do.

She cannot hear preaching at all, nor a prayer, nor reading, nor conversation, except with the one who has her in charge. Yet with a slate and pencil an interchange of thought may sometimes be made very interesting and profitable. Every pleasant Sabbath she may be seen with her guardian at the house of God. She behaves with perfect decorum, disturbs no one, and is unnoticed by strangers. She loves to be there. It is refreshing to her to be in the house of God, to receive the salutations of friends, and to give them the hand of friendship. She reads the Bible and loves it. She loves the Saviour and all that love him. We recognize in her an humble disciple of the meek and lowly Jesus. Learn,

1. *To recognize Christ in his members.* “I was hungry, and ye gave me meat.” Not that every one in want, or trouble, is a member of Christ. For, by indolence or vice, by fanaticism or crime, or by some other fault, persons may be destitute or afflicted. Such are not members of Christ. Do them good, as Christ did to all sorts of people,

teaching and feeding them, in a due exercise of compassion. But recognize the peculiar claims of the members of Christ when in want or distress. If the pious, like her whose narrative has been given, are in want or distress by the providence of God; or if they, for Christ's sake, are despoiled of their goods, turned out of doors, driven into exile, beaten, or cast into prison—be sure to recognize them as the members of Christ. Due care and examination will generally enable us to distinguish them. We may find the members of Christ, as Obadiah did a hundred of the Lord's prophets; or as Onesiphorus did the apostle Paul, when he was in Rome, and "sought him out diligently." 2 Tim. 1:17. Learn,

2. *To relieve* Christ in his members. To feed, to clothe, to receive, to protect, to visit, to comfort believers in want, or trouble, is to relieve Christ; as he says, "YE DID IT UNTO ME." So Obadiah hid the Lord's prophets in a cave, and fed them. So Onesiphorus refreshed Paul in prison, and "was not ashamed of his chain." So the Macedonian Christians sent once and again to relieve Paul, and once by their good minister Epaphroditus, who was nigh unto death in the same service. They also gave bountifully for the relief of the poor saints at Jerusalem. Such sacrifices are pleasing to the King, who will say, "YE DID IT UNTO ME." Learn,

3. *To be afraid of failing to relieve* Christ in his members. Through ignorance, or carelessness, or want of sympathy, or some selfish plea, members of the church may fail to recognize or relieve Christ in his needy and afflicted ones. But, if they fail from such causes, when they might know, and could give, how fearful the prospect. Their failure may arise from want of true love either to Christ or his members. If so, the King shall say unto them, "YE DID IT NOT TO ME." "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment."

WILL YOU BE SAVED?

You have a soul worth millions of worlds. It needs salvation, because it is lost, sinful, and guilty. Unless saved by grace, you will for ever perish. If ever saved, you must be willing to be saved. *Will you be saved?* If you will, then,

1. Settle it firmly in your mind that there is a great and glorious God; that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God, and the only Saviour of lost men; that the Bible is the true word of God; that there is a glorious heaven and a dreadful hell, in one of which the judgment of God will soon fix your soul, there to abide for ever.

2. Be assured that the last sentence will be passed upon you, according as your works in this life are good or bad. Remember, that it is very difficult to get to heaven, but that the way to hell is broad and easy. Never forget that your heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; that the devil is busy, cunning, and malignant; and that the world spreads its snares on every side. Your time is short, your work is great, your enemies are strong, and your strength is small. Your case is exceedingly solemn.

3. Consider that the glories of heaven are worth all your care and pains; that hell is so terrible as to make your earnest and speedy flight from it most reasonable; and that if you die in your sins, it would be better for you if you had never been born. All the troubles of this world are light to him who will soon be at rest in the bosom of his God. All the riches, honors, and pleasures of earth, are a poor gain to him who must soon lie down in sorrow and dwell in everlasting burnings. How terrible will hell be to those who have had many good things here.

4. Seriously say to yourself, "I may yet reach heaven, and avoid the fearful torments of hell. If saved, what a God shall I enjoy for ever and ever. If lost at last, how can I bear the weight of God's displeasure? There is yet hope. The door of mercy and the gate of heaven are yet open. If I fail of salvation, my doom will be as just as it will be fearful. God's offers are free and frequent, sincere

and earnest. And shall I murder my own soul? Shall it be written on my prison for ever, 'Here is a self-destroyer, a despiser of gospel grace?'"

5. Solemnly ask yourself, "What is there in sin that I should love it so? Can I dig the pearl of happiness out of the dunghill of this world? Can I *certainly* attain the houses, lands, honors, or friends I seek? If I can get them, may they not make me anxious in life and torment me in death? Is it not my greatest wisdom to be wise unto salvation? Is it not my best work to work out my salvation with fear and trembling?"

6. Search and try your heart. Is your love unfeigned? Is your faith saving faith? Is your humility deep? Is your repentance godly sorrow? Is your face really set towards Zion? Is sin in your eyes hateful? Do you love the whole law of God? Is Jesus Christ just such a Saviour as you think you need? Do you wish to be found in him? Have you renounced all for him?

7. Never seek any other way of salvation than that of the Gospel. Jesus says, "I am the door: I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Without me ye can do nothing." Whoever attempts to go to heaven in any other way, is said in Scripture to be "a thief and a robber." The tears, and groans, and cries, and good works of yourself and all your friends, cannot atone for a single sin. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission." The blood of Jesus alone can cleanse you. He is full of mercy, full of pity, full of grace. He is the most loving of all who ever dwelt on earth. He never tramples on a broken heart.

WILL YOU BE SAVED?

1. Then come, a lost, undone, miserable, hopeless, helpless sinner, to Christ, the all-sufficient and merciful Saviour. Cry out, "Lord, save me, or I perish." Look to him and say, "My Lord, and my God." Leave him not, but say, "Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. Thy blood can cleanse me from all sin; yea, though my sins be as scarlet, they shall be as wool; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as snow, if only thy blood shall be applied."

2. Come, as an humble, penitent sinner. Come trem-

bling, with tears in your eyes and with deep sorrow in your heart. Come, as one ill-deserving in the sight of God and in your own sight. Like the publican, in humility and grief say, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Say as the Centurion, "Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." Say, "I am guilty, awfully guilty. I have sinned against love, and mercy, and truth, and holiness. Yet there is mercy with thee. That is all my hope. I part with all my sins. I confess I deserve no good thing. Have mercy upon me, O God, not for my sake, but for Christ's sake."

3. Come, as vile, to be cleansed at the fountain of grace. Humbly say, "Not Lazarus, with all his sores, nor Job with his boils, sitting in the ashes, were so filthy and odious in the sight of man, as I am in the sight of a pure and holy God on account of my sins. Sin cleaves to every thought, every duty, every enjoyment. I abhor myself. Unclean, unclean. O wash me in thy blood."

4. Come, feeling your grievous bondage. Say, "Lord, thou hast paid a full ransom for me. Thou hast redeemed me by thy blood, more precious than ten thousand worlds. Take off these fetters of iniquity. Let me not be held by the cords of my sins. Rescue me out of this dungeon of depravity. I am sunk down in worldliness. Quicken me. If thou wilt make me free, I shall be free indeed."

5. Come to Christ as the great Physician. Tell him of the plague of a hard heart, of the agonies of a wounded conscience, and of the anguish of a wounded spirit. Tell him there is no soundness in you; that the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint, and that you are covered with wounds and bruises and putrefying sores. If you touch even the hem of his garment you will be made whole.

6. Come, weary and heavy-laden under the burden of your sins, that Christ may give rest to your soul. He can take away also the burden of all your griefs. No one comforts like Christ.

7. Come to Christ, as the poor come to the rich, for alms. Bring no price in your hand. You must "buy" of him, but it must be "without money and without price." "The full soul he sends empty away." Bring not your own righteousnesses. They are all as filthy rags. Say, "I want grace, faith, love, hope, zeal, righteousness, pa-

tience, every thing, and I have nothing to give in return. O take me, a *poor* sinner."

8. Come to Christ, hungering and thirsting. He is the Bread of heaven. He is the water of life. Cry to him, "Lord, give me the hidden manna. Let me have at least the crumbs that fall from the children's table. Give me the water thou gavest to the woman at Jacob's well. Yea, pour floods upon me, for I am poor, and needy, and thirsty too."

9. Come to Christ to teach you. Come, feeling your ignorance. Jesus says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly;" as if he had said, "I will not upbraid you for your dulness. I will teach you the same lesson over and over again." Say, "Lord, I would be thy disciple. I am ignorant and blind. Open thou mine eyes."

10. Come in all your weakness. Trust in Christ as the Captain of your salvation. If he shall be with you, you will be safe. He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

11. Come, as a condemned criminal, to Christ your advocate with God. Your crimes are many and great. Your accusers are many and unrelenting. The law pronounces you accursed. "God is angry with the wicked every day." But Jesus has undertaken for such as you. Entreat him, "Lord, stand between the justice of God and my perishing soul."

12. Come, as a willing servant, to Christ your Lord and Master. Obey, honor, love, and serve him, even unto death. Let your heart go out after him, let your tongue praise him, let your hands work for him, let your feet walk in his paths. Esteem none of his commands grievous. Have respect to all his commandments.

13. Come to Christ as your portion. Make him your all in all. He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption. He is more. His word is life. His smile is joy. His plaudit is eternal glory. To be with him and to be like him, is heaven.

Thus come to Christ, and *you will be saved*, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

[The above pages have been condensed from an old author.]

THE
GOSPEL FOR THE POOR.

BY REV. JOHN M. MASON, D. D.

THE Old Testament closes with a remarkable prediction concerning Messiah and his forerunner. "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." Accordingly, at the appointed time, came John the Baptist, in the spirit and power of Elias, saying, "*Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*" In his great work of preparing the way of the Lord, he challenged sin without respect of persons. The attempt was hazardous; but feeling the majesty of his character, he was not to be moved by considerations which divert or intimidate the ordinary man. Name, sect, station, were alike to him. Not even the imperial purple, when it harbored a crime, afforded protection from his rebuke. His fidelity in this point cost him his life. For having reprov'd Herod, for Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, he was thrown into prison, and at length sacrificed to the most implacable of all resentments, the resentment of an abandoned woman.

It was in the interval between his arrest and execution that he sent to Jesus the message on which my text is grounded. As his office gave him no security against the workings of unbelief in the hour of temptation, it is not strange, if, in a dungeon and in chains, his mind was invaded by an occasional doubt. The question by two of his

disciples, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" has all the air of an inquiry for personal satisfaction; and so his Lord's reply seems to treat it. "Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, TO THE POOR THE GOSPEL IS PREACHED." Luke 7:22. The answer is clear and convincing. It enumerates the very signs by which the church was to know her God, for whom she had waited; and they were enough to remove the suspicions and confirm the soul of his servant John.

Admitting that Jesus Christ actually wrought the works here ascribed to him, every sober man will conclude with Nicodemus, "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." It is not, however, my intention to dwell on the miraculous evidence of Christianity. The article which I select as exhibiting it in a plain but interesting view, is, THE PREACHING OF GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

In scriptural language, "the poor," who are most exposed to suffering and least able to endure it, represent all who are destitute of good necessary to their perfection and happiness; especially those who feel their want, and are disconsolate—especially those who are anxiously waiting for the consolation of Israel. Thus, in Psalm 40:17, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." Thus, in Isaiah 41:17, "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them." Thus also, chapter 61:1, "The Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the *meeke*," the same word with that rendered "poor;" and so it is translated by Luke, chapter 4:18, to "preach the Gospel to the *poor*," which is connected, both in the prophet and evangelist, with "healing the *broken-hearted*." Our Lord, therefore, refers John,

as he did the Jews in the synagogue at Nazareth, to this very prediction as fulfilled in himself. So that his own definition of his own religion is, *a system of consolation for the wretched*. This is so far from excluding the *literal poor*, that the success of the Gospel with them is the pledge of its success with all others; for they not only form the majority of the human race, but they also bear the chief burden of its calamities. Moreover, as the sources of pleasure and pain are substantially the same in all men; and as affliction, by suspending the influence of their artificial distinctions, reduces them to the level of their common nature, whatever, by appealing to the principles of that nature, promotes the happiness of the multitude, must equally promote the happiness of the residue; and whatever consoles the one, must, in like circumstances, console the other also. As we cannot, therefore, maintain the suitability of the Gospel to the literal poor, who are the mass of mankind, without maintaining its prerogative of comforting the afflicted; nor, on the contrary, its prerogative of comforting, separately from its suitability to the mass of mankind, I shall consider these two ideas as involving each other.

I. With this explanation, the first thing which demands your notice is the FACT ITSELF—GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR.

From the remotest antiquity there have been, in all civilized nations, men who devoted themselves to the increase of knowledge and happiness. Their speculations were subtle, their arguings acute, and many of their maxims respectable. But to whom were their instructions addressed? To casual visitors, to selected friends, to admiring pupils, to privileged orders. In some countries, and on certain occasions, when vanity was to be gratified by the acquisition of fame, their appearances were more public. For example, one read a poem, another a history, and a third a play, before the crowd assembled at the Olympic games.

To be crowned there, was, in the proudest period of Greece the summit of glory and ambition. But what did this, what did the mysteries of pagan worship, or what the lectures of pagan philosophy, avail the *people*? Sunk in ignorance, in poverty, in crime, they lay neglected. Age succeeded to age, and school to school; a thousand sects and systems rose, flourished, and fell, but the degradation of the multitude remained. Not a beam of light found its way into their darkness, nor a drop of consolation into their cup. Indeed, a plan for raising them to the dignity of rational enjoyment, and fortifying them against the disasters of life, was not to be expected; for as nothing can exceed the contempt in which they were held by the professors of wisdom, so any human device, however captivating in theory, would have been worthless in fact. The most sagacious heathen could imagine no better means of improving them than the precepts of his philosophy. Now, supposing it to be ever so salutary, its benefits must have been confined to a very few—the notion that the bulk of mankind may become philosophers being altogether extravagant. They ever have been, and, in the nature of things, ever must be, unlearned. Besides, the grovelling superstition and brutal manners of the heathen presented insuperable obstacles. Had the plan of their cultivation been even suggested, especially if it comprehended the more abject of the species, it would have been universally derided, and would have merited derision, no less than the dreams of modern folly about the perfectibility of man.

Under this incapacity of *instructing* the poor, how would the pagan sage have acquitted himself as their *comforter*? His dogmas, during prosperity and health, might humor his fancy, might flatter his pride, or dupe his understanding; but against the hour of grief or dissolution he had no solace for himself, and could have none for others. I am not to be persuaded, in contradiction to every principle

of my animal and rational being, that pain, and misfortune, and death, are no evils, and are beneath a wise man's regard. And could I work myself up into so absurd a conviction, how would it promote my comfort? Comfort is essentially consistent with nature and truth. By perverting my judgment, by hardening my heart, by chilling my nobler warmth, and stifling my best affections, I may grow stupid, but shall be far enough from consolation. Convert me into a beast, and I shall be without remorse; into a block, and I shall feel no pain. But this was not my request. I asked you for consolation, and you destroy my ability to receive it. I asked you to bear me over death, in the fellowship of immortals, and you begin by transforming me into a monster. Here are no glad tidings: nothing to cheer the gloom of outward or inward poverty. And the pagan teacher could give no better. From him, therefore, the miserable, even of his own country, and class, and kindred, had nothing to hope. But to "lift the needy from the dunghill," and wipe away the tears from the mourner; to lighten the burdens of the heart; to heal its maladies, repair its losses, and enlarge its enjoyments; and that under every form of penury and sorrow, in all nations, and ages, and circumstances; as it is a scheme too vast for the human faculties, so, had it been committed to merely human execution, it could not have proceeded a single step, and would have been remembered only as a frantic reverie.

Yet all this hath Christianity undertaken. Her voice is, without distinction, to people of every color, and clime, and condition; to the continent and the isles; to the man of the city, the man of the field, and the man of the woods; to the Moor, the Hindoo, and the Hottentot; to the sick and desperate; to the beggar, the convict, and the slave. She impairs no faculty, interdicts no affection, infringes no relation; but taking men as they are, with all their depravity and woes, she proffers them peace and blessedness. Her

boasting is not vain. The course of experiment has lasted through more than fifty generations of men. It is passing every hour before our eyes ; and for reasons to be afterwards assigned, has never failed, in a single instance, when it has been fairly tried.

The design is stupendous ; and the least success induces us to inquire, by whom it was projected and carried into effect. And what is our astonishment, when we learn, that it was by men of obscure birth, mean education, and feeble resource ; by men from a nation hated for their religion, and proverbial for their moroseness ; by carpenters, and tax-gatherers, and fishermen of Judea. What shall we say of this phenomenon ? A recurrence to the Jewish scriptures, which had long predicted it, either surrenders the argument, or increases the difficulty. If you admit that they reveal futurity, you recognize the finger of God, and the controversy is at an end. If you call them mere conjectures, you are still to account for their correspondence with the event, and to explain how a great system of benevolence, unheard, unthought of by learned antiquity, came to be cherished, to be transmitted for centuries from father to son, and at length attempted among the *Jews*. And you are also contradicted by the fact, that however clearly such a system is marked out in their scriptures, they were so far from adopting it, that they entirely mistook it ; rejected it, nationally, with disdain ; persecuted unto death those who embarked in it ; and have not embraced it to this day. Yet in the midst of this bigoted and obstinate people, sprang up the deliverance of the human race. "Salvation is of the *Jews*." Within half a century after the resurrection of Christ, his disciples had penetrated to the extremes of the Roman empire, and had carried the "Day-spring from on high" to innumerable tribes who were "sitting in the region and shadow of death." And so exclusively *Christian* is this plan, so remote from the sphere of common effort,

that after it has been proposed and executed, men revert perpetually to their wonted littleness and carelessness. The whole face of Christendom is overspread with proofs, that, in proportion as they depart from the simplicity of the Gospel, they forget the multitude as before, and the doctrines of consolation expire. In so far, too, as they adapt to their own notions of propriety, the general idea which they have borrowed from the Gospel, of meliorating the condition of their species, they have produced, and are every day producing, effects the very reverse of their professions. Discontent, and confusion, and crimes, they propagate in abundance. They have smitten the earth with curses, and deluged it with blood ; but the instance is yet to be discovered, in which they have "bound up the broken-hearted." The *fact*, therefore, that Christianity is, in the broadest sense of the terms, "glad tidings to the poor," is perfectly original. It stands without rival or comparison. It has no foundation in the principles of human enterprise, and could never have existed without the inspiration of that "Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and every perfect gift."

II. As the Christian FACT is original, so the REASONS OF ITS EFFICACY ARE PECULIAR. Christianity can afford consolation, because *it is fitted to our nature and character*. I specify particulars :

1. The Gospel proceeds upon the principle of *immortality*.

That our bodies shall die is indisputable. But that reluctance of nature, that panting after life, that horror of annihilation, of which no man can completely divest himself, connect the death of the body with deep solicitude. While neither these, nor any other merely rational considerations, ascertain the certainty of future being, much less of future bliss. The feeble light which glimmered around this point among the heathen, flowed not from investigation, but tradition. It was to be seen chiefly among the vulgar,

who inherited the tales of their fathers ; and among the poets, who preferred popular fable to philosophic speculation. Reason would have pursued her discovery, but the pagans knew not how to apply the notion of immortality, even when they had it. It governed not their precepts, it established not their hope. When they attempted to discuss the grounds of it, “ they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.” The best arguments of Socrates are unworthy of a child who has “ learned the holy Scriptures.” And it is remarkable enough, that the doctrine of immortality is as perfectly detached, and as barren of moral effect, in the hands of modern infidels, as it was in the hands of the ancient pagans. They have been so unable to assign it a convenient place in their system—they have found it to be so much at variance with their habits, and so troublesome in their warfare with the Scriptures, that the more resolute of the sect have discarded it altogether. With the soberer part of them it is no better than an opinion ; but it never was, and never will be a source of true consolation, in any system or any bosom, but the system of Christianity and the bosom of the Christian. “ Life and immortality,” about which some have guessed ; for which all have sighed ; but of which none could trace the relations, or prove the existence—are not merely hinted, they “ are brought to light by the Gospel.” This is the parting point with every other religion ; and yet the very point upon which our happiness hangs. That we shall survive the body, and pass from its dissolution to the bar of God, and from the bar of God to endless retribution, are truths of infinite moment, and of pure revelation. They demonstrate the incapacity of temporal things to content the soul. They explain why grandeur, and pleasure, and fame leave the heart sad. He who pretends to be my comforter without consulting my immortality, overlooks my essential want. The Gospel supplies it. Immortality is

the basis of her fabric. She resolves the importance of man into its true reason—the *value of his soul*. She sees under every human form, however rugged or abused, a spirit unalterable by external change, unassailable by death, and endued with stupendous faculties of knowledge and action, of enjoyment and suffering; a spirit, at the same time, depraved and guilty, and therefore liable to irreparable ruin. These are Christian views. They elevate us to a height, at which the puny theories of the world stand and gaze. They stamp new interest on all my relations, and all my acts. They hold up before me objects vast as my wishes, terrible as my fears, and permanent as my being. They bind me to eternity.

2. Having thus unfolded the general doctrine of immortality, the Gospel advances further, informing us, that although a future life is sure, *future blessedness is by no means a matter of course*. This receives instant confirmation from a review of our character as *sinner*s.

None but an atheist, or, which is the same thing, a madman, will deny the existence of moral obligation, and the sanction of moral law: in other words, that it is our duty to obey God, and that he has annexed penalties to disobedience. As little can it be denied, that we have actually disobeyed him. Guilt has taken up its abode in the conscience, and indicates, by signs not to be misunderstood, both its presence and power. To call this superstition, betrays only that vanity which thinks to confute a doctrine by giving it an ill name. Depravity and its consequences meet us, at every moment, in a thousand shapes; nor is there an individual breathing, who has escaped its taint. Therefore our relations to our Creator as innocent creatures have ceased, and are succeeded by the relation of rebels against his government. In no other light can he contemplate us, because *his judgment is according to truth*. A conviction of this begets alarm and wretchedness. And, whatever

some may pretend, a guilty conscience is the secret worm which preys upon the vitals of human peace—the invisible spell, which turns the draught of pleasure into wormwood and gall. To laugh at it as an imaginary evil, is the mark of a fool; for what can be more rational than to tremble at the displeasure of an almighty God. If, then, I ask how I am to be delivered, or whether deliverance is possible, human reason is dumb; or if she open her lips, it is only to tease me with conjectures, which evince that she knows nothing of the matter. Here the Christian verity interferes; showing me, on the one hand, that my alarm is well founded—that my demerit and danger are far beyond even my own suspicions—that God, with whom I have to do, “will by no means clear the guilty;” but, on the other hand, revealing the provision of his infinite wisdom and grace, for releasing me from guilt. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The more I ponder this method of salvation, the more I am convinced that it displays the divine perfection, and exalts the divine government; so that “it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.” Now I know where to obtain the first requisite to happiness, pardon of sin. In Christ Jesus the Lord, is that justifying righteousness, the want of which, though I was ignorant of the cause, kept me miserable till this hour. I cling to it, and am safe. His precious blood purges my conscience. It extends peace to me as a river, and the glory of redemption like a flowing stream. My worst fears are dispelled: “the wrath to come” is not for me; I can look with composure at futurity, and feel joy springing up with the thought that I am immortal.

3. In addition to deliverance from wrath, Christianity provides relief against the *plague of the heart*.

It will not be contested, that disorder reigns among the passions of men. The very attempts to rectify it are a sufficient concession, and their ill success shows their authors to have been "physicians of no value." That particular ebullitions of passion have been repressed, and particular habits of vice overcome, without Christian aid, is admitted. But if any one shall conclude, that these are examples of victory over the *principle* of depravity, he will greatly err. For, not to insist that the experience of the world is against him, we have complete evidence, that all reformatations, not evangelical, are merely an exchange of lusts; or rather, the elevation of one evil appetite by the depression of another; the *strength* of depravity continuing the same, its *form* only varied. Nor can it be otherwise. Untaught of God, the most comprehensive genius is unable either to trace the original of corruption, or to check its force. It has its fountain where he least and last believes it to be, but where the omniscient eye has searched it out—in the human heart; the heart, filled with enmity against God—the heart, deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. But, the discovery being made, his measures, you hope, will take surer effect. Quite the contrary. It now defies his power, as it formerly did his wisdom. How have disciples of the moral school studied and toiled; how have they resolved, and vowed, and fasted, watched, and prayed, travelling through the whole circuit of devout austerities, and set down at last, wearied in the greatness of their way. But no marvel; the Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots. Neither can impurity purify itself. Here again, light from the footsteps of the Christian truth breaks in upon the darkness, and Gospel again flows from her tongue; the Gospel of a *new heart*—the Gospel of regenerating and sanctifying grace, as the promise, the gift, the work of God. "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; 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." Here all our difficulties are resolved at once. The spirit of life in Christ Jesus quickens the dead in trespasses and sins. The Lord our strength works in us all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power. That which was impossible with men, is not so with him ; for with him all things are possible : even the subduing our iniquities ; creating us anew, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness ; turning our polluted souls into his own habitation through the Spirit, and making us "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Verily *this is gospel* ; worthy to go in company with remission of sin. And shall I conquer at last ? Shall I, indeed, be delivered from the bondage and the torment of corruption ? A new sensation passes through my breast. "I lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help ;" and with the hope of perfecting holiness in the fear of God, hail my immortality.

4. Having thus removed our guilt and cleansed our affections, the Gospel proceeds to put us in possession of *adequate enjoyment*. An irresistible law of our being impels us to seek happiness. Nor will a million of frustrated hopes deter from new experiments, because despair is infinitely more excruciating than the fear of fresh disappointment. But an impulse, always vehement and never successful, multiplies the materials and inlets of pain. This assertion carries with it its own proof ; and the principle it assumes is verified by the history of our species. In every place, and at all times, ingenuity has been racked to meet the ravenous desires. Occupation, wealth, dignity, science,

amusement, all have been tried—are all tried at this hour, and all in vain. The heart still repines: the unappeased cry is, Give, give. There is a fatal error somewhere, and the Gospel detects it. Fallen away from God, we have substituted the creature in his place. This is the grand mistake—the fraud which sin has committed upon our nature. The Gospel reveals God as the satisfying good, and brings it within our reach. It proclaims him reconciled in Christ Jesus, as our Father, our friend, our portion. It introduces us into his presence, with liberty to ask in the Intercessor's name; and asking, to “receive, that our joy may be full.” It keeps us under his eye, surrounds us with his arm, feeds us upon *living bread*, which he *gives from heaven*, seals us up to an eternal inheritance, and even engages to reclaim our dead bodies from the grave, and fashion them in beauty which shall vie with heaven. It is enough; my prayers and desires can go no further; I have got to the “Fountain of living waters. Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.”

This Gospel of immortality, in righteousness, purity, and bliss, would be inestimable, were it even obscure, and not to be comprehended without painful scrutiny. But I observe again,

5. That, unlike the systems of men, and contrary to their anticipations, the Gospel is as *simple* as it is glorious. Its primary doctrines, though capable of exercising the most disciplined talent, are adapted to the common understanding. Were they dark and abstruse, they might gratify a speculative mind, but would be lost upon the multitude, and be unprofitable to all as doctrines of consolation. The mass of mankind never can be profound reasoners. To omit other difficulties, they have not leisure. Instruction, to do them good, must be interesting, solemn, repeated, and plain. This is the benign office of the Gospel. Her principal topics

are few ; they are constantly recurring in various connections ; they come home to every man's condition ; they have an interpreter in his bosom ; they are enforced by motives which honesty can hardly mistake, and conscience will rarely dispute. Unlettered men, who love their Bible, seldom quarrel about the prominent articles of faith and duty ; and as seldom do they appear among the proselytes of that meagre refinement which arrogates the title of *Philosophical Christianity*.

From its simplicity, moreover, the Gospel derives advantages in consolation. Grief, whether in the learned or illiterate, is always simple. A man bowed down under calamity has no relish for investigation. His powers relax ; he leans upon his comforter ; his support must be without toil, or his spirit faints. Conformably to these reflections, we see, on the one hand, that the unlearned compose the bulk of Christians, the life of whose souls is in the substantial doctrines of the cross ; and on the other, that in the time of affliction, even the careless lend their ear to the voice of revelation. Precious at all times to believers, it is doubly precious in the hour of trial. These things prove, not only that the Gospel, when understood, gives a peculiar relief in trouble, but that it is readily apprehended—being most acceptable when we are the least inclined to critical research.

6. The Gospel, so admirable for its simplicity, has also the recommendation of *truth*. The wretch who dreams of transport, feels a new sting in his wretchedness, when he opens his eyes and the delusion is fled. No real misery can be removed, nor any real benefit conferred, by doctrines which want the seal of certainty. And were the Gospel of Jesus a human invention, or were it checked by any rational suspicion that it may turn out to be a fable, it might retain its brilliancy, its sublimity, and even a portion of its interest, but the charm of its consolation would be gone. Nay,

it would add gall to bitterness, by fostering a hope which the next hour might laugh to scorn. But we may dismiss our anxiety, for there is no hazard of such an issue. Not only "grace," but "truth," came by Jesus Christ. "The gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth" were words of the "Amen, the faithful and true Witness;" and those which he has written in his blessed book are "pure words, as silver tried in the furnace, purified seven times." His promises can no man deny to be "exceeding great;" yet they derive their value to us from assurances, which, by satisfying the hardest conditions of evidence, render doubt not only inexcusable, but even criminal. "By two immutable things, in which it was *impossible for God to lie*, we have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." Now, therefore, the promises of the Gospel, which are "exceeding great," are also "precious." We need not scruple to trust ourselves, for this life and the life to come, upon that word which shall stand when heaven and earth pass away. Oh, it is this which makes Christianity glad tidings to the depressed and perishing. No fear of disappointment. No hope that shall make ashamed. Under the feet of evangelical faith is a covenant-promise, and that promise is everlasting Rock. "I know," said one, whose testimony is corroborated by millions in both worlds, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

Lastly. The Gospel, as a system of consolation, is perfected by the *authority* and energy which accompany it. The devices of man originate in his fancy, and expire with his breath. Destitute of power, they play around depravity like shadows round the mountain top, and vanish without leaving an impression. Their effect would be inconsiderable, could he manifest them to be true, because he cannot compel the admission of truth itself into the human mind.

Indifference, unreasonableness, prejudice, petulance, oppose to it an almost incredible resistance. We see this in the affairs of every day, and especially in the stronger conflicts of opinion and passion. Now, besides the opposition which moral truth has always to encounter, there is a particular reason why the truth of the Gospel, though most salutary, though attested by every thing within us and around us—by life and death—by earth, and heaven, and hell, will not succeed unless backed by divine energy. It is this. Sin has perverted the understanding of man, and poisoned his heart. It persuaded him first to throw away his blessedness, and then to hate it. The reign of this hatred, which the Scriptures call “enmity against God,” is most absolute in every unrenewed man. It teaches him never to yield a point unfriendly to one corruption, without stipulating for an equivalent in favor of another. Now, as the Gospel flatters *none* of his corruptions in *any* shape, it meets with deadly hostility from *all his corruptions* in *every* shape. It is to no purpose that you press upon him the “great salvation”—that you demonstrate his errors and their corrective, his diseases and their cure. Demonstrate you may, but you convert him not. He will occasionally startle and listen, but it is only to relapse into his wonted supineness; and you shall as soon call up the dead from their dust, as awaken him to a sense of his danger, and prevail with him to embrace the salvation of God. “Where then,” you will demand, “is the preëminence of your Gospel?” I answer, with the apostle Paul, that “*it is the power of God to salvation.*” When a sinner is to be converted, that is, when a slave is to be liberated from his chains, and a rebel from execution, that same voice which has spoken in the Scriptures, speaks by them to his heart, and commands an audience. He finds the word of God to be “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.” It sets him before the bar of Justice; strips him of his self-importance;

sweeps away his refuge of lies, and shows him that death which is "the wages of sin." It then conducts him, all trembling, to the divine forgiveness; reveals Christ Jesus in his soul, as his righteousness, his peace, his hope of glory. Amazing transition. But is not the cause equal to the effect? "Hath not the potter power over the clay?" Shall God draw, and the lame not run? Shall God speak, and the deaf not hear? Shall God breathe, and the slain not live? Shall God "lift up the light of his countenance" upon sinners reconciled in his dear Son, and they not be happy? Glory to his name. These are no fictions. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen." The record, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart, is possessed by thousands who have been turned "from the power of Satan unto God," and will certify that the revolution was accomplished by his word. And if it perform such prodigies on corruption and death, what shall it not perform in directing, establishing, and consoling them who have already obtained a good hope through grace? He who thunders in the curse, speaks peace in the promise; and none can conceive its influence but they who have witnessed it. For proofs you must not go to the statesman, the traveller, or the historian. You must not go to the gay profession, or the splendid ceremonial. You must go to the chamber of unostentatious piety. You must go to the family anecdote, to the Christian tradition, to the observation of faithful ministers. Of the last there are many who, with literal truth, might address you as follows. "*I have seen* this gospel hush into a calm the tempest raised in the bosom by conscious guilt. *I have seen* it melt down the most obdurate into tenderness and contrition. *I have seen* it cheer up the broken-hearted, and bring the tear of gladness into eyes swollen with grief. *I have seen* it produce and maintain serenity under evils which drive the worldling mad.

I *have seen* it reconcile the sufferer to his cross, and send the song of praise from lips quivering with agony. I *have seen* it enable the most affectionate relatives to part in death, not without emotion, but without repining; and with a cordial surrender of all that they held most dear to the disposal of their heavenly Father. I *have seen* the fading eye brighten at the promise of Jesus, 'Where I am, there shall my servant be also.' I *have seen* the faithful spirit released from its clay, now mildly, now triumphantly, to enter into the joy of its Lord."

Who, among the children of men, that *doubts* this representation, would not *wish* it to be correct? Who, that thinks it only *probable*, will not welcome the doctrine on which it is founded, as "worthy of all acceptance?" And who, that *knows* it to be true, will not set his seal to that doctrine as being, most emphatically, GOSPEL PREACHED TO THE POOR?

In applying to practical purposes the account which has now been given of the Christian religion, I remark,

1. That it fixes a criterion of *Christian ministrations*.

If He, who "*spake as never man spake*," has declared his own doctrine to abound with consolation to the miserable, then, certainly, the instructions of others are evangelical only in proportion as they subserve the same gracious end. A contradiction, not unfrequent among some advocates of revelation, is to urge against the infidel its power of comfort, and yet to avoid, in their own discourses, almost every principle from which that power is drawn. Disregarding the mass of mankind, to whom the Gospel is peculiarly fitted, and omitting those truths which might revive the grieved spirit, or touch the slumbering conscience, they discuss their moral topics in a manner unintelligible to the illiterate, uninteresting to the mourner, and without alarm to the profane. This is not "preaching Christ." Elegant disserta-

tions upon virtue and vice, upon the evidences of revelation, or any other general subject, may entertain the prosperous and the gay, but they will not mortify our members which are upon the earth; they will not unstring calamity, nor feed the heart with an imperishable hope. When I go to the house of God, I do not want amusement. I want the doctrine which is according to godliness. I want to hear of the remedy against the harassings of my guilt, and the disorder of my afflictions. I want to be led from weariness and disappointment to that goodness which filleth the hungry soul. I want to have light upon the mystery of providence; to be taught how the judgments of the Lord are right—how I shall be prepared for duty and for trial—how I may pass the time of my sojourning here in fear, and close it in peace. Tell me of that Lord Jesus, who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. Tell me of his intercession for the transgressors as their advocate with the Father. Tell me of his Holy Spirit, whom they that believe on him receive, to be their preserver, sanctifier, comforter. Tell me of his chastenings; their necessity, and their use. Tell me of his presence, and sympathy, and love. Tell me of the virtues, as growing out of his cross, and nurtured by his grace. Tell me of the glory reflected on his name by the obedience of faith. Tell me of vanquished death, of the purified grave, of a blessed resurrection, of the life everlasting—and my bosom warms. This is gospel; these are glad tidings to me as a sufferer, because glad to me as a sinner. They rectify my mistakes; allay my resentments; rebuke my discontent; support me under the weight of moral and natural evil. These attract the poor, steal upon the thoughtless, awe the irreverent, and throw over the service of the sanctuary a majesty, which some fashionable modes of address never fail to dissipate. Where they are habitually neglected, or lightly referred to, there may be much grandeur, but there is no gospel; and those preachers have infi-

nite reason to tremble, who, though admired by the great, and caressed by the vain, are deserted by the poor, the sorrowful, and such as walk humbly with their God.

2. We should learn from the Gospel, lessons of *active benevolence*.

The Lord Jesus, who "went about doing good," has "left us an example that we should follow his steps." Christians, on whom he has bestowed affluence; rank, or talent, should be the last to disdain their fellow-men, or to look with indifference on indigence and grief. Pride, unseemly in all, is detestable in them, who confess that "by grace they are saved." Their Lord and Redeemer, who humbled himself by assuming their nature, came to "deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper." And surely an object which was not unworthy of the Son of God, cannot be unworthy of any who are called by his name. Their wealth and opportunities, their talents and time, are not their own, nor to be used according to their own pleasure, but to be consecrated by their vocation as fellow-workers with God. How many hands that hang down would be lifted up; how many feeble knees confirmed; how many tears wiped away; how many victims of despondency and infamy rescued, by a close imitation of Jesus Christ. Go, with your opulence, to the house of famine, and the retreats of disease. Go, "deal thy bread to the hungry; when thou seest the naked, cover him; and hide not thyself from thine own flesh." Go, and furnish means to rear the offspring of the poor, that they may at least have access to the word of your God. Go, and quicken the flight of the angel, who has the everlasting Gospel to preach unto the nations. If you possess not wealth, employ your station in promoting good-will towards men. Judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Stimulate the exertions of others, who may supply what is lacking on your part. Let the beauties of holiness pour their lustre upon

your distinctions, and recommend to the unhappy that peace which yourselves have found in the salvation of God. If you have neither riches nor rank, devote your *talents*. Ravishing are the accents which dwell on the tongue of the learned, when it speaks a word in season to him that is weary. Press your genius and your eloquence into the service of the Lord your righteousness, to magnify his word, and display the riches of his grace. Who knoweth whether he may honor you to be the minister of joy to the disconsolate, of liberty to the captive, of life to the dead? If he has denied you wealth, and rank, and talent, consecrate your *heart*. Let it dissolve in sympathy. There is nothing to hinder your rejoicing with them that do rejoice, and your weeping with them that weep; nor to forbid the interchange of kind and soothing offices. "A brother is born for adversity;" and not only should Christian be to Christian "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," but he should exemplify the loveliness of his religion to them that are without. An action, a word, marked by the sweetness of the Gospel, has often been owned of God for producing the happiest effects. Let no man, therefore, try to excuse his inaction; for no man is too inconsiderable to augment the triumphs of the Gospel, by assisting in the consolation which it yields to the miserable.

3. Let all classes of the unhappy repair to the Christian truth, and *draw water with joy out of its wells of salvation*.

Assume your own characters, O ye children of men; present your grievances, and accept the consolation which the Gospel tenders. Come, now, ye tribes of pleasure, who have exhausted your strength in pursuing phantoms that retire at your approach. The voice of the Son of God in the Gospel is, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Come, ye tribes of an-

bition, who burn for the applause of your fellow-worms. The voice of the Son of God to you is, "The friendship of this world is enmity with God;" but "if any serve me, him will my Father honor." Come, ye avaricious, who pant after the dust of the earth on the head of the poor. The voice of the Son of God is, "Wisdom is more precious than rubies; and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her: but what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Come, ye profane. The voice of the Son of God is, "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness; behold, I bring near my righteousness." Come, ye formal and self-sufficient, who say that ye are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. The voice of the Son of God is, "I counsel you to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that ye may be rich; and white raiment, that ye may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear; and anoint your eyes with eye-salve, that ye may see." Come ye who, being convinced of sin, fear lest the fierce anger of the Lord fall upon you. The voice of the Son of God is, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Come, ye disconsolate, whose souls are sad, because the Comforter is away. The voice of the Son of God is, "The Lord hath sent me to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." Come, ye tempted, who are borne down with the violence of the law in your members, and of assaults from the evil one. The voice of the Son of God is, "I will be merciful to your unrighteousness; and the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." Come, ye children of domestic woe, upon whom the Lord has made a

breach, by taking away your counsellors and support. The voice of the Son of God is, "Leave thy fatherless children with me; I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me." Come, ye from whom mysterious providence has swept away the acquisitions of long and reputable industry. The voice of the Son of God is, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words," thou shalt have "a treasure in the heavens that faileth not;" and mayest "take joyfully the spoiling of thy goods, knowing that thou hast in heaven a better and an enduring substance." Come, ye poor, who without property to lose, are grappling with distress, and exposed to want. The Son of God, though the heir of all things, had not where to lay his head; and his voice to his poor is, "Be content with such things as ye have; for I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee: thy bread shall be given thee, and thy water shall be sure." Come, ye reproached, who find "cruel mockings" a most bitter persecution. The voice of the Son of God is, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of God and of glory resteth upon you." Come, in fine, ye dejected, whom the fear of death holds in bondage. The voice of the Son of God is, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Blessed Jesus, thy loving kindness shall be my joy in the house of my pilgrimage; and I will praise thee while I have any being, for that GOSPEL WHICH THOU HAST PREACHED TO THE POOR.

CHRIST A REFUGE.

JESUS, lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the billows near me roll,
While the tempest still is high !
Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
Till the storm of life is past ;
Safe into the haven guide ;
O receive my soul at last.

Other refuge have I none ;
Hangs my helpless soul on thee ;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone,
Still support and comfort me.
All my trust on thee is stay'd ;
All my help from thee I bring ;
Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing.

Thou, O Christ, art all I want ;
More than all in thee I find ;
Raise the fallen, cheer the faint,
Heal the sick, and lead the blind.
Just and holy is thy name,
I am all unrighteousness ;
Vile and full of sin I am,
Thou art full of truth and grace. Cowper.

THE
MISSING DISCIPLE.

It was a dark and gloomy evening when the doors of an obscure house in Jerusalem were closed upon a little number of plain, illiterate men, who, with a few women connected with them, had assembled for prayer. And as they prayed, they wept at the prostration of all their earthly hopes. They were discouraged and disheartened, for their Lord was taken from them, and he whom they trusted to have redeemed Israel was by wicked hands crucified and slain. They were weakened also by defection. Their number had always been small and feeble. The great, and the learned, and the rich, were never with them: Judas had apostatized; Peter, though reclaimed, had once denied his Master, and they dared not rely upon him. And now, as they looked around the room upon each familiar face, they became more disheartened, for they missed another of their little number: "*Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them.*" How discouraging! Could it be that Thomas had apostatized like Judas, or denied his Lord like Peter? If not, what could have happened? What had prevented him from coming to the prayer-meeting?

Thomas had been a forward man, and if not as much so as Peter, yet more so than some others; for once, when Jesus informed the disciples of the death of Lazarus, Thomas was the first to speak, and proposed to his fellows that they should go and die with him; yet in this day of gloom, in this hour of severe trial, when men should have been prompt

if ever, Thomas was missing. But where was he? Ah, where was he?

Could Thomas have been sick? The sacred historian is silent on that point. Good men are as liable to sickness as others, and when really sick, men are excusable for absence from any religious meeting whatever. But are there not some whose seats are vacant in the house of God on the Sabbath on the plea of ill health, who are at their business early on Monday morning, and continue it through the week? O this "Sunday sickness," how it sometimes thins the house of God! And the prayer-meeting is affected by it. Indeed the excuses sometimes multiply against the prayer-meeting when the Sabbath services are attended.

We repeat the question: Where was Thomas? Had some important worldly business detained him from meeting with his brethren on that occasion? Business is sometimes pleaded in excuse for absence from religious meetings during the week, and we can readily imagine cases where the excuse is valid; but it is not always, and probably not often. The great end of life is, to serve God and prepare for heaven. For this we were brought into the world, and for this we have been sustained hitherto, and we should take good heed that we suffer not worldly things to hinder, much less to exclude this great work of life. Thomas had a soul to be saved; he had been a member of Christ's family for three years, as he travelled about the land, and was at this time a stranger in Jerusalem. We have no reason to believe that business prevented him from meeting with his brethren to pray. But whatever may have been his excuse, Thomas was the greatest loser by absenting himself from the prayer-meeting. For,

1. Some of the most heavenly consolations were imparted to those who were present. When the disciples went in and shut the doors, they were in deep sorrow.

The crucifixion, and all the awful scenes of Calvary were before them, and as they prayed, they lamented and wept. But in the midst of their gloom a heavenly form stands among them. It is their Saviour. They know his welcome face. They hear his well-known voice, as he says, "*Pax* be unto you." What a change came over their feelings. Their mourning was turned into joy. "*Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.*" But Thomas lost all this. He was not at the prayer-meeting, and while his brethren were filled with joy, he as before was filled with sorrow.

2. The absence of Thomas from the prayer-meeting led him to the crying sin of unbelief. When the disciples told him that they had seen the Lord, he would not believe it. He had evidently become hardened in unbelief. His fellow-disciples were sincere men, and he must have known they would not tell him an untruth, and still he would not believe them. His language was most unbelieving. "*But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.*" Had Thomas been at the prayer-meeting when the Lord came into the midst of his disciples, he would not have talked in this unbecoming manner. But he was away, and the consequence was, his heart was hardened in unbelief.

3. Added to all the rest, the conduct of Thomas was an injury to the cause of religion. It was said of the disciples in another case, that the Jewish magistrates took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. They remembered that these were the men whom they had found uniform in their attachment to their Master and his cause for the enemies of Christ always watch the conduct of professed Christians. What must have been their impressions to see Thomas absenting himself, while his brethren were

assembled for prayer. Perhaps they did thus observe him, and were hardened in sin on his account. "Ah," they would exclaim, "here is one of these reformers occupying himself with the business or pleasures of the world, while his brethren are praying. This is a specimen of the new religion. It will soon die away." Thus is religion injured by those professed Christians who neglect the meeting for prayer. And perhaps religion is injured in another way. Some inquiring, yet trembling soul may be hindered. Such persons always look to professed disciples for examples; and if these are remiss and careless, the result may be the loss of a soul.

Reader, are you a professor of the name of Christ? Have you enrolled yourself with his people? And did you not covenant to avoid all sinful stumbling-blocks, and to walk with your brethren in unity and love, seeking the prosperity and enlargement of the church of which you are a member? And did you not do this voluntarily? How then can you justify yourself in the neglect of any of those means which God has always blessed to the comfort and edification of his people? The prayer-meeting stands prominent among the means which preserve the life and power of religion in the church. It is the spiritual thermometer, indicating the warmth or coldness of religion among a people. Let it no longer be neglected, especially by those who profess to love Christ; and when he comes into the midst of his people, as he ever does when they assemble in his name, let none, like Thomas, be missing from the place, lest they fail of the blessing.

GEORGE TAYLOR.

AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE.

IN the years 1820-21, Princeton, New Jersey, was blessed with a precious revival of religion. The work was still, solemn, and powerful. Among the subjects of it were some who became useful ministers of Christ. Others besides college students felt its power. The distress of many before attaining settled peace of mind was pungent, and often continued for days. There are pangs as well as joys in the new birth. He who believes the contrary, deceives himself. He who teaches the contrary, deceives others. The degree and duration of this anxious concern are determined by Him, who doeth all things well, and "giveth not account of any of his matters." He knows what best suits each case.

In the village at that time was an Englishman, whose name is above given. He was poor, feeble in mind and body, and much afflicted with rheumatism. He was honest, but very ignorant of divine things. He felt the powers of the world to come. He had a deep sense of his sinfulness, and awful apprehensions of the wrath of God. At first his case was not distinguished from that of many others. But while others obtained relief, and were begotten to a lively hope, he sunk into deeper distress. His state of mind excited the affectionate interest of the pious around him. He manifested a solemn attention to any thing that showed him his vileness. His sleep was short and disturbed. His burden of guilt was "a vast oppressive load." His appetite almost left him, and like David, he "forgot to eat." "His bones waxed old through his roaring all the day long; for day and night God's hand was heavy upon him. His moisture was turned into the drought of summer." He often feared that it was too late for him to repent and turn to God. Yet he could not give over seeking.

His chief difficulty was to conceive *how* a just and holy God could forgive sin, and particularly his sins. He saw that the law was holy, just, and good, in its precept and penalty. But he could not see how such a God, with such a law, could consistently forgive such a sinner as he was, or indeed any sinner. Many conversed with him, and tried to show him how God can be just, and yet justify the ungodly who believe in Christ. He also heard some excellent sermons on the work of Christ as a Redeemer. Still, all was dark. "How should man be just with God?" was the perplexing question. Such phrases as are commonly and very properly used to teach the nature of the offices of Christ in behalf of sinners, conveyed no idea to him. He knew not the language of Canaan. The effect of his distress was plainly perceptible in his face. The pious deeply commiserated his state, and the more so because no one had been able to afford him any relief. At last one explained to him some of the sacrifices under the law. He told him how a lamb was brought by a guilty man, and laid bound on the altar, and how he who had sinned laid his hands upon it, confessing his sin, and how its blood became the blood of atonement, and how he was thus set free from the guilt of breaking the ceremonial law. His friend then said, "Christ is our lamb," and, suiting the gestures to the words, repeated these lines of Watts':

" My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand
And there confess my sin."

This was enough. To poor George it was life from the dead. The day-spring had visited his soul. He said, "I understand it now. All is plain. Christ is the lamb to take away our sins. Why did not some one tell me this before?" His friend said, "We have been telling you the same thing all along, but in different words. Did we not tell you that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life; and that no man cometh unto the Father but by him?"

George Taylor was received into the church of Princeton, August 10, 1821; and for a few years, till his death, led a devout, consistent life. He held fast his integrity, and is now, I trust, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.

This short narrative is not intended to illustrate the whole of that great change which must pass upon men in order to salvation. Nor is it given as a type of conversions. God deals variously with men. But it may teach some useful lessons.

1. The use of learning is to make things plain.

2. There is milk as well as meat in the word of God—milk for babes, and meat for strong men. Let each have his portion in due season.

3. Whoever would come to Christ, must be taught of God. Jesus said, "No man can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." Reader, if God is drawing you, now is your time. If he is calling you, rise and follow him. He will not always call. Left to yourself, you will never find the way to God. You must be led by the Spirit. Pray like David, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."

4. God works when, how, and by what means he will. He offers salvation to the rich and the poor, to the learned and the rude. But how often are we reminded of those words of Christ, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Let us thank God that he reveals these things to babes, to the weak-minded and ignorant who are willing to learn. "The entrance of thy word giveth light." "It maketh wise the simple."

5. Let none despise the Gospel because it is preached to the poor, nor because the child and the simple can understand enough of it to be saved. Pride is as damning as murder, and pride of intellect is as ruinous as pride of person, family, or estate. "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God." "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble." "The proud,

and all that do wickedly, shall be burned up." You must humble yourself as a little child, if you would be saved.

6. It is always safe to tell of Christ and his love, of his death and his grace. This theme has awakened thousands, and brought millions to salvation.

7. How transforming is the doctrine of the cross, whenever understood and received. It is life and it is spirit. It cheers, it purifies, it puts men to praying, it makes them zealous of good works. Such were its effects on George Taylor, as many saw; on the Greenlanders, as the Moravians testify; on the Indians of New Jersey, as Brainerd declares; on the people of Kilmany, as Chalmers states. The cross at once subdues and wins. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

8. And now, dying mortal, you too are a sinner, and you too need a Saviour no less than poor Taylor. Unless you are brought to strive to enter in at the strait gate, you will never be saved. Unless you are brought to loathe and abhor yourself, you must perish. You must find the Lamb of God, by whose blood alone your guilt can be washed away. "He that believeth not, shall be damned." It is said of a poor Greenlander, that the first time he heard the love and death of Christ explained, he said, "If this Saviour died for me, he shall be my Saviour." If you will rest all your weight upon the precious blood of Christ, your soul shall be saved, your sins shall be blotted out, and heaven shall be yours.

O repent and believe; for why will you die?
 Since God in great mercy is coming so nigh—
 Since Jesus invites you, the Spirit says, Come,
 And angels are waiting to welcome you home.

If you die in your sins, many will rise in the judgment and condemn you. If you now receive Christ, you will be safe for eternity. Will you not receive him? Will you not receive him *now*? The Bible presents no alternative but NOW or NEVER.

THE LOST SON.

I WAS standing by the side of my mother, under the spacious porch of Dr. Beatty's church, Union-street, Glasgow, awaiting the hour for afternoon service. A holy calm hung over the city; no discordant noise broke the solemn stillness of the day of rest and worship; scarcely a whisper was heard in the assembly of waiting worshippers who crowded the broad pavement on which I stood. All seemed profoundly impressed with the solemn and sacred character of the day, the place, and the occasion which had called them together. It was, in short, a Sabbath in the land of Knox and Chalmers. I had been in this position probably ten or fifteen minutes, when I observed two young men turn a corner and walk towards the church. They were dressed in their working clothes, unshaven and dirty, and slightly intoxicated. As they passed the church door they assumed a swaggering, irreverent gait, laughed, and finally commenced singing a profane song. Some of the bystanders expressed their horror at the occurrence, others wondered what had become of the police; but my mother turned to me, and said, "Follow these two men, and invite them to a seat in our pew."

I soon overtook them and delivered my mother's message. One laughed scornfully and began to swear; the other paused and pondered, and was evidently struck with the nature of the invitation. His companion again swore, and was about to drag him away. But he still paused. I repeated the invitation, and in a few seconds he looked in my face and said, "When I was a boy like you, I went to church every Sunday. I have not been inside of a church for three years. *I don't feel right.* I believe I will go with you." I seized his hand and led him back to the house of God, in spite of the remonstrances and oaths of his companion. The doors were now open, and the church was filling rapidly; we entered, and I conducted him to the pew where my mother was already seated. A most excellent sermon was preached from Eccles. 11:1: "Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou

shalt find it after many days." The young man was attentive, but seemed abashed and downcast.

At the conclusion of the service he hastened out of the church, but he was closely followed, and soon overtaken by my mother, who kindly said to him, "Have you a Bible, young man?" "No, ma'am; but I can get one," was his reply. "Well, take my son's Bible until you procure one of your own. Read it attentively during the week, and come to meeting again next Lord's day. I will always be happy to accommodate you with a seat."

He put the Bible in his pocket and hurried away. At family worship that evening my mother prayed fervently for the conversion of that young man.

Next Sunday came, and the next, but the stranger did not appear. My mother frequently spoke of him, and appeared grieved at his absence. He had doubtless been the subject of her closet devotions. On the third Sabbath morning, while the congregation were singing the first psalm, the young man again entered our pew. He was now dressed genteelly, and appeared thin and pale, as if from recent sickness. My mother looked at him with great earnestness, and a gleam of satisfaction and thankfulness overspread her pale intellectual features. Immediately after the benediction, the stranger laid down my Bible, and left the house without giving my mother an opportunity she much desired, of conversing with him. On one of the blank leaves of the Bible we found some writing in pencil, signed "W. C." The writer stated that he had been confined to his room by sickness for the previous two weeks. He declared his inability to express his gratitude to my mother, for the interest she had manifested in his spiritual welfare: he asked to be remembered in her prayers, and concluded by stating that he was an Englishman, and would return to his native land in about ten days.

Years rolled on; my mother passed to her heavenly rest; I grew up to manhood, and the stranger was forgotten.

In the autumn of 18— the ship *St. George*, of which I was the medical officer, anchored in Table Bay. Between us and Penguin Island, I observed a man-of-war which I had

seen before and knew well ; it was her majesty's brig Chanticleer of ten guns, Commander Forbes, on a surveying expedition. The surgeon of the brig, Dr. F——, had been my preceptor, and I resolved to pay him a visit. After dining with the gun-room officers, he proposed that on the following day, which was the Sabbath, we should attend meeting in Capetown. "It will remind us," he said, "of old times, when we used to go arm in arm to church in Union-street."

Next day, in company with my friend, I attended morning service at the Wesleyan chapel. At the conclusion of worship, a gentleman seated behind me asked to look at my Bible. In a few minutes he returned it, and I walked into the street. I was mounting the steps in front of the hotel where I was to dine, when the same gentleman laid his hand on my shoulder, and begged to have a few minutes' conversation. We were shown into a private apartment. As soon as we were seated, he examined my countenance with great attention and then began to sob ; tears rolled down his cheeks ; he was evidently laboring under intense emotion. He appeared to be about thirty-five years of age, was tall and slender, and neatly dressed, but apparently in bad health. He asked me several questions—my name, age, occupation, and birthplace. He then inquired if I had not, when a boy, many years ago, invited a drunken Sabbath-breaker to a seat in Dr. Beatty's church. I was astonished—the subject of my mother's anxiety and prayers was before me. Mutual explanations and congratulations followed, after which Mr. C gave me a short history of his life, from the time he left Scotland to the day on which we met so unexpectedly in a foreign land.

He was born in the town of Leeds, in the east-riding of Yorkshire, of highly respectable and religious parents, who gave him a good education, and trained him up in the way of righteousness. When about fifteen his father died, and his mother's straitened circumstances obliged her to take him from school, and put him to learn a trade, where he imbibed all manner of evil, became incorrigibly vicious, and broke his mother's heart. Freed now from all parental restraint, he

left his employers and travelled to Scotland. In the city of Glasgow he had lived and sinned for two years, when he was arrested in his career through my mother's instrumentality. He confessed that, on leaving the church, on the first Sabbath, he was seized with pangs of unutterable remorse. The sight of a mother and her son worshipping God together, recalled the happy days of his own boyhood, when he went to church and Sunday-school, and when he also had a mother—a mother whose latter days he had embittered, and whose gray hairs he had brought with sorrow to the grave. His mental suffering threw him on a bed of sickness, from which he arose a changed man. He returned to England, cast himself at the feet of his maternal uncle, and asked and obtained forgiveness. His conviction of sin—his battlings with temptation—his repentance—his victory over the world—the growth of his faith in the great atonement—and, finally, his peace in believing, formed a deeply interesting and instructive narrative. With his uncle's consent he studied for the ministry; and on being ordained, he entered the missionary field, and had been laboring for several years in Southern Africa.

“The moment I saw your Bible this morning,” he said, “I recognized it, and the examination of the writing, which is still legible on the blank leaf, assured me that I was not mistaken. You now see from what I was rescued by the unfathomable love and boundless grace of God, through your own and your mother's instrumentality. I was dragged from the very brink of infamy and destruction, and saved as a brand from the burning. You remember Dr. Beatty's text on the day of my salvation: ‘Cast thy bread upon the waters; for thou shalt find it after many days.’ The proud, hardened, scoffing sinner is found, after thirteen years, a humble minister of salvation to the benighted heathen; and your sainted mother is doubtless enjoying the reward of those who turn many to righteousness—shining as the stars for ever and ever.”

MRS. HENRY VENN.

BY THE LATE REV. HENRY VENN,

AUTHOR OF THE COMPLETE DUTY OF MAN.

THE blessed God, whose every act calls for adoration from the children of men, saw fit to deprive you, my dear children, of the best of mothers, and me of the best of wives, long before you could be sensible of your loss. Uncertain whether I shall live to propose her to your imitation, I take this method of giving you some idea of her mind and life; and should I soon go to my God, I beg each of my beloved children to keep a copy of these papers, and read it with attention. May the God of your father and of your mother make the reading of it useful and pleasing to you.

Pleasing and profitable to myself it will be, thus minutely to survey the precious gift I received from God when your dear mother was married to me, and the comfort I experienced the short ten years it pleased him that sacred union should last.

Your mother's maiden name was Bishop; but in these papers I shall call her Mira. She was descended from an ancient family in Lincolnshire, of which Sir Cecil Bishop is now the head. Her father was of Sidney College, Cambridge; a Doctor in Divinity, much celebrated for his public exercise in the university when he took his doctor's degree, and very eminent for the extent of his learning and great abilities. Her mother's name was Fowler, a lady of a good family and fortune, near Stowmarket, in Suffolk. The place where her parents lived, and where Mira was born in the year 1724, was Ipswich.

Probably my dear children will wonder at the mention of Mira's descent and family; since it has been my constant aim, and daily prayer to God, that you may always feel that

the poorest parish girl who loves the Lord Jesus is a right honorable person, whilst the son of a king, who neglects him, is of a base spirit, and in the meanest condition. My only reason for taking notice of these particulars is to display more the power of God's grace, which conquered in Mira's heart that stubborn yet absurd pride which arises from being, in the language of the world, well-born.

The fortune of her parents, together with the church preferment which Dr. Bishop long held, was very sufficient to have secured an ample provision for his family, large as it was; but yet they were left at his death destitute. This event happened just when Mira was beginning to bloom in beauty, and to receive hourly admiration upon that account. But very soon must this charming flower lose its lovely appearance; for the Lord was pleased to visit her with the smallpox of so malignant a sort as to change in some degree the features of her face, and to leave her, compared with her former state, much altered for the worse.

Upon due consideration of the circumstances of her family, Mira, when near sixteen, desired some proper business might be found for her to engage in—a strong proof of good sense in vanquishing evil shame, which so often keeps young ladies idle and even burdensome at home, rather than appear in any lower station of life. Mira's desire in this matter was refused, Mrs. Bishop not choosing to part with her. The same wisdom and prudence, therefore, which prompted her to seek employment abroad, excited her now to improve herself at home. She began immediately to learn all sorts of domestic business, and determined to be ignorant of nothing which should be known or done in order to the good management of a family. Not content to excel in all needlework, she learned to be expert in every kind of contrivance and ingenuity which can be wanted in a housewife. The quality and price of every article consumed by a family she took care thoroughly to understand, so as not to be obliged to trust either to the honesty of tradesmen or servants. Her skill in these instances soon grew to be conspicuous, and gave

her a superiority over many of her sex. Indeed, in so high a degree was she mistress of these female accomplishments, that with a small income, a large family, visited by much company, and with few servants, neatness and cleanliness, order, plenty, and yet frugality, were visible, through the whole economy of the house, to every eye.

But whilst Mira was most serviceable to her dear mother and brother by her housewifery, neither her person nor understanding were neglected; the utmost neatness ever adorned the one, whilst a careful reading of several celebrated writers improved and enlarged the other.

The close of Mrs. Bishop's life it pleased God should be very afflictive, not only from a view of her large family without any provision, but from a bad state of health, till an uncommon disorder brought her to the grave. This was a swelling in her throat, which gradually increased till she was unable to swallow any sustenance, and she was literally starved to death. During the whole of this melancholy scene, Mira's filial piety shone out with a beauteous lustre. She devoted herself entirely to wait upon her mother, which she did so closely as evidently to injure her own health.

Mrs. Bishop being now deceased, and her brother married, Mira passed three or four years amongst her friends, sometimes in one family, sometimes in another; always welcome, because always cheerful, good-natured, and sure to be of use wherever she was. At this time, as well as before, offers were made to her; two particularly, which, in the language of the world, were great ones. Had love of show or money governed her mind, these offers would not have been refused. But Mira was fixed never to give her hand to one who was not, as she judged, of a mind congenial with her own, from whom she should not expect improvement with delight; persuaded that unless there was in a husband a fund of good sense and knowledge to furnish rational conversation, the marriage union must prove insipid, and the wife be little more than a nurse for the children.

It was owing solely to this rare, yet judicious way of thinking, with firmness, that Mira, though pleasing in her figure; full of life and good-humor, of excellent understanding, remarkable ingenuity, and perfectly accomplished for that middle rank of life in which she was born, refused every offer till the twenty-ninth year of her age, and then was engaged to your father.

Previous to this engagement she had acted a noble part. A sister of hers, some years younger, was set up in business in London—open-hearted, inexperienced, unsuspecting, living in the same lodgings with two young ladies as little acquainted with the world as herself. The dangers of this situation Mira immediately perceived, and from affection, determined, by living with her sister, to give her the advantage of her prudence, experience, and counsel. The mortification she must meet with in this change, quite new to her, was foreseen. No one naturally would more keenly feel the ill-usage of every peevish customer, or the being treated with contempt as an inferior. Though this grated upon her mind, and hurt her pride, she saw it the path of duty, and determined to bear it. A violence to her own will this, which it required no small degree of fortitude to offer.

It was in this situation your father first became acquainted with Mira. Had either of us been of a worldly spirit, we might easily have settled to more advantage, and been rich. But we found in each other, what was to us more than wealth, a perfect similarity of sentiment on subjects of highest moment, which continued here till her removal to glory, and will endure to all eternity in heaven.

It will be proper to inform my dear girls in what manner Mira was first led to be serious, and in earnest about the salvation of her soul. In early life she knew nothing of true religion, nor amongst her acquaintance had ever seen a single instance of its glorious power. Barren orthodoxy, full of bitter wrath against all dissenters from the Church of England, was the religion in which she was brought up; whilst the very same short form of prayer in secret, morning

and evening, and a customary attendance every Sunday on public worship, was accounted devotion sufficient to make a good Christian. A general assent to the Bible, as a revelation of God, in opposition to deism, was deemed faith in Christ; and instead of joy in God, from having received the atonement, the religion she always heard expressed from the pulpit, was a labor to enter into life, by keeping the commandments, and doing our duty.

With this sort of religion, it is true, Mira could never be satisfied. Several passages in the Bible, which she casually looked into, puzzled her much: particularly that, "The law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." She asked a clergyman to explain in what respects Jesus was so superior to Moses, but received no information. She was often also deep in thought, endeavoring to find out what real advantages Christians now receive from the Lord Jesus, who, she was taught to confess, was God, and died for men. Unable to make this discovery, she used to wish she had seen our Lord work his miracles, and bless the multitudes around him. Those numerous passages, also, which speak of the blessings of the poor and needy, and the promises made to them, as she knew not that they described the spiritual poverty of all real believers, were too hard for her to understand, since she could not conceive that the favor of God was confined to any outward state or condition.

After many passing thoughts of this kind, the first lasting impression was made by the following incident. Her mother bid her, when of age, to receive the sacrament, and prepare for it against the approaching festival. Accordingly Mira began to do it; she very diligently followed all the rules laid down in a book called "The Week's Preparation for the Lord's Supper." By reading, prayer, and meditation, her mind was much affected with a great dread of the sacrament, as a tremendous ordinance, and with the danger of being an unworthy receiver of it; her waking thoughts did not leave her in the night season, but presented themselves to her mind under the following dream. She was

walking, she dreamed, upon a long, high terrace, when suddenly a flood of waters poured in on every side, from which there seemed to be no way of escape. When the waters were just ready to overwhelm her, she saw something floating towards her on the surface; and as it was approaching, thought she heard a voice say, "That is the body of Jesus; if you can touch it, the waters will not drown you." She immediately stretched out her hand to do so, when the same voice again said, "It is the body of Jesus, but not for you," and instantly it vanished. Mira awaked in a loud scream, from the horror of her mind; but not daring to mention what had happened, she received the sacrament the Sunday following in extreme anguish; for this hideous dream she interpreted into a portentous sign of her own rejection by Christ at the last day: though the whole was evidently no more than the effect of a very solemn concern to be duly prepared to eat of the symbols of the crucified body of our Lord. Notwithstanding, she suffered very much from this dream: so strong was its impression, that at the distance of many years it would sometimes bring a transient gloom upon her mind. It had, however, certainly one good effect—it made her think much more of eternity.

Upon the things of eternity our conversation turned from our first acquaintance. Much concerned we both were to gain heaven, though very ignorant of the way. We began our engagement as two pilgrims, seeking a better country; and as we travelled on, were favored with more light, directing our steps to the city in which we were to dwell safely, even the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

As soon as my connection with Mira was known, she was introduced to all my particular friends—friends cemented to me by that dearest of all bonds, love to Jesus and his members. And now she began to enjoy what was a perfect novelty to her, intimacy with persons born of God. She saw that religion in them, instead of being a task, was their joy; that, instead of being worn on a Sunday, or confined to the closet, it was the constant enlivening subject of discourse each day. She

heard them with the freedom of sons and daughters speak of their heavenly Father's heart towards them, of their privileges, of their present happiness, their glorious hope, and the blessed exchange of the baubles of sense and time for the unsearchable riches of Christ.

The great regard which Mira met with amongst the excellent of the earth, often pained her heart, from a consciousness of deserving a contrary treatment. The husband of one of these friends, in order to facilitate our union, made me a present of a very considerable sum, insisting particularly that I should remember this was not so much to myself, as an expression of the love which he, and his dear lady just then gone to heaven, had for Mira, from their first knowledge of her.

As soon as we were married we lived at Clapham, in Surrey, a favorite village, where many London merchants choose their country-seats, designing in general only to enjoy themselves. To such, the doctrine of the Gospel, preached with zeal and boldness, was very offensive. Of this there was soon proof sufficient. But though the husband was so zealous, it was thought that Mira, from her vivacity, could be no more pleased with such doctrine than themselves. One of the ladies who visited Mira was determined to try if it were not so, and whether the wife could not be prevailed on to repress the annoying earnestness of her husband. The lady began with observing, that all the gentlemen believed that I was a very good man, and very ingenious; that it was only to be wished I would not carry matters to such lengths, nor be so alarming in the application of my doctrine. To this Mira returned, that I believed all I said, and was under the necessity of speaking as the oracles of God spake. The lady then urged her to consider her own case—the prospect of a large family without a provision, and need of many friends; and that this way of preaching was not the way to procure them. “One Friend,” replied Mira, “I am sure it is; for the Master Mr. Venn serves is too great and too good ever to see him, or his, real losers for faithfulness in his own

service." She here spoke under the influence of that faith and hope in God which were soon to be put to a very severe trial. . For in the following year, grieved at the obstinate rejection of the Gospel, during five years, by the rich almost to a man—and there were but few poor in the place—I accepted an offer unexpectedly made me by my very affectionate friend the earl of Dartmouth. By this change of situation our income was reduced more than one half. However, believing, upon what I thought good grounds, several things to be true which were misrepresented, and supposing the small income in so cheap a country would be sufficient to live upon, I determined to remove to Huddersfield. Accordingly we left my native place, and many cordial friends, to fix, near two hundred miles distance, amongst strangers.

In this new situation there was indeed the noblest field for a minister of Christ; people from all the neighborhood coming in crowds to hear. And the power of the Lord was present, and his word was glorified. More than full exercise I had for all my strength, and full employment for all my time. What can be conceived more honorable, what more delightful, than such a life as this? What a desperately wicked heart must that be, which was not exceedingly thankful for such an eligible post. But I would remember to my dying hour, with deep humiliation, my provocation before the Lord. Though he deigned to make use of me in gathering a church, though more success was given to my labors than is usually found where the Gospel is preached, I was still sadly discontented. I saw myself, with an increasing family, reduced to what I had never known before—dependence upon the kindness of friends. I saw I had given up a certain sufficient income, and a situation where, if difficulties arose, many friends would be glad to relieve me in them, for one in which there were none able, however willing; a situation, where the assistance I should receive would be construed into a mercenary motive for my preaching the Gospel. I feared also, that distance and absence might cool the love of those friends towards me, whose kindness was now

become so necessary to make up the scantiness of my income.

In these views, unbelief, pride, and selfishness conquered me entirely. I was grieved at my own vileness, and self-condemned. I lamented and strove in prayer, day and night, against my corruptions; but they bore me away as a torrent, and overwhelmed my soul. So that whilst there was yet time, before the resignation of my lectureships in London, I determined to return thither. Mira, who had much more cause on various accounts to be displeased, and more reasons eagerly to desire a return, full of faith, still dissuaded me from this step. She observed, that it was evidently the act of God to fix me here; therefore those circumstances were concealed, which otherwise would have infallibly prevented my coming here—that he was working by me; consequently at this time I could by no means, with a good conscience, leave the people to whom I was sent of God to preach the Gospel. By her persuasions, and by them alone, was I withheld from my purpose of returning into the south; though for more than a year after I yielded to them, the same unbelief and selfishness miserably tormented and deeply defiled my soul. Sovereign, all-conquering grace at last made me willing to walk by faith, and not by sight; to trust God for a provision; and be content to be beholden to the kindness of friends, who loved me for my work's sake.

This very strong act of faith in Mira did not go without its gracious reward. It was soon followed by an opening of the mysteries of the kingdom, and a revelation of the glory of Christ. Hitherto his love had been perceived by her in great obscurity. For notwithstanding the pain, torment, and blood it cost him to redeem the church, the immortal interests of real believers in him she still thought were left unsecured. To her view, the company of the faithful appeared only as an army with banners in the field of battle, not as garrisoned in a strong city, having salvation for walls and for bulwarks. Led on indeed it was by One almighty to save, but yet no one individual of his followers could be sure of coming off

conqueror. According to Mira's principles, before this period, certainty of obtaining eternal glory there was none, not even for those whom God had actually justified. In short, *but's*, *ifs*, and qualifications, made the final issue as absolutely dubious as if Christ had never finished the work the Father gave him to do. Her eye was therefore of necessity turned from the person, work, and love of the almighty Saviour, to her own labors, attainments, and marks of grace. Never was there a more sincere, and of consequence a more perplexed mind than Mira's, while she continued in this plan of doctrine. Scarcely possible is it to tell the deep sighs she fetched, the tears she shed, the desponding thoughts she felt in her heart, for near seven years.

Full sanctification, by which she meant a deliverance from the rising so much as of one sinful thought, she agonized to obtain, that from thence she might conclude she was a child of God, and one meet for glory. But, alas, she found herself still evil. And the stirring of corruptions, instead of humbling her in her own eyes, and endearing the more the Saviour's name, only tormented her with fear, because her all was at stake; and from the feeling of indwelling sin the more she strove against it, she concluded all must be lost. In a word, she labored in the fire for that which was not bread, and spent her strength for that which could not satisfy.

But when her understanding was enlightened to perceive the motive and the end of the law, and the grand difference between the covenant of works and of redemption, those Scriptures which by the Holy Ghost are emphatically called strong meat, were made food indeed to her soul. She saw the union between the Head of the church, on his eternal throne, and every member of his body on earth; their acceptance before God in him, and their completeness in his righteousness. She understood and believed those Scriptures which maintain the impossibility of any one of the sheep of Christ perishing, from the promise and oath of Jehovah standing engaged to preserve them unto the end. To her

weariness these truths were as the drops which water the earth. From henceforth she had but one thing to do—to serve, love, adore, and trust in her heavenly Husband, who took upon himself to keep her soul night and day, lest any should hurt it. Now she could eat her bread with gladness and singleness of heart, persuaded by the word and Spirit of God, that all her heart could wish was hid for her with Christ in God; and enabled to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of Christ: that very sanctification she longed for was obtained in a higher degree than ever, and her besetting sin was more successfully encountered, by her certainty of being in the end made victorious over it.

In one letter she writes thus:

“Whatever trouble or uneasiness I meet with, all seems to bring me nigher to the blessed Jesus; as he humbles me by showing me my own evil heart, he discovers his love more bright and shining, boundless, and beyond all comprehension. As he takes from me any outward blessing, or threatens to do so, he is pleased to grant me a lively sense of his all-sufficiency. He calls himself my friend, my father, my husband. O, what may I not expect from such endearing relations! And is he not sufficient to fulfil them all? I know he is. I can trust myself in his hands, and my all. I am yet hungering and thirsting, but how delightful is that hunger; how pleasing is that thirst! I would gladly feel it till the time come that my spirit shall be satisfied with all the fulness of Christ, in the mansions where our joy shall last for evermore.” * *

Three years of conflict and victory through Christ passed swiftly, and the appointed time of her departure was at hand. At this season it was with her as often is the case with the children of God towards the conclusion of their life—they revive as the corn, which in a few days makes surprising shoots. Several friends remarked with what boldness and liberty more than usual she spoke for Christ; with what faithfulness she gave reproofs where needful;

and how enlightened her ideas were of the salvation of God. They acknowledge the benefit they received from her, and remember well the unction they felt in several of the last conversations they heard from her lips on the things of God.

For several months before her departure, Mira was in a bad state of health. Yet one dreadful conflict more was she to sustain before her entrance into everlasting rest. Her disorder lay greatly upon her spirits. This was also aggravated by the assaults of her infernal enemy; for he was suffered to pour in upon her soul most blasphemous suggestions against the truth of the Bible, and the very existence of God. To so great a height were these temptations permitted to rise, that in the night of the first Sunday in July, 1767, though the tempestuous wind quite rocked the house, it did not even engage her attention, so terrible was the storm within. But in due time, God heard her prayer. Her tempted, harassed soul he set at liberty, and gave her a blessing of peace which never left her, till it was swallowed up—there is no room to question—in the joy of her Lord.

On the 27th of August, the fever which was commissioned to carry her home, made its appearance; and at the very same time, Mira told a beloved friend she had received a manifestation from God her Saviour, more glorious than any she had been favored with before. In giving to me the account of it, she said it was as clear and distinct an evidence of the love of God to her soul, as if she had heard the voice of the Lord, saying, "Thou art mine, and I am thine; I have saved thee." During the first seven days, no danger was apprehended; but on the 5th of September, some alarming symptoms appeared. The day following she said to me, "I am ready, I am willing to depart; so clear a view have I of my Saviour." The day after this, she added, "Jesus is so sufficient, I would have nothing mix with him, nor do I want one single good work more." On Tuesday the 8th, when the fever raged, she laid her hand upon her dear friend's head, saying, "O that I could take you up with me to everlasting rest."

Upon another friend's asking her whether she could still bless God, she answered, smiling, "O, now is the time for him to bless me;" meaning, that her bodily disease bore down the activity of her mind, and rendered her entirely passive to receive the communications of his love.

Two days before her departure, she desired we should not pray for her recovery, but for some mitigation of her pain, and for an easy passage to her Lord. This petition was granted; for though her pain increased till she once said, "I think it is greater than I can bear," yet the last words she uttered were such as must break from a glorified spirit the first moment of its entrance into bliss: "O the joy, the delight." After lying speechless a good while, she drew her breath twice very deep, and fell asleep in Jesus, September 9, 1767.

Thus I have given you, my dear children, a brief account of the life and death of Mira.

Several excellences she possessed, of which in the preceding relation there is most evident proof. But I will point them out more particularly in drawing up her character.

Mira's natural temper was remarkably cheerful and sprightly; her understanding strong and clear. An open, honest countenance was the mirror of her heart, which knew no disguise—which paid so sacred a regard to truth, that during the whole time I knew her, never could I perceive she once deviated from it.

The bee itself was scarce more a stranger to idleness than Mira. Her hands or head were always employed in diligent application to some business or other. Even with a very infirm constitution, her industrious, active spirit was very conspicuous. Had her health been good, much more labor she would have gone through; as it was, it is surprising how much she did, and with what dispatch, in various particulars. As of old, when Dorcas was dead, it is recorded to her honor, that they brought forth the marks of her good employment of her time; so when Mira departed, those

under her care could stand up as witnesses of her filling up all her hours with proper, useful employment. To this activity of spirit was joined an exemplary observation of the duties of her place and station. She was an affectionate wife, concerned for my happiness, and evidently more afflicted for the sufferings I was called to bear than for her own. As a counsellor, she was cool and prudent, endued with much foresight, and with penetration into the characters of men. As a companion, she was entertaining and new; so that the more I was with her alone, the more I was sure to be pleased—to be thankful to God for her, and led to wish, if it were lawful, that we had fewer intimates, in order that I might enjoy conversation with her the more. As a mother, she was loving to all her children, without partiality, and without a foolish fondness, the cruel encourager of bad tempers. Every circumstance respecting their health and improvement was attended to very carefully by her. As a friend, she was kind and full of alacrity to serve, often repeating that Scripture, “He that will have friends, must show himself friendly.”

Her servants improved under her instructions, taught by her to do their business in the best manner, and at the fittest time. Her qualifications they esteemed, and for her kindness they loved her; in her sickness they waited on her with a tender assiduity, expressive of their unfeigned regard, and sincerely lamented her death.

Money, that mighty enchantress, had no power to bewitch Mira. Though frugal, she was generous. Though our circumstances might have been used as a cloak for covetousness, she abhorred the thought of refusing to give to the poor members of Christ what was in her power.

These excellences, though amiable and pleasing, still constituted only the lower part of Mira's character, for she was born of God. Jesus Christ was her all. Even the graces of the Spirit of God, whenever spoken of so as to derogate from the divine righteousness, or shade its lustre, fired her soul with a holy jealousy, and brought forth that

apostolic feeling, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." She who for years was continually looking to marks and evidences of personal holiness as the ground of her hope before God, now had no other foundation of confidence than the everlasting covenant; no other joy than what sprang from the everlasting love of Jesus to his church. To other people she desired that her life should show the evidences of the light that was in her, and of the union she had with her Head and Husband on the throne of glory. But in her own view of herself before God, she stood as the thief saved on the cross—as a brand plucked out of the fire.

Such faith was inseparable from humility. Hence, lest I should think more highly of her than I ought to think, she was very unwilling ever to let me know the manifestations she was favored with from the God of her salvation; and though it was not possible entirely to conceal her secret devotions from me, she was desirous to do so.

To conclude, the written word of God was her study and delight. She felt the weakness and poverty of all human writings, so as to have scarce more inclination than she had leisure to peruse them; but the Scriptures, like the manna which came fresh from heaven, and lay round the camp of Israel, she found ever new and nourishing. Her manner of reading the Bible was excellent. She compared Scripture with Scripture, taking much pains to gain the true interpretation, after having earnestly implored the light of the Holy Ghost. What was still dark, she laid up in her mind, waiting for an opportunity to make inquiry concerning it of some who were mighty in the Scriptures. By this means she attained to a very clear view of the grand truths of the Gospel. The incomparable chapters in which Isaiah, John, and Paul speak of the glory of Christ, afforded a feast to her soul.

Such, in her life, temper, and employment, was Mira.

My dear children may perhaps be ready to say, And had she no faults? Yes, many. Though really possessed of a

measure of each of the excellences above-named, she was burdened with an evil nature, which often got the ascendant, as others might see; and much oftener caused her to loathe herself in her own eyes, and cleave alone to the blood and righteousness of God her Saviour, as the anchor of her soul, sure and steadfast.

Such was Mira: imperfect in the eyes of her fellow-creatures—vile and sinful in her own; yet washed, and sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

All circumstances considered, few have been called to bear a heavier cross than I was by her death—a cross insupportable, had I not been filled with the joyful assurance of Mira's instant admission into glory, upon her ceasing to dwell in the body—a cross that must have sunk me, had not the comforts of love divine, the consolations of Christ, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, been given to me.

Perilous, indeed, is their condition who have a Mira to lose, and know their treasure, if they have not in God a tried and proved friend and portion. Without this, in such a case the pangs of separation are worse than those of tearing the arm from the shoulder-blade. After such a stroke, future life is all a blank. But when such choicest of creature-comforts are enjoyed in God as his gift, infinitely inferior to himself the giver—in such a case the wound inflicted by parting, though deep and long painful, has its raging smart soon abated. The certain speedy reunion in a better world wipes away the tears, and tends to pacify the aching mind.

THE
BRAZEN SERPENT.

BY REV. EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D.



JESUS and his salvation were the substance of all the ancient shadows, the end of all the Mosaic rites, and the burden of every prophet's song. They were the favorite theme of the Old Testament and the New. They are the subject of the highest songs of the upper world. They bring the purest joy to hearts on earth broken for sin.

There are few types of happier influence to illustrate the gospel remedy and the manner of its application, than the brazen serpent. When the Hebrews provoked God in the wilderness, he sent among them *fiery serpents* of a most deadly bite—none being able to defend themselves against the fell attack. What a scene of distress was here! Hundreds lying dead in the camp; hundreds more writhing in torture, and crying in vain for relief; every one trembling for

himself; now a child, and then a wife, and then a brother crying out under the tormenting bite. What could they do? They hastened away to Moses, and said with tears, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the Lord, and against thee. Pray unto the Lord, that he take away the serpents from us." And Moses prayed for the people; and the Lord said to him, "Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Glorious emblem of Him who was "*lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*" John 3: 14, 15.

Let us trace a little more particularly the resemblance between this type and the Antitype.

1. It was provided for people in *a condition somewhat resembling* that of the race to whom the Saviour was sent. Many of them were groaning under the anguish of their wounds, and ready to die; others heard the cries of their parents and children around them, and could neither snatch them from death nor afford them a moment's relief. Such is the state of those for whom a Saviour was provided. They are dying under the tormenting inflictions of sin; panting with restless desires, which nothing can satisfy; or tossing under anguish of conscience, and a "fearful looking for of judgment." They behold around them the wide ruins which sin has made. They contemplate the present and endless misery of their parents and children, without being able to afford them any relief. The whole race lie in ruins, amidst the wide and frightful ravages of the curse—amidst misery and death in a countless variety of forms; walking over clods once animated with human life—seeing their brethren huddled together in the grave, and all the living going down after them—sinking, sinking, till they are out of sight; death temporal and death eternal swallowing up all. Such is the ruin of a world smitten with the curse of the Almighty. What need there was of a Saviour to seize a race going down to hell, to force death to resign its prey, and to call sleeping nations from the tomb!

Another resembling circumstance in the condition of the people was, that they appeared *penitent*. They confessed

their sins, and implored forgiveness. As soon as these symptoms of contrition appeared—and nothing could be done before—God ordered the remedy to be presented. In like manner, the Saviour is revealed to none but to those who are humbled. He came to preach good tidings only to the meek, to bind up none but broken hearts.

2. The brazen serpent had the *form* of the fiery serpents, but not their poison. So Christ, though he came “in the likeness of sinful flesh,” and possessed both the body and the soul of a man, had none of our depravity.

3. The bite of the serpents must be cured by the *lifting up*, not of an eagle, but of a *serpent*. So Christ must take upon himself, not “the nature of angels, but—the seed of Abraham.” “In all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.” It must be *man* that is *lifted up* to atone for the sins of man.

The serpent must be lifted up conspicuously in the midst of the camp, where the eyes of all Israel might centre upon it; and the Son of man must be lifted up in the centre of the world, on the top of Jerusalem, environed with proofs drawn from heaven and earth, brought in from the whole body of the Old Testament, and confirmed by the miracles of the New; and there, in the midst of the world, in the centre of light, where all nations might see the reality and the divine appointment of the sacrifice, he made expiation for the sins of the world.

This is the chief meaning of his being lifted up. The phrase is twice used, in this sense, in other parts of the same Gospel. “When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he.” “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him,” for they understood him, “We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou, the Son of man must be lifted up?”

There is another sense in which the Son of man was to be lifted up, in order to be the Saviour of the world. He was to be raised from the dead, and thus openly acquitted and accepted, that in his justification we might be acquitted and accepted. He “was raised again for our justification.”

There is yet another sense in which he was to be lifted up. He was to ascend into heaven, there “to appear in the

presence of God for us ;” there to receive and distribute the whole inheritance ; there to rule the universe, and complete the salvation of his people. Thus he was to be exalted “ to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

Had not the brazen serpent been lifted up, all who were bitten must have died. Not all the physicians in Israel could have brought relief. Had any caviller been disposed to say, “ What is a brazen serpent ? and cannot God heal his people without it ?” yet, when bitten himself, he must have died if he had not looked to that remedy. And although the cross of Christ is to some “ a stumbling-block,” and to others “ foolishness,” yet without it no child of Adam could have been saved ; and without a believing application to it, all must perish still.

4. The serpent being thus erected in full view of the camp, the people, when bitten, had only to *fix their eyes* upon it, and they lived. Wounded to death, and racked with pain, they had only to cast their languishing eyes on this serpent of brass, and all the fire within them was quenched—all their anguish relieved. Precious symbol of a precious Saviour ! When the soul under conviction of guilt, sees hell naked before it, and destruction without a covering, let it then catch one view of Christ atoning for the sins of the world—of Christ exalted to the seat of intercession and rule ; let there be opened upon it one sunshine of God’s mercy and truth, and all its anguish and fear are soothed, and the dying sinner lives : his sense of guilt and wrath is changed to a sense of pardoning love—his midnight darkness to a morning without clouds. Instead of lying weak and helpless under the feet of trampling foes, he feels omnipotence growing up within him, and he can march boldly against earth and hell combined. All that is wanting to bring everlasting relief to the most abject guilt and wretchedness, is to fix a believing eye on Christ—is to embrace him as a complete Saviour, and to take, with him, all that God has tendered to men—is to rely on him as the great High-priest appointed by God to atone and intercede, and whose offering God has sworn to accept—is to confide in the sincerity of God in this appointment and oath. When these great truths open on the soul, and the glory of God is seen shining in the face of Jesus Christ, the believer sees, that

were his guilt doubled ten thousand times, he might easily be forgiven, and feels that if he had ten thousand souls he could venture them all upon a precious Saviour—that there is a fulness in him for the necessities of all the lost children of Adam; and he wonders why a whole world do not come to him and partake.

It is a great thing to *believe* these sublime realities. The heart of man is prone to unbelief. For God to pardon sins so enormous, and be so kind to enemies and rebels, is so unlike the human heart, that it is hard for men to believe it. And under the glooms of guilt it seems too good news to be true. And then they have but little confidence in God, and fear to trust him for so much. They are not in the habit of ascribing to him any great desire to make his creatures happy. But when the wonders of his love open on the soul, and Christ is seen as a lamb upon the altar, and a Lamb in the midst of his Father's throne, then the sinner forgets his pains; his glooms are fled; his conscience, purged "from dead works," is filled with peace—with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. The vilest sinner has a warrant thus to believe, thus to receive the Saviour, and thus to rejoice in him. For the offer is to all; and in believing all this, he only believes the word and oath of God—an oath sworn by himself and attested by miracles: he only believes Christ to be what he really is—a highway paved to the throne of mercy, by which a whole world may go abreast. Such a view, attended as it will be, with a willingness to receive him, which will bring an instant consciousness of its own existence, cannot fail to produce a sense of safety. Christ is seen to be a rock on which the soul may rest, and on which it is conscious of resting. It knows that it has not a phantom in its embrace, but the very God of Israel.

One look at the brazen serpent was enough to relieve the most desperate case. Nothing in the patient—nothing which he had done, or had been, or then was, could prevent his cure, provided it did not prevent him from looking. No merit was required for an efficacious look. The bad and the good might equally enjoy the privilege. That they were bitten was no prevention, but the very reason why they ought to look. In like manner, faith in Christ will heal the vilest sinner that ever descended from Adam. There is nothing in any man—nothing which he has done, has been, or is, which

can prevent his cure, provided it does not prevent him from looking. No merit is required, nor any one virtue but what is involved in an operative faith. That men are sinners, is no prevention. It is the very reason why they ought to look. All that is necessary to fit the vilest sinner for heaven, is faith in Christ: not a dead faith, but that faith which accompanies repentance, and produces love and good works; not a belief that Christ died for me in particular, without any thing above a selfish temper, but a holy approbation of all that appears of God in his law and works—of all that appears of Christ in his gospel and providence. If one's temper and life do not reflect the image of God, he never believed in him that was lifted up.

5. On what *easy terms* might the poor distressed Hebrews live. They had not to search the world for physicians, and spend all they had, and only grow worse. They had only to cast their eyes on the image that was lifted up; and this they might do without money or price, and without going out of their way. And equally easy it is to be healed of the wounds of sin. Wondrous grace! After men have raised such mountains between them and God, and lie buried under worlds of guilt, the weight of which is crushing them to the lowest hell, has heaven provided that they shall be so readily forgiven? Had they been permitted to hope, after doing penance for years—after wandering for ages through the world—after giving their first-born for their transgression, the fruit of their body for the sin of their soul—even then, the grace would have transcended thought; but to have the whole debt discharged with no other pain or expense to them than to *look* on Him who was lifted up, this is indeed “the exceeding riches of his grace.”

6. And in this way men *must* be pardoned, if pardoned at all. Had God required them to make any part of the atonement—that is, to contribute a mite towards answering the purpose of their eternal punishment without enduring it—on that spot had been entombed the last hope of man: there had been an end to all compact between heaven and earth.

On the other hand, after the atonement is provided, there can be no salvation to those who hear the Gospel, without faith. After the serpent had been erected, had the wounded Hebrews neglected to look at it, they would have remained

in torments till they died. All the physicians in Israel could not have relieved them. No other remedy in heaven or earth was provided. And if provided, yet, had they refused to look, it would have been in vain. Of what avail would it have been to say, "What is the use of looking at this thing? if virtue is in it, cannot that be conveyed but through the eyes?" A thousand such cavils could not mitigate their anguish, nor gain for them a moment's respite from death. There was, indeed, no such merit in looking. The efficacy depended on God's appointment: it was intended to set forth the efficacy of faith in a Saviour to come. And this Saviour may be provided—may be displayed in our streets, yet, if we do not fix our eyes upon him, we shall die none the better, but all the worse for this provision. All the strictness of morality, all the prayers of ages, the giving of all our goods to feed the poor, and our bodies to be burned as martyrs, would not avail without faith. It is of no use for unbelief to plead, "How can I be benefited by looking on perfection, which only shames my guilt?" What if there is no intrinsic merit in faith? By divine appointment it is made the condition of salvation. Nor was this appointment arbitrary. In the nature of things, without that holiness which, in the circumstances of men under the Gospel, cannot fail to embrace a Saviour, there can be no communion with God, no heavenly happiness.

Further, it was calculated to familiarize to the universe the great fact of the substitution, for both parties, God and the sinner, to stand, as it were, together at the altar, and as the lamb is slain, to consent mutually that its life should go for the life of the sinner. Without this consent on the part of man, the vicarious exhibition is far less distinct and impressive. Also, without this consent, and the accompanying conviction of need, the sinner can never feel his indebtedness to the Saviour, nor give the glory of his salvation to the sacred Three, nor indeed be happy. On these accounts, faith in Christ is made the essential condition of salvation.

And now, my dear reader, suffer me to hold up before you the Antitype of the brazen serpent. If you are inourning under guilt and filled with anguish, raise your believing eyes to Him who is lifted up before you to-day, and one look will make you whole. Ye who are groping in darkness, look hither and be enlightened. Ye who are weak and polluted,

look and be strong and pure. Ye who complain of hardness of heart, cast your eyes upon Him who hangs on the tree covered with sweat and blood, and be melted into contrition and love. Ye who are tempted, look and be delivered. Ye who are agonized with doubts respecting your adoption, look again, and gain a clearer vision and a firmer assurance. Whatever be your infirmities or your sorrows, look—look to Him who is lifted up. As the serpent was erected in the centre of the camp, so Christ has been lifted up in the centre of the world, that all eyes, from east, west, north, and south, may centre there. There he hangs, and every lacerated vein bleeds balm for the healing of the nations. He sheds influence in every direction to heal all other wounds but his own. And from the top of the bloody tree I hear a voice, trembling in death, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." While millions of eyes are turned thither from all the regions of the globe, and millions of souls are healed by a look, my heart exclaims, "How much is this like that wondrous scene in the wilderness!" I ascend the high and trembling mount, whence I have a view of a world gazing at the cross by which I stand. I see ten thousand eyes, glistening with joy and tears, meet in this centre, from Asia, Africa, Europe, and America. I see new faces turned this way. I see their distorted features settle into heavenly peace as they gaze: and now they brighten, and now they shine as Moses' did. I stand and enjoy the transports of nations. Ye kingdoms of redeemed sinners, roll hither the volume of your united praise. Shout, for the Healer of the nations is lifted up. I follow him up to heaven. I see him, with solemn formality, take his throne. Every eye which lately gazed at Calvary follows him hither. He takes the reins of government, and a voice, deep as ten thousand thunders, and sweet as the "influences of Pleiades," issues from the glorious throne, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." A mingled sound, as "of many waters," responds, "We come, Lord, we come." And let *us* go with them. Let us go and commit ourselves eternally to Him who is our righteousness, our strength, our all in all.

MURDERERS OF FATHERS,

AND

MURDERERS OF MOTHERS.*

BY REV. EDWARD HITCHCOCK, D. D.

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IN the Scriptures, as well as in common language, murder does not always mean the destruction of natural life by an act of violence. "Whosoever hateth his brother," says John, "is a murderer;" that is, he has the essential spirit of a murderer. We say, also, that he is a murderer who unnecessarily pursues a course of conduct by which the reputation or happiness of another is destroyed, and his life shortened. In this sense, then, murder is a common crime, committed by multitudes who never imagine that they are guilty—committed sometimes upon those who are truly beloved by the murderer, and are his best friends. And strange as it may seem, this crime is more common among the young than any other class, and their parents are the victims. I shall not charge any of my youthful readers with being murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers; but as I point out some of the principal modes in which they may become such, let them honestly inquire, whether they have not already commenced the fearful work.

1. The young man may become the murderer of his father and his mother *by making the idle and the immoral, the unprincipled or the irreligious, his chosen companions*

* 1 Timothy, 1 : 9.

The principles on which the remarks I am about to make are founded, apply equally to youth of either sex. But for the sake of brevity, I shall speak only of young men. From his earliest days, it is the strong desire and effort of Christian parents to preserve the mind of their son free from the impurities and fascinations of vice; and until they find him associating with the idle, the unprincipled, and the immoral, they imagine their efforts to be successful. But his choice of companions reveals the plague-spot on his heart. He would not associate with the wicked, if he did not relish their society; and he would not relish it, if the contagion of vice had not invaded his purity of principle and feeling. With the love of sin in his heart, what now shall prevent the inexperienced youth from the lawless indulgence of his passions, with reckless companions to lead the way? How feeble will be the warning voice of parental affection to resist the strong current of sinful inclination. As yet he knows not from experience the bitter consequences of a sinful course. But parents know that "*the wages of sin is death*"—death to all true peace of mind—death to all hopes of usefulness and reputation—death temporal, and death eternal. The son, however, imagines no danger from his associates. He sees in them honorable feelings and noble purposes, and only occasionally do they show their aversion to what they call bigotry and intolerance in religion, and unreasonable strictness of morality. And what danger in such society to him, who has so much respect for religion, and who knows how to take care of himself? Alas, his parents realize that his danger is more imminent than if he consorted with the openly profligate, because he feels in no danger, and drinks in the poison without knowing it. The dreadful anticipation of having their child ruined for this world and another, fills their hearts with such anguish as a parent only can know. It brings upon them early gray hairs, ploughs deep furrows upon their foreheads, and urges them prematurely towards the grave. It is in fact slow, but

in many cases, certain murder. Yet how easy for you, O young man, by abandoning those companions, to save your parents, and to save yourself!

2. The young man may murder his father and his mother *by immoral and ungrateful conduct.*

Fearful as parents are, when their son shows a fondness for idle or immoral companions, that he will soon become like them in practice, they cannot give up the fond hope that God's restraining grace and parental admonition may save him from actual dissipation and profligacy. But when they find that the fear of God and the warnings of conscience are so overcome that habitual wickedness is committed, it is as if a deep murderer's stab had been aimed at their hearts. Can it be, that their darling boy, whom they had successfully taught to be industrious and economical, has become a reckless, idle spendthrift; not merely of money, but of time and opportunities far more valuable than money? Can it be, that one lately so obedient to parental authority, and so tenderly alive to his parents' happiness, now tramples on their authority, and is indifferent to their feelings? Can it be, that one instructed so carefully to regard the Sabbath as holy time, now devotes that day to the perusal of secular newspapers or novels, to wandering about the streets, to rides of pleasure, and to the society of irreligious companions? Once he rarely ventured far, by day or by night, without parental advice and permission; and he failed not to kneel, at an early hour of the evening, at the family altar of devotion, as a delightful preparation for early and sweet repose. But he has learnt to trust his own feelings when and where to go, and what company to keep; and often is he, when the hour of evening prayer arrives, at the convivial board, joining in the lascivious song and the Bacchanalian shout, instead of supplication and praise to Jehovah. Parental admonition and entreaty awaken only disgust and insolence, and his father and mother perceive that they have lost their hold upon the conscience of their son. Such a transformation

of a frank, open-hearted child, into a reckless, unfeeling profligate, changes parental anxiety into agony. And yet their feelings must be in a great measure concealed from him who causes their anguish, lest his hard heart should lead him to add to his other crimes, mockery and insult towards those who gave him birth. Therefore must they bear the trial in silence, and let it prey upon their spirits, until they sigh for a release from a world that is to them only a scene of hopelessness and suffering.

It is in the way pointed out under this head, that is, by immoral and ungrateful conduct, that very many become murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers. Therefore let me dwell longer upon this point, and refer to some specific examples.

The time has come when the youth must quit the paternal roof, to become, it may be, an apprentice in some handicraft, or to engage in mercantile or agricultural pursuits. Going to some country town reputed as moral and religious, his parents feel less solicitude for his safety. But when hints reach them of his prodigal habits, irregular hours, profane language, and neglect of business, their hearts begin to writhe with torturing anticipations. By letter and personal address, they lift loud the note of warning. But in his haggard countenance and reckless conduct, they read the broad marks of dissipation. Out of the reach of watchful and controlling parents, evil companionship has led to evil actions; and now it will require little short of a miracle to save him from ruin. Instead of rising to respectability and distinction, as his fond parents had hoped, he will grovel along through the years of manhood, useless and known only for his vices, seeking only low pleasures and low society, with a broken constitution, and a mind ignorant and degraded, until an early grave opens to receive him. But often he will drag down his broken-hearted parents to the same narrow house; and there will they lie, the murderer and the murdered, side by side, till they go up together to the final judgment.

It may be, that the youth, on leaving home, is sent to the city, and for a time is aware that dangers of almost every name will meet him there. But vice soon becomes familiar to his observation: fascinating companions, graceful in manners, and generous in professions, introduce him to the social circle, where a magic influence comes over him to dispel every fear of danger. The same companions lead him to the theatre, a place where he finds much to amuse and delight, and little apparently to injure; and hence he infers that its dangers have been exaggerated by his parents, and he ventures again and again to the brilliant and enchanting spot. The snare is well laid and baited, and the bird falls into it and is taken. But this is only the gilded entrance to the dark labyrinth of iniquity. With his passions excited by the scenes of the theatre, the youth is easily lured by cunning companions into the gaming-house, and the place of the midnight carousal. Maddened there by the alcoholic bowl, he soon becomes as bold and reckless as his most unprincipled companions. The next step is to enter her house whose "steps take hold on hell." There the last trace of moral and religious principle in his bosom is blotted out; the voice of conscience is effectually smothered; and when his purse becomes empty by his dissipation, he is prepared to replenish it from the coffers of his employer. Deeper and deeper does he dip his hand into the forbidden treasure, until detection follows, and the brand of infamy is publicly stamped upon his character. If he escapes the penitentiary, it is only to be looked upon with scorn by the world, and with pity by the Christian; and after herding for a time with the dregs of society, to be thrown into the drunkard's and the felon's grave, unnoticed and unlamented. But what a terrible termination of a parent's fond hopes! What a dreadful metamorphosis of a beloved son, whom they sent forth untarnished, and with lofty expectations, from their Christian home! How much worse to bear than the assassin's dagger, was each successive development of his depravity; and how

terribly must the final result have completed a father's and a mother's immolation !

Perhaps the youth leaves home for the college, or the academy ; and for one, it may be, where there are many influences and strong, in favor of religion and morality. But the purest of them has its dangers ; and some of these dangers are peculiar, and assail the young man unawares, and he falls an easy prey to the wiles of the wicked. At home he had been taught, that a man could not be placed in any circumstances where he could be released from obligations to obey the laws of religion and morality, or might connive at wickedness in others, and omit to bear testimony against it. But in the literary institution to which he attaches himself, he finds that he must modify these so-called puritanical notions. *Certain rules of honor*, instead of strict moral and religious principle, must regulate all his conduct towards his companions. He cannot find any one who can tell him exactly what these rules are ; but he is distinctly informed, that they require him to close his eyes and ears as much as possible against the wickedness of his fellow-students, and to wink at immoral conduct in them, which he would feel bound to expose in any other member of the community. At any rate, he must suffer undeserved punishment himself, rather than expose the evil deeds of a classmate ; and always be ready to vindicate the honor and reputation of his fellows. At first, his rigid views of duty are shocked by such requisitions ; but finding that compliance or persecution awaits him, many a young man has not moral courage enough to take his firm stand on the platform of the Bible. He submits to the trammels imposed upon him, and thus sacrifices his independence ; for this is only the beginning of his degradation.

Those who have driven him to abandon one important point, well know that he can be made to yield others. The next step is to draw him into the society of the idle and the reckless : and alas, what literary institution does not contain

some such? There for a time he meets with little to shock his moral sensibilities, except perhaps an occasional joke upon religion, an inuendo against bigotry and intolerance, and possibly a little profaneness. His companions are indeed jovial, but they are amiable and gentlemanly; and their society occasionally seems almost essential to relieve the monotony and cheerlessness of college life. Ere long, however, the oath becomes more frequent, the mirth more boisterous, and the card-table and the wine-cup are introduced. To escape detection, these convivial entertainments must be deferred till the midnight hour, and of course the subsequent day be devoted to recovery from the debauch. The youth's literary standing soon sinks; he loses his habits of study, and falls under censure; but instead of reforming, he is irritated by expostulation and warning. Detection serves only to lead him to adopt more effectual measures to avoid it in future.

In short, he has become almost irreclaimably dissipated before his parents are aware that he has turned aside at all from the right path. They had supposed him possessed of superior talents; and with virtuous principles, that he would be proof against temptation. The intimation of his deviations, therefore, comes upon them with the suddenness and severity of the assassin's stab. With the earnestness of parental affection, they immediately appeal to every principle in their son which they suppose capable of being called into action. They cannot believe that he has so soon abandoned his bright hopes of future distinction, nor lost his respect for parental authority, or his filial attachments, nor become insensible to the sanctions of religion. They, therefore, press upon him all these considerations; and that is usually the crisis in the young man's history. If parental authority and affection triumph, and he relents, and breaks off his bad habits, and abandons his evil companions, he will be saved from utter ruin. But if his proud heart spurns a parent's counsel and exhortation, the last hold upon him is gone, and

it will be but a short time before he reaches the bottom of the gulf of infamy. If he should be smuggled through college, it will be only to tantalize a little longer his parents' hopes, and to throw himself upon the community as a useless weight. Those parents must see him still grovelling with the idle and the dissipated; and thankful should they be, if his broken constitution should carry him prematurely to the grave by natural disease, before his depravity has outraged society so that he must expiate his crimes in the dungeon for life, or upon the scaffold. But how much easier for his wretched parents to fall by the literal murderer's assault, than thus to be suspended on the rack of uncertainty year after year, and at last to feel life and hope expire together. Alas, how many parents are at this moment stretched upon that rack, and destined to the same extinction of life and hope.

In all the examples that I have now given, and indeed as a general fact, the beginning and chief agent of ruin to the inexperienced youth, is the secret convivial frolic with jovial and unprincipled companions. And in fact, in no other place will his religious principles sooner yield, or parental lessons be forgotten, or the fear of God and man be cast off, and his low appetites and passions triumph over reason and conscience. For there the lewd and ribald song soon salutes his ears; low, vulgar wit takes the place of reason; the sober and the religious are made the butt of ridicule; and there, sometimes at least, the cup of intoxication goes round, and the youth, perhaps almost for the first time, "looks upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright," until his firmest temperance principles are overcome, and the fatal cup is lifted to his mouth; and with that first draught he swallows scorpions and daggers. True, he may have no suspicion of the dangers that await him there; nay, he may suppose that by entering that circle he is only preparing himself for the circles of gentility and fashion, and that

unless he does there learn to sip the alcoholic bowl with politeness, he can never be admitted to the society of the wealthy and influential. But his father and mother know, every experienced man knows, because again and again have they seen the fatal process carried through, that the young man, however firm he may suppose his principles and yet uncorrupt his practice, who enters these convivial circles, has placed one foot within the purlieus of hell. He has entered a moral Maelstrom, and begun those fatal gyrations, which, without miraculous deliverance, will become swifter and swifter, narrower and narrower, until he goes down like lightning into the central vortex, and disappears for ever. O terrible delusion! To what multitudes of talented and amiable, yet inexperienced young men, has the convivial frolic proved fatal for this world and another. "Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burnt? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burnt?"

But parents are not thus deceived; and as one development after another comes out, as wicked actions succeed to wicked companionship, they see and know the fatal end to which he is hastening. Though his path be crooked, they know how slippery and downward it is, and how difficult for one who has entered upon it to thread his way back to virtue and to heaven. For one who has thus returned, they have seen a thousand buried beneath the waves of everlasting infamy and despair. Each successive act of wickedness, therefore, of which their son is guilty, makes a deeper and a deeper murderer's stab into their hearts. They know that idleness and duplicity, intemperance, profaneness, and licentiousness, are sins that not only paralyze the conscience, but rot out the heart and the intellect, and leave the miserable victim to sink down early, a loathsome mass of corruption, into hell.

One other mode of murdering fathers and mothers I ought to describe under this head, because it approaches

nearer to literal murder than any which has been named. As the father approaches the dotage of old age, he is apt to repose an overweening confidence in a favorite son, and in an unguarded hour, *transfers to him his property*. And it would indeed seem that a father might be sure of an ample support and kind treatment from an own son, whom he had treated thus generously; for to that father he was indebted for existence, for support in infancy, for an education, and now for an estate earned by a life of labor. But alas, melancholy facts show that there are some so devoid of natural affection, as well as of all honorable feeling and religious principle, as to feel their parents to be a burden, so soon as they have obtained their property; and who will treat them unkindly for the very purpose of shortening their days. It is base enough for a child to refuse to sustain his aged and feeble parents because they have been unable to bequeath him any property. But when they have actually done this, it becomes barbarous and detestable in the extreme; and if there be any sin which will provoke God to punish it in a special manner, it is this. But why do I enlarge? For he who has become so dead to every sentiment of nature and religion as to abuse an aged parent, has a conscience too deeply enveloped by the callous folds of selfishness and meanness to be reached by any words of mine.

3. The young man may murder his father and his mother *by embracing dangerous religious error*.

Men embrace errors in religion, either because they lead unholy lives, or cherish a self-righteous, unsubmitive spirit. The more wicked a man's life, the more reckless must he be in his opinions, in order to quiet his conscience. Self-righteousness and pride require a system of error more refined, and more capable of literary embellishment; and the nearer it approaches in appearance to the true Gospel, the more acceptable will it be, because conscience, that stern advocate for evangelical piety in the heart, will be thus more easily satisfied. But it is essential, that such a system be

wanting in all that is vital in the Gospel, or it will not quiet the fears of one who expects to enter heaven without a new heart. The particular form of error embraced is of little consequence in the view of the parent, provided it leave his son to rest easy without a new heart. He may fancy that he differs so little from his father that it is of small importance; while yet it is as mysterious to him as it was to Nicodemus, how a man can be born again. Ignorant of this doctrine, his parents know that he differs enough from them to shut him out of heaven as certainly as if with the fool he had said, "There is no God;" for, "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

It is the loss of his soul, not a bigoted attachment to a particular creed, that makes these parents so anxious. They well know how easy it is for the advocates of almost any error, even of Atheism itself, to array a list of names distinguished in literature and science as its supporters; and they know, too, how fascinating to the youthful mind, is a reputation for talents and learning. Whatever religious opinions such men embrace, the young are ready to suppose safe and true; although, in fact, such men are probably of all others most apt to embrace error, because they usually give less serious attention to the subject, have more pride of opinion, and are usually more stubborn in their prejudices. Besides, when a man has once adopted some plausible and popular system of error, and thrown around it the drapery of literature and philosophy, he is the most unlikely of all men to see his lost condition, and flee to that only name under heaven whereby he can be saved. Therefore it is that these parents are so distressed when they find their son reposing quietly upon the gilded and downy couch of error, where he is most likely to be "given up to strong delusions to believe a lie, that he might be damned."

4. The young man may murder his father and his mother *by neglecting personal religion.*

The grand object of all their toils and prayers for their

child; is his conversion. Until this great change pass over him, they feel as if the grand business of life, for which chiefly he was created, had been neglected. For, without a new heart, they know he must be lost; and yet he, like others, is liable at any moment to be summoned into eternity. Hence, though he be moral and amiable, a respecer of religion, and even distinguished among men, they look with comparative indifference and dissatisfaction upon all his acquisitions which leave him destitute of a new heart. Can it be, that they have brought up a child only to endure everlasting misery? From his earliest days they consecrated him in prayer and faith to God; and as he grew up, every opportunity was seized upon to store his mind with the truths of religion, and to impress his conscience with his guilt and danger. Sometimes his heart seemed to relent, and the tear of anxiety was seen in his eye. But these signs proved only the morning cloud and early dew; and though the years of his minority are almost or quite gone, he still remains unconverted; and every year the work is delayed, only deepens parental anxiety, because the hope of his salvation so rapidly diminishes.

During the childhood and youth of most persons, there are certain memorable events, each of which forms a sort of crisis in their history. One of these is sickness. At such a time, when the youth needs the supports of religion, he finds that he has none on which he dare rest. His morality, his kind feelings towards others, his upright and honorable conduct, and even his attention to the outward forms of religion, he finds will not form a resting-place for his soul, in that dark valley he seems about to enter. Oh, had he listened to parental instruction and entreaty while in health, he might now have had a rock to stand upon, amid the surging billows. If he should recover, surely he cannot longer neglect the great salvation. So feels the youth, and so feel his parents. He does recover; but his former stupor creeps over him again, and his agonized parents have every reason to

expect that his next sickness will find him, like the last, entirely unprepared to die.

It may be that the youth is called to severe affliction, in the sudden departure of a brother, a sister, or chosen companion. A dying friend sounds in his ears a piercing note of warning. It falls upon him like a sudden peal of thunder, and awakens him from his deep spiritual slumbers. Strong hope that the hour of his conversion has come, springs up in the bosom of his affectionate parents. But the cup of happiness, which with a trembling hand they are lifting to their lips, is destined to be dashed upon the ground, leaving only the dregs of disappointment for them to taste. Their son's religious impressions gradually wear away, and he sinks into a deeper sleep than ever, while they awake to keener suffering.

Another season of deep solicitude and strong hope to Christian parents, is a revival of religion. If their son be not awakened and converted then, they know how faint is the probability that he will turn to God during the season of general indifference that too often follows a time of special religious interest. Nay, they fear, that having resisted the special influences of such a season, his heart will be so hardened that no future means will avail to subdue it. Intense, therefore, is the anxiety which Christian parents feel for their unconverted and unawakened son, during such a work. They have long beheld him twisted and crushed in the folds of the hydra-headed monster sin, and now they see approaching a more than Herculean Deliverer, ready to set the dying captive free. Alas, must they see their child spurn the only power that can deliver him, and permit the monster to wind another coil around his heart? He does not, indeed, see how bitter is the anguish of disappointment in their souls, when the special work of God draws to a close, and he remains unconverted. But their closets, the midnight hour, the stars of heaven, and the God of heaven witness their deep distress, when, from a bleeding heart, the parent

exclaims, "Is Ephraim my dear son? Is he a pleasant child?" "How can I give thee up, Ephraim? How can I deliver thee, Israel?" Ah, they must give him up; but it will break their hearts. They will go down to an early grave, murdered by a beloved son.

In view of this subject, thus presented, let the young man who reads these pages honestly inquire, whether he is not really, though perhaps unconsciously, among the murderers of fathers, and the murderers of mothers. Is he not the child of pious parents, and yet wedded to a companionship with those whom he knows to be idle, or unprincipled, or immoral, or irreligious? Nay, is he not conscious of indulging in some immoral practices? Has he not fortified himself in the belief of principles which effectually shield him from conviction of sin, and keep the slumbers of spiritual death unbroken? At least, does he not, from year to year, neglect personal religion, even under the loudest calls and the most urgent appeals, and the rebukes of conscience, and the strivings of the Spirit? If such be your character, in any of these respects, little do you know what a bitter cup you are compelling your father and mother to drink. It is known, that certain poisons may be administered in so small doses as to be unnoticed at the time, but great enough, by repetition, to insure the death of the victim. That fatal act you are practising upon your dearest earthly friends, who would gladly endure suffering and death, could they ward them off from you.

This charge you may think extravagant and untrue. The smile of affection meets you under the paternal roof, and the tenderest solicitude is manifested for your welfare. Ah, natural affection will glow in those parents' hearts till they are cold in the grave; nor will the hope of your conversion entirely abandon them, while you live and they can pray. But knowing as they do, how dangerous are the companions with whom you associate, or the evil habits you indulge, or the religious errors you have embraced, or your

long-continued indifference and stupidity respecting your own salvation, their hearts sink with discouragement; they tremble lest you are given over to blindness of mind and hardness of heart, and their faith falters when they pray for your conversion. Though concealed from your eye, a secret anguish on your account is preying upon their life. The mother who bore you—she whose tears fell often upon your infant cheek, as over your cradle she agonized in prayer for your early conversion—she who has often grown pale with midnight watchings by your sick-bed—she who first taught your infant lips the language of prayer—she who has followed you with her prayers, and tears, and counsels, in all your wanderings—that mother's heart you are now filling with deep distress, if indeed that distress and her toils for you have not already carried her down to an early grave. That father, too, who has cheerfully foregone a thousand pleasures, and made a thousand sacrifices, and submitted to multiplied cares and toils, for your support and education—whose hopes have been centred in you, and who has long felt as if death would be welcome, could it secure your conversion—O, what desolation reigns in that father's heart, as he sees you, after all his prayers and labors, still moving unconcernedly on the road to death. Or it may be, that his early grey hairs ere now have been brought down with sorrow to the grave. Oh, you are the murderer of those parents, whether you realize it or not, as really as if you had stolen to their bed at midnight, and buried the fatal steel in their bosoms; and for that deed you must answer at the final day of trial, when the wounds you have inflicted will be exposed to the view of the universe.

But after all, though there is a solemn reality in these representations, I am fully aware that most of those who are thus the murderers of fathers, and the murderers of mothers, are totally unconscious of the influence they are exerting upon their parents' happiness. Nay, though they must know that every wrong course they take, and even their

continued neglect of religion, cannot but thwart the strongest desires of those parents' hearts, still they cling to them with strong attachment. For filial affection is a chord in the human heart that retains its sensibility when sin has paralyzed every thing besides ; and even the desperate criminal, who has set heaven and earth at defiance, melts and weeps at the name of father or mother. Would to God I could make that chord vibrate, till it should rouse you, O ye unconverted young men, from the stupor of sin, and convert you, from the murderers, into the temporal saviors of your parents. Should you see that father and mother in the hands of the literal assassin, and their blood were streaming, and their death-cry came into your ears for help, how would you rush to their rescue, though a hundred swords were drawn to oppose you. Ah, they *are* in the assassin's hands—but *thou*, unconverted youth, art the man. They *are* covered with wounds, and their lifeblood is flowing out like water. But your sins, your unbelief and stupidity, are the sword that has cloven their hearts asunder. They *are* crying for help : but it is to God for your conversion. The language of Christ for his murderers is theirs : "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But can you be forgiven, if you persist in destroying the peace and happiness of those who gave you being, and commit suicide, also, upon your own most precious soul ? Never ! Yet if you will be persuaded to yield your heart to the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ, forgiveness, free, and full, and everlasting, will be lavished upon you. The wounds you have inflicted upon your earthly parents will be healed as if by miraculous touch ; and your father on earth, and your Father in heaven, will joyfully exclaim, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him ; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. For this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found."

CHRIST PRECIOUS

TO

ALL TRUE BELIEVERS.

BY REV. SAMUEL DAVIES,

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“UNTO you therefore which believe,” says the apostle, “He is precious.” 1 Peter, 2:7. Yes, blessed be God, though a great part of the creation is disaffected to Jesus Christ; though fallen spirits, both in flesh and without flesh, both upon earth and in hell, neglect him or profess themselves open enemies to him, yet he is precious: precious not only in himself, not only to his Father, not only to the choirs of heaven, who behold his full glory without a veil, but precious to some even in our guilty world—precious to a sort of persons of our sinful race who make no great figure in mortal eyes, who have no idea of their own goodness; who are mean, unworthy creatures in their own view, and who are generally despicable in the view of others: I mean, he is precious to all true believers. And though they are but few comparatively in our world, yet, blessed be God, there are some believers even upon our guilty globe, and I doubt not but I am now addressing some such.

My believing brethren—if I may venture to claim kindred with you—I am now entering upon a design, which I know you have much at heart; and that is, to make the blessed Jesus more precious to you, and if possible, to recommend him to the affections of the crowd that neglect him. You know, alas, that you love him but little, but very little, compared to his infinite excellency and your obligations to him; and you know that multitudes love him not at all. Whatever they profess, their practice shows that their carnal minds are enmity against him. This you often see, and the sight affects your hearts. It deeply affects you to think so

much excellency should be neglected and despised, and so much love meet with such base returns of ingratitude. And you cannot but pity your poor fellow-sinners, that they are so blind to the brightest glory and their own highest interest, and that they should perish through wilful neglect of their deliverer ; perish, as it were, within reach of the hand stretched out to save them. This is indeed a very affecting, very lamentable, and alas, a very common sight. And will you not then bid me God speed in my attempt to recommend this precious, though neglected Jesus ? Will you not contribute your share towards my success in so pious and benevolent a design by your earnest prayers ?

To you which believe, He is precious. He ? Who ? Is it mammon, the god of the world ? Is it pleasure, or honor ? No ; none of these is the darling of the believing heart. But it is He who is the uppermost in every pious heart ; He, who is first in the thoughts and affections ; He whom every friend of his must know, even without a name : if it be but said of him, He is precious, this is enough to distinguish him from all others. “ If it be He the apostle means,” may every believer say, “ who is most precious to my soul, then I can easily point him out, though without a name. It must be Jesus, for O, it is he that is most precious to me.” The connection also of the text directs us to the same person. It is he the apostle means, whom he had just described as a living stone, chosen of God, and precious ; the chief cornerstone, the great foundation of the Church, that spiritual temple of God, so stately and glorious, and reaching from earth to heaven ; it is this precious stone, this heavenly jewel, that is precious to believers.

“ *To you which believe, he is PRECIOUS ;*” that is, he is highly valued by you. You esteem him one of infinite worth, and he has the highest place in your affections. He is dearer to your hearts than all other persons and things. The word *τιμη* requires a still stronger translation : “ To you that believe, he is *preciousness* ;” preciousness in the abstract ; all preciousness, and nothing but preciousness ; a precious stone without one blemish.

“TO YOU WHICH BELIEVE, *he is precious* ;” that is to say, the value of this precious stone is, alas, unknown to the crowd. It is so far from being precious, that it is a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence ; a stone disallowed of men, verse 4 ; rejected even by the builders, verse 7 ; but you believers, ye happy few, have another estimate of it. Faith enables you to see the glories of the blessed Jesus ; and when you know him through this medium, you cannot but love him. The blind world neglect the Lord of glory, because they know him not ; but you believers know him, and therefore to you he is precious. Faith presents him to your view in a just light, and directs you to form a proper estimate of him. It is truly lamentable that such real excellency should be despised ; but so it will be with the world till they believe. The mere speculative recommendation of their reason, the prepossessions of education in his favor, and the best human means, are not sufficient to render Jesus precious to them. Nothing but saving faith can effect this.

To you THEREFORE which believe, he is precious. The illative particle *therefore* shows that this passage is an inference from what went before ; and the reasoning seems to be this : “This stone is precious to God ; therefore it is precious to you that believe. You have the same estimate of Jesus Christ which God the Father has ; and for that very reason he is precious to you, because he is precious to him.” That this is the connection will appear, if you look back to the fourth and sixth verses, where you find Jesus described as “a chief corner-stone, laid in Zion, elect or chosen, and precious ; disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.” Men wickedly disapprove this stone, and even many of the professed builders of his church reject him. This, says the apostle, must be granted. But this is no objection to his real worth. He is precious to God, who knows him best, and who is a perfect judge of real excellency ; and for that very reason he is precious to you that believe. Faith teaches you to look upon persons and things in the same light in which God views them ; it makes your sentiments conformed to his. Christ is the Father’s beloved Son, in whom he is

well pleased ; and he is your beloved Saviour, in whom you are well pleased.

Is it any wonder that Jesus should be precious to believers, when he is so precious in himself, and in his offices—so precious to the angelic armies, and so precious to his Father ?

I. He is precious IN HIMSELF. He is Immanuel, God-man ; and consequently, whatever excellences belong either to the divine or human nature centre in him. If wisdom, power, and goodness, divine or human, created or uncreated, can render him worthy of the highest affection, he has a just claim to it. Whatever excellences, natural or moral, appear in any part of the vast universe, they are but faint shadows of his beauty and glory. “ All things were created by him, and for him : and by him all things consist.” Col. 1 : 16, 17. And whatever excellences are in the effect must be eminently in the cause. You do not wonder nor censure, when you see men delighted with the glories of the sun, and the various luminaries of the sky ; you do not wonder nor blame, when they take pleasure in the beautiful prospects of nature, or in that rich variety of good things which earth and sea, and every element furnishes for the support of man, or the gratification of his senses ; you do not wonder and blame, when they are struck with mortal beauty, when you see them admire and approve wisdom, benevolence, justice, veracity, meekness, and mercy ; you never think it strange, much less censurable, that men should love these things, and count them precious ; and can you be astonished, can you ridicule or find fault that Jesus is precious to poor believers ? If the copy be so fair and lovely, who would not love the original, that has eyes to behold it ? Believers see so much of the worth of Christ as is sufficient to captivate their hearts, and convince them of their guilt in loving him no more ; and the clearer their views are of him, the more are they mortified at the criminal defects of their love ; for O, they see he deserves infinitely more.

II. The Lord Jesus is precious IN HIS OFFICES. His mediatorial office is generally subdivided into three parts :

namely, that of a prophet, of a priest, and of a king ; and how precious is Christ in each of these.

As a *prophet*, how sweet are his instructions to a bewildered soul. How precious the words of his lips, which are the words of eternal life. How delightful to sit and hear him teach the way of duty and happiness, revealing the Father, and the wonders of the invisible state. How transporting to hear him declare upon what terms an offended God may be reconciled—a discovery beyond the searches of all the sages and philosophers of the heathen world. How reviving is it to listen to his gracious promises and invitations to the poor, the weary, and heavy laden, the broken-hearted, and even to the chief of sinners. The word of Christ has been the treasure, the support, and joy of believers in all ages. “I have esteemed the words of his mouth,” says Job, “more than my necessary food.” Job 23 : 12. It is this precious word the psalmist so often and so highly celebrates. He celebrates it as “more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold : sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” Psa. 19 : 10. “O how love I thy law !” says he ; “it is my meditation all the day.” Psa. 119 : 97. “How sweet are thy words unto my taste ! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth,” verse 103 ; “The law of thy mouth is better than thousands of gold and silver,” verse 72 ; “Behold, I have longed after thy precepts,” verse 40 ; “Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage,” verse 54 ; “In my affliction, thy word hath quickened me,” verse 50 ; “Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction,” verse 92. This is the language of David, in honor of this divine Prophet, near three thousand years ago, when Christ had not revealed the full Gospel to the world, but only some rays of it shone through the veil of the Mosaic dispensation. And must not believers now, who live under the more complete and clear instructions of this great Prophet, entertain the same sentiments of him ? Yes, to such of you as believe, even in this age, he is most precious.

But this external objective instruction is not all that

Christ as a prophet communicates; and indeed, did he do no more than this, it would answer no valuable end. The mind of man, in his present fallen state, like a disordered eye, is incapable of perceiving divine things in a proper light, however clearly they are revealed; and therefore, till the perceiving faculty be rectified, all external revelation is in vain, and is only like opening a fair prospect to a blind eye. Hence, this great Prophet carries his instructions farther, not only by proposing divine things in a clear objective light by his word, but inwardly *enlightening the mind*, and enabling it to perceive what is revealed by his Spirit. And how precious are these internal subjective instructions. How sweet to feel a disordered, dark mind opening to admit the shinings of heavenly day; to perceive the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the beauties of holiness, and the majestic wonders of the eternal world. Speak, ye that know by happy experience, and tell how precious Jesus appears to you, when by his own blessed Spirit he scatters the cloud that benighted your understandings, and lets in the rays of his glory upon your admiring souls; when he opens your eyes to see the wonders contained in his law, and the glorious mysteries of his Gospel. What a divine glory then spreads upon every page of the sacred volume. Then it indeed appears the book of God, godlike, and worthy its Author. O precious Jesus, let us all feel thine enlightening influences, that experience may teach us how sweet they are. Come, great Prophet, come, and make thine own Spirit our teacher, and then shall we be divinely wise.-

Again, the Lord Jesus is precious to believers as a *great High-priest*. As a High-priest, he made a complete atonement for sin by his propitiatory sacrifice on the cross; and he still makes intercession for the transgressors on his throne in heaven. It was his sacrifice that satisfied the demands of the law and justice of God, and rendered him reconcilable to the guilty, upon terms consistent with his honor and the rights of his government. It was by virtue of this sacrifice that he procured pardon of sin, the favor of God, freedom from hell, and eternal life for condemned obnoxious

rebels. And you who have ever felt the pangs of a guilty conscience, and obtained relief from Jesus Christ, you can tell how precious is his atoning sacrifice. How did it ease your self-tormenting consciences, and heal your broken hearts. How did it change the frowns of an angry God into smiles of love, and your trembling apprehensions of vengeance into delightful hopes of mercy. How precious did Jesus appear, with a pardon in his hand, with atoning blood gushing from his opened veins, and making his cross, as it were, the key to open the gates of heaven for your admission. Blessed Saviour, our great High-priest, thus appear to us in all thy pontifical robes, dyed in thine own blood, and cause us all to feel the efficacy of thy propitiation.

Let us next turn our eyes upwards, and view this great High-priest as *our Intercessor in the presence of God*. There he appears as a Lamb that was slain, bearing the memorials of his sacrifice, and putting the Father in remembrance of the blessings purchased for his people. There he urges it as his pleasure, as his authoritative will, that these blessings should in due time be conferred upon those for whom they were purchased. In this authoritative manner he could intercede, even in the days of his humiliation upon earth, because of the Father's covenant engagements with him, the accomplishment of which he has a right to demand, as well as humbly to petition: "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me," etc. John 17:24. Now, how precious must Christ appear in the character of Intercessor. That the friendless sinner should have an all-prevailing Advocate in the court of heaven to undertake his cause; that the great High-priest should offer up the grateful incense of his own merit, with the prayers of the saints; that he should add the sanction of his authoritative will to the humble petitions of faith; that he should urge the claims of his people as his own claims, founded upon an unchangeable covenant with his Father, of which he has fully performed the conditions required; that he should not intercede occasionally, but always appear in the holy of holies as the constant, ever-living Intercessor, and maintain the same in-

terest, the same importunity at all times, even when the petitions of his people languish upon their lips—what delightful reflections are these; and how warmly may they recommend the Lord Jesus to the hearts of believers. How just is the apostle's inference: "Having a High-priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith; and let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering." Heb. 10:21-23. "He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" for this reason, because "he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb. 7:25. May each of us intrust his cause to this all-prevailing Advocate, and we shall certainly gain it. The unchangeable promise has passed his lips, that whatsoever we ask the Father in faith and in his name, he will give it us. John 16:23.

Let me add, *the kingly office* of Christ is precious to believers. As King, he gives laws—laws perfectly wise and good, and enforced with the most important sanctions, everlasting rewards and punishments. And how delightful, how advantageous, to live under such a government; to have our duty discovered with so much clearness and certainty, which frees us from so many painful anxieties; and to have such powerful motives to obedience, which have a tendency to infuse vigor and spirit into our endeavors. As King, he appoints ordinances of worship. And how sweet to converse with him in these ordinances, and to be freed from perplexity about that manner of worship which God will accept, without being exposed to that question, so confounding to will-worshippers, *Who hath required this at your hands?* As King, he is head over all things to his church, and manages the whole creation as is most subservient to her good. The various ranks of creatures in heaven, earth, and hell, are subject to his direction and control; and they must all coöperate for the good of his people. He reclaims, confounds, subdues, or destroys their enemies, according to his pleasure. And how precious must he be in this august character to the feeble, helpless believer. To have an almighty Friend sitting at the helm of the universe, with the supreme man-

agement of all things in his hands ; to be assured that even the most injurious enemy can do the believer no real or lasting injury, but shall at length concur to work his greatest good ; and that, come what will, it shall go well with him, and he shall at last be made triumphant over all difficulty and opposition—O what transporting considerations are here. But this is not the whole exercise of the royal power of Christ. He not only makes laws and ordinances, and restrains the enemies of his people, but he exercises his power inwardly upon their hearts. He is the King of souls ; he reigns in the hearts of his subjects ; and how infinitely dear and precious is he in this view. To feel him subdue the rebellion within, sweetly bending the stubborn heart into willing obedience, and reducing every thought into a cheerful captivity to himself, writing his law upon the heart, making the dispositions of his subjects a transcript of his will, corresponding to it like wax to the seal, how delightful is all this. O the pleasures of humble submission. How pleasant to lie as subjects at the feet of this mediatorial King without arrogating the sovereignty to ourselves, for which we are utterly insufficient. Blessed Jesus, thus reign in our hearts ; thus subdue the nations to the obedience of faith. “Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty ; and in thy majesty ride prosperously, because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness.” Psalm 45 : 3, 4. “Send the rod of thy strength out of Sion : rule thou in the midst of thine enemies,” Psalm 110 : 2 ; rule us, and subdue the rebel in our hearts.

Thus you see the Lord Jesus is precious to believers in all the views of his mediatorial office. But he is not precious to them alone : he is beloved as far as known, and the more known the more beloved ; which leads me to add,

III. He is precious to ALL THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN.

St. Peter tells us, that the things now reported to us by the Gospel are *things which the angels desire to look into*. 1 Pet. 1 : 12. Jesus is the wonder of angels now in heaven ; and he was so even when he appeared in the form of a servant upon earth. St. Paul mentions it as one part of the

great mystery of godliness, that *God manifested in the flesh was seen of angels.* 1 Tim. 3 : 16. Angels saw him and admired and loved him in the various stages of his life from his birth to his return to his native heaven. Hear the manner in which angels celebrated his entrance into our world. One of them spread his wings and flew with joyful haste to a company of poor shepherds that kept their midnight watch in the field, and abruptly tells the news, of which his heart was full : "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people ; for to you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord : and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host." Crowds of angels left their stations in the celestial court in that memorable hour, and hovered over the place where their incarnate God lay in a manger : Jesus, their darling, was gone down to earth, and they must follow him ; for who would not be where Jesus is ? Men, ungrateful men, were silent upon that occasion, but angels tuned their song of praise. The astonished shepherds heard them sing, "Glory to God in the highest ; on earth peace : goodwill to men." Luke 2 : 10-14. When he bringeth his first-born into the world, the Father saith, "Let all the angels of God worship him." Heb. 1 : 6. This seems to intimate that all the angels crowded round the manger where the infant God lay, and paid him their humble worship. We are told, that when the devil had finished his long process of temptations, after forty days, and had left him, the "angels came and ministered unto him." Matt. 4 : 11. When this disagreeable companion had left him, his old attendants were fond of renewing their service to him. In every hour of difficulty they were ready to fly to his aid. He was seen of angels, in his hard conflict in the garden of Gethsemane ; and one of them "appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." Luke 22 : 43. With what wonder, sympathy, and readiness did this angelic assistant raise his prostrate Lord from the cold ground, wipe off his bloody sweat, and support his sinking spirit with divine encouragements. But O, ye blessed angels, ye usual spectators and adorers of the

divine glories of our Redeemer, with what astonishment and horror were you struck when you saw him expire on the cross !

“ Around the bloody tree,
Ye pressed with strong desire,
That wondrous sight to see—
The Lord of life expire ;
And could your eyes
Have known a tear,
Had dropped it there
In sad surprise.”

Ye also hovered round his tomb, while he lay in the prison of the grave. The weeping women and his other friends found you stationed there in their early impatient visits to the sepulchre. O what wonders then appeared to your astonished minds. Could you that pry so deep into the secrets of heaven—you that know so well what divine love can do, could you have thought that even divine love could have gone so far ; could have laid the Lord of glory a pale, mangled, senseless corpse in the mansions of the dead ? Was not this a strange surprise even to you ? And when the appointed day began to dawn, with what eager and joyful haste did ye roll away the stone, and set open the prison doors, that the rising Conqueror might march forth !

“ And when arrayed in light,
The shining Conqueror rode,
Ye hailed his rapt'rous flight
Up to the throne of God ;
And waved around
Your golden wings,
And struck your strings
Of sweetest sound.”

When he ascended on high, he was attended with “ the chariots of God, which are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels.” Psalm 68 : 17, 18. And now, when he is returned to dwell among them, Jesus is still the darling of angels. His name sounds from all their harps, and his love is the subject of their everlasting song. St. John once heard

them, and I hope we shall ere long hear them, saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." Rev. 5 : 11, 12. This is the song of angels, as well as of the redeemed from among men :

" Jesus the Lord, their harps employs,
 Jesus, my love, they sing ;
 Jesus, the life of all our joys,
 Sounds sweet from every string."

O, my brethren, could we see what is doing in heaven at this instant, how would it surprise, astonish, and confound us. Do you think the name of Jesus is of as little importance there as in our world? Do you think there is one lukewarm or disaffected heart there among ten thousand times ten thousand of thousands of thousands? O, no; there, his love is the ruling passion of every heart, and the favorite theme of every song. And is he so precious to angels—to angels, who are less interested in him, and less indebted to him; and must he not be precious to poor believers bought with his blood, and entitled to life by his death? Yes, you that believe have an angelic spirit in this respect; you love Jesus, though unseen, as well as they who see him as he is, though alas, in a far less degree. But to bring his worth to the highest standard of all, I add,

IV. He is infinitely precious to his FATHER, who thoroughly knows him, and is an infallible judge of real worth. He proclaimed more than once from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." "Behold," says he, "my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." Isa. 42 : 1. He is called by the names of the tenderest endearment: his Son, his own Son, his dear Son, the Son of his love. He is a stone, disallowed indeed of men: if their approbation were the true standard of merit, he must be looked upon as a very worthless, insignificant being, unworthy of their thoughts and affections. But let men form what estimate of him they please, he is *chosen of God, and precious*. And shall

not the love of the omniscient God have weight with believers to love him too? Yes, the apostle expressly draws the consequence; he is precious to God, therefore to you that believe he is precious. It is the characteristic of even the meanest believer, that he is godlike. He is a partaker of the divine nature, and therefore views things, in some measure, as God does; and is affected towards them as God is, though there be an infinite difference as to the degree. He prevailingly loves what God loves, and that because God loves it.

And now, what think you of Christ? Will you not think of him as believers do? If so, he will be precious to your hearts above all things for the future. Or if you disregard this standard of excellence, as being but the estimate of fallible creatures, will you not think of him as angels do—angels, those bright intelligences, to whom he reveals his unveiled glories, who are more capable of perceiving and judging of him, and who therefore must know him better than you—angels, who have had a long acquaintance with him at home, if I may so speak, for near six thousand years, as God, that is, ever since their creation, and for near two thousand years, as God-man? Since angels, then, who know him so thoroughly, love him so highly, certainly you may safely venture to love him; you might safely venture to love him implicitly, upon their word. He died for you, which is more than ever he did for them; and will you not love him after all this love? It is not the mode to think much of him in our world, but it is the mode in heaven. Yes, blessed be God, if he be despised and rejected of men, he is not despised and rejected of angels. Angels, that know him best, love him above all, and as far as their capacity will allow, do justice to his merit: and this is a very comfortable thought to a heart broken with a sense of the neglect and contempt he meets with among men. Blessed Jesus, may not one congregation be got together, even upon our guilty earth, that shall in this respect be like the angels, all lovers of thee? O why should this be impossible, while they are all

so much in need of thee, all so much obliged to thee, and thou art so lovely in thyself? Why should he not be precious to every one of you, rich and poor, old and young, white and black? What reason can any one of you give why you in particular should neglect him? I am sure you can give none. And will you, without any reason, dissent from all the angels in heaven, in a point of which they must be the most competent judges? Will you differ from them, and agree in your sentiments of Christ with the ghosts of hell, his implacable, but conquered and miserable enemies?

If all this has no weight with you, let me ask you farther, Will you not agree to that estimate of Jesus which his Father has of him? Will you run counter to the supreme reason? Will you set up yourselves as wiser than Omniscience? How must Jehovah resent it, to see a worm on his footstool daring to despise Him whom he loves so highly. "O let him be precious to you, because he is so to God, who knows him best.

But I am shocked at my own attempt. O precious Jesus, are matters come to that pass in our world, that creatures bought with thy blood, creatures that owe all their hopes to thee, should stand in need of persuasions to love thee? What horrors attend the thought. However, blessed be God, there are some, even among men, to whom he is precious. This world is not entirely peopled with the despisers of Christ. To as many of you as believe, he is precious, though to none else.

Would you know the reason of this? I will tell you: none but believers have eyes to see his glory; none but they are sensible of their need of him; and none but they have learned from experience how precious he is.

1. None but believers *have eyes to see* the glory of Christ. As the knowledge of Christ is entirely from revelation, an avowed unbeliever who rejects that revelation, can have no right knowledge of him, and therefore must be entirely indifferent towards him, as one unknown, or must despise and abhor him as an enthusiast or impostor. But one who is not an unbeliever in profession or speculation, may yet be

destitute of that faith which constitutes a true believer, and which renders Jesus precious to the soul. Even devils are very orthodox in speculation; devils believe and tremble; and they could cry out, "What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? We know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God." Mark 1:24. And there are crowds among us who believe, after a fashion, that Christ is the true Messiah, who yet show by their practices that they neglect him in their hearts, and are not believers in the full import of the character. True faith includes not only a speculative knowledge and belief, but a clear, affecting, realizing view, and a hearty approbation of the things known and believed concerning Jesus Christ; and such a view, such an approbation, cannot be produced by any human means, but only by the enlightening influence of the Holy Spirit shining into the heart. Without such a faith as this, the mind is all dark and blind as to the glory of Jesus Christ; it can see no beauty in him, that he should be desired. Honorable and sublime speculations concerning him may hover in the understanding, and the tongue may pronounce many pompous panegyrics in his praise; but the understanding has no realizing, affecting views of his excellency, nor does the heart delight in him and love him as infinitely precious and lovely. The god of this world, the prince of darkness, has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine into them. But as to the enlightened believer, God, who first commanded light to shine out of darkness, has shined into his heart, to give him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. This divine illumination pierces the cloud that obscured his understanding, and enables him to view the Lord Jesus in a strong and striking light—a light entirely different from that of the crowd around him—a light, in which it is impossible to view this glorious object without loving him. A believer and an unbeliever may be equally orthodox in speculation, and have the same notions in theory concerning Jesus Christ; and yet it is certainly true, that their views of him are vastly different. Believers, do you

think, that if the Christ-despising multitude around you had the same views of his worth and preciousness which you have, they could neglect him as they do? It is impossible. You could once neglect him as others do now; you were no more charmed with his beauty than they. But O, when you were brought out of darkness into God's marvellous light, when the glories of the neglected Saviour broke in upon your astonished minds, then was it possible for you to withhold your love from him? Were not your hearts captivated with delightful violence? You could no more resist. Did not your hearts then as naturally and freely love him whom they had once rejected, as ever they loved a dear child or a friend, or the sweetest created enjoyment? The improving your reason into faith is setting the disordered eye of the mind right, that it may be able to see this object: and when once you viewed it with this eye of reason restored and improved, how did the precious stone sparkle before you, and charm you with its brilliancy and excellence? Christ is one of those things unseen and hoped for, of which St. Paul says, *faith is the substance and evidence*. Heb. 11:1. Faith gives Christ a present subsistence in the mind, not as a majestic phantom, but as the most glorious and important reality: and this faith is a clear, affecting demonstration, or conviction, of his existence, and of his being in reality what his word represents him. It is by such a faith, that is, under its habitual influence, that the believer lives; and hence, while he lives, Jesus is still precious to him.

2. None but believers are properly *sensible of their need* of Christ. They are deeply sensible of their ignorance and the disorder of their understanding, and therefore they are sensible of their want of both the external and internal instructions of this divine Prophet. But as to others, they are puffed up with intellectual pride, and apprehend themselves in very little need of religious instructions; and therefore they think but very slightly of him. Believers feel themselves guilty, destitute of all righteousness; and incapable of making atonement for their sins, or recommending themselves to God; and therefore the satisfaction and righteous-

ness of Jesus Christ are most precious to them, and they rejoice in him as their all-prevailing Intercessor. But as to the unbelieving crowd, they have no such mortifying thoughts of themselves; they have so many excuses to make for their sins, that they bring down their guilt to a very trifling thing, hardly worthy of divine resentment; and they magnify their good works to such a height, that they imagine they will nearly balance their bad, and procure them some favor at least from God, and therefore they must look upon this High-priest as needless. They also love to be free from the restraints of religion, and to have the command of themselves. They would usurp the power of self-government, and make their own pleasure their rule; and therefore the Lord Jesus Christ, as a King, is so far from being precious, that he is very unacceptable to such obstinate, headstrong rebels. They choose to have no lawgiver but their own wills; and therefore they trample upon his laws, and, as it were, form insurrections against his government. But the poor believer, sensible of his incapacity for self-government, loves to be under direction, and delights to feel the dependent, submissive, pliant spirit of a subject. He counts it a mercy not to have the management of himself, and feels his need of this mediatorial King to rule him. He hates the rebel within, hates every insurrection of sin, and longs to have it entirely subdued, and every thought, every motion of his soul brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ; and therefore he feels the need of his royal power to make an entire conquest of his hostile spirit. His commands are not uneasy impositions, but most acceptable and friendly directions to him; and the prohibitions of his law are not painful restraints, but a kind of privileges in his esteem. The language of his heart is, "Precious Jesus, be thou my King. I love to live in humble subjection to thee. I would voluntarily submit myself to thy control and direction. Thy will, not mine, be done. O subdue every rebellious principle within, and make me all resignation and cheerful obedience to thee." To such a soul, it is no wonder Jesus should be exceeding precious: but O, how different is this spirit from that which generally

prevails in the world. Let me add but one reason more why Jesus is precious to believers, and them only : namely,

3. None but believers have *known by experience* how precious he is. They, and only they, can reflect upon the glorious views of him which themselves have had, to captivate their hearts for ever to him. They, and only they, have known what it is to feel a bleeding heart healed by his gentle hand, and a clamorous, languishing conscience pacified by his atoning blood. They, and only they, know by experience how sweet it is to feel his love shed abroad in their hearts, to feel a heart, ravished with his glory, pant, and long, and breathe after him, and exerting the various acts of faith, desire, joy, and hope towards him. They, and only they, know by experience how pleasant it is to converse with him in his ordinances, and to spend an hour of devotion in some retirement, as it were in his company. They, and only they, have experienced the exertions of his royal power, conquering their mightiest sins, and sweetly subduing them to himself. These are, in some measure, matters of experience with every true believer, and therefore it is no wonder Jesus should be precious to them. But as to the unbelieving multitude, poor creatures, they are entire strangers to these things. They may have some superficial notions of them floating in their heads, but they have never felt them in their hearts, and therefore the infinitely precious Lord Jesus is a worthless, insignificant being to them ; and thus, alas, it will be with the unhappy creatures, until experience becomes their teacher—until they taste for themselves *that the Lord is gracious.* 1 Pet. 2 : 3.

There is an interesting question, which, I doubt not, has risen in the minds of such as have attended to what has been said with a particular application to themselves, and keeps them in a painful suspense ; with an answer to which I shall conclude : “ Am I indeed a true believer ; and is Christ precious to me ? My satisfaction in this sweet subject is not complete, till this question is solved. Sometimes I humbly think the evidence is in my favor, and I begin to hope that he is indeed precious to my soul ; but alas, my

love for him soon languishes, and then my doubts and fears return, and I know not what to do, nor what to think of myself." Do you not long to have this perplexing case cleared up? O what would you not give, if you might be fully satisfied in this point. Well, I would willingly help you, for experience has taught me to sympathize with you under this difficulty. O my heart, how often hast thou been suspicious of thyself in this respect. The readiest way I can now take to clear up the matter is to answer another question, naturally resulting from my subject; and that is, "How does that high esteem which a believer has for Jesus Christ discover itself? Or how does he show that Christ is indeed precious to him?" I answer, he shows it in various ways; particularly by his affectionate thoughts of him, which often rise in his mind, and always find welcome there. He discovers that Jesus is precious to him by hating and resisting whatever is displeasing to him, and by parting with every thing that comes in competition with him. He will let all go, rather than part with Christ. Honor, reputation, ease, riches, pleasure, and even life itself, are nothing to him in comparison with Christ; and he will run the risk of all, nay, will actually lose all, if he may but win Christ. He discovers this high esteem for him by the pleasure he takes in feeling his heart suitably affected towards him, and by his uneasiness when it is otherwise. O, when he can love Jesus, when his thoughts affectionately clasp around him, and when he has a heart to serve him, then he is happy, his soul is well, and he is lively and cheerful. But, alas, when it is otherwise with him, when his love languishes, when his heart hardens, when it becomes out of order for his service, then he grows uneasy and discontented, and cannot be at rest. When Jesus favors him with his gracious presence, and revives him with his influence, how does he rejoice. But when his Beloved withdraws himself and is gone, how does he lament his absence, and long for his return. He weeps and cries like a bereaved, deserted orphan, and moans like a loving turtledove in the absence of its mate. Because Christ is so precious to him, he cannot bear the thought of

parting with him, and the least doubt of his love pierces his very heart. Because he loves him, he longs for the full enjoyment of him, and is ravished with the prospect of him. Because Christ is precious to him, his interests are so too, and he longs to see his kingdom flourish, and all men fired with his love. Because he loves him, he loves his ordinances; loves to hear, because it is the word of Jesus; loves to pray, because it is maintaining intercourse with Jesus; loves to sit at his table, because it is a memorial of Jesus; and loves his people, because they love Jesus. Whatever has a relation to his precious Saviour, is for that reason precious to him; and when he feels any thing of a contrary disposition, alas, it grieves him, and makes him abhor himself. These things are sufficient to show that the Lord Jesus has his heart, and is indeed precious to him; and is not this the very picture of some trembling, doubting souls among you? If it be, take courage. After so many vain searches, you have at length discovered the welcome secret, that Christ is indeed precious to you; and if so, you may be sure that you are precious to him. "You shall be mine, saith the Lord, in the day that I make up my jewels." Mal. 3:17. If you are now satisfied, after thorough trial of the case, retain your hope, and let not every discouraging appearance renew your jealousies again; labor to be steady and firm Christians, and do not stagger through unbelief.

But alas, I fear that many of you know nothing experimentally of the exercises of a believing heart, which I have been describing, and consequently that Christ is not precious to you. If this is the case, you may be sure indeed you are hateful to him. He is angry with the wicked every day. Those that honor him, he will honor; but they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. 2:30. And what will you do if Christ should become your enemy and fight against you? If this precious stone should become a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to you, over which you will fall into ruin, O how dreadful must the fall be. What must you expect but to lie down in unutterable and everlasting sorrow.

P A R D O N

FOR

THE GREATEST SINNERS.

BY PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

WE find David, in one of his beautiful psalms, using this remarkable prayer: "FOR THY NAME'S SAKE, O LORD, PARDON MINE INIQUITY; FOR IT IS GREAT." Psalm 25: 11.

Observe, here, what arguments the psalmist makes use of in pleading for pardon.

He pleads for pardon for *God's name's sake*. He has no expectation of pardon for the sake of any righteousness or worthiness of his own, for any good deeds he had done, or any compensation he had made for his sins; though, if man's righteousness could be a just plea, David would have had as much to plead as most. But he begs that God would do it for his own name's sake, for his own glory, for the glory of his own free grace, and for the honor of his own covenant faithfulness.

The psalmist pleads, also, *the greatness of his sins* as an argument for mercy. He not only does not plead his own righteousness, or the smallness of his sins; he not only does not say, "Pardon mine iniquity, for I have done much good to counterbalance it;" or, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is small, and thou hast no great reason to be angry with me; mine iniquity is not so great, that thou hast any just cause to remember it against me; mine offence is not such but that thou mayest well enough overlook it;" but on the contrary, he says, "Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great:" he pleads the greatness of his sin, and not the smallness of it;

he enforces his prayer with this consideration—that his sins are very heinous.

But how could he make this a plea for pardon? I answer, Because the greater his iniquity was, the more *need* he had of pardon. It is as much as if he had said, “Pardon mine iniquity, for it is so great that I cannot bear the punishment; my sin is so great, that I am in necessity of pardon; my case will be exceedingly miserable, unless thou be pleased to pardon me.” He makes use of the greatness of his sin to enforce his plea for pardon, as a man would make use of the greatness of his calamity in begging for relief. When a beggar asks for bread, he will plead the greatness of his poverty and necessity. When a man in distress cries for pity, what more suitable plea can be urged than the extremity of his case? And God allows such a plea as this; for he is moved to mercy towards us by nothing in us but the miserableness of our case. He doth not pity sinners because they are worthy, but because they need his mercy.

Hence let us learn, that IF WE TRULY COME TO GOD FOR MERCY, THE GREATNESS OF OUR SIN WILL BE NO IMPEDIMENT TO PARDON. If it were an impediment, David would never have used it as a plea for pardon, as we find he does. Now there are several things necessary in order that we truly come to God for mercy:

1. We must *see our misery, and be sensible of our need of mercy*. Those who are not sensible of their misery, cannot truly look to God for mercy, because the very notion of divine mercy is, that it is the goodness and grace of God to the miserable. Without misery in the object, there can be no exercise of mercy. To suppose mercy without supposing misery, or pity without calamity, is a contradiction; therefore, men cannot look upon themselves as proper objects of mercy, unless they first know themselves to be miserable; and so, unless this be the case, it is impossible that they should come to God for mercy. They must be sensible that they are the children of wrath; that the law is against

them, and that they are exposed to the curse of it; that the wrath of God abideth on them, and that he is angry with them every day while they are under the guilt of sin. They must be sensible that it is a very dreadful thing to be the object of the wrath of God; that it is a very awful thing to have him for their enemy, and that they cannot bear his wrath. They must be sensible that the guilt of sin makes them miserable creatures, whatever temporal enjoyments they have; that they can be no other than miserable, undone creatures, so long as God is angry with them; that they are without strength, and must perish, and that eternally, unless God help them. They must see that their case is utterly desperate, for any thing that any one else can do for them; that they hang over the pit of eternal misery, and that they must necessarily drop into it, if God have not mercy on them.

2. We must be sensible that we are *not worthy that God should have mercy on us*. Those who truly come to God for mercy, come as beggars, and not as creditors; they come for mere mercy, for sovereign grace, and not for any thing that is due; therefore, they must see that the misery under which they lie, is justly brought upon them; that the wrath to which they are exposed, is justly threatened against them, and that they have deserved that God should be their enemy, and should continue to be their enemy. They must be sensible that it would be just for God to do as he hath threatened in his holy law, namely, make them the objects of his wrath and curse in hell to all eternity. Those who come to God for mercy in a right manner, are not disposed to charge him with severity; but they come deeply feeling their own utter unworthiness, as with ropes about their necks, and lying in the dust at the footstool of mercy.

3. We must come to God for mercy *in and through Jesus Christ alone*. All our hope of mercy must be from the consideration of what he is, what he hath done, and what he hath suffered; and that there is no other name

given under heaven, among men, whereby we can be saved, but that of Christ; that he is the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world; that his blood cleanses from all sin, and that he is so worthy, that all sinners who are in him may well be pardoned and accepted. It is impossible that any should come to God for mercy, and at the same time have no hope of mercy. Their coming to God for it implies that they have some hope of obtaining it, otherwise they would not think it worth their while to come. But those who come in a right manner, have all their hope through Christ, or from the consideration of his redemption, and the sufficiency of it.

If persons thus come to God for mercy, the greatness of their sins will be no impediment to pardon. Let their sins be ever so many, and great, and aggravated, God will not be in the least degree more backward to pardon them. This may be made evident by the following considerations :

The mercy of God is as *sufficient* for the pardon of the greatest sins, as for the least, because his mercy is infinite. That which is infinite, is as much above what is great, as it is above what is small. One finite measure doth not come any nearer to the extent of what is infinite than another; so the mercy of God being infinite, it must be as sufficient for the pardon of all sins as of one. If one of the least sins be not beyond the mercy of God, so neither are the greatest, nor ten thousand of them.

However, it must be acknowledged, that this alone doth not prove the doctrine. For though the mercy of God may be as sufficient for the pardon of great sins as others, yet there may be other obstacles besides the want of mercy. The mercy of God may be sufficient, and yet his other attributes may oppose the dispensation of mercy in these cases. Therefore, I observe,

That *the satisfaction of Christ is as sufficient for the removal of the greatest guilt, as the least*: “The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.” 1 John, 1:7. “By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye

could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13 : 39. All the sins of those who truly come to God for mercy, let them be what they may, are satisfied for, if God be true who tells us so; and if they be satisfied for, surely it is not incredible, that God should be ready to pardon them. So that Christ having fully satisfied for all sin, or having wrought out a satisfaction that is sufficient for all, it is now no way inconsistent with the glory of the divine attributes to pardon the greatest sins of those who in a right manner come unto him. God may now pardon the greatest sinners without any prejudice to the honor of his holiness. The holiness of God will not suffer him to give the least countenance to sin, but inclines him to give proper testimonies of his hatred of it. But Christ having satisfied for sin, God can now love the sinner, and give no countenance at all to sin, however great a sinner he may have been. It was a sufficient testimony of God's abhorrence of sin, that he poured out his wrath on his own dear Son, when he took the guilt of it upon himself. Nothing can more show God's abhorrence of sin than this. If all mankind had been eternally damned, it would not have been so great a testimony of it.

God may, through Christ, pardon the greatest sinner without any prejudice to the honor of his majesty. The honor of the divine majesty indeed requires satisfaction; but the sufferings of Christ fully repaired the injury. Let the contempt be ever so great, yet if so honorable a person as Christ undertakes to be a Mediator for the offender, and suffers so much for him, it fully repairs the injury done to the Majesty of heaven and earth. The sufferings of Christ fully satisfied justice. The justice of God, as the supreme Governor and Judge of the world, requires the punishment of sin. The supreme Judge must judge the world according to a rule of justice. God doth not show mercy as a judge, but as a sovereign; therefore his exercise of mercy as a sovereign, and his justice as a judge, must be made consistent one with the other; and this is done by the sufferings of Christ,

in which sin is punished fully, and justice answered. "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Rom. 3 : 25, 26. The law is no impediment in the way of the pardon of the greatest sin, if men do but truly come to God for mercy ; for Christ hath fulfilled the law, he hath borne the curse of it in his sufferings : "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. 3 : 13.

Again, Christ will not refuse to save the greatest sinners, who in a right manner come to God for mercy ; for *this is his work*. It is his business to be the Saviour of sinners ; it is the work upon which he came into the world ; and therefore he will not object to it. He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Matt. 9 : 13. Sin is the very evil which he came into the world to remedy ; therefore he will not make it an objection to any man, that he is very sinful. The more sinful he is, the more need has he of Christ. The sinfulness of man was the reason of Christ's coming into the world ; this is the very misery from which he came to deliver men. The more they have of it, the more need they have of being delivered : "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Matt. 9 : 12. The physician will not make it an objection against healing a man who applies to him, that he stands in great need of his help. If a kind-hearted physician comes among the sick and wounded, surely he will not refuse to heal those that stand in most need of healing, if he be able to heal them.

Still further, observe that *the glory of grace* by the redemption of Christ much consists in this very thing, namely, in its sufficiency for the pardon of the greatest sinners. The whole contrivance of the way of salvation is for this end, to glorify the free grace of God. God had it on his heart from all eternity to glorify this attribute ; and therefore it is, that the plan of saving sinners by Christ was conceived. The

greatness of divine grace appears very much in this, that God by Christ saves the greatest offenders. The greater the guilt of any sinner is, the more glorious and wonderful is the grace manifested in his pardon. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5 : 20. The apostle, when telling how great a sinner he had been, takes notice of the abounding of divine grace in his pardon, of which his great guilt was the occasion. "Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious : but I obtained mercy. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." 1 Tim. 1 : 13, 14. The Redeemer is glorified in this, that he proves sufficient to redeem those who are exceedingly sinful, that his blood proves sufficient to wash away the greatest guilt, that he is able to save men to the uttermost, and that he redeems even from the greatest misery. It is the honor of Christ to save the greatest sinners, when they come to him, as it is the honor of a physician, that he cures the most desperate diseases or wounds. Therefore, no doubt, Christ will be willing to save the greatest sinners, if they come to him ; for he will not be backward to glorify himself, and to commend the value and virtue of his own blood. Seeing he hath so laid out himself to redeem sinners, he will not be unwilling to show that he is able to redeem to the uttermost.

Once more : pardon is as much *offered and promised* to the greatest sinners, as it is to any, if they come aright to God for mercy. The invitations of the Gospel are always in universal terms : "Ho, every one that thirsteth ;" "Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden ;" "Who-soever will, let him come." And the voice of wisdom is to men in general : "Unto you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man." Prov. 8 : 4. Not to moral men, or religious men, but *to you, O men*. So Christ promises : "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." John 6 : 37. This is the direction of Christ to his apostles, after his resurrection : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel

to every creature : he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark 16 : 15, 16 ; which is agreeable to what the apostle saith, that " the Gospel was preached to every creature which is under heaven." Col. 1 : 23.

Now the proper use of this subject is, to encourage sinners whose consciences are burdened with a sense of guilt, immediately to go to God through Christ for mercy. If you go in the manner we have described, the arms of mercy are open to embrace you. You need not be at all the more fearful of coming because of your sins, let them be ever so black. If you had as much guilt lying on your soul as all the wicked men in the world, and all the damned souls in hell, yet, if you come to God for mercy, sensible of your own vileness, and seeking pardon only through the free mercy of God in Christ, you need not be afraid—the greatness of your sins would be no impediment to your pardon. Therefore, if your souls be burdened, and you are distressed for fear of hell, you need not bear that burden and distress any longer. If you are but willing, you may freely come and unload yourselves, and cast all your burdens on Christ, and rest in him.

I shall now reply to some OBJECTIONS, which some awakened sinners may be ready to make against what I have asserted.

Some may be ready to object, " I have spent my youth, and all the best of my life in sin, and I am afraid God will not accept of me, when I offer him only my *old age*."

To this I would answer, Hath God said anywhere, that he will not accept of old sinners who come to him ? God hath often made offers and promises in universal terms ; and is there any such exception put in ? Doth Christ say, " All that thirst, let them come to me and drink, except old sinners ? Come to me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, except old sinners, and I will give you rest ? Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out, if he be not an old sinner ?" Did you ever read any such exception anywhere

in the Bible? And why should you give way to exceptions which you make out of your own heads, or rather which the devil puts into your heads, and which have no foundation in the word of God? Indeed, it is more rare that old sinners are willing to come, than that others are; but if they do come, they are as readily accepted as any whatever.

You entirely mistake the matter, in thinking that God will not accept of you because you are old; as though he readily accepted of persons in their youth, because their youth is better worth his acceptance, or for the sake of the service which they are likely to do him afterwards; whereas it is only for the sake of Jesus Christ, that God is willing to accept of any.

You say, your life is almost spent, and you are afraid that the best time for serving God is past; and that therefore God will not now accept of you; as if it were for the sake of the service which persons are like to do him after they are converted, that he accepts of them. But a self-righteous spirit is at the bottom of such objections. Men cannot renounce the notion, that it is for some goodness or service of their own, either done or expected to be done, that God accepts of persons, and receives them into favor. It is true, that those who deny God their youth, the best part of their lives, and spend it in the service of Satan, dreadfully sin, and provoke God; and he very often leaves them to hardness of heart, when they are grown old. But if, when old, they are willing to accept of Christ, he is as ready to receive them as any others; for in that matter God hath respect only to Christ and his worthiness.

But perhaps you are ready to say, "I am afraid that I have committed *sins which are peculiar to reprobates*. I have sinned against light, and strong convictions of conscience; I have sinned presumptuously, and have so resisted the strivings of the Spirit of God, that I am afraid I have committed such sins as none of God's elect ever commit. I cannot think that God would ever leave one whom he intends

to save, to go on and commit sins against so much light and conviction." Others may say, "I have had risings of heart against God; blasphemous thoughts; a spiteful and malicious spirit; and have abused mercy and the strivings of the Spirit, and trampled upon the Saviour, and my sins are such as are peculiar to those who are reprobated to eternal damnation." To all this I would answer,

There is no sin peculiar to reprobates but the sin against the Holy Ghost.* Do you read of any other in the word of God? And if you do not read of any there, what ground have you to think any such thing? What other rule have we, by which to judge of such matters, but the divine word? If we venture to go beyond that, we shall be miserably in the dark. When we pretend to go further in our determinations than the word of God, Satan takes us up and leads us. It seems to you, that certain sins are peculiar to the reprobate, and such as God never forgives. But what reason can you give for this opinion, if you have no word of God to reveal it? Is it because you cannot see how the mercy of God is sufficient to pardon, or the blood of Christ to cleanse from such presumptuous sins? If so, it is because you never yet saw how great the mercy of God is; you never saw the sufficiency of the blood of Christ, and you know not how far the virtue of it extends.

Men may be less likely to believe, on account of the sins which they have committed, and yet be not the less readily

* In referring to this sin, the Rev. A. Fuller remarks as follows: "With respect to *dejected minds*, let it be observed, that no person, let his crimes have been what they may, if he be grieved at heart for having committed them, and sincerely ask forgiveness in the name of Christ, need fear that he shall be rejected. Such grief is itself a proof, that he has *not* committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, because it is a mark of that sin to be accompanied with a hard and impenitent heart. Such characters may feel the remorse of a Cain, a Saul, or a Judas; but a tear of godly sorrow never dropped from their eyes."

pardoned when they do believe. It must be acknowledged, that some sinners are in more danger of hell than others. Though all are in great danger, some are less likely to be saved. Some are less likely ever to be converted, and to come to Christ; but all who do come to him are alike readily accepted, and there is as much encouragement for one man to come to Christ as another. Such sins as you mention are indeed exceedingly heinous and provoking to God, and do in an especial manner bring the soul into danger of damnation, and into danger of being given up to final hardness of heart; and God more commonly gives men up to the judgment of final hardness for such sins than for others. Yet they are not peculiar to reprobates; there is but one sin that is so, namely, that against the Holy Ghost. And notwithstanding the sins which you have committed, if you can find it in your heart to come to Christ, and close with him, you will be accepted not at all the less readily because you have committed such sins. Though God doth more rarely cause some sorts of sinners to come to Christ than others, it is not because his mercy or the redemption of Christ is not as sufficient for them as others, but because in wisdom he sees fit so to dispense his grace, for a restraint upon the wickedness of men; and because it is his will to give converting grace in the use of means, among which this is one, namely, to lead a moral and religious life, agreeable to our light, and the convictions of our consciences. But when once any sinner is willing to come to Christ, mercy is as ready for him as for any. Let him have been ever so sinful, his sins are not remembered, God doth not upbraid him with them.

“But had I not better stay till I shall have *made myself better*, before I presume to come to Christ? I have been, and see myself to be very wicked now; but am in hopes of mending myself, and of rendering myself at least not so wicked; then I shall have more courage to come to God for mercy.”

In answer to this, let me entreat you to consider how

unreasonably you act. You are striving to set up yourself for your own saviour; you are striving to get something of your own, on account of which you may the more readily be accepted. So that by this it appears, that you do not seek to be accepted only on Christ's account. And is not this to rob Christ of the glory of being your only Saviour? Yet this is the way in which you are hoping to make Christ willing to save you.

Again, consider that you can never come to Christ at all, unless you first see that he will not accept of you the more readily for any thing that you can do. You must first see that it is utterly in vain for you to try to make yourself better on any such account. You must see that you can never make yourself any more worthy, or less unworthy, by any thing which you can perform.

And if ever you truly come to Christ, you must see that there is enough in him for your pardon, though you be no better than you are. If you see not the sufficiency of Christ to pardon you, without any righteousness of your own to recommend you, you will never come so as to be accepted of him. The way to be accepted, is to come—not on any such encouragement, that now you have made yourself better, and more worthy, or less unworthy; but solely on the encouragement of Christ's worthiness, and God's mercy.

Lastly, if ever you truly come to Christ, you must come to him to make you better. You must come as a patient comes to his physician, with his diseases or wounds to be cured. Spread all your wickedness before him, and do not plead your goodness, but plead your badness, and your great necessity on that very account; and say, as the psalmist did—not, "Pardon mine iniquity; for it is not so great as it was"—but, "PARDON MINE INIQUITY; FOR IT IS GREAT."

NOVEL-READING.

FEW persons suspect how many novels are written, and printed, and sold. There are about five thousand five hundred offered for sale in this country. If a man were to read one a week for seventy-five years, he would not be through the list. There are, of course, many novel-readers. Something on a great scale will be the result. What will it be; good or evil? Let us see.

It is natural to inquire, Who write novels? A few pious persons have written works which are sometimes called novels. But they are too serious for the gay, and too gay for the serious. So they are seldom read. Others are written by moral persons, who really seem anxious to teach some truth in an easy way. But nearly or quite all such are thought dull; and so they lie, covered with dust, on the shelves of the bookseller, are sent to auction, and used as waste paper. The popular novels of our day are, to a great extent, written by men who are known to be lax in principle, and loose in life. England and France contain no men who are more free from the restraints of sound morality, than their leading novelists. They are literal and "literary debauchees."

But do not novels contain many good things, which cannot be learned elsewhere? I answer, they do not. It is confessed that they never teach science. It is no less true, that they pervert history, or supplant it by fiction. This is throughout true of Walter Scott, who has excelled all modern novelists in the charms of style. The literature of novels is commonly poor, and that of the best cannot compare with the standard English and French classics. Even Scott's best tales are intended to ridicule the best men, and to excuse or extol the worst men of their age. Like Hume, he was an apologist of tyrants, whose crimes ought to have taken away both their crowns and their lives. I beseech you not to read novels. I will give my reasons.

1. Their *general tendency* is to evil. They present vice and virtue in false colors. They dress up vice in gayety, mirth, and long success. They put virtue and piety in some odious or ridiculous posture. Suspicion, jealousy, pride, re-

venge, vanity, rivalries, resistance of the laws, rebellion against parents, theft, murder, suicide, and even piracy are so represented in novels as to diminish, if not to take away the horror which all the virtuous feel against these sins and crimes. Almost all that is shocking in vice is combined with some noble quality, so as to make the hero on the whole an attractive character. The thief, the pirate, and especially the rake, are often presented as successful, elegant, and happy. Novels abound in immodest and profane allusions or expressions. Wantonness, pride, anger, and unholy love, are the elements of most of them. They are full of exaggerations of men and things. They fill the mind with false estimates of human life. In them the romantic prevails over the real. A book of this sort is very dangerous to the young, for in them the imagination is already too powerful for the judgment.

2. Novels beget *a vain turn of mind*. So true is this, that not one in a hundred of novel-readers is suspected, or is willing to be suspected of being devout. Who by reading a novel of the present day was ever inclined to prayer or praise? Novel-reading is most unhappy in its effects on the female mind. It so unfits it for devotion, that even in the house of God levity or tedium commonly rules it. Thus practical atheism is engendered. The duties of life are serious and weighty. They whose trade it is to trifle and to nourish vanity, cannot be expected to be well-informed, or well-disposed respecting serious things. However much novel-readers may weep over fictitious misery, it is found that they generally have little or no sympathy with real suffering. Did you never know a mother to send away a sick child, or a daughter to neglect a sick mother, for the purpose of finishing a novel? If irreligion and impiety do not flourish under such influences, effects cannot be traced to causes.

3. The price of these books is often low, yet the *cost* of them in a lifetime is very great. Miss W. borrowed some books, yet she paid seventy dollars in one year for novels alone. Doing this for fifteen years, she would spend one thousand and fifty dollars. Yet her nephews and nieces were growing up without an education. Mrs. L. stinted her family in groceries, that she might have a new novel every month. Mr. C. pleaded want of means to aid the orphan asylum, yet he paid more than sixty dollars a year for novels for his daughters. Novels have, in the last five years, cost

the people of the United States from twelve to fifteen millions of dollars. For one, they have paid thirty thousand dollars. This waste is wanton. No good is received in return.

4. Novel-reading is a great *waste of time*—time,

That stuff that life is made of,
And which, when lost, is never lost alone,
Because it carries souls upon its wings.

Nothing is so valuable as that which is of great use, yet cannot be bought with any thing else. We must have time to think calmly and maturely of a thousand things, to improve our minds, to acquire the knowledge of God, and to perform many pressing duties. The business of life is to act well our part here, and prepare for that solemn exchange of worlds which awaits us. He whose time is spent without economy and wasted on trifles, will awake and find himself undone, and will “mourn at the last, when his flesh and his body are consumed, and say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof!”

5. The effects of novel-reading on *morals* are disastrous. Many young offenders are made so by the wretched tales which now abound. In one city, in less than three months, three youths were convicted of crimes committed in imitation of the hero of a novel. Here is a court of justice in session. Blood has been shed. Men are on trial for their lives. All the parties involved are intelligent and wealthy. The community is excited. Crowds throng the court-room from day to day. The papers are filled with the letters which led to the tragical end of one, and the misery of many. The whole scene is painful in the highest degree. Among the witnesses is one of manly form, polished manners, and hoary locks. Even the stranger does him reverence. His country has honored him. He must testify, and so sure as he does, he will tell the truth; for he has honor, and blood is concerned. He says, The husband of my daughter was “kind, honorable, and affectionate,” and “if my daughter has been in an unhappy state of mind, I attribute it to the impure works of Eugene Sue and Bulwer.” All these cases have been judicially investigated and published to the world. They have filled many a virtuous mind with horror, and every judicious parent with concern.

Nor is novel-reading a wholesome recreation. It is not

a recreation at all. It is an ensnaring and engrossing occupation. Once begin a novel, and husband, children, prayer, filial duties, are esteemed trifles until it is finished. The end of the story is the charm. Who reads a novel a second time?

Some say, Others do it, and so may we. But others are no law to us. The prevalence of an evil renders it the more binding on us to resist the current.

Novel-reading makes none wiser, or better, or happier. In life it helps none. In death it soothes none, but fills many with poignant regrets. At the bar of God, no man will doubt that madness was in his heart, when he could thus kill time and vitiate his principles. I add,

1. Parents, know what books your children read. If there were not a novel on earth, you still should select their reading. Leave not such a matter to chance, to giddiness, or vice. Give your children good books. A bad book is poison. If you love misery, furnish novels to your children.

2. Young people, be warned in time. Many, as unsuspecting as you, have been ruined. Be not rebellious, to your own undoing. Listen to the voice of kindness, which says, Beware, beware of novels.

3. Pastors, see that you do all in your power to break up a practice which will ruin your young people, and render your ministry fruitless. I was shocked when I heard of one of you recommending a novel which exposed the arts of the Jesuits. The Jesuits are indeed bad, but not worse than Sue.

4. Booksellers, let me say a word. A young man, with a hurried manner, entered a druggist's shop and asked for an ounce of laudanum. It was refused. He went to another and got it, and next morning was a corpse. Which of these druggists acted right? You sell poison when you sell novels. They kill souls. You sell for gain. "Woe to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil! Thou hast consulted shame to thy house by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it." You may make money by depraving the public morals, but for all these things God will bring you into judgment.

MESSIAH'S THRONE.

BY REV. JOHN M. MASON, D. D.

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 THY THRONE, O GOD, IS FOR EVER AND EVER. HEBREWS 1:8.

IN the all-important argument which occupies this epistle, Paul assumes, what the believing Hebrews had already professed, that Jesus of Nazareth is the true Messiah. To prepare them for the consequences of their own principle—a principle involving nothing less than the abolition of their law, the subversion of their state, the ruin of their city, the final extinction of their carnal hopes—he leads them to the doctrine of their Redeemer's person, in order to explain the nature of his offices, to evince the value of his spiritual salvation, and to show, in both, the accomplishment of their economy which was now “ready to vanish away.” Under no apprehension of betraying the unwary into idolatrous homage, by giving to the Lord Jesus greater glory than is due unto his name, the apostle sets out with ascribing to him excellence and attributes which belong to no creature. Creatures of most elevated rank are introduced; but it is to display, by contrast, the preëminence of Him who is “the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.” Angels are great in might and in dignity; but “unto them hath he not put in subjection the world to come. Unto which of them said he, at any time, Thou art my son?” To which of them, “Sit thou at my right hand.” He saith they are spirits, “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. But unto THE SON,” in a style which annihilates competition and com-

parison—"unto THE SON, *he saith, Thy throne, O GOD, is for ever and ever.*"

Brethren, if the majesty of Jesus is the subject which the Holy Ghost selected for the encouragement and consolation of his people, when he was shaking the earth and the heavens, and diffusing his gospel among the nations, can it be otherwise than suitable and precious to us on this occasion? Shall it not expand our views, and warm our hearts, and nerve our arm in our efforts to exalt his fame? Let me implore, then, the aid of your prayers, but far more importantly the aids of his own Spirit, while I speak of the things which concern THE KING: those great things contained in the text—his personal glory—his sovereign rule.

I. His PERSONAL GLORY shines forth in the name by which he is revealed; a name above every name: "THY throne, O GOD."

To the single eye nothing can be more evident, in the

First place, than that the Holy Ghost here asserts the *essential deity* of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of his enemies, whom he will make his footstool; some have, indeed, controverted this position, and endeavored to blot out the text from the catalogue of his witnesses. Instead of "thy throne, O God," they would compel us, by a perversion of phraseology, of figure, and of sense, to read, "God is thy throne;" converting the great and dreadful God into a symbol of authority in one of his own creatures. The Scriptures, it seems, may utter contradictions or impiety, but the divinity of the Son they shall not attest. The crown, however, which "flourishes on his head," is not to be torn away, nor the anchor of our hope to be wrested from us, by the rude hand of licentious criticism.

I cannot find, in the lively oracles, a single distinctive mark of deity which is not applied, without reserve or limitation, to the only begotten Son. All things whatsoever the Father hath, are his. Who is that mysterious WORD, that was, "in the beginning, with God?" Who is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, the first

and the last, the Almighty?" Who is he that "knows what is in man," because he searches the deep and dark recesses of the heart? Who is the Omnipresent, that has promised, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them;" the light of whose countenance is, at the same moment, the joy of heaven and the salvation of earth; who is encircled by the seraphim on high, and "walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks;" who is in this assembly, in all the assemblies of his people, in every worshipping family, in every closet of prayer, in every holy heart? "Whose hands have stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth?" Who hath replenished them with inhabitants, and garnished them with beauty, having created all things that are in both, "visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers?" By whom do "all things consist?" Who is the Governor among the nations, "having on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS?" Whom is it the Father's will that "all men should honor even as they honor himself?" Whom has he commanded his angels to worship, whom to obey? Before whom do the devils tremble? Who is qualified to redeem millions of sinners from the wrath to come, and preserve them, by his grace, to his everlasting kingdom? Who raiseth the dead, "having life in himself, to quicken whom he will," so that at his voice, "all who are in their graves shall come forth," and death and hell surrender their numerous and forgotten captives? Who shall weigh, in the balance of judgment, the destinies of angels and men, dispose of the thrones of paradise, and bestow eternal life? Shall I submit to the decision of reason? Shall I ask a response from heaven? Shall I summon the devils from their chains of darkness? The response from heaven sounds in my ears, reason approves, and the devils confess: This, O Christians, is none other than the GREAT GOD OUR SAVIOUR.

Indeed, my brethren, the doctrine of our Lord's divinity

is not, as a *fact*, more interesting to our faith, than, as a *principle*, it is essential to our hope. If he were not *the true God*, he could not be *eternal life*. When pressed down by guilt, and languishing for happiness, I look around for a deliverer, such as my conscience, and my heart, and the word of God assure me I need, insult not my agony by directing me to a creature—to a man, a mere man like myself. A creature—a man! My Redeemer owns my *person*. My immortal spirit is his *property*. When I come to die, I must commit it into his hands. My soul, my infinitely precious soul committed to a mere man, become the property of a mere man! I would not thus intrust my *body* to the highest angel who burns in the temple above. It is only the *Father of spirits* that can have *property* in spirits, and be their refuge in the hour of transition from the present to the approaching world. In short, my brethren, the divinity of Jesus is, in the system of grace, the sun to which all its parts are subordinate, and all their stations refer; which binds them in sacred concord, and imparts to them their radiance, and life, and vigor. Take from it this central luminary, and the glory is departed; its holy harmonies are broken; the elements rush to chaos; the light of salvation is extinguished for ever.

But it is not the deity of the Son, simply considered, to which the text confines our attention. We are, in the

Second place, to contemplate it as subsisting in a personal union with the human nature.

Long before this epistle was written had he “by himself purged our sins, and sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.” It is, therefore, as “God manifested in the flesh;” as my own brother, while he is the express image of the Father’s person; as the Mediator of the new covenant, that he is seated on the throne. Of this throne, to which the pretensions of a creature were mad and blasphemous, the majesty is, indeed, maintained by his divine power; but the foundation is laid in his mediatorial character. I need not prove to this audience, that all his gracious

offices and all his redeeming work originated in the love and the election of his Father. Obedient to that will, which fully accorded with his own, he came down from heaven; tabernacled in our clay; was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs; submitted to the contradictions of sinners, the temptations of the old serpent, and the wrath of an avenging God. In the merit of his obedience, which threw a lustre round the divine law, and in the atonement of his death, by which "he offered himself a sacrifice without spot unto God," repairing the injuries of man's rebellion, expiating sin through the blood of his cross, and conciliating its pardon with infinite purity and unalterable truth: summarily, in his performing those conditions on which were suspended all God's mercy to man and all man's enjoyment of God—in these stupendous "works of righteousness" are we to look for the cause of his present glory. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Exalted thus to be a Prince and a Saviour, he fills heaven with his beauty, and obtains from its blest inhabitants the purest and most reverential praise. "Worthy," cry the mingled voices of his angels and his redeemed, "worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Worthy," again cry his redeemed, in a song which belongs not to the angels, but in which, with holy ecstasy, we will join, "worthy art thou, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

Delightful, brethren, transcendently delightful were it to dwell upon this theme. But we must refrain; and having taken a transient glance at our Redeemer's personal glory, let us turn to the

II. View which the text exhibits—the view of his SOVEREIGN RULE: “Thy THRONE, O God, is for ever and ever.”

The mediatorial kingdom of Christ Jesus, directed and upheld by his divinity, is now the object of our contemplation. To advance Jehovah’s glory in the salvation of men, is the purpose of its erection. Though earth is the scene, and human life the limit, of those great operations by which they are interested in its mercies and prepared for its consummation, its principles, its provisions, its issues, are eternal. When it rises up before us in all its grandeur of design, collecting and conducting to the heavens of God millions of immortals, in comparison with the least of whom the destruction of the material universe were a thing of naught, whatever the carnal mind calls vast and magnificent shrinks away into nothing.

But it is not so much the nature of Messiah’s kingdom on which I am to insist, as its *stability*, its *administration*, and the *prospects* which they open to the church of God.

Messiah’s throne is not one of those airy fabrics which are reared by vanity and overthrown by time: it is fixed of old; it is STABLE, and cannot be shaken, for,

1. It is the throne of *God*. He who sitteth on it is the Omnipotent. Universal being is in his hand. Revolution, force, fear, as applied to his kingdom, are words without meaning. Rise up in rebellion, if thou hast courage. Associate with thee the whole mass of infernal power. Begin with the ruin of whatever is fair and good in this little globe. Pass hence to pluck the sun out of his place, and roll the volume of desolation through the starry world. What hast thou done unto him? It is the puny menace of a worm against Him whose frown is perdition. “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh.”

2. With the stability which Messiah’s Godhead communicates to his throne, let us connect the stability resulting from *his Father’s covenant*.

His throne is founded not merely in strength, but in

right. God hath laid the government upon the shoulder of his holy child Jesus, and set him upon mount Zion as his king for ever. He has promised, and sworn, to build up his throne to all generations; to make it endure as the days of heaven; to beat down his foes before his face, and plague them that hate him. "But my faithfulness," adds he, "and my mercy shall be with him, and in my name shall his horn be exalted. Hath he said it, and will he not do it? Hath he spoken it, and shall it not come to pass?" Whatever disappointments rebuke the visionary projects of men, or the more crafty schemes of Satan, "the counsel of the Lord, *that shall stand.*" The blood of sprinkling, which sealed all the promises made to Messiah, and binds down his Father's faithfulness to their accomplishment, witnesses continually in the heavenly sanctuary. "He must," therefore, "reign till he have put all his enemies under his feet." And although the dispensation of his authority shall, upon this event, be changed, and he shall deliver it up, in its present form, to the Father, he shall still remain, in his substantial glory, a Priest upon his throne, to be the eternal bond of our union, and the eternal medium of our fellowship with the living God.

Seeing that the throne of our King is as immovable as it is exalted, let us with joy draw water out of that well of salvation which is opened to us in the ADMINISTRATION of his kingdom. Here we must consider its general characters, and the means by which it operates.

The *general characters* which I shall illustrate are the following:

1. *Mystery.* He is the unsearchable God, and his government must be like himself. *Facts* concerning both, he has graciously revealed. These we must admit upon the credit of his own testimony; with these we must satisfy our wishes, and limit our inquiry. To intrude into those things which he hath not seen because God has not disclosed them, whether they relate to his arrangements for this world or

the next, is the arrogance of one vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. There are secrets in our Lord's procedure which he will not explain to us in this life, and which may not, perhaps, be explained in the life to come. We cannot tell how he makes evil the minister of good; how he combines physical and moral agencies of different kind and order, in the production of blessings. We cannot so much as conjecture what bearings the system of redemption, in every part of its process, may have upon the relations of the universe; nor even what may be all the connections of providence in the occurrences of this moment, or of the last. Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: it is high, we cannot attain it. Our Sovereign's "way is in the sea, and his path in the deep waters; and his footsteps are not known." When, therefore, we are surrounded with difficulty, when we cannot unriddle his conduct in particular dispensations, we must remember that he is God—that we are to "walk by faith;" and to trust him as implicitly when we are in the valley of the shadow of death, as when his candle shines upon our heads. We must remember, that it is not for us to be admitted into the cabinet of the King of kings; that creatures constituted as we are could not sustain the view of his unveiled agency; that it would confound, and scatter, and annihilate our little intellects. As often, then, as he retires from our observation, blending goodness with majesty, let us lay our hands upon our mouths and worship. This stateliness of our King can afford us no just ground of uneasiness. On the contrary, it contributes to our tranquillity; for we know,

2. That if his administration is mysterious, it is also *wise*. "Great is our Lord, and of great power; his understanding is infinite." That infinite understanding watches over, and arranges, and directs all the affairs of his church and of the world. *We* are perplexed at every step, embarrassed by opposition, lost in confusion, fretted by disappointment, and ready to conclude, in our haste, that all things are against our own good and our Master's honor. But

“this is our infirmity ;” it is the dictate of impatience and indiscretion. We forget the “years of the right hand of the Most High.” We are slow of heart in learning a lesson which shall soothe our spirits at the expense of our pride. We turn away from the consolation to be derived from believing that though we know not the connections and results of holy providence, our Lord Jesus knows them perfectly. With him there is no irregularity; no chance, no conjecture. Disposed before his eye in the most luminous and exquisite order, the whole series of events occupy the very place and crisis where they are most effectually to subserve the purposes of his love. Not a moment of time is wasted, nor a fragment of action misapplied. What he does, we do not indeed know at present, but, as far as we shall be permitted to know hereafter, we shall see that his most inscrutable procedure was guided by consummate wisdom; that our choice was often as foolish as our petulance was provoking; that the success of our own wishes would have been our most painful chastisement, would have diminished our happiness, and detracted from his praise. Let us study, therefore, brethren, to subject our ignorance to his knowledge; instead of prescribing, to obey; instead of questioning, to believe: to perform our part without that despondency which betrays a fear that our Lord may neglect his, and tacitly accuses him of a less concern than we feel for the glory of his own name. Let us not shrink from this duty as imposing too rigorous a condition upon our obedience, for a

Third character of Messiah’s administration is *righteousness*. “The sceptre of his kingdom is a right sceptre.” If “clouds and darkness are around about him, righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne.” In the times of old, his redeemed “wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; but, nevertheless, he led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation.” He loves his church and the members of it too tenderly to lay upon them any burdens, or expose them to any trials, which are not indispensable to their good. It is right for them to

go through fire and through water, that he may bring them out into a wealthy place—right to endure chastening, that they may be partakers of his holiness—right to have the sentence of death in themselves, that they may trust in the living God, and that his strength may be perfect in their weakness. It is right that he should endure with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; that he should permit iniquity to abound, the love of many to wax cold, and the dangers of his church to accumulate, till the interposition of his arm be necessary and decisive. In the day of final retribution, not one mouth shall be opened to complain of injustice. It will be seen, that the Judge of all the earth has done right; that the works of his hands have been verity and judgment, and done, every one of them, in truth and uprightness. Let us, then, think not only respectfully but reverently of his dispensations, repress the voice of murmur, and rebuke the spirit of discontent; wait, in faith and patience, till he become his own interpreter, when “the heavens shall declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.”

You will anticipate me in enumerating the *means* which Messiah employs in the administration of his kingdom.

1. The *Gospel*, of which himself, as an all-sufficient and condescending Saviour, is the great and affecting theme. Derided by the world, it is, nevertheless, effectual to the salvation of them who believe. “We preach Christ crucified: to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” The doctrine of the cross connected with evangelical ordinances—the ministry of reconciliation; the holy Sabbath; the sacraments of his covenant: briefly, the whole system of instituted worship—is the *rod of the Redeemer's strength*, by which he subdues sinners to himself, rules even in the midst of his enemies, exercises his glorious authority in his church, and exhibits a visible proof to men and angels that he is King in Zion.

2. The efficient means to which the Gospel owes its success, and the name of Jesus its praise, is, the *agency of the Holy Ghost*.

Christianity is *the ministration of the Spirit*. All real and sanctifying knowledge of the truth and love of God is from his inspiration. It was the last and best promise which the Saviour made to his afflicted disciples at the moment of parting, "I will send the *Comforter*, the Spirit of truth; he shall glorify me, for he shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." It is he who convinces the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; who infuses resistless vigor into means otherwise weak and useless. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, God the Spirit, to the pulling down of strong holds. Without his benediction, the ministry of an archangel would never convert one sinner from the error of his way. But when he descends, with his life-giving influence from God out of heaven, then "foolish things of the world confound the wise; and weak things of the world confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, yea, and things which are not, bring to naught things which are." It is this ministration of the Spirit which renders the preaching of the Gospel to men dead in trespasses and sins a reasonable service. When I am set down in the valley of vision, and view the bones, very many and very dry, and am desired to try the effect of my own ability in recalling them to life, I will fold my hands and stand mute in astonishment and despair. But when the Lord God commands me to speak in HIS name, my closed lips shall be opened: when he calls upon the breath from the four winds to breathe upon the slain that they may live, I will prophesy without fear, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord;" and, obedient to his voice, they shall come together, bone to his bone—shall be covered with sinews and flesh—shall receive new life, and stand up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. In this manner, from the graves of nature, and the dry bones of natural

men, does the Holy Spirit recruit the "armies of the living God," and make them, collectively and individually, a name, and a praise, and a glory, to the Captain of their salvation.

3. Among the instruments which the Lord Jesus employs in the administration of his government, are *the resources of the physical and moral world.*

Supreme in heaven and in earth, "upholding all things by the word of his power," the universe is his magazine of means. Nothing which acts or exists, is exempted from promoting in its own place the purposes of his kingdom. Beings rational and irrational, animate and inanimate; the heavens above, and the earth below; the obedience of sanctified, and the disobedience of unsanctified men; all holy spirits; all damned spirits: in one word, every agency, every element, every atom, are but the ministers of his will, and concur in the execution of his designs. And this he will demonstrate to the confusion of his enemies, and the joy of his people, in that great and terrible day when he shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and dispense ultimate judgment to the quick and the dead.

Upon these hills of holiness, the stability of Messiah's throne, and the perfect administration of his kingdom, let us take our station, and survey the PROSPECTS which rise up before the church of God.

When I look upon the magnificent scene, I cannot repress the salutation, "Hail, thou that art highly favored!" She has the prospect of preservation, of increase, and of triumph.

1. The prospect of *preservation.*

The long existence of the Christian church would be pronounced, upon common principles of reasoning, impossible. She finds in every man a natural and inveterate enemy. To encounter and overcome the unanimous hostility of the world, she boasts no political stratagem, no disciplined legions, no outward coercion of any kind. Yet her expectation is, that she shall live for ever. To mock this hope, and blot out her memorial from under heaven, the most furious efforts

of fanaticism, the most ingenious arts of statesmen, the concentrated strength of empires, have been frequently and perseveringly applied. The blood of her sons and her daughters has streamed like water; the smoke of the scaffold and the stake, where they won the crown of martyrdom in the cause of Jesus, has ascended in thick volumes to the skies. The tribes of persecutors have sported over her woes, and erected monuments, as they imagined, of her perpetual ruin. But where are her tyrants, and where their empires? The tyrants have long since gone to their own place; their names have descended upon the roll of infamy; their empires have passed, like shadows over the rock—they have successively disappeared, and left not a trace behind.

But what became of the Church? She rose from her ashes fresh in beauty and in might. Celestial glory beamed around her; she dashed down the monumental marble of her foes, and they who hated her fled before her. She has celebrated the funeral of kings and kingdoms that plotted her destruction; and, with the inscriptions of their pride, has transmitted to posterity the record of their shame. How shall this phenomenon be explained? We are, at the present moment, witnesses of the fact; but who can unfold the mystery? This blessed book, the book of truth and life, has made our wonder to cease. **THE LORD HER GOD IN THE MIDST OF HER IS MIGHTY.** His presence is a fountain of health, and his protection a *wall of fire*. He has betrothed her, in eternal covenant, to himself. Her living Head, in whom she lives, is above, and his quickening Spirit shall never depart from her. Armed with divine virtue, his Gospel, secret, silent, unobserved, enters the hearts of men and sets up an everlasting kingdom. It eludes all the vigilance, and baffles all the power of the adversary. Bars, and bolts, and dungeons are no obstacle to its approach. Bonds, and tortures, and death cannot extinguish its influence. Let no man's heart tremble then because of fear. Let no man despair, in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, of the Christian cause. The ark is launched, indeed, upon the floods;

the tempest sweeps along the deep ; the billows break over her on every side. But Jehovah-Jesus has promised to conduct her in safety to the haven of peace. She cannot be lost unless the Pilot perish. Why, then, do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ? Hear, O Zion, the word of thy God, and rejoice for the consolation. “ No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” Mere preservation, however, though a most comfortable, is not the only hope of the church ; she has

2. The prospect of *increase*.

Increase—from an effectual blessing upon the means of grace in places where they are already enjoyed ; for thus saith the Lord, “ I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground : I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring ; and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses.”

Increase—from the diffusion of evangelical truth through pagan lands. “ For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people ; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see : all they gather themselves together, they come to thee : thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thy heart shall fear, and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.”

Increase—from the recovery of the rejected Jews to the faith and privileges of God's dear children. Blindness in part has happened unto Israel ; they have been cut off, for their unbelief, from the olive-tree. Age has followed age, and they remain to this hour, spread over the face of the

earth, a fearful and affecting testimony to the truth of God's word. They are without their sanctuary, without their Messiah, without the hope of their believing ancestors. But it shall not be always thus. They are still "beloved for the fathers' sake." When the "fulness of the Gentiles shall come in," they too shall be gathered. They shall discover, in our Jesus, the marks of the promised Messiah; and with tenderness proportioned to their former insensibility, shall cling to his cross. Grafted again into their own olive-tree, all Israel shall be saved. It was through their fall that salvation came unto us Gentiles. And "if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead?" What ecstasy, my brethren! the Gentile and the Jew taking sweet counsel together, and going to the house of God in company: the path of the swift messenger of grace marked, in every direction, by the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ—a nation born at once—the children of Zion exclaiming, "The place is too strait for me: give place to me, that I may dwell;" the knowledge of Jehovah overspreading the earth as the waters cover the sea; and all flesh enjoying the salvation of God. This faith ushers in a

Third prospect of the church—the prospect of *triumph*.

Though often desolate and afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, the Lord her God will then make her "an eternal excellency," and repay her sorrows with triumph.

Triumph—in complete victory over the enemies who sought her hurt. "The nation and kingdom," saith the Lord, "that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." That great enemy of her purity and her peace, who shed the blood of her saints and her prophets, the *Man of Sin*, "who has exalted him-

self above all that is called God," shall appear, in the whole horror of his doom as the "son of perdition, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." The terrible but joyous event shall be announced by an angel from heaven crying mightily with a strong voice, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen!" "ALLELUIA," shall be the response of the church universal: "Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; for true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." Then too, the accuser of the brethren, that old serpent which is the devil, shall be cast down, and bound a thousand years, that he shall deceive the nations no more. This will introduce the church's

Triumph—in the prevalence of righteousness and peace throughout the world.

Her people shall be all righteous. The voice of the blasphemer shall no longer insult her ear. Iniquity, as ashamed, shall stop its mouth and hide its head. All her officers shall be peace, and all her exactors righteousness. The kings of the earth, bringing their glory and honor unto her, shall accomplish the gracious promise: "The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills by righteousness." Her Prince, whose throne is for ever and ever, "shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Every man shall meet, in every other man, a brother without dissimulation. Fear and the sword shall be far away: "they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid." For thus saith the Lord, "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise."

Triumph—in the presence of God, in the communion of his love, and the signal manifestation of his glory. “Behold, the tabernacle of God shall be with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.” Then shall be seen the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, which “shall have no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God shall lighten it, and the Lamb shall be the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it; and they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it; and there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

Such, according to the sure word of prophecy, will be the triumphs of Christianity; and to this issue all scriptural efforts to evangelize the heathen contribute their share. That mind is profane, indeed, which repels the sentiment of awe; and hard is the heart which feels no bland emotion. But let us pause. You exult, perhaps, in the view of that happiness which is reserved for the human race; you long for its arrival, and are eager, in your place, to help on the gracious work. It is well. But are there no heathen among us? Are there none who, in the midst of their zeal for foreign missions, forget their own souls; nor consider that they themselves *neglect the great salvation*? Remember, that a man may be active in measures which shall subserve the conversion of others, and yet perish in his own iniquity. That very gospel which you desire to send to the heathen, must be the gospel of *your* salvation; it must turn you from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God; it must make you meet for the inheritance of the saints, or it shall fearfully aggravate your condemnation at last. You pray, “Thy kingdom come.” But is the “kingdom of God within you?” Is the Lord Jesus “in you the hope of glory?” Be not deceived. The *name* of Chris-

tian will not save you. Better had it been for you not to have known the way of righteousness; better to have been the most idolatrous pagan; better, infinitely better, not to have been born, than to die strangers to the pardon of the Redeemer's blood, and the sanctifying virtue of his Spirit. From his throne on high he calls—calls to you, "Look unto me, and be ye saved; for I am God, and there is none else. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found; call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

On the other hand, such as have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them, are commanded to be *joyful in their King*. He reigns, O believer, for thee. The stability of his throne is thy safety. The administration of his government is for thy good; and the precious pledge is, that he "will perfect that which concerneth thee." In all thy troubles, and in all thy joy, commit thy way unto him. He will guard the sacred deposit. Fear not that thou shalt lack any good thing. Fear not that thou shalt be forsaken. Fear not that thou shalt fall beneath the arm of the oppressor. "He went through the fires of the pit to *save* thee; and he will stake all the glories of his crown to *keep* thee." Sing, then, thou beloved, "Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation."

And if we have "tasted that he is gracious;" if we look back with horror and transport upon the wretchedness and the wrath which we have escaped, with what anxiety shall we not hasten to the aid of our fellow-men, who are sitting in "the region and shadow of death." What zeal will be too ardent, what labor too persevering, what sacrifice too costly, if, by any means, we may tell them of Jesus, and the resurrection, and the life eternal? Who shall be daunted by difficulties, or deterred by discouragement? It

but one pagan should be brought, savingly, by your instrumentality, to the knowledge of God, and the kingdom of heaven, will you not have an ample recompense? Is there here a man who would give up all for lost because some favorite hope has been disappointed, or who regrets the worldly substance which he has expended on so divine an enterprise? Shame on thy coward spirit and thine avaricious heart. Do the holy Scriptures, does the experience of ages, does the nature of things justify the expectation, that we shall carry war into the central regions of delusion and crime, without opposition, without trial? Show me a plan which encounters not fierce resistance from the prince of darkness and his allies in the human heart, and I will show you a plan which never came from the inspiration of God. If missionary effort suffer occasional embarrassment; if impressions on the heathen be less speedy, and powerful, and extensive, than fond wishes have anticipated; if particular parts of the great system of operation be, at times, disconcerted; if any of the *ministers of grace* fall a sacrifice to the violence of those whom they go to bless in the name of the Lord—these are events which ought to exercise our faith and patience, to wean us from self-sufficiency, to teach us where our strength lies, and where our dependence must be fixed; but not to enfeeble hope, nor relax diligence. Let us not “despise the day of small things.” Let us not overlook, as an unimportant matter, the *very existence* of that missionary spirit which has already awakened Christians in different countries from their long and dishonorable slumbers, and bids fair to produce, in due season, a *general movement of the church upon earth*. Let us not, for one instant, harbor the ungracious thought, that the prayers, and tears, and wrestlings of those who make mention of the Lord, form no link in that vast chain of events by which he “will establish, and will make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” That dispensation which is most repulsive to flesh and blood, the violent death of faithful missionaries, should animate Christians with new resolution. “Precious in the sight of

the Lord is the death of his saints." The cry of martyred blood ascends the heavens; it enters into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. It will give him no rest till he rain down righteousness upon the land where it has been shed, and which it has sealed as a future conquest for Him who "in his majesty rides prosperously because of truth, and meekness, and righteousness."

For the world, indeed, and perhaps for the church, many calamities and trials are in store, before the glory of the Lord shall be so revealed that all flesh shall see it together. "I will shake all nations," is the divine declaration—"I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come." The vials of wrath which are now running, and others which remain to be poured out, must be exhausted. The "supper of the great God" must be prepared, and his "strange work" have its course. Yet the missionary cause must ultimately succeed. It is the cause of God, and *shall* prevail. The days, O brethren, roll rapidly on, when the shout of the isles shall swell the thunder of the continent; when the Thames and the Danube, when the Tiber and the Rhine, shall call upon Euphrates, the Ganges, and the Nile; and the loud concert shall be joined by the Hudson, the Mississippi, and the Amazon, singing with one heart and one voice, Alleluia, salvation! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

Comfort one another with this faith, and with these words.

Now, "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be his glorious name for ever: LET THE WHOLE EARTH BE FILLED WITH HIS GLORY. AMEN AND AMEN."

THE

SUBSTANCE OF THE GOSPEL.

BY REV. RALPH WARDLAW, D. D.,

GLASGOW.

WHAT a happy thing it is, that the Gospel comes into *so little compass*. Often have I felt this when visiting the sick and the dying. When I have found the mind incapable of vigorous, expansive, or continuous thought, O how thankful have I been that the Gospel is so short and so simple; that the elementary truths, which give peace to the conscience and hope to the heart, can be stated in so few words. There is divine wisdom and divine kindness in this. There are short sentences which contain essentially all that a sinner needs to know, to give him a sense of pardon and confidence towards God. "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—even the chief." "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son, hath life; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life." These, and others of a like description, are precious sentences. These are what the dying "man of God," Dr. M'All, so emphatically denominated the core, the very core of the Gospel. And if even a mind like his, of such penetration, amplitude, and energy, was fain to have recourse to the core of the Gospel, and "could not now trouble itself with its envelopments," how invaluable the fact that the Gospel has a core, has simple elements, that constitute its essence, which are easy to be understood, and enough to be the soul's food and life, independently of those kindred doctrines which, though in close association with it, are not indispensable to its apprehension—are its envelopments, not itself. What a ground of gratitude this, when connected with the declaration, "To the poor the Gospel is preached."

Connected with this is the striking fact, that in the hour which is sure and common to all, the hour of nature's last

conflict and most pressing exigency, the hour when the mind is shut up to one point, and that point peace with God and hope for eternity, that in that hour *all minds come to be so very much on a level*, in regard to what imparts their confidence. It is the same truth, in all its simplicity; that gives it to the greatest as well as to the least, and to the least as well as to the greatest. It is most instructive and interesting to see how minds of the largest grasp and mightiest power, when they come to this hour of trial and of final decision, when passing through the valley of the shadow of death, anticipating eternity, and conflicting singlehanded with the last enemy, have recourse to the same simple elements of divine truth that are the springs of peace to the very weakest of the "babes in Christ."

I have been struck with this, in the biographies of some of the most distinguished of our modern divines. Look to the terms in which they express the ground of their everlasting hopes. Although, from previously knowing the character of their minds, you of course conceive thoughts of a higher order associated with those terms, and although at times there may be coruscations of brilliant sentiment emitted, that indicate the undying light within, yet substantially they are the very same in which "poor Joseph" expressed the ground of his: "'It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;' and why not Joseph?"* What dying sinner can say more? I mean not, that the minds are equal, that were folly; but that, as the greatest and the least stand on the same ground of condemnation, they must stand also on the same ground of acceptance; so that he who has traversed the whole round of theological learning, has explored its depths, and scaled its heights, has argued with metaphysical acumen, and illustrated with matchless eloquence all its points, has read and has written volumes upon volumes, when he comes to the test of a dying hour, is shut up to all the simplicity of the "faithful saying." This is what he needs, equally with the least; and this is what the least, equally with him, enjoys. And the perfectly childlike submissiveness with which master-minds in Israel have avouched their reliance on the most rudimental elements of the truth,

* See the simple and affecting Tract, No. 68.

is among the marks of its divinity. It shows that, in the one point of need, in which all are alike, and which, in all cases equally, the Gospel is intended to meet, the adaptation of means to the end is perfect.

It is a fact not less extraordinary, and not less pregnant with evidence of the divine origin of the Gospel, that it never yet has had *any one, in the hour of dissolution, repenting of having trusted to it.* I call attention to the fact. The Gospel is the only system of which this can be affirmed; and the fact is without exception. I am in the full recollection, when I say so, of the many believers who have passed through the valley of the shadow of death in mental depression and gloom, and whose fears have encompassed them even to the last. But these are not exceptions to the fact; they are confirmations of it. For, whence has the gloom of these believers arisen? What has drawn the cloud over their souls? What has engendered their fears? Has it been any question, starting up within them, of the solidity of the gospel foundation of hope? Any doubt of its being trustworthy? Any conviction, or even any suspicion, forced upon them in this testing-time of human confidences, of its being, after all, not rock, as they had fancied, but sand, a delusion, a "refuge of lies?" The very reverse. Their doubts have not been about it, but about themselves. The question has not been about the security of the foundation, but about the fact of their having built upon it; not about the sufficiency of Christ, but about the reality of their interest in him; not about the soundness of the hope, but about their scriptural warrant to entertain it. That is a very different matter. So far from repenting in the end their having trusted to the Gospel, their bitter regrets, and their heartsinking fears are all about the reality of their trust. Their hearts misgive them, whether under the morbid operation of physical causes, or obscurity in their views of truth, when they think of their past profession. They fear, they fear that they may have been self-deceived, fancying themselves Christ's, when they were "none of his." But regrets, lamentations, anxieties, and fears, springing from such sources, bear testimony, not against the Gospel, but for it. I ask for an instance of any individual, in perfect possession of his mental powers, unaffected by any morbid hallucinations, and in the full prospect of death, expressing

regret for the folly, or repentance for the sin of having believed and followed Christ; disowning the foundation on which he has rested through life, as now seen in the searching light of its closing hour, to be false and unstable.

Infidelity, and every system of human framing, have had their thousands who have renounced them at death. How comes it that the Gospel has had none? If it were itself human, how should it have this extraordinary distinction from all else that is human? Many are the schemes with which men have made shift to live, but which have misgiven them when they have come to die. The last enemy is a ruthless inquisitor. Many a time has he shown what a power he possesses of detecting to the mind the sophistries by which it had flattered itself in error, and of exposing to the conscience the flimsiness of its favorite refuges. Even in the valley of the shadow of death, there is often a revealing light, which compels the sinner to see what he had been shutting his eyes against before, and awakens him to a late and appalling sense of his infatuation. How comes it, then, that to no one mind has death, in the hour of his dread inquisition, ever made the discovery of the insufficiency and delusiveness of the Gospel? How comes it that of this foundation the hollowness, the unsoundness, the sandy instability, has never been exposed, and he who has trusted to it been convinced too late of his folly? Is there not something extraordinary in this? That of all systems this should be the only one that has stood the scrutiny of death, and the test of anticipated judgment? Let the infidel account for it. To me it appears as the seal of the God of heaven to his own truth; evincing its divine adaptation to all our nature's consciousnesses, and to all our nature's exigencies, and peculiarly in the hour of that nature's extremity. It proves itself, in this unvarying experience, to have proceeded from Him who "knoweth what is in man."

Had I ten thousand gifts beside,
I'd cleave to Jesus crucified,
And build on him alone;
For no foundation is there given,
On which I'd place my hopes of heaven,
But Christ the corner-stone.

SALVATION TO THE UTMOST.

“WHEREFORE,” says the apostle Paul, to the Hebrews, “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Heb. 7 : 25. It is of Jesus, the great High-priest after the order of Melchisedec, that these words are spoken. It is He who is the “Surety of the better covenant.” Heb. 7 : 22. It is He who hath the “unchangeable priesthood.” Heb. 7 : 24. It is He who, having “offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God.” Heb. 10 : 12. He, therefore, is a Saviour to the uttermost ; and this, not only because of *what he did on earth* for the putting away of sin, but because of *what he is now doing in heaven* as an ever-living intercessor, carrying into effect that glorious work which he completed on the cross. It is in the knowledge of this Saviour that we have eternal life. Let us then inquire what God has taught us in these words concerning him. And may the Holy Spirit testify of him to us, enlightening the eyes of our understanding, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.

I. *Christ is* A SAVIOUR. “He is able to save.” It was on this account, that he is described by the prophet Isaiah, chap. 63 : 1, as “mighty to *save* ;” and for this he was named JESUS, because “he shall *save* his people from their sins.” Matt. 1 : 21. This was the purpose for which he was sent : “The Father sent the Son to be the *Saviour* of the world.” 1 John, 4 : 14. This was the errand which he fulfilled : “The Son of man is come to *save* that which was lost.” Matt. 18 : 11. It was for this that he spoke to the people when on earth : “These things I say, that ye

might be *saved*." John 5 : 34. For this he was born, for this he lived, for this he died, for this he rose again, for this he ascended up on high : "Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a *Saviour*." Acts 5 : 31. And from what does he save ? He saves from sin, from guilt, from wrath, from the curse, from a present evil world, from hell, from Satan himself. From all these he is a Saviour, a complete Saviour, the only Saviour ; a Saviour not for those who *deserve* salvation, but for those who *need* it.

But *how* is he thus "able to save ?"

1. Because he is *God*—the Lord God Almighty, of whom, and through whom, and to whom are all things. All authority and dominion are his ; all power either to save or to destroy.

2. He is "able to save," because he is the *God-man*, God manifest in the flesh, Immanuel, God with us ; and thus he has all power, created and uncreated, human and divine, finite and infinite, centred in himself. Who could be more able to be a Saviour than he who is God ; and who could be more suitable to be *our* Saviour than he who is bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, our kinsman, and our brother ? Heb. 2 : 14-18.

3. He is "able to save," because of *the work* which he has done, by coming into our place, taking upon him our responsibilities, and bearing our sins. It was not mere *power*, though infinite, that could save us. It must be power put forth in a righteous way. And until there was a righteous way opened for its exercise, it could do nothing for our salvation. Therefore it is in *his work*, that his great power and strength as the Saviour may be said to lie ; for had there been no sacrifice or atonement, not even an infinite arm could have saved us. As long as infinite righteousness was *against* us, it was in vain though infinite power were *for* us. But Christ's atoning work has brought infinite power, and righteousness, and holiness, as well as infinite love and grace, all over to the same side. None of these

are against us now. Our salvation is in full accordance with them all. Through the "blood of his cross" he has made reconciliation for iniquity, and on that cross provided a place where God and the sinner may meet in peace. He has taken out of the way that which hindered God from having any dealings with us; and thus it is now as righteous and glorious a thing in God to *pardon*, as before it was to *punish* transgressors. He has magnified the law, and made it honorable, Isaiah 42 : 21; so that the dishonor we had done to that law by our disobedience, is far more than made up by the glory which he has put upon it, through his perfect and divine obedience. Christ's work is thus a full treasure-house of every thing the sinner can need or desire. In it there is full provision for pardon, for cleansing, for renewing, for eternal life, for holiness, for complete restoration to the image, the character, the kingdom of God, and to every blessing included in the term *salvation*: that is, to the complete reversal of, and deliverance from every thing which made us *lost*, and the full bestowal of every blessing from the hand of God which a *saved* condition can possibly imply, from the lowest degree of mere deliverance from hell, up to the highest glories of which a created being can be heir.

4. He is "able to save," because of *the offices* he sustains. As a Priest, he saves from sin. As a Mediator, he brings us to God. As an Intercessor, he pleads our cause. As the Shepherd and Bishop of souls, he seeks and saves the lost, as well as watches over them when found. As Messiah, he anoints us with the Holy Spirit, bestowing gifts on men, even on the rebellious, that the Lord God may dwell among them. As a Prophet, he teaches the ignorant, and makes the foolish wise unto salvation. As the Captain of our salvation, he fights our battles and leads the array against our enemies. As a King, he rules in us and over us, making us more than conquerors over earth and hell—over the power of this ensnaring flesh, with all its deadly lusts which war against the soul—over this gay, seducing world, with all its

pomp, and pride, and bravery—over principalities and powers, and all the banded legions of the prince of darkness.

II. *Christ is a Saviour* TO THE UTTERMOST. He is not only *able* to save, but *infinitely able*. It is the ability of Omnipotence. It is the ability of one who has all power in heaven, in earth, in hell. It is the ability of one who has shed infinitely precious blood, who has paid an infinitely precious ransom, who has laid down an infinitely precious life, in order that there might be salvation to the uttermost. It is the ability of one who has accomplished an infinitely glorious work, and thereby made infinite provision for every thing that sinners could require. It is the ability of one who has not only mercy and grace upon his side, but righteousness, holiness, and truth. Every infinite perfection is now upon the side of salvation. A Saviour's death did this. Before that they were against it. Nothing, therefore, can be beyond the reach of a Saviour such as this. No sinner upon earth, no sinner on this side of hell can be beyond his power to save. His salvation goes to the very uttermost extremity of human ruin, to "the very ends of the earth," up to the very gate of hell.

1. This salvation is "to the uttermost," with respect to *a sinner's state and character*. It goes to the very extremity of ruin and death. There is no degree of guilt for which it has not provided a full pardon. There are no sins too many, there is no burden too heavy for a salvation like this. Though our sins be truly infinite in number, though they be more than the hairs of our head, or the sands on the sea-shore, or the drops of the ocean, or the leaves of the forest, or the stars of heaven, or all of these multiplied together, yet still this salvation goes infinitely above and beyond them all. Though they be awfully heinous and aggravated, like scarlet or crimson, unspeakably abominable and loathsome, nay, black as hell, yet still, this salvation goes far beyond them. Nor can any sinner be too vile and polluted to be saved. He may be sunk deepest of all in the horrible pit and the

miry clay ; his soul may be a cage of unclean birds, hateful and filthy beyond human conception, yet still there is salvation for him here. Here is blood even to cleanse such a soul, nay, to make it whiter than snow. No soul is too vile for Jesus to cleanse. Isaiah 1 : 18 ; 1 Cor. 6 : 9-11 ; 1 John, 1 : 7. Nor can any soul be too dead for Jesus to quicken. They may be lying in the deepest grave of trespasses and sins, yet the arm of Jesus can reach down to them and pluck them from it. The power of Jesus can awaken the soul that is sunk in the deepest slumbers of spiritual death. John 5 : 25 ; Eph. 2 : 1. Let no one then say, My soul is so dead that I despair of its ever being quickened. Here is life for the dead ; life to the uttermost. No degree of death is beyond the power of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. To speak thus despondingly of your deadness is not humility, but presumption. It is limiting the power and grace of Jesus. It is saying, that he is *not* able to save to the uttermost—that there are some states of death beyond his reach !

Neither is there any heart too hard for Jesus to soften. It matters not how hard it be. It may be like iron, that nothing will break ; it may be like adamant, that nothing will melt. It may be both of these together, or far more so than any figure can give you the least idea of. But still it is not too hard for him. Neither is there any soul too needy, too poor, too full of wants for him. It matters not how manifold be the wants, how deep the poverty, how great the need. Still, he is able to save to the uttermost ; and that, surely, is enough to assure the very neediest that there is an abundant supply for them. His fulness is the fulness of God, and that is infinite. “ It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” And he himself thus graciously addresses the needy soul : “ I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich.” None are too empty for Jesus to fill ; and that in no scanty measure, but even to overflowing : “ He that believeth on

me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water." Neither is there any soul too miserable for him to make perfectly blessed. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He has peace for the most troubled, rest for the most weary, light for the darkest, joy for the most sorrowful, calm for the most tempest-tost, perfect blessedness for the most wretched of all! He gives beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Truly he is a Saviour to the uttermost.

Take your station on the highest eminence of earth, which commands the widest prospect that man's eye can reach. Look around on this fallen earth. Look backward on the condition of sin and wretchedness in which its millions have been involved for these six thousand years; look forward and conceive the guilt in which it is to be yet more fearfully sunk ere the day of its glory come. Look on every side of you in this present generation. See the pollution, the guilt, the abominations, the enormities with which it is flooded. Take a wider circle, and conceive what lie beyond these—the crimes, the atrocities, perpetrated in secret, unseen by the eye of man, deeds done in darkness, and fit only to be named in darkness—every thing conceivable on this side of hell. Take a yet wider circle, and imagine, if it be possible, how much more than all this, God's eye discerns and God's soul abhors, in what has been done and is yet doing on the surface of this fallen earth. Take the very widest possible circle of human guilt, the deepest mire of mortal sin, and imagine, in addition to these, all possible difficulties and hinderances; still, beyond that widest circle, yea, infinitely beyond the farthest that man's guilt has compassed, is the power of Jesus to save. For his is salvation to the uttermost; his is the salvation of God. The sinner may indeed have gone to the very extremity of guilt, to the very ends of the earth, in his wanderings from God. Yea, he may have gone to the very gates of hell, and be knocking for admittance

there. He may be a brand already set on fire of hell; yet even thence the arm and power of Jesus can pluck him; even from the gates of hell can the outstretched hand of Jesus save! 2 Chron. 33 : 1-13; Zech. 3 : 2; 1 Tim. 1 : 13-16.

2. This salvation is to the uttermost, in respect to the *completeness* of the salvation. It is a *complete* deliverance that Jesus brings to the soul. The first thing he does is to justify the sinner; and this he does at once and entirely, so soon as we believe in his name. Our acceptance with the Father, through his beloved Son, is a perfect and immediate acceptance, without any reserve. It is not partially, or by halves, that he forgives. He forgives fully, and without limitation; so that not so much as one sin remains unpardoned. He forgives not merely until seven times, or until seventy times seven, or even until ten thousand times ten thousand, but without number or bound. Whether our sins be known or unknown, felt or unfelt, remembered or forgotten, he freely forgives all to the uttermost. And as he forgives entirely, so he ultimately sanctifies wholly. Whatever be the hinderances or the enemies in our way, he will perfect that which he begins. Whatever have been our past lives, the sins or crimes of manhood, still he saves "to the uttermost," so as entirely to undo the evil of our former ways, and wash away the pollution of our former sins. Hence, the salvation of one sinner is as complete as that of another, though the former may have lived much longer, and gone far deeper into sin than the latter. The salvation of Rahab the harlot was as complete as that of Joshua, her deliverer; nor would her long life of sin make her peace less perfect or secure than his, though perhaps he had known the Lord from his youth. The salvation of Manasseh, whose sins, both in their own enormity, and by their aggravations, seem absolutely without a parallel, was as complete as that of his godly father Hezekiah, or his inspired teacher Isaiah. The salvation of Paul, the blasphemer and persecutor, was not less complete

than that of Timothy, who from his youth had sought after God. Nothing but an infinite salvation could have reached the case of such vile transgressors; but when it did reach them, it was complete. It purged their consciences, and cleansed their souls from guilt, even such as theirs. It brought them a perfect, not a partial or doubtful peace. It gave them as complete an assurance of God's love, and as sure a consciousness of reconciliation with him, as to those whose past life had been stained with no such outward abominations. It preserved unruffled the steadfast calm of the soul, even in the full remembrance of all the enormities of other days. O, what a salvation must this be, that could accomplish all this so perfectly, even for the chief of sinners!

3. And then, all this is *eternal*. It is not a temporary salvation; neither is it one that can change or give way hereafter. No. It is eternally secure; for he who commenced it, ever liveth to maintain and perpetuate it. He preserves each saved soul, by his mighty power, until his coming, that then he may present them faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. Nay, their very dust to him is dear. Their body as well as their soul he saves, raising it up and making it like unto his own glorious body, that he may place them altogether perfect, completely saved, upon his throne in the day when he returns to reign. Eph. 5 : 27; Col. 1 : 22; Jude 24. And throughout eternity these saved ones remain as trophies of a Saviour's grace and power: an undecaying memorial of the redeeming love of him who "is able to save to the uttermost." No stain of former sin can reappear upon their spotless raiment; nor can all the infinite abomination of their former ways prevent them from shining in their perfect brightness as the sons of light—it may be, the most resplendent of all! No returning mists of earth can ever again overcast their everlasting sunshine, or cloud the pure azure of their sky. No remembrance of guilt can ever draw one darkening shadow over their brow of light. No consciousness that they are the very sinners who were

once in the horrible pit and in the miry clay, can check their notes of joy, or do aught but add to the gladness as well as the loudness of the new song they sing. How truly is all this "salvation to the uttermost"—salvation that knows no bound, no end.

III. *They that COME UNTO CHRIST are saved.* He saves those who come unto God by him, or who come unto himself, for both statements are common in Scripture. Those whom he saves, are those who come unto the Father through him as the way, who consent to take him as the way to God; to recognize him as "the way, the truth, and the life"—the new and living way into the presence of God. He saves none else. Not but that he has the *power* to save millions more, even of those who refuse to come; yet still, he saves none who remain away. Their remaining away, their refusing to come unto the Father through him, seals their condemnation. To save such, would be to proclaim his own work unnecessary, to declare that he had died in vain. Therefore he saves none who reject him as their Saviour; he leaves them to die in their sins. He saves none who persist in coming to God by ways of *their own*, who seek life by methods of their own, who try to obtain pardon by doings of their own. He saves none who stand afar off, and turn away from God. None of these he saves, so long as they remain such. It is the coming ones that he saves; those who consent to take him and him only as the access into the holiest—the way unto the Father. Whosoever, then, persists in taking his own way of coming to God, cannot be saved. Whosoever comes without this Mediator, or chooses another, cannot be saved. It is our taking him as the appointed way to God, and drawing near by that way, that saves us. John 10:9; 14:6; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 10:19, 20.

The special object of the apostle in making this statement seems to be, to show that Christ is so infinitely able to save, that none can possibly bring to him a case too despe-

rate—a case beyond his skill and power to cure. Such is his power, that if sinners will only bring the case to him, however hopeless it may seem, still it must yield to his touch. All who will only put their case into his hands, will find in him an infinitely sufficient Saviour. And yet how many are seeking to save themselves, before they come to him to be saved. How many refuse to come as they are, and try to do something, however little, in the way of saving themselves, before they count themselves entitled to come to him for the rest. How many think they must begin the work, and then come to him to end it. They think it would be presumption to bring a soul so diseased as theirs, a heart so hard and dead as theirs. They count it humility to stay away, or at least to come doubting and fearing. They do not see that it is not humility but presumption to stay away, or to come doubting, as if he to whom they were coming were either unable or unwilling to receive and save them.

Whosoever thou art then, only COME, and thou shalt be saved. Come unto God by him. Whatever be your sin, only come. Whatever be your unworthiness, only come. Whatever be your hardness of heart, only come. Whatever be the peculiarity of your case, only come. Bring your oppressed soul to him. Bring your hard heart to him. Bring your troubled conscience to him. Do not stand afar off. Do not try to be your own physician. Do not try to make yourself better before you come. In the very state in which this message finds you, come. There is infinite fulness in him. There is infinite provision for you in that fulness. There is infinite love in him. There is infinite willingness to save you. He sends you this message; he stretches out his arm; he beckons with his hand; he lifts up his gracious voice to you, saying, I am the way, and the truth, and the life; him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.

IV. *Christ's INTERCESSION is the pledge of his infinite ability to save.* He ever liveth to make intercession for us. It is for this that he *liveth*. It is for this that he is exalted

to the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. And this is the assurance to us of his being able to save unto the uttermost; for it is by this intercession that he carries on our salvation. His work on earth, as the *sacrifice*, wrought out the atonement from which salvation flows; and his work in heaven, as the *advocate with the Father*, carries on and applies that work. On earth he finished his work as the bearer of sin, thereby taking it out of the way, and opening the access to God. In heaven he is now seated to effect the reconciliation for which he had prepared the way—to *introduce* to the Father those that approach in his name. Let us briefly consider what this intercession implies.

1. He intercedes *by presenting his sacrifice before the throne*. He appears in heaven as “the Lamb that was slain.” Rev. 5:6, 12. As such the Father beholds him and is well pleased. And thus by his presenting himself and his complete work before the Father, intercession is made by him, silent yet resistless. His appearance pleads, his attitude pleads, his blood pleads, his obedience pleads, his sacrifice pleads. Just as the altar might be said to plead for every one who laid his hands upon its horns, so the sacrifice of Jesus pleads for every one who lays his hand on him. Just as the lamb, though silent, pleaded effectually for him who brought it as an offering, so the Lamb of God pleads for all who will take him as their offering, and lay their sins on him.

2. He intercedes *by presenting HIMSELF in our name*. “He appears in the presence of God for us.” Heb. 9:24. He was our substitute on earth, and he is our *representative* in heaven. Hence, God sees us *in him*, hears us in him, deals with us in him. By presenting his blood, he obtains forgiveness for us; but by presenting *himself*, his infinitely glorious self, he does far more—he obtains for us every thing that belongs to him. Every thing that *we* say is heard by God as if *he* had said it; every thing that we ask for is bestowed by the Father as if he had asked it; our petitions

are counted as his petitions; our voice ascends acceptable in the Father's ears, as if it were the voice of his beloved Son. Thus entirely does he *represent* us, and by so doing plead for us irresistibly. He appears in the presence of God for us; and by so appearing carries on his mighty intercession. He invites us to come, and be represented by him. He sees sinners coming to God upon their own footing, and he invites them to come on his. He sees men vainly presenting their prayers before God on the ground of some personal title of their own, and he asks them no longer to attempt such folly, but to consent to take him as their representative, assuring them that if they will but do so, all his infinite merit and acceptableness with the Father shall plead for them. O sinners, self-righteous ones, self-trusting ones, come, and be thus represented and interceded for by him. His holiness will plead infinitely more *for* you, than all your unholiness can plead *against* you. His glorious righteousness will plead infinitely more *for* you, than all your miserable unrighteousness can plead *against* you. The excellent beauty of his person will be a far stronger plea in your favor, than all the loathsome deformity of your own person can be against you.

3. He intercedes *by pleading for us*. When he was on earth, he thus pleaded, and doubtless he has not ceased to do the same gracious office in heaven. He pleaded for Peter: "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Luke 22:31, 32. Thus he took up Peter's case; thus he prayed that his faith might be upheld. And as he did to Peter on earth, so doubtless he does in heaven for those who come unto God by him. He takes notice of their case. His eye is always upon them. He sees their fainting faith. He marks their struggles with unbelief—struggles to which no human eye is witness—struggles maintained in the solitude of their closet, and expressed only by the tear, the groan, the sigh. He sees when they

would fain come to him, and Satan keeps them back, or casts them down, or whispers malignant doubts ; and seeing all these, he takes their case into his hand and pleads for them with God. How comforting to believers to remember this. How encouraging to those who are seeking the way to God perhaps in fear and darkness, to see how ready this divine Intercessor is to take up their case and plead in their behalf. Again, in the seventeenth chapter of John we have a specimen of Christ's intercession on earth, which is well fitted to give us a right idea of what it must be in heaven. Take such passages as these: "Sanctify them through thy truth ; thy word is truth." Again, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." John 17 : 17, 24. These are some of Christ's pleadings on earth ; and O, how consoling, how animating to think that these are still his pleadings in heaven. With such an Advocate above, 1 John, 2 : 1, what can we fear ? Whatever be the feebleness, the imperfection of our pleadings here, either for ourselves or others, his intercession is always perfect and prevailing. And it is *his* intercession that is our confidence and hope. If he plead for us, who can plead against us ? O sinners, come to him. Come, and be pleaded for by this divine Intercessor. Come, put your case into the hands of this divine Advocate. Allow him to plead for you. Do not continue to manage your own cause. Intrust it to him, and all shall be well.

4. He intercedes *by presenting our prayers*. It is he and he only that presents our prayers to the Father ; and being presented by him, they are accepted and answered. As our High-priest, he both "bears the iniquity of our holy things," and procures acceptance for them. Exod. 28 : 38. Our prayers must pass through his hands ere they can reach the Father. As they leave our lips they are impure and earthly, being breathed from polluted hearts ; but forthwith he takes hold of them, strips them of their impurities, purges

away their imperfections, and presents them as a perfect offering to God. The hearts they come from are corrupt and vile ; the desires they contain are cold, lifeless, wandering ; the words in which they are expressed are poor and feeble ; each petition seems to plead against us ; yet still, being presented by him, they are well-pleasing even in the eyes of Him who cannot look upon iniquity. Hence, prayer is likened to sweet incense, and in heaven the four and twenty elders have in their hands " golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." Rev. 5 : 8. Thus also Jesus, as our High-priest, stands with his golden censer full of incense, to " offer it, with the prayers of all saints, upon the golden altar which is before the throne." Rev. 8 : 3. Into that censer he calls on us to put our prayers. He stretches out his hand ; he lets down that censer to earth ; he brings it to our very side ; he asks us to put in our prayers. Then he will draw up that censer ; and, fragrant with rich incense, he will present them before the throne.

How apt are we to overlook this. How prone either to present our prayers without any censer at all, or to make censers of our own. How apt to look aside from Jesus, even when looking up to God. How apt to undervalue the efficacy of this divine censer, and to cherish doubts whether our petitions may find their way safely to the throne. How apt to make censers of our own, and to attempt with these to approach the Father. How apt, for instance, are we to make our acceptance depend upon our earnestness, and say, " Alas, we are so cold in prayer, how can we expect an answer ;" or, on the other hand, to congratulate ourselves, and take courage from an opposite state of feeling, saying, " Ah, we have been earnest, we have had much enlargement, surely we shall be accepted." What is all this but making a censer of our earnestness ; forgetting that it is not our frame in prayer, but the censer into which it is put, that secures its acceptance ? The most fervent petition that ever rose from earth needs this censer with its incense

to prevent its being an abomination to God ; and the feeblest cry that ever left a sinner's trembling lips needs *no more*. O sinners, put in your prayers into this censer. The High-priest reaches it towards you, he presents it at your side ; put in your prayers, and they shall be heard. Ye who have never prayed before, bring your first petition here, and *even you* are sure of acceptance. Ye who have been praying in doubt, lodge your petitions here, and cease to doubt. That golden censer is enough to remove your fears, and give you the full assurance of faith in drawing near to the mercy-seat.

Such, then, is the great High-priest of our profession. Such is Jesus. Able to save to the uttermost. Ever living to intercede. Mighty in saving—all-prevalent in interceding. How secure, how blessed is the state of those who have come unto God through him. How great the encouragement for sinners to come unto God through him. He is infinitely able and willing to save you. Do not stay away from him ; but come at once, come now, come boldly, come without doubting, come as you are, and he will save you ; he will undertake your cause, and all shall be well.

SALVATION TO THE UTTERMOST. This is the message we bring. Salvation for the vilest, the guiltiest, the most wretched of all. Salvation for every sinner on this side of hell. None can say their case is too bad, for it is salvation to the uttermost ; and where is the sinner that is beyond the uttermost—beyond that which *God* calls the uttermost ? Lost ones, come, and be saved. Chief of sinners, come. Prodigals, rebels, wanderers, come. *Whosoever will*, let him come, and be saved.

CHRIST'S INTERCESSION.

He lives, the great Redeemer lives—
What joy the bless'd assurance gives :
And now, before his Father, God,
Pleads the full merit of his blood.

Repeated crimes awake our fears,
And justice arm'd, with frowns appears ;
But in the Saviour's lovely face
Sweet mercy smiles, and all is peace.

Hence, then, ye black despairing thoughts ;
Above our fears, above our faults,
His powerful intercessions rise,
And guilt recedes, and terror dies.

In every dark distressful hour,
When sin and Satan join their power,
Let this dear hope repel the dart,
That Jesus bears us on his heart.

Great Advocate, Almighty Friend !
On him our humble hopes depend :
Our cause can never, never fail,
For Jesus pleads and must prevail.

Steele

THE
CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

BY REV. JAMES HAMILTON,

PASTOR OF THE NATIONAL SCOTCH CHURCH, REGENT-SQUARE, LONDON.



Greet the church that is in their house.—ROM. 16 : 5.

Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.—MATT. 18 : 19, 20.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom ; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.—COL. 3 : 16.

I know him, (Abraham,) that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord.—GEN. 18 : 19.

The voice of rejoicing and salvation is in the tabernacles of the righteous.—PSALM 118 : 15.

IN Greenland, when a stranger knocks at the door, he asks, "Is God in this house?" And if they answer, Yes, he enters. This little messenger knocks at your door with the Greenland salutation, IS GOD IN THIS HOUSE? Were you like Abraham entertaining an angel unawares, what would be the report he would take back to heaven? Would he find you commanding your children and your household, and teaching them the way of the Lord? Would he find an altar in your dwelling? Do you worship God with your children? Is there *a church in your house?*

If not, then God is not in your house. A prayerless family is a godless family. It is a family on which Jehovah frowns. He will pour out his fury upon it some day. "Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name." Jer. 10 : 25. A prayerless family and a heathen family are here accounted the same.

I cannot mention all the REASONS in favor of family worship; but if you ponder them, the four following should suffice.

1. *The godly householders mentioned in Scripture practised it.* Would you desire to be, like Abraham, the friend of God? Wherever he pitched his tent, he builded an altar, and called on the name of the Lord, Gen. 12 : 7, 8 ; 13 : 4, 18 ; and Jehovah declared concerning him, "I know Abraham, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord." Gen. 18 : 19. Would you like to resemble Job, "a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil?" He used to bring his children together, and rose early in the morning, and offered a sacrifice of as many victims as he had sons and daughters, teaching us how express and special our intercession for our families should be: and this he did "continually." Job 1 : 5, 8. Would you resemble David, the man after God's own heart? At the close of a busy

day, we find him going home "to bless his house." 1 Chron. 16 : 43. Do you admire Cornelius, whose prayers were heard, and to whom the Lord sent a special messenger to teach him the way of salvation? He was "a devout man, one who feared God *with all his house*, and prayed to God always;" and who was so anxious for the salvation of his family, that he got together his kinsmen and near friends, that they might be ready to hear the apostle when he arrived, and share with himself the benefit. Acts 10 : 2, 24, 33. Do you admire Aquila and Priscilla, Paul's "helpers in Christ Jesus," and who were so skilful in the Scriptures, that they were able to teach a young minister the way of God more perfectly? You will find that one reason for their familiarity with Scripture was, that they had "a church in their house." Acts 18 : 26 ; Rom. 16 : 5.

In the Bible you find instances of family devotion in all ranks of life, from the king to the artisan, from David's palace to the tent of Aquila, to teach you, that whatever be your situation in life, you should still have a church in your house. I have sometimes seen family worship in great houses, but I have felt that God was quite as near when I knelt with a praying family on the earthen floor of their cottage. I have known of family worship among the reapers in a barn. It used to be common in the fishing-boats upon the friths and lakes of Scotland. I have heard of its being observed in the depths of a coal-pit. I scarcely know the situation in life in which a willing family might not contrive to pray together. If you live in a scoffing, ungodly neighborhood, so much the more necessity for this duty. Abraham built his altar whilst heathen Canaanites looked on. He lifted up a testimony for God, and God honored him; so that Abimelech, his neighbor, was constrained to say, "God is with thee in all that thou doest." Gen. 21 : 22.

2. *Wherever religion revives, family worship abounds.* When the Spirit is poured out upon the house of David, "the land shall mourn, every *family* apart." Zech. 12 : 12. I can remember no instance of a great revival of which this

was not an attendant sign. Listen to the account which Mr. Baxter gives of Kidderminster during his ministry. "On the Lord's day there was no disorder to be seen in the streets, but you might hear a hundred families singing psalms and repeating sermons, as you passed through the streets. When I came thither first, there was about one family in a street that worshipped God and called on his name, and when I came away, there were some streets where there was not above one family in the side of a street that did not so, and that did not by professing serious godliness give us some hopes of their sincerity; and those families which were the worst, being inns and alehouses, usually some persons in each did seem to be religious. Some of the poor men did competently understand the body of divinity, and were able to judge in difficult controversies. Some of them were so able in prayer, that very few ministers did match them in order, and fulness, and apt expressions, and holy oratory with fervency. Abundance of them were able to pray very laudably with their families, or with others. The temper of their minds, and the innocency of their lives, was much more laudable than their parts." When the Spirit is poured upon us, our cities will all present a similar aspect.

3. It would *make your home happier*, if you had a church in your house. It has been said with much truth, "Family prayer is the oil which removes friction, and causes all the complicated wheels of the family to move smoothly and noiselessly." It is one way, and the very best, for bringing all the members of a family together, and for promoting that harmony of feeling so essential to domestic enjoyment. Some families are held together by hardly any bond, except that they lodge under the same roof, and assemble round the same board. But when they meet, it is not to fulfil one another's joy. They are selfish and sullen; cross words, peevish answers, and angry recriminations make up all their intercourse. The customary meal is dispatched in a gloomy silence, or imbittered by fretful words. I have known families so little at home with one another, that it was quite a

relief when any casual visitor dropped in to break the irksomeness of their own society. I have seen brothers and sisters so ill-assorted in the families in which God had planted them together, that they had no subject of common interest, and no mutual love nor confidence. They could converse and be happy with strangers, but not with one another. And I have seen this in families where there was a form of family worship—a pretence, a semblance of prayer; but never where there was the reality.

If yours be such a family, before peace and affection visit it, you must say, “Come, and let us seek the Lord.” If you would see the dawn of blander days on that clouded and lowering circle, you must cry, “Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.” If you could only persuade them to take into their hands the volume that speaks good-will to man, and as they sit together to read by turns its messages of kindness, and then, as they bowed before the mercy-seat, if in their common name, you said, *Our Father*, and confessed their common sins, returned thanks for any mercies which the day had brought, and asked such blessings as all need, this process could not be long persisted in till you would see its softening and harmonizing influence. The dew of Hermon would begin to come down, and you would exclaim as you saw the difference, “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Psalm 133.

But perhaps your family dwells in unity—but it is not a holy unity. It is not sanctified by the word of God, and by prayer. You are happy in one another. You are never at a loss for the materials of a cheerful intercourse. But amidst all the sprightliness, and cordiality, and kind feeling which encompass your fireside, one ingredient of gladness is wanting. God is forgotten. In the morning, you meet and give one another a joyous greeting, and, the morning meal dispatched, rush away to the day’s engagements without a word of acknowledgment to that God whose sleepless eye guarded your midnight pillow—without one word of prayer

to bespeak his upholding and guidance in this day's untrodden path. And when the evening hour of intercourse is over, and you have discussed the pleasant or prosperous incidents of the day, you hie away, *cheerful* but *unthankful*, to a prayerless slumber, perhaps to awake in the grasp of the king of terrors, and find that the Lord is not with you. Your family is united—but it is a short-lived union. Your family-love—God is not in it, and therefore heaven does not follow after it. How it would give tone and intensity to the affection of your smiling circle, if you could be brought to love one another *in the Lord!* With what new eyes you would learn to look upon yourselves, if you came to regard one another as brethren for eternity. And how it would heighten bliss, and take the sharpness out of sorrow, if "*for ever with the Lord*" were the thought which joy and grief most readily suggested. Were it manifest of all the members of a family, that God is their Father, Christ their elder Brother, and the Holy Spirit their Comforter, such a family would possess a joy which the removal of no member could take away. That joy has often come into households through the channel of domestic devotion. For,

4. Family worship is *an ordinance which God has often blessed to the saving of souls*. In houses where it is conducted with life and feeling, it has often proved a converting ordinance. A few years ago, an English gentleman visited America, and spent some days with a pious friend. He was a man of talent and accomplishments, but an infidel. Four years afterwards, he returned to the same house, a Christian. They wondered at the change, but little suspected when and where it had originated. He told them, that when he was present at their family worship, on the first evening of his former visit, and when, after the chapter was read, they all knelt down to pray, the recollection of such scenes in his father's house long years ago, rushed in on his memory, so that he did not hear a single word. But the occurrence made him *think*, and his thoughtfulness ended in his leaving the howling wilderness of infidelity, and finding a quiet rest

in the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ. In his *Fire-side*, Mr. Abbott tells us of a gay young lady, who paid a visit of a week in the family of a minister, an eminently holy man. His fervent intercessions for his children, and the other inmates of his dwelling, went to her thoughtless heart; they were the Spirit's arrow, and upon that family altar, his visitor was enabled to present herself a living sacrifice to God.

It is with the church in the house as with the church in the village. The wayfarer may get a word in passing, which he never can forget. The stranger that turns aside to tarry for a night, may hear at your family worship the word that will save his soul. Some years ago, an Irish wanderer, his wife, and his sister, asked a night's shelter in the cabin of a pious schoolmaster. With the characteristic hospitality of his nation, the schoolmaster made them welcome. It was his hour for evening worship, and when the strangers were seated, he began by reading slowly and solemnly, the second chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians. The young man sat astonished. The expressions, "Dead in trespasses and sins," "Children of wrath," "Walking after the course of this world," were new to him. He sought an explanation. He was told, that this is God's account of the state of men by nature. He felt that it was exactly his own state. "In this way I have walked from my childhood. In the service of the god of this world we have come to your house." He was on the way to a fair, where he intended to pass a quantity of counterfeit money. But God's word had found him out. He produced his store of coin, and begged his host to cast it into the fire; and asked anxiously if he could not obtain the word of God for himself. His request was complied with, and next morning, with their new treasure, the party who had now no errand to the fair, returned to their own home. Perhaps by this time, the pious schoolmaster has met his guest within the gates of the city, outside of which are thieves, and whatsoever maketh a lie. But I cannot enumerate all the conversions which have occurred

at the church in the house. Many servants have been awakened there. Children have often heard there truths which, when the Spirit brought them to remembrance in after-days—perhaps in days of profligacy, and when far from their father's house—have sent home the prodigal. It is not only of Zion's solemn assemblies, but of Jacob's humble dwellings—the little fireside sanctuaries—that “the Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.” In your house there have been, perhaps, several immortal spirits born into the world. Have there been any born again?

Prayerless parents, your irreligion may prove your children's damnation. They might have been within the fold of the Saviour by this time, had not you hindered them when entering in. That time when God visited your family with a heavy stroke, they were thoughtful for a season, but there was no church in your house to give a heavenly direction to that thoughtfulness, and it soon died away. That evening when they came home from the Sabbath-school so serious, if you had been a pious father or mother, you would have taken your boy aside, and spoken tenderly to him, and asked what his teacher had been telling him; and you would have prayed with him, and tried to deepen the impression. But your children came in from the church or school, and found no church in their father's house. Their hearts were softened, but your worldliness soon hardened them. The seed of the kingdom was just springing in their souls, and by this time might have been a rich harvest of salvation; but in the atmosphere of your ungodly house, the tender blade withered instantly. Your idle talk, your frivolity, your Sunday visitors, your prayerless evening, ruined all. Your children were coming to Christ, and you suffered them not. And you will not need to hinder them long. The carnal mind is enmity against God; but no enmity is so deep as theirs who were almost reconciled, and then drew back. You drove your children back. You hardened them. They may never more be moved. They may grow up as

prayerless and ungodly as yourself. If God should change yourself, they may soon be too hard for your own tears and entreaties. If you die as you are, their evil works will follow you to the world of woe, and pour new ingredients into your own cup of wrath. O, think of these things. A prayerless house is not only a cheerless one, but it is a guilty one; for where God is not, there Satan is.

But I know not why I should multiply words to prove a duty which nature teaches. The poor pagan, with his household gods and family altar, will rise in the judgment against some of this generation, and will condemn them. Instead, therefore, of saying more on the obligation and advantages of this most reasonable service, I shall endeavor to give SOME PLAIN DIRECTIONS to those into whose hearts the Lord has put the desire to begin it.

1. Can you *sing*? or is there any one in the house who can? You will find it enliven the service wonderfully if you can make "a joyful noise unto the Lord." The psalm or hymn is a part of the service which the youngest enjoy, and in which they will gladly take a share.

2. There is the *reading of the word of God*. You may go straight through, or you may select a course of subjects. For instance, you might read the parables as one series, and the miracles of Christ as another. You might select the biographical portions, and read the lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Peter, Paul, etc.; or you might read the epistles in connection with the history of the churches, or individuals to whom they are addressed. Thus you might compare Ephesians with Acts 18-20, and with Rev. 2:1-8; or Thessalonians with Acts 17:1-13; and you might compare the Psalms with the period in David's history when each was written, and the prophecies with those passages which record their fulfilment—a comparison, which a Bible with good marginal references will enable you to make. Or you may select passages appropriate to particular seasons. On the morning of a Lord's day, you might read Psalm 48, 63,

84, 92, 118; John 20; Rev. 1, etc. On a sacramental Sabbath, Psalm 22, 45; Isa. 53; Matt. 26; John 6, etc. It might help to keep attention awake, if each read a verse in rotation. At other times there might be more solemnity if the same person read the whole continuously. It would make it more impressive and more memorable, if you occasionally asked a question, or made a few remarks on the passage read. For instance, you read the nineteenth of Luke, and this is your commentary as you go along.

1. "And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho.

2. "And behold there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans," or tax-gatherers, "and he was rich.

3. "And he sought to see Jesus, who he was: and could not for the press, because he was little of stature."

This was the last time that Jesus passed through Jericho. He had often passed quietly through it before; but now his time was fully come, and he could not be hid. The road was full of passengers at this season; for it was passover-time, and they were all going up to Jerusalem. Besides, the sensation in Jericho was increased by the miracle which Jesus had just wrought on the blind beggar, and which we read in the last chapter yesterday. The crowd was so great that Zaccheus could get no opening to push through, and he was so little that he could not see over other people's shoulders.

4. "And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5. "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

How surprised he must have been. Up in the leafy sycamore, he never expected to be noticed. But see. Jesus stands still and looks at him as if he were about to speak. Perhaps Zaccheus expected to get a rebuke before the multitude for his villanies, when Jesus, in his own gentle way, just says, "Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house." Grace went with the word.

6. "And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7. "And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner."

There were many who felt that they had a better right to this distinction than the mean, grasping tax-gatherer. Many of them felt as if they were not SINNERS. It lowered their opinion of Christ, that he would condescend to become the guest of such a man. They little knew the reason.

8. "And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold."

How glad he must have been. A happy heart devises liberal things; and so happy had this visit made him, that his greedy soul had no longer love for money. He stood up like one on whom a sudden thought had come, or who wished to give solemnity to what he said, and declared that he would make it all up to those whom he had wronged, and give half his substance to the poor. This was the effect of receiving Jesus. Where the love of Christ enters, the love of the world goes out. What would the murmurers think when they saw this change upon the "sinner?"

9. "And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham."

It was his "joyful receiving" of Jesus which made him a son of Abraham. It made him more. It made him one of the sons of God. John 1:12. Have we received Christ? Has his voice ever made us joyful? Have we ever parted with "goods," or any thing else, from gratitude to him? Now let us remember the next verse, for it is one of Christ's own faithful sayings:

10. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

This is one way. Another and perhaps better way, is to make the members of the family supply the commentary themselves. This evening, before it is so late that you are all sleepy, you sit round the table, each with his Bible open

before him; and the passage selected is the forty-fifth of Isaiah.

1. "Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut."

FATHER. The prophet has been foretelling the fall of Babylon, and here he names its conqueror. Mary, what is his name?

MARY. Cyrus.

FATHER. Does any one know how long after this it was before Cyrus made his appearance? Can no one tell? George, your Bible has got the dates on its margin. Can you tell when Isaiah uttered this prophecy?

GEORGE. About 712 years before Christ.

FATHER. Now if you will look to the beginning of Ezra, you will see the first year of Cyrus set down there.

GEORGE. Before Christ 536.

FATHER. Then how long before had the Lord called Cyrus by his name?

GEORGE. Nearly 200 years.

FATHER. It is not very long since John and Henry finished the Life of Cyrus. Do you remember any facts which illustrate this prophecy?

HENRY. The Lord says, "I have holden his right hand to subdue nations before him." Cyrus subdued the Lydians with their rich king Cræsus, the Phrygians, the Phœnicians, and many more, as well as the Babylonians.

JOHN. Yes; and when he took Babylon, "the gates were not shut." For the people were all drinking and diverting themselves when he dried up the river, and had forgot to shut the gates at the end of the streets which open into the river; so that Cyrus had nothing to do but march down the dry channel, and then climb up the banks into the city.

FATHER. Very true; but do you remember nothing more about "opening the two-leaved gates?"

HENRY. O, yes. When the king of Babylon heard the uproar in the city, he sent to find out what was the matter; and when they were opening the palace gates to let out the king's messenger, the Persians rushed in and killed the king.

Try to bring out some lesson that may be needed that

very day. You read at morning worship that verse, 1 Cor. 10 : 31.

“Whether, therefore, ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

FATHER. What does that mean?

JOHN. That every thing, however little, we are to do so as to please God.

FATHER. Quite so. It means, that you, children, when learning your lessons, or at play—that Sarah down stairs, and your father in his counting-room, should all remember that we have a Father in heaven, and should do *every* thing, the little things and the great things, in the way that pleases him.

MOTHER. This was the principle on which Oberlin acted, as I read in his life not long ago. He would take a stone out of the road, if it were likely to incommode a traveller, on the principle of love to his neighbor; and directed his people to plant trees, and keep their roads in good condition, for the public benefit, as one way of pleasing and honoring the Lord Jesus Christ.

FATHER. Well, let us do like Oberlin. Let us be kind, and obliging, and useful; and remember, that nothing is so little but that we may do it to the glory of God.

Read over carefully beforehand the passage which you mean to read with your family, and consider what are its most striking points and most useful lessons; and a little practice will make you a good family expositor.

3. The last and most important part of family worship is *united prayer*. By prayer, I mean the outpouring of an earnest heart in the name of Jesus. It is not prayer when you merely read or repeat a heartless form. You do not ask a blessing on your daily bread, when you merely mutter over it a charm—a few inarticulate words for custom’s sake. Nor do you pray when you bend the knee, and read or say a few petitions which you do not feel, and which you forget as soon as you have uttered them. It is prayer, when you ask from God blessings which you are really anxious to obtain, and when, in a conviction of your own unworthiness, you ask them for the sake of Him who indeed is worthy, the well beloved Son of God. It is prayer, when you ask so earnestly that you remember afterwards what you sought, and so believingly,

that looking up you expect an answer. Be earnest, lest you give your family a distaste at prayer, by your dulness and formality. Be honest. Deal truly with the God of truth. Do not mock the Searcher of hearts. Give yourself to the Lord; then set up his worship. Go to the Lord Jesus yourself, and then seek to bring your children with you.

In family prayer you may be more minute and specific than it is possible to be in more public services. If you have a deep reverence of God upon your mind, there is no fear that particularity will degenerate into an unholy familiarity. If any of your friends are in affliction, pray for them. If your children are at school, or at a Sabbath-class, pray for their teacher. Pray for your brethren in church-fellowship, that the beauty of the Lord may be upon them, and that they may dwell in love. Pray for the office-bearers of your church; pray for your minister. Endeavor to interest your family in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, and pray for faithful ministers and missionaries, especially in those places in which you feel most interested. Every morning commit your way to God. Bespeak his presence in all its duties and temptations—his blessing on your intercourse; and especially on any means of grace which you hope that day to enjoy. Every night commend yourselves to his watchful keeping, that you may sleep and wake with him. Pray over the scripture you have read; and abound in thanksgiving. Cultivate a cheerful and grateful spirit: think if there be any mercies you have lately received, and acknowledge them. Has any one arrived from a journey safe and well? Is a sick member of the family restored? Have you heard good news from the far country, tidings from the absent brother? Were you at church or at the prayer-meeting this evening; and did you find it refreshing? Have you read in your *Missionary Magazine* the conversion of a heathen or a Jew? Have you heard that God is pouring out his Spirit on some corner of our own country? Have you got an answer to a former prayer? Praise the Lord, for it is pleasant.

It will depend on the age of your family and the amount of your leisure, how long the service should be. Some hurry it over in a way which shows that they have no heart in it themselves. Others prolong it so, that every one else is wearied. Ten minutes of a formal service will look longer than twice the time when the whole soul is in it.

Be consistent. Behave yourself wisely in a perfect way. Walk within your house with a perfect heart. Psa. 101 : 2. If you be devout in prayer, and unholy in practice ; if you be heavenly-minded at the hour of worship, and frivolous, or proud, or passionate all the day ; if you teach your children in the morning, "Be not conformed to this world," and if half the day's lessons be designed to conform them to the world as nearly as possible ; if you pray for your household that you may be all meek, and gentle, and kindly-affectioned one to another, and then treat your servants as haughtily as if they were your slaves or your enemies, your contradictory prayers and practices will be a terrible stumbling-block in their way to the kingdom of God. God may convert them ; but your conduct will make that miracle of grace more miraculous still.

Reader, I do not know whether by this time you are almost persuaded, or have actually determined to begin. When I think what you are losing who are strangers to this delightful exercise, and when I farther think on the blessed results which might flow from your now beginning it, I am loath to leave off—though it is time that we were done. Do you still hesitate ? What is your excuse ?

"I never saw the advantages you describe. It has always been a dull service wherever I have seen it." But *you* need not make it dull. Throw your whole heart and soul into it, and it will be lively enough. It is often dull, because it is a mere form. Do you make it a living service, and it will not be dull. It is often dull, because it is tedious. Do not spin it out. Better one paragraph of scripture, feelingly and intelligently read, than a whole chapter listlessly drawled over. Better a prayer no longer than the publican's, Luke

18 : 13, if the whole soul be in it, than a weary form without feeling. Be fervent, and you will not be dull. Family prayer has often been so conducted, that instead of wearying in it, children felt it a punishment to be excluded. I was once told of a cottage patriarch, who was born in those days when Scotland had a church in almost every house. There was one in his father's dwelling, and when he pitched a tent for himself, he builded an altar. Round that altar a goodly number of olive-plants grew up, but one by one they were either planted out in families of their own, or God took them, till he and his old partner found themselves, just as at their first outset in life, alone. But their family worship continued as of old. At last his fellow-traveller left him. Still, he carried on the worship by himself. So sweet was the memory of it in his father's house, and so pleasant had he found it in his own, that he could not give it up. But as he sat in his silent habitation, morning and evening, his quivering voice was overheard singing the old psalm-tune, reading aloud the chapter, and praying as if others still worshipped by his side. He had not found it dull.

"I have no time." If you really value time, family prayer is good husbandry of time. What you do with God's blessing, is much better and faster done than what you do without it, *and is not so likely to need doing over again.* You will find it here, as Sir Matthew Hale found it with the Sabbath. What you take from God, he can easily take from you. If other things were equal, I should expect far more to be accomplished in a day, by the man whose spirit had been tranquillized, his resolution fortified, and his activity quickened by morning prayer, than by the man who impiously hurried out to do it all without asking God's presence. Philip Henry, who was an excellent economist of time, when early out of bed to hasten the preparations for a day's travel, as he called his children together, used to say to them, "Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey." Try his homely maxim, and you will find it true.

"Our family is so small." How many are there of you ?

Are there two? Then, "Wheresoever *two*"—see Matt. 18 : 19, 20. John Howard and his valet, as they journeyed from place to place, used to have family worship by themselves, if they could get no one else to join them. "Wherever I have a tent," he would say, "there God shall have an altar." If there be two of you—though it should be but a Ruth and a Naomi, a mother and her daughter, your family is large enough to worship God, and to get the blessing of those who worship him.

"My family is so large. There are so many servants, and often so many visitors, that I have not courage to begin." If your family be large, the obligation to begin is all the greater. Many suffer by your neglect. And if your congregation be numerous, the likelihood that some good will be done is the greater, for there are more to share the benefit. And why want courage? Should not the very fact that you are acknowledging God encourage you? "Them that honor me, I will honor." Begin it believingly, and in the very attempt courage will come.

"But I have no gift of prayer. I cannot lead the devotions of my family." Prayer is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 8 : 26. Before you begin, ask God to give you his Spirit to teach you. Luke 11 : 13. I have heard of stammering men who were eloquent in prayer, for the Spirit of God spake by them. When you pray, remember that God is listening. You have called on him to hearken. You have asked him to lend you an attentive ear, for you are about to ask mercies for yourself and your dearest friends. Remember that God is listening, and you will forget that men are hearkening. And they in their turn, when they find that you are really praying, will have no time to criticize, for they will be constrained to join you in your prayer.

But perhaps I have not after all touched your real objection. You refuse to pray in your family, because you know that you do not pray in your closet. You evade it, because you know that your life is such that family worship would, in your case, be a mockery, and would only add hypocrisy to

sin. Or you are under the influence of that false shame which will be felt to be the most shameful of all things, when the now affronted Son of God comes again in his glory. Mark 8 : 38. Is it so? And are you about to throw away this tract with your purpose unchanged? Then I can only say, that the day is coming when you will wish that the Lord had written you childless—that you had been a poor outcast, with no roof to shelter you, rather than the ungodly husband and father and master, which you this day are—for then you had been more free from blood-guiltiness in the care of others' souls.

The considerations by which I have tried to urge you to a discharge of this duty are, the obligations which you owe to yourselves, to your children, and to God: to yourselves, who will never have the same inward happiness, nor the same satisfaction in your family circle, till once the voice of rejoicing, the melody and praise, which are heard in the tabernacles of the righteous, be heard in your own; to your children, who will rise up and call you blessed, if you guide their feet into the way of peace; to God, who offers to become the never-slumbering keeper of you and yours, and to uphold your going out and coming in from this time forth for ever. These are the considerations I have urged. Some of you may think that I should have succeeded better, if I had dwelt on the beautiful and picturesque of family religion; if I had carried you back to the time when the glory of domestic piety had her habitation in our land, when villages and towns presented a look of Sabbath quietness at the hour of morning prayer, and when night succeeding night, repeated the praises of God from the lonely upland cottage to the hamlet on the plain. I might have done this; and I might have planted you amidst the worshipping household, and invited you to listen to the cordial music of their psalm, and the pathos and fervor of their prayer. But one thing hinders me. I know that all that is beautiful and picturesque in domestic devotion has not only been witnessed, but described by those whom its loveliness could never win to an

imitation. It is one thing for a heart full of sensibility to be touched by contemplating the beauty and the joys of true devotion, and quite another thing for a renewed heart to feel these joys. Hundreds have been melted by the matchless poem in which the bard of Scotland describes the worship of a cottage patriarch; but the *Cotter's Saturday Night* never taught any man to pray. It is told of Sir Walter Scott, that sometimes in an evening he took his guests to an arbor on his lawn, and let them hear the distant music of a sacred tune. It came from the cottage of one of his dependents, and fell touchingly on the ear of the great minstrel himself; but it only touched the ear. He and his visitors went back to the drawing-room at Abbotsford, but it was not to raise, with their better skill, an evening hymn of thanksgiving to the God of all their mercies. The distant cadence of a covenanting melody was somewhat romantic, but nearer at hand it would have blended ill with the dance and the tabret. They all agreed that the voice of psalms from a cottage was picturesque—but that in the mansion, the harp and the viol would be more appropriate.* If higher consid-

* These merry halls were soon after silent, and “the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers,” has never since been heard in them. The “psalm-singing” servant was a brother born for adversity, and on the breaking-up of the establishment, refused to leave his master; and rather than leave him, offered to serve for nothing. In his new post of ploughman, it affected the poor baronet to hear “Old Peep” whistling to his team, as he trod the fresh-turned furrows. It was a change to both; but it would seem that the one possessed a source of perennial joy, which outward calamities could not dry up nor trouble. And after all, in an angel’s eye, which is the greater genius—the sublimer spirit: the poet on his Pegasus, or the peasant who, in the hour of calamity, can take the wings of a dove, and fly away and be *at rest*? Who, that has read the latter days of Robert Burns, does not wish that he had been his own *Cotter*? He sometimes wished it himself. The son of Bosor is not the only man whom the sight of Jacob’s goodly tents has made to sigh, “Let me die the death of the righteous.”

erations have no weight, I am sure that a little picture-work will not prevail upon you.

Fathers and brethren, some of you are the heads of happy families to-day. All that I ask is, that you would make them happier still—happy, not only in your love, but in the love of God the Saviour—happy for time, and through eternity. The happiest family will not be always so. The most smiling circle will be in tears some day. All that I ask is, that you would secure, for yourselves and your children, a friend in that blessed Redeemer, who will wipe all tears from all faces. Your families may soon be scattered, and familiar voices may cease to echo within your walls. They may go each to his own, and some of them may go far away. O see to it, that the God of Bethel goes with them, that they set up an altar even on a distant shore, and sing the Lord's song in that foreign land. They may be taken from this earth altogether, and leave you alone. O see to it, that as one after another goes, it may be to their Father's house above, and to sing with heavenly voices, and to a heavenly harp, the song which they first learned from you, and with you often sung together here—the song of Moses and the Lamb. And if you be taken, and some of them be left, see to it that you leave them the thankful assurance that you are gone to their Father and your Father, their God and your God. And in the meanwhile, let your united worship be so frequent and so fervent, that when you are taken from their head, the one whose sad office it is to supply your place as priest of that household, shall not be able to select a chapter or a psalm, with which your living image and voice are not associated, and in which you, though dead, are not yet speaking to them. And thus, my heart's wish for you all—

“When soon or late you reach that coast,
O'er life's rough ocean driven,
May you rejoice, no wanderer lost,
A family in heaven.”

THE
HOPE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

BY REV. SAMUEL DAVIES,
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“THE wicked is driven away in his wickedness,” says the wisest of men; “but the righteous hath hope in his death.” Men will leave the world according to their conduct in it; and be happy or miserable hereafter, according to their improvement of the present state of trial.

“THE WICKED IS DRIVEN AWAY IN HIS WICKEDNESS”—he dies as he lived: he lived in wickedness, and in wickedness he dies. His wickedness sticks fast upon him, when his earthly enjoyments, his friends, and all created comforts leave him for ever. The guilt of his wickedness lies heavy upon him, like a mountain of lead, ready to sink him into the depth of misery. And the principles of wickedness which he indulged all his life, still live within him, even in the agonies of death; nay, they now arrive at a dreadful immortality, and produce an eternal hell in his breast. He leaves behind him not only all his earthly comforts, but all the little remains of goodness he seemed to have while under the restraints of divine grace; and he carries nothing but his wickedness along with him. With this dreadful attendant he must pass to the tribunal of his Judge. To leave his earthly all behind him, and die in the agonies of dissolving nature—this is terrible. But to die *in* his wickedness—this is infinitely the most terrible of all.

He once flattered himself, that though he lived in wickedness, he should not die in it. He adopted many resolutions to amend, and forsake his wickedness, towards the close of life, or upon a death-bed. But how is he disappointed. After all his promising purposes and hopes, he died as he lived, in wickedness. This is generally the fate of veterans

in sin. They are resolving and re-resolving to reform all their lives ; but after all, they die the same. They purpose to prepare for death and eternity ; but they have always some objections against the present time. They have always something else to do to-day, and therefore they put off this work till to-morrow ; to-morrow comes, and instead of reforming, they die in their wickedness—to-morrow comes, and they are in hell. Oh that the loiterers of this generation would take warning from the ruin of thousands of their unhappy ancestors who have perished by the dread experiment.

And are not some of you in danger of splitting upon the same rock ? Are not some of you conscious, that if you should die this moment, you would die in your wickedness ? And yet you have little fear of dying in this manner : no ; you purpose yet to become very good, and prepare for death before you die. So thousands who are now in hell purposed as strongly as you. The time for repentance was still an *hereafter* to them, till it was irrecoverably past. They were snatched away unexpectedly by the sudden hand of death, and knew not where they were, till they found themselves in eternity, and thus they had no time for this work ; or their thoughts were so much engrossed with their pains, that they had no composure for it ; or they found their sins, by long indulgence, were become invincibly strong, their hearts judicially hardened, and all the influences of divine grace withdrawn ; so that the work became impossible. And thus they died in their sins. And if any of you be so foolhardy as to imitate them in their delays, you may expect to die as they did.

“ The wicked is *driven* away in his wickedness ”—*driven* away in spite of all his reluctance. Let him cling to life never so fast, yet he must go. All his struggles are vain, and cannot add one moment to his days. Indeed, the wicked have so little taste for heaven, and are so much in love with this world, that if they leave it at all, they must be *driven* out of it—*driven* out of it, whether they will or not. When they hope for heaven, they do in reality consider it but a shift, or a refuge when they can no longer live in this their

favorite world. They do not at all desire it, in comparison with this world. Here they would live for ever, if they could have their will. But let them grasp never so hard, they must let go their hold. They must be driven away, like chaff before the whirlwind—driven away into the regions of misery—into the regions of misery, I say; for certainly the happiness of heaven was never intended for such as are so disaffected to it, and prefer this wretched world, with all its cares and sorrows, before heaven itself.

This is the certain doom of the wicked. But *who are they?* Though the character be so common among us, yet there are few that will own it. It is an odious character; and therefore few will take it to themselves. But there is no room for flattery in the case; and therefore we must inquire, Who are the wicked? I answer, all that habitually indulge themselves in the practice of any known wickedness—all that neglect the God that made them, and the Saviour that bought them—all that live in the wilful omission of the known duties of religion and morality—all that have never known by experience what it is to repent and believe; in a word, all that are in their natural state, and have never felt a change of spirit and practice so great and important, that it may be called with propriety, a new birth, or a new creation—all such, without exception, are wicked. They are wicked in reality, and in the sight of God, however righteous they may be in their own eyes, or however unblamably some of them may conduct themselves before men.

May you make an impartial inquiry into a matter so important; and if you find the character of the wicked is yours, believe it, you must share in the dreadful doom of the wicked, if you continue such.

But “THE RIGHTEOUS HATH HOPE IN HIS DEATH.” To have hope in death, is to have hope in the most desperate extremity of human nature. Then the spirits flag, and the heart sinks, and all the sanguine hopes of blooming health and prosperity vanish. Then all hopes from things below—

all expectations of happiness from all things under the sun, are cut off. All hopes of escaping the arrest of death are fled, when the iron grasp of its cold hand is felt. Even in these hopeless circumstances, the righteous man hath hope. The foundation of his hope must be well laid, it must be firm indeed, when it can stand such shocks as these. It is evident, the objects of his hope must lie beyond the grave; for on this side of it all is hopeless. His friends and physician despair of him; and he despairs of himself as to all the prospects of this mortal life. But he does not despair of a happier life in another state. No; he hopes to live and be happy, when the agonies of death are over; and this hope bears him up under them.

This hope I intend to consider as to its *objects*, its *grounds and evidences*, and its various *degrees and limitations*.

I. The OBJECTS of the righteous man's hope in death. And here I shall only mention his hope of support in death—of the immortality of his soul—of the resurrection of his body—and of perfect happiness in heaven.

1. The righteous man has an humble hope of *support in death*. He has repeatedly intrusted himself into the faithful hands of an almighty Saviour, for life and death, for time and eternity; and he humbly hopes his Saviour will not forsake him now—now, when he most needs his assistance. This was St. Paul's support under the prospect of his last hour: "I know in whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." 2 Tim. 1:12. As if he had said, Finding my own weakness, I have committed my all into another hand; and I have committed it to one whose ability and faithfulness have been tried by thousands as well as myself, and therefore I am confident he will keep the sacred deposit, and never suffer it to be injured or lost. This was also the support of the psalmist: "Though I walk," says he, "through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me: thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Psalm 23:4. Yea, it was upon this support St. Paul leaned, when he braved death in that

triumphant language: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us. For I am persuaded," says he, "that death"—that separates our souls and bodies—that separates friend from friend—that separates us from all our earthly comforts, and breaks all our connections with this world—even death itself "shall never separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8:35-39. What a faithful friend, what a powerful guardian is this, who stands by his people, and bears them up in their last extremity, and makes them more than conquerors in the struggle with the all-conquering enemy of mankind. How peculiar a happiness is this, to be able to enjoy the comfort of hope in the wreck of human nature. How sweet to lean a dying head upon the kind arm of an almighty Saviour—how sweet to intrust a departing soul as a deposit in his faithful hand. O, may you and I enjoy this blessed support in a dying hour; and may we make it our great business in life to secure it. In that gloomy hour our friends may weep, and wring their hands around our beds, but they can afford us no help—no hope. But Jesus can, as thousands have known by experience. Then he can bring home his promises to the heart; then he can communicate his love, which is better than life; and by his Holy Spirit bear up and encourage the sinking soul. Blessed Jesus, what friend can compare to thee?

"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."

2. *The immortality of the soul* is an object of the righteous man's hope. He is not like a Bolingbroke, and other infidels, who having made it their interest that there should be no future state, consider immortality as an object of fear, and therefore try to reason themselves out of the belief of it, and choose to ingulf themselves in the abyss of annihilation. That man has indeed a terrible consciousness of his demerit,

who dares not trust himself for ever in the hands of a just and gracious God, but wishes to escape out of his hands, though it were by resigning his being. It is not the force of argument, that drives our infidels to this. Demonstration and certainty were never so much as pretended for it. And after all the preposterous pains they take to work themselves up to the gloomy hope, that when they die they shall escape punishment by the loss of all the sweets of existence; yet, if I may venture to guess at, and divulge the secret, they are often alarmed with the dreadful *may-be* of a future state. In their solemn and thoughtful moments their hope wavers. They are men of pleasure; they are merry, jovial, and gay, and give a loose to all their licentious passions and appetites. But how short, how sordid, how brutal the pleasure; how gloomy, how low, how shocking their highest hope. Their highest hope is to be as truly nothing, in a few years or moments hence, as they were ten thousand years ago. They are men of pleasure, who would lose all their pleasures if they were angels in heaven, but would lose none of them if they were swine in the mire.

Blessed be God, this gloomy hope is not the hope which the religion of Jesus inspires. No; he "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim. 1:10. He opens to the departing soul the endless prospects of a future state of being—a state where death shall no more make such havoc and desolations among the works of God; but where every thing is vital and immortal. Hence, the righteous man hath hope in his death. He has not made it best for him that his religion should be false. He is not driven to seek for shelter in the gulf of annihilation; nor to combat with the blessed hopes which reason and revelation unitedly inspire, as his worst enemies. He wishes and hopes to live for ever, that he may for ever enjoy the generous pleasure of serving his God, and doing good to his fellow-creatures. The belief of immortality is not, indeed, peculiar to the righteous: it is the belief of mankind in general, except a few infidels here and there, who are to be regarded as monsters in human nature. But this is not so properly the

object of hope, as of fear, to multitudes. They wish it were false, though they cannot believe it is so. They have no joy and peace in believing this; but, like devils, they "believe and tremble." James 2:19. But to the righteous man, this is properly an object of hope: the prospect is pleasing to him. If it were a dream, which, blessed be God, it is not, it is a pleasing dream. If it were a delusion, it is a harmless and profitable delusion. It inspires him with noble pleasures, and excites him to glorious deeds while life lasts; and if it must be entirely given up in death, he will sleep as easy as the most stanch unbeliever upon earth who lived in the expectation of so terrible a doom. Thus we might argue even upon the worst supposition that can be made. But we are left in no such uncertainty. This is not a pleasing error, but a pleasing truth; nay, I had almost said, a pleasing demonstration. Such it proves to the righteous man; for O, how pleasing to the offspring of the dust, to claim immortality as his inalienable inheritance. How transporting to a soul just ready to take its flight from the quivering lips of the dissolving clay, to look forward through everlasting ages of felicity, and call them all its own—to sit and prognosticate and pause upon its own futurities—to defy the stroke of death, and smile at the impotent malice of the gaping grave. O, what a happiness, what a privilege is this. And this is what the righteous man in some measure enjoys.

3. The righteous in death has the hope of the *resurrection of his body*. This glorious hope we owe entirely to revelation. The ancient philosophers could never discover it by their reason; and when it was discovered by a superior light, they ridiculed it as the hope of worms. But this is a reviving hope to the righteous in the agonies of death. Those old intimate friends, the soul and body, that must now part, with so much reluctance, shall again meet and be united in inseparable bonds. The righteous man does not deliver up his body as the eternal prey of worms, or the irredeemable prisoner of the grave; but his hope looks forward to the glorious dreadful morning of the resurrection, and sees the

bonds of death bursting, the prison of the grave flying open, the mouldering dust collected, and formed into a human body oncè more—a human body most gloriously improved. This prospect affords a very agreeable support in death, and enables the righteous to say with Job, though I die, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” Job 19:25, 26. “This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” 1 Cor. 15:53–55. This is an illustrious victory indeed; a victory over the conqueror of conquerors and of all the sons of Adam. And yet, thus victorious shall the frail dying believer be made over that terror of human nature.

4. *The perfect and everlasting happiness of heaven is an object of the righteous man’s hope in death.* He hopes to drop all his sins and their attendant train of sorrows behind him; and to be perfectly holy and consequently happy for ever. He hopes to see his God and Saviour, and to spend a happy eternity in society with him, and in his service. He hopes to join the company of angels, and of his fellow-saints of the human race. He hopes to improve in knowledge, in holiness, and in capacities for action and enjoyment, in an endless gradation. He hopes to see the face of his God in righteousness, and to be satisfied when he awakes with his image. Psa. 17:15. In short, he hopes to be as happy as his nature will possibly admit, through an endless duration. O, what a glorious hope is this. This has made many a soul welcome death with open arms. This has made them desirous “to be with Christ, which is far better.” Phil. 1:23. And this has sweetly swallowed up the sensations of bodily pain. Indeed, without this, immortality would be an object of terror, and not of hope: the prospect would be insupportably dreadful. For who can bear the thought of an immortal duration spent in an eternal banishment from God and all happiness. and in the sufferance of the most exquis-

ite pain? But a happy immortality, what can charm us more? I now proceed,

II. TO THE GROUNDS AND EVIDENCES of such a hope.

It is a hope *peculiar* to the righteous; and it is a hope that shall never be disappointed, nor put to shame. This, alas, is not the common popular hope of the world. Job speaks of the hope of the hypocrite, Job 8 : 13 ; 27 : 8 ; and One greater than Job tells us, that many will carry their false hopes with them to the very tribunal of their Judge. When he assures them he never knew them, they hardly think him in earnest. "Strange! dost thou not know us? Have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence, and hast thou not taught in our streets?" Luke 13 : 26. St. Paul also tells us, that while some are crying peace and safety, and apprehend no danger, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape. 1 Thess. 5 : 3. This is likewise evidently confirmed by observation; for how often do we find in fact, that many not only hope for immortality, but for immortal happiness, who give no evidence at all of their title to it, but many of the contrary? Here, then, is a very proper occasion for self-examination. Since there are so many false hopes among mankind, we should solicitously inquire whether ours will stand the test. To assist us in this inquiry, let us consider what are the peculiar grounds and evidences of the righteous man's hope.

Now it will be universally granted, that God best knows whom he will admit into heaven, and whom he will exclude; that it is his province to appoint the ground of our hope, and that constitution according to which we may be saved; that none can be saved but those who have the characters which he has declared essentially necessary to salvation; and that none shall perish who have those characters. And hence it follows, that the righteous man's hope is *entirely regulated by the divine constitution, and the declarations of that holy word* which alone gives us certain information in this case. This, I say, is the grand test of a true hope; it expects what God has promised, and it expects it

in the way and manner established by him. It is an humble, submissive hope: it does not expect happiness, as it were, in spite of Him who is the author of it; but it expects happiness just in the manner which he has appointed.

Now, what has God appointed to be the ground or foundation of our hope? St. Paul will tell you, No other foundation can any man lay than that which is already laid, which is JESUS CHRIST. 1 Cor. 3:11. God himself proclaims, by Isaiah, "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a Stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." Isaiah 28:16. Jesus Christ, then, is the only sure ground of hope, appointed by God himself. Or, in other words, the free mercy of God, which can be communicated only through Jesus Christ, or for his sake, is the only sure ground of hope for a sinner. It is upon this, and not upon his own righteousness, that the righteous man dares to build his hope. He is sensible that every other foundation is but a quicksand. He cannot venture to hope on account of his own merit, either in whole, or in part. It is in the mercy, the mere mercy of God, through Jesus Christ, that he trusts. He is gratefully sensible, indeed, that God has wrought many good things in him, and enabled him to perform many good actions; but these are not the ground of his hope, but the evidences of it: I mean, he does not make these any part of his justifying righteousness, but only evidences that he has an interest in the righteousness of Christ, which alone can procure him the blessings he hopes for. Which leads me to add,

That the evidence of this hope is the righteous man's finding, upon a thorough trial, that *the characters which God has declared essentially necessary to salvation, do belong to him*. Has God declared that the regenerate, that believers and penitents, that they who are made holy in heart and life, and none but such, shall be saved? Then is my hope true and sure when I hope for salvation, because I find these characters belong to me. I know the God of truth will keep his word; and therefore, poor and guilty and unworthy as I am, it is no presumption for me to hope for ever-

lasting happiness from him, if I find myself to be such as he has promised everlasting happiness to.

This, brethren, is the only valid evidence of a good hope. And is this the evidence that encourages you in this important affair? Alas, the world is overrun with delusive hopes, that are so far from being supported by this evidence, that they are supported in direct opposition to it. God has declared, in the plainest and strongest terms, that no drunkard, nor swearer, nor fornicator, nor any similar characters, shall inherit his kingdom; and yet what crowds of drunkards, swearers, fornicators, and the like, will maintain their hopes of heaven, in spite of these declarations. He has declared, with the utmost solemnity, that "except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." John 3:3. And yet what multitudes presume to hope they shall enter there, though they still continue in their natural state, and have no evidences at all of their being born again. God has declared, that "except we repent, we shall all perish," Luke 13:3-5, like the infidel Jews; and that "he that believeth not, shall be damned." Mark 16:16. And yet, how many hope to be saved, though they have never felt the kindly relentings of ingenuous, evangelical repentance, nor the work of faith with power wrought upon their hearts. What can be more plain than that declaration, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord?" Heb. 12:14. And yet multitudes that hate holiness in their hearts, hope to be saved, as well as your precise and sanctified creatures, as they call them. In short, the hopes of many are so far from being supported by the authority of the Scriptures, that they are supported only by the supposition of their being false. If the Scriptures be true, then they and their hopes must perish together; but if the Scriptures be false, then they have some chance to be saved, though it is but a very dull chance after all; for if they have to do with a lying, deceitful deity, they have no ground at all of any confidence in him: they must be anxiously uncertain what they should hope, or what they should fear from his hands. Hence, you see that we should vindicate the truth of God in these dec-

larations, even by way of self-defence ; for if the divine veracity fail in one instance, it becomes doubtful in every instance, and we have nothing left to depend upon. If they may be saved whom God has declared shall perish, then by a parity of reason, they may perish whom he has characterized as the heirs of salvation ; and consequently, there is no certainty that any will be saved at all. Thus, sinners, while establishing their own false hopes, remove all ground of hope, and leave us in the most dreadful suspense.

Let us regulate our hopes according to His declaration, who has the objects of our hope entirely at his disposal. When we pretend to improve upon divine constitutions, or, as we think, turn them in our favor, we do in reality but ruin them, and turn them against ourselves. Make that, and that only, the ground and evidence of your hope, which God has made such. Your hope is not almighty, to change the nature of things, or reverse his appointments ; but his constitution will stand, and you shall be judged according to it, whether you will or not. Do not make that the ground or evidence of your hope which he has not so made, or which he has pronounced the characteristic of the heirs of hell. You hope, perhaps, to be saved, though you live in the wilful neglect of some known duty, or in the wilful practice of some known sin. But has God given you any reason for such a hope ? You know he has not, but the contrary. You hope he will show mercy to you, because his nature is mercy and love, and he is the compassionate Father of his creatures ; or because Christ has died for sinners. But has he given you any assurances, that because he is so merciful—because he is so compassionate a Father—because Christ has died for sinners, therefore he will save you in your present condition ? You hope to be saved, because you are as good as the generality, or perhaps better than many around you. But has God made this a sufficient ground of hope ? Has he told you, that to be fashionably religious, is to be sufficiently religious ; or that the way of the multitude leads to life ? This may be your hope ; but is it the authentic declaration of eternal truth ? You know it is not, but quite

the contrary. I might add sundry other instances of unscriptural hope, but these may suffice as a specimen. And I shall lay down this general rule, which will enable you to make farther discoveries: namely, *Those hopes are all false which are opposite to the declarations of God in his word.* Certainly this needs no proof to such as believe the divine authority of the Scriptures; and as for infidels, it is not the design of this discussion to deal with them. You who acknowledge the Scriptures as the foundation of your religion, with what face can you entertain hopes unsupported by them, or contrary to them: hopes that must be disappointed if God be true; and that cannot be accomplished unless he prove a liar? Can you venture your eternal all upon such a blasphemous hope as this? But I proceed to consider,

III. THE VARIOUS DEGREES AND LIMITATIONS of a good hope in death.

A good hope is always supported by *evidence*; and according to the *degree* of evidence is the degree of hope. When the evidence is clear and undoubted, then it rises to a joyful assurance; but when the evidence is dark and doubtful, then it wavers, and is weakened by dismal fears and jealousies. Now, I have told you already, that the evidence of a good hope is a person's discovering, by impartial examination, that those characters which God has pronounced the inseparable characters of those that shall be saved, do belong to him; or that he has those graces and virtues which are at once his preparation for heaven, and the evidence of his title to it. Now different believers, and even the same persons at different times, have very different degrees of this evidence. And the reason of this difference is, that sundry causes are necessary to make the evidence clear and satisfactory; and when any of these are wanting, or do not concur in a proper degree, then the evidence is dark and doubtful. In order to be fully satisfied of the truth and reality of our graces, it is necessary we should arrive to some eminence in them; otherwise, like a jewel in a heap of rubbish, they may be so blended with corruption that it may be impossible

to discern them with certainty. Hence, the weak Christian, unless he have unusual supplies of divine grace, enters the valley of the shadow of death with fear and trembling; whereas he who has made great attainments in holiness, enters it with courage, or perhaps with transports of joy. It is also necessary to a full assurance of hope, that the Spirit of God bear witness with our spirit, that we are the sons of God, Rom. 8 : 16 ; or that he excite our graces to such a lively exercise, as to render them visible by their effects, and distinguishable from all other principles. And therefore, if a sovereign God see fit to withhold his influences from the dying saint, his graces will languish, his past experiences will appear confused and doubtful, and consequently his mind will be tossed with anxious fears and jealousies. But if he be pleased to pour out his Spirit upon him, it will be like a ray of heavenly light, to point his way through the dark shades of death, and open to him the transporting prospects of eternal day that lies just before him.

Another thing that occasions a difference in this case is, that an assured hope is the result of frequent *self-examination*; and therefore the Christian that has been diligent in this duty, and all his life laboring to make all sure against his last hour, generally enjoys the happy fruits of his past diligence, and enters the harbor of rest with a "full assurance of hope," Heb. 6 : 11 ; but he that has been negligent in this duty, is tossed with billows and tempests of doubts and fears, and is afraid of being shipwrecked in sight of the port.

It is also necessary to the enjoyment of a comfortable hope in death, that the mind be in some measure *calm and rational*, not clouded with the glooms of melancholy, nor thrown into a delirium or insensibility by the violence of the disorder. And according as this is, or is not the case, a good man may enjoy, or not enjoy, the comforts of hope.

These remarks will help us to discover with what limitations we are to understand the expression, "The righteous hath hope in his death." It does not mean, that every righteous man has the same degree of hope ; or that no righteous

man is distressed with fears and doubts in his last moments. But it means,

1. That every righteous man has a *substantial reason* to hope, whether he clearly see it or not. His eternal all is really safe; and as all the false hopes of the wicked man cannot save *him*, so all the fears of the righteous man cannot destroy *him*, though they may afford him some transient paings of horror. He is in the possession of a faithful God, who will take care of him; and nothing shall pluck him out of his hands. He sees fit to leave some of his people in their last moments to conflict at once with death and with their more dreadful fears; but even this will issue in their real advantage. And what an agreeable surprise will it be to such trembling souls, to find death has unexpectedly transported them to heaven.

2. When it is said, "The righteous hath hope in his death," it means, that good men, in common, *do in fact enjoy* a comfortable hope. There never was one of them that was suffered to fall into absolute despair in this last extremity. In the greatest agonies of fear and suspicion, the trembling soul has still some glimmering hope to support it; and its gracious Saviour never abandons it entirely. And it is the more common case of the saints to enjoy more comfort and confidence in death, than they were wont to do in life. Many that in life were wont to shudder at every danger, and fly at the sound of a shaking leaf, have been emboldened at death to meet the king of terrors, and to welcome his fiercest assault. The soldiers of Jesus Christ have generally left this mortal state in triumph, though this is not an universal rule. And who would not wish and pray for such an exit, that he may do honor to his God and Saviour, and to his religion, with his last breath; that he may discover to the world, that religion can bear him up when all other supports prove a broken reed; and that his last words may sow the seeds of piety in the hearts of those that surround his dying bed? This every good man should pray and wish for, though it must be left in the hands of a sovereign God to do as he pleases.

3. When it is said, "The righteous hath hope in his death," it may mean, that the hope which he hath in death *shall be accomplished*. It is not a flattering, delusive dream, but a glorious reality; and therefore deserves the name. His "hope shall not make him ashamed," Rom. 5:5, but shall be fulfilled, and even exceeded. However high his expectations, death will convey him to such a state as will afford him an agreeable surprise; and he will find that it never entered into his heart to conceive the things that God hath laid up for him, and for all that love him. 1 Cor. 2:9.

This is the glorious peculiarity of the good man's hope. Many carry their hope with them to death, and will not give it up till they give up the ghost. But as it is ungrounded, it will end in disappointment and confusion. And O, into what a terrible consternation will it strike them, to find themselves surrounded with flames, when they expected to land on the blissful coasts of paradise—to find their Judge and their conscience accusing and condemning instead of acquitting them—to find their souls plunged into hell under a strong guard of devils, instead of being conducted to heaven by a glorious convoy of angels—to feel the pangs and horrors of everlasting despair succeed, in an instant, to the flattering prospect of delusive hope—to fall back to hell from the very gates of heaven. O, what a shocking disappointment, what a terrible change is this!

Therefore, now make sure work. Do not venture your souls upon the broken reed of false hope. But "give all diligence to make your calling and election sure." 2 Peter, 1:10. Now, you may make a profitable discovery of your mistake; if your hope be ungrounded, you have now time and means to obtain a good hope through grace. But then it will be too late: your only chance, if I may so speak, will be lost; and you must for ever stand by the consequences. O, can you bear the thought of taking a leap in the dark into the eternal world; or of owing your courage only to a delusive dream? Why will you not labor to secure so important an interest, beyond all rational possibility of a disappointment? Have you any thing else to do which is of greater,

of equal, or comparable importance? Do you think you will approve of this neglect upon a dying bed, or in the eternal world?

Let this subject strengthen the hope of those whose hope will stand the Scripture test. You must die, 'tis true; your bodies must be the food of worms; but be of good courage, your almighty and immortal Saviour will support you in the hour of your extremity, and confer immortality upon you. He will also quicken your mortal bodies, and reunite them to your souls, and make your whole persons as happy as your natures will admit. Blessed be God, you are safe from all the fatal consequences of the original apostasy, and your own personal sin. Death, the last enemy, which seems to survive all the rest, shall not triumph over you; but even death itself shall die, and be no more. O, happy people, who is like unto you, a people saved by the Lord. Deut. 33:29.

Let me now conclude with a melancholy contrast: I mean, *the wretched condition of the wicked in a dying hour*. Some of them, indeed, have a hope, a strong hope, which the clearest evidence cannot wrest from them. This may afford them a little delusive support in death; but upon the whole, it is their plague: it keeps them from spending their last moments in seeking after a well-grounded hope; and as soon as their souls are separated from their bodies, it exposes them to the additional confusion of a dreadful disappointment. Others of them live like beasts, and like beasts they die; that is, as thoughtless, as stupid, about their eternal state, as the brutes that perish. O, what a shocking sight is the death-bed of such a stupid sinner. Others, who with a great deal of pains, made a shift to keep their consciences easy in the gay hours of health and prosperity, when death and eternity stare them in the face, find this sleeping lion rousing, roaring, and tearing them to pieces. They had a secret consciousness before, that they had no ground for a comfortable hope; but they suppressed the conviction, and would not regard it. But now it revives, and they tremble with a fearful expectation of wrath and fiery indignation. This is especially the usual doom of such as have lived under a faithful min-

istry, and have had a clear light of the Gospel and just notions of divine things forced upon their unwilling minds. It is not so easy for them as for others to flatter themselves with false hopes, in the honest, impartial hour of death. Their knowledge is a magazine of arms for their consciences to use to torment them. O, in what horrors do some of them die; and how much of hell do they feel upon earth.

Nay, this is sometimes the doom of some infidel profligates, who flattered themselves they could contemn the bugbear of a future state, even in death. They thought they had conquered truth and conscience, but they find themselves mistaken: they find these are insuppressible, victorious, immortal; and that, though with mountains overwhelmed, they will one day burst out like the smothered fires of *Ætna*, visibly bright and tormenting. Of this the celebrated Dr. Young gives us a most melancholy instance—an instance of a youth of noble birth, fine accomplishments, and large estate, who imbibed the infidel principles of deism so fashionable in high life, and debauched himself with sensual indulgences; who, by his unkind treatment broke the heart of an amiable wife, and by his prodigality squandered his estate, and thus disinherited his only son. Hear the tragical story from the author's own words.

“The sad evening before the death of that noble youth, I was there. No one was with him but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved and whom he had ruined by his infidel principles and debauched practices. At my coming in, he said,

“‘You and the physician are come too late. I have neither life nor hope. You would aim at miracles—you would raise the dead.’

“Heaven, I said, was merciful——

“‘Or I should not have been so deeply guilty. What has it not done to bless and to save *me*. I have been too strong for Omnipotence; I have plucked down ruin.’

“I said, ‘The blessed Redeemer——’

“‘Hold, hold! You wound me. That is the rock on which I split—I denied his name, and his religion.’

“ Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck. Then, with vehemence, ‘ Oh, Time, Time, it is fit thou shouldst thus strike thy murderer to the heart. How art thou fled for ever! A month! oh, for a single week! I ask not for years; though an age were too little for the much I have to do!’

“ On my saying, we could not do too much—that heaven was a blessed place—

“ ‘ So much the worse. It is lost, it is lost! Heaven is to me the severest part of hell, as the loss of it is my greatest pain.’

“ Soon after, I proposed prayer.

“ ‘ Pray, you that can. I never prayed—I cannot pray—nor need I. Is not heaven on my side already? It closes with my conscience. It but executes the sentence I pass upon myself. Its severest strokes but second my own.’

“ His friend being much touched, even to tears, at this, with a most affectionate look he said, ‘ Keep those tears for thyself. I have undone thee. Dost thou weep for *me*? That is cruel. What can pain me more?’

“ Here his friend, too much affected, would have left him.

“ ‘ No, stay. *Thou* still mayest hope; therefore hear me. How madly have I talked! How madly hast thou listened, and believed! But look on my present state, as a full answer to thee and to myself. This body is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if stung up by torment to greater strength and spirit, is full powerful to reason—full mighty to suffer. And that which thus triumphs within the jaws of mortality, is, doubtless, immortal; and as for a Deity, nothing less than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.’

“ I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on asserting the two prime articles of his creed, the existence of a God, and the immortality of the soul, extorted by the rack of nature; when he thus, very passionately,

“ ‘ No, no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak

My much-injured friend! My soul, as my body, lies in ruins—in scattered fragments of broken thought. Remorse for the past throws my thought on the future. Worse dread of the future strikes it back on the past. I turn, and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst struggle with the martyr for his stake, and bless heaven for the flames. That is not an everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable fire.'

"How were we struck! Yet, soon after, still more. With an eye of distraction, with a face of despair, he cried out, 'My principles have poisoned my friend; my extravagance has beggared my boy; my unkindness has murdered my wife. And is there another hell? Oh, thou blasphemed, yet most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge, if it hides me from thy frown.'

"Soon after, his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgot. And, ere the sun—which I hope has seen few like him—arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired."

Is not this tragical instance a loud warning to all, and especially to such as may be walking in the steps of this unhappy youth? "Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die." Death will make them wise, and show them their true interest, when it is too late to secure it. Ignorance and thoughtlessness, or the principles of infidelity, may make men live like beasts; but these will not enable them to die like beasts. May we live as candidates for immortality. May we now seek a well-established hope, that will stand the severest trial. And may we labor to secure the protection of the Lord of life and death, who can be our sure support in the wreck of dissolving nature. May we live the life, that we may die the death of the righteous; and find that dark valley a short passage into the world of bliss and glory.

CHRIST

A

COVERT FROM THE TEMPEST.

BY REV. EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, D. D.

IN the person of our Redeemer, who is very man as well as God, is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, that "*A MAN shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*" Isa. 32:2.

In a serene day when no wind is up, when no rain is falling, a man may see by the wayside a shelving rock and may pass by it without emotion. Not so the weary traveller who is fleeing before the rising storm or the beating tempest.

In a season of rain, or in a land of waters, one may pass by a river with little interest. Not so a traveller in the Arabian deserts, surrounded with burning sands, fainting with heat, and parched with thirst. The sight of a stream of water, and especially of "rivers of water," in such a place, would transport him.

In a country covered with wood or pinched with cold, a huge rock might offer its shade unwelcome; but amidst the parched wastes of Arabia, where the weary traveller, exposed all day to the intense heat of a vertical sun, sees not a tree nor a shrub, but only one boundless waste of burning sand—*there* a cool retreat beneath the shade of an overhanging cliff—*there* "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land," would be most welcome.

These observations suggest a principal reason why the Saviour of the world, whose very name ought to be music to every human ear, is treated with such cruel indifference by the greater part of mankind. It is because they do not feel their guilt, and misery, and need of a Saviour. They are blind to the infinite majesty, and holiness, and loveliness

of God, and to the immense obligations by which they are bound to him; and therefore they do not see the infinite guilt of rebelling against all his commands, all his mercies, all his glories and interests; and therefore they are not pressed down under a sense of their awful condemnation and ruin. Hell is not laid open before them as their proper punishment. They do not stand amazed at the patience which has kept them out of it so long. They do not see themselves to be utterly ruined, and utterly helpless and hopeless without a Saviour. And therefore his precious Gospel, which ought to fill the world with wonder and delight, with gratitude and praise, is cast aside as an idle tale, and the name of Jesus is treated with the most dreadful indifference.

But let a man be thoroughly convicted of sin; let him see himself covered with pollution from the head to the foot; let him stand in sight of the eternal judgment, and apprehend that divine justice has no choice but to crush him into everlasting torment; let him see himself just about to receive the descending wrath of God with the weight of a thousand worlds; and in that awful moment let him obtain a glimpse of Jesus, who came to "save his people from their sins;" let him lift his trembling eye to a God reconciled in Christ and smiling upon him: I ask that man, "What" now "think you of Christ?" "O," says he—but language fails. A sacred reverence settles upon his countenance; his uplifted eye speaks unutterable things. I see it glisten, I see it weep. "O," says he. His hands are clenched and forcibly raised to his breast. The opening of the last judgment could not add solemnity to a single feature. "O, the height and the depth, the length and the breadth of the love of Christ! Where has this glorious mystery lain hid, that I have never seen it before?" To such an eye, how precious does the Saviour appear as the great medium through which the love of God has come down to men—as the Word by which all the wonders of the eternal Mind are expressed—as the great Prophet who has brought down all the instructions that have blessed the world from the days of Eden—as the Priest whose atonement and intercession have astonished heaven and earth—as the King who has governed the world from the beginning, and has always protected and provided for his people, and has all their interests in his hands, and all the treasures of the universe to impart.

To one who is indifferent to the blessedness of communion with God and of conformity to him, there appears no form or comeliness in Christ why he should desire him. But to one who feels an insatiable eagerness to rise from this dark world to a knowledge of all the grand and interesting things which are taking place in the kingdom of God—who longs to be united to all holy beings, and to share in their immortal friendship and blessedness and honors—who has no desire so great as to be good and conformed to the God he loves; to such a one Jesus must appear exceedingly precious as the one appointed to open the universe to view, to pour all its light upon the eye, and to exalt the soul to all its purity, to all its dignity, to all its happiness.

To an anxious and afflicted soul the Saviour appears peculiarly interesting in the light in which he is exhibited by the prophet. In the charming simplicity of eastern figure, he is presented "*as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*" Here are three separate figures, very striking to an eastern ear, which admit of distinct illustrations.

"A hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest." This is but one figure; for the latter clause, as is common in eastern poetry, is only the echo of the former, presenting a hiding-place and covert from the windy storm and tempest.

Jesus is found to be the best hiding-place and covert from the winds and tempests of *affliction*. A poor disconsolate soul, after it has been chased through the world by the frowns of pursuing fortune—after it has been hunted from place to place, and not suffered to rest in any corner of creation—will find in Christ that protection and repose which all other places denied it. The weather-beaten wretch, after bearing the storms of this inclement world through the long night of affliction, may find in him a shelter under which he may hear the tempest howl without, and feel it not.

Jesus is the best hiding-place and covert from the tempest of an *agitated conscience*. When the lightning of conviction flashes upon the soul, and guilt with its thundering voice spreads its dark folds over the mind, nowhere but in Jesus can be found a covert from the bursting storm. To what other refuge can a sinner fly when the horrid nature

of his rebellion is laid open before him? At what time his ingratitude to the God that made, redeemed, and preserves him appears; at what time he is terrified and confounded by the frequent repetition of his sins and the obstinacy of his corruptions; at what time guilt, superadded to guilt, rolls its dark wreaths over the soul, like clouds that "return after the rain," nowhere but in Jesus can he find a refuge from the gathering tempest. The blood of Christ, sprinkling his conscience from dead works, has a wonderful power to relieve from the pangs of conscious guilt. It is the most sovereign balm to a wounded spirit. "Give me Jesus or I die," cries the agonized soul. "None but Christ, none but Christ. Take away that cloud that I may see him, and I shall live." What other refuge *can* a soul find that is racked with guilt? Let him go to his wealth, his honors, his pleasures; they are all unsavory ashes in the mouth of a man dying with hunger. Let him go to philosophy, it is a stranger to his case, and knows nothing either of his griefs or his wants. Let him go to speculative divinity, it is no physician, but only a corpse laid by the side of a dying man. Let him go to the courts of the Lord—let him go to his Bible, to his knees, and all without Christ are nothing. Let him go to God, and God out of Christ "is a consuming fire." But let him only come in sight of Jesus, and get near enough to "touch" if it be but "the hem of his garment," and all his pains are instantly relieved—the fire in his conscience is quenched, and he is as much at ease as though he never felt a pain.

Jesus is also the best covert from the tempest of *fear* when it agitates the soul. There is a material difference between conscious guilt and the apprehension of punishment, although, like light and heat, they generally go together. I see a sinner convulsed with the fear of a judgment to come. With an eye wildly rolling and marked with horror, I hear him cry, "Who can dwell with devouring fire? who can inhabit everlasting burnings?" His anxious eye looks above and beneath, and searches creation through, but not a ray of hope can it find—nothing but clouds, and darkness, and tempests. At length it falls on Jesus. Instantly the heavens are calm; the sound of the distant storm dies upon his soothed ear, and every care is still.

Jesus is the only hiding-place from the tempest of *divine*

wrath. A rock of adamant he stood and suffered this storm to spend its force on him; while his people, enclosed "in him," lay hid from the beating tempest. The storm is past, and now their faith looks abroad and sees an unclouded sky, and all nature smiling in fresher beauties than though no storm had been.

To finish the illustration of this figure, Jesus is the only hiding-place from the storms and tempests which *for ever beat upon the regions of the damned.* Not to *them* is he a covert. They rejected the canopy of his grace when he would willingly have spread it over them; and now he is nothing to them. But to his own dear people, he will be a covert from the eternal storm.

He shall be "*as rivers of water in a dry place.*" The most obvious idea on the face of this figure is, that Jesus conveys *satisfaction* and *refreshment* to those who can find them nowhere else. There is a thirst for happiness in the soul of man, but there is a drought in all things but in God; and for *human* souls, a drought in all things but in the God that shines "in the face of Jesus Christ." Such is the constitution of things, that no man can find satisfaction but in the Christ of God. Nor will any ever find it there but those who despair of finding it anywhere else. But "when the *poor* and *needy* seek water and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them: I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water."

When one has ranged creation through in search of happiness—has sought it in the field and in the city, in the haunts of business and in the circles of pleasure, and has met with nothing but disappointment and rebuffs; when he has wandered restless from scene to scene, from employment to employment, perhaps from country to country; when, a pilgrim in the deserts of life, he finds himself "in a dry and thirsty land where no water is," and faints to think that happiness is nowhere to be found; then the Gospel meets him, and thus accosts him: Wherefore seekest thou "the living among the dead?" It is not here. Return from thine idle pursuit. There is but one point whence refresh-

ment can come. Lift thine eyes to the Saviour of sinners. He lifts his eyes; he lifts his heart; and finds "waters" breaking out "in the wilderness—and streams in the desert." Ah, says he, this is where I should have come before. It would have saved me many sore disappointments and many years of anguish.

When one is plucked and crushed by the hand of adversity—has found nothing but grief and perplexity in his connection with the world—carries the aching wounds where friends that have been torn away once grew to his heart—mourns alone without father or mother, without brother or sister, without wife or child—unpitied by the crowd of strangers that gaze upon him and pass him by—while his tattered garments remind him of better days; I hasten to the turf where he sits weeping, and gently, lest I should alarm the ear of grief, say to him, "Hath no man pitied thee?" "Ah," says he, "I am 'in a dry and thirsty land where no water is;' no satisfaction or refreshment for a wretch crushed beneath misfortune." "From my soul I pity you, but do not despair. Let me lead you to the mourner's Friend." I bring him to Jesus: and when I see the balm applied to his wounds, and the countenance of the sufferer beginning to brighten, I take my leave, and return to my house with delicious sensations that an infidel never knew.

Here is another pressed under a sense of heavy guilt. He also is in a land where no water is. He has sought on all sides for relief, but sought in vain. His thirst is for reconciliation with God. In quest of this he has applied to external reformation, to outward duties, to the means of grace. He has sought the counsel of ministers and Christians, and has tried to repose on the good opinions of others. He has made the desperate attempt to rest on universalism, and even on infidelity; but all to no purpose. The fever of his mind remains. His thirst for pardon and peace is unabated; but nowhere can he find any thing to allay it, till at last he approaches the Gospel. He hears it say, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." His attention is strongly arrested. He examines the passage. It is the voice of the Saviour himself. He ultimately seizes the invitation and goes to him; and his astonished soul finds this way of salvation exactly suited to his wants. He finds within "him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

The last figure employed by the prophet, though appropriate and striking, conveys no meaning materially different from the other two. The idea is that of *rest in a cool and refreshing place*. "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The figure represents a traveller in one of the eastern deserts, burnt with intense heat, worn out with toil, fainting for water, for shade. His resolution and strength fail. He abandons the hope of ever reaching the end of the desert; when all at once he discovers before him a high impending rock, under the cavity of whose side he finds a refreshing shelter from the scorching sun and burning sand. Such a retreat does our dear Redeemer afford to those who are fainting under the labors and discouragements of this wearisome life. This vale of tears may well be called a weary land. There are many in it who are ready to faint under the load of affliction, and can say with Job, "My soul is weary of my life." Many are weary of sin—wearied out with a long course of painful struggles with the world, the flesh, and the devil—are often discouraged with the greatness of the contest, and sink under the apprehension that they shall never get through with safety. These evils press them so hard that they often sigh for the grave where the weary are at rest. But a nearer and more delightful retreat is to be found in him who says, "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." "I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul." When his Church wandered forty years in the Arabian wilderness, among burning sands, without a shelter or a shade, he covered them by day with a pillar of cloud. What this was intended to signify, appears from the application made of it by the prophet: "The Lord shall create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory shall be a *defence*. And there shall be a tabernacle *for a shadow in the daytime from the heat*, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."

At what time a poor fainting soul, weary of affliction, weary of sin, weary of temptation, casts itself under the shadow of this rock, he feels a sensation of relief which nothing else can bring, and which none can fully describe.

My brethren, what everlasting thanks do we owe to God for providing such a refuge from the beating tempest—such rivers of refreshment in a dry and thirsty land. What *could* the weather-beaten pilgrim, what could the faint and weary traveller do without them in such a world as this? How greatly does this view tend to endear the Saviour to us. What new motives rush upon the mind to *abide in him*, that we may every hour enjoy a “hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest”—that we may constantly lie at the fountain of living waters, and feel the permanent shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Why do the people of God find so little relief from the distresses of life and the troubles of conscience, but because they abide no more in their everlasting refuge?

How surprising it is, that in a world where a covert from the tempest is so much needed, it is so much neglected, and that even by those who have often found it a shelter when every other refuge failed. Would it not be strange to see a person ready to die with heat and thirst by the very side of a cooling fountain, and by the shade of an overhanging rock? Yet a still greater wonder is witnessed here.

May not these sweet and heavenly truths be allowed to “light up a smile in the aspect of woe?” Will not mourners in Zion come to this refuge and dry up their tears? Were you confined to these stormy regions without a shelter, you might well beat your breasts like one distracted. But now what need? Many there are who know the truth of what I say; who have often found refuge here, and seen the agitations of the tempest composed, and all the fury of the storm appeased. The same shelter is ever at hand, and is always offered to you; and at what time you are afraid, you may always find in Christ a sure retreat. What occasion have you, then, for these desponding griefs? What abundant reason have you to “rejoice evermore.” And while we thus enjoy the blessed fruits of a Saviour’s dying love, let our souls arise and praise him; let a thousand tender recollections rise up in our hearts; and let us renewedly devote ourselves to his service, resolving to live to his glory and to die with an eye fixed upon his cross.

MARY OF TOULOUSE.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”
PSALM 119 : 105.



CHAPTER I.

SOME years ago I left London with my family, for the purpose of trying the mild climate of Italy ; but the disturbed state of the country at that time, led us to make arrangements for passing the winter in the south of France. We crossed in the packet from Dover to Calais, where we spent a few days in procuring information as to the best mode of travelling ; and then proceeded to Paris, which we quitted at the end of three weeks, journeying by post to the south, through Orleans, Châteauroux, Limoges, Montanban, and other towns or villages of less note, not knowing exactly where we should winter. At length, early in October, we

reached Toulouse, a large city, containing about 50,000 people, and situated in a delightful plain, in the ancient province of Languedoc, only forty or fifty miles distant from the Pyrenees, a chain of lofty mountains which divide France from Spain. On the banks of the Garonne, which takes its rise in those mountains, stands Toulouse, almost surrounded by that river and the royal canal of the south, which opens a communication from Bordeaux to Cette, joining the Atlantic ocean to the Mediterranean sea. Toulouse lays claim to very high antiquity, being supposed to have existed 615 years before the Christian era. It was made a Roman colony by Julius Cæsar, and some Roman antiquities may still be seen within and near the city. Christianity was first planted there about A. D. 245, by one Saturninus, who suffered martyrdom by being tied to an ox, and dragged until life was extinct. The name of a street commemorates this cruelty, and a church is still dedicated to the martyr, who, under the title of St. Sernin, is regarded as its patron or protector.

The lateness of the season, and other circumstances, induced us to fix on Toulouse as our winter residence. We therefore lost no time in seeking for a habitation; and a cottage near the city being recommended, we went immediately to see it. It was about half a mile distant from town, and belonged to an abbé, who was then from home, but a message brought him back speedily. The cottage we went to look at stood on a height, giving a delightful view of the city and surrounding country, and was called Pavilion, from two turrets, which surmounted its wings. It contained six rooms and a kitchen, all neatly furnished, and at a moderate rent. In front was a small garden, with fruit-trees and flower-plants; in its centre there was a fountain, and at the angles of the walks were placed statues representing the four seasons. Behind the cottage was a vineyard of about half an acre. The grapes had just been gathered, and lodged in

the wine-press, for the abbé's next year's store of wine. Within the vineyard, and round about it, the British troops were engaged with the French in 1814, before the surrender of Toulouse to the army under the duke of Wellington. Close to the edge of the garden was a road leading to Montauban; and beyond the highway a plain of some extent, subdivided into fields intersected by trenches, which serve instead of hedges as boundaries of the land. This plain is terminated by lofty hills.

To the right of the cottage was seen, lying in a hollow, the city, skirted by the royal canal, which was enlivened by moving barges and trees lining the banks. Here the bustle of traffic was observable, the noise of the boatmen, and the laborious industry of the women, many of whom were busied in lading and unlading barges, while others were immersed knee-deep in the canal washing linen, and others again were in the fields, handling the hoe, or else guiding the oxen in carts or ploughs.

To the left, the Pyrenean mountains raised their lofty peaks to the clouds, and added much to the beauty and interest of the surrounding scene.

CHAPTER II.

The terms of hire being soon arranged with the abbé, with whom it was easy to treat—for he was a very courteous and accommodating man—we entered our cottage on the following day, and when a little settled, paid our respects to our amiable host, who was our next-door neighbor. He received us with much kindness. His appearance was venerable, his age being about seventy years. He was in his ordinary dress, which was a long close garment of black stuff, buttoned from top to bottom. When he went abroad, he put on a three-cornered hat, and, in cold weather, a purple silk surtout, lined with wadding; but in all seasons he

carried his crook-headed cane, which had supported him for several years in his daily walks to and from the cathedral, where he went every morning to assist at early mass. Besides his service at the cathedral, he commonly officiated on Sundays at some village a short distance from home, or else supplied the place of a sick or absent curé of some neighboring church, whither he was conveyed in a covered cart, drawn by oxen; or, if the church lay in the direction of the canal, he proceeded by one of the barges which ply regularly to and fro. His own dwelling consisted of a parlor, two bedchambers, and a kitchen, all on a small scale, and furnished in a simple manner. A framed inscription, which hung over the chimney-piece, attracted my attention on my first visit, and made me wish for an opportunity to take a copy of it. At the top of it was a rude sketch of the virgin Mary, and the infant Saviour in her arms; and underneath, partly in Latin and partly in French, was written the following

PRAYER TO THE HOLY VIRGIN.

“We flee unto thee for protection, O holy mother. Despise not our supplications in our necessities, but deliver us at all times from danger, O glorious and blessed virgin. Amen.

“Honor and glory be to the daughter of the Most High!

“On the 10th of April, 1814, the memorable day of the battle of Toulouse, the cannon-balls respected the image of the most holy virgin, which was in the house of Monsieur T——, priest and prebendary of the cathedral of Toulouse.”

What was meant by *respecting the image* was, that during the action, a cannon-ball passed through the apartment where the image then stood, without touching it.

The abbé's household comprised himself, his vine-dresser, and a female servant, who waited on her master, nursed him

in sickness, marketed, washed, cooked, cleaned the house, and worked in the garden; in short, she managed all his domestic concerns. The name of this valuable servant was Mary. She was the daughter of the vine-dresser, and one of four living sisters, all called Mary, though one had the additional name of Magdalene. She was nearly fifty years of age, of a lively disposition, shrewd understanding, contented mind, and always respectful to her superiors. Whether at work in the house or in the garden, Mary was accustomed to enliven the neighborhood with her cheerful song. She appeared to be one of the happiest of human beings: I say *appeared*, for her contentedness had no solid foundation, because all her delight and wishes were centred in the world, and in the things of time and sense. Her mind seemed to be at ease, but it was only a false peace—a dangerous slumber; and awful indeed would her condition have been, had death and judgment surprised her in that state of ignorance of the only way of escape from the wrath to come. If ever she looked beyond the grave to a future state of existence, she considered her lot to be secured among the blessed by the absolution of the priest, and the performance of certain customary ceremonies; or at least imagined, if she should be forced to undergo some punishment in purgatory for her purification, that the period might be shortened by the money of her friends, or the prayers of the church, and that she would, sooner or later, be set at liberty, and admitted into paradise. At this time she knew nothing of the wickedness and deceitfulness of her own heart—nothing of the devices of the great destroyer of souls—nothing of the poisonous nature of sin, or how it had brought death and every evil into the world. She, in short, was unacquainted with God's word; and being ignorant of the Saviour of sinners, was far from him, and consequently far from enjoying true happiness, and that peace which passes all understanding. In this dangerous state she had toiled many years in the

service of her master, who passed in the neighborhood for a guide and instructor in the way of salvation. Labor through the week, and diversions on the Sabbath-day, intermixed with stated attendances at church on Sundays and holidays, and a round of confessions and absolutions, communions and sins, were the sum of her life, and the substance of her religion. On Sunday morning she never failed, after the hour of market, to go to mass. This done, she believed she had observed the Sabbath, and saw no harm in dividing the remainder of the day between ordinary work, idle conversation, and frivolous amusements. The evening of the Lord's day was constantly closed by a public dance, in which Mary was very conspicuous, both from the sprightliness of her manner, and the gayety of her attire.

CHAPTER III.

The first opportunity I had of speaking seriously to Mary was on a Sabbath-day, about a month after my arrival. Something having been said about her master's privation of domestic comfort, for the want of a good wife, she expressed surprise that Protestant ministers should be allowed to marry, when Roman Catholic ones were *forbidden* to do so. I told her, if man prevented their marriage, God did not, and afterwards read to her out of the Roman Catholic New Testament the passage which requires both bishops and deacons to have but one wife, to rule their own houses well, and to have their children in subjection. 1 Tim. 3 : 2-4, 8-11. Some days after this the abbé called on me, and this subject, among others, became the topic of conversation. He then candidly owned, that the rule of his church forbidding priests to marry, is opposed to holy Scripture; and declared that many ecclesiastics were formerly married, and that some, being threatened with imprisonment if they refused, took wives during the revolution in France. One of these mar-

ried priests, he said, was then living in Toulouse. The abbé allowed that St. Peter was a married man, Matt. 8 : 14, 15 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 5 ; and the Scripture before quoted, 1 Tim. 3, having been again adverted to, I read to him the whole passage, which he thought decisive of the question. He expressed regret that any ecclesiastical law should exist against the marriage of the clergy, though he thought celibacy meritorious. This gave me occasion to remark, that no man can have *merit* with God, all being sinners in his sight. Rom. 3 : 23.

At a subsequent meeting, I read to him 1 Tim. 4 : 1-5 ; but he made no reply, except that the keeping of Lent—as a fast, or abstinence from animal food—is *not* a divine institution.

Finding from the above-mentioned conversation with Mary, that she was unable to read—though I was pleased to hear she was then learning her letters—I proposed to read to her a little out of the New Testament. She having assented, I opened at the third chapter of St. John's Revelation, and read from the eighteenth to the twenty-second verse, making a few observations. I also read the parable of the Pharisee and publican, recorded in St. Luke's gospel, 18 : 10-14. She now expressed much regret that she had not learned to read at an earlier age.

The next day my wife seeing her with her prayer-book, desired her to show it to me. I found the prayers were in Latin and French ; and my eye was soon arrested by one *for the dead* ; upon which I observed to Mary, that prayers are wholly unavailing for departed souls, because they are then fixed in a state of happiness or misery for ever. She seemed surprised at this, but soon afterwards observed, " Then the masses said for the dead must be for the purpose of raising money for the church." These sums she rightly supposed would be better bestowed on the poor in the lifetime of the giver. I afterwards learned that her master

had left in his will four hundred francs for as many masses for his own soul. In order to prove to her that this was a fraud upon the credulous and ignorant, I read to her the evangelist's relation of the two malefactors who were crucified with our blessed Saviour, Luke 23 : 39-43, and dwelt on our Lord's promise to the penitent and believing thief: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

In the course of this conversation, I informed her that one of the chief distinctions between Romanists and Protestants was, that the former *shut up the word of God from the people*, and the latter offered it freely to all the world, according to the spirit of Christ's command to his disciples, which I then read to her from Mark 16 : 15, 16 : "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." This declaration was followed by a statement of the number of copies of the sacred volume distributed by the British and Foreign Bible Society during a period of sixteen years, amounting to upwards of two millions, in different languages, and among various nations. She replied, "*That* is certainly a good work—to enlighten the ignorant; for how can I know any thing except I am taught?"—a remark which brought forcibly to my mind the words of the apostle: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Rom. 10 : 14.

Before the close of this conversation, I adverted to the prayers appointed to be offered to the blessed Mary and other glorified saints, by acquainting her, that as they were only created beings, they ought not to be worshipped, and that the apostle Paul declares there is "*one Mediator* between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Tim. 2 : 5; and with a view to convince her that worship is due to God alone, I read a few verses from Matthew's gospel, 4 : 1-10, pressing upon her the last clause of the tenth verse: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

I also desired her to mark our Saviour's repeated appeal to *the holy Scriptures as the source of all truth* and the corrective of all error; for when Jesus thrice said, "It is written," he surely must be understood to mean, that the sacred Scriptures were given for the express purpose of *being read*, that being the end of all writings. And that such *was* his meaning, is clear from many other passages of the holy volume. But some imagine that the word of God was never designed to be read indiscriminately by all the people. Let, however, two inspired apostles answer these objections. Peter, writing to the faithful, and speaking of the voice from heaven, which declared of Christ, "This is my beloved Son," immediately adds, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." And again he says, "This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in both which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour." 2 Peter, 1:19; 3:1, 2. Observe, that Peter is not writing to the teachers of the people, but to the flock, when he affirms that the inspired volume was intended to enlighten their minds and refresh their memories concerning those truths which belong to their everlasting peace: and if the word of God was used as a light and a remembrancer by the church in the time of the apostles, how much more is it needed in our day to enlighten us, and remind us continually of those things we may have already heard and known? 2 Peter, 1:12, 13, 15. Attend now to the other witness. Paul, in his epistle to the church at Rome, states, that "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Rom. 15:4. The same apostle on another

occasion declares, that "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness;" and it is particularly worthy of attention, that he not only commended Timothy for knowing the holy Scriptures from his childhood, but likewise honored the Bereans for searching the Scriptures daily. See 2 Tim. 3:16; Acts 17:11. Whatever errors and heresies have crept into the church of Christ, it has been justly observed, have originated from men of worldly wisdom and corrupt minds, and almost always from the clergy; but never from humble students of the divine writings, or sincere inquirers after truth.

Among the numberless cases that might be mentioned of the double benefit which meek and teachable persons derive from hearing and reading the records of salvation, that of Mary is one which deserves to be noted. On one occasion she exclaimed, "I am as ignorant as an animal!" and on another she said, with much earnestness, that the Scriptures penetrated the marrow of her bones—reminding me of Hebrews 4:12: "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

CHAPTER IV.

In reference to *public praying and chanting in Latin*, and particularly of unlearned persons addressing God in words which they do not understand, I once read to her part of the fourteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, laying great stress on these verses, 15–17: "I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also; I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also. Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occu-

pieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified." At another time I read the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles in connection with this subject, when she seemed to be convinced in her judgment that prayer in an unknown tongue is improper.

Desirous to renew these conversations frequently with Mary, and perceiving in her an aptness for learning, I offered to devote an hour every afternoon to teach her to read, promising at the same time to give her a New Testament as soon as she was able to read it. She gladly accepted my proposal, and came regularly every day from four to five o'clock. These interesting lessons commenced about the middle of November, and continued until February, when they were interrupted by my indisposition. Our method was, to precede them by a short prayer; both kneeling, and invoking the aid and light of the Holy Spirit to guide teacher and learner into all truth. Part of the hour was spent in her reading, and part in my explanation of the subject, chiefly drawn from the gospel history, particularly from that according to St. John. These familiar lectures often called forth many serious inquiries and pertinent observations on the part of Mary, who once asked me, with much solemnity, whether I thought it *possible she could be saved* in that communion in which she had been brought up. My answer was, "With God nothing is impossible." At another time she observed, "If what you tell me be true, then *the chief part of the inhabitants of this country are in great error*;" and she not unfrequently expressed surprise that her master, a regular ecclesiastic, had never instructed her in those truths which she was now in the habit of hearing daily from a layman. This neglect did not, however, prevent her from imparting to him that knowledge which she was acquiring from day to day, by the teaching of the Spirit of truth; and though the abbé was

informed of the particulars of each day's lesson, he never took the least offence, but on the contrary repeatedly thanked me for teaching her, and not seldom heard her repeat her lesson before she came to me. Indeed, his behavior was always kind and friendly, and I sometimes recall with mingled delight and regret many winter evenings of social converse near our comfortable log-fire ; on which occasions he partook of bread, and fruits, and wine, after the custom of his country, while we refreshed ourselves, after the English fashion, with tea and toast.

Having in my possession a tract "On the Employment of the Sabbath," I lent it to Mary one Sabbath, desiring her to ask Emily, a young woman in the next cottage, to read it to her. In the evening Mary told me that she and another female had heard it ; but, said she, if its contents were strictly observed, "I must never handle a broom on the Sabbath-day." I informed her that necessary work only ought to be done on the Lord's day. She thought it would be better if all the shops were closed on Sunday ; for she said that people might easily supply themselves on Saturday with what they wanted. I answered, "God's commands ought to be obeyed, and we should not follow a multitude to do evil." "Certainly not," she replied ; "for if a crowd of people choose to drown themselves, it is no reason why I should jump into the river." Soon afterwards she added, "For my part, I wish to repent, and be saved." I advised her to pray for the Holy Spirit ; and as conversion had been mentioned, I said I would read to her something on that subject. I then explained the third chapter of St. John's gospel, where our Lord Jesus Christ, in a conversation with a certain ruler, declares, verses 3, 5, 7, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God ;" and, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Marvel not," continues the Saviour, "that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."

Mary asked if she had done right in staying at home that afternoon, for the purpose of learning to read, instead of taking her string of beads to church, where she said she would probably only gaze about, as others did, during the service. I told her, when she was able to read her Testament, she would lay aside her beads; for the word of God, once written in her heart, would supply the place of the rosary. I further said, that if she remained at home with an intent to learn to read good books, she had done well. Her answer was, "I desire to read no other than good books;" and then she spoke of Thomas à Kempis, as one. This work is known in France by the title of "The Imitation of Jesus Christ." I commended its general contents, though I could not approve of all; and observed, that it was translated into many languages; but, added I, those who would imitate Jesus Christ, must follow his steps. I then turned to the tenth chapter of John, and read it to her, laying particular stress on these verses, 1, 9, 11, 14, 27, 28: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. I am the good Shepherd: the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." I pointed out *Christ as the only door of admission* into the heavenly fold, and stated, that all who attempt to enter it by their own fancied good works or deservings, or by any other way than by his merits, must fail, and incur condemnation; that Jesus is also the good Shepherd, who sacrificed his life for his believing people, those once-strayed and lost sheep, in whose recovery he rejoices, watching over them with the tenderest care, and

supplying all their wants; that those who belong to his flock enjoy the comfortable assurance of his continual love and protection, diligently study his word, obey his commands, and copy his example. "These shall never perish," because he has engaged to guide and guard them through all the dangers and trials of life, and to bring them at last safely to the fold of everlasting rest.

These lectures and explanations were not long continued before a marked change was very observable in Mary's behavior. The Spirit of God had opened her heart, and wrought wonderfully in her. The Lord's day, so long abused by frequenting the market and the dance, and by idling away the intermediate hours in vain conversation and amusement, she now began to hold in esteem and reverence. The dance was given up, but it was some time before the Sunday market could be renounced; at length, however, the new nature prevailed over the old—grace triumphed over sin—and she was enabled to relinquish also this profane custom. The conflict was probably hard, before her resolution was fixed on this point, because the comfort of her master, to whom she was much attached, was involved in the decision. It may not be generally known, that the provisions brought to the Sunday markets in France are the most abundant, and of the choicest kind. There she had never failed to procure the best supplies for his table: and it should not be omitted, that when Pavilion cottage was hired, it was agreed that Mary should market for us, but no purchases were ever made for us on the Lord's day; and though she had repeatedly advised them, we had always declined them for ourselves, and condemned them in others. At length it pleased God to convince her that this was a violation of his Sabbath; and one day she informed me that she had come to a determination to let her master know that she could no longer market for him on Sundays, because God had commanded that day to be kept holy. This intimation, which was made

in a respectful manner, was received by him without anger or displeasure. The gardening was likewise discontinued, and all unnecessary work within and without doors was suspended till the following day.

A remarkable feature in my scholar was, an uncommon readiness of mind to believe whatever could be *proved to her out of holy Scripture*. She seemed to belong to that small class of sincere and unprejudiced persons, in whom the divine seed falling into good ground, prepared by the secret operations of the Spirit, promises the largest increase, even an hundred-fold. One day, Mary with tears in her eyes deeply lamented to me her sinfulness. I thereupon reminded her of these consolatory words of the Friend of penitent sinners: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Matt. 5:4.

On another occasion, when our studies were over, and she was about to leave me, her heart being full of what she had just read and heard, she exclaimed with much earnestness, "I desire to *give myself up to God*." I think this occurred after my having read with her the parable of the creditor and debtor, Luke 7:36-50, which I stated to be a short but clear exposition of the good tidings of great joy which were to be published to all people. Such was the earnestness of her manner at this time, and so solemn did this dedication of herself to her God and Saviour appear to me, that she might well be supposed to have then felt the forcible language of our Christian poet:

"Earth shall never be my care;
This my only wish and prayer—
Thine in life and death to be,
Now, and to eternity!"

Mention has been already made of the string of beads called a *rosary*, which Mary was accustomed to carry to church. This was purchased of those missionaries who

yearly traverse different parts of France, preaching and setting up crosses of wood or stone on the high-roads, and trafficking in crucifixes, images, and things of that kind. One of these teachers having announced from the pulpit that none of the people could be saved except they purchased rosaries at their booths, Mary was induced to try the efficacy of this charm; but no sooner were her eyes opened to the imposition, than she renounced her vain confidence, and offered to give it to me. I accepted it, rejoicing with thanksgiving at this fresh triumph of truth over error, and of light over darkness.

This, and similar superstitions, had been discussed on different occasions; and on one of these the doctrine and practice of *auricular confession* became the subject of more serious conversation. It is commonly supposed to be grounded on the apostle's words, "Confess your faults one to another." Jas. 5:16. I therefore endeavored to convince her that this could not mean that the people were to confess their sins to their priest, for then it would be equally the priest's duty to confess his sins to his people, because it is written, *Confess one to another*. But as the apostle likewise adds immediately, *and pray one for another*, it follows, that if the priest is not bound to confess to the people, neither is it his duty to pray for them, or that of the congregation to pray for their pastor. The true sense, I thought, seemed to be this: that it is the duty of every Christian to acknowledge the faults and trespasses he commits against his neighbor; to ask his forgiveness; and each is required to pray for the other: but priests and people are alike bound to confess their sins, not to men, for *all* are sinners, but to God, who only can pardon and absolve transgressors.

CHAPTER V.

Mary not only felt a deep concern for her own soul, but soon showed her love for the souls of others; and this ap-

peared in different ways. Her master's friends, some of whom were priests, came occasionally to see him; and after Mary received the New Testament, she took every opportunity of producing the gift of the English traveller, extolling it at the same time as a good book. The abbé's elder brother was of the number of those visitors. He was a layman, between seventy and eighty years of age, on whom Mary's arguments had so good an effect, that he was persuaded to purchase a copy of the New Testament in the town. I had an interview with him in the evening, and Mary exhibited the purchase with exultation. Some tracts were added to Mons. T——'s parcel, which he gladly accepted, and took home with him the following day.

Another instance of Mary's desire to benefit others was, that observing I was in the habit of distributing tracts, she asked me to allow her to do the same; or, to use her own words, to act the part of a missionary. Though I did not judge this advisable, I yet remember having intrusted to her care two tracts, one of which, "Serious Thoughts on Eternity," was for the particular use of her master, and given at his own request; and the other was intended for one of her acquaintances in the city.

A further evidence of her love and solicitude for the best, the eternal interests of others, is, that just before Christmas, when her youngest sister, who was married and settled at Castelnau-dry, came to spend a day with Mary, she brought her to me, and entreated me to speak to her on the subject of religion. She had previously hinted to me that her sister's husband had a great desire to learn to read, profiting by every leisure moment; and that he had even been seen with a book in his hand while in the field; but that this thirst for knowledge displeased his wife much, and she made his home very disagreeable, which sometimes obliged him to retire for quiet into the stable. In the same house with Mary's relatives lived three brothers, who were all as desir-

ous as himself to acquire the art of reading. After speaking seriously to her sister about her opposition to her husband, and also concerning her own state, I read to her some portions of the word of God, to which she listened with deep attention; and before she left me, her opinion seemed so much changed, that she gladly received four Testaments and some tracts for her husband and his fellow-lodgers, and another set of books for the schoolmaster of the place where she resided; and I was much gratified by her assurance, that she would never again molest her husband, but rather encourage his reading.

Mary and her sister attended our family prayers that evening, when another portion was read out of the New Testament; and early the next morning the latter returned home in the barge, and some days afterwards sent me word that all the books were thankfully welcomed.

I could never discover that any adult school existed in France. I exceedingly lamented this great deficiency, and that some part of the misspent and profaned Sabbaths was not applied to teach the ignorant and unlettered poor to read the words of eternal life.

CHAPTER VI.

A diversity of opinion was now apparent in Toulouse and its neighborhood concerning the holy Scriptures, both priests and people being divided as to its being good or evil for all persons to read the sacred volume. Besides the adjoining cottage, where Emily resided with her parents, there were two others very near the abbé's. One belonged to Mons. S., formerly a commissary of the French army in Spain, who lived with his wife in the enjoyment of a quiet retreat, and a sufficient income. The other was tenanted by a peasant, whose wife Cecile supplied us with milk. These last had a daughter about thirteen, named Louise, to

whom I gave a Testament as a new-year's gift, and wrote under her name, "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." 2 Tim. 3 : 15. This girl, who went to a school kept by the new order of nuns, called *Sisters of Charity*, took great delight in reading the Scriptures to her mother, who had never been taught to read. One day when Cecile, in conversation with a female acquaintance, was commending what she had heard her daughter read out of the New Testament, she was greatly surprised to hear from the woman that it was a *bad book*; and because it came, as she said, from a heretic, she told her she was committing a great sin in retaining it. Cecile, alarmed and terrified, desired her daughter to take it to the grand-vicar for his opinion concerning it. The girl went and delivered it into his hands. As soon as the grand-vicar perceived it was the New Testament, he shut the book and calmly put it into his pocket, telling the girl that it was a book formerly prohibited. Louise went away with a sorrowful face, lamenting the loss of her pretty book. After waiting several days without hearing more of it, she informed one of the nuns of my present, and how the grand-vicar had kept it, when she went to ask his opinion of it. The nun's curiosity being excited to see the book, she desired Louise to request the grand-vicar to send it to her. Louise set off immediately, and quickly returned with it; and, after examination, the nuns pronounced it to be a good book, in spite of former prohibitions. It was then restored to the child, who was overjoyed at again having the lost treasure in her possession.

Another Testament was presented to the commissary's wife, who kindly received it, though she feared to use it before she had obtained the approval of an ecclesiastic. She therefore desired her nephew, who was a student at the seminary, to show it to the director, who was a priest; but

he instantly condemned it *as a book which deserved to be burned*. Madame S—— being very unwilling to carry the sentence into execution, thought it right to take first another opinion. She accordingly applied to her own confessor, who declared it to be *a proper book for her*.

Mary had likewise told her confessor that she had received a similar gift from me; upon which she was cautioned not to read too much in it, lest it should divert her mind from the duties of her religion.

This variety of sentiment, I think, did much in establishing the fame of the New Testament *as a good book*, not only in the two adjacent cottages, but also in the minds of Mary and Emily, who likewise received one from me. All the Testaments distributed were of the same version—De Sacy's—the one generally approved by those French Romanists who know something of the value of the oracles of God.

Mary continued her daily study of the Scriptures till about the middle of February, three months from its commencement. An interruption occurred at this period, in consequence of a severe illness, which prevented me for some weeks from attending to any business. Mary showed during that season of trial a most affectionate concern for her instructor, by her eager activity to contribute by every means in her power to my relief and comfort. She was always ready to run to the physician or chemist, to the shops or the market, in order to procure what was wanting. At one time she seemed to think my recovery hopeless, saying, "He will certainly die, and go to heaven." But the Lord and Giver of life—blessed be his holy name—willed it otherwise. He spared and raised me up to renewed health and vigor. When restored to strength, I offered her a pecuniary recompense for all her kindness during my sickness, but she was unwilling to take it; and I was obliged to insist on her receiving some remuneration besides my grateful acknowledgments, before she would consent.

The study of the Scriptures was now resumed and continued till the period of our departure, which was fast approaching. By the end of February the winter had nearly disappeared, with scarcely a flake of snow left except on the neighboring mountains, which were well clad with it. A hoarfrost covered the ground by night; but this was quickly dissipated by the returning sun, which now beamed forth with great force, giving new life to the vegetable creation. Though the winters in that region are by no means severe, it is nevertheless visited by many a keen blast from the Atlantic ocean and the Pyrenees, and in 1819 the river Garonne was passable on the ice. The spring sets in about three weeks sooner than in England. In February the almond-tree abounded in blossoms, and in March a species of the pear-tree was in full bloom. At this early season the vine-dressers were busy in pruning the vines, which grow there like gooseberry-bushes, requiring neither props nor runners. The sprigs of the vine are then lopped off near the stem, leaving it about two feet above ground. Many dry sticks are thus gathered for firing from the superfluous withered branches, while the pruned ones become more vigorous and productive: the former aptly representing to the Christian spectator the *end* of all dead, fruitless, hypocritical professors in Christ's church; and the latter exhibiting the true and living disciples, who, though pruned by sharp trials, have still an abiding union with Christ, and deriving from him all sap and strength, yield more abundant fruits of the Spirit, to the praise and glory of God. John 15:1-8.

On the 4th of April, we took our departure from Toulouse. It was a day of gloom and sorrow to us, as well as to some whom we were leaving behind. Mary was so greatly affected that she was incapable of rendering us any assistance. She stood like a statue on the threshold of the door, and with tears in her eyes and a faltering voice, entreated me to pray for her. When all the neighbors wished us a

prosperous journey, she remained motionless and speechless, absorbed in pensiveness and grief. At length the moment of separation arrived. We commended her to God, and the word of his grace, which was able to build her up, and give her an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus, Acts 20 : 32 ; and afterwards we gave her, and all around us, the parting farewell. As the carriage descended towards the gate of St. Etienne, we cast a long, lingering look at Pavilion cottage, admiring the wonderful grace of God, and the wisdom of his providence, in fixing our habitation in that particular spot.

The kind abbé accompanied us to the end of the first stage, but long before we reached it, the tear was visible in his eye : and when the moment of our separation from him arrived, feeling perhaps that we might never meet again till the general assembly before the judgment-seat of Christ, he became much agitated ; his heart was full, and his eyes filled with tears. We took an affectionate leave of one another, and then pursued our opposite courses ; we towards Villefranche, and he towards Toulouse. Our friend the abbé had taken the precaution to apprise his brother of the exact time when we should reach his house, which lay in our direct route ; and when we alighted at his door, he gave us a very hospitable reception, and comfortable refreshment.

CHAPTER VII.

After passing an hour and a half with Mons. T——, we prosecuted our journey towards Nice, visiting on the way Montpellier, and other populous cities, towns, and villages in the south. The country we traversed abounded in olive-trees, which presented a desolate appearance ; the greater part having been smitten by the frost the preceding year. Those that survived the severe cold were now in blossom. This tree is an evergreen, and grows to a good height ; its leaf resembles that of the willow, and its trunk

assumes every fantastic form. On one occasion we remarked the olive-tree, the vine, and the corn all growing together in one field; thus combining in one view, three of the choicest products of the earth which the bounteous Giver of all good dispenses to ungrateful man. At Nice, a town lying on the Mediterranean, and on the frontier of Italy, I received a letter from the abbé, in reply to one sent to him on my journey, and it contained this pleasing intelligence: "My own health, Mary's, and her father's is very good. I did not forget to inform Mary of your kindness in seeing her brother-in-law, and putting into his hands 'the word of God,' for which she requests me to express her grateful acknowledgment."

After spending several weeks in Nice, we crossed in the middle of June the high Alps by a dangerous road, the Col di Tende, part of which was covered with snow. Thence we descended into the valleys of Piedmont, where God has preserved, from the first planting of Christianity in Italy, a church uncorrupted in doctrine by any of those errors and superstitions which degrade the neighboring region. The lamp of truth still shines amidst the surrounding darkness, and in the history of that community has been literally fulfilled the Redeemer's promise to his church, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." From Piedmont we journeyed through many famed cities, which lie on the great road leading to Rome. Crossing the Apennine mountains beyond Bologna, the eye of the traveller is delighted with a view of several hamlets and cottages, which serve to beguile the weariness of the passage over that desert. Night brought us to the handsome city of Florence, whence we proceeded to the ancient capital of the world; and there, while surveying the ruins of palaces and theatres, and mourning over the surrounding spiritual desolation, we unexpectedly received the melancholy intelligence of the removal of poor Mary by death. No previous information of

her illness had reached us, nor any further accounts of her since the abbé's letter in May; we were, therefore, the more shocked by the unexpected account of her death, an event afterwards confirmed by a second letter from the abbé, giving some particulars. The substance is as follows.

“Your letter, my dear sir, drew from me tears of joy and sorrow: joy, in hearing that you and your family enjoyed good health; and sorrow, in the revival of my grief for my irreparable loss. I am quite sure that you participate in my sorrow on this mournful occasion. Mary was deeply regretted by all who knew her. Her rare virtues and her good temper made her beloved by all. You desire to know some particulars of her illness, and the good disposition she manifested before her decease; but in order to satisfy your inquiries, I must enter into a very distressing detail.

“The day of your departure was a day of mourning both to myself and Mary. From that fatal hour she lost her natural gayety, and found comfort in nothing but in the study of the precious book—*le livre d'or*—which you had given her, for she never forgot the good sentiments you had impressed on her mind.

“Five days after you left us, your apartments were taken by three young men, one of whom was ill, suffering from disease of the lungs. Doctor R—— was called in, and applied a large blister to his chest. Mary nursed him with the tenderness of a mother. This distressing and disagreeable circumstance, added to the business of the house, and the necessary errands, made her neglectful of her own health, which was then in a critical state, requiring much rest and care. On the 2d of June, I felt so indisposed after my return from town at seven o'clock in the morning, that it was thought I had taken a serious illness. Mary was greatly distressed and alarmed about me, and was unfortunately incapable of rendering me any assistance. Medical aid was obtained; several draughts were ordered for me, as well as

the application of leeches. My illness lasted six weeks, during which period Mary, in spite of her own indisposition, endeavored to do all she could for me, but would take no medicine herself until I was restored. Meanwhile her illness daily increased, and she became very weak. The doctor's prescriptions were useless, for she took medicine only once or twice, and then omitted it, depending on the strength of her constitution. A week before she died, she took whatever was ordered for her; but medical skill was then of no avail. A consultation took place. On the 19th of August, at two in the morning, she became so feeble that she fainted for some time. I was instantly called, and hastened to her, but found her dying. Her mind was quite clear, as it was throughout her illness. I seized this favorable moment to give her all the spiritual consolation in my power, and had the satisfaction of seeing her resigned to death—to sleep in the arms of her Beloved, who has taken her to his bosom. I doubt not she is now happy. May the Lord grant us all the same favor. She surrendered her spirit to God in the best religious frame, in the presence of many, who were dissolved in tears. Her poor father will remain with me for the comfort of each other in our irreparable loss.

“ I shall carefully keep the precious present you made to Mary, and *thence* I shall draw all my consolation; and will never cease in my prayers to God to implore the preservation of your own life and that of your connections. My elder brother is much obliged by your remembrance of him; also M. and Madame S.

“ On the 19th of October I again let the cottage, but my tenants quitted it in six weeks; so that I am now without society, absorbed in recollections and sorrow, which overwhelm me.

“ I have the honor to be, my dear sir,

“ Your most affectionate servant,

“ T——.”

Mary's life and death are full of salutary instruction. The reader of this narrative will remember how very different her character and dispositions were before and after her conversion to God. Before she had received a new heart and a right spirit, she was debased by foolish superstitions and fatal ignorance of the only way of salvation, pursuing a course of vanity and sin; yet all the while under the strange delusion that she was a Christian, because born and baptized in the church of her fathers. But no sooner were her eyes opened to see her guilt and danger—no sooner was she brought by divine mercy to weep over her sins, and turn from the error of her ways to that Redeemer who is not less willing than mighty to save all who come unto God by him, than we behold her reverencing that sacred day which she had so long slighted and abused—we see her diligently employed from day to day, and sometimes for hours together, in the study of God's holy will and commandments, and testifying her love to her Saviour by various acts of kindness and affection, more particularly by zeal and solicitude for the eternal welfare of her fellow-creatures; evidencing, in short, throughout her latter days, both in life and conversation, that she was a new creature, "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son." Who that remembers her earnest desire to give up herself to God and be saved, can doubt her having chosen, with her namesake of old, that good part which shall never be taken from her? Luke 10 : 42. Or who can hesitate to believe that she is now numbered with those myriads of angelic spirits who are incessantly chanting the new song of the redeemed: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing." "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb," Rev. 5 : 12; 7 : 10.

Mary's speedy removal from this transitory state of exist-

ence is a warning voice to all who have yet to pass into the eternal world. It is a voice from her tomb admonishing high and low, rich and poor, young and aged, "Prepare to meet thy God."

Mary was of a good constitution of body, accustomed to the hardships of labor and the vicissitudes of weather, and was besides in excellent health not long before she was overtaken by that illness which laid her cold corpse in the grave. But every day's experience only serves to confirm the observation, that whenever God is pleased to send his messenger to cut down the full-ripe corn, or the fruitless tree—one for the granary, and the other for burning—neither health, nor youth, nor rank, nor riches can stay his hand. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Reader, beware lest death surprise *you* in your sins. Repent and believe the gospel, before it be too late to flee from the wrath to come. Pray fervently that, through the grace of the Lord Jesus and the aid of the Holy Spirit, you may be turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; otherwise you will perish in your sins, and be cast into the lake of unquenchable fire, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VIII.

Frequent allusion has been made to the kind and amiable conduct of our host; but truth compels me to declare, that though an acknowledged minister of Christ, he was as lamentably ignorant of the gospel as most of his neighbors. "If the blind lead the blind, both," as says our Saviour, "shall fall into the ditch." In proof of the abbé's ignorance of true religion, we need only refer to the superstitious inscription suspended in his apartment, his bequest for masses to extricate his own soul from an imaginary place

called purgatory, and his neglect of the spiritual and eternal welfare of his household and neighbors. Whether it has since pleased the God of all grace to show him his danger and lead him to Christ, the only refuge for lost sinners, I know not; but I love to cherish the hope, that by the teaching of the Holy Spirit our conversations may have been blessed to the conversion of his soul, and that he may indeed have drawn all his consolation from that fountain of truth where Mary imbibed her saving knowledge; which, while it proved the comfort of her latter days, was doubtless also her support when passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

Since the abbé's second letter, and after different inquiries, I at length received a communication from his niece, five years later, informing me of his passage from time into eternity. No particulars were given of his dying sentiments, or of the date of his departure.

Thus have both master and servant been summoned to that final account which all must render at the tribunal of Christ. Their lot is cast, either for endless happiness or endless misery; and in a few years, or months, or days, the hand that now writes may be motionless, and the eye that now reads may be sightless. See, reader; that you *now* lay this instruction to heart. Seek to profit by it; and, above all, seek grace from God to study, believe, and obey the blessed volume of inspiration—GOD'S HOLY BOOK. Read it for yourself, or hear it read by another; examine it well, and pray over it fervently; and neglect not to impart to all within your reach the words of eternal life. Hide not from others this key of knowledge; bury not this inestimable talent; lest you not only shut out *them* from the kingdom of heaven, but *yourself* also, and bring on your own head a greater condemnation.

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