

JOHN ANGELL JAMES:
A REVIEW OF HIS
HISTORY, CHARACTER, ELOQUENCE
AND
LITERARY LABOURS
BY
JOHN CAMPBELL

PROOF-READING DRAFT

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JOHN ANGELL JAMES:

A REVIEW OF HIS

HISTORY, CHARACTER, ELOQUENCE,

AND

LITERARY LABOURS;

WITH DISSERTATIONS ON

**THE PULPIT AND THE PRESS, ACADEMIC PREACHING,
COLLEGE REFORM, ETC.**

BY JOHN CAMPBELL, DD

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CHRISTIAN MISSIONS, PUSEYISM AND POPERY, JETHRO, ETC.*

RESIDENCE OF MR. JAMES.

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PREFACE

THE leading idea of the present volume is the necessity of a Scriptural ministration of the Gospel, alike as to men, matter, and medium. Its fixed and imperative demands are, 'Men of God'—'Christ crucified'—and 'great plainness of speech'. Any material deviation

on these points will be dangerous, and fully carried out, it will be ruinous to the interests of Religion. But such a ministration is the exception, not the rule, throughout the Protestant Churches of Europe. It is, therefore, vain to look for any true, great, and lasting revival of Religion which is not preceded and accompanied by a Scriptural ministry.

The Grand Apostasy, early begun, and ultimately finished by the Papacy, issued in the utter destruction of the Kingdom of Christ in its essence, form, and attributes; and the calamity was perfected by withholding from the people the Sacred Scriptures. The Priest then became their Bible, and his will their law. The Church, which had by degrees become confounded with the world, was at length lost in it. The ministerial office perished in the common wreck. Preaching and the Gospel went down together; and Christian ordinances shared the same fate. They were first corrupted, then neglected; they were by degrees perverted, and in the end completely destroyed. The spiritual character of the Christian ministry was entirely set aside. No regard whatever, in relation to it, was had to the Sacred Scriptures. Thus the worst of men became the teachers of the human race, and their lessons tended only to blind, debase, and destroy. 'The knowledge of salvation' they could not impart, for they did not possess it; and their example was

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not in advance of their intelligence. They were everywhere a stumbling-block, a curse rather than a blessing.

Now it admits of no dispute, that the Reformation from Popery did much at the outset towards correcting this universal evil. The Protestant standards were good, but they soon became, and have continued almost everywhere to be, a dead letter. The Protestant Universities throughout Europe generally acted on the principle of 'making ministers' out of our common humanity, just as they did physicians and lawyers. Nothing, or next to nothing, has been done towards restoring the supremacy of the Divine Word as to their spiritual character, or their evangelical qualifications. Laudable attempts have been made by bodies of Christians, apart from the Universities, to carry out the principles of the New Testament; and the endeavour has been attended with results highly beneficial to the cause of religion. There is, nevertheless, danger as to these

bodies, lest, as they become numerous, and wealthy, and popular, profession should survive principle, and the same carnality prevail among them as among others. The idea of securing and preserving a *converted Ministry* implies much more than at first sight appears, requiring the utmost vigilance and the most unswerving fidelity in all who have to do with the matter. By degrees the *professional* idea, unless closely matched, will infallibly creep into both the Churches and the Colleges; considerations of holiness will merge in considerations of learning, and the head will take the place of the heart. The work of the Holy Spirit will be lost sight of in the work of tutors, and the 'making of ministers' will become once more an affair of art and man's device. It will be viewed as simply a process of intellectual culture. This is the natural tendency of things; the principle operates everywhere, and when the effect has come to pass, the cause of Christ, even among Protestants, is in imminent jeopardy. Unbelieving men will here and there, in the guise of ministers, find their way to the pulpit; by degrees they will multiply into a majority, and in due season they will command the whole field. The pulpit once filled with carnality, it will extend to every office in the

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Church. Wealth, not grace, position, not piety, will constitute the sole qualification! As the concomitant of all this, the Gospel will be first clouded, then diluted, then neutralised, then slurred over, then denied, and at last opposed! The work of conversion, of course, will cease; discipline will be disregarded, the laws of Christ trampled in the dust, and the Gospel vineyard covered with desolation! Examples of all this in abundance are supplied by Church History.

It must surely, then, be a great object both to correct and to prevent an evil so fearful and so fatal. So great is the danger that even the buddings of it are not to be despised or overlooked; a little leaven will suffice to leaven the whole lump. An inconceivable amount of work, however, is yet to be performed before the Protestant Churches be thoroughly purged from their carnality, and brought back to the Apostolic Standard, as to doctrine, ordinances, and ministry. The difficulties which stand in the way are incalculable, and all but insurmountable! Habit, pride,

presumption, antiquity, all unite to bar the way of the zealous Reformer, and so to conserve the all-destroying evil. It becomes, therefore, a matter of grave inquiry, by what means the 'Old Paths' may be most successfully restored; and after revolving the subject for long years, I feel shut up to one course as that which alone promises to be attended with the Divine blessing, and followed by the desired results. That course is a direct appeal to the New Testament. Our business is simply to master that book, and then to compare everything with the Divine Standard. On this principle I have uniformly acted in preparing the present volume. Ignoring sect and party, I have sought only for truth. Its strictures are the fruit of careful examination of the inspired page; and I am deeply, painfully struck with the difference which obtains between the Divine Record and the Protestant Churches. Scarcely can two economies be less like each other than that of the Apostles, and that which now prevails.

But this change is without authority. The Apostles, beyond question, intended that their inspired plan should continue in the ages to come, instead of giving place to

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another of an entirely different and most conflicting character. They never contemplated that, as a means of raising up pastors, crowds of young men should be taken promiscuously from a godless world, or even from the professing Church, and manufactured into ministers, and to that end required to spend whole years in secular studios, and in learning the tongues of idolatrous Greece and Rome! It is absolutely certain that the Apostolic pastorates were not composed of mere lads and very young men. The Epistles explicitly, emphatically require the parties to be ordained to have reached maturity. They are designated 'elders'—a term which always had reference to age rather than to office—'pastors', 'teachers', 'rulers', 'stewards', 'watchmen', 'ambassadors of Christ', 'angels of the churches', and 'servants of the Most High God'—terms wholly incongruous with the idea of persons in their teens, or only a year or two beyond them.

The idea of Preaching Schools was unknown to the Apostles; every church supplied its own pastors. In those days there was clearly no lack of fit and proper men. What was sought was not

linguists, mathematicians, philosophers, and orators, but 'men of God'. We find Titus specially appointed to 'set in order the things that were wanting, and ordain elders in every city'; and we have Paul himself traversing whole regions, and 'ordaining elders in every church.' Fit and proper men everywhere appear to have abounded. In Paul's epistles both to Timothy and Titus, where the qualifications of Pastors are specially set forth, and the rules of ordination clearly laid down, it is distinctly stated that the candidate must be a married man, 'having his children in subjection with all gravity.' The reason is urgent, 'for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the Church of God?' The reason holds equally in all time. This language is utterly incompatible with the idea of juvenile pastorates. 'Taking care of the Church' is work which ill befits the condition of untried and inexperienced youth. It requires years, wisdom, discipline, knowledge of man, and weight of character.

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As to the selection, we read in the sacred page, that it is the express prerogative of the Lord Jesus 'to give pastors and teachers for the work of the Ministry.' This gift, and the internal call consequent upon it, come to be known by the fact, that the parties in question 'desire the office of a Bishop.' They are, by the Holy Spirit, prompted to seek the work to which they are divinely appointed. But even this 'desire', as it may be spurious, has its checks and its tests. The subject of it, if a 'novice', or recent convert, neither 'rooted nor grounded in the truth', is to be rejected; 'lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil.'

The Scriptures testify that the Holy Ghost not only calls and qualifies pastors, but appoints them to the sphere of their labour. He commanded the Church at Antioch to 'separate Paul and Barnabas for the work to which he had called them.' Paul, addressing the elders of the Church at Ephesus, said, 'Take heed unto yourselves and to the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.' There is here a principle of universal application and unchanging perpetuity. True pastors are appointed by the Holy Ghost. They are 'sent', and they enjoy the promised presence

of their Master to render their work efficacious. Men may, indeed, go, as multitudes have gone, unspent, but their character will be known by the fact that they remain unblessed. 'I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran: I have not spoken unto them, yet they prophesied.' Concerning such men, however, it is written that 'they shall not profit the people at all.' Paul asks, 'How shall they preach except they be sent?' showing the perpetuity of the arrangement, and the necessity of the Divine mandate.

The Divine Book further shows that personal piety, true and deep, is an essential qualification; without this no man is fitted to publish the Gospel of reconciliation. This piety, moreover, must be not simply credible, as a thing of profession, but fully developed in the character of the parties, and palpable to all the world. The specified graces of the pastor

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enumerated in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, extend to a long catalogue, exhibiting not merely a character without spot, but shining in all the beauties of holiness!

Next to character is capacity. This is an indispensable qualification. There must be 'aptness to teach', as well as 'good behaviour'. The rule of ordination runs thus:—'The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.' Fidelity and ability must be united: neither will suffice apart. The bulk of the Gentile pastors could have but little beyond the Gospels and the Apostolic Epistles. But whether more or less, their knowledge and their qualifications were derived solely from the Scriptures. These were their study both day and night. There they were to 'seek knowledge as silver, and search for it as hid treasure.' The fullness and the sufficiency of Scripture were infinite. No occasion could arise to the individual, the family, or the Church, which was not amply provided for in the sacred volume.

Such are the principles set forth in the New Testament, principles intended to regulate the Churches of Christ till the close of ages. There is room for diversity of judgement as to Church Government, and a multitude of subjects not of a fundamental character, but as to these the law is absolute, fixed, and unalterable. It follows, therefore, that whatever expedients may be had recourse to of an

auxiliary nature, they must in no degree trench upon these principles, but rather tend to fortify and add to their efficacy. While these principles are held sacred, language, science, philosophy, literature, all knowledge and all culture, may be added in the largest possible measure. But all these things united, cannot compensate for the want of piety, the want of Gospel, or the want of teaching ability. John Angell James, like Apollos, was ‘an eloquent man, and mighty in the Scriptures’; and to further the increase of such men is the main design of the present publication.

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ACADEMIC REFORM

TO THE

**PRESIDENTS, PROFESSORS, MANAGERS, AND
SUPPORTERS**

Theological Colleges

GENTLEMEN,

I beg leave, with all respect and deference, to submit for your consideration the following thoughts on the Reform of our Theological Institutions. My object is the correction of evils, which are exercising a disastrous influence. With the Academic Institutions of the country these evils originated, and it therefore devolves on them to furnish an antidote. The application of the remedy may require courage, wisdom, and patience; but the cure once effected, the good will compensate all the trouble and all the cost a thousand-fold.

In this volume the voice of John Angell James, although dead, is still heard; and it may be that the pleadings which have heretofore been ineffectual, will at length obtain a hearing. The testimony of that great Master in our British Israel on this subject, is finished;

having delivered his judgement, his lips are sealed, and he will remain silent for ever! It, therefore, behoves those who, like myself, fully sympathise with him in his solicitude, to make the most of it in their honest endeavours to carry out what he so intensely desired

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and so zealously laboured for. With this view the present publication has been put forth. All that Mr James has uttered at various times, in various places, and in various ways, on the great theme, has here been brought together, and embodied so that every passage may be contemplated either alone, or with others, all forming a valuable digest of opinion, sentiment, and suggestion on this the greatest of all great subjects. On the more important of his views Mr James is here supported by men of knowledge, experience, and power, both among the living and the dead. So clear, indeed, is the case, that to be convinced, I think, men have only to examine it with candour. This, I hope, will in good faith and in good earnest now be done. The alternative is irretrievable damage to the cause of God throughout these realms!

While entirely concurring with Mr James in all his views on the subject of Academic Reform, I go much further, from the conviction that nothing less will meet the necessities of the case. The march of improvement everywhere and in everything is fairly begun, and it surely behoves those who have to do with that which is the source of all our happiness, domestic, social, and political, to keep pace with the age. They ought, I think, to walk ahead and to lead it. Intellectual culture, and the acquisition of general knowledge are of course matters to be specially provided for; that is good and right; but it is only a small part of what is required to a well-furnished and competent ministry. The much-neglected art of communicating knowledge to the popular mind is the grand point on which everything turns in regard to usefulness. If that be neglected, it is of small importance what else be attended to.

The grand question of the time among the sects composing the One Church of Christ, whether endowed or voluntary, is the question of Preaching. The millions neither understand, nor regard aught else. All interest begins and ends in the pulpit. Other things being equal, genuine eloquence always carries the day. It rarely fails to triumph, even in the absence of such equality, and in spite

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of it. A free, correct, commanding extemporaneous address, embodying full, clear, and accurate exhibitions of the Gospel, exercises sovereign sway among the masses. They cannot, at the outset, enter into high points of Christian doctrine or ecclesiastical polity; but they can comprehend great facts and receive strong impressions. All have judgements to be convinced, consciences to be awakened, and passions to be wrought upon. That Denomination which shall make Preaching the *one great business* of its Academic Institutions, will inevitably take the lead in the great work of evangelisation, and ultimately triumph over every competitor.

But if the really great want of the times is Preaching, ought it not then, for that very reason, to be the great business of the Colleges? Nothing within or without should be suffered for one moment to interfere with this. Here, then, occurs a question which, I think, involves the highest interests of all the Colleges of the Nonconformist Body.

Have the affiliation of our Theological Institutions with the University of London, and the introduction of Examinations for Honours and Degrees, been prejudicial to the interests of the Colleges in the matter of Preaching, or have they not?

Such is the question, and with all submission and deference, I avow that I hold the affirmative, and consider that it has introduced a new and an evil element, supplying the strongest temptations to personal vanity and sinister ambition. Nor is this all; it is practically injurious. From the first hour it serves to divert the mind of the Student from what ought to be the primary object of the Institution. The tendency is to lose sight of the Churches in the Examiners, of the Ministry in the Degrees. That ordeal is always before him. He apprehends that failure there will be irretrievable disgrace. Success achieved, and his reputation is made. The object for which he entered the College is accomplished. In the case of those who have had few early advantages, the danger is indefinitely increased; in the absence of extraordinary abilities, every waking hour will be required to

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attain even the lowest probability of success. The bulk of the Nonconformist churches, I presume, are not acquainted with the

true facts of the case; I shall, therefore, set forth the Statement of the University itself as to the Degree, that of BA:—

The subjects of Examination are:—In Mathematics and Natural Philosophy—arithmetic and algebra, geometry, plane trigonometry, mechanics, hydrostatics, hydraulics, pneumatics, and astronomy. In Natural History—chemistry, animal physiology, vegetable physiology, and structural botany. In Classics—one Greek and one Latin book, announced two years previously. Grammar; History, ancient and modern; Geography; the French or German language, by translation and re-translation; Logic and Moral Philosophy. Candidates must show a competent knowledge in the four branches—1. Mathematics and Natural Philosophy; 2. Natural History; 3. Classics; 4. Logic and Moral Philosophy. The examination is much more extensive than that for the pass examination. In mathematics and natural philosophy, it comprehends the theory of equations, the differential and integral calculus, the calculus of finite differences, heat, optics, and astronomy. In classics, the list of authors takes a far wider range; the examination is not confined to subjects of which notice has previously been given; and the examination comprehends prose composition in Greek, Latin, and English, and in the last of these, original composition upon questions arising out of the classic authors selected for examination; with questions in grammar, history, and geography.

Now let us take out of the first two or three years the time necessary for the bulk of Students to master the foregoing Course of Study, and see what will remain for Theology in all its branches, for Preaching Studies, and Preaching Practice, to say nothing of general knowledge.

Gentlemen, I submit that the entire system is wrong. The mind cannot without revulsion conceive of such a plan being laid down by the Lord Jesus Christ, or his Apostles, or even by the Fathers of the Reformation. What on earth

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have most of the foregoing subjects to do with the Preaching of the Gospel? The plan may be likened to the great Medical Schools of the Metropolis, which have recently rendered themselves ridiculous by cumbering their Course of Study with a set of subjects of Examination which have no more to do with Medicine than Physic has with Divinity. It can contribute nothing to the interests of Medical Science, and only serve—as it is clearly meant to serve—to keep down the number of Students, and so to sustain the

monopoly. The foregoing outline, and much more, can easily be afforded in the Scottish Universities, where four years are set apart exclusively for such matters, and an additional four years dedicated to Theology and the Oriental Languages; but in England, where life and time are, I think, more correctly estimated, and the Course is limited to four years, it is wholly out of the question.

All that I have said of the BA Degree holds with undiminished force as to the MA; and the Degree of LLB is, if possible, still more objectionable as an ingredient of a Theological Course. As the thing staggers credibility, I shall set forth the language of the University:—

The Examination is in the following subjects:—A.—Blackstone's *Commentaries*, or the three last volumes of Kent's *Commentaries*. B.—Rutherford's *Institutes of Natural Laws*, or the two portions of Dumont's edition of Bentham's *Morals and Legislation*, which contain the principles of a civil code and the principles of a criminal code. An examination for honours subsequently takes place. No candidate who has completed his twenty-fifth year is admissible. The subjects are:—Jurisprudence, Conveyancing, Law of the Courts of Equity, Law of the Courts of Common Law, Roman Law, the Law of the Admiralty, and Ecclesiastical Courts and Colonial Law.

Now for the Law Schools of Oxford, or Cambridge, or the Law Classes of Lincoln's Inn, this is all in point; the whole thing begins and ends with Law. But suppose the Law Classes were to Examine on Divinity, or Medicine, or Agriculture, or Engineering, what would the world say to

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them? But why should it be scandalised? Would it be a whit more absurd than is an Examination in Law for a Degree in a Theological College? The whole thing is a compound of vanity, carnality, and folly, unworthy of an Institution professedly established for raising up 'Servants of the Most High God, to show unto men the way of salvation.'

Some twenty years ago, when the Theological Colleges were affiliated with the University of London, a cry was raised that we 'wanted a higher order of men'; the Colleges have been endeavouring ever since to produce that 'order of men'; and time sufficient has been allowed to test their success. Let us, therefore, look at the matter a little more closely in connection with the newest academic

type, Spring-hill College. From the *Year Book*, then, we learn, that in the course of twenty years, the period of the connection with the University, the following Degrees have been taken

| | LLB | MA | BA |
|---------------------|-----|----|-----|
| Spring-hill College | 4 | 13 | 41 |
| Coward | 2 | 6 | 22 |
| Highbury | 2 | 5 | 23 |
| Hornerton | 1 | 1 | 9 |
| Cheshunt | 0 | 2 | 21 |
| Lancashire | 1 | 4 | 15 |
| Airedale | 1 | 0 | 12 |
| New | 3 | 3 | 35 |
| Western | 0 | 4 | 11 |
| Rotherham | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Brecon | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| Hackney | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| | 15 | 38 | 198 |

Human nature would not be true to itself in the breasts of the Professors, the Committee, the Supporters, and the Students, if in the contemplation of the foregoing figures it did not feel somewhat elated. The pre-eminence of Spring-hill in this matter of Degrees is so proud, that its humility

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may well be endangered. Nor is this all; it is well fitted to mislead the less reflecting portion of the Christian public into the belief, that Spring-hill stands at the head of the Theological Colleges of England. With them the whole thing is a question of Degrees. But this distinction in that matter must not be taken for more than it is worth. This pre-eminence is quite compatible with its being not a Theological College at all, but merely a Classical and Mathematical School, sending forth companies of tutors, rather than Evangelists, men 'eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures.' The glory of a Theological College does not consist in its graduates, but in its Divines, not in its linguists, but in its Orators, not in their taking 'gold medals', but in their commanding the high places of the field both at home and abroad. That—that is true glory! A Theological College might be the first in the land without a single graduate, and the last where every man has taken a degree!

As Spring-hill so towers above its fellows in Degrees, it is proper to inquire into the position of its Students among the churches. What are their numbers, what their standing? Appealing to the *Year Book for 1859*, then, we learn that the total of the Spring-hill Students, graduates and undergraduates, now on the list of Independent Ministers in England, Scotland, and Ireland, after twenty years, is just 34: only 34! The fact is all but incredible. The total of the graduates alone during the period, we have seen, is 58; of these only 18 are found on the ministerial roll of the Body. What has become of the 40? It is very remarkable that the deficit is chiefly among the BAs; the MAs have stood well: they were originally 13, and they are still 11; whereas the BAs were 41, and they are reduced to 7! The LLBs were 4, and they are reduced to 1. Of the 34, 10,—5 graduates and 5 undergraduates,—are without charges: one is a tutor, two or three may have gone to foreign parts, The total of BAs, however, both in the colonial and the mission field, according to the *Year Book*, is under a dozen, to be divided among all the colleges, which will leave but a small dividend to each.

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Are we, then, to accept this as the highest proof of the value of Academic Degrees to Theological Colleges? Is this a satisfactory return for the building and upholding of a College, with its staff of Professors, and Students, for the long period of twenty years, at a cost of some tens of thousands sterling? There is nothing to compare with it in academic history. It seems clear that no deliverance to our enthralled and benighted world can come out of such a class of institutions. When we find, from the *Year Book*, in the list of Independent Ministers, no fewer than 45 Students from the cheap, unpretending Home Missionary Institution of Cotton End, we are utterly astounded! Of the large number only 4 are without charges. The absence of Degrees at Cotton End has not impaired its efficiency as a Preaching School: Degrees have contributed nothing to the success of Spring-hill in raising up Pulpit Orators.

It is notorious that for many years past there has been the utmost difficulty in settling first-class vacant pulpits, both in and out of the Metropolis, and that they have mainly at last been filled by men who never crossed the threshold of a college. This is surely

the severest reflection that can well be passed upon the prevailing academic system. The numbers of competent men required for such pulpits and more ought to be ready on demand. The churches ask *Preachers*, and they are offered BAs, MAs, and LLBs! The churches turn from art to nature, and take the matter into their own hands. It is further matter of fact, that there is often the utmost difficulty in finding suitable men for the most arduous posts in the Mission field. It is also far from easy to find fit and proper men for the chief colonial stations.

Were these Degrees of higher value, they might still be purchased too dearly. When students ask to get off for the session from the regular classes in branches of Theology, avowedly to prepare for taking Degrees, and obtain their request, the price, I think, is too high. The end is being sacrificed to the means, and Institutions, established and upheld to rear able Ministers of the New Testament, are being perverted to purposes of personal vanity and college

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pride. The impropriety of such a course is so great as to be all but incredible. Here the Colleges, however, are more to blame than the Students. There is naturally a secret rivalry engendered among these Institutions, the larger ones more especially. The honour of the Institution must be maintained! Then each successive batch of Students in the same College must keep up the classic strife with its predecessors. So that this passion for Academic distinction possesses all. The malady is not only self-sustaining, but self-extending. There is but one remedy—the knife! Under such a system, is it strange if young men go forth wanting in every qualification necessary to the Christian Ministry, not preachers but *readers*, and even as such often execrable? Would it not be strange were it otherwise? Surely the Founders and the Supporters of Colleges ought to have more for their money. They are entitled to a full supply of well-furnished Divines, and accomplished Preachers—men who in the Pulpit, on the Platform, and wherever eloquence is required to advance the welfare of man, will do credit to themselves, their flocks, their Colleges, and their Denomination. If young men professedly under training for the Ministry are made BAs, left ignorant of Theology, and not taught Preaching, and then sent forth to secure their bread as Gospel Heralds among

the churches, is it wonderful if the churches reject them, and if rejected, they withdraw and disappear? How can they do otherwise? This is the natural history of the whole affair. Poor youths, they have sustained most grievous wrong! They have lost much time, and been placed in a wholly false position. Of the few who have dropped into insignificant charges most are without acceptance, usefulness, or comfort. Some are driven to resign; for others unable to obtain a settlement, the last resort is teaching or business.

Men and Brethren, Spring-hill alone sufficed for the purpose of illustration, the rest are therefore passed over; but I submit that it is time that all the larger Colleges should take stock of their academic husbandry, that they may see how matters really stand. It is to no purpose to send forth

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men naturally incompetent, or men naturally competent, but wholly untaught in the things they are designed to teach, or altogether unqualified to communicate the things they know. Suffer me, then, to suggest, that as a first step in the path of improvement, the thoroughly Theological character of the Colleges should be asserted, and henceforth upheld, come what may, in all its integrity. Let the two great cardinal objects of the Colleges be avowedly to impart Theological Knowledge, and to cultivate the art of Preaching. To these two grand points let everything be subordinated. On these the whole apparatus of conversation, reading, lecturing, and examination, should be brought to bear from the first day to the last.

If Theological Colleges will thoroughly fulfil their mission the modern system of Lecturing must undergo revision. As managed, it has often been little more than a waste of time. Dr Johnson exposed the inefficiency of the thing in his day, but apparently to little purpose. The plan of teaching everything by lectures was well enough in earlier times; but happily things are altered. The Printing Press has worked its miracles; knowledge on every subject is reduced to system. Everything may now be taught by Text Books. The most distinguished men on every branch of human inquiry have published their lectures and systems, which for a lifetime they read to admiring multitudes. The young man instead of travelling from afar, and waiting at a heavy cost on the instructions of these illustrious sages,

may now, for a small consideration, have their company all the day long and all the year round.

Let it not be said that such a process would be to compromise the dignity of the Professors. True dignity is never at variance with sound reason. There has been enough of this, so-called, dignity; let common sense now have a turn! Suffice it to say, that to a large extent this plan was adopted by the late Dr Chalmers, and before him still more largely by the celebrated Dr Dwight. The system of delivering splendid lectures without either exercise or examination, is faulty in the extreme. It is a vain display of the Professor at

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the expense of the Pupil. By the system of Text Books properly conducted, wonders might be wrought in the course of a single year. Men thus become not passive listeners, but severe inquirers. By means of these books a body of the ablest men the world ever saw may be brought to serve the College, while the Professors would come between them, and the Students, and see that the latter duly profited by their learned labours. The Professors would thus virtually sustain the office of University tutors. To conduct this business with skill and energy would sufficiently tax the ingenuity of the ablest man in the land. It were far easier to deliver lectures. In this way young men would be taught the highest of all lessons, how to use their own faculties, how to read, to think, and to inquire. This alone is 'study', nothing else deserves the name.

In this way Theology itself, and the entire range of the knowledge connected with it, may be fully taught in the course of the four years. The Theological Text Book of Chalmers was the lectures in three volumes of the late Principal Hill, of St Andrew's.

The young men thus disciplined, would go forth richly laden with the most important information, and with habits of literary study from which they would profit to their latest day. Above all, they would go forth with their Theological views completely settled, instead of having a creed to seek after ordination! With the Bible, and Biblical Criticism, at their fingers' end, they would take their place at once in the assembly of the Elders as men knowing both 'what they said and whereof they affirmed.'

Brethren, bear with me, when I say that contemporaneous with all these things, and from the very outset, Preaching ought to be

a constant and earnest business. In this matter wise prelection and superior Text Books are good, but practice is better—it is everything! To much speaking must be added as much writing as possible. The advantages of this are great and manifold. Habit will soon bring facility. Nothing good should be expected from debates among the students by themselves. Fierce discussion, which will some

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times arise, but ill accords with social prayer! I have known much of this thing, and all my experience in two colleges is dead against it; but if objectionable among general students, how much more in a Theological College! The thing is incongruous; students there are being trained to discourse, not *to debate*. Wrangling is suited to law students, but not to ‘men of God’. They want none of the dexterities of debate; while much of its language, and all its passion are interdicted to them. What they want is a thorough mastery of their native tongue, the full power of extemporaneous discourse. A zealous Professor will have no difficulty in devising proper exercises in this art. It does not greatly matter what the subject be. It is with the mind as with the body; there are divers kinds of exercise all equally good. One most valuable class exercise is the exposition of a portion of the Holy Scriptures. A noted conversion in biography, a great event in history, an article in a Review; anything, in a word, that admits of rehearsal, will serve the purpose. This would, of course, as in the case of Yale College, under Dr Dwight, be a weekly affair, attended and participated in by all the classes. This course persevered in for four years, we shall hear no more of *sermon-reading!* Students so trained, will begin where the bulk have hitherto only ended, with a perfect command of free speech. Most preachers commence in fetters, which, in process of time, they work off, and, to their extreme comfort, discourse freely. The students to whom I refer would commence their labours on settlement, with a manly freedom of utterance which would create universal attention, and greatly elevate them in popular esteem. In the sick-room, at the prayer-meeting, in the Bible-class, in the social gathering, on the platform, at the Lord’s Table, in the pulpit, everywhere, their superiority would be manifest, their comfort increased, and their usefulness enhanced. This power would, moreover, set at liberty a large amount of valuable time now uselessly

consumed, for healthful exercise, pastoral visitation, and useful study. Thus this admirable art would not merely add to power, but in effect lengthen life.

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Theology! say the churches, give us theology, or we perish! Let every young man come forth a John Brown, an Archibald Maclean, an Abraham Booth, a Thomas Scott, an Andrew Fuller! 'Let the word of Christ dwell in them richly in all wisdom!' Let Timothy be the model and standard: '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. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

Gentlemen, these wonderful words supply both lessons and laws on the great subject of academic instruction. Your path is plain: may God give you the wisdom and the courage to walk in it! To meet the spirit of these words great changes must be wrought in some of your Establishments. The Prophets and Apostles must rise, and Heathen writers sink among you! The Inspired Word must become the Alpha and the Omega of your arrangements. In a better age of the Church the grand qualification for a minister was that he should have by heart the Psalms of David, the Gospel of John, and Paul's Epistles! Taking a wide view, I am free to confess, that I should rejoice to witness the utter exclusion from our Theological Schools of the whole of the Greek and Roman Poets with their manifold impurities, atrocious wickedness, and mythological abominations, that the whole of the time thus worse than thrown away might be consecrated to the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures. As the matter now stands, it is a deep disgrace to the Christian world. I set great store by Latin for general purposes, and especially for the more thorough mastery which it gives of the English tongue. In Theological Colleges, however, I would do no more than was necessary to preserve it.

Men and Brethren, one thing more to complete my notion of a Theological College: I would have all the elementary drudgery of Greek and Latin over prior to entering College. This

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is a matter of great moment. It would test Capacity, energy, and perseverance.

I would apply the same principle to Mathematics in all their branches; such things ought to have no place in a purely Theological College. The High School, the Academy, the General College is the place for such studies. Let the battle of Degrees be fought *there*, and let us have them in the largest possible abundance. In their own place I set great store by them as most legitimate and most reliable Certificates of Scholarship.

In the United States, where education is carried to such perfection, Theology is not taught in the general Colleges, but in separate Institutions. Four years are set apart to the General, and three to the Theological course. In the latter the whole time is devoted to matters theological, pastoral, and ecclesiastical. Hebrew and Greek are taught to all. Grant England this, and let Students acquire their secular knowledge as they best may, and it will give a new and happy turn to the religion of the Empire.

In harmony with all this, and at the foundation of it, I would, as a rule, admit no student under twenty-one years of age, and if a year or two beyond so much the better. It is hardly possible to overrate the importance of this limit. Time would thus be furnished to try and test personal piety, a matter of moment all but infinite! Hitherto the errors on this score have been most lamentable, and sad have been the consequences! Character, also, to some extent, would be formed. Physical nature would likewise so far be consolidated as without danger to admit of severe study. Last and greatest, the intellectual powers would have reached a measure of maturity fitting them for the loftiest exercises. Further, time would be furnished for completely testing the candidate's capabilities in the way of public speaking. The paramount question of his 'aptness to teach' would be safely settled out of College, and a most serious as well as common error avoided. The chronicles of war record the sad result of recruiting with boys rather than with men; the analogy is complete. The work of the ministry is far too weighty,

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requiring far too much wisdom and experience for mere boys. The exceptional cases of a Jay and a James are nothing to the

purpose. I appeal to reason, to Scripture, and to the common consent of mankind. The period I suggest would still met a young man at liberty at the age of twenty-five, a period, as a rule, still much too early for a pastoral charge of any magnitude. In the Navy, the Army, and Civil life such an age would be deemed wholly to disqualify for any office of grave importance. At the Bar a man of twenty-five would expect to go briefless for at least seven more years. In Medicine, 'MD' might be put on the door, but for many a day to come the 'Doctor' might retire to rest without the fear of disturbance in his slumbers. Practice would not come by rail. Reason and experience thus bear iron rule in all the affairs of earth and time. It is only where the concerns of eternity and the interests of the never-dying soul are involved, that people lay aside reason and experience, and give themselves up to the government of feeling, fancy, and whim! These juvenile settlements are a purely uncompensated evil. No advantage whatever attends them. The first five or seven years are for the most part merely tentative or experimental. All is necessarily raw, immature, and impotent; it is only at the end of that period that efficiency begins to be manifest. Had the ordination been prolonged till that time, and the period devoted to College, or to business, it had not been a loss, but a gain, both to the individual and society. This would often prevent much evil and save a deal of bootless sorrow.

Men and Brethren, such are the conclusions to which I have been led by much reflection, wide observation, and considerable experience. Happy will be the College that shall have the wisdom and the courage to take the initiative that they may deal with the question, and 'set in order the things that are wanting.' There can be no dispute amongst well-informed and candid men, that the chief Colleges of tile day, 'weighed in the balances, are found wanting'; and only, I think, in some such way as I have ventured to indicate can matters be rectified. Unhappily, secular Colleges

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and national Universities are always the last bodies on earth to see, feel, and acknowledge the necessity of reform. Let it not be so among you! The interests not only of the whole Church but of the whole world are involved! If the great power for which we all look and long shall descend, it will either revolutionise existing

Colleges, or supersede them. With the history of Methodism before us, we need not be in darkness. Nothing but a simple, spiritual, thoroughly evangelical, and free-spoken ministration will meet the wants of a reviving Church and an awakening world.

Men and Brethren, you will please to take in good part these well meant and very respectful suggestions from a sincere friend of all Theological Colleges, without regard to sect or party, and your fellow-servant 'in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,'

JOHN CAMPBELL.

LONDON, *November 30*, 1859.

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JOHN ANGELL JAMES

INTRODUCTION

MINISTERIAL Biography among the Independent Body somehow forms a very slender element of their denominational literature. The amount issued during the last thirty years, is quite insignificant. Ireland has produced absolutely nothing; and Scotland only four volumes having for their subjects James Alexander Haldane, John Watson, Greville Ewing, and Dr Wardlaw. To these volumes must be added notices of pastors departed, in the Magazine of the body. It may be supposed, however, that the popularity of these works has compensated for their paucity; but such is not the fact. Not one of them has been what the publishers call a 'success', except the Memoir of Mr Haldane, which is now in the sixth edition. All the rest, I believe, slumber on in the first, with little prospect of ever reaching a second impression. But it may be said that in Scotland the Independent Body is still very young, comparatively small, and by no means wealthy, and such is the fact; let us, therefore, inquire how the matter stands in

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England, where the churches are numerous and ancient, and their resources ample. Well, even there, I regret to say, that, regard being had to these circumstances, things are worse rather than better. Within the thirty years, which limit this inquiry, we have had the lives of George Burder, Dr Williams, Dr M'All, the Griffins,

Morrell the younger, Taylor, Gilbert, Dr Pye Smith, John Campbell, John Ely, Dr Hamilton, John Glyde, Dr Townley, Dr Stowell, and Dr Henderson, with two or three minor publications.

Such is the state of our regular Ministerial Biography, to which, of course, is to be added the numerous and interesting sketches which have appeared in the Magazines. Truly Independency has not been prodigal of this species of renown! Nor are matters at all mended by the fact, that not one of these works has attained to even the lowest degree of popularity. Not one, so far as I know, has reached a second edition. It will readily occur to thoughtful readers, to ask, whether these—seeing that the number is so small—were the only men deemed deserving of this distinction. Such readers are then to understand that this matter is regulated not by merit, but by circumstances. There have been not a few besides whose lives and labours would have supplied ample materials for instructive and edifying biography; but, under neglect so great and uniform, the pecuniary risk of publication is such that their families prudently shrank from the perilous experiment.

It is natural for those who have not hitherto

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thought on the subject to inquire into the causes of this depressing state of things. The Independent Body are generally foremost in all that is just, enlightened, liberal, and magnanimous: how is it, then, that they so grievously fail in this direction? Is it that the subjects of the several works aforesaid were wanting in the degree of public character necessary to excite extended interest? or did the failure arise from defective execution? or was it that the Congregational Body is the subject of peculiar apathy in the matter? The answer to these questions, which bound the subject, is ready. Intimately conversant with the merits of the whole, I hesitate not to affirm, that the failure arose not, to any large extent, either from the subjects, or the execution. The former were all, in their several degrees, men of mark and excellence, who had deserved well of the community; the execution, too, was uniformly respectable, and in some cases decidedly superior. We are, therefore, driven to the conclusion, that the subject does not occupy the place which it ought in the mind of the body; or rather that the body is wanting in a denominational mind—a common sentiment; there is too

much isolation among the churches; each fellowship cares but little for aught that lies beyond its own narrow domain. It is not so with the Presbyterian bodies of Scotland; it is not so with the Methodist bodies of England; it is not so with the Established Church. There, great men are justly viewed as common property, and hence their lives are extensively and permanently popular. They are received with special favour, read with avidity, and become household

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books. Works even of but average merit often run through many editions.

It may be said that the general enlightenment, and mental independence of the Congregational Body have much to do with the question. It may be said, that their spirit is incompatible with the spirit of 'hero worship', which imparts a high popularity to ministerial memoirs. This, however, is a compliment rather than an inculcation, which, I think, is more fitting the occasion. I deny, moreover, the correctness of the principle. Genuine Congregationalism ought not to be behind, but in advance of every other community in the power of appreciating ministerial worth, and in a readiness to award just but discriminating honour both to the living and the dead. In proportion as fame is pure, it will be lasting; and it is the province of intelligence to conserve the reputation of the intelligent. Whatever be the cause, the fact remains, that Ministerial Biography does not sell to any extent in the Independent Denomination. One of the most recent and most mortifying instances is that of the Life of Mr Jay—written partly by himself, and partly by two of the first men of the time, Mr James and Dr Redford—which has to all intents fallen dead-born from the press!

There, I say, is the fact, account for it as we may. It is certainly matter for regret as well as surprise. How is it? Can it result from the alleged principle which men, wise men, among ourselves have often lamented—the principle of admiring nothing that is our own, and reserving all our praise,

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and all our patronage, for the productions of other denominations? If so, it is certainly very liberal! But is it very wise? Is it very just?

Do other bodies so deal with the writings of Independency? I trow not! They know better.

Need I say, that no Ecclesiastical reading is so deeply interesting, so richly instructive, and so highly edifying as good biography, especially that of devoted pastors? This is nowhere doubted. Let us hear Mr James:—‘Religious biography has been of great service to us all, especially the biography of Christian ministers. Perhaps I may mention some which I have found greatly serviceable to myself: Brainerd’s Life has been a standing book, and so has that exquisite gem of biography, Fuller’s Memoirs of Pearce; or going further back, that equally precious little volume, Philip Henry’s Life, by his son Matthew; Job Orton’s Life of Doddridge; that extraordinary book, Payson’s Memoirs; Scott the Commentator’s Life, by his son; and the Life of Griffin, of Portsea, have all been of service to me.’ With what delight Independents read the memoirs of a Martyn, a Richmond, a Cecil, a Fletcher, a Grimshaw, a Newton, and others of more recent times, all Episcopalians! They do well, but let me assure them that they will find the Memoirs of their own ministers not less, and in some cases even more, worthy of perusal.

Well: the subject is undoubtedly one of great interest. I should rejoice in reason for a hope, that these truthful strictures may not be really useless in attracting attention to so serious a dereliction of

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denominational duty. I shall especially be glad, if through them a better fate shall await the forthcoming Memoirs of John Angell James, seeing that they will form the climax of his labours—the sum of all his excellences, mental, moral, and ministerial—a monument that ought to be more enduring than brass, and go down to a remote posterity. His countless admirers will know how to co-operate with his devoted successor and biographer, Mr Dale, in communicating to him whatever they may deem available for his object, and particularly in exercising the requisite patience, until the highly onerous task shall have been completed. Such a work as is required, and as, we doubt not, will be produced, is not to be thrown together in a few short months, even by a man whose whole time is at his own command; and still less by a minister who

has to sustain the ceaseless and oppressive labours of a pastorate in the leviathan church of Carr's-lane, whose redeemed time alone will be available for the undertaking. Whole years might be laudably spent in such a task. Only experienced men are competent to estimate the labour and anxiety involved in the work. It will, of course, contemplate less the generation that now is than that which is to come. Mr Dale will, therefore, do well to set very light by the clamours of a well-meaning, but ill-judging impatience-to take his time, and to 'paint for eternity!' Let him profit by the high example of the illustrious biographer of John Knox, the late learned Dr M'Crie, who, after whole years of herculean labour, brought forth a work which will last as long as the

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language in which it is written, and serve to future ages as a model of biographical composition.

These remarks may, to the uninformed and unreflecting, seem gratuitous, if not impertinent; but they are the dictate of some experience and wide observation, and they flow from a sincere regard alike for the credit of Mr Dale, and for the honour of his and my departed friend. I am here doing for Mr Dale what he has no means of doing for himself, and I doubt not he will take it not merely in good part, but feel that a substantial kindness has been done him. Let him have the courage to make haste slowly. The numerous sermons, sketches, and tributes, of all sorts and sizes, now appearing, will serve for a time to occupy the public, and keep them in good humour till he shall have far advanced with his undertaking. Among these respectful and affectionate effusions, things of the hour to be cursorily read, and soon forgotten, I crave a humble place for the following pages. I venture to hope that they may survive the writer, and administer wholesome hints to those who need them when he is gone. The volume comprises materials from other hands than mine, of an ever-during character. To render it permanently useful, as well as to pay a passing tribute to a much-valued friend, has been my sole aim and chief motive. I have laboured to make it subservient to the interests of the British Churches, and the furtherance of our common Christianity. In prosecuting my endeavour I have enjoyed superior facilities through

the possession of perfect freedom. There is much in this volume which could

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have no place, without the violation of propriety, in a regular, formal, family biography. Its peculiarities, indeed, will be found to constitute no small measure of any value which may belong to it. It will be found to trench in no degree on the forthcoming Life. I may, perhaps, be allowed to claim for it the honour of an humble harbinger.

I have had in view another and a highly important object. If I have at all succeeded in embodying my own views, something has been done to resuscitate a portion of the writings of Mr James. No small part of a generation has passed away since a number of them were first published. It may, therefore be inferred that very many of those now alive have but an imperfect acquaintance with them. I have no doubt that such is the fact; we are but too ready to take for granted that what is known to us is known to all the world. A little intercourse with society, however, would serve to set us right. The present review, it is hoped, may be of service to many by bringing them acquainted with the writings of this great Master in Israel. Hitherto there has been no attempt at such an exhibition of the aggregate sentiments embodied in the works of Mr James. I offer this, therefore, as an humble contribution to that end, and to the memory of my never-to-be-forgotten friend. It may be but of small value, yet it will suffice to indicate regard as surely as something greater. I entertain a devout sense of personal obligation to him. Often have I been indebted to his kindness, instructed by his wisdom, cheered by his approval, and animated by

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his example. I, therefore, feel grateful that in the course of a gracious Providence, I have been permitted to make this very slender effort towards preparing the ground for the lofty pedestal of his well-earned fame. I sincerely mourned his departure, and now I most profoundly honour his memory. For many years I admired him at a distance; but in 1828, I met him on the Missionary Platform of Union Street Chapel, Southwark, where he occupied the chair. Then with deep emotion, for the first time, I listened to that voice which has since so often charmed me. He cordially

subscribed to the object which had brought me to the Metropolis, and urged me to visit Birmingham with the assurance of extended assistance. Circumstances, however, rendered that both impossible and unnecessary. On my return and settlement in the Capital, time and events only served to increase my regard; esteem ripened into affection, confidence became implicit, and community of sentiment on almost every subject, of a religious character, led to a friendship which death has only interrupted, not dissolved! We shall meet again! Light, for a season, is overpowered, but spirit is free! I can follow him whither he has gone, and behold him as he mingles with the glorious fellowship of the new Jerusalem! Nor is that all: I can, I do, most fervently desire the choicest blessings of the covenant of mercy for all who bear his honoured name—for his devoted people and his filial successor! Mr Dale having sprung from the Tabernacle, Moorfields, I cannot but feel in him more than an ordinary interest;

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I sincerely rejoice in his comfort, usefulness, and honour. May his career equal in length, fame, and splendour that of his departed colleague!

Happy flock whom a gracious Providence had prepared for the event which has clothed them for a season in symbols of sorrow! Had they now been as sheep without a shepherd, how terrible might have been the consequences! The possibilities are frightful to contemplate. The noble field might have been strewn with the wreck of the goodliest fellowship in the nation! As it is, thanks be to God, the danger is over, and gone! Long before the fatal day, the successor, through having been for six years the colleague, had been not only installed, but fully initiated, and clothed with general confidence. All now is security, satisfaction, and hope. The noble vessel, with a skilful commander, with officers highly competent, with a crew well disciplined, prompt, and orderly; with the compass true, the charts correct, all sail set, and filled with a fair, strong, and steady breeze, holds on her course, with every prospect of a prosperous voyage, and safe arrival in the 'Fair Havens'. That it may be so is my most heartfelt aspiration!

BIOGRAPHICAL OUTLINE

I SHALL now proceed to set forth such facts in the history of Mr James as are required to the purpose I have in view. These facts, which are comparatively few, have already appeared in a variety of forms, and been very extensively circulated; but it is necessary to reproduce them. Those which refer to the earlier years of Mr James have obviously been supplied by the family, and their accuracy may therefore, of course, be relied on.

John Angell James was born at Blandford, on the 6th of June, 1785. His father was an honourable and an upright man, but did not till late in life profess faith and love towards the Lord Jesus Christ. His mother was a woman of eminent godliness, and to her care and her prayers, to his very latest years, he constantly expressed the largest and most grateful acknowledgments. His mother used to take the children one by one to her chamber and pray with them there, and earnestly beseech God to take them into his family, and make them for ever his own. The blessed result of this maternal piety was, that all the children who lived embraced the faith and became Christian people. When school life was over John was apprenticed to

a Mr Bailey, a draper at Poole, in Dorsetshire. This was a trying hour for 'the Young Man from home.' Under the influence of a false shame, he discontinued the habit of morning and evening prayer. A new apprentice, however, came, who slept in the same room with him, and the first night the new comer knelt by his bedside before retiring to rest. The susceptible heart and conscience of John were struck with self-reproach; and that solitary act of fidelity in a fellow-apprentice, without a single word to sustain it, was made by God to sink into his heart and become the spring of all his future usefulness. There lived in Poole at that time a humble but most useful Christian, an old shoemaker, who was always on the watch for the appearance of religious thoughtfulness in young people, and was accustomed to invite them to his house. Night after night the young apprentice went to the shoemaker's shop, an 'anxious inquirer'. In that cottage were first heard the tones

of that voice in prayer which has since awoken the devotions of thousands. At this time one of John's elder sisters was visiting some relations at Romsey, and as she had already been brought to Christ, she and her brother used to correspond on religious topics. She showed some of his letters to Mr Bennett, now Dr Bennett, of Falcon Square Chapel, London; and he, being struck by the evidence they presented of the fervour and ability of the writer, thought he might become an effective minister of the Gospel. This was followed by correspondence, and through Mr Bennett's influence, John was led to

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look to the ministry as his future calling. His father was extremely unwilling that his son should abandon business; but at length these difficulties were surmounted, and the youth became a pupil of Dr Bogue, at Gosport. He was there received into the Christian church; his mother being a Baptist, none of the children had been baptised in infancy, and he was therefore baptised while there. Dr Bogue's academy was supported by Mr Robert Haldane, the London Missionary Society, and the County Fund; some of the Students were destined for missionary work, and some for the ministry at home. It was on this foundation that Mr James received his education. Among his associates at Gosport was Morrison, the famous Chinese missionary.

The urgent demand then existing for Evangelical preaching induced the conductors of Dissenting Colleges to encourage earlier attempts at public speaking than might otherwise have been deemed prudent. Mr James was accordingly much engaged in such services, and before the termination of his studies several churches sought his permanent settlement with them, and amongst these was the church at Carr's-lane. In August, 1804, Mr James, then only nineteen years of age, entered Birmingham to preach to the church temporarily, and with no conception that he would be chosen its pastor. He had not, however, preached to them more than four times, when a deputation waited upon him with a request that he would become their minister as soon as he might be permitted to leave Gosport. He returned to the academy, and after another year

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spent there, came back to Birmingham to enter upon the duties of the pastorate. On the 8th of the following May he was ordained. Drs Bogue, and Edward Williams; Messrs Jay, of Bath; Bennett, of Romsey; Moody, of Warwick; Steele, of Kidderminster; and many other eminent ministers took part in the services of that auspicious day. Referring to it, in his work on 'Protestant Nonconformity in Birmingham', Mr James says:—'It was a solemn and delightful day. The church had gone through much trouble, but now seemed to see happier days approaching. The old men wept for joy—the young men rejoiced in hope.' At that time Carr's-lane congregation was far from being the numerous, wealthy, and influential body it now is. It consisted of not more than 200 persons, and the church itself of only about forty members. The pulpit ministrations of the young minister for nearly seven years did not increase the number of his hearers, and this season was one of trial and anxiety, but evidently also one of spiritual improvement; for to such a minister it could not fail to prove a season of self-examination and earnest wrestling with God. If already he had learned to preach, now he learned to pray—to pray in faith, and wait for the blessing. The answer to those prayers was not long delayed; for in the eighth year of his pastorate an alteration and improvement of his chapel was needed and effected; and when, at its reopening, he returned to it with his congregation, it proved insufficient to hold the numbers that gathered there. Six years only

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elapsed from this period before it was determined to take this chapel down, and erect another which should seat 2,000. The new building was opened for public worship by Drs Fletcher and Bennett, and how, Sunday by Sunday, it continued to be crowded, even till the day of his death, every visitor to Birmingham induced by his fame to worship at Carr's-lane Chapel, can testify.

For some time past Mr James's health had been failing, chiefly through the infirmities of age, accelerated, no doubt, by a long course of constant labour, and intensified by the wearing force of the 'care of all the churches.' His own consciousness of an exhausted constitution had been often betrayed by declared anticipations of coming death during his more recent public appearances. When

the Congregational Union assembled at Aberdare, he was obliged to content himself with a patriarchal message to his brethren by the mouth of the Rev. Thomas James; and when the Evangelical Alliance, of which he was the first President, met the week after in Belfast, he by the following letter requested an interest in the prayers of its assembled members in terms, the remembrance of which made the intelligence of his decease not less sorrowful, but less surprising.

At the opening of the session, the Secretary addressing the Bishop of Down and Connor, who occupied the chair, said:—‘Before your Lordship calls upon any other brethren to address the meeting, I will take the liberty of trespassing for a moment, in order to present to

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your Lordship and this assembly a note addressed to Mr Henderson by our valuable and beloved, but now absent and afflicted brother, the Rev. John Angell James, of Birmingham. At the first meeting, at which preliminary steps were taken to form the Evangelical Alliance, Mr James occupied the same position which your Lordship this morning occupies, and from that time to the present he has been one of the most valuable and useful friends of the Alliance. He says in his letter: “I shall be with you in spirit at the holy gathering this week; but, instead of being with you as God’s active servant, I must remain at home God’s suffering one. Perhaps the dear brethren will think of me as they approach the Throne of Grace; and that it may not be forgotten, I will enclose in this letter a written supplication to that effect, which you will be kind enough to present at one of your devotional meetings. Such a prayer from such an assembly will perhaps have power with God to prevail.” Then follows the rest:—“Mr James sends his paternal love to the brethren assembled at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, and, while praying that the great Lord who is the centre of Christian unity may be in their midst, earnestly solicits their prayers on his behalf, that, if the cup of personal and relative suffering which is now put into his hand may not pass from him, he may be favoured with bright manifestations of the presence and power of Christ, and be enabled to bear present and future affliction with all long-

suffering and joyfulness, and be thus assisted to glorify God in the fires.”

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Mr James’s death was, however, at the last very sudden and unexpected. He had been indisposed and feeble for some ten days, and the watchfulness of anxious and trembling affection had discovered that his physical infirmities were perceptibly and rapidly increasing. But on the Sunday morning previous to his death he had preached an eminently characteristic and vigorous discourse at Edgbaston Chapel; and in the evening he was present at Carr’s-lane. Indeed, in the midst of all his physical weakness, his mental power seemed to remain unimpaired, and he wrote and studied as usual up to the hour of his last seizure. The sermon he intended to preach at Carr’s-lane Chapel on the next Sunday evening was prepared. The dread, perhaps the morbid dread—not of death, but of pain—which he had formerly experienced, seemed during the past fortnight to have passed entirely away. He was cheerful and happy, under the consciousness that his end was approaching. He talked much of heaven, and seemed to anticipate, with great satisfaction, ‘the rest that remaineth for the people of God.’ The gloom which had previously sometimes clouded his mind, especially when his thought of leaving his afflicted daughter, had been wholly dissipated. During the week his friends were struck with the elevation of his religious joy, and were not without their fears that the end could not be far off. On the Friday, however, he seemed stronger, and a lady, who happened to be staying with him, read to him in the evening the whole of the *Missionary Chronicle* for the month, to which he

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listened with an interest at which we cannot wonder, when we see that a large part of it refers to China. In the course of the day he penned several letters, in one of which, addressed to his brother, the Rev. Thomas James, of London, he wrote thus:—

My condition just now is very low, not my spirit. I thank my Heavenly Father I am peaceful, I may say happy, quietly and contentedly waiting to see how it will go with me. My appetite entirely fails. Through mercy I get tolerable nights; but I believe it is the beginning of the end.

On that day, also, Mr James corrected the proofs of the last production of his pen, a review of the life and labours of the Rev. Richard Knill, which is about to appear in the memoirs of that good man in the press. He forwarded it to the editor, the Rev. CM Birrell, of Liverpool, accompanied by a letter in which the following interesting and touching words occur:—

I think it probable that with these few notes on dear Knill's life and labours, I shall lay down my pen, which has written much; would God it had written better. But while I say this, I am not without hope, yea, I may add conviction, that it has in some degree written usefully. In some humble degree I have aimed at usefulness both in my preaching and writing, and God has, to an amount which utterly astonishes and almost overwhelms me, given me what I have sought. It seems a daring and almost presumptuous expression, but with a proper qualification it is a true one—that usefulness is within the reach of us all—the man who intensely

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desires to be useful and takes the proper means will be useful. God will not withhold his grace from such desires and such labours. Oh! my brother, how delightful is it, notwithstanding the humbling and sorrowful consciousness of defects and sins, to look back upon a life spent for Christ. I thank a sovereign God I am not without some degree of this.

As he was about to retire to rest he became indisposed, having apparently been attacked by indigestion, and Dr Evans, an eminent physician, residing next door, was called to his aid. He prescribed for his venerable friend, and assured his family there was no need for alarm. When Mr James was about to go to his bedroom, Dr Evans wished to assist him upstairs—a trouble which Mr James was very unwilling to give—but when the doctor persisted in proffering his aid, he turned to him affectionately and quoted the text—'Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto one of the least of these, thou hast done it unto me.' During the night he was restless, and frequently sick, but slept from half-past four till six o'clock in the morning. Then he awoke, and it was plain that the time of his departure was at hand. He lay calmly for a little while, held out his hand to his son, who with his medical advisers was standing at his bedside, and then again sank into a slumber, which in a few

minutes became the sleep of death. So peacefully passed away this honoured servant of Christ. Had he lived much longer it is almost certain that he would have been destined to protracted martyrdom,

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as latterly he had been afflicted with a most distressing malady, which time would have aggravated to torture. All this he has been mercifully saved. A post-mortem examination has disclosed partial ossification of the heart, and proved that death was actually caused by the rupture of a small vessel in that organ.

Such, then, is the substance of the Birmingham statement—such is an epitome of the history of this great Master in Israel. His loving friend and fellow-townsmen, the Rev. Peter Sibree, has transmitted to me the following, which is a valuable supplement to the foregoing:—

A few hours before he died, which was at seven o'clock in the morning, the previous hours of the night had been much disturbed. His servant, Ann ———, who heard the violence of his cough, went into his room to offer assistance, which he declined, unwilling that anybody should lose rest on his account; but as the violence of the cough and sickness returned, she remained in the bedchamber, and during the intervals of coughing, she heard him indistinctly engaged in prayer, and repeating portions of Scripture and hymns. She little thought any more than her revered master, that he was so near the Jordan, and even then in the dark valley. She heard him distinctly utter—

‘Tho’ dark be my way,
 Since he is my guide,
 ’Tis mine to obey, and
 ’Tis his to provide.’

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And after a short interval-

His path was much rougher,
 And darker than mine;
 Did Christ, my Lord, suffer,
 And shall I repine?

He took great interest in his servants. One of them, Joseph the coachman, he was much attached to. Ann had lived with him fifteen years, and the other female servant six; the sudden death of Joseph gave a shock to his feelings that he never recovered. Like the excellent

Harvey, whose last words were, 'Precious salvation', he felt for immortal souls; and as he looked with tenderness on his servant who was alone with him, and weeping (they were none of them members of his church), he said, 'I want you all to be saved.' Like the faithful and earnest Matthew Mead, of whom John Howe speaks in his funeral sermon, his life aim was to save himself and the souls of others, and like him, having successfully served his generation, he fell asleep.

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ROBERT HALDANE AND THE GOSPORT ACADEMY

IN casting our eye backward on the foregoing facts, the first thing that presents itself for remark, is the relation of the Gosport Academy to men and things but little known to the bulk of the living generation. The remoter consequences of action can be noted only by a few. The information of the general public is rarely sufficient to enable them to trace the relation between cause and effect in any given instance. While Mr James was shining like a star of the first magnitude few of his contemporaries had any idea of the connection which obtained between him, and the justly celebrated Robert Haldane—a gentleman of landed estate in Scotland. That most able, opulent, and every way excellent individual, on coming to the knowledge of the truth, reduced his establishment, and disposed of large property, that he might consecrate both himself and his substance, to the Evangelisation of India; and when he found insuperable barriers placed in his way by the vigilant cupidity of the East India Company, he betook himself to the diffusion of the Gospel in his native country, where he soon perceived it was deplorably wanted. With his admirable brother, James Alexander, previously a captain

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in the East India Service, and a man of a noble and decided character, he gave an impulse to the entire Scottish nation. Besides building chapels throughout the country, and supporting itineracies both in the Highlands and Lowlands, and keeping up at his own expense great preaching stations in the chief towns and cities, he established an academic institution, which, however humble, and

unpretending, was honoured to send forth some of the best ministers of the time, among whom I may observe, was the late William Orme, of Camberwell—a man of the most extensive erudition—and Dr David Russell, of Dundee, in his day, perhaps, the ablest expositor of the Sacred Scriptures in the empire. The Messrs Haldane, with their noble associates, were the founders of Independency in Scotland. It was the irrepressible spirit of Christian philanthropy that prompted Mr Haldane to employ Dr Bogue at Gosport to train young men of piety and promise for the work of the Ministry, whether at home or abroad. In that as in his Scottish movement, Mr Haldane was so blessed in his deed as to prove that the hand of God was with him. Up to the point at which the question of Baptism, which marred all, came to be a subject of controversy between Messrs Haldane and their friends, whatever they did prospered. Not to mention other and most effective men, who issued from the Academy at Gosport, the narrative points to the greatest Missionary of his age, Dr Morrison, who conquered the language of China, to whom we must add Mr James, one of the most efficient pastors of his own

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 or any other nation. The extent to which Mr R Haldane influenced both kingdoms, and acted directly and indirectly on heathen lands, it is impossible to state, but it was very great. There is more in the training of Mr James at Gosport than at first sight appears. The Missionary spirit in Scotland originated wholly with the Messrs Haldane; for many a day, indeed, their followers were contemptuously called ‘the missionaries’; and, nearly all the earlier agents of the London Missionary Society who came from Scotland were mainly brought forward by the Haldane movement. No small portion of the first Missionaries were prepared by the Academy at Gosport, which for many a day was the hope of the London Society. The effect of the Gosport institution was two-fold. It admits of no dispute that the Missionary Spirit which throughout life worked so powerfully in the heart of Mr James, was imbibed at Gosport. To this we trace his generous enthusiasm, and eloquent advocacy of that the highest of all causes. To this also must be traced the munificent acts of his people from the first day till now.

The services, however, of Mr Robert Haldane did not end here. It was reserved for him to perform a great and extraordinary work on behalf of mankind in Geneva, which was then in a state of utter spiritual darkness. Not one ray of Gospel light was to be seen in the city of John Calvin, which aforetime had been called the 'Eye of Europe'. Mr Robert Haldane, in the course of Providence was led thither for a mighty purpose

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of mercy and grace. He took up his residence there for a winter, and soon found means to form the acquaintance of a portion of the students who were being trained to propagate darkness in the character of Christian Ministers. These be invited to his lodgings, where he conversed with them, and expounded to them the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, and set forth the glorious Gospel in all its freeness and fullness. That divine Spirit who had led him thither, graciously used him to accomplish the purposes of his sovereign love; the result was the conversion of the great historian, D'Aubigné, Vinet, and a number more of their contemporaries who have since proved lights of the world, and centres of heavenly influence.

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ACADEMIC PREACHING

THERE is something alike remarkable and irregular, according to the foregoing statement, about the first stage of the distinguished career of John Angell James. Neither church, nor pastor had anything to do with the matter till he appeared at Gosport; where, not having been baptised in infancy, in consequence of the views on that subject entertained by his excellent mother, the ordinance was administered by Dr Bogue, and he made a public profession of the faith under the pastoral auspices of that great and good man. His entrance into the ministry was at the recommendation of Dr Bennett, on the sole strength of a letter written by the lad to his sister. Untried as to conversion, unproved as to speaking capabilities, without either church or pastoral recommendation, he was received to the institution. The first step in the order of nature would have been for the youth to offer himself to a church, to be baptised, and admitted, and then for a season tested, and afterwards certified. Considering his extreme youth this was all

the more expedient. His age even at his exit was hardly sufficient for entrance. But if there was a want of order, there was no want of the evident tokens of a divine hand. It

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is difficult to believe that there was not in the whole matter, to an unusual extent, the intervention of a gracious Providence overruling the actions of men.

There is an important academic question on which the history of JA James has a strong bearing—the time at which students ought to be allowed to commence preaching. This point is clearly a momentous one, both as it regards the stewardship of talent in students for the ministry, and the salvation of a perishing world. The mode in which the subject has been dealt with even in some of the most enlightened and Protestant portions of the Church of Christ is altogether surprising. In the Established Church of Scotland, for example, the regular course of ministerial preparation extends to seven years; till that long period shall have expired it is at the student's peril to attempt preaching the Gospel! He is then admitted to 'his trials'—that is, he is examined by the Presbytery; he delivers discourses before them, and if they approve he receives 'license' to preach throughout the churches. He is then at liberty to occupy vacant pulpits as a candidate, or others as a supply, and is called a 'probationer'. The course runs, if it be not still, substantially the same among the great unendowed Presbyterianism bodies in Scotland. The Protestant Dissenters of England have not erred to the same extent; their earlier academic institutions, indeed, can hardly be said to have erred at all; they pursued what I hold to be the proper course in the matter; the young men were allowed, or rather required,

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to preach from the time of their entrance. But since academies were elevated into colleges, surrounded with pomp and circumstance, and since the course of instruction was improved and extended, a tendency has begun to manifest itself in the direction of the Scottish Church; preaching has been interdicted for the first, and second, if not in some cases, the third year. This plan is defended by plausible, but, I think, insufficient reasons; I hold, that there is a much more excellent way. It runs directly in the face of the

New Testament, and the practice of apostolic times. Order is well enough in its place, but it is only a means to which the end must, on no account, be sacrificed.

This error is the fruit, the necessary consequence of another—the sending of young men to Academic Institutions, or Colleges, before they have given, or been required to give adequate, or any proof whatever of their preaching ability. This is the case to a fearful extent throughout the bulk of the Protestant churches. ‘Aptness to teach’, as Paul expresses it, is neither proved nor sought; the ministry is treated as a mere profession such as law and medicine; it is assumed that the colleges can educate any man into a minister. How great is the error! How fatal the assumption! Even for law natural powers are indispensable to eminence; to a large extent such also is the case with medicine; but more so than in either it is the case with divinity. The true minister of Christ is heaven-made. Human aid in the matter of culture may be useful, but it is not indispensable. JA James

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supplies an illustration; he was heaven-born; he could not well have gone into an institution with fewer advantages, or less preparation, and yet from the very outset he was allowed, or required to preach the Gospel, and he did preach it with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven. In the foregoing narrative of his student life, it is set forth as an apology for his early preaching that in those days there was a lack of the Gospel; is there not a lack of the Gospel still? Regard being had to the increase of numbers, and Evangelical preaching, are things, in many places, much improved? Apart from the principle, two questions occur: first, were those early exercises of Mr James in any respect injurious to him? and were they attended with any hurtful consequences whatever to the people? Will any man, in either case, affirm that such was the fact? Whatever the pride of caste, or academic fastidiousness may urge to the contrary, I hesitate not to take the negative side of the question, and stand prepared to defend it at any tribunal.

There is another, and a highly momentous view of this subject. The perilous effects of academic study are proverbial: Mr James fully recognises the fact in his Address to a body of Spring-hill students, who had finished their course. He said: ‘If your piety has

suffered in its vigour and vitality by study; if the Bible has been neglected for the class book; and prayer has degenerated into a form by the influence of lessons; if you feel that you are going forth from college less of a Christian than you entered it, you should sorrowfully confess, it to God,

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and make it your first, your immediate, and your pressing business to repair the loss. You are not in a fit state of mind, if there be an impaired state of personal religion, to do the work of the Lord. You are feeble and inapt, and must immediately seek to be "strengthened with all might by the Spirit in the inner man." I wish each of you to be a vessel meet for the Master's use; which you cannot be in a low state of experimental religion.'

There is, from the nature of the case, but too much reason for these searching suggestions. What is here put subjunctively is to a fearful extent, everywhere, a sad reality. In the absence of powerfully conservative provisions, it is the certain result of the zealous prosecution of the bulk of the studies of the place. Leave a man under the full influence of them for two or three years without public religious exercises, and he is in danger of being undone! When he is at length allowed to preach he will resemble a machine, overrun with rust, which can hardly be put in motion! No marvel, if pious old women, on retiring, are heard to say to each other, 'What a poor, dry stick! These college lads are not worth their salt.' No wonder if they *read* their sermons. Short of miracle, how can it be otherwise? There has been no practice of free speech, and the very springs of the soul are frozen! Such has been the state of many a youth who, before entering the college, was deemed a good preacher. Cecil says: 'Were I to preach only once a month, I should soon lose the power of preaching altogether'; what would have

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been the result to the great man of a suspension of two or even three years?

Such, then, is the danger, and there is no remedy comparable to that of constant preaching, more or less, according to circumstances. This will compel recourse to the Bible, and tend to keep alive the flame of personal religion. In a word, let every young man first

pass muster in the church to which he belongs as a good and hopeful preacher; and then, from the day he enters till the day he leaves, let him go on exercising the gift that is in him for the salvation of men, I know all that has been said on behalf of the silent system, but deem it unworthy, of notice.

On this subject my opinions, the effect of extended observation, are matured and decided; and I am anxious to place them on record. It is my deliberate conviction that it is not the business of academies, or colleges, either to test or to develop the preaching capabilities, the 'aptness to teach' of young men, but simply to cultivate, improve, and as far as possible, perfect the capabilities with which they enter the institution—capabilities which have been previously ascertained, and fully certified elsewhere. In this, I think, very mainly consists the value of such institutions. That the opposite course largely prevails is granted; and I deeply lament it! This point of natural capacity, I contend, ought to be settled in the churches to which the parties, respectively, belong. As a rule, no youth ought to be sent to college till he has been well and fully, tried and proved in Prayer Meetings, Sunday

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schools, and Village Preaching. Nothing should be left to peradventure. No man should be sent thither who could not, if uncontrollable circumstances required it, get on without academic aid, and by the help of God, become an efficient preacher of righteousness. True power is inherent—an affair of nature; no art can impart it, and no negligence uproot it. He in whom it exists will live and die with it. It is easy to conceive of a multitude of mere college men cumbering the ground in the Evangelical Vineyard, as well as of a multitude of men who never spent a day in academic bowers efficient and useful Ministers of the Gospel. I desire to bear my emphatic testimony on this subject because of its incalculable importance in these times to the interests of Christianity. Whether with or without academies, and colleges, there must be an adequate measure of innate capacity in order to Ministerial efficiency. This is the primary, and unalterable condition of success. But there is a secondary condition which I hold to be equally indispensable, and unchangeable—vigorous perseverance in well directed self-culture. Without this mere college residence will be productive of

no real good; and with this great things may be attained far away from academic institutions. Examples of this in theology, language, science, and literature are abundant. There is Thomas Scott, the prince of our Commentators, who never passed the threshold of a university. There is John Newton, in his own walk, a great popular writer, who was indebted to no human

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tuition. There is Andrew Fuller, the greatest doctrinal and polemical writer of his time, who was equally without academic training. There is William Jay—a name that will long be dear to the British Churches, whose advantages were confined to the humble roof of Cornelius Winter, who himself had no instruction whatever other than a few lessons in grammar received from Mr Green at the expense of George Whitefield; and yet he sent forth some of the best and most successful Ministers of the period. To William Jay may be added not a few of Mr Winter's students, who were second to none of their contemporaries as servants of Christ. Last, not least, we might almost claim John Angell James; for, I think, it is highly probable, that had he never seen Gosport, his way and his end, his service and his fame, would have been substantially the same. Such piety, such talents, such industry, such eloquence would have succeeded to the full, apart from the slender advantages conferred on him at Gosport.

To labour, then, to devout, zealous, vigorous, well-directed labour, whether in or apart from Colleges, men must look for attainments, and efficiency. The history of letters abounds with proof, and illustration. Amongst Englishmen we might cite the cases of Swift, Gibbon, and a multitude besides. The academic life of these individuals was a comparative blank. That they gained not more, and came not forth laden with literary treasure was, of course, their own blame; I only state the fact that their time was thrown away, to show, that,

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had they never entered the university, the result would have been in nowise materially affected. Swift for seven years laboured fourteen hours a day! Gibbon, referring to his college residence and its unproductiveness, remarks, that no man was ever great who did not afterwards put himself through a second course of education.

A college, or a university, is but a name for a set of advantages, such as time, books, stimulus from gifted and aspiring compeers, and direction from wise and experienced tutors—matters all, doubtless, highly important, and which may be turned to the best account; but how important soever they may be, they are not to be considered essentials. Time and books are all that are absolutely necessary to men of real power, and governed by high principle. Such men will derive sufficient stimulus from within their own bosoms; and as to direction, like Lord Bacon, they will either ‘find or make a way.’ A plan for study is not a thing of much difficulty, and after all, a great deal does not depend on it. One author leads to another; and as a man advances the light increases, and the path becomes broader. Such men, with the right spirit, will bid defiance alike to help and hindrance, and carry the world before them. Every difficulty will vanish at their approach, and in the end they will not fail of usefulness, respectability, and honour.

In thus speaking, let it not be supposed that I am unfriendly to academic institutions; far from it; they maybe, as they have been in the case of countless thousands, the means of incalculable good, but

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abused by being made subservient to incompetence, they become the reverse of a blessing, and prove a source of public mischief. I do not speculate; I speak from extended observation; I went through my full curriculum half the period in one, and half in another of our national Universities; and I speak with the experience of long years to guide me. I have known many men of superior parts, pass through all the classes—classes conducted by Professors of first-rate ability—with scarcely one particle of benefit. A number of them, equal to great things, utterly failed. Precious time was idled away; classes were, indeed, resorted to, but not prepared for; from Professors they bore certificates of attendance, but that was all! They finished their course, spent their money, and went forth with very little more of either culture or knowledge than when they entered. The whole of the golden period was one long holiday with them; they walked, they lounged, they beguiled their heavy hours with light company, and light literature; and went forth at length to the battle of life uneducated men! No matter, they had

been at college; the public knew *that*, and they did not care to know more; they had been to college, and that was enough! It was charitably presumed, that the end for which they had entered was answered, and that now they were competent to the duties of their Profession. They were, therefore, accepted, while men of superior attainments privately acquired, were looked down upon.

This, then, is the state of things over which I

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would utter my loud lament, and against which I enter my earnest protest! Let us, by all means, have academic institutions in abundance, and of the very best description, and let them be filled with proper men; but let the very door-posts proclaim, and every professor's chair echo the voice, that the unalterable condition of culture and acquirements is, self-application, devout, unceasing labour! Again, with like emphasis I would encourage men of respectable parts, and genuine piety, but who, from circumstances, cannot command the advantages of a college training, to take courage, and look up. Let them neither despair, nor be faint-hearted, but gird up the loins of their minds! Everything they can desire is within their grasp. Let them be assured that there is nothing required in the way of the attainments needful to efficiency in the Gospel vineyard, which they may not in process of time, with prayerful industry, secure for themselves.

I am anxious, above all things, to recommend this matter of self-culture for purposes of evangelical usefulness, wholly apart from the regular ministry. The Churches of Christ more and more require it for a variety of objects. Speaking-power is an element far more necessary than money in advancing the cause of God. On this subject, Dr Vaughan, in the *Modern Pulpit*, has the following admirable observations:—

Unhappily, it is not a small portion of our population who are subject to deep poverty, and who seem to be wedded to the suffering, and to the degraded social condition, natural to such poverty. It

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is scarcely necessary to say, that the spiritual wants of these classes must on no account be forgotten. In such connections, the ministry of religion must continue to be in some degree peculiar, and as a case of exception. Good natural ability, a fair amount of knowledge, a

ready and impressive delivery, and a heart intent on contributing to the spiritual improvement and comfort of the poor, must continue to be the main qualifications demanded in the case of a somewhat large class of religious teachers, if the multitudes who have their place as on the lowest verge of our civilization are to be brought of all under the influence of religion. The bigot, the inconsiderate, the frivolous, the vain—all such persons will continue to cast their reproach on preachers of this description, upon the ground of their limited education, and on our general ministry as being identified with them. But a glance at the spiritual destitution of so many myriads among our countrymen, for whom no better provision can be made, must suffice to render every mind imbued with the spirit of the Gospel proof against reflections of that nature. To subordinate the pride of learning, to a feeling of compassion towards spiritual natures perishing for lack of knowledge, should be no work of difficulty with men holding the office of Christian ministers.

Nor should we forget, that in such departments of labour, the natural ability of the comparatively uneducated, must carry with it a much greater promise of success, than the merely acquired ability of minds possessing little original capacity. We see

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every day, that the man of little technical scholarship may be a man of power, while the man who has been most patiently trained to such scholarship may be a man without power.

The following remarks from the same work on the same topic, are entitled to special notice. By far the most efficient ministers for the common people have been supplied by the common people, and it is important that care should be taken not to educate students out of sympathy with the common people. Dr Vaughan goes on:—

We should bear in mind, also, that the distance separating between the social habits of the teacher and those of the taught, must be in no case very great, if there is to be the degree of sympathy between them which is necessary to success. Gentlemen who pride themselves on the aristocratic character of the associations and tastes which their manner of education has been calculated to bring along with it, are not likely to be among the most suitable persons to do the work of an evangelist among classes whose rough and hard lot has its place at the lowest point beneath their own. The gulf which intervenes between such parties, is commonly found to be much too wide to allow of any real intercommunion of thought or feeling. Who can

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need be reminded of the distance which separates between the habits of a college and those of a colliery?

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CHARACTER

ON this head I desire to be distinctly understood; the private and personal character of Mr James lies wholly beyond my province. I have to do with him solely and only in his public capacity as a Preacher, a Platform Orator, a Pastor, an Educationist, and a Nonconformist; and in dealing with these points I profess nothing more than to present a faithful outline of the several particulars.

THE PREACHER.

‘The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.’ So long as Birmingham shall be a town or a city, England a nation or an empire, John Angell James will be held in reverential memory. Amid all the changes, probable or certain, in human affairs this is sure. His name is written on the hearts of the British Churches, and nothing can obliterate it; on that imperishable tablet it is inscribed along with the names of Wickliffe and Latimer, Ridley and Hooper, Owen and Flavel, Baxter and Howe, Henry and Doddridge, Watts and Whitefield, and myriads more. From time his character has nothing to fear but everything to hope. The more it is scrutinised the more it will

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shine. But the present state of his fame is quite satisfactory; he has suffered little, if anything, from prejudice. He belongs to a small and privileged class to whom large, if not full, justice has been done during their own lives. He has in an eminent degree enjoyed the blessed promise; he has been ‘shielded from the scourge of the tongue.’ Little more will remain for posterity but to affirm the sentence of his contemporaries; and that it will do so is certain; no revision is required, no reversal is to be apprehended; but while the generations to come will form their own opinions from the data which will go down to them, they will not be indifferent to contemporary judgements, and especially to judgements expressed at the time of his departure by those who were his personal friends

and associates. While in this labour of love the first place will, of course, be accorded to his biographer, the passing tributes of various sorts from other hands will be held to possess a portion of interest. A desire to contribute somewhat, however small, to this aggregate of sentiment and opinion, has prompted the present observations.

Mr James was distinguished by all the attributes of personal superiority. He would have attained to eminence in any walk of life he might have chosen. As a tradesman he would have ruled his guild; as a merchant he would have been a prince; as a physician he would have attained to the presidency of the college; as a lawyer he would have led the bar, and finished on the bench; as a politician, however, his virtue would have barred

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his promotion. But, while in a large measure adapted to all, he was specially fitted for the line to which he was led in Providence. Oratory is quite as much a thing of the physical as of the intellectual. There are multitudes of men of superior parts who from bodily organisation could never have been reared into effective public speakers. We refer not at present to voice, but to the muscular knitting of the frame, and its general structure. The Bar, the Senate, and the Pulpit, to be sure, everywhere supply illustrations of cases in which mere intellectual potency has conferred distinction in spite of physical defects, and others in which physical power alone, with but slender parts, has raised its subject to eminence; but, had the former possessed the body of the latter, and the latter the mind of the former, the result would have far transcended that which, in either case, was attained. About Mr James there was a physical and a mental massiveness that served as a rock on which to plant his rhetorical artillery, which mightily enhanced its effect. To this was added a countenance highly dignified, open, angular, and radiant at every point with the sunshine of heaven-born benevolence—a countenance in which the whole man was mirrored forth with truth and majesty—a countenance which attracted and conciliated an auditory the moment he rose to speak. Sincerity and veracity seemed written on it as with a sunbeam. To behold was to love, confide, and admire. The celestial spot of that countenance was, of course, the eye, which, when lighted up, shot fire into the

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soul of an assembly, but it was the fire of Heaven and love, full of sympathy with the righteous, and compassion for the wicked. That eye worked wonders both in the pulpit and on the platform, as well as in the intercourse of private life. Then there was the voice, the matchless voice, which at pleasure arrested, subdued, charmed, and melted an audience a voice which, in a degree rarely, if ever, surpassed, united compass with sweetness, and pathos with power. While its faintest accents were audible in the remotest corners of the largest building, its loudest thunder, fraught with melody, never wounded the most cultivated ear. The inexperienced are incapable of estimating the value of such an organ to a public speaker. Its working power is wholly inexhaustible. Its operation is almost entirely an affair of the vocal organs; the speech is from the fauces, not from the chest, which makes all the difference between a pleasurable, wholesome exercise, and a painful, self-consuming effort. Speakers of this class—Mr Spurgeon to wit—can speak for ever with but little physical exhaustion, whereas chest speakers are utterly prostrated by a great and prolonged effort. It will, nevertheless, be found that this latter class, whether in England, Scotland, or Ireland, have formed the highest order of speakers. It is inseparable from the oratory of passion. Mr James was never the subject of the divine frenzy which belongs alike to the highest species both of eloquence and of poetry. He spoke on great occasions with emotion, deep and strong, but not with passion; and hence the effect of his address was to

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move and to melt, rather than to agitate, amaze, and overwhelm, as in the case of Robert Hall, Thomas Chalmers, and James Parsons in the pulpit—Chatham, Sheridan, and Burke in the Senate—Curran, Erskine, and Brougham at the bar.

In pulpit propriety Mr James was a model. There all was composure, gravity, and solemnity; there the light and the frivolous had no place. He was, moreover, the same man in and out of it, before and after the service. Good faith marked the whole of the exercise. What he boldly said he clearly meant, and fully believed his own testimony. Mr James was alike exemplary in every portion of the service. With him mere preaching was not the Alpha and Omega

of the hour; it was only a part,—and, although a very important part, by no means the greatest part of the business. He attached the utmost importance to the proper reading of the Holy Scriptures; it was quite a feast to hear him in his best frames, and in good health. His mere reading was far more instructive, impressive, and edifying than a crude and feeble comment. He was deliberate, discriminating, feeling, and emphatic. The lessons of the day were obviously well studied beforehand. To some extent, the orator as well as the poet, must be born, but it is competent for every man, at least, to become a good reader. There is, therefore, no excuse for defect here. To the preacher it is absolutely indispensable, and yet the reading of many a superior and learned man, in the pulpit, is execrable! It would be deemed intolerable even in a village school

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master. This matter ought to be well seen to in our colleges. Its importance is vital.

With regard to the sermons of Mr James, in the earlier part of his history, he was intensely laborious. To a large extent he preached *memoriter*, and, the habit once formed, he was enabled when he deemed it expedient, to secure a large amount of force and effect; quite as much so in point of language as the best reader, without the deadening, and the often deadly, effect of MS. By degrees, however, he cultivated the invaluable power of extemporary speech with the utmost success. In this line, indeed, he had few superiors; and it often stood him in excellent stead. As a rule, his preaching was by free speech, although on some occasions he read; and he always provided large notes, although neither reading nor committing them to memory, which he deemed, as it doubtless is, the best method of public ministration.

Few men, perhaps, ever paid more attention to the searching out of 'acceptable words' than Mr James, who was a thorough master of the English tongue; yet in no man was there less of the appearance of display. In him art successfully concealed itself. He combined in a degree equalled by none of his contemporaries the power of easy and dignified talk with vigorous and commanding declamation. While this in tender scenes was omnipotent for effect, it afforded repose both to the assembly and to the speaker, who

merged the orator in the friend, and for the moment became one of the social circle. This is one of the highest and most

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difficult attainments in oratory. In secular eloquence, the late Mr O'Connell was the greatest master of it in his time, as Mr James was in ecclesiastical. They were, perhaps, as nearly matched on this point as men could be; each was perfect in his way.

This is a matter of exceeding great importance, and deserving of the utmost attention. The absence of nature is the crying sin of modern eloquence. Natural speaking is rarely heard in the Senate, the Pulpit, or in the Courts of Law. Mannerism is all but universal. Drawling, shouting, ranting, whining, singing, screaming, these are prevalent characteristics in every department. Whatever varieties may obtain, they are all in the direction of the unnatural. There are no doubt noble and splendid exceptions—but such is the rule. When Whitefield went to Scotland, the only fault found with him by the good people was, that he wanted 'the holy tone'. He did not sing, but spake as a man to men, which was deemed irreverent. That consummate orator surpassed all his contemporaries in the power of vivacious and vigorous talk, as well as of rapturous and overwhelming declamation. The people were startled by his natural utterance; he spake as a man that really meant it! From this mainly arose his marvellous power over the minds of the multitudes he everywhere addressed. It was quite a new thing. We have now large numbers of superior men who have formed each for himself a mechanical style of address, stilted, mouthing, jolting, with a measured, meaningless modulation, which

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renders them intolerable and inefficient alike in the pulpit and on the platform, but whose mental powers and general attainments are such, that if they were to speak naturally they would reign supreme in popular assemblies. The effect of nature is magical. Men are awakened, excited, charmed, they know not how. In our time this nature is mainly found among laymen, numbers of whom speak admirably. Almost all Ministers, all Barristers, and all Statesmen have formed, more or less, an artificial manner. Without great care, indeed, this is almost always the effect of speaking often. It is with speaking as with other things, frequency leads to formality:

manner becomes habit. It is nevertheless quite possible to resist the evil influence, and keep true to nature, and the attainment will amply repay the necessary effort. But even success may assume to the vulgar the air of a failure, or at least of an imperfection. A perfect speaker will never, by the masses, be extolled as an orator, but he will be universally felt to be one! Their admiration is reserved for the artificial; their understandings are surrendered to the natural! A really natural orator will by them be viewed as no orator at all; they will, indeed, think nothing about it; they will only attend to what he says; they will be led captive by him, and rejoice in their vassalage! But the things to charm them are imagination as to matter, and spouting as to manner; by these they are amused, not vanquished; but they fall prostrate before the footstool of truth and nature! Whately, in his *Rhetoric*, judiciously remarks, concerning the natural speaker:—

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He will, indeed, never be praised for a very fine delivery; but his matter will not lose the approbation it may deserve; as he will be the more sure of being heard and attended to. He will not, indeed, meet with many who can be regarded as models of the Natural manner; and those he does meet with, he will be precluded, by the nature of the system, from minutely imitating; but he will have the advantage of carrying within him an INFALLIBLE GUIDE, as long as he is careful to follow the suggestions of nature, abstaining from all thoughts respecting his own utterance, and fixing his mind intensely on the business he is engaged in. And though he must not expect to attain perfection at once, he may be assured that, while he steadily adheres to this plan, he is in the right road to it; instead of becoming, as on the other plan, more and more artificial, the longer he studies: and every advance he makes will produce a proportional effect: it will give him more and more of that hold on the attention, the understanding, and the feelings, of the audience, which no studied modulation can ever attain. And though others may be more successful in escaping censure, and ensuring admiration, he will far more surpass them, in respect of the proper object of the orator, which is, *to carry his point*.

But the matter of Mr James's discourses was worthy of his manner. His theology was pre-eminently that of the olden time, thoroughly Apostolic, thoroughly Puritanic. He was never tired of repeating, under every variety of combination, the testimony once delivered to the saints. Mr Jay,

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towards the close of his life, thanked God that he had been 'kept from whims'; and Mr James had equal cause for gratitude. He never deviated a hair's breadth from the grand system of evangelical doctrine. So sound was his judgement on this subject, so thoroughly was he rooted and grounded in the truth, that he was not more proof against mortal error than against the unscriptural novelties and vagaries of the hour. It was as natural for him to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as to breathe! So little importance did he attach to the minor heresies of his day that he rarely thought it worth while to move either tongue or pen for their suppression: he left them to die of themselves. In his lips the doctrine of Divine Sovereignty was sweet and lovely. The Gospel was always 'glad tidings of great joy' to those who were 'ready to perish'. Every accent was as honey from the comb. His ministry might be likened to his character; it was fall-orbed; no one element shot away in excess while leaving another dwarfed or stunted. While he traversed the Sacred Book in all its length and breadth, he opened up to view every fold of the human heart in its relation to the Gospel with the same fidelity. He was at great pains to set forth and delineate the influence of truth in all its aspects on the soul. Christian experience in his lips was a thing so accordant with reason, that to reject it was to do violence to common-sense, and separate between cause and effect. In all his preaching, as well as in all his writings on the subject, every utterance was marked by a thoroughly

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Scriptural purity. The vague, the fanciful, the imaginative, the mystical, still so much admired in some quarters, had no place in his system. Everything was as transparent as in the Epistles of the New Testament. Every expression was sound and wholesome. The counsels of Mr James were but a transcript of his own practice. To a body of students leaving college he said:—

Preach Christ, my brethren, and for Christ's own sake. Exalt Christ, not yourselves. Exhibit Christ, in the divinity of his person, the efficacy of his atonement, the prevalence of his intercession, the fullness of his grace, the freeness of his invitations, the perfection of his example; in all his mediatorial offices, and Scripture characters; and as the Alpha and Omega of your whole ministry. Let your sermons be fragrant

with the odours of his name: carry this precious unguent to the pulpit, break the alabaster box, and let the precious perfume fill the house in which you minister. Christ has himself told you the secret of popularity and success, where he said, 'And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' With this divine loadstone magnetise your sermons: here lies the attraction. Preach as in full view of all the wonders of Calvary, and let it be as if, while you spoke, you felt the Saviour's grace flowing into, and filling your soul, and as if at that moment you were sympathising with the apostle in his sublime raptures—'God forbid I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.' When Popery and Puseyism are lifting so extensively the crucifix, or at any rate a

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mere ceremonial religion, let us exhibit the cross in all its grandeur and attractions. This is our strength, our defence, and will ensure our success. Turning with disgust from the puerilities by which the doctrine of the cross is substituted, the people will feel afresh the power of Gospel truth, if *we* have but the wisdom and fidelity to present it. Denied it from their own pastors, our hearers will go for it to the Wesleyans and the evangelical clergy of the Church of England. And who can wonder, or blame them? Dissent is a poor thing without the Gospel—the shell without the kernel, the chaff without the wheat. It has nothing for the imagination, nothing for mere taste; and if that which alone can quiet the conscience and feed the heart, be wanting in its preaching, I mean the fullness of the Gospel, it will be left by all those who are more concerned for their salvation, than they are for their nonconformity. Thank God, there is yet no extensive indication of this state of things; I hope there never will be: but in order that there may not, let our young ministers remember, that it is not by intellectuality, nor by bitter controversy, nor by being public men, but by fully, faithfully, ably, and earnestly preaching the Gospel, that they will be useful either in the higher object of saving souls, or the secondary one of building up their own denomination.

But this was not the whole. The system of Romaine, Booth, and other excellent men, would have stopped here, exhibiting what Robert Hall called a 'profile view of the Gospel.' Not so John Angell James; he uniformly taught that Christian

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experience was accompanied by Christian morality. In nothing was he more successful than in setting forth the claims of the Divine

law on the subjects of Divine grace. He was careful to show that Christian obedience was simply Christian love in operation—internal sanctity rendered palpable by external action—that sanctification is the only evidence of justification—change of character the only proof of a change of state—a growing meetness for heaven a true evidence of a title to it. This fact is important, as showing that the popularity of Mr James in no degree arose from his merging the preceptive in the promissory, and preaching comfort at the expense of holiness—dwelling on privilege while silent on duty! In this full-orbed ministry he is a model for young preachers, who will find that, in proportion as they honour their Master, they will secure their own reputation. The motto of all his discourses, as of all his works, was, ‘Holiness to the Lord!’ The fact of his great and enduring acceptance much redounds to the credit of the general soundness of the churches of our age and country. The best commentary on his words and writings is the all but unexampled fertility of the church in Carr’s-lane. If the tree be known by its fruits, what shall be said of that leviathan fellowship? The good man bears the following testimony in the last letters he issued to the churches, which now possess a special claim to Public attention.:—

When I became pastor of my church, more than fifty-three years ago, the only object of congregational benevolence and action was the Sunday-school,

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which was then conducted in a private house, hired for the purpose. There was nothing else; literally, nothing we set our hands to. We had not then taken up even the Missionary Society. We have now an organisation for the London Missionary Society, which raises, as its regular contribution, nearly £500 per annum, besides occasional donations to meet special appeals, which, upon an average, may make up another £100 a year. For the Colonial Missionary Society, we raise, annually, £70. For our Sunday and day schools, which comprehend nearly two thousand children, we raise £200. We support two town missionaries, at a cost of £200. Our ladies conduct a working society for orphan mission schools in the East Indies, the proceeds of which reach, on an average, £50 a year; they sustain also a Dorcas Society for the poor of our town, a Maternal Society, of many branches, in various localities; and a Female Benevolent Society, for visiting the

sick poor. We have a Religious Tract Society, which employs ninety distributors, and spends £50 nearly a year in the purchase of tracts. Our Village Preachers' Society, which employs twelve or fourteen lay agents, costs us scarcely anything. We raise £40 annually for the County Association. We have a Young Men's Brotherly Society for general and religious improvement, with a library of 2,000 volumes. We have also night schools for young men and women at small cost, and Bible classes for other young men and women. In addition to all this, we raise £100 per annum for Spring-hill College. We have laid out £23,000 in improving

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the old chapel and building the new one; in the erection of school-rooms, the college, and in building seven country and town small chapels. We have also formed two separate Independent churches, and have, jointly with another congregation, formed a third, and all but set up a fourth, and are at this time in treaty for two pieces of freehold land, which will cost £700, to build two more chapels in the suburbs of the town.

We doubt if in the history of the churches of these realms there be any instance of a pastor in the fifty-fourth year of his ministry so situated as to be able to make a similar statement. The church in Carr's-lane towers far above even the most fertile of the sisterhood, whether endowed or voluntary. We know of nothing comparable in the realm.

While the preaching of Mr James was distinguished by various other concomitant attributes entitled to notice, it was remarkable for adaptation to special occasions; these might be small or great; there was always sufficient pertinence to them. Rarely, indeed, was an audience disappointed. He seemed, somehow, to reach the thing that was right as if by instinct. Amid the all but innumerable discourses which he delivered in and around the metropolis, and throughout the country, it may be doubted if there was one which wholly failed in this important particular. This, of course, implied forethought and special preparation; and it would seem that nothing was grudged that might further the object of the occasion.

It is worthy of notice that Mr James was quite

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as acceptable in Scotland as in England. On one occasion he and Chalmers preached on the same day for a public object in

Edinburgh, and by some of the most competent judges it was held that, as to all the great ends of public preaching, the renowned Englishman lost nothing by comparison with the brilliant Scottish orator.

The prayer! who shall describe that? So full, so multifarious, so comprehensive, so discriminating, so pertinent, so simple, so meek, so childlike, often so sublime that earth and time were annihilated and forgotten, and the worshipper borne straightway to the throne of God! Who that ever joined with him can forget it? To devout people, indeed, the reading and the prayer, with the praise, were often enough for a spiritual repast; they scarcely wanted more; the soul was refreshed, strengthened, and happy, and all beyond was in excess. His prayer was quite equal to his preaching; we cannot pay it a higher tribute. It may be doubted if his prayer did not contribute as much to his usefulness as his preaching, perhaps, also to his popularity, especially among godly people.

THE PLATFORM ORATOR

Mr James was quite as great on the platform as in the pulpit—a circumstance which greatly contributed both to his popularity and his usefulness. On this head he deserves the special notice of all young ministers. In this matter he fairly eclipsed Jay, Chalmers, Wardlaw, and some other eminent preachers, who first neglected platform speaking,

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and then shrank from it. The first and the second of these eminent men could never be induced to appear there; and Wardlaw was once clamoured down in the midst of a beautiful but unspeech-like disquisition on the platform of the Bible Society—the most moderate and decorous of all our religious gatherings. Till within the last dozen years, when he seemed to get weary, and disposed to leave the platform to younger men, Mr James was a very frequent speaker in London, where he was always welcome and always effective. Nor was this all; where he was most known he was most loved, the sure proof of excellence. His noble-hearted neighbour, Dr Miller, of Birmingham, in a Funeral Sermon which will reflect lasting credit on his respected name, and in which the Churchman

is merged in the Christian, and the popular orator in the mourning friend, says:—

On his advocacy of those religions societies in whose great and blessed designs Churchmen and Dissenters co-operate, and on his general powers as a public speaker, I need not dwell. No man ever rose on a Town Hall platform who was more welcome to the auditory. Earnest, grave—or with a gravity relieved by playfulness only, never by levity—touchingly pathetic; rising not seldom to lofty eloquence; his language fluent and choice; every speech presenting the difficult combination of all the polish of the most finished preparation, and all the freshness of extempore address—his face betokening high intelligence and often lighted with a smile of heaven's own love—he was a speaker not often surpassed. I never saw him sit down without

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regret that his speech was not longer. It has been sometimes objected that his personal references to friends present savoured somewhat too much of compliment and flattery. But I believe that they upon whose lips such language would have been but compliment and flattery judged him by their own hollowness. With friendly eye he unconsciously exaggerated the excellences of those he admired and loved—but Angell James was no retailer of platform compliments—he was a true man—he was sincere. While many others possess one and another of his gifts in greater measure, a rare combination made him what he was. And few men more diligently improved gifts given. He was a singular exemplification of Lord Bacon's words,—'Reading maketh a full man; conversation a ready man; and writing an exact man.'

It is among the traditions of the last generation, which may still be occasionally heard in certain circles, that the first event which fairly brought forth JA James as an orator and a public man, was a speech he made at the formation of the Wolverhampton Auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society. To this oration, therefore, a more than ordinary interest now attaches. We are indebted for a copy of it—the only one we ever saw—to our much-esteemed, and learned friend, Benjamin Hanbury, Esq. As it is something more than a curiosity, and well worth preserving, I shall here insert it, where it will be read with interest by the generations to come. The meeting was held 12 December 1815. The Rev. T Whitby in the chair opened

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the business with a most suitable speech, after which no fewer than *fifteen*, Clergymen, Dissenting Ministers, and Laymen, at various lengths, addressed the assembly. The task assigned to Mr James placed him at the close, when the time was gone and the people exhausted: he was appointed merely to move thanks to the Provisional Committee, which showed that but little was required, or, perhaps, expected, of the young man from Birmingham. Mr James, however, wisely felt, that the cause was greater than time, and being prepared, he determined that his labour should not be thrown away. The great speeches of the occasion were those of the Rev. Thos Gisborne, afterwards so famous for his writings, and the Rev. Thos Scales, well known as one of the Dissenting Ministers of Leeds, and still alive respected and beloved, useful and happy, in connection with one of the great Dissenting Schools for the Sons of Ministers in the North of England. Mr James, nothing daunted, proceeded:—

Mr Chairman,—At this late hour of the Meeting, when so many able speeches have been already delivered, and especially after the luminous, comprehensive, and eloquent address of the Reverend Mr Gisborne, it is needless, if not presumptuous, in me to add a syllable. What that gentleman has touched he has enlightened—what he has enlightened he has warmed—what he has warmed he has impressed. I cannot, however, forbear to express my sincere congratulations to the inhabitants of this town, upon their accession to the cause of the British and Foreign Bible Society: an Institution, than which

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ingenuity could not invent, nor will future ages disclose, one more fraught with the best blessings of man, and the highest praises of the great God: an Institution, which, more than any other ever framed by the wisdom, or promoted by the benevolence of the human mind, is entitled to the angelic ascription as its motto, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good-will towards men.’

There are three points of view, Sir, in which the importance of the Bible Society may be clearly seen.

First, by considering what are its pretensions. To circulate the Scriptures according to the Authorised (King James) Version, without note or comment, as widely through our own, and other countries, as its funds shall allow. In every case its boon is nothing less than the Word of God. The Bible is the most valuable gift which one mortal can bestow

upon another, and no wonder, since it is the richest treasure which God himself, next to his Eternal Son and Spirit, can direct to the possession of man upon earth. There are many other Societies which embrace religious objects, and which are exceedingly important as far as they go; Prayer Book and Homily Societies, religious Tract Societies, and others of a similar nature, are in the view of their supporters highly valuable. But whence do these Institutions derive their value? Unquestionably from the portion, either of the letter or spirit of the inspired volume, which is infused into the subjects of their benevolence. Prayer Books, Homilies, and Tracts, their most zealous distributors must admit, are important, only as they lead men to the Bible; they are lesser

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lights conducting to the greater, and, like the Star of Bethlehem, are valuable only as they guide to the rising orb of spiritual day. Now if these lesser and subordinate objects are thought of sufficient moment to justify a distinct and separate combination of 'human effort, much more that which is paramount to them all. There is something ineffably sublime in the spectacle which exhibits all denominations of Christians, and all the Protestant nations of Christendom, uniting to conduct the Bible in solemn procession to the supreme tribunal in the temple of truth, and with one voice, exclaiming as they stand around its seat of majesty, 'The Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of men, as sinners, or as Protestants.'

The importance of the Bible Society may be estimated, in the next place, by a survey of the moral and religious state of the world. It is now, Sir, nearly four centuries since God, by directing the human mind to the invention of printing, may be said to have produced wings for the Bible; and about three centuries since, by the Reformation, he broke open its prison doors and made way for it to take its flight through the earth; and yet, how melancholy is it to reflect upon the religious and moral condition of the globe in the nineteenth century! Assuming that the population of the earth is about eight hundred millions of inhabitants—of these, four hundred and eighty millions are groaning beneath the various systems of pagan idolatry; a hundred and forty millions avow the blood-converting blasphemy of Mahomet; nine millions are Jews; only about a hundred and seventy

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millions are Christians by profession, and out of this number only fifty millions are Protestants. This is a most heart-affecting statement.

As it respects our own country, this land of Bibles, this valley of vision, even here, beneath the very droppings of the Christian sanctuary, there was a lamentable dearth of the Scriptures. It is computed that when the Bible Society commenced its operations, no less than four hundred thousand families in England and Wales alone, were destitute of the Word of God. If this be the state of things here, think, Sir, what must be the condition of less favoured countries upon the continent of Europe. The scarcity of Bibles in many of the German States was lamentably great; but in the Russian provinces it was almost incredible. In only two of these provinces, nearly half a million of families were starving for lack of this bread of life. Advancing into Catholic kingdoms, we enter deeper and gloomier shades. As we pass through the realms over which the Arabian impostor stretches his blood-stained sceptre, the night thickens dismally around us, till having reached the swarming regions of paganism, we are wrapped in the midnight of the moral world; there darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people; save where the throne of superstition is revealed by the horrid glare of its own abominable systems, with its ministers, impiety and obscenity, cruelty and terror, binding their fetters upon innumerable myriads of its wretched votaries, who, as they pass to eternity, send in the bosom of every wave, and upon the wings of every breeze, that

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touches the British shore, their mournful plaint, 'Come over and help us.' How important is the Institution, which rises amidst this wreck of human happiness, to supply such wants, and relieve such miseries! In such a state of the world as this, what are we to think of the mercy of those who complain of the multiplication of Bible Societies? Do they really know the state of the world? Must we convict them of ignorance or inhumanity?

But there is another way to ascertain the importance of the Bible Society; and that is, to look at it through the medium of its own reports. *'Her own works praise her in the gates.'* Here, Sir, it was my intention to have laid before the Meeting a summary of its operations, and success; in this, however, much for the benefit of this assembly, I have been anticipated by the able friend of the Society to whom I have already alluded. In addition to the interesting details communicated by him, there is one scene of the Society's operations, where its labours to diffuse its own spirit have been pre-eminently successful—I mean Russia. Yes, Sir, on that spot where French cruelty had left nothing but a sepulchre, for the ancient capital of this Northern Empire—there, through the aid of British mercy, has a fountain of life been

opened, by the establishment of a most flourishing Bible Society. Amidst the ruins and ashes of Moscow, this noble cause is displaying uncommon energy. The support it meets with in that immense kingdom, including the fostering care of its benevolent Monarch, and many of its Princes, is astonishing. There are

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one or two facts in connection with the Russian branches of the Bible Society, contained in the last sheet of information published by the Parent Institution, of too encouraging a nature to be kept back on the present occasion. One is, the establishment of a Branch Society in Theodosia, a commercial city in the Crimea. The importance of this event consists in the opening it will afford for introducing the Scriptures into that part of the Turkish Empire, which once formed the chief scene of St Paul's successful labours, and which contained the seven Churches addressed in the Apocalypse. How delightful is the thought, that access may thus be obtained, by the means of the Bible Society, for the torch of inspired truth, to rekindle the lamps in the seven golden candlesticks, which once formed the light and glory of Asia Minor, but which have long since almost expired amidst the errors of Islamism!—Another fact, singularly important, is communicated in the same letter. The Mufti of the Crimea, who is at the head of 10,000 Mahomedan Priests, is a subscriber of fifty roubles annually to the Bible Society, and appears from the account not to be far from the kingdom of God. From this and several other facts which might be mentioned, in connection with the Wahabee Schism, it is very evident that the crescent of the impostor is waning and waxing pale, preparatory to its being lost amidst the noontide splendour of the Sun of Righteousness.

It is thus, Sir, that our cause is going on to encompass the globe with its operations, and to fill the world with its bloodless triumphs. It is thus that

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it is raising the prayers of all nations to Heaven for Britain's prosperity, and causing their united supplications to ascend, like a cloud of incense, before the throne, on the behalf of our beloved country. And then, be it remembered, that these are the operations of its infancy. It is yet but in the twelfth year of its existence. We are the more astonished at its success, when we also recollect, that it has all this time had to struggle for its very being against a phalanx of foes armed for its destruction. Like the Jews at the building of the second

temple, its friends have had to wield with one hand the weapon of defence, while they have grasped with the other the instrument of labour. Mitres and professorships have been set in array against it, while all the artillery of rhetoric, argumentation, calumny, and abuse has been brought to bear upon it. Amidst all opposition it has lived and triumphed. Like the mountain pine, the storm which shook its boughs, gave strength to its roots; like a torch, the more it was smitten, the brighter it burnt. The tempest which was raised for its destruction, served only to transport it the more swiftly through the earth; 'she rode upon the wings of the wind, and did fly.'

Now, Sir, to what shall we attribute this astonishing energy? *To the sublime simplicity of its fundamental principle.* To its immutable purpose of circulating the Scriptures without note or comment. 'Tis this that has gained for it such immense support. 'Tis this that prevents all complexity of internal arrangement, all confusion of external operation. It is all simplicity, and therefore all efficiency. That

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which is its *present glory* is also the *pledge of its future purity*. Many noble Institutions, by the admixture of what is human in their construction, have, in the lapse of a few years, been entirely perverted from their original purpose. Such a perversion can never happen to the British and Foreign Bible Society. It must ever remain faithful to its original design, so long as it shall exist. To alter it, which can only be done by encroaching upon its fundamental principle, is to destroy it. This is the keystone of the arch, which the moment it is removed, leaves the whole a heap of ruins. It is delightful to repose our hopes for future generations upon such a basis, and amidst the melancholy changes which we are often condemned to witness in this world of mutability, to fix our expectations on this Institution, which, while it continues, must continue to be what it now is.

Time will not allow, nor does occasion require, that I should dwell on the excellence of this Society, as tending so powerfully and so directly to gather up the broken thread of Christian Unity, and guide back to the Church of God the retreating spirit of Christian peace. It has been fashionable of late to declaim against enthusiasm and fanaticism. Where these evils exist, they are to be deplored; but what are they, compared with the dark, malignant spirit of bigotry? 'Enthusiasm has something of the radiance and ardour of the sun to impart a sort of beauty to its clouds and mists. Even fanaticism has thunder and

lightning, and meteors in its gloom, and soon disperses itself by the violence of its storm.

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But *bigotry* is the palpable obscure; the solid temperament of darkness, whose chilling damps, and pestilential vapours, blast the lively fruits of piety and goodness; while all noxious, all monstrous, all prodigious things crawl forth to increase the horror of the night.' The British and Foreign Bible Society has done more for the destruction of this gloomy and sullen enemy of the Christian Church, than was ever done before. Its tendency is to produce candour, without generating indifference. UNION WITHOUT COMPROMISE, is its Motto.

I have now, Sir, acted for nearly ten years with my friend, the Rev. Mr Burn, in the concerns of this Institution; who, to a spirit of love which has adorned his principles as a Christian, has united a dignity and consistency as a clergyman which would have delighted, could he have witnessed it, even the Bishop of Lincoln himself. From what I have seen in my respected friend, I assure you, Sir, that if I had joined this Society in the hope of seeing the Church of England pulled down by the hands of her own sons, I should long since have left it in despair. Yet there are some persons, and not a few, who would have us dissolve this Society, and act only within the pale of our distinct and separate communions. No! Let them dissolve the Hallelujah chorus of Handel, and send the performers each to sing his own part, in his own separate abode; this, though an outrage upon harmony, would be a venial offence compared with the breaking up of an Institution, which to the delight of angels, and the joy of God's own heart, is performing the noblest concert

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that ever rolled its sublime tones from earth to heaven. Let them speculate with gratification upon the scene that would present itself, were the rainbow divided, and the heavens striped with its distinct and separate colours; but let them not attempt to persuade us to separate the mingled beauties of this interesting Society, which now throws its noble arch across the hemisphere of Christendom, the symbol of retiring storms, and the fair pledge of future tranquillity.

Such was the speech which is said to have inaugurated, or established the fame of JA James. From that day his reputation as an orator was fixed, and every succeeding year but added to its consolidation. The speech is remarkable for its striking pertinence to the occasion,

its brilliant figures, and rhetorical flights, rather than for its breadth, depth, or power. Most ordinary men were quite competent to its production; but add to it the voice and manner of Mr James, and it at once lifted it above all competition. It was obviously prepared with the utmost care. In this point, Mr James through life was a model to all public speakers. He prepared for the platform equally as for the pulpit. A conscience accompanied him everywhere. Whatever may be a man's gifts of fluency, or his acquisitions of knowledge, to the utmost that circumstances allow, he will do well always to make elaborate preparation for great occasions.

THE PASTOR

But, how distinguished soever Mr James might

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be as a preacher, he was still more so as a pastor. He had a most exalted conception of the office, its claims, honours, and responsibilities. Proof the most abundant of this came forth in his daily walk, free converse, ordination charges, and more extended authorship. For practical illustration we may look into the working of the church in Carr's-lane, as well as into his ecclesiastical writings. The church is his writings developed into actual life; and his writings, the church reduced to abstract principle and verbal exhibition. We there find him operating on all classes, and in every possible way, and by every species of agency. Among his manifold literary projects for the good of his people, not the least noticeable are his valuable, or rather invaluable, Addresses, amounting to several volumes—productions surpassed by none of his precious performances. We know not where to look for anything of the kind which admits of comparison with these golden lessons of pastoral love, sagacity, and vigilance. They are Divine philosophy adapted to the events of the passing hour among the people of God. Had Mr James produced nothing else, he would have established a claim to the grateful admiration of the Christian Church, and more especially of his own people. They deserve to be known to the ends of the earth.

But particulars are so numerous that we must leave them, and extend our thoughts on this head to Mr James as the great moving

power of the noble institution of which he was so long the head in Carr's-lane. Here it is that his true greatness

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becomes fully apparent. How vast the multitude there congregated, and the societies therewith connected, all animated by one spirit, moving in one path, and labouring to one end! Of the gigantic fellowship, so manifold and complete in its organisation, he was the life and the soul, everywhere present, a parent and a power. Such a position was one of incomparable moral greatness; enthroned amid the affections of this vast society of the excellent of the earth, it is difficult to say whether Mr James was more distinguished as a Christian pastor, a patriot, or a philanthropist. The principle of the three characters, however, in him was one and the same, 'Christ the hope of glory.' From his avocation, and the circumstances therewith connected his patriotism came forth but seldom and sparingly, but he was every inch an Englishman—a genuine lover of his country. His philanthropy, however, was in constant, powerful, and costly operation. The forms it assumed were Protean and all-comprehending. While he felt that Birmingham had the first claim on him and his flock, he was duly mindful of England, the colonies, and the world. Never, perhaps, did Christian zeal distribute its efforts and its beneficence with greater judgement or in better regulated proportion. Wherever we find them at work we might be led to think that the task of the hour was the only thing they were concerned about; but it forthwith appears that it was only a segment of the great circle of their multiplied undertakings. While the burden of his cry was, 'Let the whole earth be filled with his glory', his

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noble heart might be said to agonise pre-eminently for the vast Empire of China. He considered the great work well begun in other compartments of the globe, and panted to see the standard of the Cross extensively unfurled in the 'Flowery Land'. It will still be remembered by many that his overflowing zeal found an outlet in the late *British Banner*, when that journal was under my management. His zeal in this matter increased with time; his last great literary effort on this magnificent subject was in the shape of a pamphlet—'The Voice of God in China'—one of the most

eloquent and powerful productions that ever issued from his prolific pen. Brainerd ‘lying,’ as he said, ‘on the sides of eternity’ did not more vehemently yearn for the salvation of the Heathen at large than did Mr James for the Chinese. The only man who long preceded, and, if possible, surpassed him, in this matter was Mr Thomas Thompson, whose midday thoughts and midnight dreams for half a lifetime have been of China and its idolatrous hundreds of millions. Mr James was honoured to achieve wonders on behalf of China, and it is but fair to state that he was both powerfully prompted and liberally assisted in his efforts by his friend Mr Thompson.

Mr James, in his Appeal for China, addressed to the *British Banner*, with characteristic ardour, said:—

I have lately received a letter from that active and devoted friend of Christian enterprise, Thomas Thompson, Esq., of Poundsford-park, containing the noble proposal *to raise a fund immediately for*

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printing and circulating in China A MILLION COPIES OF THE CHINESE NEW TESTAMENT, and earnestly soliciting me to lay the subject before the public, through the medium of the Press, and to call out the Sunday-school teachers and scholars to do the work. The project of circulating a million copies of the New Testament is itself a vast idea. Is it practicable? Easy. Is it worth the effort, the pains, and the cost? Transcending all we can calculate. Shall it be done? Will not voices as numerous, though far more intelligent, as those which, in the eleventh century, under the wild enthusiasm of Peter the Hermit, shook the plains of Clermont and raised the thundering shout, ‘God wills it,’ again say, ‘God wills it?’ My friend, Mr Thompson, has commenced this subscription-list himself, by promising to give 1,000 copies; and I shall be most happy to give 500.

It is interesting to add that, instead of one *million, two and a quarter millions* were subscribed for, at a cost of about £40,000! I reflect with special and heartfelt gratitude that the *British Banner* was the instrument of inaugurating this great, glorious, and unparalleled movement.

THE EDUCATIONIST

Education in every form, and for every class, had in him a most powerful advocate. However he might differ from some of his friends on the question of Government aid in the matter, there were no differences as to the general importance of the

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subject and the necessity of the work being carried out on Christian principles. But, much as he prized day-school instruction, he set an infinitely higher estimate on that of the Sunday-school. From his earliest youth to the close of his great career he was a zealous advocate of that institution. One of his very first productions from the press was a work intended to farther the competency of its teachers. His own Sunday-school in Carr's-lane was among the most efficient of its kind in the nation.

Mr James did not lose sight of youth on their leaving the school, and he urged it on young ministers not to do so. He says:—

Be peculiarly attentive to the young men, especially those who are of the educated class, and endeavour to train *them* up to be pillars in the church, when their fathers are removed to the temple above. We have neither right nor reason to complain that our young people yield to the seductive influence of the National Establishment, or go off to the world in all its gaities and pleasures, if we take no pains to cultivate their minds, form their character, and attach them both to ourselves, and to our system. Take a deep interest in the welfare of the Sunday-school. It belongs to you of right and propriety to do so: for I maintain that the Pastor is the general superintendent of all the public religious instruction that is carried on in connection with his congregation, and that the Sunday-school is one department of his duty. Bestow a kind, but not a dictatorial, attention upon the teachers, in training and fitting them for their work. Be

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the friend of your people, and let it be *felt* by them that you are so; not by convivial feasting, idle gossip, or political discussion, but by watchfulness over their spiritual welfare, gentle yet faithful rebuke, tender sympathy, pastoral visitation, and a deep interest in the religious character of their children. Avoid all undignified familiarity. Respect yourself, and teach every one to respect you. Let no man despise you. Without assuming official pomp, or affecting the odour of extraordinary sanctity, or gathering up yourself into clerical stiffness, or exhibiting

religion in the type of awfulness and gloom, remember that a bishop, however young, must be grave and serious: and provided he have these qualities of character, he may be as cheerful and pleasant, as sincere religion and good temper can make him. Many young ministers have done themselves irreparable mischief, at their entrance upon their work, by allowing their cheerfulness to degenerate into facetiousness and levity. Never forget that they who see you on week days, will be gathered round your pulpit on the following Sabbath, and that your demeanour and conversation in the former, should not hinder, but help them, by profiting by your sermons in the latter. Who can look up with confidence, in reference to their soul's affairs, to the fribble, or the fop? Your youth is with some persons a little check to that veneration and deference, with which the Christian Minister should be regarded; how much is the power of this check increased, when frivolity is associated with juvenility.

Mr James, at all times, took the deepest interest in the academic institutions of the land for the training of the Christian ministry. He watched over them with a godly jealousy. Much as he valued sound intellectual culture, literary and other attainments for the ministry, he viewed them only as a means to an end, and as dust in the balance compared with sound theology, fervent piety, and preaching power. It may be doubted if any one of his contemporaries had a more correct view of this paramount subject. The slightest symptom of academic departure from the faith in the case of either student or professor filled him with alarm. Some gentlemen of sanguine temperament and exuberant courage thought him a little morbid on this point; our sympathies, however, are with him, and not with them; if he erred, it was on the safe side. The matter is not merely momentous but vital to the interests of the Church of Christ. The poison of error once introduced into the colleges, none can tell the consequences which may flow from it. One of the very last communications I had from Mr James made special and emphatic reference to this subject. In the preface to his *Affectionate Counsels*, he expressed himself as follows:—

It is certain that an apprehension has been pretty extensively felt for some few years past, that the preaching of some of our young ministers was considerably defective in those qualities both of manner and matter, which were likely, under God's blessing, to render it effective for the conversion of sinners, and the edification of those who, through

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grace, had believed: that in fact, without being in any sense heretical, it was neither so richly evangelical in doctrine, nor so plain, pungent, and popular, in style and mode of address, as could be wished. This was considered to be in part the result of a greater attention paid in our colleges to classical and philosophical studies, to the incorporation of these Institutions with the London University, and to a more extended intercourse with the seats of learning in Germany; whereby a degree of ambition for literary distinction and academic honours had been excited, which had a little corrupted some from the simplicity that is in Christ. The venerable Mr Jay, in an admirable sermon preached before the managers, friends, and students of Cheshunt College, since published, and which every young minister should read, uttered his oracular and impressive voice against this tendency of our age; and since then, others have expressed the same cautions, and the same fears. It may be these fears are groundless—it is certain at any rate they proceed from no unworthy motive, from no mean jealousies, no dread of the legitimate effect of literature, nor from any unkind feeling towards the younger brethren—but from a truly paternal solicitude for the usefulness, honour, and comfort of the rising ministry, from an anxious care for the salvation of souls, and from a jealous solicitude for the welfare of our churches. We do not undervalue literature—we wish we had a thousand times more than we possess; we are not insensible to the beauties of classical composition, nor to the immense

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advantage to the cause of truth of the power of sound logic, of true philosophy, or of chaste eloquence: would that we had more of all these; but still what are they in comparison with, or without, the fullness of the glorious gospel of the blessed God?

Some of us are growing old in the ministry, and begin to be deeply anxious about our co-pastors or successors; and knowing by what means we have attained to a degree of public favour and usefulness, as far above our deserts as it is beyond our expectations; knowing, at the same time, what it is that is most adapted to meet the wants of human nature, the tastes of society, and the demands of our churches, we are tremblingly concerned to see a race of ministers rising up, who, when we have rested from our labours, shall sustain and carry on the work which we have been honoured in our respective spheres of duty to accomplish. Sorrowfully and humbly conscious of our

defects, yet thankful for what God has wrought through our instrumentality, we desire to be followed by men every way our superiors, and we hear with pure and unutterable delight the testimony that is borne not only to the literary attainments, but to the sound theology, and the evangelical and effective strain of preaching, of many who are from time to time issuing from our colleges. Too much may have been said of the exceptions to this, and too little caution may have been observed in giving utterance to it; but it has been in love to our younger brethren; and love is jealous, while at the same

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time, even the jealousy of affection is not always sufficiently careful in its language. We have a most solicitous concern for our denomination, and knowing that it is suffering not only from the assault of its foes, who were never more determined in their hostility, but from the incompetency of many of its ministers, we venture to tell them that to be correctly dull, intellectually profound, or philosophically religious, will not secure or retain for them the favour of the churches, accomplish the ends of their ministry, or build up our denomination. To be useful, they must be popular; and to be popular they must be richly evangelical, simple, earnest, impressive and affectionate.

Mr James, in speaking of 'exceptions', refers to a series of papers, which had recently appeared in the *Congregational Magazine*, reflecting on the theology of the Rising Ministry, against which the students of two colleges, to the grief of Mr James, had passed resolutions.

Mr James sometimes indulged in a strain of quaint pleasantry in addressing young men on this subject, which riveted instruction. The Rev. Peter Sibree has kindly transmitted to me the following:—

At a meeting of the Friends and Subscribers at Spring-hill College, on their last anniversary at which I was present, Mr James addressed the students on the subject of preaching. Dr Gordon, whose beautiful sonnet to the memory of the late pastor of Carr's-lane you inserted in the *Standard*, was also there, and made an effective speech, referring the students to the moral strength which Mr

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James had attained, and quoting some Greek which Mr J could not well understand—his mind was full of one idea, how young men were to become useful preachers—so he would have nothing of Dr G's encomiums or his Greek—he wanted to see the rising ministry aiming

more at usefulness than high attainments in scholarship—though he did not undervalue learning. I want you, said he, to be like Spurgeon, to preach as he preaches, in good plain Saxon style—and in his Evangelical strain, adapted to the wants and feelings of the common people. Three qualifications you all need—and no apologies, he said, were needed for the homely advice he was going to give. But these three things they must have if they wished to be useful preachers:—

1st. *Brains*, to take in all the Latin, Greek, and Logic you can receive or your professors give.

2nd. *Bowels*, for intellectual power without pathos and tenderness in preaching will not succeed—preach with sympathy and feeling, not as reproaching men.

“And 3rd. *Bellows* also you must have; and without you give full exercise to your breathing apparatus, by frequent platform and pulpit exercises, you will not be efficient ministers. Get out of doors in the summer months and give free play to your lungs in the open air; and make all your classical attainments bear on the one great object—saving souls!

In this homely address there is a world of practical wisdom. The spirit which it breathes is not merely Puritanic, but Apostolic.

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Mr James entertained a very decided opinion concerning the duties of college committees in relation to this matter. He contended for the necessity of constant, free, and friendly intercourse with the students, and he was careful to exemplify his views in his own case in regard to Spring-hill College. From the time of the opening of that institution he was in the habit of inviting the young men to dine with him on the Saturday afternoon; and it need hardly be said that such occasions were times of especial interest. It may be hoped that some of these gentlemen will favour the world with an outline of an afternoon's intercourse in the hospitable mansion of Edgbaston. Such an outline could not fail at the present hour deeply to interest the churches; and it might not be without its use in academic localities. There can be no doubt that these parental talks were virtually lectures on subjects connected with the Christian ministry, strongly tending to guide, to encourage, and to establish. The benefits thence derived, we doubt not, will be experienced by those whose happy lot it was to share them to their latest day.

Some of the best and most active pastors now in the field are deeply sensible of their obligations to him; and the people of their charge have reason to bless his honoured memory.

In addressing a body of the students about to leave college, Mr James thus touchingly and beautifully refers to it:—‘In thus publicly taking my leave of you, on your quitting Spring-hill College, I really feel that I am parting with so many personal

and much endeared friends: for your uniform good conduct during your residence in our institution has given you a high place in my regard and esteem. Some of you it was my privilege to admit to the visible fellowship of the Christian Church—others to meet monthly at the Table of the Lord—one to consider as in some measure the fruit of my labours—and all to receive from time to time at my habitation, for the purpose of friendly intercourse, and for imparting to you, as I was able, the results of my observation and experience as a Christian minister: and I would fain believe that our Saturday afternoon conferences will not be forgotten by you, as they certainly will not by me.

THE NONCONFORMIST.

We must next glance at another phase of the pastoral character of Mr James—his Dissent from the Established Church—which is deserving special notice. His Nonconformity was of a thoroughly Scriptural character; it was the Nonconformity of Owen and his noble compeers—a thing not of faction or division, but of conscience, decided and inflexible, yet peaceful and loving. Mr James greatly prized, and firmly held, his principles on this subject; and, on proper occasions, he was always prepared to state, and, if necessary, to defend them, in a manner at once chivalrous and charitable. There was something, however, on which he set an infinitely higher value—the doctrines of the ‘common salvation’. His charity was

compatible with his Nonconformity, and his Nonconformity with his Charity. Neither demanded of him the sacrifice of the other. Only once during his long life did the discussion of the question of the union of Church and State assume dimensions which might be designated national; and then Mr James was not wanting either

to his principles or his piety. That he might once for all deliver his conscience and have done with the subject, he issued one of the most eloquent and powerful pamphlets that the occasion brought forth. Still, the production of that potent manifesto appeared to have been to him a self-denying duty. He rather deplored the necessity than rejoiced in the opportunity of assaulting the Established Church, which was then carrying things with a rather high hand. However necessary and important to the interests of the Gospel at times, polemics were not congenial to his generous nature. He carried aversion on this point, I think, too far. After the memorable struggle of that period, things settled down by degrees to their former condition, and Mr James never again entered the arena of controversy. This led to the insinuation, that he had become lukewarm in the cause of Dissent; but it was not so. As we have heard him say, it was 'not that he loved the principles of Nonconformity less, but that he loved the people of God more.' He saw, moreover, no good, but much evil, come out of the contest; and, while much was wrong, he felt that things could only be set right by the diffusion of truth and the progress of reason; and he rightly judged that love and

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union would infinitely more conduce to this than the most ably-conducted controversy.

This pamphlet is now a literary curiosity. A Churchman had somewhat rudely assailed Dissent as set forth in the *Church Member's Guide*, by Mr James, which led him to publish a 'Defence'; the volume necessarily assumed the aspect of an assault, although made in an excellent spirit. The closing paragraph is worthy of his noble nature. He says:—

As it respects the conduct of Episcopalians towards Dissenters, we ask nothing but candour and good-will. We have had contumely, and hatred, and misrepresentation enough, from some quarters in the Church, and some from which it would be little expected, to wear out our charity, if anything could do it. If we are occasionally betrayed into expressions of warmth and irritation, which will hardly bear the test of the high-toned morality of a religion that requires us to bless those that curse us, perhaps our excuse, if anything could excuse the least violation of Christian meekness, may easily be found in the page of many writers, both clergymen and laymen, poetical and prosaic,

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who seem to regard it a proof of good Churchmanship to insult and abuse the Dissenters. We sometimes smile at the harmless fulminations of *ex cathedra*, or *ex rostro*, scorn and displeasure with which we are assailed; but they do not hurt us; amidst all we go on, and go on our way rejoicing. Our numbers ought to be sufficient to protect us from contempt; and though excluded from the Universities, and denied access to

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the national fountains of literature, by a bigoted and narrow-minded policy, and thus left to provide as we can for the education of our own ministry, we have among us some, who in the departments of Biblical criticism, Greek and Hebrew literature, systematic theology, and English composition, would be referred to as splendid ornaments of the Anglican hierarchy. At any rate, there is one thing which entitles us to the gratitude and respect of all who prefer constitutional freedom to despotic authority: for David Hume himself, 'a competent witness, if ever there was one, of political principles, and who was far from being partial to Dissenters, candidly confesses, that to them we are indebted for the preservation of liberty.'

Desirous of living in the good-will of our neighbours, we ask for just so much esteem as our conduct entitles us to, and no more: and as to our principles, *they* are matters between God and our souls, which we have placed in the sanctuary of our heart, under the guardianship of our conscience, and allow no man to meddle with: which we love and value, notwithstanding the incidental evils with which it is our unhappiness to see them sometimes associated; which inspire us with no ill-will to those who differ from us, and disqualify us for none of the duties of social life, none of the operations that are carried on for the temporal or eternal welfare of mankind; which we publicly profess, and unblushingly avow, amidst the wonder of the ignorant, the suspicion of the credulous, and the sneer of the scornful; which we have inherited from

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martyrs, and for which, should God call us to the trial, we hope we should find grace to accept and wear the crown of martyrdom ourselves; but which we are ready, notwithstanding our present convictions, and attachment, to surrender to any one who will prove them to be contrary to the Word of God. In ceasing to be Dissenters we should have no sacrifices to make, no persecution to endure, no cross to take up; these things lie all on the other side. Dissent, if it be a sin, is neither

a courtly nor a gainful one. So far its motives are beyond suspicion. Our principles cost us much money and much respect, which we should save by entering within the pale of the Establishment: and at the same time, we should lose the ungracious character of separatists, and get rid of the unmerited name of schismatics. We should at any rate, try our fortune in the 'lottery of ecclesiastical prizes', and the career of church preferment. We are neither stoics nor ascetics; we do not profess to be in love with poverty and reproach, though quite willing to endure both for conscience sake. We are open to conviction, and will hearken to reason; but are never likely to be converted by the hectoring and contempt, the dogmatism and arrogance of either the evangelical or anti-evangelical members of any hierarchy upon earth. Although we contend for dissent, our desire is to be vanquished by the truth; and if these two can be shown to be not identical, we are quite prepared to surrender the former. But the man who would lead us back to the Church of England, must not meet us with the works of

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Hooker, but with the New Testament; he must not come with a sufficient portion of dialectic skill, to convict of many errors in style and logic, so humble an advocate of Nonconformity as myself but to overturn our great position that THE WORD OF GOD IS THE SOLE AND SUFFICIENT AUTHORITY IN MATTERS OF RELIGION; he must not only prove, if prove he could, from my concessions, that Dissenters are guilty of many things inconsistent with their own principles, but he must demonstrate, and nothing less than this will give him the victory, THAT AN ALLIANCE OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST WITH THE SECULAR POWER IS SANCTIONED BY THE AUTHORITY, AND ACCORDS WITH THE GENIUS OF CHRISTIANITY; THAT DIOCESAN EPISCOPACY, FOUNDED ON THE SUPERIORITY OF BISHOPS TO ELDERS, IS OF APOSTOLIC ORIGIN AND APPOINTMENT; AND THAT THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER CONTAINETH NOTHING CONTRARY TO THE WORD OF GOD. Until this is proved, nothing is done, and when this is demonstrated, the grounds of dissent are taken away, and dissent itself will in all probability, be abolished for ever.

To prevent misconception and to do justice to the fellow-labourers of the departed, less renowned, but not less faithful in the Gospel vineyard, it is proper to state that Mr James carried on the bulk of his potent ministry under circumstances of a peculiarly favourable character; more so, we presume, than any one of his compeers. No mistake can be greater than to suppose that Mr James would

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have achieved the same things in the Metropolis, or in any other of the great towns or cities. For

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the first seven years of his course he 'ploughed on a rock', like too many other faithful men at the present time. In his case, as in that of others, piety, talent, zeal, eloquence, work—hard, zealous, and prayerful—seemed to go for nothing, or very little. To employ a homely figure, the pump was well constructed, sound and good, and the well was full of wholesome water, but suction was not established, and hence the handle was moved to little purpose. In the case of the pump, what is wanted was a bucket full of water, and in the case of the pulpit, additional people sufficient for a time to fill the edifice; that done the water will flow and the congregation will keep up, increase, and multiply. These seven or eight years of Mr James's opening ministry were far from cheering, and, if he had sought a change and found it, the act to the human eye would not have been censurable. It would nevertheless, in his case, have been most unfortunate. A congregation of one hundred and fifty or two hundred people, and a church of forty members, held forth but a poor prospect for a young man panting to be useful; but, had he left and got into the rut, he might, like many others, have toiled on with small success and repeated changes, without improving his position, till, after a long life of self-denying labour and manifold afflictions little noticed and little known, he dropped into a nameless grave! But he waited prayerfully and patiently, labouring till the appointed time, when the tide rose in strength, and, for forty years, wafted him along to a measure of usefulness and honour, such as has

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fallen to the lot of very few. The fact is significant, and highly monitory to the churches; there is, we feel assured, many a James throughout the land that will leave the world undiscovered. We have among us a number of pastors 'labouring in the fires', who want nothing but a start. Give them that; let them once get fairly into contact with the masses, and, like Mr James, they will go on conquering and to conquer! But, for the want of this, their lives are one long struggle even for existence! Some churches, reading the history of Carr's-lane, may be tempted to exclaim, 'Oh that we

had a James!' while their pastors may, perhaps, with equal propriety, exclaim, 'Oh that we had a Birmingham!'

Another circumstance is entitled to notice: the property of which Mr James early came into possession, and which he used so admirably for the glory of his Master, greatly redounded to the success of his ministry. The pastor who, to high personal worth, excellent wisdom, and preaching powers of the first order, adds a carriage, cannot fail, under the Divine blessing, of immense popularity and corresponding success. 'The rich have many friends, but the poor is despised of his neighbour.' The commercial principle, that 'money makes money', applies with the utmost force to the Christian congregation. Rich men are everywhere gregarious. Wealth draws to wealth; and, when an assembly largely composed of the opulent and the well-to-do are once brought fairly under the power of the Gospel, the results are highly gratifying. The

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tendency to increase will be constant. Where the wealthy are the wealthy will go, and there they will remain and become the supporters of every good work, a comfort to the pastor and a blessing to all around them. That wealth, moreover, is generally allied to superior intelligence, whereby its possessors are fitted for public usefulness, and carry with them, both within and without the church, great influence for good.

Again, the Carr's-lane church, as being the first in the field, naturally became the mother-church of the town, and, as such, without seeking it, acquired a species of monopoly of public favour, esteem, and confidence. There were numbers, opulence, respectability, and usefulness in the chapel, with eloquence, power, fame, and manifold worth in the pulpit. In juxtaposition with this mighty institution, new chapels, new churches, and new pastors had no chance! The history of Birmingham in relation to the present case confirms this view, and the theory suffices to explain its transcendent superiority. But this is only a portion of its advantages. The great town went on constantly increasing in number and opulence, and every step in advance brought its tribute to Carr's-lane. No church in England has had such a field to work on; none of the London churches has had a tithe of its advantages. It might be likened to some of our leviathan commercial establishments, with boundless

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wealth and world-wide fame, carried forward by their own momentum, self-sustained by their all-embracing connections and countless ramifications,

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and resting on foundations which nothing can shake. Any man with a reasonable measure of competency, so circumstanced, would have realised great things, although it may be few would have attained to the altitude of John Angell James.

We have felt it due to the Ministers of the Gospel of the Independent Body thus to discriminate. The principle is one which deserves more attention than is frequently given to it. Men alike, excellent and devout are frequently the victims of their positions, where they are visited with neglect, and often with reproach or contempt, when they are fully entitled to sympathy, succour, and admiration.

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ELOQUENCE

THE great Roman orator, in the simplicity of his heart, told the world, that his own orations supplied a perfect illustration of the principles set forth in his rhetorical treatises. A prouder man would have left it for others to make the discovery; although there can be no doubt of its substantial truth. The principle applies with the utmost force to the case of Mr James. To a very large extent he unquestionably was both the preacher and the pastor whom he so admirably portrayed in his books and charges. To ascertain what he actually was, how he preached and pastorised, the distant reader has only to consult his, various works. He expresses himself thus on *An Earnest Ministry*:—

Nothing less than earnestness can succeed in any cases of great difficulty, and the earnestness must of course be in proportion to the difficulty to be surmounted. Great obstacles cannot be overcome without intense application of the mind. How then can the work of the ministry be accomplished? Every view we can take of it replies, 'Only by earnestness.' Every syllable of the apostle's language replies, 'Only by earnestness.' Every survey we can take of human nature replies, 'Only by earnestness.' Every recollection of our own experience,

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as well as every observation we can make of the experience of others, replies, 'Only by earnestness.' This, this, is what we want, and must have, if the ends of the gospel are ever to be extensively accomplished, *an EARNEST ministry.*'

His own ministry was beyond question one of the most earnest ministries of the nineteenth century, the very thing here set forth. On this point we have a fine touch of his own experience at an early period. He says:—

If without an offence of the law of modesty I may refer to my own history, labour, and success, I would observe that I began my ministry, even as a student, with a strong desire after this object; and long before this, while yet a youth engaged in secular concerns, I had been deeply susceptible of the power of an awakening style of preaching, which was strengthened by the perusal of the rousing sermons of Dr Davies, of New Jersey. From that time to the present I have made the conversion of the impenitent *the* great end of my ministry, and I have had my reward. I have been sustained in this course by the remarks of Baxter in his *Reformed Pastor*, a long extract from which I will now furnish:—

We must labour in a special manner for the conversion of the unconverted.

The work of conversion is the great thing we must drive at; after this we must labour with all our might. Alas! the misery of the unconverted is so great that it calleth loudest to us for compassion. If a truly converted sinner do fall, it will be

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but into sin which will be pardoned, and he is not in that hazard of damnation by it as others are. Not but that God hateth their sins as well as others, or that he will bring them to heaven, let them live ever so wickedly; but the spirit that is within them will not suffer them to live wickedly, nor to sin as the ungodly do. But with the unconverted it is far otherwise. They 'are in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity', and have yet no part nor fellowship in the pardon of their sins, or the hope of glory. We have therefore a work of greater necessity to do for them, even 'to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them who

are sanctified.' He that seeth one man sick of a mortal disease, and another only pained with the toothache, will be moved more to compassionate the former than the latter; and will surely make more haste to help him, though he were a stranger, and the other a brother or a son. It is so sad a case to see men in a state of damnation, wherein, if they should die, they are lost for ever, that methinks we should not be able to let them alone, either in public or private, whatever other work we have to do. I confess I am frequently forced to neglect that which should tend to the further increase of knowledge in the godly, because of the lamentable necessity of the unconverted. Who is able to talk of controversies or of nice, unnecessary points, or even of truths of a lower degree of necessity,

how excellent soever, while he seeth a company of ignorant, carnal, miserable sinners before his eyes, who must be changed or damned? Methinks I even see them entering upon their final woe! Methinks I hear them crying out for help—for speediest help! Their misery speaks the louder, because they have not hearts to ask for help themselves. Many a time have I known that I had some hearers of higher fancies, that looked for rarities, and were addicted to despise the ministry, if I told them not something more than ordinary; and yet I could not find in my heart to turn from the necessities of the impenitent, for the humouring of them; nor even to leave speaking to miserable sinners for their salvation, in order to speak so much as should otherwise be done to weak saints, for their confirmation and increase in grace. Methinks as Paul's 'spirit was stirred within him,' when he saw 'the Athenians wholly given to idolatry', so it should cast us into one of his paroxysms, to see so many men in the greatest danger of being everlastingly undone. Methinks, if by faith we did indeed look upon them as within a step of hell, it would more effectually untie our tongues, than Croesus' danger did his son's. He that will let a sinner go down to hell for want of speaking to him, doth set less by souls than did the Redeemer of souls, and less by his neighbour than common charity will allow him to do by his greatest enemy. O therefore, brethren, whomsoever you neglect, neglect not the most miserable! Whatever you pass over, forget not poor souls that are under the condemnation and

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curse of the law, and who may look every hour for the infernal execution. if a speedy change do not prevent it. O call after the impenitent, and ply this great work of converting souls, whatever else you leave undone.

From such a man this is a most important testimony,—a splendid example! It shows that what had been so largely found, had been the chief object of his search. It was not a chance affair. This object, however, may long be earnestly sought without being found; and the disappointment is, doubtless, a very trying condition for a right-minded minister. As to the effect which it ought to have, Mr James says:—

Here it may be proper for us to look out of our own profession, and ask if the earnest tradesman, soldier, lawyer, philosopher, and mechanic, are satisfied to go on as they have done, though with ever so little success? Do we not see in all other departments of human action, where the mind is really intent on some great object, and where success has not been obtained in proportion to the labour bestowed, a dissatisfaction with past modes of action, and a determination to try new ones? And should we who watch for souls, and labour for immortality, be behindhand with them? In calling for new methods, I want no new doctrines; no new principles; no startling eccentricities; no wild irregularities; no vagaries of enthusiasm, nor frenzies of the passions; no, nothing but what the most sober judgement and the soundest reason would approve;—but I do want a more inventive,

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as well as a more fervid zeal in seeking the great end of our ministry. Dull uniformity, and not enthusiasm, is the side on which our danger lies. I know very well the contortions of an epileptic zeal are to be avoided, but so also is the numbness of a paralytic one; and after all, the former is less dangerous to life, and is more easily and frequently cured, than the latter. We may, as regards our preaching, for instance, examine whether we have not dwelt too little on the alarming, or on the attractive themes of revelation; whether we have not clothed our discourses too much with the terrors of the Lord, and determine to try the more winning forms of love and mercy, or whether we have not rendered the Gospel powerless by an everlasting repetition of it in commonplace phraseology; whether we have not been too argumentative, and resolve to be more imaginative, practical, and hortatory; whether we have not addressed ourselves too exclusively

to believers, and determine to commence a style of more frequent and pungent address to the unconverted; whether we have not been too vague and general in our descriptions of sin, and become more specific and discriminating; whether we have not been too neglectful of the young, and begin a regular course of sermons to them; whether we have not had too much sameness of topic, and adopt courses of sermons on given subjects; whether we have not been too elaborate and abstract in the composition of our discourses, and come down to greater simplicity; whether we have not been too careless, and bestow

more pains; whether we have not been too doctrinal, and in future make all truth, as it was intended to do, to bear upon the heart, conscience, and life.

This is a passage of extraordinary value, finely distinguishing a right from a wrong course. It is a treatise in a paragraph! Mr James had a very exalted conception of the importance of high spirituality in the ministry. The following are weighty words on this head:—

No careful reader of the New Testament, and observer of the present state of the church, can fail to be convinced, one should think, that what is now wanting is a high spirituality. The Christian profession is sinking in its tone of piety; the line of separation between the church and the world becomes less and less perceptible; and the character of genuine Christianity, as expounded from pulpits and delineated in books, has too rare a counterpart in the lives and spirit of its professors.

How is this to be remedied, and by what means is the spirit of piety to be revived? May we not ask a previous question—How came this spirit of slumber over the church? Was it not from the pulpit? And if a revival take place in the former, must it not begin in the latter? Is the ministry of the present day in that state of earnest piety which is likely to originate and sustain an earnest style of preaching, and to revive the lukewarmness of their flocks? I do not mean for a moment to insinuate that the ministers of the present day among the Dissenters, or Methodists, or the Evangelical clergy of the Church of England, are characterised by immorality,

or even a want of substantial holiness: or that they would suffer, as regards their piety, in comparison with those of some other periods

of the history of their denominations: but what I am compelled to believe, and what I now express, is that our deficiencies are great as compared not only with what is always required of us, but is especially required by the circumstances of the times in which we live. Amidst the eager pursuits of commerce; the elegancies and soft indulgences of an age of growing refinement; the high cultivation of the intellect, and the contests of politics, the church needs a strong and high barrier to keep *out* the encroachment of tides so adverse to its prosperity; and needs equally a dam to keep *in*, its spiritual feeling. And where shall it find this, if not in the pulpit?

This language is, doubtless, very humbling, but not more so than that of Dr Chalmers, whom Mr James quotes as follows:—

‘As things stand at present, our creeds and confessions have become effete; and the Bible a dead letter; and the orthodoxy which was at one time the glory, by withering into the inert and lifeless, is now the shame and reproach of all our churches.’ This is strong language, and a startling opinion. But the most melancholy thing connected with it is its truth.

Mr James thus beautifully epitomises the sum and substance of the Gospel ministration:—

I advert first to the MATTER of our ministrations. And this must consist of course of those topics which bear most obviously and directly upon

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the great ends we are seeking to accomplish. Earnestness will take the nearest and most direct road to its object; nor will it be seduced from its path by beautiful prospects and pleasant walks, that lie in another direction. ‘I want to reach that point, and I cannot allow myself to be attracted by scenes, which however agreeable and appropriate to others, would, if I stayed or turned to contemplate them, only hinder me in my business.’ Such is the language of one intent upon success in any given scheme. Now what is the end of our office?—the reconciliation of sinners to God, and their ultimate and complete salvation, when so reconciled. It is easy then to see that the matter of our instruction and persuasion must be, *the ministry of reconciliation*. Of course it must be our purpose to declare the whole counsel of God, and to remember ‘that all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’ In the way of exposition a minister should go through the greater part of the whole Bible,

fairly and honestly explaining and enforcing it. But since the whole Bible, as explained by the more perfect revelation of the New Testament, directly or indirectly points to Christ, or may be illustrated and enjoined by considerations suggested by his mission and work, our preaching should have a decidedly evangelical character. The divinity, incarnation, and death of Christ—his atonement for sin—his resurrection, ascension, intercession, and mediatorial reign—his

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spiritual kingdom, and his second coming: the offices and work of the Holy Spirit in illuminating, regenerating, and sanctifying the human soul: the doctrine of justification by faith, and the new birth: the sovereignty of God in the dispensation of his saving gifts—these and their kindred and collateral topics should form, so to speak, the staple of our public ministrations and teaching. It surely must be this which the apostle meant when he said, ‘I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified.’ ‘The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness: but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.’ If there be any meaning in language, this must imply that the apostle in his ministry dwelt chiefly upon the work of Christ, as the theme of his discourses. His epistles all sustain this view of his meaning. They were all full of this great subject. We may perhaps smile at the simple piety of the individual who was at the trouble of counting the number of times that the apostle mentioned the name of Jesus in all his epistles, but at the same time something is to be learnt from the fact that he found it to reach between four and five hundred. This teaches us how thoroughly Christian, how entirely imbued with evangelism, his mind and his writings were. His morality was as evangelical as his doctrine, for he enforced all the branches of social obligation by motives drawn from the cross. His ethics were all

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baptised with the spirit of the Gospel, so that the believer in reading the writings of Paul, has his eye as constantly kept upon the Crucified One, in the progress of his sanctification, as the sinner’s eye is turned towards the same object, for his justification. Here then was the earnestness of the apostle, one constant, uniform, and undeviating endeavour to save men’s souls by the truth as it is in Jesus.

Would that these wise and admirable words might be engraven on the hearts of all our young Academics! They form a fine clue to a thoroughly evangelical ministration.

With respect to the best method of dispensing the truth, Mr James was clear, decided, and Scriptural. He began with men where God begins with them, urging repentance towards God as well as faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Connected with this subject there is one point, the 'terrors of the Lord', on which it is important to have the judgement of such a man. In the days of the Puritans there was greatly more of this in the pulpit than there is in our times. The views of Mr James were thoroughly sound; and his practice therewith corresponded. Many good men err on the subject, and err upon principle. Extremes are not unnatural even to public teachers. During many years we were hearing constantly, and on all occasions, of the Moravian Missionary's experiment. For a long time he preached nothing but justice and wrath, and there was no fruit: at length he altered his course and sounded the trumpet of mercy, and the souls of his hearers were then melted. From

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this an inference was drawn, that nothing should be preached but love; that wrath should not be mentioned! Now what says the Scriptures? How did the Prophets and Apostles preach? How did John and Jesus preach? That point once ascertained, our rule is before us: a straw for human opinion! We have only to follow the divine pattern in a right spirit and all will be well. The Missionary from the first should have preached both the 'terrors of the Lord', and the love of the Lord—both justice and mercy. On this point the following is full of interest; Mr James says:—

I remember a discussion, by a large company of ministers in my vestry, on one occasion, as to what style of preaching had been found in their own experience to be most useful: and it was pretty generally admitted, and some of them had been among our most successful preachers, that sermons on alarming and impressive texts had been most blessed in producing conviction of sin, and first concern about salvation. At the same time it must be recollected that though descriptions of sin may affect—exhibiting the consequences of it may affright—vehement censures of it may alarm—reasoning concerning it may open the gloomy road to despair—this alone will not convert. Law

without gospel will harden, as gospel without law will only lead to carelessness and presumption: it is the union of both that will possess the sinner with a loathing of himself, and love to God. Still our danger in this age lies not so much in neglecting the gospel, as in omitting to associate with this, the

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preaching of the law. It is worthy of remark that Jesus Christ, who was incarnate love itself, the living gospel, yea the way, the truth, the life, was the most alarming preacher that was ever in our world. It is, however, especially incumbent upon us not to mistake grossness for fidelity; nor harshness for earnestness. The remarks of Mr Hall on this, are as correct as they are beautiful: 'A harsh and unfeeling manner of denouncing the threatenings of the word of God, is not only barbarous and inhuman, but calculated by inspiring disgust, to rob them of all their efficiency. If the awful part of our message, which may be styled the burden of the Lord, ever fall with due weight upon our hearers, it will be when it is delivered with a trembling hand, and faltering lips.' The look, the tone, the action, when such subjects are discussed, should be a mixture of solemnity and affection—the awfulness of love. To hear such topics dwelt upon in strong language, vehement action, and boisterous tones, strikes us as being an utter violation of all propriety, and in every hearer of the least discernment, is likely to excite horror and revulsion. Real earnestness is the result of deep emotion, and the emotion excited by the sight of a fellow-creature perishing in his sins is that of the tenderest commiseration, which will express itself not in stormy declamation and thundering denunciations, but of solemnly chastened expostulation and appeal.

I have no doubt whatever that the error of the day with many is, as Mr James defines it, 'the preaching of gospel without law.' The doctrine

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and duty of repentance requires far more prominence, I have reason to think, than in our day is generally given to it. Many rest satisfied with a clear, full statement of Gospel truth, which some call 'bearing the Gospel testimony'; and having done that, they think they have done all that is required of them. One thing is certain, this is not the preaching of the New Testament. Mr James strikingly observes:—

If all that was necessary to secure the ends of our ministry was to lay the truth open to the mind; if the heart were already predisposed to

the subject of our preaching, then like the lecturer on science, we might dispense with the hortatory manner, and confine ourselves exclusively to explanation. Logic, unaccompanied by rhetoric, would suffice; but when we find in every sinner we address, an individual acting in opposition to the dictates of his judgement, and the warnings of his conscience, as well as to the testimony of Scripture; an individual who is sacrificing the interests of his immortal soul to the vanities of the world, and the corruptions of his heart; an individual who is madly bent upon his ruin, and rushing to the precipice from which he will take his fatal leap into perdition, can we in that case be satisfied with merely explaining, however clearly, and demonstrating however conclusively, the truth of revelation? To borrow the allusion which I have already made, should we think it enough, coldly to unfold the sin of suicide, and logically to arrange the proofs of its criminality, before the man who had in his hand the pistol or the

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poison with which he was just about to destroy himself? Would exegesis, however clear and accurate, be enough in this case? Should we not entreat, expostulate, beseech? Should we not lay hold of the arm uplifted for destruction, and snatch the poison cup from the hand that was about to apply it to the lips? What is the case with the impenitent sinners to whom we preach, but that of individuals, bent upon self-destruction, not indeed the present destruction of their bodies, but of their souls. There they are before our eyes, rushing in their sins and their impenitence to the precipice that overhangs the pit of destruction; and shall we content ourselves with sermons, however excellent for elegance, for logic, for perspicuity, and even for evangelism, but which have no hortatory power, no restraining tendency, none of the apostle's beseeching entreaty? Shall we merely lecture on theology, and deal out religious science, to men who amidst a flood of light already pouring over them, care for none of these things?

The worst conceivable style of instruction for the millions, is to 'lecture on theology'; merely to lecture. Were man composed of pure intellect, that would be the proper plan; but as he is a moral agent, the subject of hopes and fears, love and hate, joy and sorrow, it is not so. That great Master in Israel, the Rev. R Cecil, has recorded his opinions in his golden *Remains* as follows:—

The first duty of a Minister, is, To call on his hearers to *turn to the Lord*. 'We have much to speak to you upon. We have many duties to urge

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on you. We have much instruction to give you—but all will be thrown away, till you have *turned to the Lord*. 'Let me illustrate this by a familiar comparison. You see your child sinking in the water: his education lies near your heart: you are anxious to train him up so that he may occupy well the post assigned to him in life. But, when you see him drowning, the first thoughts are not how you may educate him, but how you may save him. Restore him to life, and then call that life into action.

The same great man again thus sets forth his views:—

A sermon that has more head infused into it than heart will not come home with efficacy to the hearers. 'You must do so and so; such and such consequences will follow if you do not; such and such advantages will result from doing it':—this is cold, dead, and spiritless, when it stands alone; or even when it is most prominent. Let the preacher's head be stored with wisdom; but above all, let his heart so feel his subject, that he may infuse life and interest into it, by speaking like one who actually possesses and feels what he says.

Such was the hold the subject, from its importance, seemed to have taken on the mind of Cecil, that he often referred to it. He elsewhere says:—

In acting on matter, the art of man is mighty. The steam-engine is a mighty machine. But in religion, the art of man is mere feebleness. The armour of Saul is armour in the camp of the Israelites, or in the camp of the Philistines—but we want the sling and the stone. I honour Metaphysicians,

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Logicians, Critics, and Historians—in their places. Look at facts. Men who *lay out their strength, in statements preach churches empty*. Few men have a wisdom so large, as to see that the way which they cannot attain may yet be the best way. I dare not tell most academical, logical, frigid men, how little I account of their opinion, concerning the true method of preaching to the popular ear. I hear them talk as utterly incompetent judges.

Mr James, notwithstanding his intense solicitude about doctrinal truth, and spirituality of mind, at all times set great store on elocutionary training for theological students, which, notwithstanding its paramount importance, has on both sides of the Tweed been

most lamentably neglected in the Schools of the Prophets. He says:—

Far greater numbers of our preachers fail for want of this, than from any other cause, a fact so notorious as to need no proof beyond common observation, and so impressive as to demand the attention not only of the professors but the committees of all our colleges. It is too generally the case that no culture sufficient is bestowed upon the speaking powers of our students, from the beginning to the end of their course of study. There is great assiduity manifested in giving them a fullness of matter, but far too little in producing an impressiveness of manner. Every assistance is granted to them to make them scholars, philosophers, and divines; but as to good speaking, for the acquisition of this, they are left pretty much to themselves. Nay, it is not even inculcated upon them with the emphasis

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it should be, to try to make good speakers of themselves. A complete system of ministerial education must of necessity include some attention to elocution, and which should commence as soon as a student enters college: so that by the time he is put upon the preaching list he may have some aptitude for the management of his voice, and not have his thoughts diverted then from his matter and his object, to his manner. He should by that time have acquired a *habit* of good speaking, so as to be able to practise it with facility, and without study. The great objection to lectures on elocution is, that they are apt to produce a pompous, stiff, and affected manner; but this is an abuse of the art, the object of which should be to cure the vices of a bad, and to supply the wants of a defective enunciation, and to form an easy, natural, and impressive delivery.

The fact here alleged is all but incredible. Men whose business through life is to be public speaking, receiving no instruction on this vital subject, while severely drilled in matters but remotely connected with theology! The fact is astounding. But it is difficult for people to teach what they have not learned, or to impart acquirements which they do not themselves possess. Many able, skilful, and successful tutors have been but sorry models either of good reading, or good speaking. It was in vain, therefore, to look to them for the required commodity, and it only remained to call in the aid of the Elocution Master. But the services of that personage, where he could be found

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—for he was far off from most of the Independent colleges—were perilous in the extreme. They too frequently amounted simply to lessons in theatrical speaking, the very worst of all bad things in the house of God. Under such circumstances it was not strange, that the thing was left to its own course.

Mr James, addressing students, asks:—

How is it then that of those who leave our colleges, so few attain to eminence as preachers? In some, and perhaps in not a few cases, I am aware, there are physical disqualifications in the way: there is no gift of commanding utterance, no fervour of imagination, no strength of intellect, no enthusiasm of soul; and a fault lies somewhere that such persons were ever sent into the ministry, for neither reverend imbecility, nor sacred inanity, nor learned dullness, will do for the pulpit at any time, much less for the present, when all around, without, and within the church is in a state of high excitement. Rush-lights will not do in the pulpit, when hydrogen and oxygen are blazing everywhere else. But the failure in other cases is not to be traced to a cause so innocent as inability. It is not a want of talent, but of tact—it is not ignorance, but indolence—it is not a deficiency of voice, but of soul—not a physical incapability of any kind, but a moral one: it is in fact a want of heartiness, and diligence, and earnestness. The men have not thrown their whole selves into the work. They have wanted the burning zeal for God, the melting pity for souls, the hungering and thirsting after usefulness,

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the labour in study, the self-cultivation, the constant painstaking, and the fervent piety, which alone can conduct to eminence. Or else perhaps they were more concerned for a comfortable settlement, a home of elegance or comfort: or they made the fatal mistake at the outset of determining to be scholars, metaphysicians, or philosophers, instead of being preachers and pastors. They went to their ministry with the purpose of composing what they meant should be fine sermons, and secure the approbation and applause of what they considered were the more intellectual portion of their hearers, and thus failed in everything. They forgot that their congregations were sinners that needed pardon, lost souls perishing in their sins, and that needed salvation; or else that they were men and women harassed by six days' labour, wearied by the cares, and burdened with the sorrows of time, collected round their pulpit on the day of rest, to be

soothed and invigorated by the prospects and the hopes of heaven and eternity; that these children of want and woe had come to have their minds instructed, their cares softened, their sorrows assuaged, their consciences purified, their hearts healed by the music of gospel truth and then to be treated with nothing but the philosophical essay, the metaphysical disquisition, the meatless, marrowless bones of criticism, the thorns of controversy, the flowers of rhetoric, or the mere slip-slop of words without thought, or thoughts without connection, order, or intelligible meaning! Oh, what is this but to mock the hungry by offering

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stones for bread, and to insult the thirsty by presenting froth instead of the crystal stream of the water of life?

On the same point he says:—

Everything I have said implies that in order to eminence there must be simplicity as opposed to what is artificial, affected, and egotistical, both in style and manner. It has been well remarked by an American writer, that

some giant of a Johnson with all the encumbrance of artificial structure, has protruded his unwieldy form through the world, and Samson-like, has poised the pillars of the house, notwithstanding his fetters of brass; and his humble imitators, are without his might trying what they can do with both hands bound. They are placing perfection in sonorous words, in stateliness of movement, in an antithetical balance of clauses, and are running from nature as fast as they can.

I seek divine simplicity in him

Who handles things divine.

It may be rested upon as an everlasting maxim, that the eloquence best fitted to thrill the heart of a philosopher, is that which melts the heart of a child.

Here let me warn you against the sad mistake of confounding mere noisy declamation, bluster, and rant, with earnestness and animation. Nothing is more offensive to persons of taste, more repulsive even to the untrained multitude, or more destructive of the effect of the tender and solemn truths of the gospel, than emotionless vociferation. I have heard it said of Talma, the celebrated French actor, that he had made it his study for twenty years to

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acquire earnestness without vehemence. Robert Hall was a fine specimen of this; no one can have heard that extraordinary man, in his happiest moods, without being as much impressed with the intense feeling and animation of his manner, as astonished by the grandeur of his conceptions, and delighted by the correctness of his taste. With a voice of little compass, and by no means musical, he compensated for these defects by the earnestness of his manner; and with an eye through which the glow of his mighty soul was perpetually flashing upon his subject and his audience, he poured forth a stream of eloquence, which though impeded at first by a slight hesitation, soon acquired the force of a torrent, and the grandeur of the cataract. Let me then entreat you to endeavour to acquire the great secret of earnestness without vehemence, and to avoid the reproach of having the contortions of the sibyl without her inspiration. In guarding against the one extreme of being pulpit statues, cold, motionless, and all but silent, do not run into the other of being pulpit furies.

On this momentous subject Dr Vaughan is entitled to a hearing:—

Should it be necessary, therefore, in order to secure to the students in our colleges an agreeable and effective elocution, we do not hesitate to say, that it would be wise to bestow as much attention on this branch of education as upon the study of the Greek language. We speak thus strongly on this point, because there would seem to have been great deficiency in this respect in most of our collegiate

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institutions, and because there is special danger that this deficiency will become more observable, rather than otherwise, as we raise the standard of scholarship. Readiness in speaking is so much a natural gift, and consists so often with the superficial in almost everything else, that men of real power, and solid acquirement, are oftentimes disposed to hold such talent in little estimation, and not unfrequently cease to be themselves men of ability in speaking, in the degree in which they become men of thought and learning.

We scarcely need say that such a course of things is the result of a radical error in judgement—an error, so childish and absurd, that a man pretending to sagacity in anything, should blush to find that he has allowed himself to be ensnared by it. The want of sound practical sense in cases of this sort is so manifest, as to afford strong presumption,

that the man who has thus failed in relation to the pulpit, will hardly succeed in relation to any other object. Nothing could be more plain, than that it became him, when purposing to take upon himself the office of a preacher, to be constantly mindful of the fact, that no attainment could be of value to him in that capacity, except as it might be popularised, and made to subserve his power as a speaker. But of that fact he has not been mindful, and he has failed—failed deservedly, inasmuch as his failure has resulted from a negligence of those means, attention to which should have been seen at a glance as strictly necessary to success. We repeat, therefore—let our students fail in the matter of

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elocution, and, so far as regards their ministry among protestant dissenters, it will matter little in what else they may succeed.

The closing words of this paragraph ought to be deeply pondered by all who are looking forward to the office of the ministry. When the most potent of modern advocates, the Hon. Thomas Erskine, during the period of his legal studies, was privately asked by the Lord Chancellor of the day, what book he was making his manual, he mentioned a particular work on Law, when his Lordship subjoined, ‘Erskine, you had better make a manual of Enfield’s *Speaker*.’

On this head it may be proper to state, that it is one on which, beyond most others, self-instruction may effect great things. Works on it, since the example set by the elder Sheridan and John Thelwall, have been numerous, and many of them excellent. Walker, in particular, is entitled to special notice. His *Dictionary*, *Rhetorical Grammar*, and *Elements of Elocution* are a well-furnished storehouse, where the diligent student may find all that he requires.

It may well be supposed that the subject of sermon reading occupied the serious attention of Mr James; it did so, and upon all fit and proper occasions he was ready to express a decided opinion upon it. Unless under special circumstances, he was a determined opponent of the practice, which, as a rule, he deemed utterly incompatible with general acceptance and extended usefulness. Referring to the recorded opinions of Dr Mather,

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of New England, on the subject of Notes, he says:—

Pity that Dr MATHER had not gone a little farther than this, and affectionately advised his younger brethren in the ministry, to begin their career without any notes at all in the pulpit; advice still more necessary in this day, as there seems a rising inclination to adopt the practice. Nothing can be conceived of more likely to repress earnestness, and to hinder our usefulness, than this method becoming general. True it is that some preachers may rise up, who, like a few living examples, may in despite of this practice attain to eminence, to honour, and usefulness, such as rarely falls to the lot of ministers in any denomination; but this will not be the case with the greater number, who having no commanding intellect to lift them above the disadvantage of this habit. will find few churches willing to accept their dullness, for the sake of the accuracy with which it is expressed. And who can tell how much greater our greatest men would be, if they delivered their sermons without their notes? Think of WHITEFIELD, HALL, PARSONS, reading their sermons! What a restraint upon their noble intellects, and their gushing hearts! Where is reading tolerated but in the pulpit? Not on the stage, nor at the bar, nor in the senate. It is conceded that we lose something of precision and accuracy by spoken discourses, as compared with those that are read; but is not this more than made up by what we gain in impression? By him who slavishly reads, the aid borrowed by the preacher from the

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eye and graceful action is lost: the link of sympathy between his soul and that of the audience is weakened: the lightnings of his eloquence flash less vividly, and its thunders roll less grandly, for this obstruction to their efforts. Perhaps even those who do read are aware of the disadvantages of the habit, and would say to their younger brethren, whose habits are not yet formed, avoid if you can the practice of reading your discourses. There are however occasions, when from the nature and extent of the subject, this practice is not only allowable, but necessary.

Was ever condemnation more decided? This great preacher has thus put upon record his entire and intense disapproval of the practice! Surely such a *dictum* ought to be decisive with all who aspire to the office of the Christian ministry. Is free speech a primary condition of acceptance? Must it not, then, be a primary condition of success? Ought not its culture, therefore, to be a governing principle in all academic instruction? Should not special

provision be everywhere made for it? We are much pleased to find Dr Vaughan deliberately stating his views on the subject. He says:—

It will be perceived that in these remarks we contemplate preaching as to consist, not in *reading sermons*, but in such extemporaneous delivery as obtains at the bar and in the senate. We account it, on the whole, one of the greatest mischiefs that have befallen the church, and the cause of religion generally, that any other mode of communicating instruction than obtains in those connections, should

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have become prevalent in the pulpit. In the history of Europe, the practice of reading sermons is almost peculiar to England; and one of its effects has been to render preaching, which should have been the most popular form of public speaking, in the great majority of instances the least so. It is a practice which became prevalent among us subsequent to the Restoration, and became established as the invariable usage of preachers in the Church of England, and as the general usage among Nonconformists, by the close of the seventeenth century.

We are not ignorant with regard to the objections usually made to extemporaneous preaching. But these objections consist almost entirely of arguments derived from a misconception of the practice intended, or from its abuses only. It does not follow because the language of a discourse is extemporaneous, that the substance is unpremeditated. It is not to be supposed because a speaker has not stored his memory with words, that he has not been careful to store his mind with thoughts. Nor does it follow because the greater part of an address is clothed in language supplied at the moment, that this must be the case with every part of it. We say not, that no good has come to our pulpit literature, or to religion, from written sermons, we only say that the good which has so come might well have been spared, for the sake of the much greater good that might have been realised by a different method. No man of sense would be understood to intimate that extemporaneous discourses always display the best judgement or the

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best taste. We reason from the general effect of the practice, and not from its exceptions or its parts. Every man knows that the contrary practice of reading sermons, is no guarantee that the sermon read will be well read, or will be at all worth reading. It often happens, that the men who only read sermons, never write them, and not unfrequently they betray a lamentable want of discernment even in

availing themselves of the labours of other men. We advocate extemporaneous preaching, not as demanding less labour or less talent than the opposite practice, but as being more natural, more impressive, more adapted to the ends of preaching, and as involving, when entered upon with the due amount of preparation, the most wholesome exercise both of the mental and moral faculties. We no more mean that the extemporaneous preacher should be a mere rhapsodist, than we mean that such should be the character of pleading at the bar, or the character of oratory in the senate.

Some rare occasions there are, on which it may be well to deliver a whole discourse memoriter, or even to read; but among the persons who have been truly obliged to adopt either of these methods as a general practice, there are few, we suspect, that should have become preachers. Multitudes, who seem to be wholly dependent on such methods have become so purely through habit—habit which has derived its license from custom, and its strength from indulgence.

The celebrated Bishop Burnet, one of the most excellent preachers of his times, has borne a noble

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testimony against this baneful practice. Referring to statements he had made, he says:—

This leads me to consider the difference that is between the reading and the speaking of sermons. *Reading is peculiar to this nation, and is endured in no other.* It has indeed made our sermons more exact, and so has produced to us many volumes of the best that are extant. But after all, though some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those affections they recommend, that in them we see both the correctness of reading, and the seriousness of speaking sermons, yet every one is not so happy. Some, by hanging their head perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read, and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the matter of their sermons, that as they are generally read with very little life or affection, so they are heard with as little regard or esteem. Besides, the people (who are too apt to censure the clergy) are easily carried into an obvious reflection on reading—that it is an effect of laziness.

These opinions I hold to be decisive. The practice ought to be universally reprobated as one of the sorest evils with which the Church of God can be afflicted. I avow my entire concurrence with Dr Vaughan in his allegation, that among those who are incapable

of free speech, and compelled to have recourse to reading, 'there are few that should have become preachers.'

So strong were the objections of Mr James to the practice, that he cordially entered into every expression of opposition to it, whether by tongue

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or pen, whether at the meetings of the Congregational Union, or elsewhere. In writing to myself, he expressed a strong wish for the publication in a volume of the series of Articles, which recently appeared in the *British Standard* on preaching—Articles which breathed the most uncompromising hostility to the reading of sermons.

There is another subject of moment all but infinite, on which it is most important to record the judgement of Mr James. In addressing a body of students, he says:—

Before I leave the department of preaching, allow me to refer your consideration to one particular kind of preaching I mean the expository, which I am sorry to say is far too little practised in the English modern pulpit. To this your attention has been directed by your able and excellent theological tutor. I know it has been supposed, or at any rate said, that the people do not like exposition. I believe the contrary to be the fact, and that it is the ministers and not the people, that are not fond of it. If it has been tried and produced dislike, it must be from one or other of these causes, either it has been conducted too much like the German Exegesis, in which there is so much minute and anxious verbal criticism as to be almost tedious even to a scholar; or else it has been carried on in such a loose and slovenly manner as to disgust even a superficial hearer and thinker, and to produce the conviction, that it has been taken up from mere indolence: a bad exposition is usually the worst of all bad sermons. If it be well done, and this is not

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a difficulty beyond the reach of any one who will give himself the trouble to make the acquisition, the people are sure to like it. There are so many advantages connected with it, that it is surprising to me it should not be adopted by all preachers. How much perplexity and waste of time does it save in the selection of texts and subjects: what an opportunity does it afford to introduce topics into the pulpit which we should neglect but for this method, topics which if they did not

come in regular course, would be set down to personality on the part of the preacher. If the minister takes the view of the passage which his hearers have previously formed, they are pleased with him for thinking as they do; if he bring out a view which did not occur to them, they give him credit for a deeper insight into the meaning of a passage than *they* possessed. It leads to an extended acquaintance with the Bible, both on the part of ministers and people. So far as my own experience goes, having practised this method from the commencement of my ministry, I can bear emphatic testimony to its acceptableness, although I make no pretensions to be a skilful expositor. If you feel a difficulty at commencing what might be called a regular exposition, so early in your ministry, begin with a consecutive course of sermons, for which the eighth chapter of the Romans would furnish a fine field, or the eleventh of Hebrews; or occasionally take a long parable, or fact of the New Testament, and procure for yourself the tact, and produce in your people the taste, for this method of instruction. But be sure and let it be

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done well, and rendered interesting, as it certainly may be with painstaking, and you will have no cause to complain of a want of relish for it. Some ministers give short, current remarks on the chapters which they read in the course of the service, and preach a sermon afterwards. For my own part, I have a feeling which makes me wish that God's own word, unattended by any remark of my own, should be heard during a part of the service allotted to public worship.

But how great soever the importance of preaching, there is something still more important. If we examine closely the New Testament, we shall find very little said about preaching, but a great deal about prayer. It would in apostolic times seem to have been not simply 'the one thing needful', but the *one* work, both of the preacher and the people. We hear much now-a-days of Great Preaching, but very little of Great Prayer! This is readily accounted for by the carnality of human nature, which delights in the excitements of oratory, but shrinks from the exercises of devotion! If with decency the thing could be done, it would altogether dispense with worship. On this subject Mr James has expressed himself thus:—

Before we pass from the subject of preaching, we may consider with propriety the matter and manner of prayer. Between these two there is a close and obvious connection, for earnest sermons should ever be associated with earnest prayers; and it cannot be doubted that a

pious, faithful, and devoted minister is scarcely less useful, at least in the

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way of keeping up the spirit of devotion in his congregation, by the latter, than he is by the former. His chastened fervour, like a breeze from heaven, comes over the languid souls of his hearers, and fans the spark of piety in their hearts to a flame: while on the contrary, the dullness and coldness of some public prayers are enough to freeze what little devotion there may be in the assembled people. We have thought too little of this, and have too much neglected to cultivate the gift, and seek the grace, of supplication. If entreating and beseeching importunity be proper in dealing with sinners for God, can it be less so in dealing with God for sinners? Our flocks should be the witnesses of both these, and hear not only how we speak to them, but how we plead with God for them; should be the auditors of our agonising intercession on their behalf; and be convinced how true is our declaration that we have them in our hearts. How such petitions, so full of intense affection and deep solicitude, would tend to soften their minds, and to prepare them for the sermon which was to follow. Who has not beheld the solemnising and subduing effect of such holy wrestling with God, upon the congregation; they seemed to feel as if God had indeed come down among them in power and glory during the prayer, and was preparing to do some work of grace in their midst. The rudest and most turbulent spirits have sometimes been awed, and the most trifling and frivolous minds made serious by this holy exercise. We who practise extempore prayer have advantages for this, of which we should not be

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slow to avail ourselves. Not being confined by the forms of a liturgy, but left to our own choice, we can give a harmony to all the various parts of the service, and make the Scripture we read, and the hymns we sing, as well as the prayers we present, all bear upon the subject of the sermon, and thus give a unity of design, and a concentration of effect to the solemn engagements of the sanctuary. This should be an object with every minister, in order that the thoughts of the people may, without being divided or diverted, flow pretty much in one channel, and towards one point. Moral, as well as mechanical effect depends on the combination of many seemingly small causes. But more especially should the prayers be in harmony with the sermon, and every preacher knows what the sermon is to be. If he is about to

address himself in a strain of beseeching importunity to the impenitent and unbelieving, how much would it tend to prepare them for his appeal if his heart were previously, and in their hearing, to pour forth a strain of fervent pleading with God on their behalf. They would thus be awed and subdued into a state of mind likely to render the forthcoming sermon effectual, by the blessing of God, for their conversion. Such a prayer would be the most appropriate introduction he could give to his discourse. But then especial care should be taken that the hymn, and even the tune, which interposes between the prayer and the sermon, should not be of a kind which would divert the current of thought, much less efface the solemn impressions already produced, and hinder the effect of the

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discourse about to be delivered. I remember to have heard a preacher, who was going to preach a very solemn sermon, breathe out one of the most impressive strains of intercession for the impenitent I ever listened to, as if even anxious to begin the work of conversion by his prayer, which he hoped to finish by his sermon. The people sat down in solemn awe, when as if by a prompting of the wicked one, who catcheth away the seed out of the heart, the clerk gave out a most inappropriate hymn, and the choir, with a band of musical instruments, sung a tune more inappropriate still: as may be easily imagined, the seriousness produced by the prayer was instantly lost, and the preparation for the sermon entirely destroyed. How true is it that the singing seat is often hostile to the usefulness of the pulpit, and the choir in opposition to the effect of the preacher.

This beautiful passage must commend itself to the understandings and the hearts of all devout and reflecting men. It has been gloriously exemplified in the better ages of the Church; then, in many cases, power of preaching and power of prayer united in the same person. Both the history and the biography of the Reformation abound in illustrations. Those seraphic men whose names are still dear to Scotland were among the most noted examples of faith and fervour since the days of the Apostles. What things are told of Welsh and Wishart, Guthrie and Peden, and a multitude their brethren in tribulation! The Presbyterian Body in Scotland, during the last generation,

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wanted not for men whose public prayer was instrumental of working the noblest results. Their spirituality gathered multitudes from miles round, who hung upon their lips with unabated interest till hoary hairs! Their preaching was simple, plain common-sense, steeped in devotion. They stood and talked as fathers and grandfathers in the midst of their children and grandchildren. But their prayer! How mightily did the Spirit of God work in them! What importunity! What agony! What confidence, humility, sublimity! It was Abraham pleading for the doomed cities!

I cannot withhold a fine passage on this subject from Dr Vaughan:—

Every argument that will apply to freedom of utterance in preaching will apply in favour of the same kind of utterance in prayer. In this case, as in the former, the freedom for which we plead is not a freedom precluding all forethought, but such as allows thought to be clothed for the most part in the expressions of the moment, such as may admit of allusion to passing seasons and events, and of that expansion and warmth which is so natural to the mind when it becomes really interested in such exercises. So far are we from pleading for the kind of free prayer which has no relation to preparatory mental discipline, that we should delight to see *the manner of prayer accounted of no less importance, as an object of study, than the manner of preaching*. Such an attention to the subject would secure to the young minister a fixed and scriptural idea concerning the nature of prayer, and could hardly fail

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to familiarise his mind with modes of thought, and scriptural examples, of a nature adapted to impart fluency, order, variety, appropriateness, and withal richness and unction, to the devotional exercises in our public services, such as even those of the contrary practice would often be constrained to approve and imitate.

Among the persons distinguished by their place in the court or the cabinet during the reigns of Charles II and James II, there was no man who possessed, on the whole, a better knowledge of his contemporaries, or of the times in which he lived, than the Marquess of Halifax. His sagacity as a statesman was allied with great refinement and power of thought, and with an unusual command of language as an author; and we scarcely need say that he is not to be suspected of any leaning, on general grounds, towards the practices of the Nonconformists. But it is in the following terms that his lordship has

expressed himself on the comparative claims of free prayer and forms of prayer:—

I am far from relishing the impertinent wanderings of those who pour out long prayers upon the congregation, and all from their own stock—too often a barren soil, which produces weeds instead of flowers, and by this means they expose religion itself to contempt rather than promote men’s devotion. On the other side, there may be too great a restraint put upon men whom God and nature have distinguished from their fellow-labourers, by blessing them with a happier talent, and by giving them not only good sense, but a powerful

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utterance too, which has enabled them to gush out upon the attentive auditory with a mighty stream of devout and unaffected eloquence. When a man so qualified, endued with learning too, and, above all, adorned with a good life, breaks out into a warm and well-delivered prayer before his sermon, it has the appearance of a divine rapture; he raises and leads the hearts of the assembly in another manner than the most composed and studied form of set words can ever do; and the ‘pray we’s’ who serve up all their sermons with the same garnishing, would look like so many statues, or men of straw in the pulpit, compared with those who speak with such a powerful zeal, that men are tempted at the moment to believe that heaven itself has dictated their words to them.

What can be more important in relation to public worship, than the kind of service, which, when well-conducted, is found capable of producing such impression, even in such quarters? Indolence, under the mask of a pious humility, may allege that the true spirit of prayer is from God, but so is the true spirit of preaching also, and both are included in the apostolic admonition—‘Neglect not the gift that is in thee.’

I entirely concur in these wise and weighty words, and most fully sympathise in particular with those I have italicised. The subject is entitled to greatly more attention than it generally receives. The majority care very little about a man’s prayers, provided he preach with force, and splendour, and passion. Let there be but fire, and the masses will

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make no inquiries whether it be true or false, from heaven, or of earthly origin.

The moral, then, of all this is, the propriety, the necessity, the duty of most intensely cultivating the gift and the grace of Prayer.

Such is the portrait of the Preacher and his Work, conceived and drawn by some of the best and greatest men of past and present times. The hopes of the Church are largely bound up with the Ministers of the Word. For good as well as for evil, the adage of the prophet, 'Like priest like people', will stand true. A nation is seldom better than its laws; a church is rarely in advance of a minister, and it will never lag very far behind him. To raise the pastors, therefore, is infallibly to raise, the flocks, and hence the incalculable importance of every effort to improve colleges, students, and ministers. The nation whose pulpits should one and all be filled with such men as are described in the foregoing pages, would be, or soon become, a spiritual paradise. We may still be far off from such a consummation, but every hour brings it nearer; and its advent is as certain as the fulfilment of prophecy. To every flock of the faithful, of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, the Great Shepherd of Israel will 'give pastors after his own heart, who will feed them with knowledge and with understanding.' Whatever, meanwhile, may stand in the way, it shall be sure, 'for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it!'

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THE PULPIT AND THE PRESS

THE subsequent remarks on the writings of Mr James may, perhaps, be profitably introduced by a few observations on the relation of the Pulpit to the Press, and the bearing of Authorship on posthumous usefulness and reputation. The subject has been but little discussed, and yet it is one of very grave importance. The province of the Press has frequently been exaggerated and misrepresented. Its power and value have been extolled at the expense of the Pulpit, which has been scornfully spoken of as a thing of the past—weak, worn out, and no longer to be accounted of. This view, which is alike false and foolish, ought to be corrected. Each has its own

place, a place of great power, and peerless dignity in the Evangelical economy. There is no rivalry between these institutions. Sun and moon are not more related, nor more harmonious. They are the creations and the property of the same Lord, and appointed to subserve the interests of the same kingdom. The vitality of both arises from the blood of the Cross, and the righteousness of faith. The end of both, each in its own way, is to 'fill the earth with his glory.'

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John Angell James has now disappeared from our midst, and we are left, undistracted by his commanding and all-absorbing presence, to look at the sum total of his labours. Our position is, therefore, improved, and so much the more favourable to a clear and comprehensive glance at his noble doings. He may now, as an author, in some degree, be viewed by us as he will be by the generation to come. Anticipating the flight of time, we may place ourselves among the men of 1959, with their eyes survey the present generation, and place in the balances the venerated man of whom we are speaking. Can there be a doubt as to the place which, among the men of the present age, they will assign to him, and the estimate which they will form of his services? When our living generation shall come to be thoroughly sifted, the objects of contrast and comparison will, after all, not be numerous. Few are in the way to fame: the mass of those who now people these Isles will each repose in a nameless grave. They will leave no trace of their existence but be 'dead men out of mind.' Such will be the lot of the bulk even of great and useful characters now living; although ably and honourably 'serving their generation by the will of God', future renown on earth will make no part of their reward. Posthumous celebrity of an enduring character, cannot be severed from posthumous usefulness of some sort, and a chief means of that is Christian literature.

Baxter and Owen, but for their writings, would, with the mass of their compeers, have been utterly

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forgotten. They are still useful, and will be for ages to come. Tradition may do a little for a season, but the book alone is enduring.

It is in connection with this that we must now look at the future of Mr James; and proceeding on this principle, our task is easy. For a long period things will remain much as they are now. The esteem in which he will be held a century hence, will be simply a continuance of the esteem of which he is the object now. The reason is obvious: posterity will mainly judge of his character by his writings; his fame will therefore rest on sure foundations. It is agreed on all hands, that the staple of his books is in the highest degree favourable to immortality, since they are based on truth and nature. They will be every whit as much adapted to the year 1959 as they are to the present hour. They embody the principle of a permanent vitality, for they are in every case fully charged with the verities of the Gospel. Human nature, moreover, will remain the same, as well as the wants of the various classes for whom he so zealously laboured. The prospect, therefore, of his ever extending usefulness, and lasting celebrity, is bright in the extreme. By his writings he will continue to speak in the leading languages of the earth, for the work of translation is but beginning. There is no hazard in such a prediction. It is founded on principles of eternal truth, and the indestructible character of the human mind. Such is the advantage of the printing press, and such the value of thoroughly Christian and popular literature.

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This is the correct view of the subject, but let it not be perverted. It is not to be inferred from the distinguished place thus assigned to writing, that preaching is thrown into the background. No mistake can be greater. As compared with preaching, as a means of advancing the kingdom of God, the publishing of books, how numerous or excellent soever, is but impotence. Preaching is God's specially-appointed instrument for the conversion of men. Whatever aid books may have supplied, this has been the rule in every age, and it will be so to the end of the world. The two things in their nature are wholly different, so much so as altogether to exclude the idea of comparison. Each is absolutely great and valuable in its own place; neither is meant to supersede or substitute the other. Each has its excellence and its drawback, and the one is designed to assist the other. The labours of the preacher are confined to his lifetime. The tongue of Whitefield was for a period the horn

of his power; with that he moved the nations; through that, 'by the good hand of his God upon him', he wrought wonders in both hemispheres; but on 30th September 1770, that tongue ceased to articulate, and his noble career came to an immediate end! He sought neither usefulness nor fame by means of the press; he perfectly understood his own glorious mission, as he beautifully defined it in a lively letter to his early and life-long friend James Hervey, author of the *Meditations*.

It is necessary that the number of speakers should be great; it must be increased by thousands

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and hundreds of thousands many times multiplied, to meet the necessities of the human race; whereas a comparatively small number of competent writers will suffice for the wants of the family of God. The sphere of preaching is mainly the world; the sphere of Christian books is mainly the Church. Rightly to estimate this matter, we must look at the Sacred Scriptures. It is a remarkable fact, that the Lord himself wrote none while he was on earth; and that after his ascension, he dictated only seven short letters to his 'servant John.' His mission was to '*preach* the Gospel', not to write it. The same rule guided both the prophets before the advent, and the apostles after the ascension. The prophets wrote very little; most of them, indeed, nothing. The history of the apostles is analogous; they all preached; to this they were specially ordained by their Lord; for this they were specially endowed by the Holy Spirit. In season and out of season, they all published salvation with the living voice, till severally called to seal their testimony with their blood. But, as in the case of the prophets, the bulk of them wrote nothing, and those who did very little,—Paul more than all the rest several times over, but the aggregate even of his writings constitutes only a small volume.

Preaching, then, preaching, was, is, and evermore will be the great, sole, and heaven-appointed means of the world's renovation. When the preaching has achieved its object, the book advances to help on the mighty process of spiritual culture. By this means personal influence is indefinitely

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extended, not only while the writer is alive, but after he has departed this life. Where the preacher cannot go with his testimony, the author may send his book. It may cross oceans and continents, and find its way to the poles, and thus impart to him first a species of ubiquity, and then a species of immortality! Thus the insignificance of man, the feebleness of his power and the brevity of his life are compensated largely by the invention of Printing. Through this a writer may speak, and speak on till time shall be no more!

The Anxious Inquirer of JA James will not be at all affected by his removal. It will travel onward in its beneficent course throughout the earth, scripturally answering questions vital to salvation! A book is unmoved by the threats of tyranny, and impervious to the darts of death! It can wait the conciliation or the overthrow of persecuting dynasties, and will then come forth as true and strong as when it withdrew to its hiding-place.

Such, then, is the medium through which we are to look at the future of John Angell James. For the millions he wrote; and while the millions exist they will prize his lessons, and profit by his labours. They will teach their sons and their daughters to venerate his memory, and to make manuals of the invaluable volumes specially prepared for them.

It will be allowed by all that the preacher's path is marked out for him by his divine Master; who will deny that it is equally so with the devout author? If this matter be closely looked at, it

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will be seen that there is uniformly an overruling providence with regard to it. Nothing else can explain facts. How is it that some men write so much and that others, equal, or superior in point of ability, write little or none? The true answer is, that the matter is dependent on a variety of circumstances largely beyond human control. Some are led by an unseen hand; they are now impelled by this motive, and now by that, to do the thing appointed for them. Others remain uninfluenced, and are, therefore, silent, and indifferent. They have within them, consciously or otherwise, a mine of mental wealth, which is never opened; they bear with them their undiscovered treasures to the grave, leaving the world in no degree their debtors, while they might have enriched their

contemporaries, and have laid posterity under lasting obligation. One man finds openings all around, and is called forth to act; and another seems fairly shut up, repressed, and helpless. The reasons of the difference do not appear. Some at once gain the ear of the public, who read with avidity whatever bears their name; while others, men of sterling merit, never can obtain a hearing. They are likewise led on by degrees; they proceed from less to more, till they are at length borne forward by public favour as if by a torrent. JA James, we presume, had no idea of the length to which his first essay at authorship would carry him. Like other men, at the outset, he knew nothing of the power that was within him, never dreamt of the course which awaited him. It was only by exercise that he discovered his own superior capacity.

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In the case of James, as in that of Baxter and a few others, there was a union of great writing with great speaking power. But this is rare. The divine wisdom is never prodigal of the highest gifts, and generally deems *one* of these sufficient. It deserves remark that this holds alike in the Church and in the world. First-class writers and first-class speakers, as a rule, have always formed two distinct bodies. Notwithstanding the occasional union, the peculiar qualities on which the utmost success in these respective walks depends, if not conflicting, seem but imperfectly to harmonise. Speciality of gifts is required to eminence in either; and although the union is possible, it is rare, and apparently not quite natural. Besides the special gift, a condition of the highest success is incessant cultivation. The unremitting exercise of great preaching powers, and proper attention to pastoral duties, are wholly incompatible with the extensive cultivation of authorship.

Again, even when the gifts do co-exist, and are alike in measure, the attainment of the first eminence in either, requires that a man shall choose his line,—preaching or authorship,—and devote himself to it morning, noon, and night. He cannot cultivate *both* to perfection.

Men such as Baxter—who probably wrote more a hundred times than Jay, Wardlaw, or James—with stupendous energy, may, in combining both divisions, work wonders, but these are the exception;

and even they, by selection, would have attained to things far greater. Had Baxter been nothing but a

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preacher, he could scarcely have preached more, but potent as he was, he might have been far more so; or had he been nothing but a writer, the amount of his authorship could scarcely have been increased, but its finish and value would have been incalculably improved. Fully to perfect would have been vastly to reduce. Had Mr James done nothing but preach, even he might have preached better; and had he done nothing but write, even he might have written better. In either case there might have been more finish and more fame, but I doubt if there would have been more real usefulness, either living or posthumous. Power, a chief element of usefulness, is in no respect dependent on polish and prettiness, exactness of thought, and choiceness of diction.

The sum of the matter, then, is this:—every man hath his own gift of God, and as are his gifts, so are his duties. Let every man, therefore, be satisfied in his own mind, and act upon his own convictions. Let him preach wholly, or let him write wholly, for the glory of God: or let him combine more or less of writing with preaching, or of preaching with writing, according to circumstances. Neither will the preacher nor the writer lose, but gain by the mixture in moderation. But where there is in the preacher no internal promptings, and no external call, towards the Press, let him not force the matter, but with brave and loyal heart, and high devotion, cleave to the Pulpit, the noblest of earthly vocations, and fully avail himself, for pastoral purposes, of the literary aids supplied by other hands. If

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he thus forego living and posthumous usefulness from books, and the fame attending it, he may still make it redound to his eternal honour. Let him but redouble his diligence in preaching. The great, the peerless service is personal effort for the salvation of men. ‘He that winneth souls is wise’, and ‘they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.’ If the direct work of saving souls is to be estimated by the reward assigned to it, all human standards of value, and all human thoughts, utterly

fail. Nothing will suffice but the most exalted, most glorious, and most enduring objects in the Universe! Such service surely should be enough to satisfy the loftiest ambition of the highest angel! It should be enough, and more than enough, to satisfy the most gifted and exalted of human kind, for a season, to tread this great globe,—led by the hand that made it,—and, as a fellow-labourer with God, to raise the Dead in trespasses and sins! Such a man can well afford to dispense alike with the usefulness of accepted authorship, and the honours which attend it, both now or in after times. All such minor things are lost amid the radiance of the firmament and the glory of the stars!

As with the Gospel preacher, so with the Christian author: although full of Science, overflowing with Literature, richly replenished with the gifts of Genius, and fired with a holy desire; yet if there be no inward promptings, and no outward call, and above all, if there be what amounts to an interdict,

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a positive absence of ‘aptness to teach’—without which, whatever the ‘desire’, there can be no divine call—let him not force the matter, but meekly submit. Let him be satisfied with his own ‘talent’. and worthily ‘occupy till his Lord come.’ He too shall ‘stand in his lot at the end of the days’, and receive a glorious recompense. All men cannot be Kings; all men cannot be the Ministers of Kings; it is, nevertheless, a noble office, a most distinguished honour to serve in the palace, or to be in waiting.

Yes, honour enough to serve in company with an Owen, the wisest, the holiest, the most erudite, and, in his class, the mightiest of men, to whom was denied the honour of preaching-usefulness: he was only just not without ‘a single convert.’ There is a sovereignty in the regulations of the divine service; and as a rule the service excludes monopoly. Preaching was not the work to which Owen was called: he was predestined and appointed to be the Teacher of Teachers, the Minister of Ministers, not to rule the legions and order the battle, but to supply the armour, and to forge the weapons with which other, and far meaner men were to go forth and subdue a rebel Universe!

Yes, honour enough to serve in company with a Dick, and unite with him as he connects all the segments of the mighty Circle of

Science with the Central Cross, and stamps the whole cyclopedia of human knowledge with the divine impress of Christianity! Yes, that is honour an angel might covet.

Evangelical authorship! Christian Literature! Let

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it not be lightly thought of, nor viewed as an ignoble, or worthless vocation. It is, I repeat, only second in value and in honour to the preaching of the word. To master all the languages of man, and sanctify them by rendering them the vehicle of Eternal Truth, of Heaven's life-giving medicine to a dying world,—to lay hold of all history and free it from its fable, folly, and falsehood,—to purge all poetry from the nonsense, the corruption, and the impiety which disfigure and debase it,—to displace all philosophy 'falsely so called', by true Christian ethics which unite man to man and all men to God, restoring a reign of reason, truth, justice, and charity, and show that true obedience consists in holy love,—to provide pure and edifying instruction of every sort for all classes of the people of the nations,—to provide for all the earth a system of complete, perfect, and adapted school literature for the rising generation of every land: to do these things is not to be treated as an ignoble and a worthless vocation! No: it will be, and be viewed as a work worthy a Bacon and a Boyle, a Newton and a Locke, a Johnson and a Burke, a Butler and a Paley—worthy the first of mortal men!

Every man, then, in his own order: let preachers discourse, and let authors indite, each as of the ability which God has given them, and so fulfil their respective missions; and each will, in due season, receive from the lips of the Lord of all, 'Well done! good and faithful servant: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!'

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LITERARY LABOURS

IN proceeding to review the literary labours of John Angell James my object is simple, and definite; it is no part of my plan to analyse the several publications, and thereby to pronounce upon their respective merits for the guidance of public opinion. This would be a work of supererogation: the Church of Christ in all its branches has already stamped them deeply with the impress of its favour;

but it is not too late to exhibit the principles they embody, to set forth their general character, with specimens of their varied excellence. It is not too late to do for John Angell James precisely what Morris did for Andrew Fuller—a service which extorted the cordial plaudits of Fuller’s illustrious friend, Robert Hall. By this process, the writings of Mr James will in effect be brought within visible compass, which will very materially contribute to a right conception. of his multifarious and abundant labours. While the gem passages will interest the small number who possess the whole, they will specially attract those who have still to cultivate an acquaintance with this invaluable writer. I can think of no means so calculated to give the general public somewhat of an adequate idea of the character and

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measure of his literary labours, and the foundation which they lay for general and grateful admiration of his talents, industry, zeal, and charity.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

At the time when this work came forth there was great need for something of the sort. For a long period nothing had appeared in England beyond two or three very elementary volumes, and in Scotland only Ewing’s *Attempt*, and the *Social Worship* of Haldane; the former an elaborate dissertation on the Kingdom of Christ, powerful as against State Churches, and Presbytery, but of little use as a Manual of Christian Fellowship; the latter a work of real merit, elaborate, solid, and scriptural, but not at all suited to the taste of England, or adapted to popular use. There were several English works, however, of a former generation, of a meritorious character, which appear never to have had much popularity, and they were then forgotten. One of these is a really excellent book, by a Mr Whitfield, published in Northumberland; I never saw a copy but my own. Under these circumstances the practical judgement of Mr James was soon attracted to the deficiency, and accordingly he set to work, and in the middle of 1822 forth came the *Church Fellowship; or, the Church Member’s Guide*. The sun of Mr James was then approaching its meridian, and his name became a sure passport

to such a publication. In three short months the entire impression was sold off! That

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the reader may see at a glance its scope and range, I shall set forth the contents:—

- 1 Nature of a Christian Church.
- 2 Nature and Design of Church Fellowship.
- 3 Privileges of Membership.
- 4 General Duties of Church Members in their Individual Capacity.
- 5 Duties of Church Members to their Pastors.
- 6 Duties of Church Members towards each other.
- 7 Duties of Church Members to the Members of other Christian Societies.
- 8 Duties of Church Members in their Character and Station.
- 9 True Nature of Church Power.
- 10 Mode of Conducting Church Meetings.
- 11 Admission of Members to the Church.
- 12 Church Discipline.
- 13 Removal of Members.
- 14 Voting in the Election of a Minister.
- 15 Church Conduct in such Elections.
- 16 Private Communion.
- 17 Causes of Schisms.
- 18 Support of the Ministry.

The thoroughly practical character of the work appears throughout these headings. There is little wanted for purposes of social worship which the volume does not supply.

The candour of Mr James relative to the shortcomings of the Independent Body was meanly abused. There were not wanting those who used his frankness to damage Dissent, and the Voluntary

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Principle. Mr James anticipating a charge of incautiousness from his friends, in his preface, said:—

It will probably be thought by some readers, that the evils occasionally attendant on the Independent form of church government, are too much exposed in the following pages; and that strength will thus be given to the objections which are urged against the principles of Nonconformity. To which the author replies, that it is the existence

not the statement of these adventitious evils, that will injure the cause of dissent. No secrets are betrayed in this volume. Nothing is promulgated but what is already known. Anxiety to remove those evils which, through the imperfection of human nature, have grown like excrescences upon our system, and disfigured its beauty, is far more useful, and certainly more honourable, than any efforts to conceal them.

The section on the causes of schisms to which the parties in question mainly referred, is a very valuable portion of the book, and its publication was upon the whole a real service to the cause of true religion. Would that it were thoroughly worked into the mind of all Ministers, Deacons, and leading men in the body! At the same time expressions do occur of an undue severity, calculated to make an impression greatly in excess of the real facts. The following is a specimen:—

I BELIEVE ONE HALF OF OUR CHURCH QUARRELS ORIGINATE IN LAZY, LOITERING MINISTERS. They live beyond their income, plunge themselves in debt, and

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their people in disgrace; or they speak unadvisedly with their lips, and involve themselves in litigation, with either their own friends, or persons of other denominations; or they hastily engage in paper wars with their neighbours; or they marry persons unsuitable to their character, and offensive to their congregation, and thus lay the foundation of uneasiness and dislike; or they become involved in politics, or public business, and thus neglect the interests of the church; or they speak ill of some members to others, and thus raise a prejudice and party against them in the society; or they let down their dignity by becoming the gossiping companions of some of their congregation. In all these and many other ways do ministers often prepare the way for dissatisfaction, or schism. Piety and prudence in the ministerial character would prevent many of the divisions of our churches.

The small capitals are the author's own. This is doubtless very severe, and although in some cases, it may have been supported by facts, yet beyond question, the examples were not numerous. In the same chapter the people received their portion of meat in due season. The author remarks:—

Other causes of division are to be found amongst the people.

1 A very large proportion of our schisms arise at the time of *choosing a minister*. This has already received a distinct and separate consideration.

2 A *hasty choice of an unsuitable person* to fill the pastoral office, has frequently ended in great uneasiness.

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The people have discovered their error, when its rectification was sure to cause much trouble to the society. Upon our system of church government, it is not easy to displace an unsuitable individual, and therefore great caution should be observed in choosing him. Few men will venture to remain in opposition to the wishes of a whole society, but how rarely does it happen that an individual has no party in his favour.

3 A peculiar and dishonourable *fickleness of disposition on the part of the church*, is in some instances the cause of division.

They soon grow tired of the man whom they chose at first with every demonstration of sincere and strong regard. They seldom approve a minister beyond a period of seven years, and are so uniform in the term of their satisfaction, as to make their neighbours look out for a change, when that term is about to expire.

4 Uneasiness has often arisen between a minister and people, by *the unwillingness of the latter to raise the necessary support for their pastor*.

They have seen him struggling with the cares of an increasing family, and marked the cloud of gloom as it thickened and settled upon his brow; they knew his wants, and yet, though able to double his salary and dissipate every anxious thought, they have refused to advance his stipend, and have robbed him of his comfort, either to gratify their avarice, or indulge their sensuality. *He remonstrates, they are offended: love departs, esteem is diminished, confidence is destroyed; while ill-will, strife, and*

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alienation, grow apace. How easily might all this have been prevented: a few pounds a year more, given by some individuals who could not have missed the sum, would have spared the peace of a faithful servant of Christ, and what is of still greater consequence, the harmony of a Christian church. Can these persons be disciples of Jesus, who would put a religious society in peril, rather than make so small a sacrifice? Let not the voice of avarice reply, 'Can that man be a minister of Christ, who would feel offended with his church, for not increasing

his salary?’ But what is a minister to do? Starve? or beg? or steal? If he is already living in luxury, and expects more, he deserves to be denied. But I am supposing a case, where, in the judgement of candour, he has not enough to support his family in *comfort*.

5 *An improper method of expressing dissatisfaction with a minister’s labour or conduct*, has often led to trouble in a church.

I do not pretend to say, that a minister occupies a seat too elevated for the voice of complaint to reach him, or that he is entitled (like his Master) to an entire exemption from all that interference which would say unto him, ‘What doest thou?’ There are times when it might be proper to remind a minister of some duty neglected, some pastoral avocation overlooked; but if anonymous and insolent letters are sent him; if young, impertinent, or dictatorial persons wait upon him; if, instead of the modest, respectful hint of some individual whose age and station give him a right to be heard, he is

schooled in an objurgatory strain, by those who have nothing to recommend them but their impudence and officiousness; no wonder, considering that he is but an imperfect man, if he feel offended with the liberty, and almost command the intruders from his presence. The apostle has spread over the ministerial character the shield of his authority, to defend it from the rude attacks of those who would act the part of self-elected accusers. ‘Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father.’—1 Timothy 5:1.

6. *The domineering spirit and conduct of some leading members*, has often been the source of very considerable uneasiness to our churches.

If amongst the first disciples of Christ, there existed a strife for pre-eminence, and even in the churches planted by the apostles; it is not to be wondered at, however much it is to be regretted, that there should be individuals in our days, who carry the spirit of the world into the church. manifest a love of power, and struggle with others for its possession. Their property, and perhaps their standing, give them influence, and this unhappily is employed in endeavouring to subjugate both the minister and the people. No scheme is supported unless it originates with them; while every plan of *theirs* is introduced, almost with the authority of a law. They expect to be consulted on the most trivial occasion, and if in anything opposed, become resentful, sullen, and distant. Little by little, they endeavour to gain a complete

ascendancy in the society, and watch with peculiar jealousy every, individual who is likely to become a rival. The minister

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at length, scarcely dare leave home for a Sabbath, without asking their leave; nor can the people form the least scheme of usefulness without their permission. When they are at any time resisted, they breathe out threats of giving up all interest in church affairs, at which the terrified and servile society end their resistance, consolidate the power of their tyrant, and rivet the fetters of slavery upon their own necks. At length, however, a rival power springs up; a family of growing reputation and influence, refuse any longer to submit to the thralldom; opposition to unlawful domination commences, the church is divided into factions, the minister becomes involved in the dispute, distraction follows and division finishes the scene. Lamentable state of things! Would God it rarely occurred! Let the leading individuals of our churches, the men of property, and the deacons, consider what mischief may be occasioned by the least assumption of undue influence. Let them watch against the lust of power: it is a passion most guilty and most mischievous: it arises almost imperceptibly from their situation, and its progress, like that of sin in general, is slow but certain. Let them conduct themselves with humility, and deliver their opinions with modesty, and remember that every exertion of illegal authority is an invasion, not only of the liberty of the Church, but of the prerogative of its Divine Head.

Here is a sample of fidelity which has never been surpassed. The man who could thus express himself was clearly no ordinary person. He spoke as one having authority. Such a manifesto was

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greatly fitted to work the cure of crying evils, and to advance the cause of truth, order, peace and charity, beyond anything that had been issued in the Independent Body during the living generation. It were well if a custom were established throughout the churches, at the admission of members, to put a copy of this work into the hands of every individual, whether rich or poor, at the expense of the church, with a solemn injunction to give it a careful perusal at least once a year. There is a world of matter set forth which is vital to church comfort and prosperity, which cannot be brought out in the pulpit in addressing a promiscuous congregation. The

cheap edition, recently issued, would greatly facilitate such an arrangement.

CHRISTIAN CHARITY EXPLAINED

This, which is one of the best publications of Mr James, appeared in the summer of 1828, and met with a very cordial reception. The subject was peculiarly congenial to his great heart, and generous aspirations, and it commended itself to the Universal Church as a highly seasonable production. Beyond the very masterly dedication there was nothing in it to bespeak the thorough Dissenter, or to stumble the devout Churchman. The volume was inscribed to the fellowship in Carr's-lane in a composition of great length, and singular beauty. The author there takes occasion to give expression to his views on certain points of great moment; the following is a sample:—

It has been sometimes alleged against the

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principles of the Independent mode of church government, that they supply innumerable occasions for strife and division. I wish that an appeal to facts did not seem to furnish some ground for the objection. The fault, however, is not in the system, but in the spiritual imperfections of those who embrace it; and, probably, in the attempts of many to carry it to an extreme. The identifying principle of any system, whether civil or sacred, should, of course, be well defined, constantly recognised, and carried out into all its practical details; but it should not be pushed too far, or too violently, in what may be called the line of its own direction and tendency: it is by a forgetfulness of this, that monarchy is sometimes urged on to tyranny, and democracy to anarchy. Amongst us, as you know, all the principles of Independency have been recognised; but they have not assumed the character, nor produced the confusion, of a turbulent republic. We have not converted our church meetings into seasons for debate, nor have we either encouraged or tolerated those who love to prate and to have the pre-eminence. *You* have never encroached upon *my* duty and prerogative, as your spiritual ruler; and I hope *I* have never attempted to lord it over God's heritage. Our union, formed upon the principle of mutual choice, was founded upon love, and has been supported by confidence: to this understanding of the nature of our relation, and of the duties it brings with it, we owe, under God, our undisturbed tranquillity.

Even then the keen perception of Mr James discovered

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the embryo of the *Negative Theology*, and from its birth he held it in the deepest abhorrence! Addressing his flock he says:—

Amidst all that variety of matter which is presented by the Word of God, you have been much familiarised with those grand fundamental truths which constitute the leading features of the Christian economy: the divinity of Christ; the vicarious and sacrificial nature of his death, justification by faith in his righteousness; regeneration and sanctification by the influence of the Holy Spirit. Loose generalities, cautious reserve, and ambiguous statements, have not been characteristic of the sermons you have heard. The importance of right sentiments has been enforced, the form of sound words has been exhibited, and the faith once given to the saints has been earnestly contended for; yet not, it is to be hoped, in such a way, as either to generate a spirit of controversy, or to extinguish the feelings of benevolence. DOCTRINES, my friends—doctrines are of immense consequence—they are the basis of all practical religion; and the morality that is not connected with truth by faith, is not the morality of the New Testament. The theology of the Word of God involves all the principles and motives of its morality. It is the very nature of Christian ethics, that they are so many emanations from Christian truths. Christ crucified, therefore, should be the great theme of every minister of religion: that latitudinarianism—and alas! it is becoming but too fashionable in the present day—which would reduce all sentiments as to their importance, to a level,

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and which would banish all distinctive opinions from the pulpit, to make way for mere moral duties and social virtues, is the rankest and most mischievous infidelity. If THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS be withheld, there can be no Christianity: no, nothing but deism; and to this many of the liberals of the passing age would bring us;—but it must not be.

Only the contents of the work can give an idea of its very important character. They are as follows:—

- 1 The Occasion of Paul's Description and Enforcement of Christian Charity.

- 2 The Nature of Charity.
- 3 Christian Love is not to be confounded with that Spurious Candour which consists in Indifference to Religious Sentiment, or in Connivance at Sinful Practices.
- 4 The Indispensable Necessity of Christian Love.
- 5 On the Properties of Christian Love.
- 6 The Meekness of Love.
- 7 The Kindness of Love.
- 8 The Contentment of Love.
- 9 The Humility of Love.
- 10 The Decorum of Love.
- 11 The Disinterestedness of Love.
- 12 The Unsuspiciousness of Love.
- 13 The Joy of Love.
- 14 The Candour of Love.
- 15 The Self-denial of Love.
- 16 The Permanence of Love.
- 17 The Pre-eminence of Love.

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- 18 Improvement.
- 19 Improvement, by Way of Examination and Humiliation.
- 20 Improvement, by Way of Exhortation.

As a treatise on Christian love the work may be considered approaching perfection. Very little remains to be added. I know of nothing equal to it. There is nothing, I believe, in the English tongue to be compared with it. Nothing has appeared so experimental, so practical, and, at the same time, so Scripturally doctrinal. It is quite a treasury of wisdom, touching this greatest of all the graces. The book is more fit for the Millennial than the present state. It is a fair, and a full portraiture of the purity and felicity which yet await our corrupt and afflicted world. After its perusal the reader sits down with a sigh of sadness to think how short the Church still comes alike of her duty and of her privilege, and how deplorable the state of those nations which have not the Gospel. The following is a sample of the chapter on the 'Humility of Love':—

The *usual* grounds of pride are the following:—

Wealth. Some value themselves on account of their fortune, look down with contempt on those below them, and exact obsequiousness towards

themselves, and deference for their opinions, according to the thousands of money or of acres which they possess. Others are proud of their *talents*, either natural or acquired. The brilliancy of their genius, the extent of their learning, the splendour of their imagination, the acuteness of their understanding,

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their power to argue, or declaim, form the object of self-esteem, and the reasons of that disdain which they pour upon all who are inferior to them in mental endowments. But these things are not so common in the Church of God, as those which we shall now mention.

Ecclesiastical convections form, in many cases, the occasion of pride. This was exemplified in the Jews, who boasted that they were the children of Abraham, and worshipped in the temple of the Lord. Their self-admiration, as the members of the only true church, and as the covenant people of God, was insufferably disgusting. In this feature of their character, they are too often imitated in modern times. While some boast of belonging to the church as by law established, and look with contempt on all who range themselves on the side of dissent, too many of the latter throw back the scorn upon their opponents, and pride themselves on the greater purity of their ecclesiastical order. There is the pride both of the dominant party, and also that of the seceding one; the pride of belonging to the church, which includes the court, the senate, the universities; and that which is sometimes felt in opposing this array of royalty, and learning, and law; the pride of thinking *with* the king, and the nobles, and the judges, and the prelates; and also that of thinking *against* them. Whatever leads us to think highly of ourselves in matters of religion, and to despise others, whether it be the distinctions of earthly greatness, the practice of religious duties, or the independence of our mode

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of thinking, is opposed to the spirit of Christian charity.

Superior light on the subject of revealed truth, is no unusual occasion of pride. The Arminian Pharisee dwells with fondness on the goodness of his heart; the Antinomian, with equal haughtiness, values himself on the clearness of his head; and the Socinian, as far from humility as either of them, is inflated with a conceit of the strength of his reason, and its elevation above vulgar prejudices;—while not a few moderate Calvinists regard with complacency *their* sagacity in discovering

the happy medium. As men are more proud of their understanding than of their disposition, it is very probable that religious opinions are more frequently the cause of conceit and self-importance, than anything else which could be mentioned. 'It is knowledge,' says the apostle, 'that puffeth up.' We are the men, and wisdom will die with us, is the temper of multitudes.

Religious gifts are sometimes the ground of self-admiration. Fluency and fervour in extempore prayer, ability to converse on doctrinal subjects, especially if accompanied by a ready utterance in public, have all, through the influence of Satan and the depravity of our nature, led to the disposition we are now condemning. None are in more danger of this than the ministers of religion;—it is the besetting sin of their office. There is no one gift which offers so strong a temptation both to vanity and to pride, as that of public speaking. If the orator really excel and is successful, he is the immediate

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spectator of his success, and has not even to wait till he has finished his discourse, for although the decorum of public worship will not allow of *audible* tokens of applause, it does of *visible* ones;—the look of interest, the tear of penitence or of sympathy, the smile of joy, the deep impression on the mind, the death-like stillness, cannot be concealed;—all seems like a tribute of admiration to the presiding spirit of the scene; and then the applause which is conveyed to his ear, after all the silent plaudits which have reached his eye, is equally calculated to puff him up with pride. No men are more in danger of this sin than the ministers of the Gospel; none should watch more sleeplessly against it.

The man who could thus speak was clearly a Master in Israel, intimately conversant with the mysteries of the human heart. On the 'Decorum of Love' we have the following:—

Unseemliness in the conduct of a church member towards his brethren, applies to *all that is rude, unmannerly, or uncivil*. 'No ill-bred man,' says Dr Adam Clarke, in his comments on this word, 'or what is commonly termed rude or unmannerly, is a Christian'—certainly not a consistent one. 'A man may have a natural bluntness, or be a clown, and yet there may be nothing *boorish*, or *hoggish* in his manner. I must apologise for using such words, but they best express the evil against which I wish both powerfully and successfully to declaim. I never wish to meet with those who affect to be called "blunt honest men"; who

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feel themselves above all the forms of civility and respect, and care not how many they put to pain—how many they displease. But let me not be misunderstood: I do not contend for ridiculous ceremonies, and hollow compliments: there is surely a *medium*; and a sensible Christian man will not be long at a loss to find it out. Even *that* people who profess to be above all worldly forms, and are generally *stiff* enough, yet are rarely found to be rude, uncivil, or ill-bred.’ There is much good sense in these remarks, that deserves the attention of all professing Christians who have the credit of religion and the comfort of their brethren at heart. It is inconceivable what a great degree of unnecessary distress is occasioned by a disregard of this rule; and how many hearts are continually bleeding, from the wounds inflicted by incivility and rudeness. We should be careful to avoid this; for religion gives no man a release from the courtesies of life. In our *private intercourse* with our brethren, we should be anxious to give no offence. If we feel it our duty at any time, as we may, and ought, to expostulate with a brother on the impropriety of his conduct, we should be most studiously cautious to abstain from all appearance of what is impertinently officious, or offensively blunt. Reproof, or even expostulation, is rarely palatable, even when administered with the honeyed sweetness of Christian kindness; but it is wormwood and gall when mingled up with uncourteousness, and will generally be rejected with disdain and disgust. We must never think of acting the part of a reprover,

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till we have put on humility as a garment, and taken up the law of kindness in our lips.

Although there is a good deal of repose in the work, yet on fit occasions the orator appears in all his splendour. As, for example, on the ‘Pre-eminence of Love’, he says:—

Survey with admiration and delight the mighty operations, and the splendid achievements of this powerful and benevolent principle, as they are to be seen within, and only within, the hallowed pale of Christianity. What are all the numerous and diversified institutions in our own land, where houseless poverty has found a home; craving hunger, a supply; forsaken infancy, a protector; helpless age, a refuge; ignorance, an instructor; penitence, a comforter; virtue, a defence;—but the triumphs and glories of love? What are all those sublime combinations of human energies, property, and influence, which have

been formed for the illumination, reformation, and salvation of the human race? What Bible Societies, Missionary Societies, Anti-Slavery Societies, Peace Societies—but the mighty monuments of that love, which seeketh not her own, and is kind? What are the tears of commiseration, which flow for human sorrows, but the drops that fall from the eye of love? What the joy that is excited by the sight of happiness, but the smiles of love? What was it that made the great Apostle of the Gentiles willing, not only to bear any accumulation of suffering, indignity, and reproach, but to pour out his blood as a libation for others, and even to be accursed from Christ for his kinsmen, and man

kind in general?—Love! What is it that renders the modern missionary willing to go into perpetual exile, from the land of his fathers and of his birth, to spend the future years of his life, and find, at last, a grave amidst the sands of Africa, or the snows of Greenland; willing to exchange the society and polished intercourse of Europeans, for savages, whose minds are brutishly ignorant, and whose manners are disgustingly offensive; willing to quit the land of Sabbaths, and of Bibles, and of churches, for regions over which the demon of superstition has extended his horrid sway, and beneath whose yoke nothing is to be seen, but orgies, in which lust and cruelty struggle for pre-eminence?—Love! What was it that breathed into the heart of HOWARD, that spirit which so filled and fired his imagination with visions of human misery, and which brought from so many dungeons the plaintive cry, ‘Come over and help us!’ that he could no longer rest in his own house, or in his own country, but travel, again and again, across the breadth of Europe, in quest of wretchedness; descending into the captive’s cell, that he might weigh his fetters, and measure his narrow apartment, and examine his food, to ascertain whether there was not more of misery in his hapless and forgotten lot, than justice demanded for the punishment of his crime; who inhaled the infected atmosphere of the lazaretto, to grapple with the plague—that fell destroyer of the human race, to approach which seemed to be courting death? It was love that formed the character of that illustrious man, and presented him to the

notice and admiration of the civilised world. What was it that gave courage, confidence, and self-denial, to that EXTRAORDINARY WOMAN, who ventured among the furies of Newgate, where, if she had not

cause to fear that assassins would attempt her life, she must have calculated upon finding a sort of demons, whose malignity, excited by the purity and virtue which seemed to set in stronger light, by the power of contrast, their own vices, would vent its rage on the angel form which had disturbed them? If ever the form and the beauty of charity were seen in one of our species, it was in Mrs FRY when she entered the cells of our metropolitan prison, and called their vicious and loathsome inmates round her, to be instructed and reformed? And what is it that makes ten thousand holy men and women employ themselves continually in all kinds of self-denying exertions, to instruct the ignorant, to relieve the miserable, to reform the wicked? These, O heavenly charity! are thy works, the displays of thy excellences, and proofs of thy pre-eminence!

This is a fine sample of the eloquence of Mr James at an early period, and although ornate it is pure, and excellent English.

THE FAMILY MONITOR.

No preacher of our times was more studious of simplicity and definiteness in all his statements than Mr James. Never sermon or speech displayed less of the vague and the general. He delighted to view men in classes, and those classes

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he made it his business to study carefully, inquiring into all their necessities, with a view to supply them. Out of this sprung his *Family Monitor*, which is a most valuable contribution to the domestic literature of the nation. The subject was one of equal difficulty, and delicacy; there are many points requiring to be touched which none but a practised hand could safely deal with. From the nature of the case the topics are not numerous, although they are highly momentous. They are as follows:—

- 1 The Domestic Constitution.
- 2 The Mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives.
- 3 The Special Duties of Husbands and Wives.
- 4 Some Remarks on the Formation of the Marriage Union.
- 5 The Duties of Parents.
- 6 The Duties of Children to their Parents.
- 7 On the Fraternal Duties.
- 8 The Duties of Masters.
- 9 The Duties of Servants.

While the volume is throughout one of duties these duties are all carefully based on Christian principle. The volume is, in effect, the great work of Baxter in epitome, not that he copied Baxter, but that he travelled in the same path. None could have written it but a man of great practical sagacity, and a shrewd observer of life and manners. Among the numerous passages distinguished by pungency and originality is the following:—

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The alienation of brothers and sisters on account of pecuniary matters, is usually a matter of deep disgrace to them all; not only to the spoiler, but also to the rest.

But in what terms shall I depict the atrocious wickedness of a villainous brother, who, after the death of their parents, would employ his influence to wheedle and swindle an unmarried sister out of her property, and reduce her to poverty and dependence, to indulge his own rapacity, or to avert calamity from himself! Such wretches *have* existed, and *do* exist, who, taking advantage of a sister's strong affection, combined with her ignorance of money matters, never cease, till, by all the arts of subtlety, they have got out of her possession the last shilling she has in the world; and then, perhaps, when she has nothing more for them to pilfer, abandon the victim of their cruelty with the remorselessness of a highwayman, to want and misery. Let such monsters remember, that there is one in heaven whose eye has been upon all their wicked arts and cruel robbery, and who, for all these things, will bring them into judgement. It is an act of cruelty in any brother, who, without any dishonest intention perhaps, would wish to jeopardise the property of a sister, in order either to increase his own gains, or to avert his own dreaded misfortunes. She may be very unfitted to struggle with poverty, and altogether disqualified for earning support by her own industry, and therefore ought not to be exposed to the danger of losing her property. Cases do occur sometimes, in which it may

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be proper, and even necessary, for the property of unmarried sisters to be employed in the trade of their brothers; but as a general rule, it is *unadvisable*; and where it does happen, the latter should let all their conduct be conducted on the principles of the greatest caution, the most rigid integrity, and the noblest generosity.

Brothers ought ever, after the death of their parents, to consider themselves as the natural guardians of unmarried sisters; their advisers in difficulty, their comforters in distress, their protectors in danger, their sincere, tender, liberal, and unchanging friends, amidst all the scenes and vicissitudes of life. It is rarely advisable that a sister should permanently dwell with a married brother; but then, even the much stronger claims of the wife ought not to cancel or throw into oblivion those of the sister.

I fervently hope these golden words may meet the eye of many a brother who may be the better for them, and who may be led by them to plead as Mr James has pleaded for an interesting and a frequently injured class of society. The following lesson of frugality is for female servants:—

You are in very dependent circumstances. Your support depends upon your own labour, and that upon your health. You have no arm but your own to rely upon, and should therefore feel the obligation of laying up something in the day of prosperity, against the night of adversity. We are all enjoined to *trust* Providence, but not to *tempt* it. To spend all we get in vanity, and useless

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trifles, under the idea that we shall be taken care of, in one way or other, is a presumption that generally brings its own punishment. There is in the present day a most censurable propensity in female servants, and workwomen in general, to dress quite beyond their station. It is not easy, in some cases, to distinguish between the maid and her mistress. What abject folly is it, for a young woman to spend all her wages in gay apparel. When she is in ill health and out of place, will it be any consolation to look upon finery which she is obliged to pawn, one article after another, for her support? The love of dress has led in some instances to stealing; in others to prostitution; in more, to poverty. Character is respectability, not dress. Harlots are generally fine and gaudy in their attire. Economise your little property, then; lay up in store for the time to come. I know several servants who have, one forty, another fifty, another one hundred pounds in the bank. Besides, it is desirable to save from unnecessary expense in dress, that you may have a little to give to the cause of humanity and religion. The mite of the servant may mingle, in this age, with the pound of the master, to help in spreading the blessings of Christianity over the face of the earth. And it is to be poor indeed, to have nothing to give to the cause of humanity or religion.

Servants had always a powerful, judicious, and sympathetic friend and advocate in Mr James. The following is to masters on their behalf:—

Kindness should lead us to allow our servants

all possible indulgences and recreations that are not incompatible with religion.

They are capable of gratification like ourselves, and have the same desire of it; while at the same time are denied, by their very circumstances, access to many of those sources of delight which are continually open to us. Those who seem to grudge domestic servants an occasional remission of their labour, that they may have communion with others at the feast of innocent enjoyment, convert their service into slavery, and render the oppression additionally bitter by the circumstance, that it is exercised in the land of freemen. I have often been delighted to see the cheerful faces of female servants at those meetings which are convened for promoting the various objects connected with the cause of religion and humanity, and who seemed to drink in the streams of eloquence and piety, with as eager a thirst, and as exquisite an enjoyment, as their more enlightened and better educated masters and mistresses. And I have known those, who, when going to some neighbouring town or village to attend, perhaps, a religious service of a public nature, have placed a female servant on the box-seat of the carriage that conveyed them, that she might share the pleasures of the day. It is our duty, of course, to keep them from all polluting and vitiating amusements, but it is not less a duty of benevolence, to give them as often as is convenient to us, and consistent with their interests, an opportunity of enjoying the liberty and the sunshine of innocent and holy pleasure.

The chapter on marriage is one of a highly important character; the following is to Ministers of the Gospel:—

To my brethren in the ministry I do recommend, and recommend with an earnestness which I have no language sufficiently emphatic to express, the greatest caution in this most delicate and important affair. In their case, the effects of an imprudent marriage are felt in the church of the living God. If the wives of the deacons are to be 'grave, not slanderers. sober, faithful in all things', what less can be required of the wives of the pastors? 'A bishop must be blameless, one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection

with all gravity. For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?' But how can he exhibit in his domestic constitution, the beautiful order and harmony which should prevail in every Christian family, and especially in every *minister's* house, without the intelligent and industrious co-operation of his wife; and how can this be expected of one who *has* no intelligence or industry? Not only much of the comfort, but of the *character* of a minister, DEPENDS UPON HIS WIFE; and what is of still greater consequence, much of his usefulness. How many have been driven away from scenes of successful labour, or rendered uncomfortable in the midst of them, by the mismanagement of wives, who have plunged their husbands into debt, and thus blasted their respectability; or by that pride, petulance, vulgarity, meanness, and busy interference, by which they have involved

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them in perpetual strife with their neighbours, tradesmen, or their congregation! Considering, therefore, how much mischief may be done by *their* indiscretion, ministers should raise imprudence in marriage to the rank of a great sin. And then their guilt in the commission of this sin is the greater, as they have less excuse for it than others; for they have only to exercise patience, and to restrain themselves from hasty and injudicious entanglements, and to avail themselves of the extended opportunity which their situation gives them, to obtain a companion that shall be to them, both as men and ministers, a helper of their joy. Some widowers in selecting a second wife have consulted their children's comfort more than their own taste; whether this be right or wrong in their case, we shall presently consider; but certainly a minister while he is allowed the usual privilege of following his own predilections, ought never to gratify his taste at the expense of his official respectability, or at the risk of his usefulness, but in the choice of a wife, should be guided by a view to the comfort of his church, as well as by a reference to his own happiness.

On the subject of mixed marriages we have some most searching observations. The following deserves special notice from all, whether ministers or people:—

A Christian should make everything bend to religion, but allow religion to bend to nothing. This is the one thing needful, to which everything should be subordinate; and surely, to place out of

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consideration, the affairs of his eternal salvation, in so important an affair as marriage, shows either that the religion of a person who acts thus, is but profession, or likely soon to become so.

The neglect of this plain and reasonable rule is becoming, I am afraid, more and more prevalent. I do not wonder at all, that this subject should have excited the attention of the ministers of religion, and that the CONGREGATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR WILTSHIRE should at their yearly meeting, in eighteen hundred and six, have come to the following resolution:—‘*Deploring the little regard of late years paid, by too many professors of religion to the Christian rule of marriage; and deeming it desirable, that the attention of the public in general, and our own churches in particular, should be called to this subject; we do unanimously request the Rev. Mr Jay to publish some strictures upon it.*’

“In the excellent treatise which Mr Jay published in compliance with this request, he makes the following just and important remarks:— ‘How deplorable is it that this Christian rule of marriage is so frequently trampled upon. The violation is, in the *degree* of it at least, peculiar to our own age. Our pious ancestors, especially among the Nonconformists, would have been shocked at the practice, as appears from their invaluable writings. AND I AM PERSUADED THAT IT IS VERY MUCH OWING TO THE PREVALENCE OF THESE INDISCRIMINATE AND UNHALLOWED CONNECTIONS, THAT WE HAVE FALLEN SO FAR SHORT OF THOSE MEN OF GOD WHO ARE GONE BEFORE US, IN OUR SECLUSION FROM THE WORLD, IN THE SIMPLICITY OF OUR

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MANNERS, IN THE UNIFORMITY OF OUR PROFESSION, IN THE DISCHARGE OF FAMILY WORSHIP, AND IN THE TRAINING UP OF OUR HOUSEHOLDS IN THE NURTURE AND ADMONITION OF THE LORD.

Never was a volume more correctly designated. It is verily a *Monitor*, wise, benevolent, and faithful. Well it were should it have a place in every British family, and receive a careful and frequent perusal from both heads and members.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHER’S GUIDE.

This is one of Mr James’s earliest efforts at authorship. The first edition appeared in the autumn of 1816, and it shows that his talents for literary labour sprung into maturity at once. I know of

no author who has gained less from experience. Everything has been marked by the same fullness of discussion, flow, force, and finish. His thoughts, whether commonplace, or profound, were always distinguished by a singular completeness. His mind carried on all its operations amid a blaze of sunshine. He always perfectly understood what he meant to say, and he never failed to communicate his ideas, whether with the tongue or the pen, to others. I have never met in his writings a single dark sentence, an entangled sentence, or one that could be materially improved by reconstruction. For a public teacher this is an invaluable felicity, and John Angell James enjoyed it to the full. He would seem to have been born with it. It was in him a species of instinct.

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The present volume is distinguished by extraordinary effectiveness; all its points are presented with the skill of an advocate, and touched with the pencil of an orator, But there are higher excellences than these: the principles of the work are thoroughly sound in everything that appertains to the Sunday school. Their object is thus set forth:—

The ultimate object of a Sunday-school teacher should be, in humble dependence upon divine grace, to impart that religious knowledge, to produce those religious impressions, and to form those religious habits in the minds of the children, which shall be crowned with the SALVATION OF THEIR, IMMORTAL SOULS; or, in other words, to be instrumental in producing that conviction of sin, that repentance towards God, that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that habitual subjection in heart and life to the authority of the Scriptures, which constitute at once the form and power of GENUINE GODLINESS.

The Sunday-school thus viewed, is lifted up into a dignity which admits of no increase. It is as much as the regular worship of adults an institution for the salvation of immortal souls. The social effect of school-teaching, as far as the end of their establishment is accomplished, is the same as that of the public ministry, This point is vividly set forth in the following passage:—

Sunday-schools multiply the virtues that establish the comfort of society. All the particular duties that arise out of the reciprocal ties of society are inculcated, while the general principles of benevolence and submission, which like two mighty columns

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support the whole fabric of our social interests, are deeply founded in the human bosom. Although the general aspect of society in its lower classes, appears as yet unchanged, and the wintry face of its morality at present seems to throw to a great distance the harvest of your zeal, still let it be a stimulus to your exertions to be assured that you are pouring the principle of fertility through a thousand channels, and that already you see here and there a vernal flower lifting its head amidst barrenness and storms,—the welcome harbinger of a happier season. Already innumerable masters bless your labours for faithful servants; wives pour out their gratitude for industrious and affectionate husbands; and children, as they gather round the knees of a kind and tender father, well clad, well fed, well taught, turn to you with the thankful smiles of their bliss, as their benefactors, who made their parents what they are. Society, through all its ranks, gratefully acknowledges the obligations conferred by your labours, and earnestly solicits their continuance. The king from his throne, and the senate in full convention, have paid the tribute of admiration to the utility of your exertions. You are admitted to be some of the best friends of the community, and the most efficient philanthropists of the poor. Your efforts are directed to prevent crimes, instead of punishing them, and to prevent misery, instead of merely relieving it. Pursue your labours with increased diligence, since their tendency is to strengthen the foundations and adorn the fabric, of society.

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This is, indeed, the true state of the case. The nation is not yet brought under the full power of the system, else we should see more fruit. On the worth of souls we have a passage of peculiar brilliancy:—

So far as the children are individually concerned, I again remind you that their temporal interests are the lowest object of your pursuit. Your last and highest end is the salvation of the immortal soul. This is your aim, to be instrumental in converting the souls of the children from the error of their ways, and training them up in the fear of God, for glory everlasting. What an object! The immortal soul! the salvation of the human spirit! The soul was the last and noblest work of God in the formation of the world; the finish and ornament of this material fabric, on which the divine Architect bestowed his most mature deliberation, and expended his richest treasures. It stood amidst creation the fair and beauteous image of the Creator. This was the object which upon his expulsion from paradise first caught the envious

eye of Satan, and in the spoils of which, his malice sought a fiend-like solace for the loss of heaven. This was the object which in its fall dragged the creation into a vortex of ruin. This was the object selected by the great God in the councils of eternity, whose salvation should be the means of exhibiting to the universe the most glorious display of the divine perfections; on which mercy, wisdom, and power were to exhaust their united resources. This was the object for which the Son of God could justify

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himself to all worlds, as not demeaning his dignity, or disparaging his wisdom, when for its salvation he veiled his divinity in human flesh, was for a while made lower than the angels, tabernacled amidst the sorrows of mortality, and closed a life of humiliation and suffering upon the ignominious summit of the cross. This is the object for which all the revelations of heaven, and all the dispensations of grace; all the labours of prophets, priests, and apostles; in short, all the splendid apparatus of redemption, was arranged. This is the object whose interests render angels unquiet upon their heavenly seats, and draw them with exquisite solicitude to minister to its safety. Such is the retinue attending upon the soul of man, into whose train you have fallen. What then must be the value of the human soul? Now you see the justice of our Saviour's language: 'What is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?' Now you perceive this is no hyperbole; and that literally the globe, weighed against the value of one human spirit, is less than the small dust of the balance. Convert the sun into one blazing diamond, the moon into a pearl, and every star that decks the firmament into a gem, all this bears no proportion to the value of the soul. Arithmetic, with all its powers, is here of no use; it cannot aid our conceptions. Think of the immortality of the soul, and this one property of its nature raises it above all calculation. It is in consequence of this that it has been said with justice, that the salvation of a soul amounts to

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a greater sum of happiness than the temporal deliverance of an empire for a thousand ages; for the latter will come to an end, but not the former. By the same argument, the loss of one soul is a greater catastrophe than the total sum of all the temporal misery endured upon the face of the globe from the period of the fall to the general conflagration. Say now, is not such an object worthy all the means

that are or can be employed for its attainment? Do you hesitate? Ponder, intensely ponder, again. The subject can never be exhausted; the more it is studied, the wider will its compass appear. Should you be the happy instrument of converting but one soul to God, what honour you are providing for yourselves, what happiness for others!

Touching the special encouragement of teachers, we have the following burst of splendour:—

My fancy has sometimes presented me with this picture of a faithful teacher's entrance to the state of everlasting rest. The agony of dissolution is closed, the triumph of faith completed, and the conquering spirit hastens to her crown. Upon the confines of the heavenly world, a form divinely fair awaits her arrival. Rapt in astonishment at the dazzling glory of its celestial inhabitant, and as yet a stranger in the world of spirits, she inquires, 'Is this Gabriel, the chief of all the heavenly hosts, and am I honoured with his aid to guide me to the throne of God?' With a smile of ineffable delight, such as gives fresh beauty to an angel's countenance, the mystic form replies, 'Dost thou remember little Elizabeth, who was in yonder world a Sunday-scholar

in thy class? Dost thou recollect the child who wept as thou talkedst to her of sin, and directed her to the cross of the dying Redeemer? God smiled with approbation upon thy effort, and by his own Spirit sealed the impression upon her heart, in characters never to be effaced. Providence removed her from beneath thy care, before the fruit of thy labour was visible. The seed, however, had taken root, and it was the business of another to water what thou didst sow. Cherished by the influence of heaven, the plant of religion flourished in her heart, and shed its fragrance upon her character. Piety, after guarding her from the snares of youth, cheered her amidst the accumulated trials of an afflicted life, supported her amidst the agonies of her last conflict, and elevated her to the mansions of immortality; and now behold before thee the glorified spirit of that poor child, who under God owes the eternal life on which she has lately entered to thy faithful labours in the Sunday-school, and who is now sent by our Redeemer to introduce thee to the world of glory, as thy first and least reward for guiding the once thoughtless, ignorant, wicked Elizabeth to the world of grace. Hail, happy spirit! Hail, favoured of the Lord! Hail, deliverer of my soul! Hail to the world of eternal glory!

I can trace the scene no farther. I cannot paint the raptures produced in the honoured teacher's bosom by this unexpected interview. I

cannot describe the mutual gratitude and love of two such spirits meeting on the confines of heaven; much less call I follow them to their everlasting mansion,

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and disclose the bliss which they shall enjoy before the throne of God.

All this, and a thousand times more, is attendant upon the salvation of one single soul. Teachers what a motive to diligence!

It is desirable that this work should be for ever kept before the mind of Sunday-school Teachers. It is still alone in our language.

THE ANXIOUS INQUIRER.

This volume is so universally known, and so highly prized, that I need hardly refer to it, unless to complete the catalogue of the author's chief works. Here Mr James has had competition to an extent far exceeding that with which he had to encounter in any other of his publications; and to say the least, and speak the truth, he has also had equals. The subject is one on which we had several excellent treatises before, and we have had some since he wrote, but none of them have taken such a hold on the public mind. This circumstance is explained partly from the great name of the author, and partly from its having been taken up by the Tract Society, who have sent it all over the world, so that it has appeared where none of its rivals were ever heard of; and hence it has got translated into various tongues, where it is destined to achieve exceeding great good. It is an excellent performance; there is in it but one feeble and unsatisfactory chapter, that on 'Cautions', which is very unlike Mr James, who rarely touched a great subject without

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sufficiently exhausting it. The style of the *Inquirer*, on the whole, is well fitted to the subject. It is simple, direct, and didactic, yet at every turn the orator appears waving his rod, and charming his auditor, whom he inspires with a glow of interest and pleasure.

The *Inquirer*, reviewed as a whole, is immeasurably superior to the *Call* of Baxter, and the *Rise and Progress* of Doddridge, and bids fair for ages to come, to prove a boundless blessing to the rising race. The following is a specimen:—

Anxiety, then, deep anxiety about salvation, is the most reasonable thing in the world; and we feel almost ready to ask, Can that man have a soul, or know that he has one, who is careless about its eternal happiness? Is he a man or a brute? Is he in the exercise of his reason, or is he a maniac? Ever walking on the edge of the precipice that hangs over the bottomless pit, and not anxious about salvation! Oh, fatal, awful, destructive indifference! Cherish, then, your solicitude. You must be anxious, you ought to be so, you cannot be saved without it; for no man ever was, or ever will be. The salvation of a lost soul is such a stupendous deliverance, such an infinitely momentous concern, that it is impossible, in the very nature of things, it should be bestowed on any one who is not in earnest to obtain it. This is the very end of your existence, the purpose for which God created you. Apart from this, you are an enigma in creation; a mystery in nature. Why has God given you faculties which seem to point to eternity, and

desires which go forward to it. if he has not destined you for it? Eternal salvation is the great end of life: get what you will, if you lose this, you have lost the purpose of existence. Could you obtain all the wealth of the globe; could you rise to the possession of universal empire; could you, by the most splendid discoveries in science, or the most useful inventions in art, or the most magnificent achievements in literature, fill the earth with the fame of your exploits, and send down your name with honour to the latest ages of time, still, if you lost the salvation of your soul, you would have lived in vain. Whatever you may gain, life will be a lost adventure, if you do not gain salvation. The condition of the poorest creature that ever yet obtained eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, although he had but a mere glimmering of intellect, just enough of understanding to apprehend the nature of repentance; although he lived out his days amidst the most squalid poverty and repulsive scenes; although he was unknown even among the poor; and although, when he died, was buried in the pauper's grave, on which no tear was ever shed; is infinitely to be preferred to that of the most successful merchant, the greatest conqueror, the profoundest philosopher, or the sublimest poet, that ever existed, if he lived and died without salvation. The lowest place in heaven, is infinitely to be preferred to the highest place on earth. Go on, then, to urge the question, 'What shall I do to be saved?' Let no one turn off your attention from this matter. As long as you covet this, your eye, and heart, and

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hope, are fixed on the sublimest object in the universe; and when officious, but ignorant friends would persuade you that you are too anxious, point them to the bottomless pit, and ask them if any one can be too anxious to escape its torments? Point them to heaven, and ask them if any one can be too anxious to obtain its glories? Point them to eternity, and ask them if any one can be too anxious to secure immortal life? Point them to the cross of Christ, and ask them if any one can be too anxious to secure the object for which he died?’

It may be observed, that while the volume is specially suited to the Inquirer, there are countless multitudes of professors, many of them far advanced in years, and real Christians, too, who still might peruse it with the utmost advantage. The following are points into which the work is distributed:—

- 1 Deep Solicitude about Salvation reasonable and necessary.
- 2 Religious Impressions, and the unspeakable importance of retaining and deepening them.
- 3 On the Importance of Gaining Scriptural Knowledge and Clear Views of Divine Truth.
- 4 On Repentance.
- 5 On Faith.
- 6 Mistakes into which Inquirers are apt to fall.
- 7 Perplexities which are often felt by Inquirers.
- 8 Discouragements which Present Themselves at the Commencement of a Religious Course.
- 9 Cautions.
- 10 Encouragements.

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Under these ten sections we have a large amount of genuine divinity, both doctrinal and experimental.

CHRISTIAN PROGRESS

This little volume has not received the attention which is due to it; we rarely hear it mentioned, while the *Anxious Inquirer*, to which it is a sequel, is in every mouth. Such is human nature, that the awakened conscience is more anxious for peace than it is afterwards for progress. The latter is much more trying to flesh and blood than the former. Having obtained peace through believing the

Gospel, there is a disposition to take things easy, to rest awhile, merely praising the Lord instead of denying self, taking up the cross and following him.

There is something deeply interesting about the history of the book. The idea originated not with Mr James, but with the late excellent Mr Lloyd. At first, Mr James declined to entertain the question, but his friend persevered and conquered. What follows is too interesting to be overlooked:—

During a season of indisposition, which by confining me pretty much for some days to my chamber or my study, the subject came under reconsideration: I communed about it ‘with my own heart upon my bed’, and also with him ‘from whom all good counsel, all just thoughts, and all holy desires do proceed’; and the result was a determination to comply with the suggestion of Mr Lloyd. The plan was in part drawn, and the general idea of

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the subject revolved and taken while my head was upon my pillow, and during the silent watches of the night; and my first business on my restoration was to commit to paper the thoughts which had passed through my mind in the season of seclusion.

The work, according to their undeviating plan of submitting, all their publications to the careful examination of their own committee, or to some one appointed by them, was committed by the Religious Tract Society to the revision and approval of Mr Lloyd, then in retirement through long-continued indisposition. Sheet after sheet had passed under his critical review, till the last, which contained the preface and the dedication to himself, came back with a short note expressive of his gratification that his name would thus be publicly associated with mine. In consequence of an unexpected delay in the supply of paper, the striking off of this last sheet was delayed till the very morning when intelligence of his death arrived, and just in time before the press was set to work, to enable me to pay this tribute of affectionate respect to the memory of one with whom I have been in private somewhat intimately associated, and whom I so much respected for his talents, admired for his usefulness, and loved for his virtues. It will ever be a grateful recollection that *one* of his last, if not the very last, of his services for the Society whose interests he so tenderly loved and so efficiently promoted, was to examine on its behalf this production of my pen, and fruit of his own suggestion.

There is an impressive analogy between this and

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the close of the affecting sketch by Mr James appended to the *Life of Richard Knill*. Mr James had returned the last proof-sheet with a note to the Editor, when he laid down his pen, and was speedily summoned into the joy of his Lord. The topics of this very valuable treatise are these:—

- 1 Necessity of Progress.
- 2 Nature of Progress.
- 3 Means of Progress.
- 4 Mistakes concerning Progress.
- 5 Hindrances to Progress.
- 6 Motives to Progress.
- 7 Encouragements to Progress.

As a sample I offer the following; referring to the means of grace, the author says:—

How much depends upon *the frame of mind* in which, and the purpose for which, this attendance is carried on. There is a manner of attending upon the means of grace, which instead of benefiting the soul does it great harm. Gospel sermons and the richest devotional services may harden the heart instead of sanctifying it, and be a savour of death unto death instead of life unto life. Let us never forget that to be *profited*, that is to be spiritually improved in knowledge, faith, holiness, joy, and love, is the end of hearing sermons, and not merely to have our taste gratified by genius, eloquence, and oratory. I know scarcely anything of more importance to put before a young Christian than the necessity, in order to a healthful state of religion, of a right end and object in hearing the Word of God. We live in an age when talent is idolised, and

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genius adored. This is 'the image of jealousy which maketh jealous' in the temple of the Lord. With too many it is not the truth of God that is thought of, valued, and delighted in, but the talent of man with which it is set forth. Now we admit that it is almost impossible not to admire, and be affected by, genius. Mind must admire the nobler exhibitions of mind; and cultivated intellects cannot put up with the crude effusions of ignorance or dullness. To such persons, it is not only offensive to taste; but to piety, to hear such sublime and glorious themes as the Gospel contains set forth in the mean and tattered habiliments of vulgar language and mean thought. Who would like to have the richest delicacies served-up on the meanest or

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broken earthenware? Even in regard to books, elegant typography and good paper add to the pleasure of reading, even where the matter is instructive, and the subject of perusal is interesting. But it would argue an ill-regulated mind, in the one case, to be fonder of the elegance of the dish than of the good food which it contains; and in the other, of the type, paper, and binding of the book, than of the momentous subject on which it treats. It is scarcely possible to give a more important piece of advice to one setting out on the ways of God than our Lord's words, 'TAKE HEED HOW you hear.' We should hear sermons with something of the same state of mind, and for the same purpose, as we should directions from a physician concerning our health—or from a lawyer how to avert an impending sentence of death.

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The following lesson, touching the perils of companionship, deserves to be written in letters of gold:—

Among the hindrances to progress in religion must be mentioned *companionship*. 'He that walketh with wise men shall be wise,' says Solomon, 'but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.'—Proverbs 13:20. We take the tinge of our character from those, and in return give back in brighter hue the colour of our own to them, with whom we associate. We are all the communicants and recipients of unconscious influence; just as healthy or diseased subjects are supposed to keep the atmosphere around them salubrious or infectious. As, therefore, we would preserve our spiritual health and promote our increase of strength, let us avoid the society of those whose company and conversation are unfriendly to piety. The strength of our convictions, the fixedness of our habits, the clearness and settledness of our principles, and the firmness of our resolutions, must in a great measure depend upon our associates. David said, 'I am a companion of all those that fear God and keep his statutes.' As to the choice of good and suitable companions as a means of progress, I have already written in a former chapter; but I now speak of the avoidance of unsuitable ones, of such as would be a hindrance to it. And I would, with all the emphasis it is possible to give to written language, conjure the young professor to be most anxiously and tremblingly concerned about this matter. It may happen that now when first brought under concern

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about salvation, you may have companions congenial with your former tastes; and some to whom you were much attached, but who are still

as regardless of religion as you once were. This is indeed a painful and perplexing situation, and will expose you to considerable danger. You will find it difficult either to dissolve the ties of friendship, or to maintain them without peril to your infantine religion. To withdraw from those in whose society you have spent so many cheerful hours, will be like cutting off a right hand, or plucking out a right eye. Well, and are not these the terms of Christian discipleship? Why, in the times of persecution, the saints were often called to surrender husbands or wives, parents or children, for Christ's sake; and can you not give up a friend? Will you risk your religion, and jeopardise your soul, at the shrine of friendship? Do you not know that your religious character must be distasteful to your former friends, and that their pursuits and conversation are now distasteful, and actually injurious to you? Do you not come from their society with religious ardour damped, the spiritual taste lowered, the devotional spirit impaired, and the conscience offended and wounded by your sinking too deeply into the current of their conversation? Is it not felt by you that there is one subject, and that the most momentous of all, in reference to which you can have no sympathies and no conversation in common? You must withdraw. It is come to this, that you must sacrifice your friends or your souls; which shall it be?

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THE OLIVE BRANCH AND THE CROSS

Mr James was happy beyond most men in the titles of his works. The present is, I think, the only instance in which he may be said to have been otherwise. The second title, however, brings out the idea fully—*The Quarrels of Christians Settled, and Trespasses Forgiven, According to the Law of Christ*. That is the true title of the treatise. It is now nine years since the publication of the volume, so that Christianity was in full operation in Mr James's own circle and throughout the sphere of his observation, when he wrote the work and expressed himself as follows in his copious Dedication:—

The Church of God in general has yet failed to exhibit in any considerable and attractive prominence, that spirit of holy love, by which it was intended by its Divine Founder to be characterised. The thorn, the briar, and the nettle, instead of the fir-tree and the myrtle, still grow too luxuriantly in the precincts of the temple; and the wolf and the serpent are too often to be seen, where only the lamb and dove should be found. Christianity has not yet left the impression of its exceeding

loveliness so deeply stamped as it should be on the character of its professors; and of all its graces, none is so faintly and imperfectly traced as that which is the subject of this address. It has been found more easy, at any rate more common, to subdue the concupiscible than the irascible affections; and yet it is as much the intention of Christ, that his people

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should be distinguished by meekness and gentleness, as it is by purity, truthfulness, and justice. Love is pre-eminently *the* Christian grace. Equity, chastity, and veracity, have been found in the list of heathen virtues, but not charity: *they* have sometimes 'shed their fragrance on the desert air' of paganism, but where has love been found, except in the garden of the Lord? Alas, that even there this plant of Paradise, this heavenly exotic, should so often look shrivelled and worm-eaten; and thus fail to procure for its Divine Curator all the praise it should, and in its more flourishing condition would do.

This is a sad but I fear a true picture of the religion of the times, and it surely shows sufficient cause for the preparation of the clear, strong, and striking manifesto here presented. It so happens in spiritual maladies, that in proportion as such maladies abound the specific is neglected rather than sought for. Men begin to look on their actual as their nominal and natural condition, confounding sickness with health. Mr James has a most enlightened conception, both of the evil and its cure, and here he sets forth the true and only remedy. The following passage is entitled to the solemn attention of the Church of Christ:—

Why is it that Christians think so little about it, but because it has not been sufficiently insisted upon by ministers from the pulpit. It has long been my conviction that there is a great deficiency in the evangelical school of doctrine, of the practical enforcement of Christian duties *in detail*, especially

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of what may be emphatically called the evangelical virtues—the passive graces of the Christian character—the exercise of brotherly kindness and charity. It is delicious, I know, to hear a fine, eloquent, and richly theological descant upon redeeming love and pardoning mercy—to have the imagination and heart regaled with rhetoric, radiant with the glories of the cross, and redolent with the odour of that Name which is above every name. it is gratifying to the thinking mind to

have the intellect pleased with logical dexterity, and the fine abstractions of clear and strong thinking: it will be well enough also to have the subjects of moral obligation discussed in vague generalities and by elegant composition—but it is not so acceptable to have all the special and difficult duties of the Christian's life, or man's conduct to his fellows, set clearly before the understanding and enforced upon the conscience. Men do not so well like to be followed through all the labyrinths of the heart's deceitfulness, beaten out of every refuge of lies, and made to feel the obligation to love where they are inclined to hate, and to forgive where they desire to revenge. And we ministers pander too much to this taste. The pulpit has not done its duty. We have preached to the intellect, to the imagination, and to the taste, but not enough to the heart and to the conscience. In our endeavour to please, we have not been sufficiently intent upon the greater object, to profit. We have not preached justification too much, but sanctification too little. We have been so intent upon urging men to obtain

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the forgiveness of their own sins from God, that we have neglected to urge them to forgive the sins of their fellow-creatures against themselves. We have urged faith with a becoming vehemence, but not love. We have descanted upon the evil of licentiousness, and falsehood, and dishonesty, and covetousness; but have said far, far, too little about malice. We have urged men to zeal and liberality, but not enough to humility, forbearance, and forgiveness. We have led men to view the cross of Christ, but we have not sufficiently urged them to take up their own. We have entreated them to view him as the Lord their Righteousness, but not sufficiently as their Example. How much and how often have we insisted upon this duty which we are now discussing? Has it borne that place in our discourses which it does in those of our Lord? Have we not led our people to neglect this duty? I for one plead guilty, and feel as if I had not made this sufficiently prominent in my ministry, though I have not only preached but written and published upon it.

Is it then any wonder that professing Christians should think so little, when they hear so little about it. And hence there is another result,—the obligation to this duty is not felt. It is surprising to see how lightly it presses upon the consciences of many persons. They who would scruple to commit many other sins, have no scruple on the subject of not forgiving. They have no deep solemn sense of constraint; no feeling of a bond; no urgency of conscience. An injury is inflicted,

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and instead of at once saying, 'Here is a call for charity', they at once in the quickness of resentment, say, 'Here is a demand for resentment', and they directly form a purpose of retaliation as naturally as if it were the thing most proper to be done.

The case is here put with great ability and much force, and there can be no doubt that to a vast extent the complaint of the author is well-founded. The truth is, that with multitudes the preaching required would not be endured; it would be resented as legality.

Mr James has taken a very complete view of the bearings of this great question on the increase of religion and spread of the Gospel. He says:—

I urge this duty by a regard to the character and progress of true Christianity. You profess to understand and to love religion, and to desire its progress in the world. Do you? Do you really know and practically consider that the Christian religion is a religion of forgiveness; that it is the religion of a forgiving God, through a forgiving Saviour, and designed to raise up a forgiving church? Do you really know and practically consider that all God's redeemed people are intended to be witnesses, not only for the *doctrine*, but the *duty* of forgiveness? Imagine what a sin it is to bear false witness. On this point for God, and lead men to consider that *his* religion no more promotes forgiveness than the religion of Paganism. Consider what an impression would be produced by the church upon the world in favour of Christianity, if

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all professing Christians were seen and known to be persons in whose bosom the spirit of charity dwelt, and who had blotted out by the tears of their own, penitence the word, 'REVENGE', from their vocabulary. Why, they would be strong by their weakness, and mighty by their meekness: for who would injure a man who was too loving to resent it? How many would ask, 'Where did these men learn this lesson?' and on being told 'at the cross', what an idea would it raise in the world of a system of doctrine that could produce such an effect. Now the religion of the New Testament is come into the world to bless mankind, to startle with its novelty, and to attract by its loveliness. And this is the new and beautiful thing by which it is to accomplish its end, by leading men first to obtain mercy, and then to show it.

But alas, alas, how slowly does it gain ground even in the land where it is professed. And why? Because its path is filled up with the stumbling-blocks cast there by its professors. They misrepresent it by their conduct, and lead men to suppose it is no better than other and false religions. The great bulk of mankind take the Gospel just as it is set out before them in the lives of its followers: and as there is so much of the spirit of the world, the spirit of anger, wrath, and malice, they keep aloof from it. They are afraid it will do them no good, yea, that it will do them harm, by adding hypocrisy to their other sins. Yes, they are really afraid of religion. But this would not, could not, be the

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case, if all Christians were like Jesus, ever going about forgiving sins and doing good. Therefore we must be more holy, and in order to this, among other things we must be more meek and gentle—we must be more loving in order to be more lovely, and make our religion more loved. We must by forgiveness live down the suspicions of jealousy, the reproaches of calumny, and the indifference of stupidity. Preaching will not do it—printing will not do it. Sermons and books will not do it. Eloquence may descant upon forgiveness, and the rhetoric of the orator may be admired; but if we wish religion to prosper, all who profess it must be seen and known to pardon those who injure, them.

THE YOUNG MAN'S FRIEND THROUGH LIFE TO IMMORTALITY

That man has no claim to the character of a Christian philanthropist whose heart does not warm within him at the intimation that upwards of 20,000 copies of this work are already in circulation. I hope the day draws on when these figures will be very extensively multiplied. Were 250,000 copies in operation on the minds of the rising race amongst us, it would still come short of the necessities of the case. Were its diffusion to be co-extensive with its merits and the real wants of our young men, the issue would not cease until four times the number suggested. If it be remembered that the young men of the nation are its right arm—we

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might almost say its very heart—and that by and by they will constitute the nation itself, the depositories of its power, and wealth, and influence—the occupants of all its offices, and the doers of all its work—it will be seen that to enlighten their minds, to purify

their hearts, and to mould their characters, is the highest service that can be rendered to the age that now is, as well as that which is to come. It is, therefore, no extravagance to say, that had John Angell James done nothing for his generation beyond producing this volume, he would have been entitled to rank as one of its chief benefactors.

The subjects discussed, which go far to exhaust the theme, are the following:—

- 1 Preparation for Life.
- 2 The Young Man Entering Life.
- 3 The Young Man Entering Life Undecided in Religion.
- 4 The Young Man Possessing a Defective Amiability.
- 5 The Young Man Perplexed by Religious Controversy.
- 6 The Character of Joseph a Study for Youth.
- 7 The Study of the Book of Proverbs.
- 8 The Young Man Succeeding or Failing in Business.
- 9 The Young Man Emigrating to a Foreign Country.
- 10 The Young Man Disappointing or Realising the Hopes of his Parents.

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- 11 The Young Man Impressed with the Importance of the Age in which he Lives.
- 12 The Young Man Dying Early, or Living to Review Life in Old Age.

In the present case, greatly more is performed than is promised; the contents give but a very inadequate idea of the real worth of the work. Here is an awakening passage:—

Imagine what *may* happen, *must* happen, in sixty or seventy years. Through what a variety of situations, temptations, difficulties, trials, changes, even if there be nothing at all extraordinary or out of the common course of man's history, you will be called to pass. And should not all this be prepared for? It is impossible for you now to foresee the designs of Providence towards you. I would not excite and influence your imagination to anything that is romantic; nor set you upon building castles in the air; nor lead you to leave off plodding, and in the exercise of an unauthorised ambition, to seek, by a leap or bound, to reach an exalted situation, or by a stroke to grasp a large fortune. Still it is impossible to conjecture what opportunity you may have given you, by patient and successful industry, to rise in life. In this

happy country, there is no chain of caste which binds a man down to the situation and circumstances of his birth. The very heights in social and commercial life are accessible to all, from whatever low level they commence the ascent. The grandfather of the late Sir Robert Peel was at one time a journeyman cotton-spinner. He that laid the foundation of the greatness and wealth

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of the Arkwright family, was a barber. Carey, one of the greatest linguists and missionaries of modern times, was a cobbler. Stephenson, the great engineer and first constructor of railways, was a mender of watches. No one knows what openings God may set before him in life, and should he not be prepared to take advantage of them? Yea, this very preparation, in many cases, makes the opening. Ignorance, idleness, and vice, can never rise. They will ever sink by their own weight, and effectually close any door which Providence might set open. What a painful reflection is it for any man to make in future life, when some rare and golden opportunity presents itself for bettering his condition, 'Alas! I cannot avail myself of it. I am disqualified. I made no preparation. With tolerable diligence at school, and during my apprenticeship, I could have fitted myself for it; but my indolence then, and my folly and sin subsequently, have put it quite out of my power to seize the advantage thus offered me.'

From this, and, indeed, all the other works of Mr James, it would seem as if he had done nothing else, during his waking hours, but walk up and down in the earth, closely observing and carefully noting whatever struck him as bearing on the work of public instruction. He is equally at home in dealing with all classes, from the highest to the lowest. The princely merchant, the toiling mechanic, the servant-maid, and the apprentice-boy, all feel that they are in the presence of a man who is thoroughly acquainted with their way of life,

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their cares, conflicts, sufferings, and shortcomings. He thus discourses of bad books, bad places, and bad habits:—

With much the same emphasis do I warn you against *bad books*—the infidel and immoral publications of which such a turbid deluge is now flowing from the press, and depositing on the land a soil in which the seeds of all evil will grow with rank luxuriance. Infidelity and immorality have seized upon fiction and poetry, and are endeavouring

to press into their service even science and the arts. But besides these, books that inflame the imagination and corrupt the taste, that even by their excitement unfit the mind for the sober realities of life, or that indispose it by everlasting laughter for all that is grave, serious, and dignified, are all to be avoided. In some respects bad books are more mischievous than bad companions, since they are still more accessible, and more constantly with us; can be more secretly consulted, and lodge their poison more abidingly in the imagination, the intellect, and the heart. A bad book is a bad companion of the worst kind, and prepares for bad companions of all other kinds.

There are bad places, also, which endanger you, as well as bad companions and bad books; where, if you have not already formed bad companionships, you are sure to find them. There is the tavern, the resort of drunkards—the brothel, the resort of debauchees—and the theatre, the resort of both. All these are the avenues to ruin; the wide gates that open into the way of destruction. Many who have been kept out of the way of these places at home,

on entering life have indulged, in the first instance, rather a prurient curiosity than an inclination to sin, and have thought they would go once to them, just to see what they are, and whether there is all the harm that has been represented. Fatal curiosity! Oh *that once*—that *first wrong step*—that slip off from the summit of the inclined plane! The door of evil was opened, never again to be closed. Never trust yourself even *once* in a place where you would not feel yourself justified in going habitually. Never go even once, where you are sure you would not be followed with the approbation of your father, your conscience, and your God, and from which you would not be willing to go immediately to the judgement-seat of Christ. In illustration of the danger of a single visit to an anti-Christian scene of amusement, I may here repeat the fact which I have given in another publication, of one of the primitive Christians, that for a long time resisted the importunities of a friend who invited him to witness the gladiatorial fights in the amphitheatre. At length he was subdued, but determined that he would sit with his eyes closed, and thus quiet his own conscience, while he yielded to the solicitations of his friend. An unusual shout of applause which followed some display of skill or courage, excited his curiosity. He opened his eyes, he was interested, could not close them again—went again voluntarily—became a constant and eager attendant—abandoned Christianity, and died a pagan. How many more have been victims to *one* visit to forbidden places.

I mention also *bad habits*—habits of extravagance

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in the way of apparel, ornaments, and pleasure-taking. A love of gay personal appearance, and sensual gratification, leads to expense; and as extravagance must have resources, if honesty and, industry cannot supply them, dishonesty will create them. Be frugal, economical, prudent. Begin life with a determination to live within your income. Have no needless artificial wants—dispense with the cigar; it costs money, excites appetite for liquor, leads to evil company and evil places; and introduces other expenses and other habits. Common and simple as this habit seems to be, it does not always stop with itself. It is within my own knowledge that young men have involved themselves in debt and disgrace by this indulgence.

Mr James treats of a very prevalent evil as follows:—

This is perhaps the most graphic and vivid description of inebriety ever yet given to the world. The drawing is perfect, and not less so the colouring. It has been often called, and with great truth and justice, 'the drunkard's looking-glass, in which he may see his own face.' It is said that amidst all the splendid furniture and ornaments of our gin-palaces the mirror is not found; the vendors of poison not being very willing that the miserable victims should see their own suicidal act, in gulping the fatal dram, reflected. In default of a looking-glass, I wish they could be compelled to have the passage just quoted painted in large and flaming characters, and hung up in the most conspicuous place of these human slaughter-houses. Observe

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the description of the drunkard. The quarrelsome temper which liquor produces—the fights in which it involves the man who quaffs it, and the wounds he gets in his affrays—his babbling discourse on subjects which he does not understand, and is then unfitted to discuss, when blasphemy is wit, treason courage, and ribaldry eloquence—his going on when inflamed by wine, to the gratification of other lusts, and the commission of other sins—his insensibility to injury and danger when his brain is stupefied—his returning to the indulgence of his vicious appetite when awakening up from his drunken slumber—his intense misery and woe produced by his remorse of mind and wretchedness of body—these are all set forth in this wonderful passage with a graphic power that nothing can exceed.

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Begin life Young Men, with an extreme dread of this vice. There is ground for alarm. Drunkenness was never more prevalent than it is now. Myriads and myriads sink every year into the drunkard's grave, and lower still, into the drunkard's hell. One-half of the lunacy—two-thirds of the pauperism—and three-fourths of the crime of society, are said to spring from this desolating habit. Beware, then, of this dreadful appetite and propensity. Be afraid of it. Consider yourselves liable to it. Abandon all self-confidence. Avoid everything that leads to drinking. Abjure tobacco in every shape. Shun bad company. Never cross the threshold of the tavern for the purpose of conviviality. Practise total abstinence. All the drunkards that are, or ever have been, were moderate men

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once. I do most earnestly entreat you to abstain from all intoxicating drinks. You do not need them for health, and to take them for gratification is the germ of inebriety. Total abstinence will conduce to health—to economy—to prosperity. You will one day bless me if this chapter should lead you to adopt this practice. I do not say that this will *ensure* the practice of every virtue, and the enjoyment of all prosperity, but I know nothing in the order of preparatory means more likely to be followed with such results.

Whatever value may attach to books of human origin, arises solely from what they have derived from the pages of that which is inspired. If men would but read *that* as it ought to be read, they may dispense with everything else. While all is precious above rubies in the holy volume, there is one book specially entitled to the attention of young men—the book of Proverbs. Mr James thus speaks of that marvellous storehouse of divine wisdom:—

Though there is much in this book which, properly understood and followed, would, in connection with other parts of Scripture, guide the reader to heaven, and prepare him for its enjoyment, it must be confessed and remembered, that it *principally aims to form the social character for the present world* What we have already said on this subject we repeat, that for a clear and explicit knowledge of the way of pardon and eternal life, we must read the New Testament. There we learn how Christ is made of God unto us 'wisdom, and righteousness,

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and sanctification, and redemption.' And even there also we learn the great moral principles on which all the transactions of this world's

business should be founded; but it is in this extraordinary book that all the details of social life are given with a minuteness that is really extraordinary. It is the tradesman's *vade mecum*. It might lie upon his desk by the side of his ledger, and even *that*, in a thousand instances, would have been in a better state, had *this* been more constantly consulted. It is my firm belief, that no man who reads this book through with close attention and earnest prayer, once a year, will fail, either in this world, or in reference to that which is to come. It is designed and adapted to form the industrious, prudent, honourable, and successful tradesman, and is therefore eminently suited to this great commercial country. Napoleon Bonaparte, when in the zenith of his power and pride, called this country, more in a spirit of mortification and envy than of contempt, *a nation of shopkeepers*. If by that term he comprehended our merchants and manufacturers, he did not inaptly describe us. We are not ashamed of our commercial character and greatness; and provided our merchandise be carried on upon the principles of this book, and we thus inscribe upon it *Holiness to the Lord*, it is our glory and defence.

In this book is disclosed the secret of true happiness, and which, indeed, if possessed, will make happy individuals, happy families, happy neighbourhoods, happy nations, and a happy world. All the

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errors which men have fallen into on this subject; all the delusive shadows, the polluted springs, the deleterious ingredients, which have misled so many are here detected and exposed; while the nature, the source, and the means of true felicity, are as clearly pointed out. Here in the favour of God, in the mortification of our corruptions, in the restraint of our passions, in the cultivation of our graces, in the performance of our duties, in promoting the good of our neighbours, and in the hope of immortality, are the materials of human blessedness. Here happiness is set forth not in the heathen forms of Bacchus, Venus, or Momus; not by such descriptions as those of Horace, Ovid, and Anacreon; not by such rout and revelry as the lovers of pleasure in every age would recommend. Quite the contrary. In this book, happiness is seen descending from heaven, her native place, and lighting upon our orb in the seraph form of religion. She is clad in the robe of righteousness, arrayed in the garment of salvation, and adorned with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Like the king's daughter of old, she 'is all glorious within, her clothing is of wrought gold.' Joy sparkles in her eye, and peace reposes upon her brow. Her conscience is easy by pardon, and her heart is light through purity.

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The song of the seraphim is upon her lips. Her hand is alternately lifted up in adoration to God, and stretched out in mercy to his necessitous creatures. Her feet ever carry her with willing steps, either to the house of prayer or to the abodes of sorrow. *Her* excellences are described,

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and her praises are sung, not in the odes of licentious poets, at sensual orgies, in strains inspired by lust and wine; but in the hymns composed by prophets and apostles, resounding in the temples of devotion, or chanted by good and holy men in the circles of their friends, or the homes of their families. Such is the happiness set forth in this book, the only thing which deserves the name, the only thing that can prove itself worthy of the name. That seraph form lights, Young Men, in your path, and with her own angelic, divine, and heavenly smile, beckons you to follow her to the well-spring of delight, repeating, at every step, the beautiful language of this book, 'HAPPY IS THE MAN THAT FINDETH WISDOM.'

It is difficult which more to admire—the spirituality or the worldly wisdom of this book; its conclusions on business are invaluable. Here are fragments:—

Method and *system* have much to do with failure or success. In this I include promptness, as opposed to procrastination. No habit can be more fatal to success than the wretched disposition of postponing till another time that which ought to be done, and can be done, at once. Procrastination has ruined millions for both worlds. There is a class of adverbs which some men appear never to have studied, but which are of immense importance in all the affairs both of time and eternity—I mean the words 'instantly', 'immediately', 'at once', 'now', and for which they have unhappily substituted 'presently', 'by and by', 'tomorrow', 'at some future time'. Young Men,

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catch the inspiration of that weighty monosyllable—'now'. Yield to the potency of that word—'instantly'. But to use a still more businesslike term, acquire a habit of 'despatch'. And in order to this, do not only something immediately, but do immediately the thing that ought to be done next.

Punctuality is of immense consequence. It has been rather ludicrously said, 'Some people seem to have been born half an hour after their time, and they never fetch it up all their lives.' In the present busy

age, when business is so extended and complicated, and when, of course, one man is so dependent upon another, and oftentimes many upon one, a want of punctuality is not only a fault, but a vice, and a vice which inflicts an injury not only upon the transgressor himself, but upon others who have been waiting for him. 'You have caused us to lose an hour', said a gentleman to another, for whose appearance twelve persons had been waiting. 'Oh, that is impossible,' replied the laggard, 'for it is only five minutes after the time.' 'Very true,' was the rejoinder, 'but here are twelve of us, *each* of whom has lost five minutes.' He who keeps servants, customers, or creditors waiting, through his want of punctuality, can never prosper. This is as irreligious as it is injurious, inasmuch as the Apostle has commanded us to 'redeem the time'. *Order* is no less essential to system and success than promptness and punctuality. Order, it is said, is heaven's first law, an aphorism as true of earth as it is of heaven, and as applicable to the movements

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of trade as of the stars. A place and a time for everything, and everything in its place and time, is the rule of every successful tradesman. A disorderly and irregular man may be diligent, that is, may be ever in a bustle, a very different thing from a well-regulated activity, but his want of order defeats everything. The machinery of his habits may have velocity and power, but its movements are irregular and eccentric, and therefore unproductive, or productive only of uncertain, incomplete, and sometimes mischievous results. A disorderly man wastes not only his own time, but that of others who are dependent upon, and waiting for him—nor does the waste stop here, for what a useless expenditure of energy and a painful reduction of comfort, are ever going on.

Economy has a most powerful influence in determining the failure or success of a young tradesman. This applies to personal, trade, and domestic expenses, and the man who would succeed in life must reduce them all to the lowest prudent level. In order to keep down the expenses of *trade*, he must do with as little purchased help as he can; and to accomplish this, he must be a hard worker himself till he has attained to that pitch of prosperity, when he can do more with his eyes and his ears than with his hands and feet. As to *personal* expenses, let him avoid all unnecessary consumption of money in dress and ornaments. Let it be no part of your ambition, Young Men, to be noticed and admired for matters of this kind. It is a very grovelling ambition to be complimented for that with which the

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draper, the mercer, and the jeweller, may bedizen the veriest fool in existence. How mean and petty is foppery, compared with an enlightened mind, a dignified character, and the beauties of holiness. I am not an advocate for either meanness or slovenliness. Cleanliness and neatness border upon virtue, as excessive foppery and expensiveness do upon vice. It is unworthy of a *female* to be inordinately fond of dress—but for a *man* to love finery is despicable indeed. Avoid also the love of pleasure, for 'HE THAT LOVETH PLEASURE SHALL BE A POOR MAN.' Never were truer words uttered. The man who is bent upon what is called '*enjoying himself*', who *will* have his boon companions, his amusements, and his frequent seasons of recreation; who is fond of parties, entertainments, the gaming-table, the ball-room, the concert, and the theatre—is on the highroad to poverty in this world, and to hell in the next. Let the lover of pleasure read the history of Sampson in the Old Testament, and of the Prodigal in the New—and also let him turn back to the illustrations contained in the last chapter. If you would have economical habits as a master, cultivate them as a servant. Begin now and persevere. But you must carry out the principle of economy into your *domestic establishment*. Frugality in the house is a virtue, and extravagance a vice. If you would have elegance and luxuries at the close of life, be content with necessaries at the beginning of it. He that must have superfluities at the beginning, will in all probability have scarcely comforts at the end. Let your furniture, your style of living, your whole domestic

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establishment, be all arranged upon the principle of a rigid, though not mean economy. Never aim to cover over poverty by extravagance, nor adopt the false principle that style is necessary to success. Such conduct often defeats its own end, by exciting suspicion and undermining credit. Wise creditors have keen and vigilant eyes, that look not only at the shop, but penetrate into the dining and drawing-room, and thus watch the mode of living as well as of doing business. They deal more readily and upon better terms with the frugal man, than with the extravagant one. The basis of credit is laid in economical simplicity and plain living, not in unsubstantial splendour,—just as the foundation of a house consists of unadorned bricks and unsculptured stone, and not of carved and gilded wood. It is the diligent and frugal man who is considered to be the trustworthy one.

These paragraphs, alone are worth the price of the work many times over. I attach so much importance to the following that I cannot withhold it:—

Perseverance is also necessary to success. Without this nothing good or great can be achieved in our world. Success is not so much a creation, as a gradual formation—a slow deposit. In business it usually proceeds on the principle of *arithmetical* progression, till at a certain stage, and in some few instances, it changes its ratio of increase to that of *geometrical* progression. The ascent in life is usually the reverse of that of a mountain. In the latter case the steepest part is near the summit; in the former

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at the base. Both, however, require perseverance. He that would succeed, must not expect to reach his object by a light, easy, and elastic bound, but by many a successive and weary step, and occasionally, perhaps, by a step backwards. He must go on sometimes amidst discouragement, and always with labour. There are some who cannot succeed, because they will not wait for it. If success does not come at first, they will not follow after it. They are as impatient as the foolish child that sowed his seed in the morning, and went to bed hopeless and crying because he did not see it springing up before sunset. Be ever hopeful, prayerful, and persevering. ‘In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.’ ‘Behold the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it. Be ye also patient.’

These samples will sufficiently bear out all I have said of the incomparable worth of the book. We have many on the subject of our young men, but none the admit of comparison with this.

THE YOUNG MAN FROM HOME.

The idea of this book was a most happy one. It is alike stamped with originality and benevolence. It is an apple of gold set in a picture of silver. There is nothing in it that a wise and loving parent could wish to be expunged, and there is very little

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he could have wished to have been inserted wanting. The following are the points discussed:—

- 1 The Time of a Young Man's Leaving Home always a Critical Period.
 - 2 The Sources of Danger to Young Men away from Home.
 - 3 Sources of Danger continued.
 - 4 The Progressive Manner and Successive Steps by which many Young Men are led astray.
 - 5 The Danger of Young Men away from Home Proved and Illustrated by Two Examples.
 - 6 Dangers of a Minor Kind to which Young Men away from Home are exposed.
 - 7 The Means of Safety for Young Men away from Home.
 - 8 Religion Considered as a Preservative from Sin.
 - 9 Religion Considered as Leading to Comfort and Happiness.
 - 10 Religion Viewed as a Means of Promoting the Temporal Interest of its Possessor.
 - 11 Religion Considered as a Means of Usefulness.
 - 12 Religion Considered as a Preparation for Superintending a Home of your own upon Earth, and for Going to an Eternal Home in Heaven.
 - 13 Several Classes of Young Men specially Addressed—The Traveller by Sea or Land—The Orphan—The Pious Youth—The Prodigal.
- From this it will be seen that the offices of everyday life are carefully attended to. It is moreover clearly shown that godliness has the life that

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now is as well as that which is to come. The following is a passage of rare beauty:—

Martyrs of concupiscence, victims of drunkenness, ye loathsome spectacles, ye living corpses, full of everything that is tormenting to yourselves and disgusting to others, rise like spectres before the imagination of young men, to deter them from the crimes which have reduced you to corruption, even on this side of the grave. Religion would have guarded you from all this! Such men live out not half their days. But see what is in the left hand of wisdom: 'riches and honour'. Not that religion shields from poverty, and guides all her subjects to wealth; but still it prevents the crimes which lead to the one, and implants the virtues which tend to the other. Sin is an expensive thing, as we have already considered; it is a constant drain upon the pocket, and keeps a man poor, or makes him dishonest:

while piety is frugal, industrious, sober, and prudent; it makes a man trustworthy, confidential, and procures for him esteem, preference, and station. Do you wish to prosper, and get on in the world? (and it is quite lawful for you to wish it, you *ought* indeed to wish it), go to wisdom, and take the blessing, even riches and honour, which she has in her left hand, and which she holds out to you. Go and pluck the fruit of this tree of life, or catch the precious produce as the boughs are shaken by the favouring gales of Providence.

How many young men have left their native village, and their father's house, with all the property they had on earth tied up in the bundle they carried

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in their hand, and have gone to London poor and almost friendless lads, who yet, because they became the disciples and admirers of this wisdom, have risen to opulence and respectability! What names could I record, dear to the Church of God, and known to the friends of man throughout the country and the world, who, by the aid of religion, rose from obscurity to renown, and from poverty to wealth! Their history is a striking proof that 'godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' I could mention, were it proper, the name of one, who went into an extensive concern in London as a boy to sweep the shop and carry out goods, who became, at length, possessor of the whole concern, died rich, and his property, in part, became the foundation of a new charitable institution. Of another, who, from a poor lad, became a leading man in one of our religious denominations, and the treasurer of one of our most useful societies: of a third, who, from being a shop boy in the city, became the possessor of a large fortune, which at his decease enriched many of the noblest institutions of the present time. In these cases, religion, by rendering them steady, industrious, and confidential, was the means of their opulence and elevation. They shunned evil companions, evil places, evil habits, evil amusements, and, under the influence of piety, entered those paths which lead many from poverty to wealth, and from obscurity to renown. They sat down as young men at the feet of wisdom, learned her lessons, and received her rewards.

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I do not mean to say that religion without application to business, or talents for it, will succeed; but religion, by giving diligence. and sharpening the faculties, will promote success. Piety exerts a favourable

influence, not only on the morals, but on the secular habits of life: and one piece of advice which wisdom delivers, as she holds out her left-hand blessings, is, Be diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit, serving the Lord, Romans 12:11. It is a lawful and proper ambition to try to excel in the profession or business to which you have devoted your life. You ought not to be satisfied with dull mediocrity, much less with creeping, grovelling inferiority. You happily live in a country where the summits of society are accessible to those who seem, by the circumstances of their birth, to be placed at the base. The grandfather of the late Sir Robert Peel was at one time a journeyman cotton-spinner; nor is there any legal bar across the path of any other aspirant after distinction; but it is only talent, united with good conduct, that can expect to rise: while incompetence, which is more frequently the result of a want of application than of ability and indolence, will sink. Piety and a desire to excel in business are helpful to each other: the former will give the virtues necessary to the latter, while the latter will guard the former from being destroyed by many of those evils to which youth are exposed, and by which they are hindered from getting on in life.

The cultivation of the mind in all useful knowledge, is also auxiliary to elevation in life. A religious

dolt may rise, but it is not usual. Besides, admitting that religion does sometimes help ignorance up the steep ascent to wealth, it is *knowledge* alone that can fit a man for eminent usefulness. Employ your spare time in reading and acquiring knowledge. Ignorance was never so inexcusable as it is now, when the fountains of science are opened all around us, and the streams of learning are flowing even into the cottages of the poor. Religion and knowledge are harmonious, and reciprocally helpful. Let your reading be select and useful. Squander not the little time you have to spare upon trash. Read history, natural philosophy, the evidences of revealed religion, and some of our best conducted periodical publications.

How well is that young man defended from the dangers that surround him, and how likely to rise in life, who has religion to sanctify his heart, application to business to occupy his time, and a taste for reading to employ his leisure! It is he that receives from wisdom the blessings she holds forth in both of her hands; length of days in the right, and riches and honour in the left; and at the same time it is his to gather from the tree of life the fruit of glory and immortality.

That ‘the righteous is more excellent than his neighbour’ is a proposition none can deny; it is daily demonstrated through examples counted by millions. Mr James remarks:—

To do good is God-like; to do evil is Devil-like: and we are all imitating God or Satan, accordingly as we are leading a holy or a sinful life. It is

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said in Scripture, that ‘one sinner destroyeth much good’; he not only does not do good himself, but he destroys good in others. Instead of doing good, he does evil. He not only leaves unassisted all the great means and instruments for improving and blessing the world, and has no share in all that is being done for the spiritual and eternal welfare of mankind; but he opposes it, and seeks to perpetuate and extend the reign of sin, and the kingdom of Satan. He corrupts by his principles, seduces by his example, and leads others astray by his persuasions. Who can imagine, I again say, how many miserable ghosts await his arrival in hell, or follow him there to be his tormentors, in revenge for his having been their tempter. He is ever scattering the seeds of poison and death in his path. Religion happily saves from this mischief all who possess it: it makes a man an instrument of good, and not of evil, to his fellow-creatures; it renders him a blessing, and not a curse; a saviour, and not a destroyer; a physician to heal, and not a murderer to destroy. He lives to do good—good of the noblest and most lasting kind, good to the soul, good to distant nations, good to the world, good to unborn generations, good for eternity. He is a benefactor to his species—a philanthropist of the noblest order. By a pious example, he adorns religion, and recommends it to others, who, attracted by the beauties of holiness as they are reflected from his character, are led to imitate his conduct. He connects himself, while yet a youth, with a Sunday-school, and trains up the minds of his scholars in the ways of virtue and religion. He

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associates with a Tract Society, and visits the habitations of the poor with these admirable compends of Bible truth. As life advances, property increases, and influence becomes more powerful, his sphere of usefulness widens, his energies strengthen, and his devotedness becomes more intense. He consecrates a share of his gains to the funds of Bible, Missionary, and various other societies, and gives his time, his wisdom, and his labour to the committees that direct their affairs. He thus lives not for himself alone, but for the glory of God,

the spread of religion, and the salvation of souls. To do good is his aim, his delight, his business. He catches the spirit of the times, and is a man *of* the age, and *for* the age. In secret he swells the cloud of incense that rises from the church, and which no sooner touches the throne of grace than it descends in showers of blessings upon the world. He needs not the intoxicating cup of worldly amusement, as a relief and diversion from the toils of business, and the cares of life, but drinks a purer draught from the fountain, whose living waters he is engaged in conveying to those who are sinking into eternal death. He is consulted on every new scheme of mercy, and called on to assist in working it for the relief of human wretchedness. His name is enrolled on the list of benefactors, and pronounced with respect by all who know him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish comes upon him, and he has caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. Thus he lives. A happy death terminates a holy and useful life. 'I heard a voice from heaven saying

unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.' He is received into glory by the Lord Jesus, who with a smile bids him welcome, saying, 'Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.' Transcendent scene! glorious spectacle! His usefulness is seen in living forms of glory everlasting. The good he did on earth follows him to heaven, and is a part of it. He will never cease to reap the rich reward of doing good, as with adoring wonder and rapturous delight he hears his name repeated with grateful praise in the golden streets of the New Jerusalem, by those whom he was the instrument of conducting to the celestial city.

THE CHRISTIAN FATHER'S PRESENT TO HIS CHILDREN

Mr James never produced anything more thoroughly popular. For years it ran through a large impression annually. The range of topics is very wide, and without exception, they are all of a stirring character. The texture of the book is natural, easy, and even loose; till the end there is hardly an elaborate paragraph: he never falls into anything like terse and regular composition. The work abounds in extract and anecdote all touching, amusing, or instructive. Almost any minister in the land might have written it, and yet JA

James was the only man to whom it occurred to do so, The following are the topics:—

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- 1 On the Anxiety of a Christian Parent for the Spiritual Welfare of his Children.
- 2 On the Dispositions with which we should Enter upon an Inquiry into the Nature of Religion.
- 3 On Right Sentiments in Religion.
- 4 On the Nature of True Religion.
- 5 On the Advantages and Responsibility of a Pious Education.
- 6 On the most Prevailing Obstacles which Prevent Young People from Entering on a Religious Life.
- 7 On the Deceitfulness of the Heart.
- 8 On Transient Devotions.
- 9 On Decision of Character in Religion.
- 10 On the Pleasures of a Religious Life.
- 11 On the Advantages of Early Piety.
- 12 On the Influence of Religion upon the Temporal Interests of its Possessor.
- 13 On the Choice of Companions.
- 14 On Books.
- 15 On Amusements and Recreations.
- 16 On Theatrical Amusements.
- 17 On the Period which Elapses between the Time of leaving School and the Age of Manhood.
- 18 On Public Spirit.
- 19 On Female Accomplishments, Virtues, and Pursuits.
- 20 On Prudence, Modesty, and Courtesy.
- 21 On Redeeming Time.
- 22 On the Obligation to Enter into Fellowship with the Christian Church.
- 23 On the Choice of a Companion for Life.

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- 24 On Keeping in View the Great End of Life.
 - 25 On the Meeting of a Pious Family in Heaven.
- The question, 'What profit shall we have if we pray unto him?' is well answered. The following is a sample:—

It certainly prevents *those vices which tend to poverty*. Penury is often the effect of vice. How many have hurled themselves and their families from the pinnacles of prosperity to the depths of adversity, by a course of wicked and profligate extravagance. Multitudes have spent all their substance, like the prodigal son, upon harlots and riotous living. Pride has ruined thousands, and indolence its tens of thousands. It is an observation of Franklin, 'that one vice costs more to keep than two children.' Religion is the most economical, and sin the most expensive thing in the world. How much do the drunkard, debauchee, Sabbath-breaker, and frequenter of theatres, pay for their sinful gratifications. What is spent in this kingdom every year in the grosser sensual indulgences, would pay the interest of the national debt. Piety would save all this to the nation.

And then it not only prevents the vices which tend to poverty, *but enjoins and cherishes the virtues which lead to prosperity*. It makes a man industrious, and is not this the way to wealth? It renders him sober; and does not sobriety tend to advance our fortune? It enforces aright improvement of time, and surely this is advantageous to every one. It prescribes frugality, which tends to increase. If a

young man is in the service of another, piety, by causing him to speak the truth, and adhere to the principles of honesty, renders him trustworthy and confidential. We have a most striking and instructive instance of this in the history of Joseph, of whom the historian thus writes: 'And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand. And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him; and he made him overseer over his house and all that he had he put into his hand. And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand, and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat.' This is one of the most lovely and convincing cases on record of the influence of religion on our temporal interests. It was his piety that secured to Joseph this elevation and prosperity; it was religion that exalted him from a menial slave to a steward. Innumerable are the cases in which persons who set out on the journey of life without property, and without patronage, have, by dint of those virtues which religion enjoins, risen to respectability and affluence. They were first, probably, in a state of servitude, where, by their steadiness and good conduct, they so attached themselves to their employers, as to become, in their estimation, almost essential to the future success of the

business; and the result has been a share, and, in some cases, the whole of the trade, which they had contributed so materially to establish.

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A friend of mine was once walking in the neighbourhood of a large manufacturing town on a very cold winter's morning, when he overtook a plain man, decently clad, and wrapped in a comfortable greatcoat. After the usual salutations, my friend said to the stranger, 'I am glad to see you with such a good warm covering this cold morning.' 'It was not always thus,' the man replied. 'I was once a poor miserable creature, and had neither good clothes nor good victuals; now I have both and a hundred pounds in the bank.' 'What produced this favourable change?' continued my friend. 'Religion, sir; I am a good workman, and, as is too commonly the case with such men, spent half my time, and all my wages nearly, at the public-house. I was, of course, always poor, and always wretched. By God's direction, I was led to hear the Methodists, when by Divine grace the word reached my heart. I repented of my sins, and became a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things passed away, and all things became new. Religion made me industrious and sober, nothing now went for sin; and the result is, that I am comfortable, and comparatively rich.'

* * * * *

I reflect with unutterable grief, as I now write, upon many young men, who were entering life with the greatest advantages and the brightest prospects, whom, to use a common expression, fortune favoured with her brightest smiles: but, alas! they would not be happy and respectable, for taking to the ways of sin, they dashed all the hopes of their friends,

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and wantonly threw away the opportunities which a kind providence had put within their reach. They went first to the theatre, then to the brothel, then to the tavern. They became dissipated, extravagant, idle. Unhappy youths! I know what they might have been; respectable tradesmen, prosperous merchants, honourable members of society: I know what they are; bloated rakes, discarded partners, uncertificated bankrupts, miserable vagrants, a burthen to their friends, a nuisance to the community, and a torment to themselves.

Mr James, in laying down an outline of private study, specifies the following books, which, although many of them are now superseded, are good and useful:—

In addition to the Bible, there are many uninspired religious books which I recommend. In the class of *Biography*, Hunter's *Scripture Characters* is a most fascinating production; Brook's *Lives of the Puritans*, Gilpin's *Lives of the Reformers*, Cox's *Life of Melancthon*, are all useful and interesting. Mr Williams' *Life and Diary* will show you how the tradesman may be busy for both worlds. *The Life of Pearce*, by Fuller, is an excellent work. *Martyn's Memoirs* is the most interesting piece of Biography published in modern times. Durant's *Life and Remains of his Son* are singularly instructive.

Should you wish to read on *Doctrinal Theology*, I strongly recommend Dwight's *System*. On the *Evidences of Christianity*, Bishop Watson's *Apology*, in reply to Paine; likewise Bogue's *Essay*, Chalmers'

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Historical Evidences; the masterly work of Paley; and Campbell on miracles, a work which meets the subtleties of Hume. As a work of general biblical knowledge, too much praise cannot be bestowed on Horne's *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Bible*. No young person should suffer himself to live another month without seeking to gain access to this invaluable book. Townsend's *Chronological Arrangements of the Old and New Testaments* is a very useful work.

On Church History, I recommend Burnet's *History of the Reformation*; Campbell for his admirable description of the rise, progress, and spirit of Popery; Mosheim, for his account of the error and corruptions of the Church; and Milner for the anxiety to trace true piety, wherever it is to be found, amidst the prevailing ignorance and vice of the times. He is, however, too credulous, and not so impartial in his treatment of the questions which bear on dissent, as the dignity and candour of an historian require. Jones's *History of the Waldenses* is a very interesting work.

Secondly, the other division of books Includes all the varied classes which relate to the affairs of this life.

Enjoying as Britons, the advantages of a political constitution, which is the work of ages, and the admiration of the world, you should acquaint yourselves with its theory, and for this purpose may read Custance's short work, De Lolme's more elaborate and philosophical productions, and the first volume of Blackstone's *Commentaries*, together

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with a more modern work of Lord John Russell's.

Young men should acquaint themselves with the principles of *trade and commerce*, and of course should be acquainted with Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.

History is a class of reading in which you ought to be at home; and as Britons, it would be to your deep disgrace to be ignorant of the details of your *own country*. In this department you ought not to be satisfied with mere facts, and names, and dates, but should read with an eye which discriminates and marks the changes which events introduce into the manners, laws, liberties, and governments of nations. History is something more than a mere chronicle of facts: and our knowledge of its details should be such as enables us to trace the progress of society, and the march of improvement. The history of Goldsmith should prepare you for the larger and popular work of Hume. The beautiful simplicity of Hume's composition, together with his philosophical mode of analysing character and tracing events, render him peculiarly fascinating; but unhappily Hume was a confirmed infidel, and must be read with a mind ever upon its guard against the poison which he has infused into his narrative; and his views on the great question of religious liberty were not the most liberal. In his history of the Stuarts, he has suffered his high Tory principles so far to prejudice his mind, and bias his judgement, that this portion of his work will be a lasting reproach to him for his want of accuracy: it is, in fact,

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little better in some places than a mere historical romance. It is highly probable that his antipathy to religion led him into this error. Perceiving, as he himself confessed, that the Puritans and Nonconformists were the most zealous friends of liberty, he felt a sort of revulsion for liberal principles, because of the religious sentiments with which they were so often united. Philosophy, then, does not always emancipate the human understanding from the fetters of prejudice. Mr Brodie, an author of considerable reputation, has exposed such a shameful want of accuracy in Hume's account of the Stuarts' reigns, that the authority of this northern sceptic, as a matter-of-fact man, seems to be much on the decline. When you read Hume, remember that, although you are drinking a pleasant draught from a goblet of burnished gold, there is poison in the cup; happily, the deleterious infusion floats upon the surface, and may be, therefore, easily detected. An English history, in which there shall be the most sacred regard to the principles of pure morality, evangelical religion, and rational liberty, is still a desideratum in the literature of our country.

The Ancient History of Rollin, eloquent, pure, and moral, should be read by every young person. It is almost impossible to recommend this work too strongly. It has all the interest of a novel, with none of its poison. What need have we of fiction, at least, till we have read such facts as are here embodied? Rollin, however, it must be confessed, is rather too warlike in the tendency of his remarks. Goldsmith's Greece should prepare for the masterly

work of Mitford; and his *Rome*, for the gorgeous production of Gibbon. Unhappily, the same remark will apply to this latter writer, as to his contemporary Hume; he was an infidel, though in a more covert way than the Scotch historian. If you have leisure and inclination to pursue Roman history, Crevier, who was a pupil of Rollin, has supplied the means in his *Lives of the Emperors*; and Hooke also, in his Roman History, which is carried down to the death of Octavius. Robertson's historical works are eminently entitled to attention, especially his *Charles the Fifth*, the introductory volume of which contains a view of the progress of society in Europe, from the subversion of the Roman empire to the beginning of the sixteenth century, and also presents a masterly survey of the gradations by which the social institutions of antiquity have passed through the barbarism of the dark ages into all that characterises the state of modern Europe. Bishop Burnet's *History of his own Times*, ought to be perused as the work of an author who wrote the narrative of events which he witnessed, whose veracity can be trusted, if not his discrimination.

In the department of *English Composition*, Addison and Johnson, though moral writers, in the usual acceptation of the term, are not always correct in their principles, if, indeed, the New Testament is the standard of moral sentiments. It is desirable to cultivate a good taste, and an elegant style of composition; and for this purpose, the productions of these two celebrated writers may be read, together with Burke on the *Sublime*, Alison

on Taste, Blair's *Lectures*, Campbell on *Rhetoric*, and Lord Kaimes's *Elements of Criticism*.

Should you feel inclined, and be favoured with leisure, to pursue the study of Mental Philosophy, I recommend you to begin with Isaac Taylor's *Elements of Thought*. Then read Mr Burder's *Hints on Mental Culture*; then Dr Watts on the *Improvement of the Mind*; then Dr Reid's

work on the *Intellectual and Active Powers of the Human Mind*; and then study Dugald Stewart's beautiful work on *Intellectual Philosophy*.

Poetry is a bewitching, and if not of a strictly moral character, a dangerous species of writing. I by no means condemn it, for this would betray a gothic destitution of taste, as well as an ignorance of some of the first principles of our nature. The ear is tuned to enjoy the melody of numbers, and the imagination formed to delight in the creations of fancy. But still it must be recollected that the imagination is amongst the inferior faculties of mind, and that the gratification of the senses is amongst the lowest ends of a rational existence: only a *limited* perusal of poetry is therefore to be allowed; such an indulgence in this mental luxury and recreation, as will not unfit the mind, or deprive it of opportunity, for severer and more useful pursuits. We should use poetry as we do those pleasing objects of nature, from which it derives its most lovely images; not as the regions of our constant abode, but as the scenes of our occasional resort. Although the present age can boast the noble productions of such men as Scott, Southey, Campbell, and Wordsworth,

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whose poems every person of real taste will read, yet I recommend the more *habitual* perusal of our great Milton among the ancients, and Cowper and Montgomery among the moderns: the first for his genius, and the others for their piety.

The whole wide range of *Natural History and Experimental Philosophy* presents a scene of interesting research, through which authors of the first respectability stand always ready to conduct you, unfolding at every step some new proof of the existence, and some fresh display of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the great First Cause. The sublime wonders of astronomy elevate the mind, and throw open an almost infinite field of contemplation and astonishment. Chemistry, by its combinations, affinities, and repulsions; by its principles as a theory, and the unlimited practical uses of these principles, is an endless career of pleasing and useful study. Optics, pneumatics, electricity, with all their attendant sciences, have been treated of by writers whose productions assist us to explore the wonderful works of God: while botany shows that the weed we trample under our feet, no less than the mighty orb which rolls through illimitable space, obeys the laws, assumes the place, and accommodates itself to the order appointed by its Creator.

Concerning the 'Stage', the author bears a noble testimony to its wickedness, and the abhorrence in which it has ever been held by the virtuous in all ages and nations. He says:—

It is an indubitable fact that the stage has flourished most in the most corrupt and depraved

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state of society; and that in proportion as sound morality, industry, and religion, advance their influence, the theatre is deserted. It is equally true, that amongst the most passionate admirers, and most constant frequenters of the stage, are to be found the most dissolute and abandoned of mankind. Is it not too manifest to be denied, that piety as instinctively shrinks from the theatre, as human life does from the point of a sword or the draught of poison? Have not all those who have professed the more elevated piety and morality, borne an unvarying and uniform testimony against the stage? Even the more virtuous Pagans have condemned this amusement, as injurious to morals and the interests of nations. Solon, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Cato, Seneca, Tacitus, the more venerable men of antiquity; the brightest constellation of virtue and talents which ever appeared upon the hemisphere of philosophy, have all denounced the theatre as a most abundant source of moral pollution, and assure us that both Greece and Rome had their ruin accelerated by a fatal passion for these corrupting entertainments. William Prynne, a satirical and pungent writer, who suffered many cruelties for his admirable productions in the time of Charles I, has made a catalogue of authorities against the stage, which contains every name of eminence in the Heathen and Christian worlds, it comprehends the united testimony of the Jewish and Christian churches; the deliberate acts of fifty-four ancient and modern, general, national, provisional councils and synods, both of the Western and

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Eastern churches; the condemnatory sentence of seventy-one ancient fathers, and one hundred and fifty modern Popish and Protestant authors; the hostile endeavours of philosophers and even poets; with the legislative enactments of a great number of Pagan and Christian states, nations, magistrates, emperors and princes.

The American Congress, soon after the Declaration of Independence, passed the following motion:—

Whereas, true religion and good morals are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness,—

Resolved, that it be, and hereby is, earnestly recommended by the several states, to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppressing of *theatrical entertainments*, horse-racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.

Now must not this be regarded in the light of very strong presumptive evidence of the immoral tendency of the stage? Does it not approach as near as can be to the general opinion of the whole moral world?

But let us examine *the average character of those productions which are represented on the stage*. If we go to *Tragedy*, we shall find that pride, ambition, revenge, suicide, the passionate love of fame and glory, all of which Christianity is intended to extirpate from the human bosom, are inculcated by

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the most popular plays in this department of the drama. It is true, gross cruelty, murder, and that lawless pride, ambition, and revenge, which trample on all the rights and interests of mankind, are reprobated; but I would ask, who needs to see vice acted in order to hate it? or will its being acted for our *amusement* be likely to increase our hatred of it upon right principles? As to *Comedy*, this is a thousand times more polluting than tragedy. Love and intrigue; prodigality dressed in the garb of generosity; profaneness dignified with the name of fashionable spirit; and even seduction and adultery; these are the usual materials which the comic muse combines and adorns, to please and instruct her votaries. This department of the drama is almost unmixed pollution. How often is some profligate rake introduced to the spectators, furnished with a few traits of frankness and generosity, to interest them by his vicious career; and who so far reconciles them all to his crimes, as to tolerate his atrocities, for the sake of his open-hearted, good-humoured virtues. Who can wonder that young women should be prepared by such stuff, for any intrigue with a bold and wily adventurer; or that young men should be encouraged to play the good-natured, heroic rake, which they have seen such a favourite with the public, on the stage? Besides, how saturated, as I have already observed, are both tragedies and comedies with irreverent appeals to heaven, profane swearing, and all the arts of equivocation, and

falsehood, and deception! What lascivious allusions are made, what impure passages

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are repeated! What a fatal influence must this have upon the delicacy of female modesty! Think, too, of a young man coming at the hour of midnight from such a scene, with his passions inflamed by everything he has seen and everything he has heard; and then having to pass through ranks of wretched creatures waiting to ensnare him and rob him of his virtue; does it not require extraordinary strength of principle to resist the attack?

These are samples of a work which well deserved all the popularity which has followed it. Although now old, it is not stale; every fact, anecdote, argument, all that constitutes its material, is as fresh as in 1824 when the volume appeared.

FEMALE PIETY; OR, THE YOUNG WOMAN'S FRIEND AND GUIDE

The fact that this volume is in the 21st thousand, may be taken as proof of the esteem in which it is held. It was originally delivered in a course of monthly lectures, which were highly popular. The subjects are:—

- 1 The Influence of Christianity on the Condition of Woman.
- 2 The Conspicuous Place which Woman Occupies in Scripture.
- 3 Woman's Mission.
- 4 Early Female Piety.
- 5 Female Religious Zeal.
- 6 The Young Woman at Home.
- 7 The Young Woman away from Home.

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- 8 Character of Rebekah.
- 9 The Ornament of an Early Female Profession of Religion.
- 10 History and Character of Martha and Mary, of Bethany.
- 11 To Young Mothers.
- 12 Beautiful Picture of a Good Wife in the Book of Proverbs.

It will here be seen that the subjects fall under two classes, general and particular, the latter amply charged with personal bearing and application. We could desire nothing better than many of the positions and portraits here delineated. Were the personal chapters

formed into a separate volume, it would be a great service to society. The price might then be reduced to a third, and the circulation would probably be ten-fold.

CHRISTIAN HOPE

This work was the product of the most mature years of the author, and is one of the ripest things that have dropped from his flowing pen. His great heart seems to have been frequently in a state of peculiar elevation while he was elaborating the glorious theme. It is the completion of a whole; the companion volumes, 'Faith' and 'Charity', are about the same size, and the three constitute a work of incalculable value. The most noticeable feature of the volume is the Preface, which is copious and elaborate to an unusual degree. The venerable man, consciously drawing near the close

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of his pilgrimage, is at pains to bear a clear, full, and explicit testimony on behalf of the truth as it is in Jesus. Nor is this all; he boldly specifies the evils he condemns, as well as the quarters where they chiefly obtain and prevail. He said:—

My anxiety, notwithstanding all that has been said to dissipate the fears of minds zealous and jealous 'for sound doctrine', is still alive on this momentous subject. Others of far stronger intellectual nerve than myself partake with me in these apprehensions, as will be evident by the following extract from a letter I received from one of the master spirits of the age, whose name, had I permission to give it, would impart oracular weight to his words:—

You are one with me in the deep and powerful conviction that the grandeur, and reality, and simplicity of the Gospel have faded from the view of many around us, who still would give their 'yea' to an orthodox and evangelic confession. It is not *dishonestly* that such a 'yea' would be uttered, but *heartlessly*, and with a reserved feeling of this sort—'I believe all this, if I believe anything; or, I mean to believe it until I have made good my position on another ground.' 'I am orthodox and evangelical ad *interim*.' There are many, I fear, who go on to serve the Gospel as discontented menials do who take care to give no umbrage until the day when they shall have hired themselves to a master more to their taste. I have painfully felt this in listening to and

conversing with young ministers. On the Dissenting side it is one sort of thing, on the

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Episcopal another; but as to the *result*, it is a departure from and a disrelish of the *Gospel*. I am sure you are right in foreseeing the issue—an alienation of heart from the *first truths* will end, as to many, in a declared heterodoxy: *this*, or else a hiding of the face behind the mask of ritualism. A most impervious and opaque thing, when properly prepared, painted, and varnished, is a papier mâché Churchism. Wearing this disguise, a heart-at-ease atheist may do, say, and seem whatever is convenient.

Among the Nonconformists the house of refuge is an *intellectualism*, which the people may interpret as they please: a spiritualism in the dialect of which the old women of the congregation will think they hear what they used to hear and approve; but which the young men in the crimson-cushioned pew will well know how to render into a philosophy after Hegel, or Miss Martineau, or anybody else.

The work is divided into ten chapters, thus indicated:—

- 1 Hope Considered Generally.
- 2 Nature of Hope, and its Distinction from Faith and Love.
- 3 Foundation of Hope.
- 4 Object of Hope.
- 5 Salvation by Hope.
- 6 Assurance of Hope.
- 7 Author of Hope.
- 8 Hope as an Anchor.
- 9 Hope as a Helmet.
- 10 Various Descriptions of Hope.
- 11 Necessity and Means of Strengthening Hope.

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Although here Mr James has not so completely exhausted the subject as was his custom, he sets forth all the main points; and never did he more fully summon forth his rare powers to do justice to a noble theme. Large portions of the book animate like the sound of a trumpet. His soul would seem at times to have been kept in ecstasy, like a seer of old. He speaks as one who sees with the naked eye the glorious objects of which he treats. The work

may be likened to a mass of beaten gold. It is one of the richest theological legacies of the generation.

THE COURSE OF FAITH

The title of this most precious volume would seem to have been derived from Pollok's *Course of Time*. From the nature of the subject there is but little room for originality in the mode of treatment. Publications upon it are innumerable. In all its aspects it may be said to be stereotyped. Little remained but to condense, to simplify, to inspire with feeling, and invest with force, and this is most ably done. The topics are the following:—

- 1 Faith in General.
 - 2 Faith in Justification.
 - 3 Faith in Relation to Sanctification.
 - 4 Joy of Faith.
 - 5 Work of Faith.
 - 6 Faith's Victory over the World.
 - 7 Faith in Prayer.
 - 8 Faith in Hearing the Word.
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- 9 Strong Faith, including Assurance of Faith.
 - 10 Faith in Reference to the Blessings of Life.
 - 11 Faith's Exercise in Reference to Affliction.
 - 12 Faith in Reference to Death.
 - 13 Faith in Relation to Death.
- Only two of these chapters, when the author wrote, were matter of devout speculation with him, aided by the Scripture. He had then an experimental acquaintance with all the rest, and now he has with *these!* Were Chapters 12 and 13 still to write, he could speak as man never spoke before, but it is probable that we should not be able to understand. Well, as he was we are; and as he is we shall all shortly be—in the World of Spirits.

THE CHRISTIAN PROFESSOR

The run of this volume has been great, but its merits are much greater. It is one of the very best works of its author, and eminently calculated to be useful. It is some twenty-three years since its original appearance, and it is now in the 7th edition, a measure of success

far exceeding that of the bulk of even favoured publications. The topics, which are numerous and various, are thus set forth:—

- 1 What the Christian Profession imports.
- 2 Obligation and Design of the Christian Profession.
- 3 Dangers of Self-deception.
- 4 Young Professors.
- 5 Present Generation of Professors compared with their Predecessors.

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- 6 Professors not to be Satisfied with Low Degrees of Piety.
- 7 Professors to Avoid the Appearance of Evil.
- 8 Conformity to the World.
- 9 Professors often too Much Influenced by the Opinion of the World.
- 10 Conduct in Reference to Politics.
- 11 Brotherly Love.
- 12 Influence of Professors.
- 13 Conduct towards Unconverted Relatives.
- 14 The Unmarried Professor.
- 15 The Professor in Prosperity.
- 16 The Professor in Adversity.
- 17 Conduct away from Home.
- 18 The Backsliding Professor.
- 19 Necessity of the Holy Spirit's Influence to Sustain Profession.
- 20 Dying Professor.

From this most comprehensive outline it will be seen, that *The Christian Professor* is a map of the believer's course,—a chart of the voyage to eternity, abounding with beacons and lighthouses. It is not merely a book for these times, but for all times. It has merit enough to claim for it the place of a handbook throughout Christendom.

THE EARNEST MINISTRY

This is a volume we scarcely know how to characterise. No language of ours is sufficiently strong to proclaim its worth. It is by far the best book of its class, whether of earlier or later date,

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whether of this or other countries. It has all the excellence of Baxters *Reformed Pastor*, without its defects, and excellences not to

be found in that celebrated treatise. There is not a minister of the Gospel in the world who may not profit from the perusal of its fervent pages; nothing can exceed the wisdom of its counsels, the closeness of its search, and the pungency of its appeals.

THE CHURCH IN EARNEST

This is the counterpart of the foregoing, and every way worthy of it. The idea of the work was singularly happy. The two volumes constitute a noble unity; perhaps, all things considered, they are the greatest contribution of the fertile pen of Mr James. They are a complete digest of the mighty subject,—a repertory of wisdom. There is nothing comparable to that unity anywhere to be found; it fairly eclipses everything of the sort that has been produced in the United States, where such works are somewhat numerous. It describes a state of things which has never yet obtained, but which is as sure to be realised as that a reign of truth and righteousness, peace and charity, awaits this troubled world.

Such is a glimpse at the chief works of Mr James, with illustrative passages from those of earlier dates. Among the minor performances of Mr James, a very high place is clue to his *Introduction and Notes to Spencer's Sketches*. He there

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bears the following pathetic and highly momentous testimony:—

I am still in circumstances calculated to give solemnity to my reflections, and perhaps some weight to my words. The pressure of disease upon my bodily frame has been lightened, but it has left me no longer 'strong to labour'. I am on the verge of old age, and a subject of not a few of its infirmities. The evening of life is come, and with it some of its clouds. Should these clouds, however, only furnish a new theatre on which to display the lustre of my setting sun, and afford me an opportunity of glorifying Christ by the passive virtues of the Christian character, they ought to be more welcome than even a clearer sky. It is now some consolation to me to recollect that amidst innumerable defects—which, if affection has concealed them from the notice of my friends, are humbly known to myself—I have in some measure ever kept in view the conversion of sinners as the great end of the Christian ministry, and therefore of mine. I started in my preaching career, while yet a student, with this before my eyes as the great purpose

for which I entered the pulpit. This I have kept in view through a ministry of half a century. This I now look at, with undiverted eye, in the latter scenes of my life; and taught both by my own experience, and by observation of all I have seen in the conduct of others, were I now beginning my course instead of gradually closing it, I should most deliberately choose this as my ministerial vocation, and consider that my official life would be almost a lost adventure

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if this were not in some good measure its blessed result. In the pursuit of this object, notwithstanding all my defects and manifold imperfections, I have had my reward. I speak thus, not in the way of boasting, but of gratitude, and for the encouragement of my brethren in the ministry, especially its younger members.

God will never suffer those altogether to fail in their object who make the conversion of souls their great aim, and who employ in earnestness of prayer and action his own methods, and depend upon his own Spirit for accomplishing it.

Ministers may think too little of this now, and the work of conversion be lost sight of too much, in their eager desires and ardent ambition after popularity and applause; but the time is coming when these, except as they give a man a wider sphere for his converting work, will be thought worthless and vain. Amidst the gathering infirmities of old age, and the anticipations of eternity—much more at the bar of Christ, and in the celestial world—it will be deemed a poor and meagre reflection to a minister of Christ, that he was once followed and applauded by admiring crowds. The knowledge then that he had been the instrument of converting a single sinner from the error of his ways, and saving a soul from death, will be worth more than the applauses of the world or the admiration of an age; and is an honour for which the crown of royalty or the wreath of victory might be bartered now with infinite advantage. Then amidst the scenes of the last judgement, and the splendours

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of immortality, they who have been most eager in seeking, and most successful in obtaining, the richest distinctions upon earth, shall confess that 'He who winneth souls is wise', and shall see that 'They who turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever.'

The whole of the smaller publications must be passed over. To these must be added letters in the newspapers and magazines, and reviews, prefaces, introductions, and essays almost without end. This list may be taken as an index to the head and heart of the author, and an illustration of his knowledge and zeal as well as of his wondrous tact and versatility. How ceaseless his labour! How vast the range of his thinking! His solicitude covered the whole face of society; no class escaped his attention, and none went without a benefaction. These publications are the channels which the mighty workings of his intellect and the affections of his heart cut out for themselves; and, while the current is strong, the waters are salubrious.

Rightly to estimate this part of the labours of Mr James, we must look around and see whether there be aught anywhere to be compared with it. Let us first, then, glance at Scotland: is there in that country any minister of any denomination who, in this respect, may be viewed as the rival of the Birmingham pastor? Search is in vain! There is not one that makes the remotest approach to him. Chalmers, Wardlaw, and John Brown have severally achieved a large amount of noble authorship; but it has been almost all of one character—solid divinity. The

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manifold wants of the various classes of society have been almost completely ignored by them. Let the catalogue of their works be placed side by side with that of the works of Mr James; and mark the result. Is it possible that contrast can be greater? Mr James stands alone in his glory.

Well, what has England produced? Much, very much, in the aggregate; but that is not the question. The question is, what works has any *one* minister issued? None, whether Churchman or Dissenter, has even approached Mr James. Mr Jay has done good service in a single line by his writings, which he was spared to set forth in a uniform edition; but the subject of all his volumes is one and the same; nothing can be more general. The only attempt, indeed, at class-writing is in his admirable volume, *The Christian Contemplated*; but even here the generality is undisturbed. Many ministers of the various sects have made most valuable contributions, but not one has come within sight of our departed friend. Had he been a

professional writer toiling for bread, he could hardly have put his wits to a severer stretch to awaken interest and secure popularity. Mr James *alone* has done more a thousand times over than all the Bishops on the Bench embodied! Had any one of them done *half* as much, he would have been the wonder of his age, and famous for a century to come.

Having specified and characterised all the larger Works of Mr James, it may be interesting to enumerate the smaller, and indicate their various

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measures of public acceptance. The following, then, is the ascertained circulation, up to this date, of his publications issued by the Tract Society:—

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Anxious Inquirer, | 18mo. | 456,421 |
| | Royal edition | 20,217 |
| | 32mo | 101,227 |
| | Welsh | 7,710 |
| | Italian | 160 |
| | German | 429 |
| | French | 279 |
| | | 586,443 |
| Pastoral Addresses | | 1,049,319 |
| Young Man from Home | | 88,001 |
| Christian Progress | | 37,817 |
| Believe and be Saved | 32mo | 30,260 |
| Path to the Bush | | 13,813 |
| Elizabeth Bales | | 8,262 |
| TRACTS—Believe and be Saved | | 450,900 |
| Your Great Concern | | 128,250 |
| The Pious Collier | | 121,575 |
| The Man that Killed his Neighbour | | 416,310 |
| | Grand Total | 2,930,950 |

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CONCLUSION

TAKE the whole span of the mortal career of John Angell James, and it will be found remarkable in every aspect in which it can

be contemplated. It is so, alike as it regards both the Church and the world, things at home, and things abroad. Inventions and discoveries of every kind have filled every place, and blessed every people. It may be safely asserted that no such period has passed over our world since the introduction of Christianity. It was a time of great thoughts, great words, and great deeds; its wars were great, and its peace was great; everything about it was great. It was, above all, the era of Missions to the Heathen, of popular education, and popular literature. Viewed mechanically, politically, philosophically, and religiously, it was in all respects great beyond precedent. All the half centuries that had gone before were stamped with an air of comparative insignificance. Whether that period, in its turn, shall be dwarfed by the events which are to follow, it is impossible to foresee; but if so, in the same proportion, the world is travelling on to a light and a truth, a repose and a bless, a greatness and a glory, of which poets never dreamt.

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While in the era of Mr James, every man in all departments of action, had his appropriate place, lower or higher, in the great scale of things, some more than others were centres of influence, both in the Church and in the world. He himself held a high place among those who constituted a moral power in the earth, a power of eloquence, position, piety, and character. He was the pivot on which many moral and spiritual movements, both great and small, home and foreign, for the welfare of man and the glory of God, mainly turned. His lot was to be a leader of men; and hence he reflected lustre on the town in which he spent his days, and the great community he lived and died in. 'Baxter of Kidderminster', 'Doddridge of Northampton', 'James of Birmingham', are conjunctions of persons and places which no time will sever. Baxter lived in a dark and troubled day; his herculean labours and noble career were comparatively marred by the tyranny of the times; but even when silent he was not inactive. A month to him was as much as a year to other men. That he should have effected so much in the way of theological authorship in so small a period is wonderful; it can be accounted for only by the vastness of his powers, the range of his knowledge, the skill of his pen, his severe economy

of time, and the energy of his efforts, under the blessing of the Most High, who had appointed him his work.

Next to Baxter, in some respects, although living long after him, and in a far better age, was the amiable, the learned, and the excellent Doddridge,

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who, by his works and his character, conferred lasting honour on Northampton. He and Baxter had but little in common, and yet there were points of affinity. Nothing, however, could be more unlike than the sphere of their operations, and all the difference was to the advantage of Doddridge. The globe and its treasures, so to speak, when Baxter lived were still locked up; in the days of Doddridge the gates of discovery began to be thrown open; but the work, whether as to matter or space, did not advance very far. The firmament of both these distinguished men was covered with clouds and darkness, and the horizon narrow. In the days of Doddridge, however, the light began to shine; yet how imperfect his vision, how limited his views, how narrow his sphere compared with those of John Angell James, who lived and moved amid the noonday blaze of modern science! He witnessed the opening up of the world from pole to pole. He beheld the missionary advancing into every region, while darkness and barbarism fled on his approach; even the gloom of Central Africa had been illumined. Steam had wrought its miracles by sea and land; while the Telegraph was girdling the globe, and uniting every people.

All these events and advantages, in the same proportion, ministered to the usefulness and the fame of Mr James, both as a minister and as an author. Baxter and Doddridge were known chiefly, if not only, to the people of England, then, comparatively a handful, and to the small populations of the American colonies. Their fame and

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their works extended very little further. The name of John Angell James is a household word throughout the earth. His books are read by every people. There is no nation which numbers not his friends; no language which is not the vehicle of his praise. The day of Doddridge was, in point of light, a mighty advancement on that of Baxter, but James's exceeds that of Doddridge incalculably

more. Those illustrious men, however, in a sense, now participate the benefits of this stupendous progress; in their works they share the privileges of these latter times. They now walk over the earth in company with James and his contemporaries, the immortal WATTS supplying the illustrious band with melody Printing Press, 'although dead, they all speak', and speak with a voice that fills the world!

Each of these distinguished individuals was separately a power—a mental and moral system complete in itself. They did nothing in their posterity. Of Baxter, Watts, Doddridge, and James, none have left behind them, bearing their name, any to keep alive the fires which they kindled. The dispensation of each began and ended with himself. The fact applies to most of our distinguished men. Thus it was with John Knox, Berridge, Fletcher, Wesley, Whitefield, Andrew Thomson, Thomas Chalmers, Hall, Foster, and multitudes besides; their breath gone, all was over! Such is the sovereignty which rules in the affairs of men.

In closing this Review, special prominence is due to the very last act of public service rendered by

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Mr James to the cause of God. For absorbing interest and overpowering solemnity, British Biography presents nothing comparable to it. The facts of the case are too thrilling, the pathos too profound, for comment. Nothing remains but to stand in awe, admire, and adore! Had the most judicious and devout friend of Mr James been allowed to choose for him an appropriate mode of leaving the world, it must have been somewhat such as that arranged by the Divine wisdom. His closing words to Mr Birrell are most intensely congruous with his ruling passion, the salvation of men! That passion was at its highest point when his last sands were running out! Never had he a more vivid conception of the true character of the Christian ministry, its unutterable responsibility, and its incomparable glory, than when he wrote the closing paragraph of his generous tribute to Richard Knill. Let us hear him:—

In the retrospect of a long life, now drawing to a close, during which I have watched, of course, the career, and observed the mode of action, of many of my brethren, I have noticed great diversity in the results of their ministry; and I have most assuredly seen, that where they have been intensely earnest for the salvation of souls, and have sought this

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by a style of preaching adapted to accomplish it, God has honoured their endeavours by giving them success. If, without impropriety, I may refer here, as I believe I have done elsewhere, to the service which, during fifty-four years, I have been allowed to render to our great Master, I may

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declare my thankfulness in being able, in some small degree, to rejoice that the conversion of sinners has been my aim. I have made, next to the Bible, Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* my rule as regards the object of my ministry. It were well if that volume were often read by all our pastors,—a study which I now earnestly recommend to them. I sometimes venture to hope that it has kindled in me a spark—but oh, how dim!—of that spirit which actuated Mr Knill. In regard to all that constitutes earnestness, I blush before his statue, as it rises before me in this volume, and confess my shortcomings in the work of the Lord. Standing, as I now do, in the prospect of the close of my ministry, of the eternal world, and of my summons to the presence of the great Lord of all, the salvation of souls, as the object of the ministry, appears to me, more than ever before, in all its awful sublimity. Everything else, as compared with this, seems but as the small dust of the balance; and though, perhaps, not altogether an idler in the vineyard of the Lord, it is now my grief and my surprise that I have not been more devoted and more laborious. Defects, omissions, and errors, come out before our view in the evening of life, and especially when it is spent, as mine now must be, in retirement, solitude, and suffering, which we did not perceive during the burden and hustle of the day. To my younger brethren I say, You are engaged in the greatest work in the universe; for in preaching for the salvation of souls, you are brought into fellowship with God in his eternal purposes of mercy

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to the children of men; with our Lord Jesus Christ in his redeeming work upon the cross; with the Holy Spirit in his mission to our world; and with prophets, apostles, and martyrs. Heaven, through eternity, will resound with the praises of your diligence, or hell with lamentations and execrations upon your neglect. Happy will it be for you, and happy for your flocks, if the perusal of this volume should help you to find and to wear the mantle of Richard Knill.

It will be observed that the last words are to 'Younger Brethren'; and what words! Such counsels from such lips at such a time are fitted to make such an impression which nothing can efface. A

more fitting end for such a course it is impossible to conceive. As an indulgence, a privilege, and an honour, it transcends everything of the sort in the annals of British Protestantism. Alone it suffices to impart immortality to the Memoir of Richard Knill!

This Review would be incomplete without some reference to the funeral tributes which have been published. All of these which have come to hand more especially those of Dr Gordon, R Dale, and Patrick Thompson, have been marked by varying excellence, but that which more than any other has arrested my attention is the sermon of Dr Miller. That most unambitious discourse, viewed simply as a funeral sermon, is admirable, defective in no excellence which ought to characterise such a composition. But when it is remembered, that it is the production not of an admiring Dissenter, but of a conscientious Churchman, its value is indefinitely enhanced. It

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acquires a moral lustre in which its other high qualities are in a measure lost. Never before did we meet in a clergyman with so commanding a display of Christian manhood and ministerial magnanimity. It is nothing to find such examples of justice and generosity towards Churchmen among Dissenters; there it is the rule, not the exception. When Hall pronounced his magnificent eulogy on Robinson, all men admired the tribute, but it never occurred to anybody to remark on the *liberality* of the orator! A new order of things is inaugurated by the noble-minded Rector of St Martin's, Birmingham. Something kind and honourable was certainly looked for from that quarter, but nothing equal to the actual result. Integrity and charity apart, it required a measure of courage such as few clergymen possess publicly to perform a part so honourable. By this discourse Dr Miller has reflected the highest credit on himself, his order, and his Church, and well earned the admiration of all good and candid men. Were all the pulpits of the Establishment filled with pastors of a kindred spirit, the result would very soon be a new face upon British Society. Of Mr James he says:—

He had no sympathy with any ism, however novel, or specious, or popular, which corrupted or darkened the simplicity of the Gospel message. He deplored, as we have seen, not only the heresy which has troubled our own Zion for more than a quarter of a century, but

the intellectualism and would-be profundity of a new Germanising school rising up among his own body. His life, too—a life

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of unsullied good report—has a lesson for *worldly-minded, inconsistent, careless preachers and pastors*. He was an epistle of Christ, in domestic and public life, in habits, temper, words;—an epistle, not blurred and blotted, and illegible, but fair, and known and read of all men. The secret of this may be told: ‘Happy is the man that feareth always.’ ‘Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.’ ‘Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.’ And what a life of unsparing toil! How does it rebuke loungers and dawdlers in the ministry—men talking much of their work, but doing little—idlers, triflers, hangers-on in drawing-rooms, at the dinner-tables and tea-tables of any who will ask them, and as often as they will ask them—lie-abeds. ‘Eternity is long enough,’ he writes, ‘and heaven is place enough, for rest: till then, I mean to work on.’

There was something very remarkable in the presentiment of John Angell James regarding his own dissolution. For a considerable time it seems to have been ever present to him, that his work was drawing to a speedy close. His conversation, letters, addresses on the platform, and in the pulpit, all bore more or less the impress of the valedictory. When he last stood on the platform of the Congregational Union in London, he intimated that it was his last appearance. Everywhere, to every place, and every person, he seemed to be bidding a long farewell.

In all this Mr James was clearly in deep earnest; he spoke with all the decision of a man to whom a

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divine communication had been made that he was about to put off his tabernacle. The bulk of his affectionate admirers set it down to the score of depression. The thought was unwelcome, and they, therefore, endeavoured to stave it off. His more intimate friends, however, ascribed it to the effect of the grievous malady under which he was labouring. Still all hoped the best, and looked for a number more years; and in this they were apparently justified from the extraordinary vigour of his mind. There was absolutely nothing in relation to that which seemed to bespeak even incipient decay. I have had repeated occasion within the last year or two to liken him to Edmund Burke, whose transcendent intellect seemed to

increase in power and splendour to the very close. His last performance—the Letters on the Regicide Peace—surpassed in force of argument, vigour of style, and brilliancy of colouring, everything he had previously given to the world. Still he considered himself as a man whose days were fulfilled, and he uniformly asserted that all he did was valedictory. His friends, however, could not see it, and felt unable to reconcile such powers with approaching dissolution. But as in the case of Mr James, it turned out as the great political philosopher had said. As to both these distinguished men, their time was come, their work was done, and all that remained for them was to lie down and die. In the case of Mr James this presentiment rendered the event all the more remarkable. His communication through his brother to the assembly of the Congregational Union at Aberdare,

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his letter to the Evangelical Alliance at Belfast, and his closing words touching the Life of Knill, all were deeply affecting and all added emphasis to the fact of his demise when it came to pass.

Now that time has been afforded for reflection, none can fail to see that the mode of the departure of Mr James could not fail to produce a profound impression on the town of Birmingham, the Independent Body, and the whole Protestant Church. The arrangements of Providence seem, at times, to require that eminent individuals should be removed in a manner different from that which is common to man. Examples innumerable might be specified both in the Church and in the world which will readily occur to my readers. Birmingham has had a double warning. Its two most noted men, Joseph Sturge and John Angell James, have both within a brief space of each other, received a summary dismissal from the body. Both died in the early morning, while each was indulged with a few minutes to bid farewell to the domestic circle! To John Angell James as well as to his friend, the end was worthy of the way. Whether preaching or speaking he always finished well, very generally with a burst of pathos, of power, or of brilliancy. His long life was in effect one great discourse, and his death the overwhelming peroration!

We can but view such a termination of a noble career as full of mercy. Who is there amongst the countless admirers of Mr James

who could have wished to see him slowly fade away, sinking at length, perchance, into second childhood, and at

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last passing off comparatively a stranger in the land? Such a dismissal would have formed an ill-fitting conclusion to so bright, so instructive, and so edifying a career. Amid the rush of events he would have been in a few years all but forgotten; as it is, the stroke by which he fell has resounded throughout Christendom! He 'ceased at once to work and live!'

We must now, for a season, bid farewell to this most devoted, useful, and honoured among British ministers. The memory of John Angell James will ever be very dear to me, in common with countless multitudes. His dust is with us, and his works around us; but his noble spirit has taken its place amongst the Immortals! I little thought when last in his much-loved company that this humble tribute would be called for so soon. But all labour must have an end; weary work must be followed by sweet repose. Thus the ties that bind us to the present sphere are incessantly broken. Earth is hourly robbed to enrich heaven. To men who have lived down half a century life becomes serious; romance departs, and all is reality! As years still advance the gravity increases. The object and the end of life, with its heavy responsibilities, draw near and stare us in the face, compelling attention. Separations begin to multiply, till at last this teeming world assumes the air of a dreary solitude. Men are strangers among those who are their juniors! Social gatherings and special occasions prove more and more to be valedictory, all vocal and all monitory. The wisdom, therefore, of all saints is to

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speak, and act, and look, and love as if each meeting were to be their last! In this way, while they near the world of spirits, they will become increasingly fit to enjoy its immunities and privileges.

If John Angell James has been a most faithful, he has also been a much privileged servant. His agile and luminous intellect remained unimpaired to the last; and, notwithstanding his severe affliction, he has been enabled to perform the labours of a man in the prime of life and vigour of health to the close. The last year of Mr James's life has been one of the most laborious of the threescore and

fourteen he passed on earth. He would seem every hour to have heard the Master's voice, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' With all his heart he obeyed the Divine commandment. May the text, with the commentary thereon supplied by his labours, sink deeply into all hearts!

Multitudes with the eye of faith have followed John Angell James into the realms of light, the abode of the blessed, and seen him enter the gates of the celestial city! They have beheld the welcome accorded to him on all sides from old and beloved friends long gone before, who have been hopefully, anxiously waiting his arrival! They gather, they rejoice, they admire, they adore! Nor these alone: hosts besides, cluster around him, with a multitude of his spiritual children of this and other lands, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!

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