

THE WORKS

OF

JOHN ANGELL JAMES

ONEWHILE MINISTER OF THE CHURCH ASSEMBLING IN CARRS LANE
BIRMINGHAM

EDITED BY HIS SON

VOLUME 16

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

LONDON: HAMILTON, ADAMS & CO.

BIRMINGHAM: HUDSON & SON.

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MCCCCLXII.

THIS volume contains the Author's smaller pieces, except those which seem more fitted to accompany his Autobiography, and others which might have better been inserted in former volumes; the latter will be found at the end of the works, so printed that they may either remain there, or be bound up in their proper places.

To any complaint that some of these tracts might have been omitted without any loss the Editor answers, that the size, not the number, of the volumes has been increased.

It was evidently impossible to prevent one of the volumes from being so miscellaneous that no one class of readers could be found who would be interested in all its contents. But it is hoped that each piece may find some readers who will be pleased that it has been preserved.

The "Sunday School Teacher's Guide" was the first of the Author's books, and excepting "The Anxious Enquirer Directed," has had the largest (not the widest) circulation. The Wesleyans obtained the Author's leave to publish for themselves a very large stereotype edition, in addition to those which he printed. The address which was the germ of it is not reprinted here, because every part of it is to be found in an expanded form in the Guide.

The "Memoir of Elizabeth Bales" gives an example from life, and from the Author's own church, of a teacher who put in practice the exhortations of her minister's book; and the two following tracts tell of kindred efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ.

"The Olive Branch and the Cross" was a pastoral address, and is a fuller statement of matters treated of both in the "Church Member's Guide" and in "Christian Charity." It enforces the duties of reconciliation and forgiveness as respects members of the same Christian community. The remarks on "Simeon Green" inculcate the same spirit in regard to neighbours.

"The Path to the Bush" illustrates the benefits derivable from fellow Christians watching over and reproving one another.

The Tract on Happiness may form an appendix to the 4th, the 5th, or the 13th volume.

That on the Lord's Day was one of a series, and the subject is treated in a national point of view, and especially with reference to Britain.

The Sketches of the Nonconforming Trinitarian Denominations shew the heartiness with which the Author hailed them all as parts of the Universal Church, and acknowledged their peculiar merits and advantages.

There will also be found three papers on Missionary topics; a call on Protestants in reference to China, an appeal to the citizens of the United States with respect to the Valley of the Mississippi, and a lament over Tahiti. China had a large share of the Author's hopes and prayers, ever since his fellow-student, Morrison, had assailed it as the forlorn hope of Protestant Missions; and the States were commanded to his affections by the friendship of many of their best citizens. Dr. Patton, to whom the letter was addressed, informed the Editor that it became a standing text in America on every platform where the claims of the West were advocated.

The Editor hoped to have received in time for insertion here an address by the Author to the American Churches on Slavery, which, owing to the suggestions of Dr. Patton, treated the subject in a manner which went home to American hearts and consciences; but now it may perhaps not be received before the concluding volume leaves the press.

The evangelization of both these vast countries was matter of faith, but Tahiti had afforded the early triumph of the Author's own Missionary Society; and it had peculiar interest for him, for Mr Pritchard (to whom the French gave such celebrity) had been a member of his church, and Mr Nott, whom he knew as the patriarch of that mission, had gone out from it, though before his time.

The Editor has ventured, even at the present day, to reprint the Author's remarks on Oratorios. It should be borne in mind that thirty years ago the Birmingham Musical Festival was without a rival, and the town had manifested such enthusiasm for the art as to build by rate a Town-hall, chiefly, not to say solely, adapted for musical performances, and secured by law during a portion of every third year exclusively to the purposes of the Festival Committee. The Author might well therefore think it his duty holding such opinions as he did, to give this public utterance to them, notwithstanding the odium which he would by such a step incur among his neighbours.

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**THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER'S
GUIDE.**

PREFACE.

THE design of the following work must secure the approbation of all who consider the present extent and increasing importance of the Sunday-school system of instruction. We have arrived at that important era of the moral history of this country, when, by an unconstrained election, the lower classes of the community have chosen their better-instructed neighbours as the guardians of their children's minds and manners. It is an interesting fact, that the next generation of those who are to work in our manufactories, to labour in our fields, to minister about our persons, to defend our liberties, and who, according to their moral character, diffuse, through a thousand channels, the curses or the comforts of society, are voluntarily placed in our hands for the culture of their hearts and the formation. of their manners; they are in mass looking up to us for instruction, and virtually saying, "Make us what you would have us to be." This is a circumstance of a most deeply interesting nature, and is worthy the attention of the philanthropist, the patriot, and the christian. It is a valuable and sacred deposit for which we are accountable both to heaven and earth; to the present and to every future generation of mankind.

Any effort therefore to guide the benevolence of those who have gratuitously undertaken the active duties of instruction deserves at least the acknowledgment due to good intentions, and this probably is the only debt which the author can justly claim of the public for this unostentatious little volume, the history of which is as follows. Having been repeatedly solicited to print a second edition of an address delivered to the Sunday-school teachers of the Birmingham Union, the author was preparing to comply with the request, when it appeared to him that the subject might be treated of more at large; and he resolved upon publishing a fuller account of the duties of the office, formed upon the basis of the original address. The fruit of his determination he now offers to the public.

He has thought fit to embody every sentiment and almost every expression of the address in the present volume, in order that those who desired the former might find in the latter, if they should be disposed to purchase it, the very object of their wishes.

Every thing of a controversial nature has been carefully excluded, that the book may be rendered unobjectionable to all religious denominations. If anyone should be disappointed in finding nothing said about the regulations of Sunday schools, the author begs to observe that his object was with the moral and religious part of the institution, and not with its mechanism.

It is not improbable that in the estimation of some he may appear to have invested the institution with an undue degree of importance, and to have thrown upon the subject too much of the seriousness of religion and the solemn grandeur of eternity. To this, however, he cannot plead guilty, convinced as he is that the original

design of Sunday-schools was religious instruction, and that their ultimate object should be the salvation of the immortal soul.

If any should think that, in reference to certain prevailing practices, the author fears where no fear is, he begs again to state that, as he considers the system of Sunday-school education in the light of a religious institution, and is solicitous that others should consider it so too, he feels a godly jealousy of every thing likely to interfere with its efficiency in this high and sacred relation.

He acknowledges his peculiar obligations to the "Sunday-school Repository" for information relative to the origin, progress, and improvements of the system.

The author now sends forth this unpretending production, conscious that it has many faults which have been multiplied by the frequent interruptions attendant upon the situation in which he is placed. Should it serve no other purpose than to provoke an abler pen, he will rejoice, when sinking in the shadow of his successor, that he has not laboured in vain.

INTRODUCTION,
CONTAINING A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN,
PROGRESS,
AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
SYSTEM OF EDUCATION.

To trace a mighty river to its source has ever been considered a sublime and interesting employment. It is pleasing to ascend its course from the point where it opens into the ocean, and becomes the inlet of wealth to an empire, till we arrive at the spot where it bubbles up a spring but just sufficient to irrigate the meadows of the neighbouring farm, and in descending to observe, as it receives the confluence of tributary waters, how it diffuses its benefits to the tribes that dwell upon its banks. Still more engaging is the task, to trace the streams of christian benevolence to their source, and contemplate the origin of those institutions which diffuse eternal blessings to immortal souls. For what is the Nile or the Niger, the Missouri, the Euphrates, the Thames, compared to the river of life? The smallest rivulet which flows into this celestial stream has more sublimity and importance than the mightiest rivers upon earth, and will be traced with the deepest interest upon the map of the Redeemer's kingdom millions of ages

after the ocean itself shall have been for ever dissipated. Justly therefore may it be accounted an object worthy attention to trace, by a rapid survey, the origin, progress, and improvement of the Sunday-school Institution.

It is almost impossible for the greater part of those who are employed in diffusing the benefits of this admirable system to form an adequate idea of the extreme ignorance of the poor before its introduction. Except where a happy few of their children were gathered beneath the wings of some charitable institution, the great mass of their offspring grew up in the most deplorable ignorance. There were continually rising into life myriads of children of both sexes to whom the letters of the alphabet were mystic symbols, and every page of inspired or uninspired writ an insoluble wonder. And this was the least part of their calamity. Ignorance is the prolific mother of crimes and miseries. It is during a state of mental night that the worst vices of the human character steal from their coverts in the heart to prey upon the peace and comforts of society. To the children of the poor the Sabbath seemed to suspend the toils of the body, only to afford them greater leisure for effecting the ruin of their souls. They claimed the sacred hours as their own, and diligently employed them to aid their growth in wickedness. In the vicinity of every large town multitudes were to be seen practising every boyish sport; while others spread over the face of the country to commit depredations on orchards and gardens. In many places the farmer was detained from public worship to guard his property, or employed his servants in the task. Persons going to the house of God, not only had their minds disturbed,

but received personal violence from numerous bands of those unhappy youths, the more desperate sometimes associating for the purpose of molesting those whom conscience led to worship in the meeting-house rather than the church. Thus every generation of the poor was growing up successively, without any general effort to instruct their ignorance, to check their violence, to repress their vices, or to form their manners.

In this state matters remained till God in his great goodness raised up a man whose memory innumerable multitudes will bless; and to whose name religion will assign a distinguished rank on the roll of benefactors of the human race, which she carefully preserves in the archives of the church. To the last moment of time, and through every age of eternity, Robert Raikes will be venerated as the father and founder of Sunday schools, or at least as the person who made them known to the public. This illustrious man was a native of Gloucester, and was born in the year 1735. His heart was one of mercy's earthly temples; his benevolence was ardent and active. The first object which engaged his philanthropic exertions was the miserable situation of the prisoners confined for lesser crimes in the county gaol, for whose instruction and reformation he made a noble and successful struggle. The circumstances which led to the institution of Sunday-schools shall be stated in his own language. In a letter to a gentleman who had applied to him for the particulars of the nature and origin of his plan, he thus writes:

“Some business leading me one morning into the suburbs of the city, where the lowest of the people (who are principally employed in the pin manufactory) reside, I was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, wretchedly ragged, at play in the street. I asked an inhabitant whether those children belonged to that part of the

town, and lamented their misery and idleness. 'Ah! sir,' said the woman to whom I was speaking, 'could you take a view of this part of the town on Sunday, you would be shocked indeed; for then the street is filled with multitudes of these wretches, who, released on that day from their employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at chuck, and cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than of any other place. We have a worthy clergyman,' said she, 'minister of our parish, who has put some of them to school; but upon the Sabbath they are all given up to follow their inclinations without restraint, as their parents, totally abandoned themselves, have no idea of instilling into the minds of their children principles to which they themselves are strangers.'

"This conversation suggested to me, that it would at least be a harmless attempt, if it were productive of no good, should some little plan be formed to check this deplorable profanation of the Sabbath. I then inquired of the woman if there were any decent well-disposed women in the neighbourhood who kept schools for teaching to read. I was presently directed to four. To these I applied, and made an agreement with them to receive as many children as I should send on the Sunday, whom they were to instruct in reading and the church catechism. For this I engaged to pay them a shilling for their day's employment. The women seemed pleased with the proposal. I then waited on the clergyman before-mentioned, and imparted to him my plan. He was so much satisfied with the idea that he engaged to lend his assistance by going round to the schools on a Sunday afternoon, to examine the progress that was made, and to enforce order and decorum among such a set of little heathens.

"This sir, is the commencement of the plan. It is now about three years since we began; and I could wish you were here to make inquiry into the effect. A woman who lives in a lane where I had fixed a school, told me, some time ago, that the place was like a heaven upon Sundays compared with what it used to be. The numbers who have learned to read and say their catechism are so great that I am astonished at it. Upon the Sunday afternoon the mistresses take their scholars to church, a place into which neither they nor their ancestors ever entered with a view to the glory of God. But, what is yet more extraordinary, within this month these little ragamuffins have, in great numbers, taken it into their heads to frequent the early morning prayers, which are held every morning at the cathedral at seven o'clock. I believe there were near fifty this morning. They assemble at the house of one of the mistresses, and

walk before her to church, two and two, in as much order as a company of soldiers. I am generally at church: and after service they all come round me to make their bow, and if any animosities have arisen to make their complaint. The great principle I inculcate is to be kind and good-natured to each other; not to provoke one another; to be dutiful to their parents; not to offend God by cursing and swearing; and such little plain precepts as all may comprehend. As my profession is that of a printer, I have printed a little book, which I give amongst them; and some friends of mine, subscribers to the Society for promoting christian knowledge, sometimes make me a present of a parcel of Bibles, Testaments, &c., which I distribute as rewards to the deserving. The success that has attended this scheme has induced one or two of my friends to adopt the plan, and set up Sunday schools in other parts of the city; and now a whole parish has taken up the object; so that I flatter myself in time the good effects will appear so conspicuous as to become generally adopted. The number of children at present thus engaged on the Sabbath is between two and three hundred, and they are increasing every week, as the benefit is universally seen. I have endeavoured to engage the clergy of my acquaintance that reside in their parishes. One has entered into the scheme with great fervour; and it was in order to excite others to follow the example that I inserted in my paper the paragraph which I suppose you saw copied into the London papers. I cannot express to you the pleasure I often receive in discovering genius and innate good dispositions among this little multitude. It is botanizing in human nature. I have often too the satisfaction of receiving thanks from parents for the reformation they perceive in their children. Often have I given them kind admonitions, which I always do in the mildest and gentlest manner. The going among them, doing them little kindnesses, distributing trifling rewards, and ingratiating myself with them, I hear, have given me all ascendancy greater than I ever could have imagined: for I am told by their mistresses that they are very much afraid of my displeasure. If you ever pass through Gloucester, I shall be happy to pay my respects to you, and to show you the effects of this effort at civilization. If the glory of God be promoted in any, even the smallest degree, society must reap some benefit. If good seed be sown in the mind at an early period of human life, though it shows itself not again for many years, It may please God, at some future period, to Cause it to spring up, and to bring forth a plenteous harvest.”

It appears that Mr Raikes’s effort commenced about the close of the year 1781, or the beginning of 1782.

His example was immediately copied by some of his friends, and the system began to extend itself in the city of Gloucester. Having tried the experiment for more than a year, he determined to invite the public attention to a scheme which he perceived to be fraught with so many benefits. For this purpose he inserted a paragraph in a weekly newspaper, of which he was the editor and printer.

The following is a copy of this important and modest notice from the "Gloucester Journal," Nov. 3, 1783.

"Some of the clergy in different parts of this country, bent upon attempting reform among the children of the lower class, are establishing Sunday schools for rendering the Lord's day subservient to the ends of instruction, which has hitherto been prostituted to bad purposes. Farmers and other inhabitants of the towns and villages complain that they receive more injury in their property on the Sabbath than all the week besides; this in a great measure proceeds from the lawless state of the younger class, who are allowed to run wild on that day, free from every restraint. To remedy this evil, persons duly qualified are employed to instruct those that cannot read; and those that may have learnt to read are taught the catechism, and conducted to church. By thus keeping their minds engaged, the day passes profitably, and not disagreeably. In those parishes where this plan has been adopted, we are assured that the behaviour of the children is greatly civilized. The barbarous ignorance in which they had before lived being in some degree dispelled, they begin to give proofs that those persons are mistaken, who consider the lower orders of mankind as incapable of improvement, and therefore think an attempt to reclaim them impracticable, or at least not worth the trouble."*

* The Gentleman's Magazine for February 1837, contains a memoir of the Rev. David Williams, of Heytesbury, in which the following sentences occur: "In a conversation with the then Mr. Stork, the vicar of Cheselden, and his nephew of the same name the incumbent of a parish in Gloucester, he (the Rev. David Williams) suggested the introduction of Sunday-schools as a means of preventing the misemployment of the Sabbath by young persons of both sexes. The uncle adopted the suggestion at Cheselden, the nephew at Gloucester, when the zeal, activity, and munificence of

Mr Raikes's statement of the good effects of his schools was not permitted by Him who watches every event, to float unobserved to oblivion, nor indeed was it likely to do so. It caught the attention of a gentleman in Lancashire before alluded to, who wrote immediately to him, and received the letter already given. By permission of its author, this epistle was printed in the Gentleman's Magazine for 1784. (Vol. 54, page 410.) Through the medium of this publication, the plan was laid before thousands of the most intelligent members of society in the kingdom; and Mr Raikes soon had to answer the inquiries of other correspondents anxious to gain information on this new and important subject.

The scheme began now to be very generally known and adopted. Christians of all denominations, wondering that it should never have been devised before, seemed determined to repair, as much as possible, the mischief of past neglect, by applying with the utmost diligence the benefits of this new discovery in the world of morals and religion.

Several public-spirited gentlemen in the metropolis, perceiving that the system would be greatly aided by the establishment of a society which should combine the patronage and energies of all denominations of christians, held a preparatory meeting August 30, 1785, to take into consideration the propriety of forming a society, for establishing and supporting Sunday schools for the instruction of poor children in different parts of the kingdom. In consequence of a resolution: then

Mr. Raikes, the banker, gave him the universal credit of having been the founder of Sunday Schools. *Tulit alter honores*. The first experiment had been made in the curacies of David Williams, in North Wilts, and was subsequently continued in all the parishes of which he had the charge." Ed.

passed, a public meeting was held on the 7th of September, and an institution formed, bearing the title of "A Society for the support and encouragement of Sunday schools in the different counties in England." This establishment was exceedingly beneficial to the growing cause. By the respectability of its members, it increased the public confidence; by their talents it enlightened the public mind; by their activity it stimulated the public zeal; and by their property it assisted the public expenditure for the object.

It was an object of importance with the committee of the Sunday School Society, to engage the co-operation of episcopal authority within the pale of the established religion of the country; and it must be spoken to the honour of the bishops, that they promptly came forward and cast the weight of their mitres into the scale of this good cause. Among the dignitaries of the church who patronised the plan, the Bishops of Salisbury and Llandaff, and the Deans of Canterbury and Lincoln, obtained a conspicuous place by their zeal and talents. So rapidly did the flame spread through the country, that by the close of 1786, it is conjectured not less than 250,000 children were every Sunday receiving instruction.

The schools were at first universally conducted by hired teachers. This entailed a load of pecuniary difficulty upon the plan, which, had it not been removed, must have considerably retarded its progress, and consequently diminished its usefulness. The Sunday School Society alone expended during the sixteen first years of its existence no less than four thousand pounds in the salaries of teachers. And this was not the least evil attending upon purchased labour. Hireling teachers

can scarcely be expected to possess either the zeal or ability of those who now engage in the work from motives of pure benevolence. Gratuitous instruction was an astonishing improvement of the system, though it does not appear to have entered into the views of its benevolent author. "If we were asked," says a writer in the *Sunday School Repository*, "whose name stood next to that of Robert Raikes in the annals of Sunday schools, we should say, the person who first came forward, and voluntarily proffered his exertions, his time, and his talents, to the instruction of the young and the poor; since an imitation of his example has been the great cause of the present flourishing state of these institutions, and of all that future additional increase which may be reasonably anticipated." At what precise period this was first introduced, does not appear, or where it commenced; so that the award of this second honour is reserved for the decision of the last day. About the year 1800 the plan became very general throughout the kingdom.

The improvement in the mode of popular education, introduced by Dr. Bell and Mr Lancaster, must be considered as forming another era in the history of Sunday Schools, by affording new facilities to the business of instruction. And the advantages derived from these useful systems does not merely consist in the servile imitation of all their arrangements, but in demonstrating to the world more clearly than was ever shown before, that education is an art susceptible of indefinite improvement, and in exciting an ardour before unknown, to carry it on to perfection.

The institution of Sunday schools was now become universal in this kingdom. Every city and every town

had warmly espoused the cause. Still there was one thing wanting to raise the system to the highest degree of efficiency, and that was union. In every possible application of the sentiment, union is power. Reasoning upon the general principle, many were led to conclude that great benefits would result to this particular case, from an association of counsel and energy. After much private intercourse on this subject, between many persons in London, a public meeting was holden July 13, 1803, in the school rooms belonging to Surrey chapel, and the Sunday School Union was then formed. The design of this association is thus announced in its own regulations:

“The objects of this Union are, 1st, To stimulate and encourage each other in the religious instruction of the young. 2ndly, By mutual communication to improve the methods of instruction. 3rdly, To promote the opening of new schools. 4thly, To print books, &c. suitable for Sunday Schools, at a cheap rate. 5thly, To correspond with ministers and others in the United Kingdom and abroad. 6thly, To promote the formation of country Unions, which are expected regularly to report to this Society; and are allowed to purchase its publications at reduced prices.”

This new society commenced its operations with no less prudence than vigour. Carefully abstaining from even the appearance of a desire to interfere with the private management of any of the associated schools, it aimed to diffuse new life and energy through them all. One of its first objects was the compilation of a new spelling book, more adapted to moral and religious instruction than any they could find already in existence. This production reflects no small degree of credit on its industrious compilers. The next object of the committee was to ascertain, by an extensive correspondence, what parts of the country were most destitute of

schools. Finding, in many places, that the advantages of the system were greatly diminished by the want of method and order which prevailed in the schools, they published in 1806, "A plan for the Formation and Regulation of Sunday Schools."

The example of the metropolis was soon imitated in many of the large towns and several counties. Unions were formed in different parts of the kingdom, from which the happiest effects have resulted; among which may be reckoned the establishment of new schools in neglected parts of large towns, and amidst the darkness of benighted villages; a fresh excitement given to those employed in the work of tuition; the diffusion of christian affection; and in some instances a great improvement in the mode of instruction. The formation of the Sunday School Union must, therefore, be regarded as an event of vast importance to the success of this valuable scheme.

It must be acknowledged however that in some few instances, the benefits of Sunday School Unions have not been without an admixture of evil. A disposition to conceited self-importance, to cabal, and to a turbulent spirit and independence, has occasionally, though it is hoped but rarely, manifested itself, which has led to the breaking up of the association, and extended its mischiefs to the churches to which the schools belonged. These instances have formed the exceptions, not the rule.

In an account like the present, the establishment of the Scotch Sabbath Evening Schools ought not to be omitted. The children of the poor, so far as common education is concerned, are all taught to read in the parochial schools, which are established in that

enlightened country. Still, however, as it respects the observance of the Sabbath, and the more direct business of religious instruction, like the children in this kingdom, they are left of course to the care of their parents; multitudes of whom, indifferent to the welfare of their own souls, feel no solicitude for the salvation of their offspring. Observing and commiserating the condition of these neglected youth, who in great numbers spent the Sabbath, and especially the Sabbath evenings, in profanity and vice, the friends of religion formed the pious resolution of collecting them together on the Lord's day evenings, for the purpose of imparting religious knowledge. They assemble at six o'clock and are dismissed about eight; during which time every effort is made to instruct them in the way of eternal salvation, and to urge them forward in the path of life. How desirable is it that the 'plan should pass the Tweed', and be adopted in England! There is one class of youth to whom it might become an incalculable blessing: I mean the elder boys and girls who have just left our schools, and who are generally considered as gone beyond our care. Thus abandoned by us, it is too commonly the case that they lose all the little impression they have received while under our instruction. Could they be collected together on a Sabbath evening, to be taught by the senior and more pious members of our churches, who would interest themselves in their welfare, what a blessing might be expected to accrue!

Wales at a very early period in the history of Sunday schools entered with eagerness into the scheme, and adorned her romantic and picturesque valleys with numerous asylums for the instruction of the poor.

And here it is but justice to the Sunday School

Institution, although by some it may be accounted a digression, to assert its claims to the high honour of giving birth to the most sublime and efficient society ever formed by man, or blessed by God, for promoting the interests of genuine christianity. Every reader will anticipate the name of the British and Foreign Bible Society. The honour of giving rise to this mighty combination of wealth zeal and talent is more worth contending for than the highest place in the roll of monarchs conquerors or philosophers. Newton, the greatest discoverer in natural philosophy, if he be acquainted with what is done on earth, would cheerfully resign all the glory of his peerless works, for the brighter honour of having originated this great and godlike scheme.

By means of Sunday School education in Wales, the number of readers increased far beyond any supply of Welsh Bibles which could be obtained. This induced the indefatigable Mr Charles of Bala to undertake a journey to London for the purpose of soliciting a private subscription from his friends, to defray the expense of printing a new edition. In the course of conversation on this subject, at a committee meeting of the Religious Tract Society, a thought came into the mind of the Rev. Joseph Hughes, (a thought which darted as one of the brightest beams from the fountain of light and life above, and for which millions through eternity will bless his name,) that a little more exertion than was requisite. for supplying the Principality with the Scriptures, might found an institution that should go on increasing its funds, and extending its operations, till not only the British dominions, but the whole world, should be furnished with the word of God. Such was

the origin of a society which is the glory of our own age and nation, and will one day be acknowledged as a blessing to all ages and all nations. I have no need to trace the proposal farther than to say, it was warmly embraced by the gentlemen present, and steps were immediately taken to give it efficiency. My only object in adverting to the Bible Society, was to show its pedigree, and claim it as the blooming daughter of the Sunday school institution.

The cause which originated it still supports it. For in most cases a Sunday school teacher must be the forerunner of a Bible.

Ireland, geographically separated from us only by the narrow channel of the Irish sea, hut far remote from England as to the moral and religious state of her inhabitants, begins to share in the advantages of this beneficial plan. In the year 1810, the Hibernian Sunday school society was formed, which was immediately cherished by extensive patronage, and has already been exceedingly useful in scattering the rays of heavenly light over the gloom which has long enveloped the lower classes of the community in that country so neglected, though so interesting.

In tracing the growth of the Sunday school institution it would be an unpardonable omission to pass by in silence that noble ramification of it, the instruction of adults. A few years ago, had anyone proposed such a design, a thousand voices would have exclaimed, in a strain somewhat similar to that of the wondering and doubting Nicodemus, "How can a man be taught when he is old?" But this is the age of a daring and restless benevolence, which no exertions can weary, and no difficulties can appal. The first scion was planted by

Mr Charles upon the mountains of Wales in the summer of 1811. "God prepared room before it, and caused it to take deep root; the hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were like goodly cedars." The account of his commencement and success shall be given in his own words:

"My maxim has been for many years past, to aim at great things; but if I cannot accomplish great things, to do what I can, and be thankful for the least success, and still to follow on, without being discouraged at the day of small things, or by unexpected reverses. For many years I have laid it down as a maxim to guide me, never to give up a place in despair of success. If one way does not succeed new means must be tried; and if I see no increase this year, perhaps I may the next. I almost wish to blot out the word impossible from my vocabulary, and obliterate it from the minds of my brethren. We had no particular school for the instruction of adults exclusively, till the summer of 1811; but many attended the Sunday schools with the children in different parts of the country previous to that time. What induced me first to think of establishing such an institution was the aversion I found in the adults to associate with the children in their schools. The first attempt succeeded wonderfully, and far beyond my most sanguine expectations. The report of the success of this school soon spread over the country, and in many places the illiterate adults began to call for instruction. In one county, after a public address had been delivered to them on the subject, the adult poor, even the aged, flocked to the Sunday school in crowds; and the shopkeepers could not immediately supply them with an adequate number of spectacles. Our schools in general are kept in our chapels: in some districts, where there are no chapels, farmers, in the summer time, lend their barns. The adults and children are sometimes in the same room, but placed in different parts of it. When their attention is gained and fixed, they soon learn; their age makes no difference, if they are able, by the help of glasses, to see the letters. As the adults have no time to lose, we endeavour (before they can read) to instruct them without delay, in the first principles of Christianity. We select short portions of Scripture, comprising the leading doctrines and repeat them to the learners, till they can retain them in their memories, and which they are to repeat the next time we meet."

Thus commenced that excellent institution which is Imparting the elements of knowledge, and the benefits

of religious instruction to thousands who have passed the meridian of life; which in many cases by teaching the aged to read seems to add a lengthened twilight to their day of grace; and by revealing to them the things that belong to their peace, just as they are about to be hid from their eyes, accomplishes the words of inspiration, "In the evening-tide it shall be light."

Soon after this time, as if the plan had been wafted by the Severn, and thence received by the Avon, it appeared in the city of Bristol. The individual destined to the high honour of establishing it there was a man of obscure and humble origin. The rays of spiritual light do not always strike first on the tops of the highest mountains. Men in less elevated stations have often been employed as the almoners of the divine bounty. The apostle, referring to the first preachers of the Gospel, could say, "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty." At the second anniversary of the Bristol Auxiliary Bible Society, among other intelligence communicated to the meeting, a letter from Keynsham was read, which contained the following sentence: "We have been necessarily obliged to omit a great number of poor inhabitants who could not read, and therefore are not likely to be benefitted by the possession of a Bible." This statement reached the heart of an individual present, by the name of William Smith. To be deprived of the inspired volume by inability to peruse it, appeared to him worse than for a man to be dying of the plague, through ignorance of the

way of applying a remedy which was within his reach. His benevolent mind meditated upon their situation. He longed to relieve them, but scarcely dared to hope that the case admitted of relief. In this dilemma he consulted Stephen Prust, Esq., a merchant whose name stands high in the long list of Bristol philanthropists. The object of his inquiry was to ascertain whether it was possible to teach the ignorant part of the adult poor to read. It is of immense importance, that when the seed of benevolence begins to germinate, it should be cherished by the genial influence of a kindly atmosphere; a nipping frost at that critical juncture would cause it to perish in its bud. In the advice patronage and support of Mr. Prust the scheme of Smith met the sunshine which it wanted. Upon his plan he slept not a second night; and after he had received the promise of his generous friend to assist him in the undertaking, before he commenced his exertions, he was employed the next day in collecting subscriptions for the Bible Association, and whenever he met with persons who could not read, he asked them whether they would like to learn if a school should be opened. Many embraced the offer with expressions of pleasure, and their names were taken down. Two rooms were immediately obtained, and the work of instruction commenced. So little could the ardour of Smith endure delay, that in nineteen days after he had disclosed his mind to Mr. Prust, the school was opened with eleven men and ten women. The number rapidly increased till, a few weeks after, some active friends to the cause of religion and humanity met the founder of the new institution, and formed themselves into a society, bearing the title of "An Institution for instructing adult persons to read the Holy Scriptures."

The society continued to attract the attention, and engage the support, of christians of all denominations; and at length received a most valuable accession in the active co-operation of Dr. Pole, a physician in connexion with the Society of Friends. Within the period of two years the society admitted 1508 scholars, exclusive of 276 who were taught by schools belonging to several dissenting congregations.*

Before I pass on from the successful results of William Smith's exertions in Bristol, it should be stated that although his commencement was subsequent to Mr Charles's labours in Wales, he had at the time no knowledge of his precursor's noble career; the Fountain of all good thus causing the stream of his mercy to break forth in two distant places almost simultaneously.

It was not likely that this new light, kindled by Charles and Smith, would remain long unobserved. It was seen and admired from afar. Generous and noble-spirited men in different parts of the kingdom, ever watching for new methods of benefitting their species, hailed the beaming signal with delight, and like the eastern Magi, followed its directions, and flocked to the brightness of its rising. Schools multiplied every where, till, at the present time, they are to be found in almost every considerable town in the country.

The next event in the order of time of importance in the history of Sunday schools is of a literary nature. The press is one of the best friends to the interest of man; and one of the most important auxiliaries to the cause of God. If, like the other gifts of heaven, it has been sometimes abused; if it has been pressed into the ranks of

* See "A History of the Origin and Progress of Adult Schools," by Thomas Pole, M.D.

infidelity and cruelty; still, under the direction of holier and wiser minds, it has, after such abuse of its powers, turned with indignation upon its own work, repaired the mischief it has done, and demolishing the refuges of lies together with the habitations of cruelty, erected upon their ruins the temple of truth and the throne of mercy. The press has befriended the Sunday school system in many ways. I now select only one instance, but one of considerable importance; the "Sunday School Repository," which commenced in January, 1813. This valuable work is calculated at once to interest, instruct, and excite. It should be circulated through every school, and read by every teacher. Already it has laid before the public a mass of most valuable information. and directed upon the Sunday school institution a stream of light which has revealed its magnitude and its beauty much more clearly than they were generally seen before. And in order to render it still more useful, everyone who has much experience in the business of instruction, and is possessed of ability to communicate his knowledge to others, should consider his talents as put under requisition for its support. It might become of immense importance to the great cause. If a good digest were made of all the information of this nature that could be obtained, it would exhibit the operations of the whole christian world in this respect, and so form a sort of panorama, in which, as in one connected and beautiful picture, the whole circle of Sunday school operations might be contemplated wherever it is read.

I now turn our attention from our own country to the adoption and progress of the plan in other quarters of the globe. A few years ago the British and Foreign Bible Society, as with the wings of the angel in the

Apocalypse, flew across the Atlantic, and lighted on the shores of a country which presented a new world to the operations of religion no less than those of commerce and, conquest. America, deriving from England every thing which she possesses of value in religion, has cherished in her bosom this glorious institution ever since its arrival on her shores, but has at length found, as we have done, that ignorance prescribes limits to its operations, which nothing but the Sunday-school system can break down. The western breeze lately brought to us the request, "Complete the mercy you have begun in giving us the Bible Society by sending us the Sunday-school institution." The call was promptly obeyed, and the eastern wind, which some say blows no good to any one, took back various publications relating both to children's and adult schools. Letters have been received, one or two extracts from which will record the establishment of the institution in the United States.

The earliest intimation of its having claimed the attention of the Americans was received in a letter from Divie Bethune Esq., of New York to Mr Prust, dated July 13, 1814. The former, alluding to a present of a copy of Dr. Pole's History of Adult Schools which he had received from Mr Prust, says "Mrs Bethune, and about twenty other ladies have petitioned the corporation of this city to grant them the use of a building erected for a house of industry. Mrs B. says she is of opinion an adult school may very properly be attached to such an institution."

The first intelligence of the establishment of a school in Philadelphia is contained in a letter from Miss S. Whitehead to Mr Bethune, dated March 23, 1815, which is as follows:

“I had several extracts from Dr Pole’s work inserted in the ‘Religious Remembrancer,’ a weekly paper of our city, and the subject excited universal attention; the Freemasons have taken it up; and at a general meeting it was proposed and carried unanimously, that several schools should be established and held in the Grand Lodge in Chesnut-street. There is no doubt that all the different lodges belonging to the fraternity will take up the subject, and that it will extend over the whole Union. One of the officers gave me this information. Mr Thomas Bradford commenced a school in the jail last Sabbath-day. Several pious female friends of mine propose shortly to commence one in the south end of the city, and thus you see how great a matter a little fire kindleth.”

The next account was from Mr Bethune to Mr Prust, dated New York, June 10, 1815:

“It will be gratifying to you to learn, that your transmission of the report of the adult schools has been the means of awakening towards this object a great attention here. The loss of our valued mother, it appears, a gracious God is pleased in part to make up to society, by giving health and zeal to her daughter, Mrs Bethune, to follow her steps. The little school begun by her on reading Dr Pole’s History, which you sent me, has succeeded astonishingly. She and my two daughters, assisted by a female friend, teach on Sunday mornings. It consists of between eighty and ninety learners; and their Bible class now able to read consists of forty-seven scholars.”

It must be recorded to the honour of the female sex, that the first exertions in both these cities were made by them. And by a general survey of the christian world,

it would seem, as if conscious that the woman was “first in the transgression,” they resolved she should not be the last in endeavouring to diffuse the blessings of salvation. In a letter from Mrs Bethune to Mr Prust, we have the following account of the formation of the first Sunday school for children which was ever established in the New World:

“Dear Sir,

“New York, Jan. 24, 1816.

“I cannot resist the desire I feel to employ my pen in thanking you for your presents to myself and children, of so many interesting publications; from which, I trust, we have derived both pleasure and profit. I believe I cannot express my gratitude in a way better suited to your liberal soul, than by giving you an account of a meeting held in this city this day. Mr B. published one of your letters in one of our daily papers: I lent the different publications relative to Sunday schools to a number of our friends, and was in hopes the gentlemen would have come forward in the business; but after waiting a number of weeks, I conversed with several of my own sex, who expressed a wish to unite with me in a ‘Female Sunday School Union.’ Accordingly we called a meeting of the female members of all denominations, who met this day in the lecture-room of one of our churches; and although the notice was not so general as intended, several hundreds were present. Dr R. opened the meeting with a very appropriate prayer. When he withdrew, the ladies were pleased to call me to the chair. I addressed the meeting in a few words stating for what purpose their company was requested; the great need of such an institution, where numbers of one sex were training for the gallows and state prisons, and of the other for prostitution; likewise the great want of religious instruction in our small schools: the parents of children attending such, not having time to teach them, would probably avail themselves of Sunday schools if within their reach. In order to stimulate them to so good a work, I said I would read them several extracts from British publications, which would show them how much the Lord had blessed such institutions in the Old World, and concluded by humbly hoping that He would extend the blessing to His hand-maidens in their attempts to train up a seed to serve Him in the New World.

“I may venture to affirm there was not a dry eye in the room, and tears flowed copiously down the cheeks of many. A committee was

appointed of one or two from each denomination to prepare a constitution and set of rules, to be laid before the society at a meeting this day week."

In a letter from Mr Bethune, dated New York February 4, 1816, we learn what was the result of this noble exertion of female piety and zeal. "This city is in a stir throughout, a strong interest awakened and great exertions commenced for the instruction on Sabbath days of children and adults. Mrs B. has written to you all account of the first meeting of ladies: on that day week the second meeting was held; and so great was the crowd of ladies pressing forward, that the company had to adjourn from a lecture-room to a church.

"Next Sabbath, I believe, was appointed for the commencement of the work of teaching; the zeal of three of the congregations, however, led them to begin this day. Mrs B. visited these schools, which, with a school of black adults, taught by my family, make up one hundred and thirty-six scholars. I presume the number next Lord's day will amount to one thousand in all the schools. I believe the gentlemen are mustering their numbers, to follow the example of the ladies, and to take charge of the adults and children of their own sex."

Thus it is evident that this plant of heavenly growth has struck root in the western quarter of the globe, and there, as well as here, will one day cover with its wide-spreading branches, and refresh with its life-giving fruit, innumerable multitudes of the ignorant poor; and the praises and thanksgivings of Sunday school scholars from each shore of the Atlantic mingling upon its waves shall swell above its thunders, and rise before the throne of the Eternal, a grateful memorial of the countries from which they ascend.

Only one more triumph of this mighty scheme remains to be recorded, but that is a splendid one, no less than its invasion of Asia, and its establishment amidst the temples and the gods of that part of the world which may be denominated the metropolis of idolatry. The first Sunday schools in Asia were established by the Baptist missionaries at Serampore,

but at what date does not appear. Their example was followed by their brethren the Wesleyan Missionaries in Ceylon, whose commencement of the good work is thus reported by Messrs. Harvard and Clough, who were stationed in that island:

“June 4, 1815. We cannot conceal that the establishment of our Sunday-school has given us favour in the eyes of many. It has certainly considerably tended to help on the subscription to our place of worship. We only consulted one friend, who stated insurmountable difficulties, and assured us that the time was not yet come, and that the people were not ripe for such an institution. However, we were determined, by the help of God, to make the trial; and now that we have upwards of two hundred and fifty children, and twenty gratuitous teachers most cheerfully engaged in instructing them every week, everyone is charmed, and several are surprised that so simple an idea did not occur to their minds before. We have the pleasure to inform you that, through the great kindness of the Hon. Robert Boyd, Member of Council, and Commissioner of Revenue, we have the use of the theatre for our Sunday-school; and a better place could not have been chosen, it being so very central and commodious. We have quite a train of native children now in our school.”

Thus a lodgment has been made by this institution in one of the outworks to the stronghold which Satan possesses in the eastern division of the earth. Other missionaries in India will soon follow the example thus nobly given, till successive triumphs of the cross over the powers of darkness shall open for this beneficent scheme an access to the territory of China; nor is the day perhaps so distant as despondency suggests, when it shall be announced in Britain that Sunday-schools are formed in the city of Pekin. Hasten it, O Lord, in thine own time!

Thus widely and rapidly has this institution multiplied its funds, its objects, and its conquests to the present time. It is not possible even to hazard a conjecture as to the number of children and adults which are every Sabbath under the sound of Sabbath school instruction

throughout the world. Perhaps if I were to state them at a million I should not at all exceed the aggregate. What a reflection for the moralist and the christian, the patriot and the philanthropist! What a wide and lovely scene for an enlightened and generous imagination to range over! A million scholars collected by myriads of teachers in mighty circles round the fountain of celestial truth, to cleanse the eyes of their understanding from the scales of ignorance and vice! Contracted must be the mind, and cold the heart, which can find nothing here to awaken its raptures. If there be a window in heaven from which the blessed inhabitants can look upon this lower world; or if a door be opened through which the spirits of the just made perfect are ever permitted to visit the scenes of their terrestrial labours; O who can conceive the ecstasies with which the soul of Raikes must hover over the captivating scene! What a mighty reflux of delight must roll back from the tide of his benevolence, and reach him even upon the heavenly side of the shores of eternity! What accessions must be continually made to his bliss, while another and another soul is continually arriving in the realms of glory, to tell its inhabitants they were converted to God in a Sunday school! But here conjecture fails us.

If we turn from the past to the future our hopes leave even our success behind. But few years comparatively will pass before other writers will look back from a distance on progress of the Sunday school institution Inconceivable to us, and sum up all that I have recorded, as but the very commencement of its operations, the first fruits of its victories, and as not worthy to extend beyond the first page of its history.

CHAPTER I.

THE ULTIMATE OBJECT OF SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.

IT is necessary to the success of any exertions whatever: that the object to which they are to be directed should be distinctly understood. Any confusion on this point will be attended with fluctuation of design and weakness of endeavour, but ill calculated to ensure success. There is just ground of apprehension that many who are engaged in the work of Sunday school instruction, are but imperfectly acquainted with its ultimate end. It is much to be feared as to some that in giving their assistance to this cause, nothing further enters into their view, than communicating to the children an ability to read. In the estimation of such persons, the Sabbath institutions seem to rank no higher than ordinary day schools, where the offspring of the poor receive the elements of common education. Provided therefore they can assist their pupils to read with tolerable facility, they attain the highest object of their desires or expectations. How will such teachers be surprised when I inform them, that the top-stone of their hopes is but the foundation of their duties; and that the highest elevation of their purposes is but the beginning of the ascent which leads to the summit of the institution.

I admit that where no higher aim than this is taken, though very far below the proper mark, much benefit is likely to accrue to the children, to their immediate connexions, and to society at large. Where no effort is made to form the character, and nothing more in fact is done than simply to communicate the art of reading, a vast advantage is conferred upon the children of the poor. It is the testimony of inspiration, "That for the soul to be without knowledge is not good;" and the whole history of man confirms the truth of the remark. The very first rudiments of knowledge, independently of any systematic attempt to improve the character, must have a moral tendency. In attaining the very lowest elements of education, the soul feels itself elevated, and, however it may be precipitated back again by the violence of its depravity, is conscious still that it has begun to ascend from the regions of sense. Ignorance debases and degrades the mind. It not only enslaves the intellect, but dims the eye by which the human conscience traces the natural distinction between right and wrong. "On the contrary," says Mr Hall, "knowledge expands the mind, exalts the faculties, refines the taste for pleasure, and, in relation to moral good, by multiplying the mental resources, has a tendency to elevate the character, and in some measure to correct and subdue the taste for gross sensuality." Hence it is obvious, that the very least and lowest end which, as Sunday school teachers, you can propose to ourselves in your labour has a tendency to benefit the Interests of the poor. I wish, however, to remind you, that simply to teach the art of reading is the least and lowest end you can contemplate.

Others connect attention to habits of order, in-

dustry and morality, with the rudiments of knowledge, as the ultimate object of their efforts. They are most laudably anxious to form the character of the children, so as that they may rise into life an industrious, orderly, and sober race. This is of vast importance, and subordinate only to what I shall afterwards propose as the ultimate end of all your endeavours. Much of the peace, comfort, and safety of the community depends upon the, character and habits of the poor. If society be compared to the human frame, they are the feet and the hands: and how much do the ease and the welfare of the whole body depend upon the healthy state of the extremities! To tame the ferocity of their unsubdued passions; to repress the excessive rudeness of their manners; to chasten the disgusting obscenity of their language; to subdue the stubborn rebellion of their wills; to render them honest, obedient, courteous, industrious, submissive, and orderly, should be an object of great desire with all who are engaged in the work of Sunday school instruction. It should be your ceaseless effort to reform the vices, to heal the disorders, and exalt the whole character of the lower classes of society, by training up their offspring in "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." Then, to use the beautiful imagery of the prophet, "instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle tree."

Pleasing and important as such an object really is; delightful as it is to produce in the breast of a poor man a taste for reading, together with a habit of thinking,

and thus teach him to find entertainment at home, without being tempted to repair to the ale-house; delightful as it is to bring him into communion with the world of reason, and help him by the joys of intellect to soften the rigours of corporeal toil; delightful as it is to teach him to respect himself, and secure the respect of others, by industrious frugal and peaceful habits: to assist him to become the instructor of his own domestic circle, and thus to raise him in their estimation; in short, delightful as it is to strip poverty of its most distressing appearances, and to remove its more painful privations of a temporal nature, this of itself, and alone, is far below the ultimate object of your exertions. You must look higher even than this for the summit of your hopes. A man may be all that I have represented; he may be industrious, orderly, moral, and useful in his habits, and still be destitute of that faith and “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord.”

Addressing you as believers in all that revelation teaches concerning the nature condition and destiny of man, I must point your attention to an object which stands on higher ground than any we have yet contemplated. It is for you to consider, that each of the children who are every Sabbath beneath your care, carries in his bosom a soul as valuable and as durable as that which the Creator has lodged in your own. Neither poverty, ignorance, nor vice, can sever the tie which binds man to immortality. Every human body is the residence of an immortal spirit; and, however diminutive through childhood, mean from poverty, or filthy by neglect, the hovel may appear, a deathless being will be found within it. Every child that crosses the threshold of your school on a Sunday morning brings to

your care, and confides to your ability, a soul, compared with whose worth the sun is a bauble; and with whose existence time itself is but the twinkling of an eye.

And as those poor children partake with you in the dignity of immortality, so do they also in the degradation and ruin of the fall. The common taint of human depravity has polluted their hearts as well as yours. They, like you, in consequence of sin are under the curse, and stand exposed to everlasting misery. To them however the gracious scheme of redeeming mercy extends its blessings; and indeed by the express provisions of the Gospel charter, they are first among the objects to whom salvation is to be presented, "for the poor have the Gospel preached to them." Denied neither the privilege of immortality, nor the opportunity of eternal happiness, they are not exempt from the obligations of religion. Without the duties required in your own case, in order to eternal life, they will never possess it. Faith repentance and holiness, regeneration justification and sanctification, are as indispensable in their case as yours. Their danger of losing all the rich blessings of salvation, unless great exertions be made to instruct and interest their minds, is imminent and obvious. Dwelling in the walks of life where sin, in its most naked and polluting form, spreads destruction around; corrupted by their neighbours; nursed and nurtured in vice, in many cases by the example of their parents; in manufacturing districts inhaling the moral contamination with which the atmosphere of almost every workshop is laden, how rapid is the growth of original corruption; how luxuriant the harvest of actual transgressions which spring from it; how little likely, without extraordinary efforts, are those unhappy youths

to enter “the narrow path that leadeth to eternal life!”

Such are the children who flock every Sabbath to the schools where you are carrying on the business of instruction, and such their situation. Look round upon the crowd of little immortals by whom you are encircled every week; view them in the light which the rays of inspired truth diffuse over their circumstances; follow them in imagination, not only into the ranks of society, to act their humble part in the great drama of human life, but follow them down into that valley, gloomy with the shadows of death, from which they must come forth, those that have done well, to everlasting life, but those that have done ill, to everlasting shame and contempt: and while you see them plunging into the bottomless pit, or soaring to the celestial city, say what should be the ultimate object of a Sunday-school teacher’s exertions!

You are now quite prepared to assent to my opinion on this subject, when I thus state it, 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 will 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.

Here then you see your object; and you perceive that it includes every other in itself. To aim at any

thing lower than this as your last and largest purpose; to be content with only some general improvement of character, when you are encouraged to hope for an entire renovation of the heart, or merely with the formation of moral habits, when such as are truly pious may be expected; is to conduct the objects of your benevolence with decency down into the grave, without attempting to provide them with the means of a glorious resurrection out of it. To train them up in the way of sincere and undefiled religion is an object of such immense importance, that compared with it the ability to read and write, or even all the refinements of life, have not the weight of a feather in their destiny. And the truth must be told, that wherever religious education is neglected, the mere tendency of knowledge to the production of moral good is in most cases very lamentably and successfully counteracted by the dreadful power of human depravity.

Sunday schools, to be contemplated in their true light, should be viewed as nurseries for the church of God; as bearing an intimate connexion with the unseen world, and as ultimately intended to people the realms of glory with "the spirits of just men made perfect." To judge of their value by any lower estimate; to view them merely as adapted to the perishing interests of mortality, is to cast them into the balances of atheism, to weigh them upon the sepulchre and to pronounce upon their value without throwing eternity into the scale.

The salvation of the immortal soul, a phrase than which one more sublime or more interesting can never drop from the lips or the pen of man, describes your last and noblest purpose.

In what way this object is most likely to be effected, remains now to be considered.

1. Labour to impart to the children, as speedily as possible, a very correct method of reading. This is the first thing to be attended to; and as it is the basis of all which is to follow, it should be done well. Considering an ability to read, as I do every other part of Sunday school tuition, as a means for the production of spiritual and moral good, I view it as of immense importance, that the children should be rendered as perfect as possible in the initiatory art. Reading is a powerful auxiliary to the progress of piety and virtue, but it is attractive only when it is performed with facility; and therefore to allure the children to the pages of Revelation, or the perusal of good books, it is necessary to render their access as smooth as possible. If they have often to spell a word, and still oftener to pass by a word which they cannot spell, they will either be much impeded in their instruction, or perhaps give up the matter in utter despair. Few have the courage confidence and perseverance to pursue a course of self-tuition after they leave the school, if they do not acquire a tolerable facility in reading while they are there. It is of vast moment therefore that you should take peculiar pains in this preliminary step of the religious education of the children, in order that they may feel all that inducement to read which arises from the consciousness of being able to do it with ease and correctness. I am apprehensive that admonition is exceedingly necessary on this head, and that many scholars quit our institutions most lamentably wanting in this the very ground work of instruction. It is a fact that many of the persons who apply for admission into our adult schools, are young

men and women who were but imperfectly taught when children in our Sunday schools; and who could, therefore, have made but very little use of their Bible during those years when they had most leisure to read it.

2. You are to seek the great object of your labours by a course of religious instruction, judiciously adapted to the capacity of the children. I take it for granted that the business of every school is so arranged as to allow to the teachers a sufficient opportunity for explaining and enforcing the principles of religion. And here I think it right to remark, that, as the very first lesson of religious instruction, it is of vast importance to produce, even from its commencement, a sort of trembling reverence for the authority of Revelation. From the time a child is capable of receiving a sentiment on religion, he should be made to feel the obligation of the word of God upon his understanding and call science. The first idea which should be communicated to his mind, and which in every subsequent stage of education should be nursed and nurtured into a conviction inseparable from all his moral feelings, is that the Bible is and must be true; and that however singular, however beyond the range of our experience, or however miraculous any of its facts may be, and however incomprehensible are some of its doctrines, still they are all to be implicitly believed, because they are declared in the word of God: so that one of the earliest and strongest associations of their minds shall be that formed between their idea of truth and every thing contained in the holy Scriptures. From the beginning they should be instructed that all reasonings views and feelings are to be brought into subjection to the inspired volume; and that from this authority in matters of religion there does and can lie

no appeal. In order to this, the evidences of revealed truth should be laid before them in a familiar manner; and even before they are capable of estimating the weight of proofs we should endeavour to produce a powerful prepossession in behalf of the Bible. The reason for my insisting so much on this is a conviction that among the lower class of society there is a great deal of that low and ignorant scepticism which is produced in minds incapable of reasoning, by ridiculing facts which are beyond their experience, and truths which are above their comprehension. There is a sort of practical and vulgar infidelity which weaves its toils in the dwellings of the poor, and they, in consequence of not being well-grounded in the persuasion that the Bible must be true whatever corrupt minds may say against it, often fall into its snares, and become its hapless victims.

What therefore I enjoin is to endeavour that the children's minds may be so rooted and grounded in the conviction of the truth of Revelation, that when a profane and artful opposer of the Scriptures shall attempt insidiously to shake their faith, by ridiculing any of the facts or sentiments of the sacred volume, they may shudder at the insinuation, and retire instinctively to the shelter of this immovable prepossession, the Bible must be true.

Let it be an object of solicitude with you to impart to your pupils a correct view of the leading truths of Revelation. You know how to treat the opinion that the doctrines of the Gospel are quite unnecessary in the instruction of children, and that their attention should be exclusively confined to its moral precepts. Explain to them the moral attributes of the great God; his

holiness, as opposed to all iniquity; his truth, as manifested in the accomplishment of his word; his mercy, which inclines him to pity the miserable. Teach them the purity of his law, as pronouncing condemnation on a sinful thought. Endeavour to make them understand the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as breaking through all the obligations imposed upon the conscience by the majesty and goodness of God. Strive to lead them to a knowledge of the total corruption of their nature, as the source and spring of their actual transgressions. Unfold to them their situation, as under the wrath of God, on account of their sins. Show them their inability either to atone for their guilt or renovate their nature. Lead them to Calvary, and develop the design of the Saviour's death as a sacrifice for sin, and teach them to rely upon his merits alone for salvation. Direct them to the Holy Spirit, as the fountain of grace and strength, for the renewal of their hearts. In connexion with this, lay before them all the branches of christian duty; those which relate to God, such as faith, repentance, love, obedience, and prayer; and those which relate to man, as obedience to parents, honesty to their employers, kindness to all. Enforce upon them the obligations of the Sabbath and public worship. Particularly impress upon them that genuine religion, while it is founded on a belief of God's word, does not consist merely in abstract feelings or occasional duties, but in a principle of submission to the revealed will of Jehovah, implanted deep in the heart, pervading the conduct, and spreading over the whole character, so as to form a holy, moral, useful, happy man. Such are the topics which you are to illustrate to the children; unquestionably the most important which can engage their attention.

Much, however, depends upon the method you adopt for explaining them.

Of course you should allot a portion of time to the work of catechising. The experience of all ages bears testimony to the utility of this plan. If well improved it affords a most favourable opportunity for communicating religious knowledge. To accomplish this end it is necessary that you should do more than simply ask the questions, and receive the answers, as they are ranged in the book. To arrest and engage the minds of children, who consider it generally as nothing more than a school exercise, you must descend to familiar explanation. Every answer should be regarded as a text, which, by a few plain short remarks, you should illustrate to their understanding, and enforce upon their consciences. It will be found an excellent method to explain one Sabbath what is to be committed to memory during the week, and repeated as a task the next. As we always learn with greater ease and pleasure what we understand, this would facilitate the business of memory, and prepare them for the examination which should always take place when they are called upon to repeat the answers which had been previously explained to them.

It would greatly aid the business of religious instruction, if the children were encouraged to commit to memory hymns, and portions of the word of God, especially the latter. The measure and the rhyme of poetry have attractions, which without great care on the part of the teacher are likely to induce a preference for hymns. The inspired volume should be elevated in their estimation above every other book. The very words, as well as sentiments, of revelation, have a power and energy which the language of uninspired authors,

however correct their opinions, does not possess. Divine truth, expressed in divinely inspired language, often strikes upon the conscience with a force which would be found in nothing else. As the children are likely to be influenced by other motives than a simple regard to their improvement, the discretion of the teachers should be employed in selecting passages of Scripture suitable to be learnt; especially remembering that, as whatever is committed to memory should be commended to the judgment, they should be more anxious for their pupils to learn well than learn much.

[Quotations are here inserted, giving examples of questions founded on Scripture.]

Select a passage yourselves, and assign it either to a whole class, or a part of it, to be learnt by the next Sabbath, when it will become the subject of examination; and in the mean time, consider what are the questions which it naturally suggests, that you may be prepared for the task. This is a most engaging and instructive method.

Another very judicious exercise for the children is to propose a question, and to require, by a certain time, passages of Scripture to prove and illustrate it; always taking care that the subjects of inquiry be plain, easy, and adapted to the capacity of the children.

Such exercises as these possess the happiest tendency. They are an admirable discipline for the intellectual powers, and train the mind to habits of reflection and diligent inquiry. They call the thinking principle into activity, and must produce considerable improvement in the mental character of the poor. But these are the smallest advantages of the plan: it leads to an engaging and enlarged acquaintance with the word of God, and

establishes a sort of familiarity between the children and the Bible, as the man of their counsel, and the guide of their youth. It would be well also occasionally to examine the children as to their remembrance of the texts and sermons which they hear in the house of God. This would keep their attention alive to what is delivered from the pulpit, and lead them to recognise their own interest in the solemnities of public worship. Such, among other means of communicating religious instruction, appear to me to be eminently adapted to promote this important end.

3. But as very many know the theory of divine truth, without feeling its influence on the heart, or exhibiting it in the conduct; as they often see the right way without walking in it; and as it is only those who are renewed and sanctified by the truth who will be eternally saved, you must, to secure the ultimate object of your exertions, labour to produce religious impression as well as communicate religious instruction. I know it is God only who can reach the heart; but he does it generally by pouring out his Spirit on judicious and well-adapted means. Direct then all your efforts to awaken the conscience, to interest the feelings, and to engage the whole soul in the pursuit of salvation and the business of religion. Let your aim be visible in your conduct, so that the children may be convinced that till they are brought to fear God and serve him in truth, you do not consider yourself to have attained the object of your labours. Let all you do be characterised by an impressive solemnity. Take care of treating sacred subjects with lightness. Never suffer the holy Scriptures to be read unless with the greatest reverence. Mingle a devotional spirit with all you do. Admonish

and exhort the children by all that is awful, and all that is pathetic in religion. Endeavour to awe them by the terrors of the Lord, and melt them by his mercies. Roll over them the thunders of Mount Sinai, and display to them the moving scenes of Mount Calvary. Remind them of their mortality, and bring before their imagination the scenery of the judgment-day. Seize every event that the dispensations of divine Providence may furnish to aid your endeavours. Relate to them instances of early piety, and at other times alarming cases of sudden dissolution. Watch for the appearance of religious concern, as that which can alone reward your labours, or satisfy your desires. Over every other kind of excellence than true religion, exclaim, "Ah! 'tis well, 'tis good, as far as it goes; but I want the fruits of immortality." When these begin to show themselves, hail the first buds of genuine religion with delight, shield them with a fostering care, and with a skilful hand direct their growth.

CHAPTER II.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

THIS is a part of the subject to which the attention of my readers should be directed with the deepest interest and most lively solicitude. The following enumeration will furnish rather an elevated standard: but instead of condemning it as too high, it should be your endeavour to see how near you can approach it.

I. It is exceedingly important that you should be a partaker of real religion.* By personal religion I

* It should be recollected that I am not here discussing the question whether any but persons of decided and tried religion should be employed as teachers. If I were required to give an opinion on this point I should reply, that where a sufficient number of such persons, possessed of other requisite qualifications, could be selected, they would be most desirable, as far more likely to accomplish the ultimate object of the institution. But there are cases in which no such selection can be made; and others in which considerable ability, together with devoted zeal, though not united with decision of religious character, would be exceedingly useful in the general business of the school. Such help, where it is connected with moral worth, (which I hold to be in every instance indispensable), is by no means to be refused. There is a practice however which, although very common, and in its motives very laudable, ought to be resisted with unbending firmness; and that is, the habit of considering schools as places of reformation for the teachers. Many fond and pious parents are very anxious to get sons and daughters, who are destitute of all piety or gravity, introduced into our Sunday-schools, with the

mean more than a general profession of attachment to Christianity; more than a correct theory of religious sentiments; more than a stated attendance upon devotional forms; I mean an experimental acquaintance with the truths of the Gospel in their consoling and sanctifying influence. It is certainly very true that without such a state of heart you may be useful in promoting the subordinate ends of the institution, but you can scarcely be expected to reach the ultimate and supreme one. You may perform the humbler duties in this spiritual husbandry of gathering out the stones and preparing the soil, but to sow the seed of the kingdom must be left to other hands. You may, it is true, impart a knowledge of letters, and teach the children to read even the book of God; but to be the instrument of writing his laws upon their minds, and inscribing them upon their hearts, is an honour to which without true piety you cannot aspire. The teacher who is earnestly seeking the eternal salvation of the children occupies a station as far above his level who seeks nothing more than their temporal advantage, as the angel flying through the midst of heaven is above the traveller who is toiling across the low and sandy desert. If I were to delineate in picture the emblem of a Sunday-school teacher's duty and employment, I would represent faith and love, like the two angels that conducted Lot from Sodom, leading between them a poor child to the cross, and while one was directing his eye to the means of salvation, the other should be pointing him to the realms of eternal glory. But will this

hope of doing them good. It is a question whether the experiment often succeeds; and a still more serious question, whether the institution ought to be exposed to the hazard of the trial.

apply to you without decided personal religion? O no. If you are unconcerned about your own soul; if you gaze with a tearless eye upon your own nature in ruins; how can it be expected you will mourn over the spiritual desolation you see in others? How can you teach an unknown God? How can you represent that Saviour as a pearl of great price who to you is a stone of stumbling? Can you illustrate in what manner the principles of divine truth should constrain the conscience and engage the affections; how they should become the elements of a new existence, and be breathed into the nostrils as the breath of spiritual life? What, this without experimental religion? The maxim, To teach you must feel, is most applicable to vital piety of all things. And as you will be without ability, so in the absence of this qualification you will be equally destitute of inclination, to seek the highest objects of your teaching. Can you feel really disposed to alarm, to stimulate, to admonish others, in reference to the salvation of their souls, when every word brings back upon yourself the keen reproach, "Physician, heal thyself?" A jealous conscience would not endure the insult; and to keep peace in your own bosom, you must soon withhold abroad, the care and benefits which you refuse to bestow at home. If he that winneth souls is wise, and you would start in this career of wisdom, and become candidates for this prize which excites the ambition of two contending worlds, first become wise unto salvation for yourselves, and then from the mighty impulse of that wisdom seek the eternal welfare of the children.

2. A teacher should possess an accurate and extensive acquaintance with divine truth. It is not possible,

neither is it desirable, to ascertain the lowest measure of knowledge with which true godliness is compatible. In many cases the piety of the heart in reference to the ideas of the mind may be said to be the light shining in darkness. Far, very far removed from the dawn of divine truth in the soul, is the degree of knowledge which every teacher should seek to possess. Your views should be clear and extensive. To much love in the heart, you should seek to add much light in the mind. You should have such an acquaintance with your Bible, as to know to what parts of it more particularly to direct the attention of your scholars. You should have a competent knowledge of all its leading doctrines, and be able to cite with readiness particular passages to support them. Without this, how can you conduct the business of religious instruction with much effect? Remember, your class forms a kind of little planetary system, of which, so far as instrumentality is concerned, you are the central luminary. If conscious of any considerable defect in religious knowledge, let your office stimulate you to a more diligent perusal of the word of God. With you it should be an object of great desire, not only to grow in grace, but also in the knowledge of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ. You should devote much time to reading the Scriptures and theological books.

3. Gravity of deportment is indispensably necessary. Here I would not be understood as wishing to envelope the schools of religion in the gloom of melancholy and moroseness. You should be as remote from this disposition, as from its opposite extreme, trifling levity. A teacher of glad tidings should not array himself in sackcloth; nor should the messenger of mercy

appear as sullen and repulsive as the spectre of the cloister.

Religion, when wrapt in gloom, will present but little that is attractive to children; nor will they be able to conjecture how a countenance that is professedly lifted up amidst the light of heaven, can present an aspect so lowering and so dark. Be it recollected however that the cheerfulness which true piety inspires, is holy and dignified like itself, and resembles, not the dissipating glare which is thrown over a city by the gaudy lights of an illumination, but that soft and soothing radiance which beautifies the face of nature on a summer's eve. Religion has its smiles; they are not borrowed, however, from the scenes of a ball-room, but from the splendid visions of eternity, and therefore, with the happiness of heaven, partake of something of its seriousness. The topics of immortality sound badly from the lips of frivolity; and so uttered are sure to lose much of their effect.

The authority of a teacher, of whatever description may be his pupils, can be maintained only by a dignified sedateness of manners. If we may judge from the frequency with which it is enjoined in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit appears to attach great importance to this disposition; since not only are the office-bearers of the christian church commanded to be grave, but even its ordinary members, and especially young men, are charged to show gravity and sincerity, as if it were hardly possible to be sincere in religion, without being serious in deportment.

If you see the importance of such a disposition, you will be impressed with the necessity of avoiding a showy and expensive mode of dress. These remarks apply, of

course, more closely to female teachers. A fondness for dress is one of the prevailing evils of the present day; and, unhappily, it has crept down into the lower classes of society, and imposes its tax upon those who are but ill able to support it. Of the multitude of unhappy females who have quitted the paths of virtue, the great majority have been first led astray by this vain and expensive propensity. The connection between wearing gay clothes, and delight in exhibiting them, is almost inevitable in ignorant and little minds; and this love of display has often first attracted and encouraged the eye of the seducer, just as gay feathers catch the attention of the hawk looking round for his prey. If one may judge from the conduct of the lower classes at the present time, they seem to be endeavouring to hide poverty beneath gaudy colours. Ten thousand evils will flow in upon society, (and they have already begun to flow), when the poor shall conclude that they are respectable in proportion as they are fine; and how much will this disposition be encouraged in the pupils, if it be enforced by the example of the teacher! The children must have far more dignity of mind, far more solid reflection, and far more just discrimination, than can be expected in their circumstances, not to be fascinated with an exhibition on your part of "broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly apparel." To regard these things with indifference, when constantly displayed before their eyes, is too much to look for in them, when it is not found in you. With such objects before them, a whole train of the very worst feelings is likely to arise; admiration, envy, discontent, all are rapidly engendered. The rich velvet, and the glossy satin, together with feathers, flowers, and ribbons, have but little virtue to

reconcile them to the coarser textures and the plainer hues of poverty. Permit me then to recommend the utmost simplicity and neatness of apparel as of great importance in your office. Especially and earnestly do I enjoin the most scrupulous modesty. Even a distant approach to the indecency which has characterised some modern fashions would be offering poison to the morals of every child before whom it is displayed. I am not enjoining meanness, much less slovenliness or filthiness. These are a species of semi-vices wherever they exist; and are to be counteracted in young children, by the instruction of your lips, and the force of your example. What I recommend may be all summed up in two words, modesty and neatness; or, to express it in the language of an apostle, “Whose adorning, let it not be the outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price.”

4. A teacher should be intimately acquainted with all the general proprieties of human conduct which arise out of the distinctions of society and be deeply impressed with their importance. You should not only clearly understand what is religiously and morally right, but also have a keen perception of those minor distinctions between right and wrong, which have been established by the authorized laws of human intercourse. You should be acquainted with the obligations of inferiors to superiors; and of persons in dependent stations of life to those who are their supporters or employers. You should be alive to all the little niceties of behaviour demanded by courtesy, and be able to ex-

pose to the children the impropriety of any instance of rudeness, incivility, or ingratitude. Christianity, instead of sinking the distinctions of society, has elevated and guarded them; and indeed has employed its most sublime and powerful motives to enforce the minutest duties of social life. The children of the poor, especially in large manufacturing towns, are often exceedingly destitute of that respectful deportment towards their superiors which the order of society necessarily requires. This defect it is your duty as much as possible to supply. A civil, submissive, respectful habit is not to be considered as merely constituting the polish of general character, but in some measure preparing for religious impression. A rude, uncivil, untractable youth is the last in the school in whose heart holy emotions are likely to be produced. He who feels little respect for human authority is ill prepared for bowing with humility before that which is divine.

5. It is very necessary that "an instructor of babes" should be able to communicate knowledge in a simple and familiar manner. This is a talent peculiarly requisite in those who are entrusted with the education of children. The mere possession of knowledge does not qualify for the business of instruction, except it be attended with an aptitude in communicating it. Every judicious reader will consider the character of his audience, and adapt his communications to their capacity. If what he says is not understood he may as well talk in a foreign language. Children require a very different mode of instruction from what may be adopted in the case of well-educated adults. They are ignorant of the first principles of divine truth. Nothing must be

taken for granted in teaching them. You must assume nothing; every thing is to be communicated. Perhaps it is the fault of all teachers, not excepting those who deliver their instructions from the pulpit, that they proceed on the supposition that their audience have more knowledge than they really possess. They take far too much for granted. This must be particularly avoided with Sunday-scholars. Of by far the greater number of them it may be affirmed, that they have not a single idea on the subject of religion, but what they will derive from you; and you are to be very careful in presuming upon what they have derived from you.

The same remarks will apply to language as to sentiments. Their knowledge of words is as contracted as their range of ideas; and in order really to instruct them, you must always remember the extent of their vocabulary. Your discourse cannot be too simple and familiar, provided it be not vulgar.

“Nothing,” says Mr Cecil, “is easier than to talk to children; but to talk to thorn as they ought to be talked to, is the very last effort of ability. A man must have a vigorous imagination, and be able to call in illustrations from the four corners of the earth; for he will make little progress but by illustration. It requires great genius to throw the mind into the habit of children’s minds. I am surprised at nothing which Dr Watts did, but his Hymns for Children. Other men could have written as well as he, in his other works; but how he wrote those hymns I know not.”

An aptitude to teach children then in their own way, while it is necessary as a qualification, should be sought as an acquirement. I know of no better method by which this talent may be attained than to read with attention the most approved works which have been written for children, in order to mark and imitate the

style there adopted. Such, for instance, are Dr Watts's Divine Songs for Children, and Miss Taylor's Hymns for Infant Minds, together with any other books which possess simplicity without meanness. If those who wish to cultivate an elegant style read the standard works of the language, surely they whose office requires simplicity of address should take the same means to excel in their appropriate attainment.

6. A heart most deeply interested in the work is a very necessary qualification. This is a cause which leaves no room for the operation of those principles to which, in the general concerns of mankind, so large a portion of human activity may be traced. Here, neither avarice, nor ambition, nor vanity, can have any place, or contribute in the least degree towards success. Without a heart deeply interested in the work, there can be no energy and no success. That teacher who feels no conviction of the importance of the cause, and no solicitude about its issue; who has been brought into the school by no motive at all, or, at best, no other motive than to follow the example, or gratify the desires, of others; has entered upon a station for which he is ill qualified, and from which the sooner he retires the better. Without a most benevolent attachment to the duties of your office, you cannot perform them with much effect. This alone will carry you through the difficulties, discouragements, and sacrifices, which it calls you to sustain. Without such an anxious desire to be successful as shall constrain you to that activity which is requisite to ensure success, you will do but little. It is painful to observe with what sauntering indifference some young persons perform the duties of the school. They begin with weariness, and

end with disgust. It is very evident that whatever else they devote to the cause, they have never given their hearts.

7. A patient temper is exceedingly requisite. The business of instruction, especially the instruction of poor children, who have every thing to learn, will often require the very utmost stretch of forbearance. You will meet with so much constitutional dulness, so much heedless attention, so much wilful neglect, and so much insolent disobedience, that, unless your feelings are under considerable control, you will often be hurried into excesses of impatience, disgraceful to yourself and injurious to your pupils. The little vexations and irritations which arise to try a Sunday school teacher's temper are innumerable and unceasing. Yet, to be successful, you must be patient. You must discipline your temper till it is quite under restraint. A peevish or passionate manner, excited by every little irritating circumstance, renders you exceedingly unfit to deal with the untutored minds and habits of the children of the poor. In many cases impatience in the teacher must be exceedingly injurious to the improvement of the scholar. Some minds are very slow in their advances, very timid in their steps, and require the most affectionate forbearance to be kept from utter despair, and to be encouraged to go on at all: and harsh impetuosity would at once overwhelm them with confusion and dismay. Very, very often is a pupil thrown into such inextricable disorder by a hasty and terrifying sally of the master's impatience, that memory and judgment both forsake him in his fright, and leave him the motionless victim of injudicious anger. A person that has not patience to communicate knowledge drop by drop, should never think of under-

taking the instruction of ignorant children, since it is utterly impossible to pour it into their minds by copious streams. We have not forgotten how slow and unwilling we were to receive the elements of education; but as all children are very much alike in this respect, We may take our own experience. with respect to others, as a tolerably correct measure of the pains which were taken with ourselves, and find in this no weak motive to seek the qualification which I now enjoin.

CHAPTER III.

DIRECTIONS AS TO THE DUTY OF A TEACHER.

HAVING disclosed to you the ultimate object of your exertions, and prescribed the qualifications necessary for accomplishing it, I shall now lay down some directions for the regulation of your conduct.

I. There should be a discriminating attention to the different capacities and tempers of the children. A Sunday school may be considered as a plantation of young minds, the trees of which strike root in different manners, and blossom at various times; each requiring a method of culture adapted to its nature. Some need to be brought into the sun, others to be kept in the shade. Some need to have their growth repressed; others to have it stimulated. Children vary exceedingly in their capacities for learning. Perception is more quick, memory more retentive, comprehension more enlarged, in some than in others. What is industry in one is indolence in another. Of this the teacher should be aware, lest, by expecting the same in both cases, he produce despondency in the former, or nourish idleness in the latter. Nothing is more discouraging throughout the whole range of education than to have the mind put upon exertions to which its faculties are unequal. The spirit in such a case, like a camel that has sunk beneath

his burden, lies down in despair with scarcely a struggle to rise. It is of immense importance that you should know the real capacity of your children, and that you should never require of them impossibilities. You will often need much penetration to discriminate between a want of inclination and a want of ability; this, however, may be acquired.

The temper as well as the mind will require the same judicious attention. Some are timid, and will need great pains to produce in them more confidence in themselves; others are forward, and must be assiduously taught to be more diffident. Some are open and sincere; others are artful and designing. Sometimes you will find a character of such tenderness, that harshness would be like supporting a child's head by a strap of iron; and then again you will meet with such hard, incorrigible stubbornness, that lenient softness would be like tying down the branches of the mountain oak with a silken thread. Study then the character of the children. Minds, like locks, have different and often difficult wards; the same key will not open them all, yet all may be opened by a skilful locksmith.

It is astonishing what may be effected in the work of education by a little ingenuity and invention. There are some teachers who are like empirics, having a certain nostrum which they administer in every case. They never vary the application. A command, a threat, and a blow; and if this does not succeed, the case is abandoned as desperate; whereas a little variation in the mode of treatment would have carried the point, and ensured success. We want more science in the business of education. To a certain extent you should be experimentalists upon the human mind; and when

you meet with a ease which ordinary methods do not reach, you should call to your assistance the powers of invention, and try the effect of new measures. I will here insert two anecdotes illustrative of my meaning. Mr Raikes was in the habit of visiting the parents and children belonging to his schools at their own houses. He called on a poor woman one day, and found a very refractory girl crying and sulking. Her mother complained that correction was of no avail, and that an inflexible obstinacy marked her conduct. After asking the parent's leave, he began to talk seriously to the girl; and concluded by telling her, that, as the first step towards amendment, she must kneel down and ask her mother's pardon. The girl continued sulky. "Well then," said he, "if you have no regard for yourself, I have much regard for you. You will be ruined and lost, if you do not begin to be a good girl; and if you will not humble yourself, I must humble myself, and make a beginning for you." With that he knelt down on the ground before the child's mother, and put his hands together, with all the ceremony of a juvenile offender, and supplicated pardon for the guilty daughter. No sooner did the stubborn girl see him on his knees on her account, than her pride was overcome at once, and tenderness followed; she burst into tears, and throwing herself on her knees, entreated forgiveness; and, what was still more pleasing, she gave no trouble afterwards.

What would many persons have done in this instance? Uttered a scolding threat, and left the girl the miserable victim of her own bad temper. A little science, or, in other words, a little ingenuity, effected a

reformation, for which perhaps that child blesses the name of Raikes to the present hour.

Mr Lancaster had once under his care a boy of the most indolent and untractable habits, on whom the ordinary methods of punishment produced no effect. He resolved, as the case seemed almost desperate, to try an experiment. He placed him as monitor over an inferior class; and, in order more effectually to awaken a feeling of interest and excite a habit of application, he opposed his class to another in a contest to come off at a week's end, proposing a reward to that monitor whose class was victorious. The experiment succeeded to admiration. Emulation was excited in the boy's mind. During the probationary week he was every morning at school in good time, urging on his class to the most vigorous exertions. His truant habits were now broken; and, rewarded by success, he became from that time a pattern of application. By teachers less versed in the art of instruction, this boy would have been given up as incorrigible. You perceive what I mean by science and invention in education. Cultivate it. Indolence may sometimes be excited, where it cannot be driven. And one vice where it cannot be forcibly and immediately eradicated, may be starved and withered in the shadow of some opposite virtue, which a skilful and assiduous hand may raise against it.

2. Exercise great judgment in the application of rewards and punishments. I am not now going to propose any particular kind of rewards and punishments; as this little volume is not intended to regulate the formation of schools, but is addressed to teachers individually, who are already engaged in supporting the

order and arrangements of the school to which they belong. My remarks will therefore apply to the subject generally. The proper application of rewards and punishments is the most difficult part of the business of instruction. To perceive the first buddings either of excellence or of vice, when the former needs most to be encouraged, and the latter may be most easily destroyed, requires a most watchful and discriminating eye. To cherish merit by reward, and at the same time not to promote the growth of pride and selfishness, which are so apt to spring up by its side in the forcing heat of excessive commendation, requires uncommon skill; and no less judgment is necessary in the case of punishment, lest by pulling up some noxious weed with too violent a hand, we tear up with it some better plant.

With respect to reward, I advise that, as much as possible, you make a child's own feelings his reward. External stimulants, I am aware, are sometimes necessary. Indolence must often be roused by the proposal of a prize, the value of which ignorance can comprehend, and insensibility be excited to desire. Any thing is an advantage which moves the stagnant dulness of a mind after the failure of every other plan. But, as a system, I recommend you, as much as possible, to make your children a reward to themselves. By a little pains you may make them sensible of the pleasure of good behaviour, and the advantage of knowledge. When they have succeeded in a lesson, or an effort at good conduct, send them to their own bosom for a rewarding smile, and endeavour to make them sensible of the value of that reward. By this means you elevate the tribunal and strengthen the authority, of conscience. This powerful

principle is often totally neglected in the business of instruction. Its dictates are scarcely ever enforced, its authority seldom exhibited, and its solemn awards entirely superseded by a bribing, hireling system of mercenary rewards. In the education of the heart, conscience is the great auxiliary, whose aid should be perpetually engaged. When a child has behaved so as to deserve commendation, instead of being judiciously instructed by his teacher in the pleasure of doing right, I acknowledge it is a much more easy method of reward to confer a ticket, which at some future day, is to be transmuted into money; but it is more than questionable whether it is the most effectual method. I repeat, I am not for excluding all external rewards; but I enjoin as pre-eminently important an endeavour to produce, in the minds of the children, a conviction that one of the best rewards for doing right is the pleasure of doing it.

Much the same strain of remark will apply to punishment. Chastisement is sometimes necessary. Even corporeal punishment, although it should be excluded as a system, may perhaps, in some cases of extremity, be resorted to, with success, like violent medicines. In all cases of chastisement, a teacher should carefully ascertain the degree of crime, and never forget to discriminate between sins of inadvertence and wilful depravity. Between the thoughtless follies of childhood, and those actions which are deeply dyed with criminality there is a wide difference, of which you should never lose sight. The teacher who, in the infliction of punishment, removes all the distinctions which exist between different classes of offence, is in the fair way of effacing from the minds of his children the natural distinction between right and wrong. Endeavour

to keep your own temper. Never is a cool, dispassionate manner more necessary than when administering reproof, or inflicting punishment. Grinding teeth, flashing eyes, quivering lips, or angry words, are very unlikely means to bring a child to penitence. They may terrify, but will not melt. They may extort confession, but will not produce conviction. Enveloped in the mist of passion, how can you discriminate the precise degree of punishment requisite to produce repentance! Let chastisement always be attended with an obvious regard to the interests of its subject. No censor is so awful, or so effectual, as love; and no reproofs sink so deeply in the heart, as those which fall from the lips of affection. Mercy would soften the mind for the impressions of justice. Where there is a conviction that you chastise for the children's benefit, and not to gratify your own feelings, submission, if not reformation, will generally follow. Your great object in every case of misconduct should be to produce a cordial concern for the fault. This is the very end of punishment. Without a perception of the impropriety of his conduct, and real sorrow for his offence, whatever punishment a child may receive, no solid basis is laid for reformation; and therefore very little is effected. By calm statement, by mild and forcible expostulation, by an appeal to the understanding and feelings of children, much, except in cases of incorrigible obduracy, may be effected in leading to genuine penitence. Great pains should be taken in every instance of moral delinquency to convince them that their offence is committed chiefly against God, and not merely in opposition either to the rules of the school, or the will of the teacher. It should be represented as a sin

to be confessed to God, and for which there is no pardon but through the blood of the Saviour. Great judgment should be exercised in endeavouring to conduct the whole business of punishment in such a manner as shall be least likely to irritate or exasperate the feelings of the delinquent. Surgeons, when it is necessary to employ the knife, are very careful to keep the whole frame as cool as possible, and to choose a time for operation when the diseased part is least under the power of inflammation. Select your times; and particularly remember not to push the rigours of punishment too far nor continue them too long. The moment you perceive that the mind is softened to real concern for the fault, and that stubbornness or impenitence has given way to docility or contrition, it is time for punishment to cease. Beyond this it would be breaking the bruised reed, and nipping the buds of reformation by the chilling influence of despair. In short, as in the business of reward, so also in its opposite, make great use of the children's own feelings. Put the rod into the hand of conscience, and excite a trembling dread of the strokes which are inflicted by this internal censor.

3. Discharge the duties of your office in a conciliating and affectionate manner. God, who framed the constitution of the human mind, and constructed all its mechanism, has Himself informed us what are the springs of action which should be chiefly touched by those who have anything to do in guiding its operations. "I drew them, saith Jehovah," speaking of His conduct towards the Israelites, "with the cords of love, and the bands of a man." Here, in this single short expression, we have compendiously expressed the whole theory of human government, whether it apply to families,

schools, or nations; whether it be designed to control the savage or the sage. This verse, which contains the philosophy of government, should be studied by every one who has any thing to do with his species in the way of enlightening their minds, improving their hearts, forming their manners, or exacting their obedience. "The cords of love are the bands of a man." In prescribing to you therefore the manner in which your duties are to be discharged, I must enjoin an affectionate and conciliating temper. But I would not be understood as here inculcating that weak and foolish indulgence, which drops the reins of authority, and, by abandoning the children to their own inclinations, is still more destructive than the sternest tyranny. The temper that I mean is perfectly compatible with the most inflexible authority, but it expresses itself in tender and gentle language. The law of kindness is on its lips. Its commands and prohibitions are firm but mild. It avoids a surly, stern, repulsive tone; and often distributes to its objects looks and smiles which enter into their very hearts, and win them as captives to itself. It represses all that impatience which the ignorance, follies, and vices of the children, without great watchfulness, have a tendency to produce; and renders its possessor long-suffering and condescending. A teacher, adopting such a method, takes the nearest road to the hearts of the youths committed to his care. He will secure their affection, and thus hold in his hand the key of their disposition. You mistake, greatly mistake, if you suppose a stern, tyrannical manner is necessary to maintain your authority. Besides, it becomes you to recollect, that you are not mere ordinary school-masters: you are teachers of religion, and of that religion

which has so much to do with love. It is the duty of your office to teach the children the knowledge of that great Being, of whom it is said, "God is love;" to point to the cross of Jesus, and instruct them in the height, and breadth, and length, and depth of the love of Christ, which passes knowledge; to repeat to them severally the commands of the two tables, and inform them that love is the fulfilling of the whole law; to implant in them the three cardinal virtues of Christianity, faith, hope, love, and to inform them that the greatest of them is love; in short, to teach them that godliness, the essence of which in this world, and its perfection in the world to come, is love. How ill adapted, how inconsistent, how derogatory to such an office, is a harsh, surly, and tyrannical method of expression! In teaching the religion of Jesus, we must exhibit his spirit, as well as inculcate his doctrines; we must copy him who as a teacher was meek and lowly in heart: for it should never be forgotten that in his religion mercy and truth meet together.

4. With an affectionate unite a dignified manner. I have already hinted that the two qualities are by no means incompatible with each other. Their union forms the very perfection of official conduct. Condescension is not necessarily connected with degradation; nor is it requisite to be familiar in order to be affable. Remember you are placed on an eminence above your children, and, however affection may lead you to stoop from it with kindness, in order the more effectually to reach them, still you must never descend from it so as to be upon their level. Between you and them there is a boundary line which must be mutually observed; and, in order to keep them from overstepping it on their

side, do not approach too near it on your own. You must keep up your authority; for if you cannot ensure obedience you had better retire. Let your method of addressing them in common conversation be dignified and respectful. Call them by their proper names, and never apply the abbreviated terms of vulgar phraseology. Avoid all jesting and low familiarity, together with the broad laugh of jocular merriment.

If you would have them respect your authority never trifle with it yourself. Let them see that you govern from principle, and not from caprice. In order to this, never require anything but what is reasonable, and insist upon the performance of all you require. Always deliberate before you command or threaten, and then never relax afterwards. Your great aim should be that they may both love and respect you.

5. Pursue your exertions with unwearied perseverance. It was little to the honour of Reuben when his dying father thus delineated his character, "Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." Instability is a great blemish of character; occasional excellence may conceal it for a season, but does not remove it. It is in general contemptible; but when it affects other persons, it is cruel. Like the fig-tree which the Saviour blasted, it excites our hopes only to disappoint them. There are some persons whose activity for a season is prodigious. For a while they are all bustle and energy, but it is only for a while. I will not say that their exertions are utterly useless. Their zeal serves the part of thunderstorms in the atmosphere of benevolence; its roll is impressive, and its flashes as vivid as lightning, but withal they are as transient. Still, even the storm is useful, though in a degree very inferior to influences

more steady, permanent and genial. How often have we had to lament the sudden resignation of teachers, whose labours required nothing but continuance to render them incalculably useful; but over whom we have exclaimed with a sigh, "Ye did run well: what hath hindered you?"

It will be proper to enumerate here some of the causes which frequently operate in producing a want of the virtue I am now enjoining.

In some cases a want of perseverance arises from the self-denying nature of the employment, the difficulties and sacrifices of which were not previously considered. In prospect of any intended labour, it is the part of wisdom to sit down and count the cost. Where this is neglected, even the smallest difficulties, as they come upon us when neither expecting them, nor prepared for them, are likely to have a very discouraging effect on the mind. It is vain to deny, and useless to conceal, that the office of a Sunday-school teacher is attended with no trifling sacrifices of ease and comfort, which, unless they are foreseen, will in all probability soon drive them from the work. Should these pages meet the eye of anyone who is about ignominiously to retire from it, on finding that he has to undergo more trials than he expected, I entreat him to consider the importance of the cause which he is disposed to abandon. Let him meditate upon the worth of souls, and consider the childrens' interests for two worlds, which depend so much upon religious instruction; and then say if he ought not to blush at the thought of retreating. Did the Son of God labour through a life of poverty, and agonize in a death of torture for immortal souls; and will you cast from you all care for their interests because a little

sacrifice of time and ease is required on the sabbath? Can you pretend to fellowship with Christ? If selfishness has not chilled your blood at its fountain, let it rise into your cheek as the blush of holy shame, and be the signal from this hour for rallying your retreating benevolence.

Some teachers have been induced to give up their employment on account of a misunderstanding with their associates. It is much to the reproach of human nature, that there is no object, however remote from the usual track of discord, however elevated above the mists of passion, or however removed from the common objects of selfishness, but it sometimes becomes the occasion of strife and alienation among those who support it. One should imagine, if experience were not a more credible witness than fancy, that the regions of benevolence were too rarefied an atmosphere for discord to breathe in. But we know to the contrary. Offences among the active supporters of a Sunday school are, alas too common, and have driven many a valuable teacher away from his office. Let those who are under the influence of such a temptation, and have well nigh resolved to quit their posts because of some injury which they have received, seriously consider what the poor children have done that they are to be objects of their revenge; for on them at last the anger falls. Let such teachers fancy the great God following them into their retirement, and proposing to them a question similar to that with which he surprised his disheartened prophet: "What doest thou here Elijah?" Would they venture to reply, or if they did, would it not be with trembling and confusion "Lord I was offended by my fellow-teachers, therefore I determined

to give up my employment altogether!" "And what," it may be expected would Jehovah reply, "have those poor, ignorant, and, in this case, innocent children done, that they must suffer for the wrong thou hast received? Have I borne with thy offences and provocations, lo these many years, and never forsaken thee: and yet now for one slight injury dost thou forsake both my cause, and the interests of those poor babes that I had intrusted to thy care? Is this thy gratitude; thy obedience; thy religion?" Bow to the rebuke. Confess your folly. Be reconciled to the offender: and persevere in your duty.

Nearly connected with this is a dislike to some of the arrangements of the school, which not unfrequently induces a teacher to make their alteration a condition of his continuing in office. Such a concession cannot and ought not to be made unless the managers are convinced that the proposed alterations are for the benefit of the institution; and even then they ought not to be made with the view of gratifying an individual, but of improving the school. The disposition which leads a man to say, "Unless you alter this or that, I win immediately resign," with whatever plausible excuses it may be covered, is in reality nothing more or better than arrogance. Such teachers would do well to consider what would be the consequence if everyone had like themselves an alteration to propose as a condition of their continuance. They can scarcely pretend to be actuated by feelings of benevolence; since, whatever defects or imperfections they may discover in the school, they can certainly do much more good by continuing than by retiring. If they are really convinced that the system of instruction would be improved by the

adoption of their views, and are conscious of being actuated by benevolence and not merely by self-will, then, in the spirit of a true reformer, they should continue in their office with the hope of one day being able to accomplish the object of desire.

In some cases young persons have quitted their office, because there were none in the school of equal standing with themselves in life. What! shall pride, that disgusting and destructive vice, be allowed admission to the field of mercy's sacred labours? What! must our very compassion be made dependent on the finery which the milliner, the jeweller, or the tailor can supply? That the frivolous and the gay should refuse to resort to a place where correspondent glitter is not to be found is not surprising; but to refuse to distribute the benefits of instruction to the ignorant, and the blessings of salvation to the perishing, unless we have by our side one as well dressed as ourselves, seems the very climax of all that is absurd in human pride. Is this then a cause which can be ennobled by the splendour, or degraded by the obscurity, of its active supporters? Is it not enough that you are employed as the almoners of God's richest gifts, and engaged for the benefit of immortal interests? The loftiest seraph that glows and burns in the temple above would, if so commissioned by his God, accept with gratitude the office you are disposed to vacate, and would think himself most honourably employed in teaching the knowledge of his exalted Lord, though his pupils were the poorest of children, and his associates the poorest of teachers. If, however, you must have fellow-workers who are your equals or superiors, you have only to look up with the eye of faith, and you would find yourself surrounded by ministers and missionaries, prophets and

apostles, the wise and good of every age; who have all been pursuing, though in another way, the same grand object that you are seeking. And what is even this to the thought of being, although in the humblest sense, a fellow-worker with God and Christ in the redemption of a lost and miserable world?

Marriage has very frequently put an untimely close to a teachers labours. I have seen very many instances in which the next Sabbath after the conjugal union has been formed, both parties have relinquished their office at the school. Does that union then, which was designed by its divine Author as the basis of society, release us from a single obligation to promote its welfare? Or do we acquire a sanctity of character at the hymeneal altar which is profaned by exposing it in a Sunday-school? Or do the tender affections which this connection produces unfit the parties for an office one qualification of which is love? I acknowledge that in many, perhaps in most cases, the secession of females becomes a matter of necessity; but for a young man to give us his attention to the cause of God, the very first Sabbath after he has received the greatest relative blessing heaven has to bestow, is a cold expression of gratitude to his Benefactor. Till a rising family of his own prefer more just and sacred claims upon his time than the children of the poor it is both absurd and cruel to take it away from them: How can he better prepare himself to become the preceptor of the little circle that may one day surround his own fire-side than by acquiring the art of instruction among the sons and daughters of strangers? Such are the more prevailing causes that produce a want of perseverance, and such the manner in which they may be removed.

5. I mention constancy as exceedingly important in the manner of discharging the duties of a teacher's office. This perhaps may seem like a repetition of the last direction; but the qualities recommended differ. By perseverance I intend a continuance in office; and by constancy a steady, uniform, and undiverted discharge of its duties. In most large towns circumstances are continually occurring which put this virtue to the test. Some popular minister is to preach; or one of the resident ministers is to preach a charity sermon, or funeral discourse: on such occasions, without a firm and steady attachment to the business he has undertaken, a teacher is in great danger of being induced to quit his post.

There is one sect in the religious world, which, although not enumerated in any book of denominations, or in any theological dictionary; and although it has neither distinct creed, nor separate temples, still is entitled to a specific notification: this sect I shall denominate the *Curiosi*; their identifying trait is a love of novelty. They belong to any preacher who for the time can interest them by something new; and they attach themselves to every congregation that has something going on out of the common way. Thus, as they are carried along the stream of profession, they are like twigs and chips floating down near the bank of a river, intercepted by every weed, and whirled in every little eddy. If you would be a useful or respectable teacher, you must not belong to this denomination. It does not rank very high in heaven above, or earth beneath. They would fain persuade you that, like the bee, they are sucking honey from every flower; but more like the butterfly, they rove through all the garden of the Lord, not to sip the most luxurious, but to flutter with a vain

and useless volatility round the most gaudy blossoms within the sacred inclosure. Be always at your post; and let it be your glory to find what powerful attractions you can resist, rather than be absent from your needy charge.

6. Punctuality in a teacher is vitally connected with the prosperity of the school. When one considers the importance of the object in which you are engaged, and adds to this the little time which at most you can command for seeking it, one might have presumed that it would be quite unnecessary to caution you against making that little less. And yet it is painful to be obliged to assert that there is scarcely one evil, under which the whole system more severely suffers, than a want of punctuality in the teachers. It is an evil which eats into the very core of the institution. Precisely in the degree in which it exists, the order of the school must be interrupted, the solemnity of instruction be disturbed, and the whole machine be impeded. Nor will the mischief stop here. The children, perceiving that it is useless to be there before their teachers, and imitating their irregularity, will sink into the same habits of inattention and neglect. Late masters must make late scholars. It is useless for you to admonish your class to be early, if by example you instruct them to be late.

There are several causes which lead to the evil of which I now complain. A thoughtless disregard to the importance of punctuality in general is observable in some persons. They are always and in every thing behindhand. If they have an engagement, they never think of preparing for it till the time for it is past. On the Sabbath they do not set off to public worship till the clock reminds them they ought at that moment to

be in their pew. "A few minutes," they lazily exclaim, "can make no great difference." A few minutes make no difference! If everyone in every thing, were to act upon this principle but for one day, the world would be a chaos. This procrastinating temper is a bane under the influence of which the interests of society are suffering in a thousand ways; and that man would deserve the thanks of his species, who could furnish the most effectual antidote against it. There is a time for every thing: and let every thing be done in its time. In common language we speak of fetching up lost time, but this is impossible. A moment lost can never be recovered.

Late rising on the Sabbath morning is a great obstacle in the way of punctuality. Perhaps I shall be thought uncharitable in expressing my apprehensions, that many professing christians protract their slumbers to an unusual length on the morning of the Sabbath; and thus convert that day, which was mercifully intended as a season of rest, into a period of indolence. Considering how closely the world and its concerns follow us on other days, one might imagine that we should feel disposed to make the Sabbath as long as possible. It is the last day we ought to shorten; and were our souls in a state of high spiritual prosperity, we should, like the lark, be soaring towards heaven upon the wings of the morning, while the greater part of the world below us was still wrapt in silence and in sleep, and, like the nightingale, continue to pour forth our Songs in the night, when the multitude around us, to relieve the tedium of the sacred day, had prematurely gone to rest. But consider, your sloth defrauds not only your own souls, but also the souls of your children

at the school. The dreams of such forbidden slumber, to be characteristic, should present you with a shepherd depriving his lambs of their food. Rising late, you are often driven to the school without prayer and without preparation, and even then are often long after the time. Every beam of the morning, as it gently touches the lids of your eyes, seems to address you in the language of Christ to His slumbering disciples: "Why sleep ye, Rise, and pray." Or, if this be too gentle a voice to rouse you from your slumbers, let harsher tones disturb you: "What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God."

Another cause of late attendance is too much time employed at the dinner table. Are there christians who devote the Sabbath to more than ordinary gratification of the palate, and who, in order to provide for their pleasure, employ their servants or themselves during the most precious portion of the day in preparing for their table? Alas, to the shame of many who make large professions, this question must be answered in the affirmative. In some cases it is beyond a teacher's control to alter the arrangements of a family; but it is within everyone's ability to content himself with any thing the house affords, rather than be late at school, through waiting for the joint still at the fire. Do I ask a costly sacrifice for the interests of the children? What! a warm dinner on Sundays too much to give up for those souls for which the Saviour gave His blood? this too much to relinquish, in order that you may hasten with the bread of life to those who are perishing for lack of it? Can you grudge this gratification, when it is to enlarge your opportunity of endeavouring to save those souls, which if finally lost, shall never have the temporary

mitigation of their torments, that even a drop of water affords to a burning tongue?

Let me enjoin with peculiar earnestness, a strict regard to punctuality. That you may feel more strongly the obligations to this, I again entreat you to recollect for how short a space of time the children can enjoy your instructions. A few hours on the sabbath, with respect to most of them, is all the time through the whole week during which they hear or see any thing like religion. Make not that little less.

7. Crown all your labours with fervent and habitual prayer. It is important for you, in all your exertions, to bear in mind the total and universal depravity of the human race.

By total depravity, "I do not mean that men or children are as bad as they can be; for in general they lie under strong restraints. Not that they are all equally wicked; for some are more restrained than others. Not that they are destitute of every thing useful and lovely in society; their social affections are often strong and praiseworthy. Not that the form of their actions is always wrong; the contrary is manifestly true. What I mean by total depravity, is an entire destitution in the human heart by nature of all spiritual affection and holy propensities."

In this view every child that comes to your school is till renewed by divine grace totally depraved. To change this state of the mind, and produce a holy bias; to create a new disposition; to turn all the affections into a new channel, and cause them to flow towards God and heaven, is the work of the omnipotent and eternal Spirit, but he, in the execution of his purposes, generally employs the instrumentality of man. Now this view of the case must be ever before your mind; it must mingle with all your plans, and direct all your exertions. You must accurately understand the nature of the materials on which you have to work, and be

intimately acquainted with the source whence success is to be expected. You must sow the seed in due season with the diligence of the husbandman, and then exercise like him an unlimited dependence upon the influence of the heavens: for it is God that gives increase to the labours of both. A spirit of earnest prayer should be the living soul of all your conduct. While your eye is fixed upon the children, your heart should be lifted up to God. You should sit down as between them and the fountain of life, and while opening by instruction a channel to their hearts, seek to draw the living stream by prayer from heaven. Your closet should be the constant scene of your anxiety for their welfare. In those seasons of hallowed seclusion when your soul makes her nearest and happiest approaches to the throne of divine grace give her in charge their immortal interests, God loves the prayers of his people, and especially delights in the prayers of pious benevolence, Importune him therefore to bless your efforts. Confess to him that the work of conversion is all his own. Hang the interests of the school upon his arm, and lay them down in the light of his countenance.

Especially on the morning of the Sabbath, in the prospect of your exertions, make the welfare of the children the principal subject of your prayers, and next to your own growth in grace. Pray for grace to be found faithful, and to be made sufficient for these things. Entreat of God to rouse you from lukewarmness, and to enable you to feel your responsibility for the souls of others. There qualify yourself, if I may so speak, for your office. It is astonishing what an effect is produced on our own feelings by fervent prayer. It elevates in our minds, and endears to our heart, every

object which it embraces. It is not the pleading of a hireling advocate, who, after his most eloquent appeals, receives his fee, and forgets his client; but the intercession of genuine clarity, which warms towards its object lily its own impassioned entreaties on its behalf. Prayer will cherish all the tenderest sensibilities of the heart, and keep down the growth and influence of our natural selfishness. Did you come to the school every Sabbath morning, like Moses from the Mount, direct from the presence and the converse of God, bringing all the solemn tenderness with which you had supplicated for the children at the mercy-seat, what a character would be imparted to your deportment! The solemn air of eternity irradiated with the beams of heavenly glory would be visible upon your countenance; while the meekness of Jesus, and the mercy of his Gospel, breathed forth in all your language, would admonish the children that it was not a time for them to trifle when their teacher had come to them with a "message from God."

Those who are most prayerful will be most successful, provided they possess other qualifications in an equal degree. On the other hand, it is matter of little surprise that no success, in the way of spiritual benefit, attends the efforts of those by whom this duty is neglected. They labour, as might be expected, in a field on which the dew of heaven seldom distils, and which brings forth little else than thorns and briars. Whenever we shall be favoured to perceive a spirit of prayer resting upon the great mass of our teachers, and inspiring all their exertions, we shall not wait long before we hear of a degree of success among the children which will delight and astonish us; for it is said of Jehovah, that "He heareth prayer."

CHAPTER IV.

THE DUTIES OF TEACHERS TO EACH OTHER.

In every case of combined exertion, there devolve upon the co-workers, mutual obligations, on the due discharge of which the success of their efforts materially depends. This is obviously true as to the case in hand. Besides what is due to the children from the teachers, there is much to be observed by the teachers towards each other.

1. They should cultivate a spirit of reciprocal affection. In addition to the ordinary reasons for brotherly love which exist in every case, your circumstances supply another of considerable weight. Unity of exertion certainly calls for unity of affection; for the former without the latter can exist but in a very feeble degree, and be crowned only with very partial success. Love should be the superintendent of every school. Affectionately devoted to the object of the institution, you should love everyone who contributes in the least measure to its success. Worldly and even wicked associations lead to strong affection between the united parties; the soldier contracts a strong affection for his comrade who fights by his side; the servant who is faithfully devoted to his master's interest feels a regard for his fellow-servant in

whom he discovers the same fidelity; the traveller forms a growing friendship for the person, though accidentally met with on the road, with whom he shares the toils and dangers of the way; even a gang of robbers feel sometimes a sort of affection for each other. Certainly then a co-operation so benevolent in its objects as that in which you are engaged, and so holy in its acknowledged bond of union, ought to produce a high degree of christian love. Labouring side by side in the cause of immortal souls, that cause in which the Saviour spent his life, and shed his blood; that cause which from beginning to end is emphatically the cause of love, you should cultivate towards each other no common measure of hallowed friendship. It is not enough that you avoid a state of open enmity; it is not enough that you maintain complaisant indifference, or cold and civil distance; this is very far below that cordial and glowing affection, which should be cherished among the fellow-workers in such a cause. This should be the prompt and generous language of one heart to another, "I love you, for your love to these children, and the interests of piety." The teachers of every school should form a holy family, a devoted fraternity associated by the bond of affection for the purpose of benevolence, within whose sacred and peaceful circle, envy, jealousy, and strife, should never be allowed a place; but which should incessantly exhibit the "good and pleasant sight of brethren dwelling together in unity."

2. There should be cordial and general co-operation in every thing which concerns the institution. The prosperity of the school at large is that which every individual teacher should keep in view, and which he should seek by the improvement of his own class. It is of vast

importance that you should steadily and continually remember that, although you have separate and individual duties, yet you have no private and separate interests. The school forms a little community, of which you are a member, and to violate its integrity by setting up the interests of distinct parties, is treason. You must all act together. The worst of evils have arisen from the teachers being divided into little knots. These are frequently, perhaps generally, produced by the operation of private friendship. For example, there are two or three of the number who, from congeniality of mind or long intimacy, are on habits of the most friendly intercourse. Forgetting the consequences which are likely to ensue, they take no pains to conceal or suspend their intercourse during the time they are at the school; they are often seen talking to each other, and exchanging the warmest expressions of endeared friendship, while the rest are passed by with cold civilities or indifference. All this while a spirit of division is imperceptibly generated. Others, perceiving that they are not to be admitted to the select circle, form parties of their own. During the usual and uninterrupted routine of ordinary business, no effect peculiarly injurious perhaps arises; but the very first time that an offence occurs, or a diversity of opinion takes place, the mischief, which has been secretly collecting, explodes. Factions are formed according to the parties which had previously existed; opposition grows strong; the work of division and alienation goes forward; the seeds of lasting discord are sown, and the school receives an injury, from which it is long in recovering.

Take care, therefore, of forming the teachers into parties. Private friendships are not forbidden to you;

but the school is not the place to display them. Even should you walk in company to the scene of your labours, remember to separate as friends, the moment you touch the threshold of the school-room; and, suspending for a season all visible partialities, mingle with the whole body, and, feeling the pressure of a general band, act upon the principle that you are all one.

Especially take care of systematically thinking and acting with a party. Endeavour in all cases of diversity of opinion to act independently and conscientiously. Be very watchful that your affections do not impose upon your judgment, and that your private attachments do not influence your public conduct: for if it be seen that in your official duties you act independently of personal regard, your friendships, however well known, will make no party, and do no harm.

3. Never make the real or supposed faults of one teacher, the matter of conversation with others. This rule equally extends to official delinquencies and personal offences. There is a most powerful propensity in human nature to what has been denominated with considerable propriety backbiting; or making the faults of an absent person the subject of conversation. This is a vice so mean, so mischievous, so cowardly; so characteristic of littleness as well as of malignity; that every holy man should hate it, and every wise man be ashamed of it. O what wisdom, what mercy, what love, is there in our Lord's directions! "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more; that in the mouth of

two or three witnesses every word may be established.” If this rule were universally obeyed, three parts of the feuds and quarrels which destroy the peace, and desolate the temporal interests, of men would be cut off. “Tell him his fault between thee and him alone:” and of course this must mean tell him first; let not another know it till you have tried the effect of this private and personal representation. How often has the harmony of our schools been interrupted by a violation of this rule! A teacher’s faults have been made the subject of free conversation, until the matter, swelled by falsehood and envenomed by malignity, has come to his ears in the most exasperating form. It is melancholy to reflect from what slight causes the most serious animosities have arisen, even among those who were professedly teaching a religion of forgiveness; and the grief is increased by considering what a small measure of forbearance would at one time have proved sufficient for preventing the whole series of the subsequent mischiefs. It is a difficult point to settle who is most to blame and most answerable for consequences; the person who first commits a fault, or he who by revenging or publishing it causes it to extend its baneful effects. If my neighbour be wanton or wicked enough to throw a kindled firebrand into my dwelling, and I instead of immediately quenching it throw it back into his premises, or cast it into the air for the wind to carry it whither it will, am I less answerable for the conflagration than he? So when you are offended by a brother teacher if, instead of going to him alone and endeavouring to come to an amicable adjustment of the affair, you throw back the firebrand in revenge, or cast it into the

air by publicly talking of the matter, and a fiery contention ensues, you are perhaps the guiltier individual of the two.

Let me here enjoin upon all concerned in the active duties of a Sunday-school, the diligent cultivation of that charity, or love, which the apostle has so exquisitely described. "Charity suffereth long," when injured, does not seek revenge; "charity is kind," is desirous of making everyone happy; "charity envieth not," feels no pain at the sight of another's excellences or possessions, nor dislikes him on that account; "vaunteth not itself," does not boast of what it has done or can do; "is not puffed up," has no proud conceit of its own attainments or achievements; "doth not behave unseemly," quietly discharges the duties of its own rank, station, age, or sex, without rudely stepping ant of its own appropriate circle; "seeketh not her own," abhors selfishness; "is not easily provoked," is as backward to take offence, as it is to revenge it; "thinketh no evil," is willing to impute a good motive, till a bad one is proved; "rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth," mourns the failings, and delights in the excellences, of her opponent; "beareth," or, as the word signifies, "covereth all things," covers with a mantle of love those faults which it is not necessary to disclose; "believeth all things," to the advantage of another; "hopeth all things," where there is scarcely evidence sufficient to induce belief; "endureth all things," is willing to make any sacrifice, and endure any privation, consistent with truth, in order to promote peace. What schools we should have, under the control of such a spirit! What hinders us from culti-

vating this god-like, heavenly, and everlasting virtue, as the ruling temper of our hearts, and the all-pervading spirit of the institution?

4. Always address each other with kindness and respect. Avoid every thing domineering, uncivil, and disrespectful, both in manner and in tone. It is greatly to be regretted, that suavity of speech and urbanity of manners appear with some good people to rank amongst heterodox virtues. But I have yet to learn in what page of revelation courtesy is proscribed. Gold is not the less weighty for being bur-nished, nor the diamond less valuable for being polished; no, nor is real religion the less pure for being decorated with the ornament of real courtesy. The holiness of a saint receives no contamination or alloy from the man-ners of a gentleman.

I am not inculcating the stiff cold etiquette of a heartless and cringing politeness, but that affectionate and respectful attention to each other's feelings which is compounded of benevolence and good manners. "Let the law of kindness be in your lips, and your speech be always with grace;" remembering you are not many masters, but brethren.

It is of considerable moment, that, as the children are required to respect their instructors, they should be invariably taught to do this by the example of the teachers mutually respecting each other. And as it is one object of Sunday-school instruction, though not the ultimate one, to check what is rude, and polish what is rough, in the manners of the children, it is of no small consequence, that, in the conduct of their teachers, they should constantly have before their eyes models of kindness and respect.

5. Never interfere with the duties of each other. An officious meddling disposition is sure to do mischief and incur contempt. Your respective duties are sufficiently distinct to be clearly ascertained, and to render any encroachment inexcusable on the ground of ignorance. Upon observing any irregularity or neglect in the class of another, instead of attempting to rectify it yourself, mention it kindly to the teacher to whom the class belongs; especially remembering that the hint be given as privately and as delicately as possible, as no one should be convicted or reprov'd before his own pupils.

6. Be very careful to discharge the general duties of your office in a manner suitable to your age, sex, and condition in life. Older and younger teachers are under reciprocal obligations to each other. Those whose years and experience entitle them to considerable deference from their younger fellow-labourers, should be exceedingly anxious to employ their seniority to great advantage. Let them remember the influence of their example, and not merely abstain from every thing which it would be injurious for others to imitate, but abound in every virtue which may be copied with advantage. Unusual seriousness and zeal should characterize all their deportment. Connected with this should be a friendly disposition to associate with their younger brethren. There should be no distant, reserved, and repulsive behaviour, but a willingness to instruct, encourage, and guide them, unattended by a wish to dictate and govern. How eminently serviceable might such persons render themselves by repressing intemperate zeal, by giving to youthful ardour a right direction, and smoothing the ruggedness with which the first stage in the career of usefulness is sometimes marked!

Instead therefore of viewing the junior teachers as too young to be their associates, and leaving them to companions as inexperienced as themselves, let the senior labourers in this good cause consider them as objects commended to their especial protection, to be under their fostering care trained up to excellence in the duties of their office.

On the other hand, let the younger teachers be thoroughly aware of the duties of their age. Let them seek the company of their seniors; treat them with respect, solicit their advice, and hearken to their opinions with deference. Where youth is modestly inquisitive and age unostentatiously communicative, much benefit must result from their being brought into association. Young persons, however, are exceedingly apt to be forward, flippant, positive, and self-confident. Nothing can be more offensive than to see a person, young in years, and still younger in experience, forgetful of the deference due to those who are wiser and older than himself, urging his own plans and views with a pertinacity scarcely tolerable in grey hairs, and in opposition to the ripe wisdom of his seniors, contending for their adoption as confidently as if he had received them by revelation from heaven. Modesty is a disposition so necessary in the character of youth that no talents can be a substitute for it, nor can any attainments, however splendid, be admitted as an excuse for the want of it. Let those who have but recently entered upon their office always listen with great humility to those who have been employed in it for years, and eagerly avail themselves of the testimony of their experience. The worst of evils have arisen from that haughty temper which forgets that among equals in

rank some are far better qualified than others, and that deference to them is no degradation.

Between the teachers of opposite sexes there are duties to be discharged which involve their own respectability, and the character of the institution. Some persons, who understand no logic but that of the pocket, and who find it more cheap to find out the faults of an institution, than the means of its support, have sometimes made this objection against the plan of gratuitous teaching in our Sunday-schools, "that it gives occasion for too frequent meetings of young people, and often leads to hasty and injudicious connections in life." Leaving this unsubstantial objection to pass like a shadow over a rock, I certainly see the necessity and importance of the most punctilious regard to all the rules of modesty and reserve, between male and female teachers. A school room is not the place, nor is the Sabbath the time, for gossip between young men and women. Nothing can be more improper than to see young men intruding into an apartment appropriated to the instruction of girls, and there nodding, laughing, or talking to a female acquaintance. Before an assembly of poor children, one of whose greatest dangers arises from a want of proper and delicate reserve between the sexes, and who are ready to copy with avidity any want of decorum in their teachers, the very smallest deviation from the strict rules of propriety is a crime, not only against their manners, but against their morals. Under such circumstances, the most scrupulous circumspection is indispensably requisite.

And here, perhaps, it may be neither unseasonable nor unnecessary to caution young persons against being led into ill-advised connections by the intercourse they

necessarily must have with each other, after every rule of decorum has been observed. There exists no reason why a connection commenced at a Sunday-school should necessarily be a bad one; nor, on the other hand, why it should necessarily be a good one. Persons may be very excellent teachers, and yet be very ill adapted for husbands or wives. The qualifications required for these respective relationships are, in some respects, so essentially different, that there is no arguing from the one to the other.

Sometimes we shall find in the same School persons of very different standing in life; and such a disparity, without an attention to the duties which it entails, is likely to be attended with some degree of discord. The richer and better-educated members of the little community should be careful to exclude from their conduct every thing like the pride of station, and at the same time to avoid that insulting condescension, which makes its object feel at what a distance it is considered. It is a nice and delicate point to distinguish between affability and familiarity; and to act with those who are below us in life, as fellow-labourers in the school, without making them our companions out of it.

Those whom Providence has destined to fill the humbler stations of society, and who are engaged in the work of tuition with others of more elevated circumstances, will also do well to guard against an obtrusive and forward disposition; without being servile, they should always be respectful. All they ought to expect from their superiors is, a kind co-operation in the duties of the school, without the familiarity of friends and companions in general.

7. Prayer is a duty which the teachers of a Sunday

school mutually owe to each other. If we are commanded to make supplications for all men, even for those with whom we have no other connection than such as is established by the common bond of humanity, surely those with whom we are united in the communion of christian benevolence ought not to be excluded from our petitions. Mutual prayer, as I have already considered in the case of the children, would be productive of mutual endearment in proportion to its fervour. If on a Sabbath morning you devoted a portion of the time spent in the closet, to entreat the blessing of God upon the persons and labours of your fellow-teachers, how sweetly would such an engagement prepare you to mingle with them in the duties of the day! Softened to benevolence by the exercises of piety, and with the fire of love still burning which prayer had kindled in your heart, with what a holy temper would you hasten to the scene of your exertions, and with what a glowing affection look round upon the objects of your fervent supplications! What an influence might it be expected such a system of mutual prayer, sincerely importunately and perseveringly presented, would draw down from heaven upon the institution at large! Showers of blessings would come down in their season, in which both children and teachers would reciprocally rejoice. God hears and answers prayer; and of all the prayers which enter heaven, and rise before the throne, we can readily conceive that none more speedily catch His ear and move His hand than those which one christian pours forth over the religious zeal of another; since such prayers are like the aromatic incense which ascended in a cloud before the mercy-seat, compounded of many precious ingredients all of divine appointment.

CHAPTER V.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

As this life is a state of probation, it may be reasonably expected that every situation will have its trials. Temptations vary with our circumstances; but there is no scene from which they are entirely excluded. The heavenly and the earthly paradise alternately witnessed their attack, their victory, and their havoc. Angelic as well as human perfection yielded to their shock, and left a warning to every subsequent age, "not to be high-minded, but to fear." In a world which God for a while has permitted to sink under the dominion of the prince of the power of the air, it is not to be wondered at that there is no situation in the church, however obscure and solitary, or however elevated, from which all temptation can be effectually shut out. The fact is, that, as our chief danger arises from our own evil heart, till we can be separated from our guilty selves, we shall look in vain for a spot sheltered from the attack of our spiritual enemies. Well did our merciful Redeemer know our weakness and our dangers, when He put into our lips that appropriate petition, "Lead us not into temptation." What duty is more frequently enjoined in the New Testament than watchfulness? And what is more necessary? How incumbent this is on those who are

engaged in the active duties of a Sunday-school, will be very apparent by even a partial enumeration of their temptations.

1. They are in great danger of receiving injury to their own personal religion. The Sabbath, if the expression should not be thought too low, is the market-day of the soul, when she lays in the provisions which are to refresh her, and the materials which are to employ her, during the ensuing week: if this day be misimproved, six days suffer for the neglect of one. It is very true that real godliness will not confine itself to peculiar times and places; but still there are both peculiar times and places which are eminently adapted to promote its life and power. The Sabbath and the sanctuary sustain the highest rank among the instituted means of religious benefit. It is then that the christian, engaged in warfare with this world, like a ship in action with an enemy, lies by for a season to repair the damages he has received, and prepare again for action, by renewing the faith which gives him the victory. It is then that piety, wearied and weakened by the toils of her wayfare, sits down to rest beneath the shadow of Christ's ordinances, and, refreshing herself at the river of life which flows at her feet, rises with renovated strength to pursue her journey to the city of habitation. Hence all those who are concerned for the prosperity of their spiritual interests, and are wise in the selection of means to promote them, set a high value upon the Sabbath as the chief auxiliary of true religion.

Now, without great care, a Sunday-school teacher is in imminent danger of losing much of the benefit of the christian Sabbath. As your attendance is required pretty early at the school, you are often exposed to the tempta-

tion of neglecting secret prayer on the Sunday morning. Without a most resolute and self-denying habit of early rising, you will be very frequently hurried away to the school before you have had time, except in a very hasty manner, to supplicate a blessing from God upon the services of the day. A Sabbath commenced without prayer is likely to be spent without pleasure, and closed without profit. It is in the closet that the soul is prepared for the blessings of the sanctuary; it is there the understanding is cleared for instruction, and the heart softened for impression; it is there that God excites the spiritual hunger and thirst which he afterwards intends to satisfy with the provisions of his holy temple. Everyone who wishes to find the Sabbath a delight, should introduce it by a season of earnest and secret prayer, which you, without most determined habits of early rising, are likely, in consequence of your engagements, to neglect.

Without great vigilance you are in danger of losing the spirituality of the Sabbath altogether, and making it rather a day of business than of devotion. In many large schools much of the Lancasterian system of education is introduced into the method of instruction, which certainly facilitates the communication of knowledge; but at the same time it must be confessed, that, from its nature, it has a tendency, unless there be pre-eminent care on the part of the teacher, to increase the secularising influence of the whole business of instruction. The audible repetition of orders, the evolutions of the classes, the exhibition of signals, and indeed the whole mechanism of the plan has a great tendency to destroy that tranquillity and spirituality of mind which are essential to the exercises of

devotion. In addition to this, the little vexations and irritations which the conduct of the scholars so frequently produce, are very apt to disturb and discompose the most amiable temper, and thus disqualify the soul for the enjoyment of religion, which requires the most serene and unruffled atmosphere. The body, too, often grows weary, and the animal spirits flag; under such circumstances you sometimes enter upon the means of grace but ill-prepared to benefit by them.

The service passes on, while alas neither the solemnity of prayer, nor the animating notes of holy praise, neither the fervour of the preacher, nor the seriousness of the surrounding congregation, seems to interest or impress you; and then, mourning the coldness and barrenness of your heart, you retire to mark upon the gloomy chronicle of misimprovement another sabbath lost. Many a teacher will subscribe to the truth of this representation by a deep and heavy sigh; and many a tongue be ready to exclaim, "My wasting piety yields sad proof, that without watchfulness genuine godliness may receive lamentable injury even in a Sunday-school. But tell me how I may guard against the danger: its existence I know without being told." Begin the day with earnest prayer that you may carry a devotional spirit to your labours, Seriously remember your danger: and diligently watch against it. Keep in view the ultimate object of your exertions, and elevate your views from the mere communication of knowledge to the salvation of immortal souls; as long as you can fix your mind on the spiritual interests of the children, and labour affectionately for them, you guard against the secularising influence of the ordinary school business, and are cherishing a spirit every way friendly to

your own piety. Make it the subject of earnest supplication that God would preserve you from the danger to which you are exposed. Endeavour to acquire settled habits of stillness and order, that all unnecessary bustle may be avoided, and every thing conducted with calmness and serenity. Employ in devotional retirement the time you have to spare during the intervals of public worship. By these means assiduously applied the spirit of true piety may be preserved; and personal religion remain uninjured amidst the routine of Sunday-school instruction.

There is another source from whence some degree of danger may be apprehended, and that is a habit of speaking on religious subjects with too much indifference and levity. This applies to every one who is called to teach religion officially. The solemn topics of heavenly truth can never be treated lightly with impunity. A mind accustomed to dwell upon them in a mere official and unfeeling manner, must gradually lose its susceptibility to their living influence; and become hardened against their power to sanctify and comfort. That which at one time we treat as the ordinary routine of business, it will be difficult at another to enjoy as the element of devotion. Let us then take care never to handle the truths of revelation with a light and careless temper; for by such means they are likely to become "the savour of death unto death." "The solemn awe, which warns us how we touch a holy thing," should ever imbue our minds while our tongues are engaged upon the affairs of eternity. Never forget that everlasting interests hang upon the truths which you teach to the children, and that their manner of learning them, will

in a considerable measure, be in imitation of your manner of teaching them.

There is the greater need of watching against the danger to which your office as a teacher exposes your own personal piety; as of all causes of spiritual declension, this is the most likely to be excused by a deceived conscience. Is the following mode of reasoning new to you? "It is true I have not been of late so attentive to personal religion as I formerly was, and it must be confessed divine truths affect me less powerfully than they once did: but as the neglect was produced by an attention to the interests of others, it is quite pardonable; for if I have not kept my own vineyard, I have kept the vineyard of others; and therefore I consider that my falling off a little should be considered rather in the light of a sacrifice, than a sin." It becomes us to recollect that our first care is with our own soul; and that, as no duties can be incompatible with each other, nothing is required of us that necessarily interferes with personal religion. Nothing can possibly be a substitute for this; nothing excuse the decline of it. Neither the most diffusive benevolence, nor the most ardent zeal, will be admitted by God as an apology for sinking into the crime of lukewarmness. There is however no necessary connection between a decay of piety and the duties of a Sunday-school: the danger arises only in case in which there is a want of caution. Properly conducted your employment would be found rather an auxiliary, than a foe, to the greatest spirituality of mind.

2. Another temptation to which Sunday-school teachers are exposed, is a spirit of pride. To be a teacher of

others; to be invested with authority; to be regarded as an oracle; to be listened to with deference; to say to one, "Come," and he cometh, to another, "Go," and he goeth, even among children, is a situation which has its temptations, and which some weak minds have found quite too powerful for their humility. You mistake, if you suppose the distinction and elevation of your office are too inconsiderable to induce pride. Pride is a vice that does not dwell exclusively in kings' houses, wear only soft raiment, and feed sumptuously every day upon lofty titles, fame, or affluence; generated in the depravity of our nature, it accommodates itself to our circumstances, and adapts itself to our notions; it is found as often in the cottage as in the mansion; and where it has never tasted the rich viands of loftier elevations, feeds with avidity upon the lowest distinctions which raise one man above another. Consciousness of superiority, whatever be the object of comparison, is the element of this most hateful disposition; and this may be supplied even from the office of a Sunday-school teacher. The danger is greatly increased where the talents of a young person have procured for him a prominent station, and assigned to him the discharge of extraordinary duties.

It would indeed be an unhappy abuse of the system, if it should be perverted into a means of destroying that modest and retiring disposition which is the most becoming ornament of the young, and rendering them bold, forward, and conceited. And it requires no penetration to discern that some danger of this must ever attend a season of extraordinary activity like that in which we live. The mode of doing good in the present age, with all its incalculable advantages to the

interests of mankind, needs the greatest watchfulness, both on the part of principal agents and subordinate instruments, lest it generate the disposition against which this particular is directed. Vast multitudes are now brought from silence and obscurity to enjoy a share of that distinguished honor which the cause of Christ imparts to the meanest of its advocates. Let them therefore be watchful over their own spirits; for the loss of humility from the christian character leaves a deficiency not to be supplied by the most splendid talents or the most active zeal; and it Would be an evil which our congregations would have cause to deplore with tears of blood, if their junior members should ever by any cause be inflated with the spirit of pride.

3. Nearly allied to this is the danger of acquiring a dogmatical, authoritative, and overbearing manner. The last particular referred to disposition, this relates to demeanour only; and through the force of habit a person may fail in the latter without being considerably infected by the former. Accustomed to speak with authority to the children, and to expect prompt obedience to your commands, you are in danger, without great watchfulness, of carrying the tone and air of office into your general deportment. A habit of this kind may be formed by imperceptible degrees, and displayed without consciousness, and if contracted it will not be broken without difficulty. Wherever it exists it never fails to create disgust, but is never so disgusting as in young persons.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DISCOURAGEMENTS OF SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

EVERY cause which is worth supporting will have to encounter difficulties; and they are generally proportionate to the value of the object to be accomplished. The career of benevolence is not a path of flowers, leading down a gentle declivity, where the philanthropist treads softly and swiftly without a difficulty to check his progress, or a discouragement to chill his ardour. Mercy has far more to obstruct her course than even justice, since the latter is attended by the strong arm of power, to resent injuries offered to her dignity, and remove obstacles opposing her progress: whereas mercy, accompanied only by that wisdom which is peaceable, must attempt to do by gentleness what she cannot effect by force; must toil through difficulties which she cannot remove; under the most aggravated injuries, must console herself with the thought that she did not deserve them; amidst present discouragement, must cheer herself with the hope of future success; and after waiting long and patiently for the fruit of her labours, will sometimes find her only reward in the purity of her intentions and the consciousness of having done all she could. The faithful teacher will meet with

many discouragements, which I will now enumerate, and endeavour to prevent.

1. Your discouragement will arise frequently from defects in the children's minds. Instead of finding them quick in their conceptions, and steady in their application, you will often find them volatile in their habits, and slow of apprehension. After toiling several weeks in teaching them the alphabet, you will in some cases have the mortification to find that little progress has been made, and months elapse before much visible improvement takes place. In looking round upon your class, you will sometimes exclaim with a sigh of despondency, "So long have I been labouring to instruct that boy, and yet to the present hour he can scarcely add syllable to syllable. It is like ploughing upon a rock, and sowing on sand. I feel almost inclined to abandon the work altogether." Never yield to such feelings. Innumerable instances have occurred, in which the dullest children in the school have ultimately become the teacher's richest reward. Plants of great excellence are often of slow growth, and repay with ample interest the gardener's heavy toil and delayed expectations. And even should no such result crown your efforts, still bear with their dulness, recollecting that this very circumstance renders them more in need of your benevolent regard.

Their ingratitude is oftentimes exceedingly discouraging. Aware of the costly sacrifices you make, and the incessant labour you endure, for their benefit, you expect in them a just sense of their advantages, and a grateful acknowledgment of their obligations. Instead of this, you often see them utterly destitute of both; trifling over their privileges as if they were worth

nothing to them, and as thankless towards you as if it cost you nothing to impart them. Perceiving that your kindness is wasted upon objects which it fails to impress, you feel sometimes disposed to withdraw exertions so little valued and improved. But consider, this very state of the children's minds, instead of inducing you to relax your exertions, should stimulate you to greater activity, since it is a part of that depravity of heart and deformity of character for the removal of which they are intrusted to your care. To abandon them on this account would be like the physician's giving up his patient because he is diseased. The more insensible and ungrateful you find them, the more should you labour for their improvement, since those vices, if not reformed in childhood, are likely to attain a dreadful maturity in future life.

The small degree of their improvement operates very unfavourably upon the minds of their instructors. Who has not sometimes experienced a chilling depression, when he has looked round upon the school, and compared the actual state of the children with the advantages they have enjoyed? How common are such reflections as these: "Alas! how few of these children appear at present to be the better, as to any moral improvement, for the instructions they have received! How few have received any serious impressions, or imbibed any religious principles! How many appear as depraved as when they entered the school, and are leaving it without a single proof on which a teacher can rest his hope that they are really the better for his instructions! And even of those who at one time seemed to promise well, how few are there whose budding excellences have escaped the corrupting in-

fluence of bad example! Disappointed so often we are afraid to indulge another expectation. Where are the boasted advantages of Sunday-school instruction? Where the general improvement of mind, of manners, and of heart, for which we have been waiting? The present generation of the poor seems to be growing up as vicious and immoral as any that arc past. We have almost laboured in vain, and spent our strength for nought. It amounts well nigh to a question with us, whether we may not relinquish our efforts without any serious injury to the interests of morality or religion.”

This is the dark side of the picture: but it has a bright one, which should check these discouraging apprehensions, and resist the paralysing influence they are calculated to cherish. That in a great majority of cases no present visible effect of a religious kind is produced, I admit; but equally obvious it is that in not a few instances this happy result has been witnessed. Could you look at the aggregate of success which has already followed similar exertions, you would behold a scene which would fix your attention in silent wonder, or raise your heart to transports of delight. It is a fact which abundant evidence confirms that multitudes of children have already been converted to God, blessed for both worlds, and made happy for eternity, by means of Sunday-school instruction. At the very moment when you are giving vent to the sighs of disappointment, and yielding to the influence of despondency, a thousand harps are struck in heaven by a band of glorified spirits who received their first devout impressions in a Sunday-school. Could you listen to their harmony, and gaze upon their beauty: could you witness the seraphic glow

which is diffused over their frames, and hear the rapturous praises which they pour forth to Him that sits upon the throne, as often as they repeat the honoured name of their beloved teacher; before such a scene discouragement would instantly vanish, and animating hope would fill its place. When you feel despondency creeping through your soul, send your imagination for one of those heavenly harpers, and let her charm away the gloomy thoughts of your troubled breast by the song of her conversion.

On the way to heaven, as well as within its gates, are a goodly company, redeemed from their vain conversation within the limits of a Sunday-school. Scarcely a christian church will be found in the kingdom, which has had such an institution under its care, but records some members who by its means were converted from the error of their ways. The number of living witnesses, who from heartfelt experience can bear their testimony to the spiritual benefit of this system, would fill several of our largest places of public worship.

In addition to this, numberless instances of external reformation have occurred, and many who would otherwise have been running to excess or riot, have been trained to habits of morality, industry, and order.

In many cases, the seed of the kingdom begins to germinate long before your eye discerns the hidden process. A secret work is going on, which shall one day surprise and delight you. The first dawn of day commences amidst the thickest shades of night; the tide begins to turn long before it is observed by a person walking upon the shore; thus the incipient stage of conversion is often hidden amidst the remains of unregeneracy from every eye but His who sees in secret.

When you are most discouraged, there may be the least cause for it.

Even those unhappy youths whose conduct excludes all joy for the present, and almost all hope for the future, even they, at some distant time, may yield a rich harvest from the seed which is now, with respect to them, sown in tears. The instructions you communicate can never be totally forgotten. They give light and power to the conscience; keep the mind in a state of susceptibility to devout impression; and render the heart more fit to be acted upon by those incidents of a providential nature which are continually occurring to arrest the sinner in his career. In the gloomy season of distress, when reflection can be resisted no longer, then what they were taught in the school may be brought vividly to their remembrance. Then, when no preacher and no friend is near, conscience may recall the terrors of the law, and memory the glad tidings of the Gospel, till the poor trembling sinner, amidst the long-neglected stores that were deposited in her mind at the Sunday-school, finds the means of her conviction, conversion, and consolation.

It may be also observed, that minds trained in the knowledge of the Gospel are far more likely than others to benefit by preaching. They have a clearer understanding of sermons. Besides, as it is through the mind that God converts the heart, they are in a fairer way to derive spiritual impression than persons who have lived in brutish ignorance. This is a species of advantage arising from Sunday-school instruction not sufficiently thought of. The teacher is unquestionably a powerful auxiliary to the preacher, and the success of the latter in many cases must in justice be

shared by the former. You may therefore check the despondency of your hearts by this consideration, that where no present visible effect is produced by your instructions, you may by a division of labour in the business of conversion be preparing for this great change being afterwards effected under the instrumentality of the minister.

Children in whose hearts devout impression may have been produced are often removed from beneath your care before you have an opportunity to witness the fruit of your toil; but the eye of God is upon His own work, and He will one day make known to you all that He does by you.

As to the discouragement which arises from the general appearance of the lower orders of society, it should be recollected, that a mighty change indeed must be wrought before it becomes visible in the aggregate; this ought not to be expected till the system has had another generation or two to work upon the mass of the poor with the weight of accumulated benefit. Thousands and thousands of instances of individual conversion and reformation may be effected, without at present altering the visible condition of the poor in general. Wickedness is noisy and obtrusive, and may be seen and heard in every place of concourse: piety is silent, modest, and retiring; not lifting up her voice in the street, nor praying at the corners of the streets. One murder makes more noise than a hundred conversions. To see the abounding of wickedness, the overflowing of ungodliness, we need not give ourselves the trouble of research; but to witness the good effects of Sunday-schools, we must follow the subjects of them to the closet of devotion, and to the retired scenes of do-

mestic life and social order, where, like the violet, they are to be traced rather by their fragrance than their colours, and are valued in private more than they are known in public.

2. A second source of discouragement is often found in the conduct of the children's parents. It is extremely disheartening to meet With so little co-operation as is generally afforded by them: this, however, should produce double exertions on your part, by convincing you that the children are cast entirely on your mercy for religious and moral improvement. The same insensibility and ingratitude as are displayed by the children, are also in many cases manifested by their parents. It is not uncommon to meet with persons so stupidly thankless as to talk of conferring obligations upon us by sending their children to our schools. Such monstrous ingratitude is exceedingly trying to benevolence, and sometimes nearly extinguishes it. Let not the children however suffer for the sins of their parents. Continue to cherish their interests, and promote their welfare, notwithstanding every discouragement. Remember, you profess that your efforts are perfectly gratuitous; and therefore, to be consistent, you should make them dependent upon no wages, not even the effusions of a grateful heart. Do good for its own sake, and let your reward arise from the consciousness of doing it. "A good man shall be satisfied from himself." Imitate the conduct of your adorable Redeemer, who ever went about doing good, amidst insensibility and ingratitude, sufficient, one should have thought, to make infinite mercy itself weary in well-doing.

3. Sometimes you are cast down by the unconcern

which is manifested by the senior and more respectable members of the church. It can never be sufficiently deplored that so large a fund of knowledge, wisdom, and experience as is to be found in the senior branches of many of our congregations should be entirely withheld from benefitting the children; and the regret is considerably increased by observing the total indifference with which such persons frequently regard the whole concerns of the school. This arises from a mistaken idea that these things belong exclusively to the young. Is there any thing, I would ask, in this business, which would render it a disgrace for the most affluent, aged, or pious members of our churches to display a solicitude in its prosperity? Did the Saviour of the world interest Himself in the care of young children, and can anyone of His followers think such a concern beneath him? I am not now asking the aged to sit down upon the bench of the young, or to sustain the toils of labour amidst the infirmities of age. I am not urging the father to neglect the souls of his own offspring, in order to instruct the children of the stranger. All I ask, all I wish, is, that they would discover a lively and constant solicitude in the welfare of the school, and give it as much of their time and attention as their strength will allow, and prior claims admit. The hoary crown of righteous old age occasionally seen within the precincts of the school sheds a lustre upon the institution, and encourages the ardour of youthful breasts. The children are awed, the teachers are animated by the occasional assistance of men whose standing in the church and ripened piety command respect. Where however this is unhappily denied, and the young are left without the counsel and smiles of their seniors,

instead of yielding to discouragement, endeavour by your own renewed exertions to remedy the evil and supply the defect. The less others care for the children the more anxiety to be diligent should operate in your heart.

4. The mind of a teacher is very often discouraged by the want of efficient co-operation in his fellow-labourers. Perhaps you are lamenting that your co-workers are either too few in number, or lamentably defective in suitable qualifications. Plans of usefulness which you know are adapted to promote the great end, are opposed or counteracted by the ignorance and stubbornness of your fellow-teachers. You are left almost to struggle alone, you cannot do the things you would. Thwarted and impeded, you are often ready to quit the field where your operations are cramped, and your usefulness diminished. This circumstance, instead of being a reason for your resignation, should operate as a very powerful inducement for your continuance. The fewer there are to carry on the school, or the more slender their qualifications, the more criminal would it be in you to retire. This would be to forsake the cause in its emergency, and take your place amongst those who are its friends only in its prosperity. Nothing can be more noble than to see a man struggling the more for a benevolent object the more he is opposed by some and neglected by others; this is the glory and triumph of great minds, heroism in the cause of mercy. Perseverance may bring its reward by collecting round you, in process of time, a band of like-minded labourers, who will rejoice to put themselves under the direction of such a leader.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRESERVATION OF ZEAL IN SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHERS.

IT is a fact which all experience proves, that the most important object, by being constantly in sight, loses much of its power to interest. Zeal is apt to languish when it is no longer excited by the stimulus of novelty; and the fervour of first love, without great care, will soon sink into dull formality. It is not to be wondered at, if among the active supporters of a Sunday-school, the vice of lukewarmness should sometimes be found. Hence it is of importance to ascertain the best means for keeping up the spirit of the teacher's office. By this, I mean, the prosecution of its duties with vigour, interest, and delight, in opposition to that lifeless and indolent manner of dragging through them which is but too common with many.

1. Keep in view the ultimate object of your labours. The more importance we attach to an object, the less we shall be exposed to the danger of ceasing to regard it with solicitude. Whatever is momentous must be interesting. Hence the necessity of keeping steadily and clearly before your mind the salvation of the soul as the ultimate end of all your efforts. What can have such a

tendency to engage the feelings, and keep them engaged, as this? The mere endeavour to teach how to read, the effort at only intellectual improvement, cannot, in the very nature of things, have such power over the heart of the teacher, as the steady contemplation of the immortal soul; salvation is a noble prize, and eternity a wonderful excitement. If any thing can keep up the spirit of the office, it is to bring the mind from time to time under the influence of such inducements as these. When you feel your heart losing its ardour, and sinking into a lukewarm state, look afresh to the world of immortality, and behold in the crown of eternal life the object of your pursuit. If any thing can keep alive your attention to the interests of the children, it will be the constant repetition of this sentiment, "I am seeking their everlasting salvation."

2. Well-conducted Sunday-school Unions have a powerful tendency to promote the spirit of your office. The occasional meeting of fellow-labourers from different schools, together with the interesting communications and mutual exhortations which are then delivered, have a very enlivening effect. The very sight of so large a body of fellow-teachers, engaged in the same cause, has an exhilarating tendency, especially when one and another details the result of successful exertions. Not only do neighbouring flames brighten each other's blaze, but even dying embers are re-kindled when brought into contact. So the communion which is established by these associations promotes, in a very powerful manner, the feeling essential to the character of a good teacher. A holy emulation is also excited, which, if it do not degenerate into envy, leads on to the happiest effects. The annual meetings, which

are necessarily connected with the Union, aid the general impression, and keep up the interest in an eminent degree. It has been universally admitted by those who have tried the plan that it is pregnant with advantages in respect of the particular object which I am now considering. The teachers who are connected with the best regulated Unions can testify, from ample experience, to their adaptation to keep up the spirit of the office.

I must, however, repeat what I have already stated in the Introduction, that, without great watchfulness, the effects of Unions will upon experience be found to be of a mixed character. They have in some instances tended to produce and cherish a spirit of confederation and faction among the teachers, who, regarding themselves as a separate and independent body, have disturbed the churches to which they belonged by the consequence they assumed, and the authority they claimed. The array of numbers as presented at the meetings of these associations, and especially the intercourse to which this sometimes leads with persons of turbulent dispositions, are likely to give a consciousness of strength and importance to those who, on a less wide and conspicuous field of action, would have retained all their original humility and modesty.

3. Occasional meetings among the teachers of the same school for conversation and prayer in immediate reference to their joint labours, are exceedingly beneficial. At these meetings every thing should be communicated which individual experience in instruction has proved to be at all calculated for general encouragement. Each one should feel himself under obligation to render such friendly interviews as interesting as he can, by making

known every thing of an instructive or stimulating nature connected with Sunday schools, which he had seen, heard, or read; but especial care must be taken that nothing be done for the sake of vain glory or pride, as to have such meetings converted into occasions for display would effectually counteract their beneficial influence.

4. Ministerial assistance in the way of exhortation, inspection, and advice, would powerfully contribute to keep up the true spirit of the office.* Engage your re-

* It is a matter of great surprise and equal regret, that many ministers appear to take little or no interest in the concerns of the Sunday-schools supported by their congregations. They are scarcely ever to be seen among the children, or affording their presence and instruction at the meetings of the teachers. The annual sermon which they preach for the benefit of the institution seems to be regarded by them as a legal discharge from all further obligation to interfere on its behalf; and it is neglected and forgotten till they sit down to compose their sermon for the next anniversary. To what can such omission be attributed? They can scarcely imagine that a school containing two, three, or four hundred immortal souls, is an object below their notice, or beyond their duty; nor will they shelter themselves under the excuse that when they undertook the charge of the congregation, they did not stipulate to concern themselves about the school. Does it comport with that zeal and piety by which they profess to be moved, to hear of so many immortal souls, most of them grossly ignorant and wicked, assembling every week within the sphere of their labours, for religious instruction, and yet scarcely ever to inquire how they are going on? Do not ministers strangely neglect the means of increasing their own personal influence when they suffer so important an institution to be in constant operation among their people, and yet have little or no share in directing its movements? Is it not teaching their congregations to act independently of their pastors, and to diminish the weight of their office, which is already in the estimation of many far too light? Do they consult the interests of the church by neglecting those of the Sunday-school? If a proper share of attention were given to those poor youths, in all probability its happy result would often prove a balm to heal the wounds occasioned by a want of ministerial success. Here they would find materials to build up their dilapidated churches, and

spective ministers to meet you occasionally in your social interviews, that, by the breath of animated exhortation, they may fan the expiring spark, and feed the holy fire. Accustomed to public admonition, they know how to touch the springs of action, and to awaken the dormant energies of the human mind. It is no pride in me to say, that if a minister's heart be engaged in the work, and he be respected by his people, he has it in his power to awaken an interest in the minds of the teachers which scarcely any thing else can supply. Use every means therefore to engage his zealous concern in the welfare of the institution.

5. A constant perusal of publications that relate to Sunday-school instruction, especially the details of successful exertion, would be exceedingly useful. Any particular taste is vigorously stimulated by the perusal of books that treat of its appropriate subject. Be ever watchful therefore to meet with new information and facts illustrative of the advantages of the work in which you are engaged. You rise from reading an encouraging anecdote with fresh eagerness. You see what others do, and how they do it: and while you are directed you are also excited. I recommend, with peculiar earnestness, the *Teacher's Magazine*, already alluded to in the Introduction, as eminently adapted to preserve in your breast the true spirit of your office.

6. An imitation of the best examples will promote the same end. In every school we shall find some whose

strengthen the walls of Zion, long mouldering beneath the desolating ravages of death. It is true, in many cases the pastor's hands are already nearly full of cares, and his arms weighed down with the interests dependent upon them; but the duty I enjoin would add little to the number or the weight of his engagements, while it would add much to his influence, his usefulness, and his comfort.

superior qualifications and zeal entitle them to be considered as models. Instead of observing them with envy, mark them with admiration, cultivate their acquaintance, and endeavour by the glowing ardour of their spirits to rekindle the fervour of your own.

7. Occasionally devoting a portion of time to examine the state of your mind in reference to your duties would be a means of improvement. The true spirit of religion is very powerfully assisted by extraordinary seasons of devotion. The attention is more arrested and fixed by what is unusual than by what occurs in the ordinary routine of customary engagements. Half an hour occasionally devoted to a serious examination of the state of your heart in reference to the object you have embraced, when you can deliberately survey its magnitude, ascertain the manner in which it should be regarded, recollect the way in which it has been pursued by you, rouse your zeal from its slumber, and stimulate your heart to fresh activity, will be attended with the happiest effects.

It should be impressed upon all minds, that there is in the human spirit a lamentable propensity to lukewarmness, which can be effectually roused only by a violent and perpetual struggle with ourselves.

To all that I have enjoined should be added a constant supplication at the throne of divine grace, that God by His Holy Spirit, would keep alive in your hearts those feelings of holy benevolence and pious zeal, in which the spirit of the office essentially consists.

CHAPTER VIII.

MOTIVES TO DILIGENCE.

IF in addition to what has been already advanced, any thing be still wanting to stimulate your zeal, yield to the influence of the following motives.

1. Dwell upon the value of Sunday-schools to all the present interests of society. As Britons and as christians you must love the country that gave you birth; and that man is unworthy to tread the soil, or breathe the air, of Britain, who is insensible to the blessings of this "bright speck upon the bosom of the ocean." Now, if we love our country, we must desire to see her great amidst the nations of the earth) safe amidst her greatness, and happy in her safety. And who needs to be informed that wisdom and knowledge must be the stability of her times? Her greatness, her safety, and her happiness, all rest upon the moral character of her population. Whatever elevates this exalts the nation. Next to the labours of an evangelical ministry, no plan that ever was devised has a greater tendency to improve the religious state of society than the institution of Sunday-schools.

They lessen the crimes which disturb its peace. It is to be recollected that the instruction communicated

by you is strictly moral and religious. How far mere general knowledge, independently of revelation, would operate in improving the moral character of a people, we can scarcely presume to determine, because the experiment has never been tried; but that the communication of religious knowledge has a more beneficial tendency, it would be a waste of time and ridiculous to attempt to prove. It may be useful, however, to remind you here of those great national facts which are so often appealed to in illustration of the good effects of religious education among the poor. It is generally known and allowed that Scotland, and the lower counties of it in particular, are distinguished from all other parts of the British empire, by the attention which is bestowed on early education, and the provision which is made for the wide and regular diffusion of its benefits. It is provided by law in Scotland, that there shall be a school established, and a master appointed, in every parish. Many additional schools are also founded by donations and legacies: so that in the southern parts of that kingdom, it is very rare to find a person who cannot both read and write; and it is deemed scandalous not to be possessed of a Bible. Now, what are the effects of this upon the national character and habits of the Scotch, and on their morals and social order? It is principally owing to this, says Mr Howard the philanthropist, that the numerous emigrants from that country, dispersed over almost all Europe, appear with credit, and advance themselves in their several stations. From the tables of the same justly celebrated writer, it appears that in the whole of Scotland, whose population, at the time of his calculations, was estimated to amount to at least one million six hundred thousand

souls, only one hundred and thirty-four persons were convicted of capital crimes in a period of nineteen years; being, on the average, about seven in each year. In a subsequent table we are informed, that in the single circuit of Norfolk in England, including six counties, and containing, it is supposed, not more than eight hundred thousand persons, being but one half of the population of Scotland, no less than four hundred and thirty-four criminals were condemned to death in the space of twenty-three years; which is an annual average of nearly nineteen capitally convicted; besides eight hundred and seventy-four sentenced to transportation. There is thus a difference in favour of Scotland, in this important point, in the ratio of seven to thirty-eight. And it should be observed, that the education in Scotland to which this superiority may be attributed includes to a great extent training in morality and religion, although there is reason to fear that of late years some relaxation has taken place.

If we pass over to Ireland we shall find the darkest part of the empire with respect to religious education, the most fruitful of crimes and miseries. The wretched state of that unhappy country is in a considerable degree to be traced up to the prevalence of a religion which with its characteristic cruelty, withholds the Bible from the poor.

Consider then what benefits you are conferring upon society by promoting the religious education of the poor. But besides preventing crimes cognizable by human laws, you are the happy instruments of lessening the prevalence of that host of vices which, although amenable only to the bar of God, convulse society to its centre, and spread distraction and misery through all its

walks. Profanity and falsehood, drunkenness and debauchery, excessive rage and ungoverned malignity, and all the dispositions that in the different social relations render man a fiend to man, it may be reasonably hoped, are considerably diminished by the influence of your benevolent exertions.

On the other hand 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, particularly the general principles of benevolence and submission, which like two mighty columns support the whole fabric of our social interests. 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 defer to a distant period 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, well clad, well fed, well taught, they gather round the knees of a kind and tender father, turn with the thankful smiles of their bliss to you, 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 Parliament in both houses, 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 benefactors 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.

2. Dwell upon the incalculable worth of immortal souls. 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 beauteous image of its Creator. This was the object which first caught the envious eye of Satan upon his expulsion from heaven, and in the spoils of which his malice sought a fiend-like solace. The fall of the soul dragged the whole creation with it into the vortex of ruin. The salvation of the soul was selected by the great God in the councils of eternity to be the means of exhibiting to the universe the most glorious display of his own perfections, on which mercy, wisdom and power were to exhaust their united resources. The value of the soul was such that the Son of God could justify himself to all worlds, as not degrading his dig-

nity, 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 cross. On the redemption of the soul all the revelations of heaven, and all the dispensations of grace, all the labours of prophets priests and apostles, were lavished. The conversion of a soul renders angels unquiet upon their heavenly seats, and draws them with tender solicitude to minister to its safety. 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 bear 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 secures 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, ponder again intensely. The subject can never be exhausted; the more it is studied, the wider will its compass appear. Think what honour you are providing for yourselves, what happiness for others! should you be the happy instrument of converting but one soul to God.

My fancy has sometimes presented me with this picture of a faithful teacher's entrance to the state of her everlasting rest. The agony of dissolution closed, the triumph of faith completed, 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, 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-schooler 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 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 further. 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 can I follow them to their everlasting mansion, 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!

3. Consider to what indefinite lengths your usefulness may extend. Where you design only the improvement of individuals, God, through those individuals, may make you the instruments of blessing multitudes. Where you intend only to produce private worth, God may employ your zeal to form public excellences. You may be the means of cherishing and developing intellectual energies, which will one day be of the greatest benefits to the civil interests of society. And, what is more

important, you may be imparting the first rudiments of that knowledge and piety, which in their maturity may be employed by God in the service of the sanctuary. Ministers are already preaching to others that Gospel which they themselves first learnt in a Sunday-school; and missionaries are winning the savages of the desert with the sweet wonders of that cross which was first displayed to their own view by the efforts of a faithful teacher. Such instances, in all probability, will occur again, and are fairly within the scope of your ambition. In such a case who can trace the progression of your usefulness, or tell into how wide a stream it will expand as it rolls forward in a course never to be arrested but by the sound of that trumpet which shall proclaim that time shall be no more?

4. Think upon the shortness of the time during which the children can enjoy your care. In a few, a very few years at most, they will all be gone beyond your instruction. Every Sabbath almost some are leaving the school, and it is to be feared in many cases retiring beyond the sound of pious admonition for ever. Beyond the age of fifteen or sixteen, few remain to enjoy the privileges of the school; and but few, comparatively, remain so long. Could we even protract the period of childhood, and lengthen the term during which they consider themselves as beneath our care; could we in every instance be convinced that when they leave our schools they would still continue to enjoy the means of religious culture; even in this case there would be no ground for a relaxation of your diligence; the value of the soul and the importance of its salvation would demand your utmost exertion. But this is not the case. In a year or two you must give them up, and to

what? To the violence of their own corruptions, to the strength of their own passions, to the pollution of bad company, without a friend to watch over them, or a single guide to direct them. With the school many of them take leave of the sanctuary; and when they cease to hear the voice of the teacher, listen no more to the joyful sound from the lips of the preacher. What a motive to diligence! Can you be insensible to its force? Can you read this simple statement and not feel every dormant energy stirring within you? Can you peruse another line and not resolve by the help of God to renew your efforts? Do you not feel the blush of shame for past indifference diffusing itself this moment over your countenance? By all that is dear and invaluable in the eternal interests of the children; by the shortness of the time during which those interests will be under your care; I conjure you to be diligent to the very last effort of your soul.

5. Remember how transient is the season during which you can be employed in these labours of love. Were you certain of reaching the extreme boundaries of human existence, and had the prospect of extending your exertion far into the season of old age; yea, could you insure an antediluvian life, and employ it all for the good of others; even under these circumstances, you could not be too diligent in the business of your office. Immortality is a theme that will support the weightiest arguments, and justify the most impassioned exhortations. I again repeat it, nor fear the charge of tautology, the salvation of immortal souls is the ultimate object of your office; and when professing to labour for such an object, indolence would be inexcusable amidst the

range of centuries. But you have not centuries at command. "What is your life? it is even as a vapour, that appeareth for a little while, and then vanisheth away." The uncertainty of life supplies a proverb which we hear every day repeated; and is a fact which we see every day occurring. You may be soon and suddenly called away from the scene of labour. You quit the school every Sabbath without knowing that you will return to it again. Death pays respect neither to youth nor usefulness, but mows down together the tender herb, the fragrant flower, the noxious weed. The next stroke of his scythe may reach you. Among the names that will be inserted in the report of the present year's proceedings as blotted from the book of mortal life, yours may be read at the next anniversary amidst the sighs and the tears of your fellow-teachers. The place which knows you now may then know you no more for ever. You are labouring in the garden of the Lord; but in the garden are the sepulchres, "Work while it is called to-day: the night cometh when no man can work. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou goest." Enter upon every Sabbath's exertions with the reflection that it may be your last, and be as diligent as if you knew that it would be so.

But death is not the only way in which a period can be put to your exertions. In a few years the claims and the cares of a rising family may demand your time at home. For however cordially you may be disposed to continue your benevolent attention to the duties of the school and the interests of the children, the superior demands preferred by a household of your own must be admitted.

The honour of doing any thing in this way for the cause of God and souls, truth and holiness, may soon be removed beyond your reach. This opportunity will last but a little longer for you to enrich the crown of your rejoicing with fresh gems, or to increase that part of your bliss in heaven which will arise from your witnessing the raptures of those whom you were the instruments of introducing to the mansions of glory. It is a golden season that you now enjoy; it is rapidly passing away; it will never return: diligently improve it therefore while it lasts.

Dwell upon the honour of being instrumental in imparting moral, spiritual, and eternal benefits. I have already pointed out, (what indeed requires no proof,) the adaptation of Sunday-school instruction to promote the moral excellence of the lower classes; and whoever does this must be acknowledged to be a most useful, and therefore a most honourable, member of the community. The men who have improved and adorned their country by the splendid creations of their genius have had their names emblazoned in the temple of fame, and received all the glory which admiring generations could confer upon their memory. But what is the honour of adorning a city with the finest productions of the chisel or the pencil, and filling it with temples, statues, and paintings, compared with the more useful labour of causing righteousness to flow down its streets like a river, erecting the temples of the Holy Ghost, and raising the children of poverty into the living images of the most High God? In imparting moral and spiritual good, you are conferring benefits which will be perpetuated through infinite ages after the fashion of this world shall have passed away for ever.

This is emphatically to do good. What can equal the renown of being instrumental in reforming, renewing, sanctifying, and adorning the human character; clothing it with the virtues of morality, and investing it with the graces of true godliness? Amongst the ancient Pagans it was a title of the highest honour to be termed, "a benefactor." Hence the apostle argues that for a good man, that is, a man who does good, some would even dare to die. "To love the public," says a wicked writer, who yet found himself compelled to publish this confession, "to study the universal good, and to promote the interest of the world as far as it is in our power, is surely the highest goodness, and constitutes that temper which we call divine." In this consists the true honour of your employment, it is doing good; and to do good is Godlike. God is by no means dependent upon the use of means for the communication of moral and spiritual benefits; he could have accomplished the purposes of His benevolence without the intervention of human instrumentality: this arrangement was expressly intended as a distinguished, though unmerited, favour to the human race.

Dwell upon your character and circumstances, and say if it is not singular goodness in Jehovah to employ you in imparting the knowledge of His nature and of His will to your fellow-creatures. The good you do is not merely of a temporal nature; even in this sense it is a high honour to do good. It is noble to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to heal the sick, and shelter the aged. The name of the philanthropist shines with a purer, brighter glory on the page of history than any other. If then it be so exalted to do good to the body, how much greater the distinction to relieve the miseries

and establish the interests of the immortal spirit; to render our fellow-creatures happy in themselves, and a blessing to others; to fit them for the communion of heaven, after having taught them to be the humble ornaments of society on earth!

To communicate moral good is the very noblest employment of an intelligent being. It is that very operation in which the great God takes more delight than in all the rest of his works. This was the object on which the heart of the Redeemer was set when he was made flesh and dwelt among us. For this the Holy Spirit was poured out from above. For this prophets laboured and apostles preached. In the perfect enjoyment of moral benefits will consist the consummation of heaven itself. What a distinguished honour then to be engaged, although in the humblest manner, in such a work! This is to be raised into a likeness of that glorious Being who is good and does good. A time is fast arriving when it will be seen and felt, that to have been instrumental in conferring spiritual good upon one human soul is a brighter and more lasting glory than the most solid achievements of philosophy, or the most splendid discoveries of science.

Let it be manifest then by your diligence, that you are not insensible of your privilege. Put not the glory from you. Stir up every energy of your soul to do all the good you can. It is an object worthy of your hallowed ambition. While the warrior is pressing through human misery to pluck his blood-stained laurels, and thinks little of the hazard of his life in the pursuit; while the author by intense study is wasting his strength to gain the prize of literary fame; while the artist is labouring for the applause of futurity: be it your object

to do good to the present and eternal interests of your fellow-creatures; and in such a career your ambition is pursuing a loftier flight than all the rest, and ascending into regions to which no mere earthly fame will ever extend.

7. Consider what results might be expected if every teacher were possessed of all suitable qualifications, and were to devote himself to the duties of his office with all possible diligence. It may be safely affirmed that we have never yet seen, that we have scarcely yet conjectured, the hundredth part of the benefit which the Sunday-school system might be made to produce when applied under all the advantages of which it is susceptible. Its adaptation and capacities for improving the condition of the poor are admirable and incalculable. Take the aggregate number of children and teachers at the conjectural statement in the Introduction: then suppose that these myriads of young persons to whom the religious education of a million poor children is entrusted were all fully qualified for their office, and all diligently employed in discharging its duties; suppose they were all persons of exemplary piety; possessed of an enlarged acquaintance with the whole range of revealed truth; well instructed in all the general proprieties of human intercourse; endowed with peculiar aptitude to impart instruction to the youthful mind, and patient in their temper: with such qualifications, suppose they all recognised as the ultimate end of their labours the formation of those truly religious habits in the children which should be connected with the salvation of their immortal souls, and subordinate to this the improvement of their general character, so as to render them kind, gentle, submissive,

and orderly: then conceive of these myriads of persons thus fitted for their work, devoting themselves to their weekly business of instruction with intense ardour of mind; entering upon the duties of their office, Sabbath after Sabbath, with a deeply interested heart; labouring, with the most affectionate and unwearied solicitude, for their present and eternal welfare; conducting the whole business of instruction, with a judicious discrimination of the different tempers they have to deal with; wisely applying all suitable rewards and punishments; punctual and unwearied in their attention; dignified yet affable in their manner; and mingling with all their efforts importunate prayer to Him who alone can render them effectual: in addition to this, suppose them in their behaviour one to another to be universally affectionate, respectful, acting in perfect harmony for the general good, and animated by one mind: suppose, I say, that this were universally the case with the vast body of Sunday-school teachers, what results might we not expect? When we consider the adaptation of the system itself to impart religious instruction, and produce religious impression: when we consider that religious education is among God's own instituted means of conversion; when we consider how willing He is to pour out the influence of His Spirit upon the ordinances which He has appointed; especially when we add to this the good effects which have already resulted from the imperfect application of the system; it is scarcely possible to conjecture what a glorious revolution would be visible in the habits of the lower orders of society, if our teachers were universally such as I have described. Instead of hearing occasionally that here and there a child was under religious concern,

we should have the pleasing scene before us of great numbers inquiring the way to Zion, with their faces thitherward. Instead of occasionally witnessing external reformation of conduct in those who were rude, untractable, and violent, we should often receive the gratitude of parents rendered happy by the moral alteration of their once disobedient and rebellious offspring. The church and the world would both together look to the Sunday-school institution as one of the greatest blessings ever bestowed upon man. But ah! some will say, this is a pleasing vision, a Utopian picture. Why then is it a vision? Why is it Utopian? Only let each teacher resolve, by God's grace, to be all that is here described, (and nothing is described that is impossible,) and then it becomes a glorious reality. Instead of looking at the whole body with a desponding wish that it were indeed entirely what it should be, let each individual look in upon himself, determined that nothing shall be wanting on his part to realize this blissful vision. If we would obtain the result which the exertions of all would produce, we must seek it by the contribution of individual diligence.

Amidst the complaints which I have often heard of a want of success, it has long been my conviction that this want is to be attributed to the defects of the teachers. Proper views, proper qualifications, and proper diligence in those who have set their hand to the work would be followed with much greater practical effect than it has ever yet been our felicity to witness. The defect is not in the system, but in those who apply it. Let me then most earnestly enjoin you to seek a larger measure of suitable qualification, and to display still more diligence in this all-important institution;

and let your mind be excited to the greatest exertion by a consideration of what would be the result if all teachers discharged their duties with wisdom and assiduity.

8. Anticipate the approving testimony which at the last day the Lord Jesus will bear to all those who have in any measure promoted his cause. That day of righteous retribution, for which all other days were made, is hastening on. Time is drawing to a close; the world is sinking to dissolution; and all mankind converging to “the judgment-seat of Christ, where everyone shall receive the things done in the body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” Before that tribunal you must render an account of your conduct. To that Judge you are amenable both for your personal obedience and the manner in which you discharge your official duties. Then we shall know the real state of your heart, and the true character of your motives. However diligent you may now be in the subordinate duties of your office, yet if not a partaker of real religion, in vain will be the effort to supplement personal defects by official activity; or to turn away the wrath of Him that sits upon the throne with the useless plea, “Lord! Lord! did we not prophesy in thy name?” To be rewarded in that day as a faithful teacher you must first be accepted as a real christian. Without this you must take your place at the left hand of the Judge, with those whom heaven rejects from her bosom, while hell moves to meet them at their coming. But should you most happily work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, and then labour to glorify God in the salvation of your ignorant charge, not a single effort of your zeal, nor a prayer, nor a word shall be forgotten in that day of righteous reward. First publicly accepted in

your person, you will then be as publicly applauded for those services which your humility may now think almost unworthy of his notice, but which his mercy will not suffer him then to overlook. Then when the deeds of heroes will be passed over in silence, or mentioned with reprobation; when poets, except those who have sung to the harp of piety, and philosophers, except such as have employed their researches to manifest the glory of the First Cause, will sink down without distinction in the general mass; then will the holy useful teacher, attended by the children he had been the means of reclaiming, be presented before the face of an assembled universe, arrayed with infinite honour and glory: not the mighty hosts of Patriarchs and Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists, Reformers and Martyrs, Ministers and Missionaries, pressing to receive their crowns, will throw him into obscurity, or deprive him of his reward; but amidst surrounding millions he will stand single and apart to receive the public plaudits of the Judge: "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me. Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

**APPENDIX TO THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
TEACHER'S GUIDE.**

NO. I.

**MUSICAL PERFORMANCES AT SUNDAY SCHOOL
ANNIVERSARIES.**

IT has of late years become lamentably fashionable to introduce into the service at charity sermons a grand selection of sacred music. In some cases, the vocal performance is attended by a complete instrumental band. Musical effect is as much studied as at an oratorio; and, as in the case of theatrical amusements, the public are lured to the entertainment by a printed bill of the performance. Were a stranger from Rome to pass the doors of our chapels at such a season, he might fancy from the sound of trumpets and kettle-drums, that it was a military mass in some Catholic chapel. I can easily conceive with what force a thinking Papist would say to a Protestant, on such an occasion, "To make this scene complete, you should have painted windows, flowers, embroidered vestments, images, and pictures. For is there more harm in pleasing the eye than the ear?" Now it would be quite bad enough if this profanation of sacred subjects and holy times were confined to the musicians and the congregation; but the children in the Sunday-school partake of the mischievous effect, and that in various ways.

1. They are led insensibly to conclude that all entertainment is not forbidden even on the Christian Sabbath. For surely it is too much for the credulity of childhood to believe that the performance, as it is generally conducted, is intended for devotion. They thus have their views of the sanctity of the Sabbath considerably lessened. Even in the most quiet and simple method of conducting the business of an anniversary sermon there is much bustle and disquietude. The children look forward to it for many Sabbaths with feelings of hilarity as to a sort of breaking-up day. By this means the powerful association which should connect devotion as the end of the Sabbath, and moral benefit as the ultimate object of the

Sunday-school system, is considerably weakened. How much more is this the case when the sermon is attended with all the influence of a grand musical performance!

2. In these cases the best singers among the children are frequently selected to take a share in the performance; some in parts, others in solos. To prepare them for this, much time must be spent in training them. At these exercises, at which no seriousness of mind can be preserved, and which are generally seasons of great entertainment, they are accustomed to treat the most solemn and affecting topics of religion with lightness and irreverence, till their minds grow gaily familiar with them, and their hearts become insensible to all that is awful in their nature and impressive in their influence. It is a most destructive effect when children acquire the habit of treating sacred subjects in a trifling manner, in any way, and on any account. Thus injured by the preparation, their hearts are still more corrupted by the performance. Exhibited to the public, sometimes dressed beyond their station, to please by their appearance and captivate by their melody, they cannot fail to perceive how completely the end of their exhibition is answered. From that hour they lie exposed to all the pernicious influence of pride and vanity. Older, and wiser, and holier minds than are possessed by the children of a Sunday-school, have found that admiration has a poisonous effect upon genuine virtue: who then can wonder if the latter amidst the weakness of their age and station, feel its deleterious influence? Even the ordinary singing of every Sabbath's worship, where children have been employed in the choir, and exposed to the view of the congregation, has been known, in many instances, to generate a love of display, and a feeling of vanity, exceedingly injurious to their intellectual and moral improvement. How much more on those extraordinary occasions to which I allude! Let children be once led to imbibe the idea that they are taught to sing for entertainment, or any other purpose than as all act of genuine devotion; let them once be led to associate it with the idea of obtaining applause; and they are then in a fair way of seeking to display their vocal powers for the sake of gaining admiration, in company and places very unfriendly to every principle of sound morality and genuine piety.

3. Nor does the mischief end here. The teachers themselves are apt by these means to lose the simplicity of their aim and the spirituality of their mind. Their attention is drawn off from the spiritual part of the institution, and their ambition directed to making such all exhibition as shall secure applause.

As anniversary sermons however cannot wholly be dispensed with, nor all public exhibition of the children prevented, all that remains for us to do is to be careful that they be attended with as little dissipation and with as much devotion and decorum as possible. But as for the practice of making them occasions for grand musical performances, it is a custom replete with mischief, both to the children and the teachers; a custom which is hastening to corrupt the simplicity of christian worship, and undermine the sanctity of the christian Sabbath; a custom which converts the temple of God into a concert-room, and employs the pulpit to hallow, in appearance, the performance. It is quite time for some voice to be raised against the practice, or at least to suggest to the managers of the school, the enquiry, how far it can be justified.

NO 2.

PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS OF THE CHILDREN.

A PRINCIPLE of just and laudable emulation may be implanted and cherished, without transforming and degrading it into a thirst for admiration, which is almost sure to be the case where the children are called upon to make a display of their talents in public. Praise will ever be found injurious in proportion to these two circumstances; first, the publicity with which it is given; and, secondly, the ignorance of the person on whom it is conferred. If this be correct, the children of a Sunday-school should be exposed as little as possible to public applause. A love of display is very soon produced, and with great difficulty destroyed. Nor is the mischief confined to those who are the subjects of public distinction. The rest of the children, instead of directing their attention to improvement on its own account, begin to regard it and pursue it only as the road to admiration and distinction. Let either pride or vanity be generally cherished among the labouring classes, and the worst consequences may be expected to accrue to society. The evils which it was once predicted would result from the instruction of the poor, were the mere chimeras of a disordered fancy: not so the apprehensions which arise from injudicious efforts to force the growth of their understanding, by corrupting the simplicity of their hearts. No single vice to which the human soul is subject is a more effectual obstacle in the way of his salvation than pride. "How call ye believe," said our glorious Redeemer to the Pharisees, "which receive honour one of another?"

No. 3.

TEACHING TO WRITE UPON THE SABBATH.

As this is a controverted point, and the practice is adopted by many who have the spiritual welfare of the children as much at heart as I possibly can have, I would state my views with the greatest deference, and in the most dispassionate manner, without presuming to condemn those who may happen to differ from me in opinion.

I beg to assume (what I think cannot be denied,) that moral and religious habits are the ultimate end of Sunday-school instruction. I also take for granted, the sanctity of the christian Sabbath; by which I mean, that all works are to be abstained from on that day, but those of devotion, mercy, and absolute necessity.

Try the practice by this test. No one, I suppose, will contend for it as a work of devotion. Is it then a work of necessity? Necessary for what? Not certainly for their moral and religious benefit; for they may be trained up in the fear of God as well without writing as with it. It can but just be classed with the feeblest auxiliaries of virtue or religion. The circumstance of their writing texts of Scripture for copies, can scarcely be said to render it a moral exercise; since the children think little of the sentiment they are writing, and are almost exclusively intent upon producing a good copy. Everyone knows that nothing is less likely to impress the heart than the sentiment written by a child in his copy-book. As to his thus storing his memory with passages of God's word, it may be observed that the same time which is employed in filling a page with the repetition of one short sentence would be sufficient for him to learn five, and to be made, by a judicious teacher, to comprehend their meaning.

Besides, if the single circumstance of writing texts of Scripture he admitted to justify the practice, would not the same argument allow a girl to work a sampler, provided she wrought upon the canvass a passage of holy writ?

Nor is it absolutely necessary for their temporal interests; because the poor may acquire nearly all the advantages and comforts of their station, without being able to write. Not that I think it a superfluous labour to teach the poor to write. Far, very far from it. As a means of improving their worldly condition, I would not only communicate to them this art, but also every kind and every measure of useful knowledge which their circumstances would admit of. The poor cannot possess too much knowledge, provided moral instruction keep pace with it. I cannot yield assent to an opinion so truly unphiloso-

phical, that to improve the understanding is the way to corrupt the heart. I am now only contending that writing is not necessary, either to the spiritual or temporal interests of the poor. Besides, admitting that the art of writing were necessary, still this does not justify the practice of teaching it on the Sabbath, in my opinion, unless it can be proved that it could not be taught them on a week-day. But this cannot be proved, since in many schools where the practice of teaching to write is not admitted on the Sabbath, two or three evenings in the week are devoted to this object, and in such cases persons are found sufficiently disinterested to give their time to the work. If it be said, Learning to read is not necessary for the poor, I answer, It is valuable as a direct and powerful auxiliary to religious and moral improvement. Let this be proved of writing, and the argument is at an end.

If the practice then be justified at all, it must be defended as a work of mercy. But in what light is it a work of mercy? Only as contributing to promote the temporal interests and comfort of the poor. But is this the great design of the Sabbath to assist the poor in promoting their temporal interests? If so, may we not teach them many other things which, although generally considered unlawful, would strictly accord with this principle, and carry it on to much greater perfection? We might teach boys accounts and book-keeping; for this would be of great service to them. To boys in manufacturing towns we might impart the rudiments of mechanics; to those who are intended for carpenters, painters, glaziers, &c., we might teach the principles of mensuration; and the youth of seaport towns we might instruct in navigation. Especially, on this principle must it be lawful to teach girls to sew and knit, since these acquisitions are far more necessary qualifications for the female head of a poor man's family, than writing is to either of the parents. This remark applies with double force to manufacturing towns, where female children are in general put out to work long before they have acquired these valuable qualifications of a poor man's wife. I confess I do not see how the force of this reasoning is to be avoided.

The objection to the practice may be generally stated thus. It is appropriating the Sabbath to a purpose for which it was never intended, without a sufficient reason to justify such a misapplication of the holy day.

The evils resulting from the practice appear to me to be many and great.

1. It is injurious to the minds of the teachers, by secularizing the Sabbath, and increasing the danger of their losing the enjoyment of

its religious ordinances. The circumstances necessarily attendant upon the business of teaching one or two hundred children to write, must have a powerful tendency, I should think, to distract the mind, and not only divert it from all devotional subjects for the time, but to unfit it for them when they are speedily to follow. The mending of pens, the examination of copies, the correction of mistakes, seem to me likely to exert a most unfavourable influence upon a devotional frame of mind. It is also very likely to sink a teacher's view and aim from the ultimate end of his labours to what is only inferior and subordinate.

2. I think it injurious to the minds and habits of the children. It must have a tendency to take off their minds from the chief design of their being instructed. It is of vast importance to their religious improvement, that they should clearly perceive that this is with us the purpose for which we collect them together. They should be convinced, not merely by being told, but by all they see in the business of the school, that they are assembled not only to be taught to read and write, but to be made holy and happy. This would fix their eye, where ours ought to be directed, and prepare them to be co-workers with us in the business of their salvation. Now the act of teaching them to write must, I think, have a tendency to lower their aim, as well as that of their teachers, and lead them to attach less importance to moral impression.

Besides, has not the practice the effect of destroying the seriousness of that religious instruction which, in many schools, is still carried on in other parts of their mode of education? Do the children and their teachers come from the writing-desk either to the solemnities of public worship, or the more private exhortations of the school-room, with the same degree of preparedness as they otherwise would do? Is not the awe, which should ever attend the spirit to the means of religious instruction, gone?

3. A still more serious mischief is, in my judgment, likely to arise from the practice: it has a tendency to undermine the sanctity of the Sabbath in the opinion of the children. Those who live in large towns have ample opportunity of knowing how awfully the Sabbath is neglected and profaned by the labouring classes. Whole streets are to be found where the men are to be seen loitering about in indolence, and the women busily engaged in domestic affairs. Sabbath-breaking is peculiarly one of the vices of the poor, and it is the parent of many others. Scarcely a felon is carried from the bar of justice to the hulks or the gallows, but confesses that his career of iniquity commenced with this crime. Every thing should be done

to raise in the estimation of the poor, the sanctity of the Sabbath, and to bind its obligations more closely on the conscience. If it were possible to err on the side of over-strictness, our leaning should be decidedly to this. While a reverence for the Sabbath remains, all veneration for the God of the Sabbath cannot be entirely lost. It is the last spark of moral sense which lingers upon the horizon of a sinner's mind, before he is overtaken by the midnight darkness of a blinded conscience, and hurried away by his own furious lusts, or swept from the precipice of infidelity into the bottomless pit which yawns beneath. Every thing then should be done to create in the minds of the poor an habitual and scrupulous dread of the least infraction upon the solemnity of this holy day. Whether this is most effectually done by teaching them to write on the Sabbath let impartial persons decide. Accustomed to this practice at the school, who can wonder if afterwards they should feel little hesitation to write letters or keep whatever accounts may be necessary in the circumstances of their humble history?

Perhaps it will be replied, that there is the same objection against teaching to read as to write, on the Sabbath, that it secularizes the day, and impairs the strength of its devotional obligations. This is not just. Learning to read is a direct and obvious means of moral and religious benefit; and the connexion is so close, that a child of the least discernment perceives it without being reminded of it. The very books in which he learns the art are the Old and New Testaments; so that at the very time he is acquiring his ability to read, he is imbibing the principle, of divine truth and genuine godliness. These, or else extracts taken from them, or hymns founded upon their contents, are all they ever read within the precincts of the school. Every child may be easily made, and should be made, to perceive that learning to read has a close connexion with his spiritual and eternal interests; and that which the mind habitually associates with religious improvement is never likely to become a means of undermining in its feelings the sanctity of that day which we are enjoined by awful sanctions to remember and to hallow.

No 4.

SAVING BANKS FOR CHILDREN.

THE scheme which has been lately recommended to the public, denominated "the savings' bank," as a depository for the small sums which the labouring classes can spare from their weekly support, is

adopted in many schools with considerable benefit. Except during calamitous times, the children, especially in manufacturing districts, spend many a penny and twopence in the most useless trash. To prevent this waste of money, they are encouraged to bring every halfpenny that is not required for their present support, and deposit it in the hands of the superintendent, or some other person, who keeps an account open with every child who has deposited any thing.

This money they are of course allowed to draw out whenever they want it; this however should never be done but at the desire of their friends, in order that it may not be improperly applied. In some cases a premium is allowed; which indeed should be always adopted when the funds of the school will allow it. It is the least advantage of this plan, that it saves for the benefit of the children a considerable sum of money, which would otherwise be spent in useless gratifications of their appetites. There is a still greater benefit likely to accrue. It teaches them from their childhood habits of economy and frugality. Those who have had much to do with the poor know and lament how deplorably wanting they are in such habits. They are the most improvident of their species, scarcely ever looking beyond the present, wasteful of the much, and regardless of the little. Greater sums are often squandered, because they are great; and little sums not saved, because they are little. They are sadly defective in that policy which takes care of the shilling, and leaves the pound to take care of itself. Hence the greatest profusion is often followed in their families by the greatest scarcity, since, even in the best of times, and by the best of workmen, there is seldom any provision made against a season of sickness or necessity. Much of the distress which prevails during a stagnation of trade, or a time of domestic affliction, may be traced up to this wretched want of economy and foresight. We cannot then confer upon a poor man a greater earthly benefit in his station, than a habit of frugality. If this be ever done with effect, it must be accomplished while he is young; and a more effectual method can scarcely be devised, than the plan I now recommend. Let the children be taught that every farthing spent in trash is lost, and be encouraged to bring all they can spare to the savings' fund. At the end of the year, or any stated period, let them be carefully impressed with the idea, that a considerable sum, by the increase of a little self-denial, has been collected from what at the time seemed scarcely worth saving. Let them, when the money is in their hands, and their hearts leaping at the sight, be impressively taught, by an appeal to their own experience, the important sentiment, that much is made up of many littles.

Let them be very forcibly reminded of the ultimate benefits arising from preferring future good to present gratification. We are thus communicating, in an almost imperceptible manner, those saving and frugal habits which will be of service to them all the days of their life. We are doing more than this; for we are actually communicating moral benefit. Every thing that induces a human mind to forego immediate gratification for distant good; every thing that makes the future predominate over the present; every thing, in short, which makes a man live by faith and hope, seems to be a preparation for that temper which displays itself by "looking not at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are unseen and eternal."

And even where no direct moral good is produced, it will ever be found that a saving and frugal temper is connected with a spirit of proper and praiseworthy independence. So that we are by this means raising a barrier against the swelling tide of national embarrassment, which is flowing in continually upon us from the nature and influence of the poor laws.

This view of things justifies the remarks which are contained in the preface of this work, concerning the importance of the Sunday-school system, as throwing into our hands the whole labouring population of the kingdom, to form their minds and manners in what way we please. And if we may judge from the present state of things, this is an advantage which should be eagerly seized by every friend of his country, as well as every friend of religion.

No. 5.

THE RESULTS OF SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHING.

SOME persons have frequently experienced considerable discouragement in this great and good work, by not seeing more visible benefit result to the lower classes of society from these efforts. I have said much already on this head; I beg leave, however, in addition to remark, that there are two ways by which to judge of the benefit resulting from this mode of education. The first is by considering the good communicated, and, secondly the evil prevented. On the first I have already had occasion to dwell. This is incalculable and inconceivable. I shall, however, make a few remarks upon the second criterion, the evil prevented. Now, admitting all that can be said about the present profligacy of multitudes of the labouring classes

and the alarming increase of juvenile delinquency which has been discovered during the last twenty years, still let us take into the account the evil that has been prevented.

It should be recollected, that since the Sunday-school system has been in operation, the commerce of this country has swelled to unparalleled greatness. This has been attended of course with a proportionate increase of population. It is not, perhaps, saying too much, if we affirm that the labouring classes, in most manufacturing districts, have almost trebled in number since Robert Raikes commenced his exertions at Gloucester. Let it be conceived then what might have been the state of things now, if these accumulated masses of the population had been left as an intellectual chaos for the spirit of mischief to brood upon amidst the clouds of ignorance. The period now alluded to has been a season of uncommon peril to the national morals. Infidelity at one time made desperate efforts to corrupt the public mind, not only of the higher, but also of the lower, classes of society. Paine's writings were especially addressed to the passions and prejudices of the multitude. During the greater part of this period the lower classes of society have also been exposed to the demoralizing influence of a state of warfare. The military system, which has been adopted to such an unprecedented extent in the annals of British history, has had a direful influence upon the morals of the poor. It must also be admitted, that while they have thus had an opportunity of trying their physical strength, very many efforts have been employed at different times to inflame their passions against one party or other in the troubled regions of politics. Their just importance in the body politic was never so well known before, nor were they ever before in such danger of abusing it. To all this must be added the impossibility, if they were generally so disposed, of their gaining access to the solemnities of public worship, on account of the disproportion between the population and the temples of religion. Now, let all these things be taken into the account. Let it be remembered what increased opportunities have been afforded for their corrupting and being corrupted; let it also be recollected what principles of corruption have been actually at work; and then it will be evident, that it can be ascribed only to the gradual diffusion of moral principle by the means of Sunday-schools that these mischiefs have been counteracted, and the labouring classes restrained in any degree within the bounds of subordination and order. When, therefore, we look at them as they are, and lament how little real good has been done, let us, at the same time, rejoice to contemplate how much evil has been prevented.

**A PATTERN FOR SUNDAY-SCHOOL
TEACHERS AND TRACT DISTRIBUTORS**

AND A WORD FOR ALL

IN A BRIEF

MEMOIR OF ELIZABETH BALES.

“Who hath despised the day of small things.”

“IN the obscurity of retirement,” says a striking modern writer, “amid the squalid poverty and revolting privations of a cottage, has often been my lot to witness scenes of magnanimity and self-denial, as much beyond the belief as the practice of the great; a heroism borrowing no support, either from the gaze of the many or the admiration of the few, yet flourishing amidst ruins and on the confines of the grave; a spectacle as stupendous in the moral world as the falls of the Missouri in the natural; and like that mighty cataract doomed to display its grandeur only where there are no eyes to appreciate its magnificence.”

Although this striking paragraph is not altogether descriptive of the subject of the present memoir, yet it occurred to my mind in connexion with her humble lot and beautiful history.

Elizabeth Bales was born at Nottingham, of parents who though once in tolerably respectable circumstances, her father being by trade a hosier, were gradually losing their standing in life, and declining in their means of

comfortable support. Mr Bales, with the hope of retrieving his affairs, determined to remove to Ireland. On their approaching the shore of that country a violent storm arose which drove them back to the coast of Wales, where the vessel struck upon the sands, and they were in imminent peril of shipwreck. The passengers were lowered by ropes into a boat, in order to be taken ashore from the vessel: among them was Elizabeth, the subject of this memoir, then about four years old, who up to that time had been a healthy and well-formed child. It is conjectured that in the act of lowering her into the boat she received some spinal injury, for from that time she complained much of her back, which soon after exhibited signs of incipient deformity. This continued to increase till she presented an affecting spectacle of bodily infirmity. Through the days of youth she was a most dutiful and affectionate daughter, and possessed considerable sweetness of temper and placidity of disposition. From a very early period she manifested a general reverence for religion, and a vague notion of its importance. She used while a child to assemble her little companions, when she would read to them the scriptures, and sing and pray with them; but it was not until she was about seventeen years of age that she had any clear and impressive sense of her fallen and sinful condition, or of the way of pardon and eternal life through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. She was then residing at Hanwell, near London, where she heard the preaching of Mr Gregory, who kept a large boarding school, and preached in his own house. Here she was much loved, and received great attention on account of her engaging manners, sweetness of temper, and piety.

Her father having lost his all by the failure of his trade, removed with his family to this town, where he earned a scanty livelihood by weaving cotton gloves upon a stocking loom which he kept in his house, and selling them as opportunity presented. In consequence of her deformity, Elizabeth could not be put to any bodily labour, and therefore employed herself in sewing the seams of the gloves which were woven by her father. Poverty at length in most of its privations and rigours, took possession of the dwelling of this gradually sinking family, who still however contrived to do without parochial allowance.

By the labours of a few pious and zealous young people connected with my congregation a Sunday-school was set up in that part of the town where Elizabeth lived. In addition to the instructions delivered in the school, preaching was carried on in the room where the children met. The neighbourhood of Great Barr-street and Garrison Lane, where these operations were conducted, peculiarly needed such efforts, as from more causes than one morals were at that time in a very low state in that locality, and there were no places of religious worship within even a moderate distance. Among those who listened to the glad tidings of salvation was the subject of these pages. Her views of religion here became still more clear, and as a sinner condemned by the law, she believed in Christ, the great subject of the gospel testimony, enjoyed peace through faith, and became altogether a new creature. Evangelical piety not only made her happy, but excited in her heart a wish to be useful in leading others to that Saviour whom she had found to her unutterable consolation; and she solicited to be

admitted as a teacher in the Sunday-school. Her personal appearance rendered her rather ineligible, and made it somewhat doubtful whether it was desirable to expose her to derision and contempt; but her earnestness, combined with great simplicity and modesty, overcame this objection, and she took her place among her young charge. The school was at that time held in an inconvenient upper room, to which the only access was by a kind of step ladder; and oftentimes, when in a state of greater weakness than usual, it was necessary for one of the stronger teachers to carry this good girl in his arms up the steep ascent, and deposit her in the scene of her sabbath occupations.

In the year 1824, Elizabeth entered into the fellowship of the church under my care, when a written testimony was borne to her character and conduct, by the deacon who visited her at the time of her admission to our communion, from which the following is an extract:

“Elizabeth Bales first became acquainted with us in consequence of her desire to be made useful as a teacher, in our Bordesley Sunday-school; having expressed that wish to a pious woman, well known in that neighbourhood, it was made known to us, and she was introduced there about twelve months since. Her conduct as a teacher, during the whole of that time, has been one unvaried, beautiful exhibition of what a teacher’s conduct ought always to be, the most exact regularity, and an assiduous and unwearied attention to each and every child in her class: but in order to put the full value upon these good qualities, it should be known that her health is so delicate as would furnish a sufficient apology for altogether declining the employment, and her appearance such as must awaken the painful sympathy of the benevolent spectator; and yet she commands the respect of her infant charge, and well maintains her gentle authority amongst them; and although they are at that early age when it is so difficult to fix the attention, the mild and unremitting efforts of their instructress have produced a change too obvious to be overlooked in comparison with Jess favoured classes. Conduct like this could not

fail to attract the esteem of those who observed it, the marks of its heavenly origin could hardly be mistaken; the superintendent of the school therefore felt it his duty to invite her to be united with us in closer ties. After due deliberation and obtaining permission from her friends, she at length consented."

From this extract it will be seen with what efficiency, notwithstanding her personal appearance, Elizabeth discharged her duties as a Sunday school teacher. Her deformity was greater than is usually found in those who are affected with spinal distortion; and when we consider how frequently this is an object of ridicule or disgust with children who have not been trained to restrain their feelings by the courtesies of society, we can imagine that there must have been some latent and counteracting power to awe the rude spirits of her young charge. This lay in her eminent piety, in the sweetness and placidity of her temper, in her judicious affection for the children, and in her constant punctuality in the discharge of her duties, and withal, it may be added, she possessed a soft musical voice, and rather a prepossessing countenance.

Never did a teacher enter more fully, or more delightfully into the occupations of her important office, or more clearly understand and more steadily pursue its ultimate end. Her eye was fixed on the souls of the children; her heart longed for their salvation; and her efforts were unwearying to engage their affections for Christ. To teach them to read, though she was assiduous in this, was the lowest of her aims; her great object was to form their religious character. Not content with teaching them on the Sabbath day, she would meet them at other times for instruction, conversation, and prayer: nor were they reluctant to comply with her wishes, or to gather round her chair, to listen

to the effusions of her pious solicitude for their welfare: yet, from her poverty, she had nothing else to give them but the love of a heart devoted to their welfare. The intelligent and observant stranger would have been struck to notice the almost reverent and affectionate attention with which a circle of poor girls would look up to that little deformed creature that took her seat in the midst of them as their instructress: and her influence over them was another demonstration of the power as well as the excellence of goodness. This was acquired in part, as I have just hinted, by the interest she took in her children's concerns out of the school. She did not lay aside her labours when she left the school, never to take them up again till the next Sabbath morning, but carried them through the week, by enquiries after the absentees, and by visiting and praying with those who were sick. It was a stimulus to regularity of attendance on the part of the children to know that the truants would be sought after by their vigilant teacher; and it was a comfort to those in trouble to be assured with equal certainty that their sorrows would come under the notice of her attentive eye, and the sympathy of her feeling heart. All this, of course, tended to produce, and did produce, for her the gratitude and respect of the children's parents.

From the time that Elizabeth's own heart was renewed by the grace of God, she evinced that true and necessary evidence of personal religion, a deep solicitude for the salvation of others, and especially for those who dwelt in her own neighbourhood, where it must be admitted she witnessed the aboundings of iniquity, and the overflowings of ungodliness. She was not unconcerned about the conversion of the distant heathen, but

the state of the heathen around her still more deeply affected her heart. She felt all the claims of locality: this was perhaps the predominant feeling of her heart, and trait of her character; she seemed to feel that each christian should be a light in his own vicinity, especially when, as was the case with hers, that neighbourhood is characterised by peculiar darkness and depravity. Her heart groaned over the wickedness of the people, and like Lot, she vexed her righteous soul daily, because of the filthy conversation of the wicked, the immortal souls perishing at her own door; and was stirred up to seek their salvation.

To aid the good work of reformation which the church, of which she was so consistent a member, were attempting in her vicinity, by various means, and among the rest by a religious tract society, Elizabeth commenced the labours of a tract distributor. In this new office she was no less diligent, devoted, and affectionate, than in that of a Sunday school teacher. In winter and in summer, amidst storm and calm, when the sun was blazing with summer heat, and the winter's snow was deep upon the ground, this indefatigable little creature would be seen pursuing her rounds, and going from house to house upon her visits of mercy to the dark souls of those who inhabited them, and when permitted, as was very common, she would read and explain the tracts which she bore to them. Sometimes she would be refused admittance by the surly growl of brutish ignorance and profanity, and at others would be distressed by the scornful sneer of infidelity, with which the neighbourhood was much infested: but nothing daunted, she would mildly continue, and usually won an entrance for her tract by the gentleness of her manner,

and the unruffled serenity of her spirit. It may be imagined that even in her presence, contemptible as it might seem to have been, many an athletic form of impiety, stood abashed, like Satan before Ithuriel, and felt how awful goodness is. For this she prepared and armed herself by fervent prayer. Before setting out on her peregrinations she would say to the associate of her labours, "Come, my dear, let us look up to God for His help and blessing:" and then in a strain of sweet and fervent supplication invoke the grace of Him, without whom nothing is wise, good, or strong.

Insult or derision however was the exception, not the rule. She was generally regarded in her neighbourhood with a species of reverence, which eminent and consistent piety, united with extraordinary benevolence, only could inspire. Sturdy and powerful men would say to her, "If anyone should dare to molest or hinder thee in the discharge of thy business, send for us, and we will always fight for thee." To which she would reply with a grateful smile, "I can best fight for myself." Meaning, by her gentleness, and dependence upon God, which would disarm all hostility, and be her best protection. Her usual reception was that of great respect and kindness; nor was it uncommon to hear the exclamation, as she approached, "Here comes our little angel: bless her."

The labour of tract distributing made her personally acquainted with the sorrows of her poor neighbours, arising from penury and disease. She had an ear for every tale of woe, and became a visitor of the sick, to whom the kindness of her manner much endeared her; and who frequently sent for "the little woman," as they called her, though, as in the case

of her Sunday school children they could expect no money from her, to read and talk to them, and pray with them. These requests, when able to comply with them, she never refused; and she was welcomed as a ministering angel to many a wretched abode, where the glad tidings of salvation were listened to with deep and solemn attention, as they fell in the soft tones of her sweet voice upon the sufferer's ear. Having an excellent gift, as well as much of the grace, of extempore prayer, her impressive and beseeching supplications were as much valued as her instructive counsels, and perhaps more. These visits were of course usually, though not always, paid to persons of her own sex. In this way she may be said to have almost acted the part of a town missionary. Her labours in this department of christian activity were incessant and laborious, and they were carried on under the pressure of almost constant, and frequently severe pain. Sometimes she would come in, sit down, and faint, and after recovering from her exhaustion, would set off again upon a visit to some other object of her pious solicitude. It was a frequent occurrence for her not to return from her ministrations in the sick chamber till ten o'clock, and then to receive another summons to the sick or dying bed of some afflicted and anxious neighbour, who coveted the wisdom of her instructions, and the efficacy of her prayers. The clock has struck twelve sometimes before she has returned to her own dwelling, when upon being expostulated with the next day by her mother, upon the injury she must do herself by such efforts, she would reply, "I must work while I can, for I may not be able to work long:" and it was a common exclamation, "I cannot do work enough for Christ." Her mother

has often gone into her room and found she had fainted upon the floor.

It is not to be wondered at that by such conduct as this, Elizabeth had acquired such a character for sanctity and benevolence, that her neighbours were ashamed or afraid to sin in her presence. The swearer would not like to utter his oath if she were by, licentious levity would grow serious if she were coming, and the sabbath breakers, when going to purchase articles on the holy day, at the shop in her vicinity, would feel a pang of conscience as they passed her door, and look up at her window to see if her reproving eye was upon them; and if this were the case, went home with a tolerable certainty of an expostulatory visit or note next day.

I introduce here one specimen of her tract visits, with its results. She was going her round one day in company with her most intimate friend, Mary Cox, the sister of an excellent Wesleyan Missionary in Africa, when a woman asked them to go in and visit her son, then dangerously ill. The history of this youth was somewhat affecting. A caravan of wild beasts happening to be in town, he most imprudently climbed up the back of one of the waggons, and put his arm through an air hole into the den of a tiger, when the beast instantly sprung at the arm and bit it clean off in a moment. He was carried to the hospital, where a cure was effected. Soon afterwards he was again carried to the same public institution with a white swelling in one of his knees, which rendered an amputation of the leg necessary. This was not the end of the poor youth's misery, for no long time elapsed before the other knee be-

came affected, and mutilated as he was, there appeared no other means of saving life, but by amputating the other limb. This he refused to undergo, preferring to die rather than to endure further torture and mutilation. While lying in this hopeless condition, Elizabeth visited him, and found him in some concern about the state of his soul. She poured into his ear the glad tidings of salvation, and soothed his troubled spirit with the hope of mercy through faith in Christ. He listened with deep attention, expressed his gratitude for her visit, and begged a repetition of it. She lost no time in making her friend Mr Derrington, then employed as the town missionary for the neighbourhood, acquainted with the case, who immediately visited the youth, and paid him great attention. His mind was opened by the Lord to receive the truth, and having believed the gospel, was brought to the enjoyment of great peace. Elizabeth continued also to visit him, and contributed to his growth in knowledge and grace. As a proof of the state of his mind, both in holiness and happiness, the following incident might be mentioned. His father was one day drinking and singing, in the yard just under his window. To drown the voice of noisy merriment, he commenced a song of his own, which he had learnt, one of the songs of Zion, that simple little hymn:

“Mark the righteous man, and see
Peace and joy his steps attend;
All his path is purity;
Happy is his end.
Come and see his dying bed;
Peacefully his moments roll;
Angels Lover round his head;
Heav’n receives his soul.

Come and view his mortal grave;
Silence and repose are there;
Never more shall sorrow's wave
Wreck the slumberer."

O, there is something at once touching and beautiful in the idea of this dying youth turning the subject of his own mortality into song, and making his "dying bed," and "mortal grave," the very theme with which to drown the sound of the drunkards' voices. At length he prevailed upon the party to break up, sent for his father into his room, and sang over to him the hymn with which he had been entertaining his holy mind during the scene of conviviality. After lingering awhile on the borders of the grave with a most joyful hope of immortality, he laid down his mutilated body in the grave, to await the perfection of the resurrection, while his spirit departed to be with Christ, leaving Elizabeth and her female companion to rejoice in the blessed fruit of their tract labours. Mr Derrington addressed a large congregation on the following sabbath after the burial, and it may be hoped not without spiritual effect upon many minds.

After carrying on for some time the Sunday school and the preaching, in the inconvenient room already alluded to, the congregation in Carr's Lane erected, at a cost of about four hundred pounds, a new building in the same neighbourhood, which like the other was also to serve the double purpose of chapel and school house. This was a matter of great delight to Elizabeth on many accounts. Often and often would she borrow the keys and retire there, either for more leisure and a better opportunity for meditation and prayer than she could always command at home; or else to pour out her heart to God in fervent supplication

for His Spirit to descend on the labours which were carried on upon that, to her, most consecrated spot: and who shall say, or who can conceive, what communings with God were maintained in those seasons of seclusion, by her wrestling spirit; or how much of the success of the efforts pursued there, both by teacher and preachers, is to be traced up to her solitary intercessions in the place where they were made.

In that building Elizabeth was a constant attendant, year after year, upon the ordinances of public worship, as often as the doors were opened, on week-days, as well as on the Sabbaths; and in all weathers, on winter evenings as well as summer mornings. She was exceedingly fond of the prayer-meetings, and as long as her health permitted, always was present at the one which was held at the chapel early on Sabbath morning, though to accomplish this she had to rise as early as five o'clock, in order to recover her breath from the fatigue of dressing, and have time for her own private devotion. It was her custom by a rapid glance round the congregation, to ascertain who among the habitual worshippers were absent from the house of God, and then to call upon them, either in her way to chapel in the evening, or next day; not however to arraign, accuse, and scold, but in some such gentle language as this, to expostulate; "My dear, I did not see you at chapel this afternoon." In all her labours, whether as teacher in the Sunday school, as a tract distributor, or a visitor of the sick, her great and constant object was, to get the people to attend the preaching of the gospel, knowing as she well did, "that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Nor can anyone engage in any way of usefulness more easy, or more likely to be

effectual, than in persuading those who neglect the means of grace, to attend constantly upon the preaching of the gospel. Thousands have been thus the means of winning souls to Christ, and saving them from death; and thousands more, not excepting the youngest, or the weakest, may be blessed in the same manner if they would try.

Some few years ago the christian community at Carrs Lane, considering that the end for which christian churches are set up is to sound out the word of the Lord all around them, established and supported by the subscriptions of its own members a town mission. One of the first spheres of its operation was that part of the vicinity of Birmingham, in which their chapel was built, and in which Elizabeth lived: the exact locality being called Garrison Lane. In the same neighbourhood lived Mr Derrington, already mentioned, one of her fellow members, who had made himself exceedingly useful in visiting the sick, instructing the ignorant, and preaching in turn with others at the chapel, and from whom she had received the kindest and most humane attention. Her gratitude to him was exceedingly ardent, and it was her earnest hope that he would be appointed as the town missionary for that neighbourhood. Her desire for this arose in part from a high opinion of his adaptation to the situation, and an anxious hope that he would be a blessing to her poor neighbours; and in part also from christian regard to one, whose instructions and sympathy had contributed so much to her growth in knowledge, grace, and religious enjoyment.

Nor was he alone in his kindness. Her pastor felt it a duty and a pleasure to go to her lowly cot and her sick chamber, though prevented by his numerous avoca-

tions, large church, and distance from her locality, from seeing her so often as he otherwise would have done: and he knew moreover that she lived amidst a circle of friends, all of whom, for the love and reverence they bore for her, delighted to flock around her, till she was in danger of being oppressed by the attentions of christian friendship.

It should be here stated, that for several of the last years of her life, Elizabeth, through the increasing poverty of her father, who could scarcely earn the means of subsistence for himself and his aged wife, was supported in great measure by the bounty of the church of which she was a member; in the dispensation of which, the deacons felt it a pleasure to be more than ordinarily liberal in administering to her wants: this resource, and the kindness of friends, supplied her not only with necessaries, but the comforts of life, and it may be hoped she was thus rather a help than a burden to her impoverished parents.

I now mention a peculiar circumstance in her history, not for the purpose of exciting wonder, as if there were any thing unprecedented, much less supernatural, in it, but as being a part of her history, and a part which excited no little talk at the time of its occurrence, and evinced the habitude of her mind and heart. About three years since she was liable to extraordinary fits of insensibility, or diseased sleep, from which nothing could rouse her, neither noises, pungent aromatics applied to the nostrils, nor bodily violence; and during which, she would go through, in an audible voice, various soliloquies, religious exercises, and conversations. Take for example the following, which was the first that occurred in the presence and hearing

of Mr Derrington, though he heard many afterwards. Supposing herself going her round of visits to the habitations of her neighbours, she comes, in imagination, to the house of a poor aged female. Seating herself near the object of her anxiety, she addressed her as follows; "Come, old woman, I am called to see you; do you think any thing about your soul? You are getting old, and if you don't think about your soul, it will soon be too late, and there is no change in the grave; but we must be changed. Reach me that book; here is a beautiful hymn, we sometimes sing it at chapel;

'Come we that love the Lord.'

Do you love the Lord? If you do not, you cannot sing that hymn: I do love the Lord. The hymn is a long one; the verse I think is

'Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry,
We're marching thro' Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high.'

Yes marching, I have been marching a long time; I don't mean marching as soldiers march, but marching to heaven. I have had many storms and conflicts by the way, but I would not go back; no, there is a sweetness in it. But what makes it sweet, do you know? It is because Christ is with me. There is a passage in the scripture which says, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' rest, rest; rest for what? The soul rests from what? Sin. Oh how sweet that rest is; I wish all the people were weary of sin. The scriptures say, 'The wages of sin is death;' what poor wages: we cannot live by them; I cannot live by them, and yet how many are

serving Satan. And then how sweet the other part of the passage: ‘The gift of God is eternal life.’ Is not that beautiful? You don’t know much about it, because you don’t go to chapel. There is a verse in a hymn which begins,

‘How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord;’

Yes, it is a firm foundation, it is one that will stand: men build, but their foundations will not stand in the day of trial. I build upon Christ, and that is a good foundation; I have nothing to build upon of my own; my works are very imperfect. Then the last verse but one of that hymn

‘The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design
Thy dross to consume, thy gold to refine.’

Here afflictions are compared to fire; you know fire is sharp, and so is affliction. But God says, I only design thy dross to consume. I don’t mean the dross of metals, gold or iron: my brother works at iron and there is a great deal of rust upon it, but I don’t mean that; it is the dross of sin; I have a great deal of dross. In the last verse it says,

‘I’ll never, no, never; no never forsake.’

Father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, may forsake, but Christ will not, and that’s my Saviour, who will not forsake me. Well I must go to chapel now, but I will come again; I will ask Mr D. to call and see you, perhaps he may be the means of saving your soul.”

Being anxious to be present at one of her seasons of mental exclusion and isolation from the world around her, I called one day, with the hope that it would take place while I was there. My wish was gratified. I took my seat by her bed side. For awhile her lips

moved with great rapidity, as if in conversation, but without articulate sound. At length she said, let us sing the following hymn:

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed,”

Here she paused, and described the time, place, and circumstances of her first hearing this pathetic strain, and the effect it produced upon her mind. She then applied the sentiment of the hymn to herself, in a most simple yet impressive manner, “Died for me, died for poor Betsy.” After many remarks of this kind, expressive of her wonder that grace should be bestowed upon her, she broke forth into a song, in a sweet, clear, musical voice, and in a tune which, I think, was composed on the occasion, as I had no acquaintance with it whatever. Verse after verse followed in the same tune, and with a soliloquy all each. She then gave out this text; “That no man take thy crown.” She described with great correctness the nature of the crown, stating that it was not a golden one, such as monarchs wear, but a crown of life and glory that fadeth not away: she then considered the persons who were invited to possess the crown; and again thought of herself, saying, “There is a crown for poor Betsy, and a crown for my dear father and mother, if they will have one.” Next came the enemies who want to take from us our crown, especially Satan, whose power she described as being limited, though very great. It certainly was no contemptible sermon. But the most impressive part of the scene was the prayer which followed. It occupied about seven or ten minutes, without a single pause, incoherence, or word out of place. Among other subjects she remembered with respectful affection her pastor, then seated, though unknown to her, by her bed-side; nor did she

forget one dear to him, since risen above the need of prayer: but still the burden of her supplication was Mr Derrington and Garrison Lane; for whom, as was natural, the most fervent aspirations of her heart rose to heaven. It must have been an eye more unused to weep than mine is, that could refrain from shedding tears, while listening to this slumbering wrestler with God, pouring out from the inner and hidden world of her own thoughts, such affecting petitions for my happiness and usefulness. I am not the only individual who wept over that scene; a physician whom I know, and who visited often her chamber, has been seen profusely shedding tears as he listened to the unconscious strains of her prayer or praise. Now I do not mean for a moment to insinuate that there was any thing of vision or trance in all this; it was a morbid action of the brain, which continued more or less, at times, for some months; but, as the terrors and remorse of the slumbering sinner shew the state of his heart and conscience, so did these exercises of Elizabeth's soul, when the judgment and will were suspended, and the heart was left to follow its own unchecked and unguided impulses, shew what objects held her soul in the spell of their fascination. It should be observed here, that on a return to consciousness she remembered nothing that had passed through her mind during the fit.

Advancing infirmity had now confined Elizabeth to her sick chamber. But could the energies of her zeal be repressed? Could she cease to be useful? No. But what could she do? They whose hearts are bent on doing good, will find means of usefulness every where and at all times, not excepting even the bed of disease and the confines of the grave. This devoted teacher

could no longer go to her class of Sunday scholars, but her class could come to her. A sick chamber has few attractions for a set of lively girls; yet in this case they gladly obeyed the summons, and occasionally hastened to the retreat of their beloved instructress. Solemn, and serious, and affectionate was the manner in which she there taught and counselled them, and commended them to God in prayer. Nor was this the extent of her efforts to do good: from her seclusion she sent forth many letters to her friends, the writing of which must have put her to severe pain.

The influence of Elizabeth among the young females, who attended the chapel, or taught in the Sunday-school, was of the happiest kind; her good sense, and affectionate disposition, united with her eminent piety and well-known zeal, secured at once their esteem and regard. They made her their friend in the various troubles of a spiritual nature which agitated their minds; and they laid open the secrets of their hearts with a freedom which they could not use towards another; and often have they returned from her chamber, relieved from doubts fears and perplexities, with which they entered it. By them her departure is felt as the loss of a friend of inestimable value.

The last time that Elizabeth left her house, for a public service, was to be present at a quarterly tea meeting, which was held at her much loved spot, Garrison Lane Chapel, by the members of the church dwelling in that neighbourhood, with a view to promote their brotherly love, and to enjoy more perfectly "the communion of saints." As her parents had removed further from the chapel, of course it was impossible

for her to walk; her friends, therefore, procured a vehicle to convey her to the scene of holy fellowship, which was soon to be exchanged for the higher and more perfect fellowship of the church triumphant. For some time previous to her death, she had been staying with her friend, Mr Derrington, but finding herself getting worse, she wished to be removed to her own dwelling. It was however with great difficulty she accomplished the object of her desire, in consequence of her extreme weakness. A kind of Bath chair was procured, and she was drawn home in it, but was obliged to stop many times by the way, to recover from her pain and fatigue, before she could proceed. This was on the Friday, and early on Sunday morning, July the tenth, she left an earthly sabbath, to enter on that rest which remaineth for the people of God. It does not appear from any remarks she dropped that she anticipated so soon to be removed, and therefore said nothing about her decease: for this however, she was always ready. In default of death-bed expressions, we must refer to the holy, consistent, and blameless tenor of her life. What an exchange was made by her emancipated spirit in that moment when it escaped from the little, inconvenient, and unsightly habitation in which it dwelt on earth, into the glorious and boundless regions of immortality. It was sown in weakness, it shall be raised in power; it was sown in dishonour, it shall be raised in glory; it was sown a natural body, it shall be raised a spiritual body.

It was not to be expected that such an individual would be carried to her grave unattended or unlamented by her numerous christian friends. She was interred in the General Cemetery, and although this is situated

between two or three miles from the spot where she died, she was followed by a procession which would have graced and honoured the remains of a person of wealth or rank. Her beloved friend Mr Derrington, and her class of Sunday scholars, preceded the corpse, which was borne by a company of the male teachers, and accompanied by the female teachers in mourning, who felt a melancholy pleasure in paying this last tribute of respect to one whom they tenderly loved, and justly esteemed. Her aged and venerable father and mother followed as mourners. In addition, a crowd of her neighbours and fellow members joined the procession. Her pastor conducted the obsequies; and frequently as he has had to perform the same mournful rites in that beautiful place of sepulture, he can truly say, he never saw such a multitude there as stood around the opened grave of this honoured member of his church; nor did he ever see so many tears fall, as dropped, when her little, infirm body was laid in its lowly bed of death to wait the raptures of the waking morn.

Many who visit that picturesque burying place, will pass by the sculptured tombs, and flattering memorials of the rich and the great, to stand upon the spot where reposes all that was mortal of Elizabeth Bales. She deserved as an appropriate epitaph, "She did what she could." Elizabeth departed, as we should be ready to say, too soon for the completion of her felicity upon earth; inasmuch as she did not live to witness the commencement of the erection of the second new chapel in her neighbourhood. This undertaking had been long delayed by obstacles which could not be overcome; at length, however, a prospect was presented

of its being accomplished, and ground was purchased within about fifty yards of the dwelling in which her parents formerly resided, but from which they had, as I have said, lately removed. The progress of the arrangements for the new building was watched by her with deep interest, and in consequence of some new and threatening difficulties with almost painful solicitude. When Mr Derrington visited her, one of the first and most anxious enquiries used to be about the new chapel: and when hope of its being built was uppermost, she would please herself with the idea that she might yet be strengthened to worship God again in his house, and for this purpose begged her parents to remove back to their former neighbourhood, and to take a cottage near the sanctuary. But her desire was not granted her, for the foundation stone was not laid till three weeks after she had entered on her long sabbatic rest. How would she have exulted over the thronging multitudes who assembled to witness the ceremony of that interesting occasion, and with what anticipations of still greater blessings for her vicinity, would she have beheld the scene. Perhaps she was there though we saw her not. It might have been permitted to her, for aught we can tell, to be a spectator of a scene, which is doubtless to be traced in some measure, to the influence of her labours, and the fervour of her prayers.

I was much affected by an expression of her mother during a visit I paid to her since the death of this precious daughter. "Our house, sir, is now so solitary since Elizabeth is gone: during her life it was always full of company, as she had friends ever coming to see her: but now we seem to have nobody about us." This

little incident shows in what estimation she was held, and how much attraction went forth from her humble dwelling.

And now what is to be gathered from this short memoir.

I. We see in it a beautiful exemplification of the true nature and transcendent excellence of religion. Religion is not merely an outward observance of ceremonies, nor an attendance upon ordinances; these things are nothing worth in themselves, mere bodily exercise that profits nothing, and is of no acceptance with God, but as they spring from the inward principle of a renewed, holy, and humble mind. Religion begins in deep conviction of sin, a sense of our fallen and ruined state as exposed to the wrath of God in consequence of transgression; and then goes on in a simple faith in the gospel, leading to an entire, thankful, and peace-giving dependence on the blood and righteousness of Christ, for acceptance with God. From this faith there arises love to God, to his people, to his ways, and to holiness. In proportion as faith is felt, it makes its possessor humble, meek and benevolent; full of pity for man, and zeal for the glory of God. See, how all this was exemplified in the subject of this memoir. Never was there a more pure and simple minded creature; a more dutiful daughter; a more harmless and inoffensive being, than she was; and yet how did she confess and bewail her sinfulness in the sight of God; how entirely did she renounce all dependence upon her own good doings, and how exclusively did she rely upon the righteousness of Christ. Observe the holy virtues which clustered in her character; how profound was her humility; how gentle her demeanour; how striking her meekness;

how uncomplaining her submission; how exemplary her patience; how exquisite her benevolence; how ardent her zeal; how tender her attachments; how intense her piety; and to crown all, how unmixed was all this with any spiritual pride, any sense of superiority, or any sanctimonious airs. Had she been a Roman Catholic, or a Mystic, superstition would have invested this union of personal deformity and eminent piety, of usefulness and trance-like hallucinations, with something of supernatural visitation. How much is there for all of us to learn and to copy. Her body and her soul were in striking contrast with each other.

But the peace-giving nature of piety is most strikingly set forth in this beautiful example. Elizabeth amidst all her poverty, her personal appearance, and her sufferings, was happy. Many a girl of envied beauty, dwelling amidst the splendours of wealth, enjoying rank herself, and flattered and caressed by those still greater, might, on account of the untroubled flow of her thoughts, and the quiet, lake-like, heaven-reflecting surface of her heart, have looked with envy upon the little decrepit form that pursued its daily rounds of mercy, panting for breath, in the neighbourhood of Garrison Lane Chapel. She looked happy, for she felt so. Notes of praise and not of complaint were ever flowing from her lips. Many heard her expressions of gratitude, none ever had to expostulate with her on a murmuring expression.

And now contemplate the elevating nature of religion. How entirely did moral and spiritual excellence raise her above all disadvantages of person and station, and cover with its lustre her deformity and poverty. What would she have been without religion? An

object of pity to the good, and of ridicule to the bad, but of respect or interest to none. She would have lived without comfort and without esteem. It was this divine excellence that in spite of all that was repulsive to the bodily eye, made her an object of regard to all that knew her. Yes, and this did so raise her, that half the women who have passed through society, with all the advantages of beauty, elegance, and wealth in their favour, whatever they may have had of admiration and of flattery, have had far less of love and of esteem, than this child of poverty and sorrow. So true is the language of God, "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable."

II. What a proof is this narrative of the common remark, that where there is a heart to do good, there is an opportunity; where there is a will there is a way to be useful, and that no disadvantages and obstacles are so great as to be insurmountable to an intelligent and determined zeal. If with that little deformed person, if with the feebleness of constitution which it produced, and with poverty of circumstances in addition, Elizabeth could do so much good by direct personal effort, what might not be done by others, to whom these disadvantages do not belong? Alas! how much less good do any of us do, than we might: and if she lamented over the little work she did for Christ, with how much greater shame and grief should we deplore our unfruitfulness? How shall we excuse ourselves for our indolence? What defence shall we set up? The world is perishing around us. Sinners are going down to the pit before our eyes. Immortal souls by countless millions are crowding to the regions of eternal

despair: and what have we to say that we do not do more for their salvation? How little are we affected by the terrific scene! How little are we penetrated by a sense of the ignorance, sin and misery which appeal to our own senses! Oh where is the constraining love of Christ? Where the compassion for souls? Where the sense of responsibility to God? All may do good, and all should do it. There needs not the sex and strength of the man, woman may do good; there needs not personal advantage, decrepitude may do good; there needs not wealth, poverty may do good. This blessed luxury is within the reach of all, and to have no appetite or taste for it, is but too plain an indication of a wrong state of soul. In this world of sin and sorrow, where our purest enjoyments are so mixed, there is no bliss equal to that which is derived from the exercise of benevolence. There is a very admirable tract published by the Religious Tract Society entitled, "How to do good," or ways of caring for the souls of others, which enumerates the following methods of pious zeal. You can pray for your families, friends, neighbours, and the world. You can set a holy example, and shew that religion makes you holy, kind, gentle, good-tempered, and happy. You can speak to your families, friends, neighbours, about their souls. When you see people do or say wrong, you can kindly speak to them. You can read the Bible, and pray with your families. You can lend and give tracts. You can read the Bible and good books to those who will listen. You can teach others to read. Some of you can be Sunday-school teachers. You can give property to support societies for spreading the gospel. You can beg people to go to God's house. You can visit the sick. You can send your children to a

Sunday-school, or beg others to send theirs. You can speak to your companions about religion. You can beg people to keep holy the Sabbath. You can be kind to others, and then they will be more likely to mind what you say. You can write letters to your friends, and try to do them good, and ask them to do good to others. When you are going to the house of God, you can speak to those whom you see sinning. In walking along the road, or any where else, you can often drop a word to other people. In coaches, steamers, and other places, you can speak to people. When you have a few minutes to spare, you can visit some neighbours, and speak to them about their souls. Here are twenty ways of doing good. The tract which enumerates them, gives instances of success with most of them. Harlan Page was a man who loved to do good, and between the hours of his work, he went and spoke to others about their souls, besides other ways of doing good, and he was the means of turning more than a hundred persons to God, some of whom were afterwards ministers.

III. What a lesson is here taught to the poor. Much are they to be pitied. None can fully know the ills of poverty by observation. Experience alone can give this knowledge. But still it cannot be denied that these are always increased by sin, and diminished by piety. Religion is the best antidote of poverty: it has in ten thousand instances prevented it, and in ten thousand more alleviated it. Who can be poorer than was Elizabeth? For years she lived almost entirely upon the bounty of others: yet who more happy, respectable, or useful? Let the poor read her history and learn that happiness may be found in a cottage. "A man's life," said our Lord, "consisteth not in the abundance of the

things that he hath.” True blessedness comes from spiritual things, not from temporal ones. “Hearken, my beloved brethren, hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” Such are the accents which christianity floats in heavenly music over the humble vale of poverty. “Rich in faith,” This may mean either that faith is the best, the true riches, a blessed truth, for if it were ponderable we should say a grain of faith is better than a ton of gold: it gives an interest in all the unsearchable riches of Christ, of grace, and of glory; it justifies, sanctifies, saves: or it may signify that the faith of the poor is peculiarly strong: yes, it is amidst the privations of poverty where the believer has nothing in hand and nothing in hope, but what he sees in the promise of God, that faith puts forth its mightiest power, and manifests its richest glories. Was not this exemplified in the case before us? What had Elizabeth to live upon but God’s promise that she should not want? Her faith was rich and gloriously influential. And then see the other terms of this poor man’s text: heirs! And to what an inheritance? Toil? Sorrow? Want? Yes, oftentimes: but of something else if he is a christian; “of God;” “of salvation;” “of a kingdom.” He is a son of the King of Kings, and destined to wear a crown of life, James i. 12; to sit upon a throne, Rev. iii. 21; and to reign for ever and ever in a kingdom, 2 Tim. ii. 12. Rejoice ye poor, all this for you, if ye are partakers of faith.

Religion will make you respectable. Who was more truly respectable than Elizabeth? Her poverty, her deformity, her dependence, detracted nothing from her

moral worth, did not sink her in public estimation; or number her with the many who are treated with contempt and scorn. On the contrary, few, very few of far higher rank and station, have received more attention or respect. Ours is happily a country where moral worth is sure to find its proper level, where there is enough of morality and piety, to estimate respectability more by character than by wealth. Many a rich man is despised, as he ought to be, on account of his vices; many a poor man is as much esteemed because of his virtues. I allow that something else besides piety is necessary to give true respectability to the poor, but it is all within their reach, I mean good sense, good manners, and good temper. Let a man have all these and no one will pass his door or himself with contempt. With religion as the substance, and general good conduct as the polish, the poor man is a gem which all judges of excellence will know how to value, and be sure to admire, though the setting be in copper instead of gold. Take comfort my poor friends, if you answer to this description you are not undervalued by those who know you; God respects you, Christ respects you, angels respect you, good men respect you, bad men respect you, many that seem to despise you, really esteem you. Be assured that goodness is respectability, whether it live in a mansion or a cottage, whether it wear satin or cotton, whether it feed upon venison or a crust.

Nor are you though poor shut out from doing good, any more than you are from being good. O! if you have a heart to be useful, you may find abundant opportunities to employ your, energies. Instances might be adduced without number if it were necessary of persons in the humblest walk of life doing great good; and

that not only by all kinds of ingenious devices, but in the way of direct effort. Take the two following as specimens. There was a member of the church under my care, who lived in an alms house, and was so distorted by rheumatism, as to be quite a cripple, and unable to walk or stand; and withal, her fingers as the result of the disease were twisted into all kinds of shapes. On entering her apartment one day I found her with some religious tracts. "Well Mrs H." said I, "What are you doing?" "O sir," she replied, "I am sorting my tracts." "What for?" "To send out to my neighbours." The fact was that she received these tracts from richer friends from time to time, and then employed some one to carry them round the spacious court of alms houses in which she lived, and other dwellings in the neighbourhood; and her work was to keep up a regular supply and exchange. Thus poor old Ellen in the alms house could find some way to be useful. To give one more instance; I was visiting a brother minister a few years ago with a view to assist him in a missionary meeting, which was to be held in his chapel. While I was in his house he called me into the kitchen, for what purpose I did not know till the scene explained itself. There stood an aged woman about eighty years old talking with the minister, and looking, (with a smiling countenance, and with sparkling eyes, as far as such aged orbs could sparkle,) upon some silver which my friend at that moment held in the palm of his hand. It might have been supposed she was going to receive this money to increase her comfort, for all her income was half-a-crown a week from the parish, and what the kindness of her friends might occasionally bestow, and out of this she paid eighteen

pence for her lodging; but no, she came to give, not to receive. That money, amounting to more than ten shillings, she had earned by knitting various articles and selling them; and she was then in the kitchen, where I saw her, to place it in the hand of her minister for the missionary society. So you see the poor can do something for God's cause, if they have "a mind to work." But they may also do much in the way of direct effort for the conversion of souls. Can they not warn a profane sinner, or explain the way of salvation to those that are ignorant and out of the way, or distribute tracts, and talk about their contents, or invite the neglectors of public worship to the house of God? Let the poor understand, value, and enjoy their privilege.

IV. Is there not a word for the rich from Elizabeth's memoir? Can they learn nothing from this chapter of the humble annals of the poor? Should this little book meet the eye of any whom Providence has blessed with wealth, station and influence, I would say to them, does your piety flourish amidst the comforts and the elegances of life as hers did in the cottage of poverty? Must you not admit that if you are richer in money, she was richer in faith? Learn to think less and less of the wealth of this world, and more and more of the unsearchable riches of Christ. Lower the estimate which pride and vanity form of the importance of worldly distinctions. "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted; but the rich in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways." How many rich

professors are far less happy now than was this daughter of poverty and affliction; and oh! how much below her will they be in that world where the degrees of glory will be in proportion, not to the amount of wealth, but to the degrees of grace! How much would the rich learn were they more frequently to visit the dwellings of the poor, and see how contented and peaceful those of them that are pious are, amidst all their privations! The well known anecdote of poor Mary is so much in point here, that I cannot omit it. She had a rich neighbour who was of a querulous temper, and found only cause for complaint, where multitudes would have only found matter of thankfulness. One day, on returning from the chapel where she had been worshipping God, this lady overtook Mary, who frequented the same place, and who was well known to her. She entered into conversation, and as usual, had many causes of complaint. Mary, who was a woman of good sense as well as piety, endeavoured to lead her mind away from her sorrows to her mercies. When they arrived opposite her door, she respectfully asked her wealthy neighbour to walk in, and then leading her to her empty cupboard opened it, with the question, "Do you see anything there, Ma'am?" "Nothing," was the reply. And opening a drawer or two that contained her scanty wardrobe, repeated the question, "What do you see there?" "Very little." "Then you see all I have in the world: but why should I be anxious, who have God for my Father, Christ for my Saviour, salvation for my portion, and heaven for my home?" The lady felt the rebuke so wisely and so respectfully given, and found grace to profit by it.

And then what a lesson to the rich as regards their

usefulness. O did but the wealthy know their opportunity, and feel their obligations, and appreciate their privileges, to bless their species, how happy might they be themselves, and how happy might they make others! It is a distressing spectacle in such a World as ours, where evil of every kind so much abounds, to observe the disgusting and odious selfishness of many of the rich, who are wholly taken up with their own luxurious gratification, as if born only to pamper their appetites and indulge their tastes, without bestowing a thought or a care upon the misery that prevails around them. Can they wonder at the envy, suspicion, ill-will, and hatred of the poor? Can they be astonished at the sullen murmurs and convulsive heavings of that mass of wretchedness in which they have left the principles of infidelity and sedition to be scattered by the spirits of mischief, unresisted and unchecked by kindness, liberality and religious effort? Whatever are the vices of the poor, they are deeply sensible of kindness, and alive to the feelings of gratitude. More of the oil of benevolence poured over the waves of discontent and disaffection would have a mighty influence in calming the troubled surface. Especially let the rich who make a profession of religion remember their obligations. Let it be their hallowed ambition, their constant study, and rich enjoyment, to find how much good they can do. Let them win for themselves, and it is a precious prize, the widow's tear of gratitude, the blessing of him that was ready to perish, the thanks unutterable of souls saved by their instrumentality, and the testimony of their approving Saviour. Few, very few, of the wealthier members of the flock of Christ are yet exerting themselves as they ought to

do. Few indeed like the subject of this memoir, "go about doing good." Their liberality and usefulness are rather a composition and a compromise to be let alone than an actual engagement in the service of our Lord. True it is, Elizabeth had few duties and few occupations: benevolent activity was a relief from what would otherwise have been a burthensome solitude: and after all it is, I allow, a loftier course of mercy, a nobler stretch of costly and disinterested goodness, to sacrifice the hours which might be devoted to innocent recreations, and to elegant ease: to take something from the profits of business, the pleasures of friendship, or the soft enjoyments and engrossing demands of domestic scenes, and offer this contribution to the good of others. Happy in time, happier still in eternity, will those be, who thus exhibit the mind that was in Christ.

And is there no lesson for females? What when the interesting subject of this memoir was of that class? Your sex, my female friends, stands with honour on the page of every history under heaven, and especially of that one which is written by the inspiration of God. The same blessed page which proclaims your dishonour in the sin of your first mother, displays the glorious part you are to bear in the instrumentality of saving a lost world; and many successive chapters of the sacred volume accumulate the testimonies and the evidence of your usefulness. A useless woman, a selfish woman, an unfeeling woman, is a sin against her sex, formed as it was for sympathy and mercy, and is a sin also against the history of her sex. Be active, my sisters, be active. You are far more so than your fathers, husbands, and brothers. You outstrip us in zeal and in piety too:

still last at the cross, first at the sepulchre, oftenest at the sanctuary, longest at the throne of grace, busiest in the house of sorrow: go on, value and maintain your distinction, and especially maintain it with that profound modesty which is the ornament of your excellence, and reveals while it conceals, genuine worth. Elizabeth with all her activity was singularly retiring in her deportment, and unobtrusive in her demeanour. It was the activity of principle, not of passion merely; the constraint of redeeming love, which, like its Divine source, did not cry nor lift up its voice in the street. There is danger in this age of female activity of some loss of female modesty; especially of young women becoming forward, obtrusive, and bold: thus it is that weeds grow with the flowers, weaken their strength, hide their beauty, and corrupt their fragrance. Be watchful. Let not your good be evil spoken of. Resemble as much as possible, not "the sisters of charity," who though noiseless, attract attention by their garb and their order, but those blessed angels who minister to the heirs of salvation, and who perform their embassies unseen and unheard.

Tract distributors and visitors of the sick, behold a model which you may imitate with great advantage. Elizabeth's work in this department of her labour was at once her business and her delight. She went to it as a vocation, and pursued it with a steadiness, produced by the double stimulus of conscience and affection. Her tracts were not thrown in at the door, as if, like the distributors of hand bills, she had so many to give away, and the sooner that the last was gone, no matter how, the better: to her they were means of introduction for herself, little harbinger-

ers to prepare her own way to go in, and sit down, and talk with her neighbours about their souls. And this is the way to do good. A good tract distributor needs more than a foot and a hand: she should have an eye beaming with affection, lips on which is the law of kindness, and a tongue the accents of which are instruction, warning, and consolation to the ignorant, wicked, and wretched. Tracts are now happily become very common; so common that in many cases they are received with indifference, where they are not, as in some cases they are, surlily refused; this makes it the more necessary to converse and explain them, and in some cases to read them. Great skill and tact are necessary to gain ready access to the houses and hearts of the poor on such errands, but the secret of doing so is love and gentleness. Elizabeth in many instances conquered by affection. She never resented rudeness, was never petulant, but by the meek and quiet manner in which she bore with unkindness, in the few cases in which she met with it, subdued and softened the individual that expressed it. A temper, the serenity of which is with difficulty ruffled by opposition and rudeness, is essential to a visitor of the poor, who goes to reclaim them from sin. The sweet persuasiveness of her manner often served her in dealing with the sceptic and the scoffer instead of argument; for it is willingly conceded that she could more powerfully recommend religion by describing its blessedness, than prove its divine authority by argument, or answer the objections of the cavilling disputant. She was herself with such men an argument of greater weight than the logic of others. Still, it is desirable in this age, when infidelity has become condescending, and leaving the

heights of society has descended into the vale of poverty, that tract distributors should know how to answer the objections of infidels, and how to prove the divine claims of the religion they are anxious to spread.

Happily the merciful spirit of christianity is also seen in this age, not only in sending missionaries to distant lands, but in the various benevolent institutions, for visiting and relieving the sick in our own. Many, like our deceased friend, go to the chamber of affliction, and to the bed-side of disease, to impart the medicine of the soul, in words whereby men may be comforted and saved. Let no one venture upon such an errand without tenderness of spirit and gentleness of manner. Elizabeth was a pattern in a sick chamber, so soft in voice, so gentle in manner, so tender in spirit, though perhaps a little too prone, from the very longing of her soul after the salvation of those she visited, to believe they were saved. I know no office so difficult as to the discharge of its duties, as the visitation of the sick; and with the exception of cases of chronic disease, which leaves the mind long at leisure to think and meditate and pray, I do not anticipate so much real good from visits of this kind as many do. Religion is a mental process from beginning to end, and the man half delirious, with fever, in a state of extreme prostration of strength, or writhing in agony, can attend but little to the words of instruction. It were well to take the people off as much as possible, from a kind of superstitious regard to, and dependence upon the prayers of a minister, or pious people, in sickness, and lead them to consider that life and health are the time to seek the salvation of the soul. Still there are innumerable cases to which these remarks do not apply,

but in which, during the slow waste of consumption and other diseases, the soul has leisure to think of her dark and winding course, and opportunity to return to God: and in which the voice of the friendly visitor is essentially necessary. Ministers can do but little alone for such instances, and may be materially assisted by such gentle spirits as have been described in this memoir. As a general remark, it may be said that much christian intelligence, as well as much kindness of heart, and gentleness of manner, are necessary for such an office; and also a very clear, discriminating, simple method of stating the ground of a sinner's hope towards God.

And now I devote a few pages in conclusion, and with great earnestness, to that useful and honourable class to which Elizabeth especially belonged, I mean the Sunday-school teachers. It is in this character I wish you to contemplate her, and in which she really is so bright a pattern.

I will not conceal the apprehension which I have sometimes felt, lest you, my dear friends, should be in any measure injured by the manner in which you have been often appealed to of late, and in which the importance of your useful labours has been described. It is indeed true, that your office is important, and its duties of momentous consequence to the well-being of those who are the objects of your kind attention, for you have to do not only with thinking minds, but with immortal souls, and your object is not only to train the rational, but the immortal creature. Nothing, of course, can be more momentous than eternity, and it is to eternity that your labours relate: but, in proportion to the grandeur of your object, and the loftiness of your aim,

is there a danger of your having the feeling of vanity elicited by descriptions of your work, and calculations and statements of your numbers. The latter idea gives a sense of importance in any cause. Many an individual who is quite humble in his state of isolation, and when he labours on amidst his own difficult duties, and his consciousness of imperfection, still feels something of pride or vanity when he calculates the number of his associates: his mind dilates to the limits of the vast circle in which he moves. Beware, then, of the pride of aggregation, and suffer nothing to corrupt the deep humility of your spirit.

In the beautiful instance which I have set before you in this brief memoir, you have seen a just conception formed of the ultimate object of Sunday school teaching;. Elizabeth never for a moment forgot that her children had immortal souls; that those souls were lost by sin; that Christ had died for their salvation; and that her business was to seek their conversion from the error of their ways, and save them from death. This is the true light in which to view the subject. There is as much of philosophy in this, as there is of piety: for in seeking the greater good, we seek all the lesser ones contained within it. You want to fit your children, or you ought to do so, for all the stations they may be called to occupy in future life; and the best way to do this is to endeavour to bring them under the influence of religion. I beseech you to consider you have to do with souls. Ponder the worth of a soul. Weigh the awful import of that word, damnation. Measure, if you can, the height of salvation. Yearn for souls. What would you not do to save your children from falling into the water, or the fire. Think of the bottomless pit, and the fire that is never quenched.

Take a proper aim in all you do. Look as high as heaven, as deep as to the mouth of hell, and as far as eternity.

For such an object qualify yourself well, by a large measure of mental improvement. Make yourself well acquainted with the powers of the human mind, and the best method of training them; especially the means of fixing the volatile attention of youth, and of exciting a thirst after knowledge and self-improvement in your young charge. But above all cultivate a habit of devotional feeling. Remember that piety is as truly the first qualification of a good Sunday school teacher, as it is of a good minister. Catch the fervent piety of Elizabeth. Imitate her devotional habits, her meditative, prayerful spirit. She was eminently a woman of prayer. Her mother has often found her fainted on her knees. The intensity of her devotion, and the greatness of her labours exhausted her weak frame. Our Sunday schools should be the very atmosphere of religion. The children should be made to feel that in the presence of their teacher they are standing before an embodied form of living godliness. You cannot seek the salvation of the souls of others, if you are not alive to your own. Ask the question, are you in earnest for eternity? Are you fleeing from the wrath to come? Are you walking with God, living a life of faith, prayer, watchfulness, and holiness? Oh, you will make a poor Sunday school teacher without this.

Mark the devotedness of Elizabeth. Her soul, her whole soul, was in her work: it was her meat and her drink; her life was bound up in it. We can do nothing well, which we do not do in earnest. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Those who carry to the school only half a heart, will do nothing.

They had better stay away; they only keep out others who would do far better than themselves. All our schools have some such, who are hindrances, not helps. Lukewarmness is not only in its results inefficient, but makes the work disagreeable. It is impossible to enjoy what is done in such a manner. It is all mere drudgery, and is very irksome. Zeal is pleasure: it is the vital glow and energy of a healthy and active mind. It is good to be always zealous in this good thing. Watch, labour, teach, pray, as one in earnest. Be constant, and lose no opportunity. Be punctual and lose not a moment. Eternity hangs upon every instant. Let no measure of duty satisfy you. Adopt your children as objects of interest and affection. Follow them to their houses; know all about them. Thus acquire an influence over them. If teachers have no influence over their children; if the children are rude, refractory, insubordinate, in a school where order is generally observed, the teacher is unfit for his office. The disorderly state of his class proclaims his incompetency, unless there be some counteracting cause over which he has no control. If Elizabeth, notwithstanding her deformity, poverty and weakness, could by her love, and gentleness, and devotedness, keep her children in such order, who need despair of doing it, if proper means were used? Love, system, mildness, devotedness, patience, will tame a savage. Lions and elephants are tamed by love and firmness; for love is a language which brutes understand; a law which they are willing to obey.

Conciliate the affection and secure the esteem of your fellow teachers. What a pattern of this excellence is before you. She was never known to quarrel with a

single teacher. She loved all, and by all was beloved. Her kindness to others brought back kindness to herself. To her influence might, in some measure, be attributed the uninterrupted harmony which pervaded the school. She kept peace, and therefore had never to make it; and prevented breaches, which is far easier than to repair them. A good teacher is ever a peaceable one. He neither raises a faction nor joins one. He has no ear for murmurs or complaints, except it Ire to hush them; and never blows the coals of discord, nor waters the root of bitterness. What mischief might one discontented and turbulent teacher do in a school, where there are other inflammable spirits, ready to take fire from his own! The putrid fever of disaffection is as contagious as it is malignant. Keep clear from the disease and neither communicate nor receive it.

Imitate also the untiring patience, the unwearied zeal of this estimable woman. Nothing but the hand of disease arrested her, and when kept by that from the school-room she used to have her class occasionally in her own chamber. Hers was a service of nearly twenty years, and she loved her work to the last. Had she lived till seventy, she would still have been a Sunday-school teacher. Be not weary in well-doing. Amidst many who soon tire and faint, be it your ambition to see how many of these your zeal can outlive. What an honour is it to have it said, "There is a teacher of twenty years standing."

Like Elizabeth be attached to your ministers, and be ever willing to consult them, and to follow their counsels. How devoted was she to the comfort, how regardless of the peace, how concerned for the usefulness of the town missionary who laboured in the neighbourhood,

and whom she considered as her minister. I believe she would have been almost willing to die rather than for one moment to have thrown an obstacle in the way of his useful ministrations, or to injure the prosperity of the congregation at Garrison Lane Chapel. Her labours, much as she loved them and delighted in them, were no separate and detached department, but part of a whole over which he presided. Her usefulness was a rivulet that flowed into the greater stream of his. She was his willing handmaid, and she looked up to him with a deference, which though not servile, was eminently respectful. It is this blessed harmony between the Sunday-school teacher and pastor which I am most anxious to promote. I want our ministers to look with the tenderest interest, and with the most affectionate solicitude on the labours of these their invaluable assistants; and them to look up without jealousy, and with unfeigned respect, to their minister's general, unobtrusive, and paternal superintendence. In him there should be nothing dictatorial, as if they were servants: in them nothing suspicious, as if he came among them to invade their prerogative. It is a delightful sight to behold a good understanding between a christian pastor and a body of devoted teachers.

Remember, eternity is at hand, the bliss of which will be enhanced by the recollections of time. Our friend has experienced this already by meeting in glory some whom she was the honoured instrument of helping to raise from the privations of poverty to the felicities of immortality. Some harps, doubtless, are struck with a stronger hand in praise of our Lord, since she has arrived in heaven, for the instructions of her lips, the consistency of her example, or the fidelity of her re-

proofs. Sunday school teachers, go and do likewise; be stimulated, guided and encouraged by the example of Elizabeth Bales.

**THE PIOUS COLLIER; OR, THE HISTORY
OF JOSEPH ROUND.**

THE readers of this tract are probably aware of the gracious provision for the civilization and comfort of the human race, which the Almighty Creator, by his wisdom and mercy, has made, in the formation of those coal-beds, which are to be found in such abundance in various parts of the earth, and especially in this country. They lie very deep beneath the surface of the ground; and by the labour of man, and in aid of machinery, the coal is dug out, and brought up from the pit for use. Usually a shaft, or large well, is sunk, to the level of the coal-bed, down which the colliers, by the aid of a steam engine, descend in a skiff or kind of bucket fastened to a rope or chain; and the coals by the same means are brought up.

The colliers are a hardy race of men, rough in their exterior, and unhappily much given to intemperance. They are a class by themselves. Their occupation exposes them to great and numerous dangers, from the collection in the pits of one kind of gas which is destructive of human life by stopping the breathing; and of another which is highly inflammable, and when a candle is brought in causes the most terrible explosions and loss of life. These accidents from the inflammable gas happen often from the carelessness of the men. Sir Humphrey Davy, by a bright triumph of science,

invented a safety lamp, by which a candle may be kept burning without setting the gas on fire and causing an explosion. But the men sometimes neglect to take the lamp with them, and carry about a lighted candle uncovered, and the most dreadful consequences follow. Besides this, accidents often occur by the falling in of the earth from above, and of the coal which the men are digging out. Hence great numbers of them are killed, and others maimed.

It has been generally thought that familiarity with danger often hardens the heart; and this would seem to be the case with many of the colliers. Not that they are altogether without feeling, as is evident from the following fact. I remember, some forty years ago, an accident caused by the falling in of the earth between the bottom of a shaft and the place where the working of the pit was going on, by which nine men were instantly shut up, and cut off from all means of escape. The fall of earth was so great, that it could not be removed in time to save the men. There was no other way at getting at them but by working through from a neighbouring pit. The best and strongest diggers immediately went to work, and, in order to use their whole strength, no man continued longer than an hour at a time; thus the work never ceased night or day. Nerve and muscle, head, heart and arm, were taxed to the uttermost. This continued for seven or eight days. At length the pick struck through, when it was found that, though in a fearful state of exhaustion, the men were all alive but one, on whom the earth had fallen. Intelligence of this was sent up to the top. A surgeon and the owner of the pit went down. Strict orders had been given, as the

men were in too weak a condition to bear any excitement, that the crowd should keep from all shouting when the men were brought up. The skiff came up, bearing one of the men leaning on the breast of the surgeon, pale, emaciated, and seeming more dead than alive. As the feelings of the multitude could not gain vent by shouting, they all at the same moment burst into tears. Hundreds of men, who might have been supposed to be with but little feeling in their hearts, were now weeping like children. A carriage had been provided to take the sufferers home, and as the road was rough, numbers of the colliers ran forward with their picks to level it, that there might be as little jolting as possible. Who will say that colliers have no feeling? When the men had recovered, they all appeared together at church, to return thanks for their preservation, and receive an address from an excellent clergyman.

Colliers are a much improved class of late; and this may be traced to the pious labours of various christian ministers, and the diffusion among them of the benefits of education. As we shall see if the following narrative, the voice of instruction has followed them into the dark and dreary abodes of their daily toil, and the coal pit has resounded with the prayer of faith, and the song of praise.

Joseph Round was a native of Dudley, a town on the borders of the Staffordshire coal fields, from the picturesque castle-hill of which may every night be seen hundreds of fires from the blast furnaces and the coke heaps, which light up the region around, and make it look as if in a universal conflagration. Joseph received his education in the Dudley Blue Coat

School, and at the age of twelve years was sent to work in a coal-pit, where he soon imitated the vices of persons older and more wicked than himself. As he grew up he became awfully profane, and was so notoriously addicted to cursing and swearing, that when told by the manager, on a particular occasion, to drive the horses employed about the pit's mouth, one of his companions cried out, "Oh, don't send Round, for he will curse and swear all the way." This vice stood not alone. He was wicked in other ways. Unhappily, he had not the advantage of a pious example in his parents. His father feared not God; and when the son became religious, was far more displeased with his prayers, than he formerly had been with his oaths: and when kindly admonished by his son would gruffly say, "Joe, mend thyself; mend thyself." Happy had it been for the father, if he had taken home this admonition to his own heart, and mended his own conduct.

"Then about the age of sixteen, one of Joseph's relations, who saw and lamented the course he was pursuing, prevailed upon him after much entreaty, to go and hear a minister of the gospel who was to preach not far from the house of his father. The text was announced, and it fell like thunder upon his ear, while it revealed to him, with terror, the danger of his condition: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." The power of the Spirit sent these words like an arrow to his heart. He heard his sins declared, and his doom denounced. He saw for the first time what a wicked life he had been leading, and that his whole course had been rebellion against God. He went away a convinced and trembling sinner, and with the deep anxiety expressed in the

Philippian jailor's question, "What must I do to be saved?" For nine days he continued in distressing anxiety. At home and in the coal pit, the uppermost thoughts of his mind, and the strongest feelings of his heart, were about his sin and his salvation. Neither what he saw and heard in his father's house, or in the dark scene of his daily toil, was allowed to turn away his attention from these great and momentous subjects. A soul in earnest for salvation, and all who would be saved must be in earnest, can allow nothing to divert it from this new object of desire. Finding little opportunity for prayer and reflection at home, Joseph walked into the fields in an agony of mind under the burden of his sins, and falling upon his knees, sent up a cry to heaven, for mercy to pardon the guilt, and for grace to subdue the power of his sin.

When did God ever turn away from the prayer of the penitent, and the groan of the broken-hearted sinner? He who is nigh to all that call upon Him, heard and immediately answered his supplication. Various passages of Scripture came vividly to his recollection, especially our Lord's words to the woman who had been a sinner, "Go in peace; thy faith hath saved thee; thy sins are forgiven thee." He was then enabled to "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Having now really believed in Christ, it was a natural consequence that he should have joy and peace. For if we have no peace, how can it be known that we have faith? Joseph now went on his way rejoicing. From that time his faith worked by love, and proved its genuineness by the good works which it produced. Swearing was exchanged for praying and praising; sabbath-breaking for a right

observance of God's holy day; and neglect of the house of God, for a regular attendance upon religious ordinances. In short, he became a new creature in Christ Jesus; old things had passed away and all things had become new. He was a converted man.

Religion, where it is genuine, implants in the soul a strong desire to be useful. One of the best evidences of our own salvation is an eager desire after the salvation of others. This evidence Joseph Round manifested. His first concern was for his own parents; for surely our unconverted relatives should lie nearest our hearts. He did not meet with the success in this quarter which he longed after, prayed for, and diligently sought. Though his charity began at home, it did not end there. He looked round upon the moral and religious condition of his fellow colliers and others, with a heart that yearned for their salvation. The first object of his zeal was the Sunday school, in which he became an earnest and devoted teacher. But it was not enough for him to do good to the children, he was concerned also for their parents. He began by entreating his companions in the pit to break off their sins by righteousness, and turn to the Lord. To aid him in this work, he entered upon that labour of love which ever afterwards distinguished him, and became a distributor of religious tracts. He saw the adaptation and power of these little messengers of truth, and heralds of salvation, to instruct, awaken, and convince the sinner, and to lead him to Christ; and he went to the work of distribution with all his heart. At first, it is probable, he purchased I tracts by his hard earnings. His means, however, were too slender for his zeal and its sphere, and he made many journeys to Birmingham,

to obtain from benevolent individuals a more adequate supply. When those excellent clergymen, Dr. Marsh and Mr Moseley, were living there, he frequently called upon them, and became known to them. He was also a frequent visitor, for his favourite object of obtaining tracts, at the house of the writer of this narrative, who, with some little mixture of sinful impatience, I would sometimes say, "What, come again, Round?" To which he would always reply with a smile, or some talk about the men in the pit. After a while he received a regular supply of tracts from a society connected with Carr's-lane chapel, Birmingham.

His first introduction of the tracts to these underground abodes was marked by as much prudence as zeal. He engaged the help and countenance of one of his companions, who was also a pious man, to sustain his courage and aid his exertions: and one day at meal-time he took out a tract, and said he had a nice little book, and asked leave to read it to those who were eating their dinner. This was granted. The men were so much pleased, that they declared if Round or his friend did not read a tract to them every day they should lose their share of the beer which was brought into the pit for dinner. To this they agreed upon condition that, on the other hand, those that did not listen to the reading, or should swear or tell an untruth, or should utter an indecent expression, during the day, should be subject to a like penalty. This law of the pit was kept in force till the pit was worked out, and, unusual as it was, answered its purpose of effecting a moral reformation in the conduct of the miners.

As one good thing generally leads to another, this

practice of tract reading soon gave rise to a prayer-meeting among the men in the pit. This however was not at their master's cost by being held during the work-time. They were allowed an hour for dinner, half of this they took for eating their food, and the other half they appropriated to their holy fellowship round the throne of the Majesty of heaven and earth. And would they go with less strength or willingness to their toil after this double refreshment of both body and soul or with less preparation to meet the perils of sudden death, to which their labours exposed them? And can we think that He who delights to hear the voice of prayer, would turn away his ear from the supplications of those petitioners of the coalmine? He did not: for many of them who had lived irreligious lives were converted by the grace of God, and souls were there "born again" of the Spirit. These pious habits were not confined to the pit in which Round worked, but were extended to others in the neighbourhood: and from many a shaft could be heard the song of the colliers' praises rising to heaven.

All this while Round's tract labours went on, and he engaged others to join him in this useful work. If he went to his club, he was seen to take a bundle of tracts with him, and was never terrified by a frown, (which indeed he rarely received,) nor was he dispirited by a refusal, nor made to blush by a sneer. His demeanour was so meek, so loving, and so gentle, (which is an essential qualification for a good tract distributor,) that very few were ever offended by his zeal. He called one day at the house of an aged man with a wooden leg, and offered him a tract, but he was repulsed with a frowning look and an angry refusal. Round gently

expostulated, and retired. Nothing daunted, he went a second time, and having spoken a few loving words from a loving heart, and with a smiling countenance, again offered a tract. The man was somewhat subdued, and took it. On the third visit the tract was willingly and thankfully received, and was made a blessing to his soul. The lame man then became a distributor himself.

In the course of his walks, this man called at the house of an infidel, who surlily said to him, "We do not read such books here." With great good temper he replied, "Never mind, I will call again." On the next sabbath he fulfilled his word, when he met with a still more ungracious reception from the infidel's wife, who angrily and contemptuously said, "What an ignorant fellow you are! We dont want your books, and will not have them." He said the same words in the same unoffending, inoffensive manner, "Never mind, I will call again." Some might have been tempted to return railing for railing. But so must not a tract distributor. He must remember our Lord's words, "Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you:" and also the apostle's exhortation, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." The next Sunday this man, who was named "Old Jack," went upon his rounds, and determined to give the infidel one more call. He knocked at the door, and the man himself opened it, when the tract distributor put his wooden leg within the door to prevent its being closed against him. On seeing this, his opponent tried in vain to shut it, and in a temper suited

to his words, and to get rid as he supposed, of his troublesome visitant said, "Well, give me a tract." Of course the request was complied with. The following Sunday old Jack made another call, when the wife was so far softened as civilly to ask him in, and solicited two tracts, one for herself and one for her husband, who did not then happen to be at home. The result was the reformation, if not the conversion, of this individual, who renounced his infidelity, and with his whole family, from that time, regularly attended a place of worship. In writing to a friend and giving an account of this incident, Round said, "What hath God wrought! Be sure and tell your tract distributors to 'call again.'" Yes, the mild and gentle perseverance which was so successful in this case, will be followed with similar results in others.

Joseph Round had connected himself with that body of professing christians called Primitive Methodists, who, like the other sections of the Methodist body, employ, in addition to the regular preachers, laymen of approved piety and talents as "local preachers." Round was called to this way of labour, and in his humble ministrations was very acceptable to the poor people of his neighbourhood. In this new capacity of an exhorter, he did not forget his former occupation as a distributor of tracts, but always carried a bundle with him; so that when it was his turn to go to the people, they hailed his visit with: the saying, "Joseph is coming to day, and we shall be sure to have some more tracts." This expectation attracted some, who but for the little books, perhaps would not have come for the exhortation.

The neighbouring villages were not the only scenes

of his labours as a preacher. He had a deep solicitude for his fellow colliers, and persuaded them to listen to his addresses in the place of their daily labour. Some extracts from a letter may be introduced here; which after Round's death was received from one of his acquaintances, written in answer to another inquiring about the estimation in which he was held in the neighbourhood.

“The first time I fell in with this man was on a beautiful Sabbath morning, when he was standing beneath the canopy of heaven, with the people whom he was addressing all around him. I went up to listen, and the first words that caught my ear were, ‘Let us view the enrapturing scene of redeeming love.’ He then led his audience to Calvary, and implored them to flee from the wrath to come, and to take the water of life freely. I heard him finish his sermon, and then was anxious to know who the preacher was, and found he was a poor collier of the name of Joseph Round. I took the first opportunity when I went into his neighbourhood to pay him a visit, and went to see where he was at work. I stood upon the bank of the pit, and, prompted by curiosity, I made up my mind to descend the shaft. On reaching the bottom, I was conducted into a large apartment cut out of the coal. All around this place were benches cut out of the solid coal. At one end was a pulpit, also cut out of the solid coal; and in the centre and front of the pulpit was a missionary box cut out of the coal; and having engraved upon it the words Missionary Box. The steps to the pulpit were cut out of the coal. All around were pegs driven into the coal on which the men hung their hats. In the centre of the little chapel was stuck a large thorn-bush, on which the candles were hung when the service was being held. Here poor Round used to gather his fellow labourers, and point them to the cross of Christ. And as I looked round, and felt the solemnities of the place, I could not but exclaim, ‘This is none other than the house of God and the very gate of heaven.’ I had but one more interview with him before his death; and as we walked along the road together our conversation turned upon heaven and heavenly things. Among other remarks, he said, ‘I am but a poor collier, and have nothing of this world's goods, but I would not change my hope of heaven for worlds.’ All of a sudden he began to change those beautiful lines of Dr. Watts, ‘There shall I bathe my

wary soul,' 'Oh,' said he, 'that we could fix our eyes always on the crown that awaits us in the skies; then,

 'Fearless of hell and ghastly death,
 I'd break through every foe;
The wings of love and arms of faith
 Should bear me conqueror through.'

He delighted to dwell upon such contemplations as these, they that have much forgiven, oh how much they love!"

Let us for a moment turn to the little chapel cut out of the coal, hundreds of feet beneath the surface of the earth, and in imagination behold the preacher and his audience. See them all, teacher and taught, with their flannel jackets, and their faces covered with coal-dust, listening in that extraordinary sanctuary to the pious, yet humble strains of heavenly mercy flowing from the lips of their fellow labourer, who had laid down his pickaxe to take up his Bible, while they all devoted a part of their dinner hour to hear an address which led their thoughts up from a coal pit to that city whose streets are of gold, its foundation of precious stones, and its gates of pearl. No gorgeous fabric in mediæval taste, no gothic arch, or painted window, or clustered columns, or organ's solemn peal was there. But He who receives no glory from anything, but imparts it to everything, was there, according to His promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." He despised not the inelegant and uncouth strains in which His own redeeming love was poured into the ears of that humble audience by that lowly preacher, nor did He turn away from the rough unmusical voices with which the colliers sang, as they best could, His

high praises. Yes, and there the tear of penitence sometimes rolled down their dark cheeks; and the life that is to last for ever in heavenly glory was communicated by the Holy Spirit to their souls.

Joseph Round, in addition to these labours, was ever ready at the call of illness, and was often found at the deathbed of his neighbours, pointing the soul to Christ; and when the cholera was going like the destroying angel through the country, fearless of infection, he braved its tenors to administer instruction and consolation to its victims.

Neither religion nor usefulness exempts its possessor from the sicknesses, accidents, and calamities to which we are exposed in this world. The distinctions of the righteous are of another kind than this. Joseph Round was liable equally with his fellow labourers to the perils of his calling. Many were the escapes, and many the injuries he experienced during his life. Among the former may be mentioned a deliverance which was granted him about eleven years ago. He said to his wife one morning, "You may depend upon it there will be an explosion down at our pit this morning. It presses on my mind that something will happen at our place." Acting upon his impression, he did not go to his work. 'While he was at breakfast, some of the neighbours came running to his house in great consternation, with the information that an explosion had taken place, and that fourteen lives were lost. This is not necessarily to be considered as any special revelation of God. Round might have thought the pit dangerous the preceding day from something he noticed. Nor should it lead us to give too much weight and importance

to mental impressions as indications of Providence or guides of conduct. It was certainly a great, and we may truly say, a providential preservation.

He was not, however, always so happy as to escape without injury. In the course of twenty-seven years he was brought home six times, more or less hurt by the falling in of the coal. On one occasion he had his ankle put out in the pit, which, for want of skilful attention, was the cause, for some time, of much pain and inconvenience.

About six months before his death, as he was at his work in the pit, a considerable fall of coal took place, which much injured him. From this accident he so far recovered as to resume, though with considerable weakness, his employment in the pit, and his addresses to the people. About twelve days before his death he took a violent cold, which affected the parts that had been injured by the falling of the coal, and he was confined to his house, and eventually to his bed. During the last few months of his life, he often said to the men in the pit, "I shall soon put off my old flannel," alluding to the dress in which the miners work, "for a robe, and my cap for a crown." His glorious anticipations were soon to be realized. To one of his fellow labourers in the mine, who visited him in his sickness, he said, "We have often sung and prayed together, and spoken of ranging the sweet plains on the banks of the river; I shall soon be there." On being asked by this friend concerning the state of his mind, he replied, "I am still trusting in the Lord." He exhorted him to go on in the old way, and, under the influence of his ruling passion strong in death, desired

him still to go to the friends at Carr's-lane for tracts, and to continue distributing them. "I do not know," said this friend, "that I ever visited one who was so composed."

On the morning of the day he died, he said, "I feel as I never felt before." "Do you know you are dying?" said his wife. "Yes," he calmly replied, "I do know;" and having uttered his last wish and prayer in words so often repeated by waiting, dying saints, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," this poor but holy collier departed, to be with Him whom his soul loved. He died in the fifty-first year of his age. His funeral was attended by a large number of his friends, who were eager thus to testify their respect for his memory. His minister preached a funeral sermon for him, from the words of the apostle, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Dr. Marsh, in writing to a friend, says of this humble and earnest follower of the Lamb, "Round was, I believe, a simple-hearted Christian, and a useful man among the colliers. He is out of the pit now, and in the palace." No one who knew him will question the truth of this testimony.

The history of this man is full of instruction.

1. Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning? and does it not prove and illustrate the grace of God in pardoning and sanctifying some of the chief of sinners? Who that heard poor Round blaspheming God, and shocking even ordinary swearers by his terrible oaths and curses, could have thought such lips would ever pray, such a swearer be as fervent in praise as he had been in profanity, and such a sinner be as anxious to save men's

souls by his holy life and labours, as he seemed at one time to be to corrupt and destroy them by his example? But whom cannot the mercy of God forgive, and His grace sanctify? "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin;" "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him;" "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out;" "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Does anyone ask the question, "What must I do to be saved?" I reply with the apostle, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Reader, you must be convinced of sin, be sorry for it, forsake it, while trusting wholly, confidently, joyfully in Christ for pardon, holiness, and eternal life. Whoever does this, whatever may have been his sins, for numbers, magnitude, and long continuance, shall be saved. It was thus that poor Round sought and obtained mercy.

2. What a blessed thing the religion of Christ is, which makes such a change in a man's character, mode of life, and standing in society! But for this, Round would have remained a wretched swearing man, and, in all probability, would have added various other vices to his profanity, lived a wicked life, and died a miserable death, as many of his companions did. But the grace of God which changed his heart, made him also a respectable and a holy man. He was pious, useful, and happy. Yes, the gospel received into the heart, makes us, I say, respectable and useful. So the apostle Paul said of Onesimus, "Which in time past was to thee unprofitable, but now profitable to thee and to me."

Onesimus was a slave of Philemon, who robbed his master, ran away, heard Paul preach, was converted, and then this poor dishonest runaway slave, when changed by the grace of God, was useful even to an apostle, and became a minister of the gospel. Divine grace never leaves us as it finds us; it makes the robber honest, the lewd chaste, the drunkard sober, the swearer devout. To render us profitable, useful, is the sure effect of Christianity. And, then, usefulness with christian uprightness is the way to honour. Who does not respect a useful upright man? He is the salt of a corrupt world, and the light of a dark one. Such a man was Joseph Round.

3. God sometimes employs the humblest instruments to do good. Round was only a poor collier, and yet there is no doubt he was the instrument of converting many sinners from the error of their ways, and saving many souls from death; and having turned many to righteousness, he will be among those who, in another world, will shine as the stars in the firmament of heaven.* God delights to honour feeble instruments who work for Him in simplicity and godly sincerity, because their weakness magnifies His power. There is a work of God for everyone who has a heart to do it. He has placed the luxury of doing good within reach of the shortest arm. Who cannot

* The writer of this tract has received a particular account, on which he can rely with confidence, of Round's usefulness, which is as surprising as it is delightful. It is probable that twenty persons were truly converted from the error of their ways by his distribution of tracts; and far more than thirty from his pious exhortations, of whom many became exhorters themselves. The testimonies to his holiness and usefulness have come from various sources.

distribute a few religious tracts, or speak a word to a wicked companion, and enforce this by the power of a holy example and the spirit of believing prayer? Round was a holy man, as well as an active one; the flame of his zeal was fed by the oil of his piety. He was blameless and harmless, without rebuke, or he would have done little good. And he was a happy man, as everyone must be who is both holy and useful. Poverty does not take away all a man's opportunity of benefiting his fellow creatures, therefore let everyone aspire to the honour of doing good.

Joseph Round was a collier, and it is probable that this tract will be read by some who are engaged in the same way. To such, the word of exhortation is now addressed. Is not this a beautiful character which is here exhibited? Do you not admire it? Do you not wish to be like it? You may be like it if you take the right method to obtain it. Desire, intensely desire it. Say within yourself, "Oh that I were like Joseph Round!" Go to God in earnest prayer, and say, "Lord, make me holy like Joseph Round." God's grace can do for you what it did for him. He did not make himself what he was; it was God that did it: and he can and will do the same for you if you heartily desire it, and pray to him for it. Attend public worship; go and hear the gospel preached; "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." You remember it was by going to hear a sermon that Joseph was converted. What a text that was which he heard, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God!" How truly solemn and awful! Even to forget God habitually

will send a man to hell; how certainly then to live on constantly in sin against him will do so!

Do consider how suddenly you may be cut off in your sins. You know the danger of your calling as a collier; you know how many are yearly killed in the pits; you have seen the mangled corpses of those who were hurried out of time into eternity, without a moment's leisure for repentance, or a prayer for mercy. You know how wickedly many of them lived up to the very moment of their death. How dreadful it is to be sent in an instant from the place of sinning to the place of suffering! Ah! if you continue in sin, impenitence, and unbelief, this may be your case. Does not the thought make you tremble? Well then, repent of your sins; believe in Christ for pardon; pray without delay for the Holy Spirit to sanctify you. Delays are dangerous. Hear what Solomon says: "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." These are indeed awful words. How often have you been reprov'd by the attacks of disease, by the visitations of the pestilence, by the destruction of your companions, as well as by the word of God, the voice of the preacher, and the stings of conscience; and yet you have hardened your neck. Oh, be wise to consider your sin, your state, your prospect, while yet your "judgment and damnation linger." Remember, even Divine patience has its limits, and should you be suddenly cut off in your sins by one of the accidents so common, no remedy, not even the gospel, can then reach the case. Then, as you have lived, so you will die, so you will stand before God, without remedy. No blood of Christ, no advocate

will plead for you then. But now there is a remedy in the cross of Christ. Flee to that without delay, and join in the prayer with which this tract is now closed: O thou almighty God of grace and mercy, show thy long-suffering and pardon, and save me as thou didst save this man. Let me, and let many a one of those who shall read this tract, be, like him, a brand plucked out of the fire, a monument of thine abounding grace, to sing thine everlasting praises, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.

THREE IN HEAVEN.

THE DUTY OF CHRISTIANS TO INVITE OTHERS TO THE HOUSE OF GOD.

“THREE in Heaven.” So said, with rapture, an individual who had been the instrument of sending them there; and this one thought will, throughout eternity, yield him more delight than all his victories will to Wellington. Who was this happy individual? Not an eloquent preacher, nor a learned author, but a plain, poor man. How did he accomplish this noble work? Read what follows, and you shall know. Some years ago a gentleman residing in one of our cities was deeply impressed and grieved by seeing the multitudes who neglected public worship; and he determined to make the effort to induce some of the sabbath breakers to frequent the house of God. It required some little effort at first, but he overcame his timidity. One Lord’s day evening he went forth with this holy purpose, and meeting a young man who did not appear to be on his way to a place of worship, he respectfully addressed him, got into conversation with him, and persuaded the stranger to accompany him to worship, and as an inducement offered him a seat in his own pew. Succeeding in this case, he was emboldened and encouraged to proceed in this line of christian activity and useful-

ness. And now mark! with what a blessed result. He was the means of leading one hundred young men to become stated attendants at the sanctuary, many of whom have been truly converted to God.

A minister of the gospel mentioned this at one of his prayer meetings, when the idea was caught up by some persons present, who at once said, "How admirable a plan this is for doing good." A little association was immediately formed, called "The Invitation Society." In sixteen months two hundred persons were persuaded by eight or ten of its agents, no longer to forsake the assembling of themselves together.

One of these agents, an earnest christian in humble life, devoted himself to his work, and was the means of bringing forty to hear the word of life. Nor did he confine his labours to the act of bringing them to the house of God. In the week and on the sabbath day, in the streets and in their own homes, he ceased not to "beseech men to be reconciled to God." To adopt his own simple language, "I urge them," he said, "to give themselves up to Christ at once. I wish others would work on in this way by prayer. Why should not this place (referring to the chapel in which he was relating his labours) be full?" Some of the forty he has visited on their death beds, and of three he has good hope they are in Heaven.

The writer of this tract once had in the church under his pastoral care a poor woman who employed herself in this way, and five persons, who by her influence were brought under the sound of the gospel, were added to the church.

John Williams, the well known missionary to the South Sea Islands, when loitering about on a sabbath

evening in early life, was persuaded to go and hear a sermon; by the grace of God upon that sermon he was converted, and became one of the greatest missionaries of modern times.

Another case may be mentioned. A traveller was passing through Bilston in Staffordshire a year or two since, and observed the shops closed as generally as on a sabbath. Presently a funeral came by, which was attended by the clergy, and other ministers of religion, the magistrates, and many of the respectable inhabitants of the town. Who could be the distinguished person to whose memory such tokens of public respect were paid? It was John Etheredge, an unmarried man of eighty-four years of age, who had recently died in the same house in which he had lived from his birth. He kept a little shop in which he sold various small articles of ironmongery, toys for children, marbles and other petty matters, and also Bibles and religious tracts and books. He expended nine or ten shillings a week upon himself, and devoted all the rest of his profits to works of piety and humanity. Among other ways of doing good, he used to go out a little before church-time, and if he saw a man loitering about the street, would get into conversation with him and take him to church, and having found him a seat would set out to seek for other loiterers. Thus lived John Etheredge to whom these honours were shewn. A monument to his memory either is erected by public subscription, or is about to be, in the church yard of the town. How much good may be done by one man, whose heart is set upon doing it, and how he is honoured!

Christians, these examples speak to you. What are you doing to save the souls of your fellow-creatures?

Now here is a most effectual way of doing good, inducing people who neglect public worship to attend the house of God. All other ways of usefulness are omitted in this tract, not because they are unimportant, but because its design is to fix your attention upon this one.

Do consider the need of such exertions, How awful is the neglect of the house of God! The town in which the writer lives has two hundred and seventy thousand inhabitants; of these there are never more than forty thousand at one time, exclusive of Sunday school children, hearing the preaching of the gospel whereby they may be saved. Dreadful idea! Souls are perishing all around you by myriads, going down to the pit within sight of the cross of Christ and under the very sound of salvation! Dying eternally at your very doors! Care you nothing for this wide sweeping ruin before your eyes; this torrent of perdition rolling down your streets? Where is your zeal for God? Where is your sympathy with Christ? Where is your concern for your fellow creatures, if you will not give yourselves a little trouble to pluck some of these sinners as brands from the burning? It was the reproach which an infidel cast upon your lukewarmness, when he said, "Christians, if they are not the most inhuman people in the world, cannot believe what they profess, that men without repentance and faith must perish eternally, or they would be more earnest in endeavouring to save them. If I believed what they profess to do, I should scarcely cease day or night to warn them of the wrath to come." Let the reproach enter into your souls, and rouse you to action. You need not ask what you can

do. These pages tell you what you can do; you can go out on a Sabbath day and search for the neglectors of public worship and take them to the house of God.

But who shall do it? Who? You, young man, who have health and strength; all you who have courage, and have no claims of a family to keep you at home. But especially you of the working classes of society. Here is a way of doing good, great good for you. Here are means of saving souls placed within your reach. You have not much money to give and are sometimes ready to suppose that very little opportunity is afforded to you for doing good. But here is a means of usefulness more entirely within your reach than that of the rich. You have a readier access to each other and each other's homes than they have. There are greater multitudes of your condition and station, than of theirs, who are living in the neglect of public worship. No feeling of shame or ceremony need keep you from calling on a neighbour for this purpose. In regard to this method of doing good, we are ready to say, "Happy poor! favoured members of the larger if the humbler class; value and improve your privilege." Here females, without any violation of propriety, may be useful. Remember the poor woman who was the means of saving five souls by bringing them under the sound of the word. You may perhaps lead the inhabitants of a whole court, or half a street, to attend the house of God.

Do you ask how you should do it? I answer, heartily, as if you delighted in the work; kindly, not reproachfully or with scolding, but making the objects of your solicitude feel that you love them. Prayerfully,

looking up to God for the help and blessing of His Holy Spirit; and adding to your efforts the power and persuasives of a holy and consistent example.

Do consider how many inducements there are to undertake this business. It is Lawful work. You have a warrant for it. Yea, it is your duty. "Let him that heareth say, Come." Not merely him that preacheth, but him that heareth. It is Easy work, requiring neither wealth nor rank, nor great talents. It is welcome work to the objects of it. One young man said, with surprise and gratitude to the person who invited him, "No one ever invited me before." He complied, and exchanged the public-house for a place of worship. It is Pleasant work. How delightful to see a person listening to the sound of salvation, brought by you. To mark his fixed attention; to see the tear of penitence in his eye, the smile of peace upon his countenance, and the change in all his conduct. It is Hopeful work. Turn back to the instances mentioned at the commencement of this tract. You will be sure to do good. Now, read the words of the apostle, "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Wondrous words! Glorious event! Save a soul from death! greater work than saving a thousand bodies from death! A work which, whenever it is done, fills all heaven with new joy, for the angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. Oh, have you holy ambition? Here is room for it. By bringing persons under the sound of the gospel you may be the means of setting all heaven rejoicing with new delight, and filling eternity with the

praises of your fellow-creatures, and adding to the happiness of your own soul through everlasting ages. Up and be doing.

The following short appeal is printed as a hand-bill, and is designed as a convenient means of introduction to a stranger.

STRANGER, COME WITH ME.

“WHERE?” you ask. To the house of God. “Why?” Because I wish you happy in life, comfortable in death, safe for eternity. “When?” Now. “To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” Refuse not to comply with this invitation. This night your soul may be required of you. Prepare to meet your God.

One young man when urged to think of his soul, replied, “Well, you speak the truth, and at a future time I do intend to be religious; but I must have some more sprees yet.” Three or four days afterwards, he was in eternity. Eternity. Eternity. Eternity. Oh, that tremendous word, and more tremendous thing! It belongs to you. Everlasting weal or woe is before you, and hangs on every breath. Your next step may be into the grave, and then, where, oh where? Come, then, with me now; where “Streams of heavenly mercy flow, and words of sweet salvation sound;” where many persuaded thus have been made happy for ever.

Hear what Christ says to you now. “Come unto

Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Hear what He will say to you at the day of judgment, if you refuse the invitation. “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”

Come, then, with me to the house of God.

**THE OLIVE BRANCH AND THE CROSS,
OR**

QUARRELS SETTLED AND TRESPASSES FORGIVEN
ACCORDING TO THE LAW OF CHRIST.

A WORD OF AFFECTIONATE ADVICE

TO PROFESSING CHRISTIANS.

“First be reconciled to thy brother.”

DEDICATION.

MY BELOVED FLOCK,

IT has been my practice, not unfrequently, to deliver a few counsels from the press at the commencement of the new year. I now repeat this labour of love. By the present selection of a subject I would not have either you or the public imagine that there is anything in its nature peculiarly applicable to your state as a christian community. In common however with every christian minister of every religious denomination, I have occasionally had my surprise excited and my comfort disturbed by feuds and animosities; and like others, have seen the tranquillity of the church in some degree jeopardised by the quarrels of some of its members. Both parts of this treatise came under consideration in a regular course of pulpit exposition, and it is now submitted to you in this form because of its great

importance, and the too general neglect with which it is treated by those who make a profession of religion. 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 the dove should be found. Christianity has not yet left the impression of its exceeding loveliness as deeply stamped as it should be on the characters 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 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. My anxiety that it should be cultivated with more care, and be seen with admiration in healthful vigour and in beauty, has led me to send forth this tract which is now offered first of all to you, and then

to the churches in general, with the hope that this effort of pastoral fidelity may prevent in many cases the rupture, and promote in others the restoration, of christian friendship, and thus bring upon its author from many a reconciled heart, the blessing of the peace-maker.

Commending you to God and to the word of His grace, and praying that He who hath “made peace by the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself,” would pour His own Spirit into your hearts, and unite you still more closely to one another,

I remain,

Your affectionate Pastor,

J. A. JAMES.

RECONCILIATION.

Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. MATTHEW xviii. 15–17.

QUARRELS among christians! Is there not a contradiction here? Do christians ever quarrel with one another? Does not christianity, where it is really

possessed and felt in its proper influence, imply all that is loving, and kind, and peaceable? Certainly: and if every professor of it really lived under its influence, there would be no such thing as brother trespassing against brother. Christianity is, in every aspect of it, a religion of love. "God is love." Christ is love. The law is love. The gospel is love. Heaven is love. That one word "love," comprehends every thing. Perfect love not only casts out fear, but malice. In heaven there will be no quarrelling, because every one of its inhabitants is perfect in love. The design of christianity is not only to conduct us to heaven, but to meeten us for it: and it does this by imparting to us the spirit of love. The true spirit of christianity is that which the apostle has, with such exquisite beauty, described in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians.

Let it be supposed that everyone was perfectly under the influence of this spirit, and what room would there be for quarrels? But all are not so, none are so. Those who have made the greatest advances in holiness have some remains of corruption, out of which there arise sometimes wars and fightings. "It must needs be," says our Lord, "that offences will come." That is, considering what human nature is, they must be looked for. Wherever there is sin there will be enmity on some occasion or other. This is not meant to excuse the quarrels of christians, but merely to account for them.

Yes, christians do quarrel. All pastors know they do to the grief of their hearts: all denominations and all congregations of professing christians know it to their disquiet: all people opposed to religion know it, and they stand by, and say, "Aha, so would we have

it:" the Spirit of God knows it, and is grieved thereby; and the consequences of their quarrels are very sad; sad to the parties themselves, in the interruption of their peace, the injury of their religion, the discredit of their profession. Very few men come scathless out of a quarrel, whether they were the aggressors or the aggrieved. The consequences of such disagreements extend to others, to the friends of the parties, and sometimes to the church of which they are members. Whole communities have been brought into strife contention and division, by a breach of the peace committed by two of their members. Solomon says, "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out waters; therefore leave off contention before it be meddled with."

The New Testament says a great deal about offences, and the way of treating them. Here I must distinguish between the different kinds of offences alluded to. In the passage already quoted, "Woe to the world because of offences, it must needs be that offences come;" and in others, such as, "It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak;" the word signifies, as the context shows, not what in common discourse we mean by offence, but tempting a brother to sin by our conduct, doing that which would lead him into transgression, casting a stumbling-block in his way, or what the apostle calls, "making our brother to offend." And it is very true we ought to be very anxious, prayerful, and watchful, that no part of our conduct may thus lead any one into sin, lest through us our weak brother "should perish, for whom Christ died."

But I do not how refer to offences of this nature,

but to the class of actions meant, when one man says of another, "He has greatly offended me:" and spoken of by our Lord in the passage which I have put at the head of this tract in which he says, "If thy brother trespass against thee." This refers to some real or supposed injury inflicted by one christian upon another, in his person, property, reputation, or peace of mind: to some sin of which the complainant is the direct object, and by which in some way or other he is a sufferer. It does not refer to sins in which we ourselves have no individual and personal interest; but to such as particularly affect us. A man may have wronged us by some money transaction, may have made some aggression upon our property, may have treated us unkindly, may have spoken contemptuously to us, or falsely of us, and may thus have wounded our feelings: in each of these ways there has been a trespass against us. We are injured; and it is to such cases the law of Christ applies. It is true there may be other offences to which the rule may be extended. If we saw a brother living in sin, we ought, though his sin had no direct reference to our own interests, to go to him alone, and in a spirit of love warn him, and remonstrate with him: but this comes under that other law so beautifully expressed in the Old Testament code, "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." For the manner in which we should conduct ourselves in such cases, see "The Path to the Bush," post.

I shall suppose that you have received an offence, real or imagined, from some brother christian; how are you to act? First, inquire whether it is worth while to notice it at all: whether it is not one of those cases in

which you may have been mistaken as to the intention of the offender; and even if not, whether it is not one of the ten thousand little occurrences perpetually happening in the intercourse of society, of which a wise man would take no notice, and which a holy man would not allow to dwell upon his mind, so as to interrupt his good will or good feeling towards the aggressor. "He is a very miserable man," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "that is unquiet when a mouse runs over his shoe, or a fly does kiss his cheek." "Whatever is little and tolerable must be let alone," said Aristides. The moment that offence has been given, we should instantly guard against a disposition to magnify it, and summon all our wisdom to look at it as it really is. Such a frame of mind would prepare us to say, "Well, it is true he did not use me very kindly, but it was not, I dare say, the effect of design, much less of premeditation, but of haste and inconsiderateness; and, after all, it was no very serious matter. I doubt not I have often been as incautious myself. I will let it pass. To meddle would only make matters worse, and I will not allow it to remain upon my mind, nor in the smallest degree affect my good opinion of, or my good feeling towards, the aggressor." In such manner very many of the offences ought to have been treated, which by less considerate and reasonable handling have been magnified into large bulk, and made the occasion of others far larger. There is great wisdom, as well as great humility in saying, to many incipient causes of disturbance, "O, let it pass!"

But still, if the matter and ground of offence be of greater consequence than is here supposed, or if it have produced an impression on the mind unfriendly

to our own comfort, or obstructive of our pleasant intercourse with the offender, then comes in the law of Christ for settling it. What is to be done?

I. I shall state this negatively.

We are not to brood over the matter in silence. This is forbidden, at least by implication, in our Lord's command. If we cannot dismiss it from our hearts, we must not let it lie festering there, but must tell it to some one. Many persons, instead of going at once with frankness to the offender, altogether shun his society, think all kinds of hard thoughts of him, and cherish all kinds of ill feeling towards him, and yet never either by writing or by speech, utter a single syllable to him. There is nothing more likely to aggravate our estimate of an offence than this state of mind. He who broods in silence over a trespass, is sure, by such a species of incubation, to hatch from a tiny egg a monster injury. His imagination is brought into excitement by his passions, till his judgment is perverted and at length he considers himself the most injured man in the world; and then resolves to have nothing more to do with the offender. This is what the apostle calls giving "place to the devil." "How hard and how unkind it was," says this self-tormentor, "who could have expected such undeserved treatment? Well, I have done with him. I will speak no more to him." He meets the supposed guilty party, but avoids recognition, and feels his resentment influenced by the very sight of him; while perhaps the object of this conduct wonders what it can all mean?

And then as we are not to brood over an offence in sullen silence, so neither are we to tell it to another, but to the offender himself, "tell it to him alone." No

sooner have some persons received an offence, than off they are to communicate it to any body and to every body, rather than to the one and only person who ought to be informed of it. Those who have heard it tell it to others, those others to somebody else, till the report, exaggerated at each repetition, comes round at length to the aggressor in such a swollen and distorted form, that he now is the aggrieved person, by being charged with having inflicted injuries of which in truth he was never guilty. Then the matter becomes complicated, and it is difficult to say which is most to blame, he who gave the offence or he who reported it. We ought to tell the matter to no one, scarcely, I was going to say, to God in prayer, or to ourselves, till we have told it to our offending brother; we must not arraign him before God, till we have given him an opportunity of explaining himself. Our views of his conduct may have been mistaken.

It would stop this propensity to report a trespass, if we all resolutely determined. to meet the reporter with this question, "Have you obeyed our Lord's command, and told it to the offender himself and alone? if not, I cannot hear it." But alas, the disposition to receive bad reports is so common to men's corrupt nature, that their ears are greedy after information to the discredit of their neigh hours.

II. But I now go on to explain the law of Christ positively. On supposition of a trespass having been committed, Christ enjoins three successive steps, which, if we really acknowledge him to be our Lord and Master, must all be taken for the purpose of reconciliation, and taken in the order he has laid down.

1. The offended party must first go by himself to

the offender, and tell him when he is alone of the trespass. Now the reason of this is obvious. A man is much more likely to be brought to a right view of his conduct by such a plan than by being addressed before others. He is more likely to listen dispassionately, and to be open to conviction; and if convinced, much more likely to confess his fault, than in the presence of spectators. In the latter case his pride is called into exercise, and he revolts at humbling himself before others. If he be ever "won," it is most likely to be in this way.

But then every thing will depend upon the manner in which this most delicate and difficult duty is performed. A wrong way of doing a right thing may itself be a wrong, and it had better not be done at all. This is strictly and emphatically applicable to the present case. A quarrel may be made more difficult of final settlement by an injudicious manner of attempting to settle it in the first instance according to our Lord's rule. Take then the following directions.

Before we go to an offending brother to tell him his fault, let us make it matter of sincere and earnest prayer, that we ourselves may take a right view of the matter, and not be under any delusion, by supposing a wrong had been inflicted where none was intended. Let us ask for grace so to subdue and control our feelings that we may not be under the influence of passion, but be able in a most peculiar manner to exercise the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Let us beg of God that we may be able to select such language, and display such a spirit in our interview with the offender, as shall have the most direct tendency to soften and subdue him. Nothing requires greater wisdom and grace to do it

well, than the duty I am now dwelling upon, and we can hardly expect to obtain these without prayer. But we should also especially pray that all malice and ill feeling towards the offender may be extinguished, and that we may still cherish towards him a spirit of love. Nor should we forget to pray for him that he may be led to see his error, be willing to confess it, and humble himself before God on account of it.

In conducting the business of such an interview, there must be the very soul of charity in our conduct. We must go, not in the character, or with the spirit, of an accuser, but as a brother to a brother. We should be able to say to him in truth that we have not told it to another being upon earth; we should tell him that we do not actually charge him with the offence, but in the first place merely ask explanation, since we are all liable to be mistaken; that we do not come to extort any unreasonable concession, but if wrong has been committed, to receive his acknowledgment, and remain friends and brothers as before. We should then lay open our grounds of offence without any aggravating circumstances, being rather inclined to extenuate than to magnify. Especial care should be taken in reference to this latter matter, for any attempt to make the offence greater than it really is will do mischief. The two parties look at the same thing with different eyes, and what appears to be a mountain to one may be only a molehill to the other. At first the offender, as is very likely to be the case, may be a little high, petulant, and irritable; this we must not regard, or turn abruptly upon our heel and retire; but we must continue to reason with him with all the meekness of wisdom, receiving any concession which may be made, and by

lovingly acknowledging it, encouraging further admissions, till all is obtained that is sought. And be it specially remembered that our demands of confession ought not to be exorbitant, nor should there be on our part an apparent wish to conquer and to humble the trespasser. It should be clearly seen by him, that we seek nothing but such an admission of wrong as is necessary for continued friendship and brotherhood.

[Part of a dialogue is here quoted from Dr. Williams's abridgement of "Social Religion Exemplified."]

There is also a beautiful illustration of this method of stopping offences by soliciting explanation in the life of that eminently holy minister of Christ, Samuel Pearce, of Birmingham.

At a meeting of ministers on one occasion, "a word was dropped," says Mr Fuller, in his memoir of that excellent man, "by one of his brethren, which he took as a reflection, though nothing was further from the intention of the speaker. It wrought upon his mind: and in a few days after he wrote as follows: 'Do you remember what passed at Bedworth? Had I not been accustomed to receive plain friendly remarks from you, I should have thought you meant to insinuate reproof. If you did, tell me plainly. If you did not, it is all at an end. You will not take my naming it unkind, although I should be mistaken; since affectionate explanations are necessary when suspicious arise, to the preservation of friendship; and I need not say that I hold the preservation of your friendship in no small account. S. P.'" "The above," says the biographer, "is copied not only to set forth the spirit and conduct of Mr Pearce, in a case wherein he felt himself aggrieved, but to show in how easy and amiable a manner thousands of mistakes might be rectified and differences prevented by a frank and timely explanation."

Yes, and it shows another thing, and that is, how easy it is to receive a false impression, and to think evil of another, where none was intended. How would many, less blessed with charity than Mr Pearce, have acted? They would either have brooded over the

supposed offence in silence, and let it lie festering in their minds, and generating all kind of ill will towards the innocent author of the wound; or else they would have gone about talking to other persons of the affair, without saying a word to the individual himself who made the remark. Instead of this, he wrote in the meekness of wisdom to the brother by whom he imagined he had been reflected upon, and received a reply which set his heart at rest.

O that all christians would seek grace to copy this beautiful model! What a delightful result; and how simply yet how impressively stated by our Lord, "Thou hast gained thy brother!" To lose a brother is or ought to be accounted a great loss to us. But more than this is implied, for our brother if not won to repentance towards us, may have his heart hardened towards God, and incur the dreadful catastrophe described by our Lord, where He says, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul." For that one sin unrepented of may be the beginning of his downward path to perdition. While on the other hand, if we bring him to repentance, we may gain him not only to ourselves, but to Christ, the church, and heaven. Trespasses against man are trespasses against God, and the injury done by them is in many cases far greater to those who commit them than to those against whom they are committed. Regard to a brother's welfare therefore, which ought ever to be in our hearts in these matters, as well as to our own peace, requires that we tell the offence to him, and tell it in the wisest and kindest manner. In very many, perhaps I may say in most, cases, this conduct would accomplish its end, the offender would be won. Bad as

human nature is, and imperfect as even renewed human nature is, there are but few who would or could stand out against this siege of love. Let men be dealt with in a way of love, and generally speaking, they would be heard to say, "Thou hast conquered, O charity!" "The cords of love are the bands of a man." In the case of christians, they certainly ought not to consider the matter well settled unless there be a restoration of love, and a renewal of fellowship. Our object in going to an offending brother ought not to be simply to get a concession, and end our intercourse, but to restore the broken friendship of the parties. It will not do to say, "Well, I have got his confession, that is all I care for, and I now neither wish nor intend to have any further intercourse with him." This is any thing but complying with the law of Christ. Our aim must be not merely to gain our rights, but to gain our brother.

It must also be remembered that if a concession be made by the offender, the whole subject is from that moment to be buried in oblivion. As no one was informed of the matter before the private interview, so no one must ever hear of it afterwards. To mention a fault which penitence has confessed, and mercy has forgiven, is a base mean offence against the law of charity, and equally so against the forgiven offender.

I now pass on to remark, that after all, there are minds so little sensible to the appeals of reason and religion, because possessing so little of either themselves, that the most judicious and affectionate attempts to settle a private quarrel in a private way will fail. There are professors of religion so proud, so obstinate, so inflexible, that no expostulation will induce them to

say they have done wrong. Where this is the case the aggrieved party must take.

2. The second step. "If he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." I must observe that this also is imperative. We are not in cases of an aggravated nature to let the matter rest, but are to endeavour by new measures to bring our trespassing brother to repentance. Still we may suppose that in many cases there is left with the aggrieved party a discretion to let the matter drop, even if he is not successful in the private interview. He may have gained further light, and may be led to take a more mitigated view of the trespass; or he may see reason to believe that time would be likely to soften the mind of the offender; or that greater mischief would result from pursuing it than from letting it drop, and may therefore wisely and religiously choose to proceed no further. Should this be the course adopted, we must not let a spirit of ill will be cherished in our heart towards the offender, or any outward token of resentment be manifested in our conduct; much less must we tell it to anyone else. If, however, the case be such as to break up fellowship and prevent love, we had better go on to the second step, and take with us one or two more persons. It is to be noticed that we are not to send these witnesses, but are to take them with us, at least in most cases.

The reasons of the second step are sufficiently obvious. It is intended to assist us. Perhaps we may have taken a wrong or an exaggerated view of the matter, and need, in some particulars, to be set right ourselves. Or if we are right, these two or three brethren may say

something to the offender that will give weight to our appeals. Their representations may be more convincing and persuasive than ours; and thus they will be more likely to influence him; they add to the number who deal with him, and they are, or ought to be, impartial persons; and moreover, they will be then prepared to bear testimony to the church, if it should be necessary to carry the matter to this last and highest tribunal.

It must be evident that much, very much, depends on the selection of the persons to accompany the complainant. They may make matters ten times worse, if they are unsuitable for the business of reconciliation, or go about it in an improper manner. They should be christian brethren, for what have we in such cases "to do with those who are without?" They should be men of meekness and gentleness of speech, not easily offended, and of great command of temper. They should be men of weight and standing in the church. They should be impartial men, not partizans of the aggrieved party; and in order to that it would be better for them not to hear of the matter till it is stated to them in the presence of the offender. It would be also very desirable that they should be persons in whom he has confidence, and against whom it would be impossible he could raise any objection. As our Lord has mentioned one or two, perhaps it would usually be safer to take the first number, and solicit the assistance of some eminently holy and judicious friend to accompany us. Most persons are disposed to shrink from such a labour of love, for it is a delicate and difficult duty, and requires great grace for its right and proper discharge: and those who are entrusted with it must take great care of their own spirits.

In the course of my pastorate, I have settled many private quarrels thus. One member has come to me to complain of the ill-treatment of another, and has wished me to have his case brought before our Discipline committee. I have immediately stopped him, even before I knew what the grievance was, and after finding they could not settle the matter between themselves, have said, "Will you submit this matter to some wise and good man to judge between you both?" Having obtained his assent, I have made the same proposal to the other. The umpire has been agreed upon, the matter has been heard, the decision has been given, concessions have been made, the parties have been reconciled, and I have never known what the matter was about. Only the day before I penned these lines, I received a document, of which the following is a copy, signed by two parties, to whom I had recommended this plan, and I do not know what was the cause of offence between them.

"The undersigned, J. A. and T. S., being desirous that the animosity which has for a time existed between them should at once subside, agree as follows. T. S. truly and sincerely acknowledges that he has used improper language to J. A. and J. A. though unconscious of having intentionally provoked T. S., yet is heartily sorry if any thing he may have done or said produced such an impression upon his mind; and in token of mutual reconciliation, they most cordially offer to each other the right hand of christian friendship."

(Signed.).

If there be few who could stand out against the expostulation of one man, there are still fewer who could resist the entreaties of two or three; and thus many a sinner would be converted from the error of his ways. Yet our Lord supposes that there are some who are so blinded by Satan, and so hardened

by the deceitfulness of sin, as to resist even this; and now nothing remains but the dernier ressort.

3. The third step; "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church," that is, the congregation of believers, the persons associated together for social worship. The church is thus constituted the final appeal on earth. This was spoken by Christ while Judaism was yet in force. In a Jewish sense then, the church must mean the persons assembled for worship at the synagogue; and it is well known to have been the custom of Jews, thus as the final means, to settle private quarrels by an appeal to the synagogue; where, after a public admonition without any beneficial result, a mark of infamy was set upon the offenders. Our Lord, by a tacit allusion to the known practices of the Jews, here lays down by way of anticipation, the law of His future church.*

* Does not this injunction throw some light on the agitated question of the nature of a church and the form and mode of its government? It is most explicit that the offence in its last case of appeal, must be laid before the church: then whatever the church means, it must be capable of hearing it, and must pronounce the final sentence. Now it will not do to say, by the church is meant its representatives the clergy. The clergy are not the church, and are no where called so in the New Testament. The church is sometimes distinguished from its ministers, but they are never called the church. If then the church here mean a company of christians, it must be such a company as can hear, and receive, and decide upon the case: and this brings us to the Congregational mode of church government. Episcopalian expositors are somewhat puzzled by this passage. The excellent Mr Scott says rightly, "Tell it to the teachers and professors of the gospel. It would be absurd to restrict these rules to any form of church government or discipline." True, but can that form of church government be scriptural, to which these rules cannot by possibility apply? Bloomfield, another episcopalian commentator, says, in his "Critical Digest," on this passage, "This admonition is local and temporary, and as not accommodated to our times, needs

The matter having in a proper manner been laid before the church, it assuredly must upon investigation pronounce its sentence. But every large church will, if it be wise, appoint a number of its brethren to investigate the matter, and to make its report, and upon that report found its decision. To that decision the offender is required to bow. The voice of the church is the voice of God. So says our Lord in the next verse to those which form the subject of this tract: "Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind upon earth shall be bound in heaven." The same words had been on a former occasion addressed to Peter, Mat. xvi, 19; and great prerogatives and powers, it has been alleged, are thus granted to that apostle; but here the same prerogatives and powers are granted to every church, however small. The meaning of this passage is, that whatsoever shall be done rightly in the discipline of the church, shall be approved and confirmed by God in heaven. It is supposed, however, by our Lord, (as the words following imply,) that the church conducts all its acts, especially those of discipline, in a

not be observed. For this public admonition can have place only in a very small congregation, without the least appearance of civil authority, and governing itself entirely by the principles of Christ. To the present state of the church this christian discipline is little adapted." But why is it not so adapted, but because the church is not adapted to it? Is it not a perilous affirmation that Christ's own precepts need not be observed because not adapted to our times? What law of Christ might not be got rid of by such a method as this? And what a confession and concession too, that this injunction call be carried out only by those churches where there is "no appearance of civil authority," and which "govern themselves entirely by the principles of Christ." In those churches it not only call be carried out, but is. Must not those be most truly the churches of Christ, in which only Christ's laws can be carried out?

spirit of prayer, and of faith in His presence. "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree upon earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them by my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." It is apparent from all this how much importance is attached by our Lord to the maintenance of discipline in His church, and with what peculiar awe and solemnity these acts of discipline ought to be maintained. The act of a christian community investigating the character or conduct of any of its members in a case of alleged delinquency, is the most solemn proceeding upon earth, inasmuch as it is trying an accused person for an offence committed against the laws, not merely of man, but of God; and it is visiting him with a sentence, if he be found guilty, that has no relation whatever to civil pains or penalties, but to spiritual judgments. If this be true, how slowly and solemnly ought the church in all cases, to take up this fearful sword, which is to cut off an offender from the kingdom of Christ, and deliver him over to the kingdom of Satan! Yet it must be done, if in the case before us the trespasser will not hear the voice of the church, calling him to repentance. He is then to be considered as a heathen man and a publican; that is, he is no longer to be acknowledged and treated as a christian, but as one who has no part nor lot in the church, or its privileges. "Yet," says Matthew Henry, "he does not say, Let him be to thee as a devil or a damned spirit, as one whose case is desperate; but as a heathen or a publican, as one in a capacity of being restored and received in again." "Count him not as

an enemy,” says the apostle, “but admonish him as a brother.”

Such, then, is an explanation of the rule laid down by Christ for the settlement of those numerous private quarrels which rise up even among the members of the redeemed family.

I would here emphatically, as well as explicitly remark, that this law of Christ’s must of necessity be taken with some limitations, and something no doubt must be left to the discretion of the injured party, how far to proceed in requiring satisfaction, and when it would be prudent to stop or go forward in giving it publicity. All matters of this kind are addressed not only to our conscience, but to our good sense. Trespasses may be committed, and wrongs may be inflicted, of so peculiarly difficult and delicate a nature, that if they cannot be adjusted between the litigating parties themselves, the matter had better be buried in silence, and the sufferer be content with expelling from his heart all malice and revenge, and being still ready to return good for evil, though he may not see fit to receive the offender back to his favour. The same remarks may be made in reference to other matters which, (however proper it may be to carry them on to the second step,) it would be unwise to advance to the third. The case may be so complicated with doubt and difficulty, that nothing short of the severe sifting of a court of law can get at all the facts or minute points which may decide the matter and show where the blame lies, and what mitigating circumstances should be taken into account. Or the affair may be of so peculiarly delicate a nature, involving so many

parties, and such an exposure of secrets not desirable to be known, and hazarding to such an extent the peace of a whole church, that the injured party, where the matter does not amount to immorality, and no compromise either of the credit of religion or the purity of the church is involved, should be content with the expressed opinion of the witnesses whom he had found it necessary to associate with him in the appeal to the offender. A church should not be turned into a Court of Common Pleas. It would never be at peace if it were. An eagerness to drag every little matter into publicity, is a disposition as contrary to the law of Christ as a carelessness about inflicting an injury. A gradation of wisdom and caution should be set up, and maintained through every such case; we should be very backward to receive offence in small matters, or even to notice them; equally cautious of thinking the next step necessary, and still more so of carrying it on to the third. Mercy flies on eager wings to execute her offices, but justice walks with slow and measured pace in hers.

Should the question here be asked, as in all probability it will be, whether, if all other means fail to obtain redress from one who has injured us, it be lawful for a christian to appeal to the tribunal of national justice, and call in the aid of law; I reply by a reference to the New Testament. The apostle has answered this question in his remonstrance to the Corinthian church, first epistle, sixth chapter. In that chapter he clearly and positively forbids brother going to law with brother, and enjoins the settlement of differences by the arbitration of the brethren: which is virtually carrying out the law of Christ. The one or two wit-

nesses of whom our Lord speaks, constitute this tribunal; so that till this is tried it is manifestly unlawful; and when even this is found ineffectual, all appeal to law ought to be suspended till the church has given its decision upon the conduct of the offender: if then, he cannot be brought to reason, and should as the result of his contumacy be expelled, nothing else is left to the injured party but to bring the trespasser before a tribunal which he must obey. In this case he is no longer a brother, but is condemned to be treated as a heathen man and a publican. There are men so injurious and so obstinate that nothing but the arm of law is strong enough to reach or restrain them, and it is well for society that there is something for such characters stronger than moral power.

Still it is evident from our Lord's words that a christian should be very backward to have recourse to such means, even in reference to one who is not a brother. "If thine enemy take thy coat, let him take thy cloak also; and if he smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him thy left also." These words are not of course to be understood literally, so as to forbid all securities, or precaution as to future evils; for Christ did not act so when an evil servant smote him; nor Paul, when the High Priest commanded him to be smitten on the face: they neither of them received it silently, nor turned the other cheek. It is clear therefore that these words are only an impressive form of forbidding us to return violence for violence; and equally of forbidding a precipitancy of going to law to redress our wrongs, and obtain our rights. We can easily see from all this our duty. A wise man will not go to law about little things, and a good man will not

about great ones, till all other methods of settling the difference have failed. Two members of the same church while yet in fellowship, engaged in a hostile suit in a court of justice, is a spectacle which very rarely occurs, and which ought never to occur, and never would if the church did its duty: and where they are members of two different churches, both these communities ought to interfere by the exercise of proper discipline to prevent it. It is no objection to all this to say that the apostle's argument does not apply to this age and country, since the magistrates in his time were pagans, whereas they are now, at least nominally, christians, for the ground of the argument applies as clearly now as it did then, which is the credit of religion.

I now pass on to make a few remarks upon this blessed canon.

I. This is law, not mere advice; and is obligatory as such upon our conscience, and not merely suggested for our option. It is the language of the Lord. "The Master saith it," and he intended it should be obeyed. We have no more right, and ought to have no more inclination to set aside this precept, than any other which he gives by his authority. It is as truly our duty to do this, as it is to pray, or read the scriptures, or to abstain from sabbath-breaking. No matter how difficult or how unpleasant it may be, it must be done. Many other things are difficult and unpleasant, but this is no excuse for their neglect.,

It is not only law, but it is very explicit: there is no ambiguity of language, no mystery or profundity of thought, therefore no possibility of mistake. It is level to the plainest understanding. No man can plead ignorance of its meaning as all excuse for shifting

off its obligation. It is a very rational law. It is full of wisdom. No man's understanding revolts from it, but every man's common sense must approve it. It is a law which carries out many others, and obedience to which is essential to obedience to them. We cannot fulfil the law of love if we neglect it; we cannot promote the welfare of the church without it; we cannot mortify our members which are upon the earth without it. It is a law which like others entails far more unhappiness in the breach of it than in the observance. Be it so, that it costs some personal uneasiness to submit to it, how much more will result from a different mode of treating offences! Upon what a stormy sea have many embarked who have taken their own way to treat offences, instead of Christ's! It is a law that would be found efficient in most cases for the accomplishment of its purpose. All Christ's laws are wise and good, and are adapted to accomplish their own ends. This rule, though carried out in all the meekness of wisdom, and all the fervour and humility of true charity, will not of course prevent private quarrels, but it will settle amicably by far the greater part which occur, without bringing them before the church.

It is of consequence I repeat to avoid this last appeal. Private feuds are more dangerous in some cases to the tranquillity of a congregation than matters of public scandal. Vice has no party, and the man who has committed it no patrons: but the offender in a private quarrel may have or make both a patron and a party in the church. In pulling up such a tare, which must of course be done, some of the wheat may be dragged up with it: or to change the allusion, as

the evil spirit is being cast out, he may in his struggle convulse and tear the body. The man whose pride, passion, and obstinacy compel this last appeal; who has so little regard to the peace not only of the brother he has injured, but of the church, yields a strong presumptive evidence, not only of his guilt in the one trespass in question, but of his general bad temper, of his unchristian disposition, and of his unfitness for communion.

II. This law of Christ unquestionably requires and supposes for its fulfilment a high state of personal religion. All the laws of the christian church do this, more or less. The fellowship of believers, and all the interchange of brotherly kindness and charity do this. In short, the whole divine life in all its exercises is a very high attainment. Christ's church is intended to be an oasis in a desert world, a Goshen in the midst of Egyptian darkness, a witness for its Divine Head testifying for him as the Redeemer of an elect people. And how can this be accomplished but by a spirit and temper, not only diverse from, but opposed to, that of the world? Church members do not understand, or strangely forget their vocation. They do not consider that their calling is to show the world what a different people christians are to them; what a transformation grace has effected when it converted and sanctified them. Especially are they called to exhibit the power, the beauty, and the operation of love. "Ye are called," saith the apostle, "to holiness:" but holiness is love. Of this the world knows nothing: "Hateful, and hating one another," is its description. The church ought to be entirely opposed to this, as being lovely and loving one another. The spirit of the world is revenge,

satisfaction, legal adjustment; in short, the full play of the vindictive passions. But that of Christ's subjects, when indeed they are really and fully such, is forbearance, forgiveness, reciprocal concession, reconciliation, peace. Unless this be the case, what do we more than others? Where is the difference between us and them? Our profession involves in it far more than an orthodox creed, a regular attendance upon religious ordinances, and an abstinence from gross immorality; it involves the image of Jesus, yea his very mind and spirit. The meekness and gentleness of Christ are to be our badge of distinction, the token of our submission to his authority, and the evidence of our sincerity. If we do not comply, and feel we cannot comply with his laws, and this among the rest, what do we in his kingdom?

Be it so then that this law requires a high state of religion; that is of subjection to Christ's authority; this is no excuse for the neglect of it, for if it were, disobedience to any law might be excused. There is nothing required of us in this matter which he will not most graciously give us help to perform if we are willing to receive it, and pray for it in faith. Difficult it is, but it can be done; and instead of leaving it undone because of its difficulty, we ought to exercise ourselves thereto. We must mortify our pride, curb our rashness, allay the heat of passion, extinguish resentment. Perhaps this kind will not go forth but by fasting and prayer. Then fasting and prayer it must have. The fact is, we want to be christians on too easy terms, and to possess a religion which is all mere pleasurable excitement. We would shirk the cross, and excuse ourselves from the process of mortification.

III. Yet it is a law which, I regret to say, is almost universally neglected. This is a melancholy fact: an acknowledged rule of Christ, dropped by almost general consent out of the practice of his church. A wise, 'good, pacific law, practically expunged by his subjects from his statute book! Is this doubted? I challenge the testimony of all, especially that of the ministers of religion of all denominations, to the fact. Do they not know to their grief and shame how apt their members are to disagree, and how difficult it is to reconcile them? Do we not continually see the truth of Solomon's words, "A brother [not an enemy] offended is harder to be won than a strong city, and their contentions are like the bars of a castle." What a comment upon human depravity! As if the nearer the relation the wider the breach. Who thinks of adopting this canon as the rule of his conduct? Who attempts thus to stop a quarrel, and to crush a feud in the egg? Men almost smile at our simplicity in proposing it, and deem it a law suited only for the inhabitants of some spiritual Utopia. Alas, alas, is it then come to this, that christians, professedly renewed men, men forgiven by God their ten thousand trespasses against him, claiming to be the spiritual offspring of him of whom it is said, "God is love," "the God of peace," gravely tell us this law of Christ is too refined, and requires too much gentleness and forbearance, for them to submit to? What, does God, the infinite God, offended by man's transgression, and with an unlimited power at retribution at command, come down and knock at the sinner's door, and "beseech him to be reconciled," and offer him forgiveness; and yet a man, a christian man, find it too much for him to go to his own brother,

and ask for explanation, and tell us it is too much to be expected from him? Is religion then a reality, or any thing more than a profession?

But how comes it to pass that this law is so generally neglected?

1. It may be supposed that its obligation is by some scarcely admitted; they may get rid of it, or attempt to do so, under the idea it was a local and temporary enactment, which was not intended to be of universal and permanent obligation. But this will not avail them; for there is nothing at all either in the nature of the precept, or in the circumstances of its delivery, which stamps any restrictive character upon it. The man who in this way can get rid of this law, can get rid of anyone. It is law, law for us; and there is no evading it, but by resisting the authority which enacted it. Let them try as they will, the objectors cannot satisfy others; no, nor do they satisfy themselves, that this was a rule for the Jewish synagogue, but not for the christian church.

2. The general desuetude into which the law has fallen is to each individual person a reason and excuse for his neglecting it. Thus general neglect is the cause of individual disobedience, and individual disobedience perpetuates general neglect. There is a sad propensity in us to follow the multitude to do evil, and in the idea that we are following a multitude to find an excuse for following them. It requires the pressure of an overpowering sense of obligation, and some degree of moral courage to be singular in the performance of duty, Unhappily the spiritual condition of the church generally is not such that its individual members should be content to possess an average degree of personal godliness. Great

mischief is inflicted by us upon and own souls if instead of comparing ourselves with the word of God we compare ourselves with one another. It is no defence, or excuse, or even palliation for a fault, to say, "My fellow christians do it, and why may not I?" If the reasoning be valid in one case, it is in another; and if as to a little sin, as to a great one. The church can never be improved, if its general imperfections be thus allowed by their prevalence to perpetuate themselves. Let every man then whose eye wanders over these pages, say, "I will begin to act upon this rule. The next time I am offended I will go to my brother alone, and in the meekness of wisdom tell him of his fault. It is time somebody should begin, and whoever mayor may not follow, I will desire to lead." Let everyone who has been offended, and who in sullenness or in wounded feeling is now brooding in silence over any injury, resolve immediately to throw off this conformity to general custom, and go to the offender. A few examples would soon revive this law, and give it force.

3. The strength of resentful feelings, or it may be only the deep sense of injury received, prevents many a man complying with this law. His mind is ruffled, and its perturbations are so violent as not to allow of the cool exercise of reason, and the influence of religious principle. Surprise, anger, resentment, have got possession of his soul, and keep down the exercise of reflection and the cultivation of meekness. Perhaps there may be some peculiar aggravations in the offence; it may contain a display of ingratitude, and intentional insult, as well as injustice and actual wrong. The aggrieved party says with Jonah, "I do well to be angry:" hence he is too much taken up with his own sense of the

wrong done, to think of having any intercourse with the wrong doer. The very idea of seeing him, meeting him, talking to him, is revolting. "Meet him," cries the indignant mind, "I had rather go a hundred miles another way. Meet him! Go to him! I dare not trust myself in his presence; for I could scarcely keep my hands from him, much less my tongue. No, if I meet him, it shall be either before the church, or in a court of law." Be calm, man, be calm! Let the voice of Him who on the lake of Gennesaret said to the stormy winds, "Peace, be still," he heard by you. In that state of mind you had better not go. You are on fire, and will set him on fire too. But cool the temperature of your soul. You have been injured; grievously injured; that is conceded to you: for if you had not, there would be no need of the exercise of christian forbearance and forgiveness. But this does not excuse the indulgence of such stormy passions. Have you not done something worse, not indeed to man, hut to God? Is it for you to indulge all this passion and resentment? Follow me to Calvary. Look at that cross. Consider who hangs bleeding there, and for whom. Can you, with that object before you, refuse to calm your passions, and to go to your offending brother?

4. Pride is another cause of the neglect of this law. We have all more of this hateful disposition than we either know or suspect. Pride is the parent sin; the original sin, both in heaven and on earth; the devil's sin, and that by which our first parents fell. Pride is in many cases the chief cause of our exquisite sensibility to wrong done us: the man easily offended must be a proud man, and it is pride that has made his heart a very tinder-box, in which the least spark of offence

finds the means of combustion. This same disposition prevents him from desiring reconciliation, or taking any steps to effect it. "I go to my brother! no indeed, it is his place to come to me. He has insulted me, injured me; and it would be degrading myself to go cap in hand to him, as if I had need to ask his forgiveness, rather than he mine." Stop, are you a christian? Do you profess to have received pardon from God? Do you owe and own allegiance to Christ? What, and talk in this manner! Degrade yourself! No, you exalt yourself. You become by this conduct the imitator of God. You rise in moral dignity immeasurably above the offender. What says Solomon? "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." "Among all my conquests," said the dying emperor Valentinian, "there is but one that comforts me now, I have overcome my worst enemy, my own evil heart." And Cato, a heathen, could say, "He is the best and most praiseworthy general who has rule over his own passions." Yet this control of our passions, so as to go to our offending brother and ask explanation of a trespass, is degradation is it? Heathens, as we have seen, might and do teach such inconsistent christians better principles.

5. "It will be of no use to go to him; I know him; and it will only exasperate him and make matters worse," is an excuse frequently alleged for the neglect of this duty. How do you know this till you have tried. It will be of no use, if it be done in an improper manner: nay, it will do harm. The offender will be exasperated in return, if you go to him in exasperation. The passions are contagious, the bad ones strongly so. It has been of use in many instances, and may in

yours. No use! But if it should be of no use to the offender, it may be of use to yourself. If he is not made better by it, you will be. If you cannot subdue him, you will honour Christ. If you are not successful, you will set an example which may be more successful in the case of others, who will be encouraged by you.

6. "It is troublesome; and why should we burden ourselves with such a matter!" Yes, it is: it will require some little sacrifice of time and feeling: it will call for much thoughtfulness and care, in order that we may not make bad worse: and I say again, that unless we will take pains not to blow the coals and fan the flame of discord, we had better not touch the matter. But are not many other duties of religion troublesome? Can we live as christians without trouble? Can we get to heaven without trouble? And is it not worth all the trouble we shall be required to give to it? Is it not a good thing to bring our erring brother to a right mind? Is it not a good thing to set our own mind at peace?

7. It is frequently brought forward as an excuse for non-compliance with this rule, that it is the duty of the offender to make the first movement towards reconciliation, and instead of our going to him, he ought to come to us; for our Lord says, "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." It is certainly very clear from these words, as well as from the nature of things, that he who commits the trespass should by confession anticipate the expostulation of him against whom it is committed.

But suppose he does not: then comes in our duty to be the first to move.

“If others begin to quarrel, do thou begin the peace, said Seneca. For sometimes the offender deserves pardon, but dares not ask it; he begs it by interpretation and tacit desire; consult therefore with his modesty, his infirmity, and with his shame. He is more bound to do it than thou art; yet thou canst better do it than he can. It is not always safe for him; it is never unsafe for thee. It may be an extreme shame to him; it is ever honourable to thee. It may be sometimes to his loss; it is always to thy gain. By so doing, we imitate God, whom though we have so often, so infinitely offended, yet He thought thoughts of peace, and sent to us ambassadors of peace, and ministers of reconciliation. We cannot want better arguments of peacefulness: it is no shame to thee to offer peace to thy offending brother, when thy God did, who was so greatly provoked by thee, and could as greatly have been revenged: and it is no disparagement that thou shouldst desire the reconcilment of him for whom Christ became a sacrifice. Thou art bound, I say, in charity to thy brother’s soul, whose repentance thou canst easily invite by thy kind offer; and thou makest his return easy; thou takest away his objection and temptation; thou securest thine own right better, and art invested in the greater glory of mankind; thou dost the work of God, and thine own soul; thou carriest pardon, and ease, and mercy with thee; and who would not run and strive to be first in carrying a pardon, and bringing messages of peace and joyfulness.

“Consider therefore that death divides with you every moment; you quarrel in the morning, and it may be you shall die before night: run quickly and be reconciled, for fear your anger last longer than your life. It was a victory which Euclid got of his angry brother, who being highly displeased, cried out, ‘Let me perish if I be not revenged:’ but he answered, ‘And let me perish if I do not make you kind, and quickly to forget your anger.’ That gentle answer did it, and they were friends presently and for ever after. It is a shame if we be outdone by heathens; and especially in that grace which is the ornament and jewel of our religion; that is in forgiving our enemies, in appeasing anger, in doing good for evil, in returning prayers for cursings, and gentle usages for rude treatment, This is the glory of christianity, as christianity is the glory of the world.”

In all these ways may we account for the too general neglect of this admirable provision for the peace of

Zion; to which especial attention should be paid by all who love her, and pray for her prosperity: and who, indeed, desire their own tranquillity, holiness, and safety.

But as prevention is not only better, but easier, than cure, it may be well to point out one or two things which would render such an interference as is here called for but rarely necessary.

Let all professing christians be cautious not to give offence. He who comes into society, whether civil or sacred, should recollect he has duties to discharge towards those with whom he associates, and that he is bound to respect and consult their peace, as well as his own. The man who is walking in a crowd must be more circumspect, more cautious, and more fearful of giving annoyance, than he who has the road or the field all to himself. He must be careful not to trample upon other people's toes, or elbow their sides. He must consider and consult the comfort of those around him. But unhappily this is forgotten by many: they are rude, dogmatical, indiscreet, rash, over-bearing, and tyrannical; never consulting the feelings of others around them, and equally careless as to when they give pleasure, or when they inflict pain. They are like an individual who would scarcely scruple, if it pleased him, to fire a musket loaded with ball in a street. Such is not the "charity that is kind." A christian should be most anxious to avoid every thing which would give pain even to an insect by crushing one of its legs; especially to a brother in Christ by wounding his feelings. The peace of his brethren should ever be more sacred to him than his own. He should be discreet, mild, and courteous, in all his language and his

conduct, weighing the import of words before he utters them, and calculating the consequences of actions before he performs them.

Connected with this, as a necessary adjunct, is a willingness, yea a readiness, to acknowledge a wrong, when either by accident or intention he has inflicted one. But one of the most difficult duties which ever our proud hearts have to perform in the whole course of their moral probation, is to say, "I have done wrong, forgive me." Even to say this to God has been found, in some cases, no easy matter; and the poor sinner, at the very bar of Omniscience, instead of ingenuously confessing his transgressions, has looked about for all kinds of excuses and materials for defence. How much more may this be expected to take place when he is arraigned only before the tribunal of a brother. How often have we heard the remark made of some perverse and obstinate individual, "That man, however clearly he is convicted of a fault, can never be brought to say he has done wrong." Many are so blinded by the deceitfulness of sin, that they will not see their offence, however plainly it may be set before them: and others, though they see it, will not confess it. Pride and obstinacy seal their lips in silence, and prevent their saying, "I have sinned." Let us all beware of this. But us be open to conviction; and when convinced, let us confess There is something noble and dignified in a man's ingenuously acknowledging himself to be in fault. It is a contemptible and despicable sight, and ought never to be exhibited by a christian, to see a man catching up every shred and fragment of truth or falsehood, to construct a covering and a defence; fighting with every bit of missile he can

lay hand upon, and running for protection into every hole and corner, instead of yielding at once, and casting himself upon the mercy of a generous and forgiving opponent. I know not which is most entitled to admiration, the man who frankly and ingenuously says, "I have done wrong," or he who promptly and affectionately replies, "I entirely forgive you." Alas that such excellence should be so rarely witnessed, and that it should seem to require the perfect holiness of that world where it will be never needed!

It has been observed in all cases of genuine and powerful revivals of religion, that one of the indications and characteristics of such a state of things has usually been an extraordinary and very abundant produce on the trees of righteousness of "the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Old feuds have been removed, alienated friends have been reconciled, injuries have been forgiven and forgotten; those who lived at a distance from each other have made advancement, and each, without waiting for the other, has been eager to make the first movement. It seemed as if enmity could not live in such an atmosphere of love. I have witnessed something like this myself: and have known individuals who have said, "We can hold out no longer: we are melted: we must be friends." Now in proportion as the church has relapsed into a lukewarm state, and the power of godliness has sunk and become enfeebled, the old state of things returned, and the roots of bitterness began again to spring up and bear their noxious fruits.

But I will suppose it still difficult for an individual who has in any way offended a brother to go and

acknowledge the offence, and yet he still not only goes to the same place of worship, but to the same sacramental board: then to such trespasser I now address the words of Christ already quoted: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." This it is admitted referred in the first instance to the Jewish sacrifices; but it applies not only with equal but with greater force to the christian ordinance: for if a brotherly heart were required even of a Jew in order to his coming to the sacrifice of a bullock or a lamb, what ought to be the charity of a christian in coming to commemorate the sacrifice of the Son of God? And this is confirmed by the language of the apostle, where he says, "Let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness." No man is welcome at Christ's table who brings there a soul too proud to ask forgiveness for an injury he has inflicted, or too implacable to forgive an offence he has received. A religion the chief blessing of which is pardon, and the chief duty of which is love, cannot suffer at the foot of its altar one who takes no steps to obtain reconciliation with an alienated brother. Why it is a rare and an unseemly sight for two persons in a quarrel to eat bread together at the table of a common friend, how much more so at the table of the Lord! And yet how common is this, to eat of the same loaf, to drink of the same cup, in a state of enmity! To carry the feud and cherish it even there! Yes, and to carry it back again too! To go from the next spot and scene to the cross itself, and yet not reconciled! What is

this hut to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to eat and drink unworthily, and to eat and drink judgment to themselves! "What then is to be done?"

Must I not come to the communion?" No, not in that state; for God will not accept your gift. "Must I then keep away?" No; but go immediately to your brother and acknowledge your fault; or if no offence was intended, go and explain matters to him, and having conciliated him, then come and offer your gift. If the door of God's house were actually shut against everyone who refused to comply with this direction, it would make many feel: yet the door of mercy or divine acceptance is shut, which is of far greater consequence. Cyril, one of the early Fathers, tells us that the ancient christians were wont before the communion to kiss each other, as a symbol of reconciled minds and forgotten injuries: and in confirmation of this practice brings the precept of our Lord just quoted. I say therefore to everyone who is conscious he has offended his brother, and yet is too proud or too obstinate to say, "I have done wrong, forgive me," the next time you present yourself at the feast of love you ought to hear in imagination the voice of Jesus speaking by the plate and by the cup, speaking by every crumb of bread and every drop of wine, and saying, "Go, proud man, for what in that state of mind dost thou here? Go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother."

But if we are to be cautious against giving offence, we should be equally backward to receive it. Quarrels often begin for want of the caution I have just enjoined, and are then continued for want of the backwardness I am now enforcing. Between the stone that feels nothing, not the hardest blow, and the eye that feels

every thing, even the slightest touch of an insect's wing, there is a medium: and so there is between the dull stolidity of an utterly insensible mind, and the too keen susceptibilities of an over sensitive one, There is no doubt a very great difference in mental constitution, which makes it much more difficult for one man to practise a christian virtue than another man. Doubtless there is more religious principle, more of divine grace, in the half-virtues of one man than in the whole ones of another: in the one case all the seeming excellence is mere physical organization, mere constitutional quiescence, which is the result of temperament, rather than of principle; while all that is excellent in the other is the effect of principle and grace. Hence it certainly will cost one man much more trouble labour and effort to be holy, than it will another to appear so. I admit all this, but then I do not admit that the obligation to this labour and effort is superseded by the difficulty of it. Now nothing is more common than for professing christians to excuse their irritability and susceptibility to offence, on the ground of their sensitiveness. "Oh," they say, "our feelings are so tender, our emotional system is so exquisitely and delicately constructed, that we are not to be tried by ordinary rules; we, like the strings of an æolian harp, are moved to sighs and mournful notes, even by the slightest breeze passing over us." Apart from the poetry of the comparison, it means, in plain prose, that they are very waspish and easily offended; that they are but a moral sensitive plant, a little squeamish shrub, that not only falls prostrate at a blow, but trembles, shrinks, and shrivels, at the touch of a finger. Let us watch against this sensitiveness which

is offended not only by an action but by a word; not only by a word, but by a tone; not only by a tone, but by a look. There are many who feel themselves offended not only by actual injury, but by the want of what they deem due respect. "There is in such persons," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "who complain for every small offence, such a stock of anger and peevishness, and such a spirit of fire within them, that every breath and every motion from without can put it into a flame; and the devil will never be wanting to minister occasion to such prepared materials." There are cases so plain as not to be mistaken; only one construction can be put upon them; they are, and are intended to be, actual trespasses; and must be treated as such, for the design and motive are patent in the action. But there are many others, which, however appearances may be against them, are not and were never intended to be offences. Sensitive minds are ever apt to be mistaken in such matters; they are, so to speak, ever looking out for trespasses, and on the watch for offenders. They are like game-keepers watching preserves at night, who are ready to suspect every man to be a poacher, and who, gun in hand, are ever ready for action. A little of the charity that thinks no evil would lead them to impute a good motive till a bad one is proved. They are never taught by experience, for though they have in many instances found that they had judged wrongfully of a brother, and imputed to him an intention to trespass when it was furthest from his mind, they still go on concluding that all men are combined to do them harm.

In looking over the troubled scenes which in this unquiet world present themselves in nations and in

churches, in families and between friends, and observing all the envies and the jealousies, the wars and the feuds, which banish peace from the earth, and make way for confusion and every evil work, it is painful to consider by what a small and easy exercise of christian charity in the way of caution and concession, forbearance and forgiveness, all this mischief and misery might have been prevented; and yet that that measure of love was resentfully denied. And our surprise and our sorrow are increased by recollecting that in the midst of this scene of tumultuous passions and bitter contentions there stands the Bible, the law and the representative of the God of love, which, as a messenger of peace from the world of untroubled repose, is come to reconcile all alienated parties to each other, by first reconciling them to God, and so to harmonize all these discordant elements; and by expelling from them their repellent properties, to give them the cohesion of a moral attraction which shall prepare them to attach themselves to each other, and to consolidate round a common centre. O, how painful it seems that the Bible for so many centuries has been brooding over the moral chaos of our world, and sending its peace-speaking voice over the wild uproar, and that yet the elements are at war! But even this is not half so surprising nor half so affecting as that other spectacle, the result of the strifes and contentions, the envies and the jealousies, the malice and resentments, to be seen even among the members of the redeemed family: that the ministry of the word floating over the churches of saints the very echo of the angel's song, and of the Saviour's own words, "Peace be with you," sending out continually the notes of redeeming love, and causing the

distant symphonies of the heavenly choir to be heard; that the sacramental board, with its simple yet most impressive array, those emblems of the body and blood of the crucified one, that feast of love; that the communion of saints, based as it is upon the sevenfold unity so sublimely set forth by the inspired apostle; that all the hallowed sensibilities and tender sympathies of the common spiritual nature; that the prospect and the hope of eternal friendships cemented by a divine love, and indulged round the throne of the Lamb: that these, I say, all these, should have no more power to make the men who profess to believe in them all, meek, gentle, and forgiving: no more power to prevent or to heal their contentions: no more power to transform them all into sons of peace! O, my God, when with an astonished and a wounded spirit I contemplate this sad inconsistency, grant me, I beseech thee, thy grace, to be a stay to my faith, and to save me from infidelity!

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee until seven times but until seventy times seven.

MATTHEW xviii, 21, 22.

AFTER this follows one of the most beautiful of all our Lord's parables, I mean the merciless creditor, who having had ten thousand talents forgiven him took his fellow-servant by the throat and cast him into prison for a hundred pence.

The subject of this essay is included in that of the last, and forms a necessary part of it; for if the offending brother be brought to confession and repentance, (even though it be only by the last resort, the interference of the church,) the offended party, it is supposed, most freely forgives him. Still, the subject of forgiveness abstracted from this connection is by itself of sufficient importance to admit of distinct and separate consideration. Moreover, it is of wider application; the former refers more especially to the conduct of christians in their connection with and relation to each other as brethren: this is general in its aspect, having no such restriction, but being objectively applicable to all men alike.

Forgiveness is a word which occupies a large and conspicuous place in the Bible, in both the Old Testament and the New, It meets us at every turn. It comes before us in the form of a doctrine to be believed, in the proclamation of Divine mercy through the blood of Christ to sinful man: and in the form of a precept to be obeyed, in the injunction to man to forgive his erring fellow-mortal. The scriptures resound with the word forgiveness, and are radiant with the brightness of its blessings. At every step we hear the announcement from heaven, "I am he that blotteth out thy sins, and will not remember thy transgressions any more; and do thou forgive as I have forgiven thee." Hence, it is as impossible to make out our claim to the character of a christian without performing the duty of forgiveness ourselves, as it is without believing the doctrine of God's forgiveness. For that cannot be a true faith which does not work by love; nor that a true love which does not act in the way of forgiveness. One might suppose, did we not know the contrary both by experience and observation, that it would be at once the easiest and the pleasantest of all duties, for the man who professes to have received forgiveness from God to forgive an offender; that in the fulness of his gratitude, joy, and love, for having received the pardon of his twice ten thousand sins, and in the consciousness of his inability to make any adequate returns to God, he would hasten to his "offending" brother, and say, "I have had so much forgiven, that I freely forgive you all." It would seem as if, by a kind of mural necessity, a forgiven man must be a forgiving one. And yet is it really so? Is not the very contrary the case? Is there any duty so difficult, so rare, or

so reluctantly, grudgingly, and sparingly performed? Is it not almost as true in reference to the church, as it is to the world, that "a brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are like the bars of a castle."

I. As no duty is more mistaken, as well as neglected, and as forgiveness includes much more than is generally supposed, I shall show what it is really to forgive. This may seem to need no explanation, and it would need none, if men's judgments were not imposed upon by the deceitfulness of their hearts. It is to be feared that very many imagine they have discharged this duty when they have been brought to say, "I forgive him with all my heart, and pray to God to forgive him also." It is well to go thus far, instead of saying, "Forgive him! No never, I will pursue him to the utmost." But good words without good feelings, are but adding hypocrisy to revenge: and there is no doubt that forgiveness is often upon the lip, while revenge is in the heart. Men deceive themselves with their own professions, they believe their own lies. Genuine forgiveness is not only the declaration that we forgive, but an entire feeling of forgiveness. It is the heart saying, "I forgive," and the conscience attesting the truth of the assertion. The following things are all necessary to the right discharge of this duty.

It implies that we extinguish, or take great pains to do so, all feelings of wrath towards the offender. The first impulse of the soul on the reception of an injury is to give loose to anger, to look at the offence in the most aggravated form, to brood over it, and at every returning reflection upon it to kindle afresh into indignation. This is always the case with the relentless and

implacable man. But the forgiving one calms the perturbation of his mind, keeps down his rising passions, and curbs the fury of his temper. Forgiveness puts a stop to the spreading conflagration of the soul. It extinguishes the flames of our fiery tempers and allows not even the embers to burn. We have never forgiven, whatever we may say, or however we may outwardly conduct ourselves towards the offender, till we have quite laid aside all bitterness and wrath.

Every man that forgives an injury, must have a mind free from all intention and all wish to revenge. This is a word which most professors abjure, but it is a thing which very many practise. By revenge they mean great acts of injury returned for others as great; but it should be considered, any return, in whatever small way, of injury for injury, though it be a spiteful word, is revenge; and it is pitiable to see what petty acts of retaliation some will be guilty of, who perhaps imagine that because they have not openly and mischievously avenged themselves, they have really practised forgiveness. All intention or wish to resent an injury, in any way, is or must be entirely banished from the mind, if we really forgive.

So neither must we desire that others or that God would take up our cause and revenge the injury. Some will say they forgive, and yet secretly wish that though not inflicted by themselves, some evil may be done by others to an offender. "I forgive him," say they, "and leave him to God." For what purpose? To be pardoned or to be punished? Alas, how often does it mean the latter: but we never forgive till we can pray to God to forgive our enemy, and to bestow upon him good, rather than evil.

Forgiveness implies that we endeavour to forget the offence. We have a beautiful instance of this in God's language to the Jews: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." And how impressive is that language of the prophet Micah, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgressions of the remnant of his heritage: he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities: and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Wonderful language! This is one of the finest images to represent the completeness of God's pardoning mercy to be found in all the Bible. He casts our sins not into a brook nor a river where they might be found again, no, nor into the sea near the shore where the tide might cast them up again, but like a stone into the depths of the sea, where they can never be fished up again, but lie for ever buried and forgotten at the bottom of the ocean. This is divine forgiveness, casting all into oblivion. Yes, and this is human forgiveness too, where it is genuine. "I will forgive," say some, "but I cannot forget." This means that they really do not forgive at all, for they do not wish or intend to forget the evil but to cherish a remembrance of it. They write it down in their memory, preserve it there with care, often read it, and always with feelings of ill-will towards the offender. Absolute oblivion is impossible. To determine actually and absolutely to forget any thing which has once been known to us is a thing beyond our power; and there may be cases in which, in order to govern our behaviour towards the offender in future, it may be desirable and

proper to retain an accurate recollection of the offence. But the remembrance which true forgiveness prevents is that which is cherished for the mere purpose of perpetuating a sense of the injury received. This we must endeavour as far as possible to forget, and not imitate Darius the Persian, who when the Athenians had plundered Sardis, resolved to remember the evil and revenge it, and commanded one of his servants, that every day at the royal supper, he should thrice repeat, "Let us remember the Athenians." "The devil," says Bishop Jeremy Taylor, "is ever ready to do this office for any man; and he that keeps in mind an injury will need no other tempter to uncharitableness than his own memory."

Forgiveness requires that we do not upbraid the offender with his sin after we have pardoned it. It seals our lips, as well as ties our arms from injury. To reproach one for his offence after we have professed to pardon it proves that our profession was insincere. Except that if he repeat the injury, it may then be mentioned as aggravating the new offence; for it is a great enormity to renew again the transgression we had generously forgiven. And as we do not upbraid the offender himself with the offence, so we must not repeat it to others for them to upbraid him with it. To go round from individual to individual with the tale of a transgression which we profess to have forgiven can be only to do him who has committed it an injury, or to magnify our own charity in passing it by: the first of which is unkindness to him, and the other a contemptible vanity of our own.

Forgiveness is not genuine unless we are prepared to do the offending party all the good in our power. Merely to abstain from evil is not enough, for we must be will-

ing to do him good. To do actual evil is positive revenge, and to abstain from doing good is negative revenge. A beautiful incident occurs in the life of Lycurgus the Spartan legislator. In a tumult raised against him by some of the citizens he lost an eye. The people resenting the injury gave the man who did it into the prince's power, and he most worthily used it; for he kept the assailant in his house a whole year, where he taught him virtue, and then brought him forth a worthy citizen. Yet Lycurgus was a pagan. What christian could have done more? How few christians do as much! But we have higher examples than this, even the conduct of our God in Christ, who not only forgives all our sins, but "blesses us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Our mode of dealing with offenders must in this particular resemble God's.

He that really forgives must, except in certain extreme cases, restore a person to the same relations to himself as he occupied before the offence. There are I have said exceptions to this rule. The offence may have been of such a nature, and containing such a developement of character, or the confession and repentance may be of so equivocal a character, that to take the offender back again as entirely into our confidence, or our esteem, or our love, as he was before, is more than can be expected, or even required. In other cases restoration should follow reconciliation, and the latter is not complete without the former. The man who has offended me, but who has acknowledged to me his offence, (with all the sorrow that the act called for, and with all the alteration of his behaviour which the sincerity of that sorrow demands for its proof,) gives

evidence of a degree of excellence which should restore him to a place in my regard at least as high as that he held before. If that were all he did to injure me, his humiliation and reformation are a more convincing demonstration of a radically good character, than the offence was of a bad one. When a man says to me with obvious and undoubted sincerity and sorrow, "Sir, I have wronged you; forgive me:" that man rises more by his penitence than he sunk by his transgression. To withhold from him my love, to keep him at a distance, and to treat him with coldness and suspicion, is still to punish and not to pardon him. It is useless to say to him, "I forgive you," for he feels that you have not done so. It is not thus God deals with us. God has so pardoned us that He has not only averted from us the punishment which our sins have deserved, but He has received us back to His favour, and He treats us with all the love He would have borne towards us if we had never offended Him. A repulsive method of meeting a returning offender; a cold, distant, suspicious line of conduct to him, has often, like a frost, nipped the opening bud of his penitence and reformation; while kind, generous, warm-hearted confidence like the sun, will bring on and develope it, and ripen it into the beauty and the fragrance of the full-blown flower.

Such then is true forgiveness; and let anyone looking back upon the description, say, if such a disposition is not much more rare than many people are ready to imagine. If all this be included in this beautiful branch of a christian's duty, (and is it not?) then how few of us have made any great attainment in

this evangelical virtue, and how much do we all need to be stirred up again and again to enquire into its nature, and our own advancement in it.

II. Let me now consider some circumstances connected with its exercise.

1. We may inquire, How often are we required to forgive the same offender? Our Lord, in His reply to Peter's question, has answered this. That apostle came to Jesus, and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him, until seven times?" The Jews in their corrupt morality had a maxim that we should forgive an enemy three times, but not a fourth. Peter doubtless in proposing his question imagined he was giving his charity a wondrous stretch, in extending it to seven times forgiveness. How must he have been astonished at the answer of Christ. "I say not unto thee, until seven times; but, until seventy times seven." Astounding idea! We are to be so full of charity as to forgive the same person four hundred and ninety times, if he so often offend, and as often repent! And was this too much for him to demand, who has repeated His own forgiveness more than seventy times four hundred and ninety, to each one of us? We do not wonder to hear the apostles reply to such an injunction "Lord, increase our faith." Nothing but a very strong faith can do this. What then shall we say of those who have not faith enough to forgive once? Of course and Lord in this case used a definite for an indefinite number, and meant that our pardon is to be repeated as often as our brother's offence, when that offence is followed by sorrowful confession and the fruits of repentance. If Christ were to stop in pardoning us at the four hundred and ninetieth time, what would

become of us? True it is that the oftener a sin is committed, the more striking and convincing must the evidence be of sincere repentance; and the more difficult it is to determine its sincerity: and also the more cautious we should be in restoring the offender to our confidence and favour. Nor can it be expected, however truly we may forgive him so far as to abstain from doing him evil and to be willing to do him any good, that we should take him back into our favour and confidence, and trust him altogether as we did before. "He has proved himself by repeated offences hardly to be trusted; for it is plain he has not been cured of the evil principle, the malicious heart or the evil eye: the slanderous tongue or the unjust hand: his covetous desire, and his anger: and thus though he must be pardoned charitably, and prayed for heartily, he must be handled cautiously. In this, our charity must be neither credulous nor morose; too difficult, nor too easy."

2. Are we to forgive a person if he will not confess his fault? Forgiveness has various degrees, and in the fullest and most complete sense of the term it is not required of us, till confession is made. God docs not forgive us unless we acknowledge our sins. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Christ makes the duty of forgiveness dependent upon the repentance of the offender. "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent thou shalt forgive him." But still there are certain duties to be performed towards

him even in this obdurate and unrelenting state of mind. We should in the exercise of meekness and gentleness endeavour to convince him of his wrong-doing in the manner laid down in the former essay. We are not on discovering his impenitence and obduracy at once to turn away from him in anger and disgust, and leave him to himself, and thus suffer sin to lie upon him. And even after all suitable expostulations have been used, and he still remains stubbornly bent upon making no concession, we are not to allow ourselves to cherish enmity and malice towards him; we must harbour no ill-will towards him; we must pray for him: and be willing to do any good to him. Kindness shewn to an impenitent offender, in a way that will not seem to connive at his sin, or encourage a repetition of it, may melt his hard heart. This is what the apostle calls heaping coals of fire on his head, and by the agony of a guilty conscience, rendered more susceptible by your forgiveness, melting down the cold, hard substance of his iron heart. Here we act like God, who though he does not receive impenitent offenders to his favour, or bestow upon them the blessings of his children, still continues to them many providential comforts. And for what purpose? The apostle declares this, when he says, "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" This is extraordinarily beautiful: the goodness of God, instead of turning its back upon the unrepenting sinner and retiring from him in wrath and disgust, turns towards him its lovely countenance, and even takes hold of his hand to lead him to repentance. Here is our pattern. We cannot receive the offender to and favour till he has con-

fessed his fault; but we can be kind to him, and like our Heavenly Father take him by the hand and lead him to a better state of mind, He is not even in his sullen obduracy to be an object of our hatred and revenge.

III. I shall now consider the indispensable necessity of our exercising this disposition. This duty cannot be placed among the non essentials of religion; as that without which a man may be a real, though an incomplete christian. It is not to be ranked among those matters about which good men may differ, and be nearly as good, which ever side they take. Nor is it to be viewed as merely a graceful and ornamental appendage to religion, a sort of tasteful decoration of character, which a few fine spirits, men made of softer clay or cast in a more ornamental mould, may wear, but which can very well be done without. Nothing like it. Reader whosoever thou art whose eye passes over these pages, here pause and ponder the truth, which I now lay down, for it is such; thou art not a christian, thou never canst be one, thou art not in the way to heaven, but on the road to perdition, thy trespasses are not forgiven thee, but are all upon thee at this moment, if thou art habitually an unforgiving man. This is a solemn fact, which, with dark and frowning aspect now stares thee in the face. A voice from the unseen world uttered in thunder could not make it more certain. Take the following evidences of this fact.

I. It is positively commanded in holy Scripture. How frequently, how solemnly, and how authoritatively is this duty enforced by our Lord himself! Read with devout and fixed attention the following passages, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father

will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” The same thing is repeated in four other places in the gospel. “And be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven you.” “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.” “Confess your faults one to another.” Remember this is law, not merely advice: a command, not only counsel: as truly law, as that which requires honesty or chastity; so that a man who is unforgiving, is as truly a rebel against Christ, as he who does not pray, or he who is a whoremonger, or an adulterer. If Christ is our Master, and we are bound to obey Him in any thing, we are bound to obey Him in all things, and in this among the rest. If we cannot forgive, we cannot be disciples of Christ. We resist His authority; we cast off His yoke; we trample under feet His commands. We tell Him in effect He has passed a law which we cannot or will not obey. We cannot plead ignorance either of the existence or of the meaning of this law. Here it is laid down as the rule of our conduct. A child can comprehend it; nothing can be more unmistakeable. The command lies upon the very surface of christianity, and the meaning lies upon the surface of the law. Is not forgiveness necessary? Can we even pretend to be christians without it?

2. It is not only a command of the christian religion, but it is one of the commands which peculiarly belong to it, as in a very extraordinary manner appertaining to it. Paganism knows nothing about it. Revenge has ever been its spirit in all forms and all ages. No

wonder, its deities have usually been impersonations either of lust or cruelty; its orgies have been blood, and its litany groans. To Judaism it was not unknown, but, like the doctrine of a future state, was far less clearly revealed than it is under the christian dispensation. That bright economy which has revealed so clearly God's forgiving love, through the atonement of Christ, has also as clearly revealed our duty to forgive one another, as God has for Christ's sake forgiven us. The olive branch is suspended from the cross. Like the duty of loving one another, the duty of forgiveness is especially Christ's commandment, for the latter is included in the former. So that we may say of this, as well as of love, "By this shall all men know ye are Christ's disciples if ye forgive one another." Christ will not own us as disciples if we do not forgive. He in effect says, "Look at that man who cannot forgive, is he like me? Does he bear my image? Does he carry about my mind? Does he breathe my spirit? No. Let all men therefore know that though he bears my name I disown him. He bears false witness against me. He misrepresents me: he is a living slander, a foul calumny upon me; and is at the same time a traducer of my religion. If men believe that I am like him, as his profession assumes, they will, they must conclude, that I am instead of a Saviour a destroyer: instead of an incarnation of mercy an impersonation of revenge. Believe him not when he says he is a christian, for no habitually unforgiving man can be one."

3. It is a condition of our own forgiveness from God. When I say condition, I do not of course mean a meritorious one, but that state of mind without which we

cannot be forgiven, the sine qua non of our pardon. It is a condition in the same sense, though not for the same purpose, as faith is, and is as necessary. There is no merit in either, but both are required as indispensable. Yea, for one is included in the other, for the faith which believes the doctrine of forgiveness, believes also the duty of forgiveness. A true faith works by love, and a true love works by forgiveness. Nothing can be more explicit than our Lord's words, "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." This is again repeated with still greater emphasis where the beautiful parable of the merciless creditor who was forgiven ten thousand talents, and yet could not forgive a hundred pence, is delivered to enjoin this duty, and which closes with the declaration, "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not everyone his brother their trespasses." How can this be evaded? By what logic of even our deceitful hearts can this be answered? None can be so blind, so utterly ignorant of the nature of religion, or the prerequisites to salvation, as to imagine he can be forgiven, while living in lying, stealing, or adultery; and yet it is as certain that he can be saved while indulging in these sins, as while living in the habitual indulgence of an inexorable, malicious, and unforgiving disposition. Can a man be saved without love? Let the apostle answer this by his language in the thirteenth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, where he tells us that neither the power of miracles, nor the eloquence of angels, nor the most diffusive almsgiving, nor even the sufferings of martyrdom, can be a substitute for love, for that love, "which suffereth long," and "is kind," and is "not easily provoked."

There must, whatever men may imagine, be the absence of faith where there is the absence of love; for the latter is the natural and necessary fruit of the former. Is it possible for any man really to believe that he has sinned against God ten thousand times, and that God has fully and freely forgiven him all; is it possible he should have gone with a broken heart to the cross, groaning under the burden of his guilt, and heard the voice of redeeming mercy say to him, "Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee, thy sins are all forgiven thee;" and while rejoicing with gratitude and love in a sense of pardoning grace, refuse to extend the mercy to a fellow creature who has not sinned a millionth part as much towards him as he has towards God? Incredible! Impossible! How can an unforgiving man put up the petition to God, "Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me." Does he understand, does he consider what in reality in such a case is his prayer? "O God, enter into judgment with me, and be extreme to mark all my offences. Blot out none of my sins; but deal with me according to my transgressions. Let me never know a sense of thy pardoning love, but let thine arrows stick fast within me, and the poison thereof drink up my spirit. Banish me from thy life-giving presence, and consign me to the regions of hopeless despair, and let me pass through eternity under a sense of committed and unremitted sin." You tremble at the very idea, it makes your blood curdle, and sends a thrill of horror through your frame, to think of a sinner thus petitioning for damnation. But what else, or what less, is the petition, "Forgive me my sins, even as I forgive the sins of others," in the lips of a relentless man? His forgive-

ness is revenge. I put the case thus strongly, because it cannot be put too strongly; I put the case thus strongly, with the hope of rousing attention: I put the case thus strongly, for I am persuaded multitudes are deceiving themselves; to them I say, The 'gates of heaven are closed, barred, and bolted against the man who refuses to forgive his brother; and they would as soon fly open at the approach and knock of a swearer or a fornicator, as at the application of a man who has no mercy in his soul.

IV. I may now well ask the question, How it comes to pass that a duty so obvious is so much neglected, and so rarely performed in such a manner as to evince any peculiar excellence of character? Here I assume, as I did with regard to the subject of the former essay, that it is neglected; that it is too little practised, even by professing christians. Can anyone doubt this? Is anyone so blind to what is passing around him, so ignorant of himself, so unaccustomed to witness the unsettled quarrels between his neighbours, as not to know, and not to be willing to admit, that among all the duties of the christian life, the performance of this, as set forth in the beginning of this part of the tract, is among the rarest branches of evangelical holiness? Who does not know by experience how quick our resentment is, how slow our forgiveness?

The neglect of this duty may be accounted for in part by our want of consideration. We have never dwelt upon it as we ought. We have been taken up with doctrines, and have not dwelt enough upon duties: we have been intent upon privileges, and have forgotten moral obligations: we have been hungering and thirsting after comfort. but not after righteousness. Or if we

have coveted and prayed for holiness, we have not analysed that word, and enquired how many species and varieties were comprehended in that generic term. We have not set it out by itself, and looked at it, and weighed its meaning, and considered its importance, and pressed upon our consciences its necessity. We have not said to ourselves, "This forgiveness; this momentous forgiveness; this necessary forgiveness; I must practise it. I that have had so much forgiven, ought I not, shall I not, forgive others? Must I not be like God in this respect as well as in other things?"

And 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 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 in 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 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 their Righteousness, but not sufficiently as their Example. How much and how often have we insisted upon the duty which I am 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 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 of this duty is not felt. It is surprising to see how lightly it presses upon the consciences of many persons. Those who would scruple to commit many other sins have no scruple on the subject of not forgiving. They have no deep solemn sense of being constrained to practise it, no feeling of being bound to do so, their consciences do not urge them to it. An injury is inflicted, and instead of at once saying, "Here is a call upon our charity," they at once in the quickness of resentment, say, "This is a matter to be resented," and they directly form a purpose of retaliation as naturally as if it were the thing most proper to be done.

It is not unfrequently the case that those who are inclined to the exercises of generous forgiveness are prevented by the interference of a third party, who goads on the injured person to revenge. This true child of the devil does all he can to magnify the trespass, and thus inflames the resentment of the sufferer. He endeavours to extinguish the kindling spark of charity in the breast of him who is softening and melting into kindness, and blows the coals of strife into the flame of unhallowed passion. How often have third parties thus obstructed the progress of reconciliation by artful appeals to pride and passion! To every officious intruder who would thus prevent the broken bonds of amity from being again united by an act of forgiveness, say, in the indignant language of Christ to Peter, "Get thee behind me Satan, for thou savourest not of the things that be of God." Tell him he mistakes you and interprets your heart by his own, if he supposes you cannot forgive. Third par-

ties, by this officious malignant interference, have done more to perpetuate animosity and to prevent the healing of friendship's bleeding wounds, than those who have been engaged in the feud themselves. Instead of performing the work and ensuring the blessing of the peacemaker, they have had an opposite ambition, by endeavouring to prolong the strife, to bring upon themselves the malediction of heaven and the infamy of being called the children of the devil.

But after all the chief and radical cause of this deficiency in our christian duty is the corruption of our nature. A perfectly holy being would find it as easy to forgive as to act. No cloud of stormy passion would lower on the brow of an incarnate angel, no lightning of unhallowed wrath would flash from his eye, no growl of angry thunder would roll from his lips, against the offender. He would look and speak and act in love and peace. On the other hand a demon finds a malignant pleasure in revenge. It is the only gratification which can ever arise in his miserable bosom, the only pleasure, if such it can be called, that he ever knows; and a pleasure it is, which, when it is over, turns from honey into wormwood. Brutes appear to take the same ferocious gratification in worrying each other in the way of revenge. Now there is in human corruption so far as it prevails, something homogeneous with this fiend-like, beast-like disposition, a satisfaction in retaliation; hence the dreadful adage, "Revenge is sweet." This is a saying we may imagine caught from the lips of Satan, an echo of his command to his hosts when he sent them forth to war against God, who had expelled him from the seats of Paradise. There is a gratification to our corrupt nature in returning evil for evil; there is no

gainsaying it. The revenge of some persons is like that of the wounded lion, who turns upon the assailant, drinks his blood and devours his flesh, thus gaining compensation for his injury; while that of others resembles the rage of the rattlesnake which bites and kills but gets nothing by it. To our grief and shame we must all acknowledge we have tasted it. We have had more of this gratification than we like to confess, or to dwell upon. This is the operation of the flesh lusting against the spirit, and shews how imperfectly we are yet sanctified, and how much we need to carry on the work of mortification of our corruptions.

I know of no more convincing or affecting proof of the low degrees of vital practical christianity in the church of God, than this prevalence of irascibility. How clearly it is seen that christians are far less in subjection to the authority of Christ than they imagine, when they are with such difficulty persuaded to yield to him in this one particular. It is easy to do many things which he requires; to hear sermons, to believe comforting doctrines and promises, to make a profession of religion, to observe the Lord's supper, to attend public meetings, to engage in schemes of public usefulness, even to give our property; but to ask forgiveness, if we have offended, and to forgive from the heart an injury, if we have received it, how few are prepared thus promptly and entirely to yield to Christ, thus to shew their love and obedience to Him. Yet this is the test, this is what He demands from His followers. It is a severe test I know, and therefore a true one. When I stand by, as sometimes I do, and as we all do, and see the strife of two professing christians, it may be the members of the same church, and observe their un-

hallowed tempers, with what recklessness the one party has committed a trespass on the other; then with what keen and bitter resentment the injured party has taken up the offence; then with what stubborn obduracy the offender persists in his determination to make no concession and ask no forgiveness, resisting alike the remonstrance of conscience from within, and the exhortations of friends from without; then the wrathful and revengeful temper of the aggrieved party; and then the permanent and bitter alienation of both; when, I say, I stand by, the afflicted spectator of this incurable feud, I ask with grief and surprise, where is the submission to the authority of Christ, which both these parties profess? Ah, here is the test of the degree of obedience to Christ, as our Lord and Master, which prevails in his own house; and verily, I am afraid it is but small.

V. I shall now consider the means and helps of which we should avail ourselves for the performance of this duty. "Means," say some, "why speak about means? Bid them do it." Yes, and this would be all that is necessary if it were an easy matter, and one to which the heart was naturally and strongly inclined; but for a duty so hard, and with hearts so resistant, and holiness so imperfect as ours, we need all the means and helps we can command. The control of the irascible passions is, as I have already often said, the most difficult thing in the work of mortification of sin; just because their indulgence is a sin we are not only most prone to indulge, but a sin which we are most ready to excuse, and which we can commit to a great extent without injuring our reputation in the estimation either of the world or of the church. A man knows

that if he be overtaken even with only a single fault of drunkenness, or of fornication, his character has received a foul blot, which floods of sincere repentance and all future propriety can scarcely obliterate; but he may cherish the malignant passions, and make his soul the dwelling place of almost fiend-like tempers, and yet not forfeit his standing in society, or be expelled from the communion of the church, or feel himself called upon for penitence and humiliation before God. He can go and worship in the house of God, and take his seat at the table of the Lord, full of malice wrath and all uncharitableness towards a fellow-member; and yet, though he shall eat and drink judgment to himself, continue to be regarded as a reputable man. Ah! how differently does God estimate the criminality of actions to what man does! The penitent fornicator cast out by man is both holy and honourable compared with the dark malignant who never forgives. We want instruction then as to the performance of this duty, and I will now suggest it.

1. There are some things to be avoided. We must not allow ourselves to be influenced by the incitements and persuasion of others. Forgiveness is not a palatable doctrine with the world, nor is it held in general esteem, and those who cannot practise it themselves will hinder us from it if they can.

We must not brood over the offence, but endeavour as far as possible to forget it; every look at it, like a glance at a forbidden object, will excite our passions, and exasperate our feelings. Nor must we talk to other people of the injury we have received; for nothing is more likely to inflame our resentment than the recital of our wrongs. The man who is forward to

tell of an injury will ever remain backward to forgive it. The persons to whom he relates the affair will generally have some similar tales of their own to tell, and in accompanying them with descriptions of the manner in which they received them, will propose, and with too much success, their own bad example for imitation.

2. There are some things to be considered. For want of consideration, duties are neglected, sins are committed, souls are ruined. We should all be holier and happier if we would but consider. It is a momentous word, consider.

We must consider that forgiveness must be practised. We have no option; there is no room for doubt or dispute about it. It is not a matter we mayor may not take up. We can no more with propriety refuse to forgive, than we can refuse to be chaste or honest.

We must consider that we must do it. "Forgiveness," we must say, "is not only the duty of all, but it is my duty. I am the man who must practise it." We are very apt to shift obligation from ourselves as individuals to the multitude. We lose ourselves in the crowd.

We must consider that it can be done: it is not impossible. Many have done it. The most irascible tempers have (by great pains) been controlled, and the most inexorable minds softened into meekness: and what others have done we can do.

We should consider it to be an immediate duty; a duty in reference to the point in hand. Many who will read this tract are while they read it in a state of hostility against some one who has injured them. They have been insulted or wronged. You who are in this situa-

tion, you are the person to whom this duty applies. That very matter which now grieves, vexes, and irritates you, is the subject of the duty. You are to forgive that enemy, to pardon that offence. Now, at once you are to do it. You are to begin immediately. You are to lay down this tract and set yourself directly to the business of forgiveness. You are not to wait for the next offence: by taking proper steps to bring the offender to a right sense of the one already committed you may prevent a repetition of it. You are not to wait till some future time. You may die without forgiving the offender, or he may die without confessing and lamenting his sin. Procrastination in this, as well as in every other duty, is likely to render its performance more difficult and more precarious.

3. There are some things to be done.

The next time you go into your closet, (and you should go there for the very purpose), open your Bible, and read very solemnly and seriously the parable of the merciless creditor. Matthew xviii, 23–25. Pray to God before you begin, to give you grace to understand its meaning, and to see whether it applies to your case. When you have read it once, pause and say, “Can I now forgive?” If you can, fall down and give God thanks, and ask for grace to fulfil your purpose. If you cannot, read it over again, and say a second time, “Can I now forgive?” Read it again and again, till it has subdued you.

But if this fails, take with you this tract into your closet. Read it alone; read it through; read it with prayer: and when you have finished it, lay it down and say, “Can I now forgive?”

If your resentment is not yet subdued, then, “Com-

mune with your own heart upon your bed and be still." At the night-time, when you are removed from the hurry of business; when the noise of the world is hushed; when the darkness of your chamber, which enwraps the outer man, contrasts with the light of God's presence in which your soul stands; then bid your passions be silent, and let your conscience speak. There talk with and to yourself about this duty. There when you have perhaps asked God before you ventured to lie down upon your bed to forgive you your offences, ask whether you can indeed forgive those of a brother.

But in addition to all this there must be much deep, solemn meditation upon God's love in forgiving; you. Professing christian, can it be possible that you need all this expostulation to induce you to forgive others, you who have had so much forgiven? Meditate, meditate intently, upon your multiplied transgressions, your sins before conversion, and your sins after conversion; all, all, blotted out, not one, even the most aggravated, excepted. Think of the means by which this pardon of yours has been obtained. Go, go, to Calvary: behold Jehovah giving up the Son of his love to all the agony, degradation, and horrors of crucifixion: hear the piercing cry of the holy and patient sufferer. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me;" and ask why was this scene of blood and torture; and you shall hear a reply in the language of Scripture, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." Can you gaze upon that scene of love's wondrous triumphs, can you leave that spot where you hope your own pardon is thus sealed, and not feel even happy at the opportunity given you of

expressing your gratitude, by forgiving your brother?
You often sit and sing at the sacramental table,

“Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend;
Life, and health, and peace possessing
From the sinner’s dying friend:
Here I’ll sit for ever viewing
Mercy’s streams, in streams of blood,
Precious drops my soul bedewing
Plead and claim my peace with God.”

Yes, and they plead no less urgently, and claim no less justly, your peace with your offending brother. If that cross does not crucify your enmity, and bring you to love, you have never seen its glory, never felt its power. O, is it possible you can bring an unrelenting heart from that scene, which made the rocks to shiver, and the veil of the temple to rend? What, see there what it cost God to forgive you; see there all the blessings of eternal salvation flowing in upon you through the wounds opened in the body of his Son, and yet find it hard to forgive! You cannot, you must not, you dare not, yon shall not, bear away from that scene of forgiving mercy, an unforgiving spirit.

Nor is it only the dying, but the living Saviour that you must contemplate: that perseverance of His in His career of miraculous healing, notwithstanding the opposition, the insult, and the base ingratitude of the people; those tears and groans devoted to the city which had already treated Him with such indignity, and was about to complete the tragedy of His death; that look bestowed on the cowardly apostle who had denied Him thrice, a look which while it administered rebuke, conveyed the assurance of pardon; that prayer for His murderers, “Father forgive them for they know not

what they do;" that command to His apostles, "Go preach repentance and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem;" that first outpouring of the Spirit on the very men who had hurried Him to the cross; that conversion of one of the bitterest foes He ever had into the chief of His apostles; O, christians, think of all this: study that wondrous character: contemplate that illustrious pattern: dwell upon that beautiful model, till the frosty incrustations of thy cold, hard heart have all melted, like icicles before the sun; and thy tears of love and gratitude to Jesus become tears of love and forgiveness towards thy brother.

But this is not all, there must be much earnest supplication for the aid of the Spirit of all grace. This kind goeth not forth, but by fasting and prayer. We need the help of the Holy Spirit, the Sanctifier, even for the least and easiest of all the duties of the christian life. How much more for this, one of the hardest. A naturally unforgiving temper must be carried often to the throne of grace with profound humiliation and fervent supplication. Nothing short of Divine grace can subdue it. Such a disposition yields not to reason, but only to God. We must take hold of His strength, or there is no hope. The demon of revenge can be cast out only by that voice which expelled the legion from the man that dwelt among the tombs. Thus we are to watch as well as pray, to use our reason as well as call on Divine aid; but only that voice which lulled the tempest, and smoothed the billows on the sea of Tiberias, can calm the stormy passions of an angry and troubled spirit. And He will do it, in answer to the prayer of faith.

It is also necessary that there should be an endeavour

to raise the tone of our personal religion in general. For vigorous and athletic exercises of the body, and for the performance of laborious duties, there needs not only an extraordinary stimulus at the time and for the occasion, but a robust and healthful constitution. This applies with equal force to the soul; the duty laid down in this treatise is a very difficult one; a duty which in this disordered world is often called for; and there is little hope of its being well done, if the soul, as to its religion, be sickly and feeble, and needs to be stimulated to its performance by the strong excitement produced for the occasion by the elixirs and cordials of a sermon from the pulpit, or the ardent advice of a friend. What we need for the regular and consistent discharge of this, and all difficult duties, is a healthful and robust religion, a well instructed mind, an eminently sanctified heart, a tender conscience, a fervent charity. If we are not living much under the constraining love of Christ, we cannot perform this duty. A worldly, lukewarm state of soul, a heart not in some measure filled with the Spirit, a conscience dull and obtuse, are not equal to this high exercise and attainment in the divine life: it is only when we are strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, that we can reach this elevation.

VI. I now urge the performance of this duty by some appropriate and cogent motives.

I urge it by regard to your offending brother. You must not, you dare not, be indifferent to his welfare. "Am I my brother's keeper?" was the cold-blooded question of a murderer, and there is murder in it. The word of God every whom enjoins a tender regard to the spiritual welfare of others. To love our brother as ourselves is half the law of God, and obedience to it is

essential to a right performance of the other half. If you suffer sin to lie upon him by not expostulating with him; or if you tempt him to be more guilty by not forgiving him, you are perilling his eternal interest. By not telling him of his offences, you allow his conscience to slumber upon unconfessed guilt; and by cherishing towards him an implacable disposition, you exasperate him into malice, or break the bruised reed, and quench the smoking flax. That brother whom you cannot forgive has perhaps been forgiven by Christ, to whom he has confessed the sin with penitence, even as he is willing to confess it to you. I conjure you, by all the love you bear your brother, and I add, by all the love you bear your common Father, forgive him. Can you pretend to brotherly love if you cannot exercise brotherly forgiveness? But if it be not a brother that has injured you, only a fellow-creature, one who is no christian, is your unforgiving spirit likely to make him one? Is it thus you would draw him to Jesus? Thus you would win his soul for the Lord, thus you would prepossess him in favour of religion, thus you would melt his obdurate heart? Who can tell, your forgiveness may lead him to seek God's. By not forgiving him you petrify his already hard heart and drive him further from God. For shame, christian, for shame, to betray so little regard for the salvation of souls: to manifest so little of the mind of him who died for them: to have no more sympathy with him who died for his enemies, and died for you among the rest.

I plead with you on the ground of your own comfort and sanctification. You sometimes say, and tell God, you want to be holy. Is this all hypocrisy? Is it lying to God? What is holiness? Conformity to

God's image: and is it not one part of this to be merciful and to forgive sins? Would you limit holiness to chastity, justice, truth, and sobriety, and leave out mercy, the brightest jewel in the crown of heaven, the loveliest feature in the countenance of God, the very beauty of holiness, and the delight of Jehovah's heart? To be holy, and not to forgive! Impossible, man, impossible! You are under an awful delusion. The deceitfulness of the heart has imposed upon you. The pure white light of holiness is made up of many prismatic colours, and mercy in the way of forgiving sin is one of them. You want evidence you are a child of God, you wish to know your sins are forgiven. How do you expect it? By a voice from heaven, or by searching the hidden rolls of the eternal decrees? You will not, cannot have them. Neither these, nor any secret, unintelligible, enthusiastic impression upon your own imagination, constitute the witness of the Spirit to your sonship, but the conformity of your disposition to that of God. The most rapturous emotion, the most extatic delight, ever yet excited in the breast by silent meditation, or by sacred eloquence, or by religious poetry, has not half the strength of evidence of your sins being forgiven, that one act of forgiveness has, which has been performed for Christ's sake towards an erring brother. When by one glance at the cross, and one vivid recollection of the twice ten thousand sins of mine which have themselves been cancelled by the mercy of God, I can calm the impetuous passions of my heart, abjure the act, and extinguish the very wish, of revenge, and say to one who has injured me, "I freely from my heart forgive you for Christ's sake, as well as your own:" there, in that act of obedience to

the command, and conformity to the image, of Christ, I realise my discipleship, and exclaim: "Thanks, O Saviour, for that grace which by enabling me to perform this act of mercy, has enabled me to realise my union with thee, as a branch in the living Vine."

And then how calm the breast, how serene the mind, how peaceful the heart, where the flaming coals of malice have been put out by the water of charity! How happy that man, how sweet his enjoyment, who has gained the victory over himself, and can truly say, "Yes, I have forgiven him: every spark of malice is extinguished! I can receive him to my favour, and be towards him as aforetime." O, what enemies are some men to themselves, what self-tormentors, and how they keep their own soul upon the rack, who cherish a lively recollection of an injury received, a burning wrath towards the offender, and a wish for an opportunity to revenge the insult! It is like keeping a live coal in the bosom, a vulture preying upon the heart: while he who forgives has a mind calm as the heart of Jesus, and smooth as the brow of God when he blots out a sinner's transgressions, and receives him back to his favour. With what confidence may he now draw near to God, his Father in heaven, for his heart condemns him not: and with what an unfaltering tongue may he present the petition, "Forgive me my trespasses, even as I forgive those that trespass against me."

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 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 in favour of christianity would be produced by the church upon the world if all professing christians were seen and known to be persons in whose bosom the spirit of charity dwelt, and who had blotted out from their vocabulary, by the tears of their own penitence, the word "Revenge." 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 men, to startle them with its novelty, and to attract them 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 shew it.

Rut 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 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. 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.

Our religion is happily in this day putting forth its energies in the evangelizing spirit of the age: but all these things pass for very little in the estimation of the men of this world: in their estimation they are but effusions of enthusiasm, or paroxysms of sectarianism, and do but little to conciliate their esteem, or enlist their sympathies. They want an exhibition of the true spirit of christianity which they can better understand, more admire, and which comes more directly under their observation, and here it is in this divine and heavenly charity. When they see christians coming out in all the spirit of love, meekly bearing the provocations by which they are assailed, and freely forgiving the trespasses by which they are injured, "Ah," they will say, "this is what we have waited for, this looks like a religion which is an emanation from a God of love."

By exalting the character, and aiding the progress of our holy religion, we bring honour and glory to

Him who is its Head and Author. This is letting our light shine before men, whereby they seeing our good works will glorify our Father which is in heaven. God is honoured when his image is copied, and the rays of his glory reflected by his people. And should not the children of this great and good Parent, this Father of spirits, do all they can to make him known and honoured? How wonderful and how ennobling is the conception, and what an ambition should it raise in the mind of the christian, to consider and say, "Men may see something of God in me!" Yes, We can teach them what God is as to his moral character, and let them see in our merciful disposition a ray of the infinite sun of his own glory. These sweet relentings of our nature, these soft and genial currents of our soul, these effusions of love, these, we can remind them, are but the overflowings of his goodness, his own love, into our hearts, and are like the second rainbow, the reflection of the first, his infinite mercy.

And if another motive be necessary, dwell upon the last I now offer, which is, that forgiveness is a virtue which we shall soon have no longer need to exercise. When we have arrived in heaven we shall have reached a world, where we shall no longer need to seek forgiveness from God, nor to ask it from, or to bestow it upon our brother. There we shall never trespass against God, nor our brother trespass against us. In that region of love, where brotherly kindness, like every thing else, will be perfect; there will be no occasion through eternity for one exercise of this part of christian charity. All the inhabitants of that world will be divinely amiable, and never need forgiveness. Everyone will be perfect for others to love, and see in them

the perfection which they love ill him. No one will ever offend; none be ever offended. The understanding will be too clear to offend by ignorance, and the heart too holy to offend by design. The difficult virtue of forbearance will not be called for there; having been performed here, it will be dispensed with, and nothing remain but the easy and delightful acts of taking complacency in the unsullied goodness of all around us; and it is the performance here of that hard and trying duty which is to prepare us for that future world of love and joy. It is the conquest of our proud selves in this scene of our discipline and probation that is to meeten us for that blessed state where no foe is ever to be seen, and no battle ever to be fought. O christian, it is but a little while ere thou shalt be freed from the conflict, and utter the shout and wear the crown of victory. Every offence thou forgivest may be the last thou shalt ever have to forgive. And then even amidst the bliss of that glorious state to which the last enemy shall introduce thee, yes, even there it shall be a part of thy ineffable felicity, to look back and remember that in some humble measure, thou wast enabled through sovereign grace, "to forgive even as thou wast forgiven."

**THE PATH TO THE BUSH:
ILLUSTRATING THE DUTY OF RECIPROCAL CHRISTIAN
WATCHFULNESS AND REPROOF**

ADDRESSED TO

PROFESSORS OF RELIGION.

IT is said, no less correctly than beautifully, that mercy blesses twice; hath him that shews it, and him that receives it. The remark applies, in all its truth and force, to that species of compassion which has the salvation of the heathen for its object, and the cause of missions for its instrumentality. Our pity for the souls of those poor outcasts has had, in various ways, a reflex operation upon ourselves. Not only are our own graces strengthened by exercise, but we are actually raising up amidst those that were once the children of the desert, and whose minds were as barren and as hideous as the wilds they inhabit, examples of christian virtue, which we should do well to imitate. Instances of simple piety have come to us from “the dark places of the earth” and “the habitations of cruelty,” which ought to redden with the blush of shame the countenance of many a professing christian in this land of refinement. Some of our converts have outstripped us in

the spiritual life, and excelled us in the practical lessons of the school of our Divine Master. Let us not be too proud to learn from those whom we have assisted to teach. And if, from the ices of Greenland, the deserts of Africa, the islands of the Pacific, or the blood-stained shores of Madagascar, there come to us, either in the persons of converts, or by the reports of our beloved missionaries, instances of passive or of active holiness, superior to our own, let us turn them to account, and make them tributary to our growth in grace.

The short and simple story in the following pages is of this nature. It struck me, when I first heard it from the lips of the good missionary who related it, as a gem which would well bear setting, and having been applied to some time afterwards, by the editor of an American Annual for a contribution to his work, I drew up the substance of the following tract (now somewhat enlarged), and sent it across the Atlantic. The work for which it was intended, having ceased before its arrival, it was published in a periodical, entitled "The Episcopal Recorder," and has had the honour of being copied into almost every other religious periodical in the United States. Upon receiving this information, I determined upon committing it to the press in this country, with the hope that so beautiful an instance of christian reproof may stir up and direct many here in the performance of that important, but difficult, and, therefore, much neglected duty.

MR READ, the missionary at the Kat River settlement in South Africa; related, when in England, the following fact.

It is the practice of some of the christian Hottentots, at some of the stations, in order to enjoy the privilege of secret prayer, with

greater privacy and freedom than they could do in their own confined and incommodious dwellings, to retire among the trees and bushes, in the vicinity of their village; and that they may carry on their devotions without being intruded on by others, and also derive all that tranquillizing influence which would be produced by a spot, with which no other occupations, thoughts, and feelings are associated, than such as are holy, each individual selects for his own use a particular bush, behind which, and concealed by it, he may commune with his heavenly Father in secret, as Nathaniel did under his fig tree. By the rest, this bush is considered, as an oratory sacred to the brother or sister by whom it had been appropriated; and which, therefore, is never to be violated by the foot, or even by the gaze of another, during the season it is occupied by its proprietor. The constant tread of the worshippers, in their diurnal visit to these hallowed spots, would, of necessity, wear a path in the grass which lay between their habitations and the sylvan scene of their communion with God.

On one occasion, a christian Hottentot woman said to another female member of their little community, "Sister, I am afraid you are somewhat declining in religion." The words were accompanied with a look of affection, and were uttered with a tone that savoured nothing of railing accusation, nor of reproachful severity, but was expressive of tender fidelity, and the meekness of wisdom. The individual thus addressed, asked her friend for the reason of her fears. "Because," replied this good and gentle spirit, "the grass has grown over your path to the bush." Nature carrying on its usual progress had disclosed the secret. The backslider could not deny the fact; there, in the springing herbage, was the indisputable evidence that the feet which had once trodden it down had ceased to frequent the spot. She did not attempt to excuse it, but fell under the sweet influence of this sisterly reproof, and confessed, with ingenuous shame and sorrow, that her heart had turned away from the Lord. The admonition had its desired effect; the sinner was converted from the error of her ways; and her watchful and faithful reprover had the satisfaction and reward of seeing the wanderer restored, not, only to the path to the bush, but to the renewed favour of that God with whom she there again communed in secret.

Each party in this short and simple narrative is deserving, not only of our admiration, but of our imitation; the reprover for the fidelity, wisdom, and gentleness of love with which she exercised her sisterly

vigilance; and the object of her solicitude, for the meekness and practical improvement with which she bowed to the voice of affectionate reproof.

Many lessons may be learned from this touching fact. I may, for instance, take occasion to set forth by it

The efficacious power, and the holy, beautiful, and graceful results of missionary operations. These women were Hottentots, belonging to a race which, a few years before the event referred to occurred, were scarcely admitted, by some calumniators of the sable tribes, into the fellowship of rational creatures, and were thought worthy to be the companions of baboons, or at best only fit to be the slaves of men who happen to be clothed in a whiter skin. Where, I ask, can be found, in the annals of the christian church in any part of the world, a more beautiful or graceful exemplification of some of the more difficult virtues and duties of christianity, than in these two African females? Where shall we find among their more polished sisters in Europe, or in America, more tenderness, fidelity, and real refinement of soul, than in these two daughters of Ham? Here is indeed the image of God, delineated on the dark ground of a Hottentot skin, and shining forth in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, amidst the wilds of an African desert.

And what is it that has thus raised these subjects of barbarism and victims of oppression from the dust; from the captivity of Satan and his emissaries, and given them so high a place, not only among the civilized, but the sanctified portions of humanity? Not commerce, or civilisation, or arts or sciences, nor free institutions, nor general education; no: but religion.

O christianity, thou offspring of heaven, and re-generator of earth, these are thy triumphs and thy trophies! These are the conquests and the fruits which thou hast produced, in myriads of instances, and which thou alone canst produce! It is thou that hast gone forth into the deserts of Africa, not in the spirit of avarice and cruelty to enslave and to destroy, but with the mind of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost, to reclaim, to civilize, and to evangelize the most desolate wilds of humanity; and thus to add to the garden of the Lord portions of the human race, which science had abandoned as below its ambition, and commerce valued only as a means of gratifying its cupidity! Over those tracts of dreariness and desolation, as they stretched out to the far distant horizon, did christian mercy from the mount of Zion cast an eye of pity and of hope; and bearing precious seed, the christian missionary went forth weeping to the high and holy enterprise of the spiritual husbandry, and already has he returned bearing his sheaves with him. The land that was trodden by the feet, and watered with the tears, and sanctified by the labours of Vanderkemp, but which yielded comparatively little fruit to reward his toil, has been tilled by a band of holy labourers since; and Moffat has come back to tell us by the magic of his tongue, and the details of his precious volume, what he suffered for Africa, and how God has blessed his sufferings.

Who then should not be prepared to say, and to act as he says, "Go on, christianity, thou benign, and heavenly, and God-like system, with thy blessed and glorious conquests! The deepest and holiest sympathies of my heart are engaged to thy great purpose of

saving a lost world, the most fervent prayers of my faith shall ascend for thy success, and my luxuries, my comforts, and even what I have been accustomed to consider my necessaries, shall be taxed to furnish resources for thy benevolent operations. Go forward in thy evangelizing career, it is thine to accomplish the purposes of eternal love, and of redeeming mercy; thine to fulfil the predictions of ancient prophecy; thine to deliver this fallen and apostate world from the dominion of sin and Satan, and restore it to the dominion of the Prince of Peace; thine to consummate the mission, and adorn with his brightest honours the crown of Emmanuel! Hasten thy universal reign! The groans of creation invite thy approach, the shouts of a regenerated and happy world shall proclaim the universality and the blessings of thy sway.”

A second lesson to be learned from “the path to the bush,” is, the value of private prayer, and the connexion between its regular and spiritual performance, and a healthy state of the soul. When the bush was neglected, and the path to it forsaken, then did the religion of this poor Hottentot woman begin to decline’. And how could it be otherwise? Who ever kept up a vigorous piety when secret prayer was neglected? The privacy of prayer is the spirit of prayer; and the spirit of prayer is the spirit of religion. It is in the closet that the soul feels religion to be a personal concern, and maintains the individuality of her piety; it is in the closet, when the christian shuts himself in, from the gaze of all eyes but that of God, from all ears but those of conscience; when the flatteries of friends, and the accusations of foes, are alike unheeded, and the spirit listens only to the voice that

speaks from heaven; where confession of sin may be minutely made, and wants and weaknesses may be expressed, which could not be uttered in the hearing of a single human being, that the work of grace goes vigorously forward in the heart; it is in the closet where all restraint which the presence even of a child would impose is thrown off, and the suppliant feels alone with God; it is in the closet where we muse in silence, till the fire burns too intensely for repression, and we pour out the ardour of our love in the sallies of impassioned aspiration; it is in the closet where we can review and scrutinise our actions, and sift our very motives, till the accumulating amount of our delinquency is ascertained by a rigid examination, that we exercise our penitence in tears, and groans, and smitings upon our breast, and are prepared to offer to God the sacrifice of a broken heart, and a contrite spirit; it is in the closet that the bruised and burdened mind casts down its load, and pours out the bitterness which is known to none else, and also tastes the joy with which the stranger meddles not; it is in the closet, as in the cleft of the rock, that the wrestling spirit places herself, while God passes by, and proclaims his glorious names; it is in the closet that our cares are lightened, our sorrows mitigated, our corruptions mortified, and our graces strengthened; it is in the closet, that calm and holy retreat, that the believer is prepared to come forth to duty, to conflict, to hall our, before men on earth; to rise into the fellowship of the saints in light, and to hold converse with angels in the presence of God; in short, the closet of private devotion is the ante-chamber where the christian shakes off the dust of the earth, and by the aid of Divine grace makes himself ready for an

abundant entrance into the heavenly glory. Who then would forsake the path to the bush? Woe be to the man whose feet, turned into other courses, leave the grass to grow in the way that leads to the meeting-place with God. All goes wrong in religion, when private prayer is restrained, or is undevoutly and insincerely performed. Happy is it for the deserter from the closet, when, as in the case before us, he meets some faithful friend, who finds him in his truant course, and points him to the proofs of his departure from God; and blessed is he, who, in the spirit of judicious and faithful love, leads back the stray brother to the sacred, but deserted scene of communion with God.

This leads me to apply the narrative at greater length, and as the principal design of the tract, to illustrate the obligation of professing christians to discharge the duty of reciprocal watchfulness, and to administer the warnings and reproofs of faithful love. Suppose a number of the inhabitants of some town were about to emigrate to a distant and unknown place; and, foreseeing they should be exposed to many dangers, as well as privations, were to bind themselves to each other in a covenant of affection and defence; promising, with great solemnity, to watch over each other's interests, and faithfully to admonish anyone of the company who should be guilty of the least violation of the compact, whereby he should put himself in personal peril, or hazard the peace of his fellows; we can imagine how much vigilance would be exercised by each over the rest, especially in passing through tracts of country which abounded with dangerous precipices, were infested with wild beasts, or were the seats of banditti. How anxiously would they look to one ano-

ther; how kindly, yet how faithfully, would they warn anyone of the company, who by indolence or incautiousness exposed himself to destruction; and how thankfully would they receive, when they needed them, these friendly monitions, even when accompanied, as they would be, with the language of rebuke! "We cannot suppose that through a false delicacy, anyone would suffer his brother to perish, or to sustain any serious mischief, rather than wound his feelings by the warning of love; or that the individual thus plucked from the jaws of death would feel himself aggrieved by the faithful affection which had saved him from destruction. He who, in a spirit of selfish ease and surly isolation, stood aloof from the rest, and who, to whatever perils he saw his companions expose themselves, never raised his voice of warning, would be considered as having broken his compact, violated his obligations, and cut himself off, by his conduct, from the party. What, in reality, is a company of professing christians, united in the fellowship of a church, but such a band of emigrants fleeing from a place devoted to destruction, to the heavenly city; and by virtue of their union and common object of pursuit, bound to watch over and warn each other in reference to the moral dangers to which they are exposed on the road. Must it not, however, be admitted, that this is one of the duties of the christian life, which, as by common consent, are too generally neglected? What is the purpose for which we are brought within the bonds of church fellowship, but that we may be thus mutually helpful by watchfulness and warning? We are members one of the other; and as the organs and limbs of the "natural body" are each defensive of the whole, the eye guiding the hand, and the ear listening

for the foot, and the foot and the hand guarding the eye, and the head presiding over all; so it is in the "spiritual body," we are united to keep watch and ward over each other in the spirit of love.

Express injunctions to this duty are to be found in the word of God. How impressive is the language of even the more frigid dispensation of the law: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him." This scripture allows of no middle state of mind between love and hatred in all our feelings towards God or man: if we do not love, we hate. Now, surely, it cannot be consistent with love to allow a person to go on sinning, and deliver to him no words of counsel, remonstrance, and warning. While maintaining such a silence, our Divine Lord will hold us accountable for the sin of hating our brother. How frequent are the admonitions to the exercise of brotherly warning in the New Testament! "Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." "Warn them that are unruly." "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." "If any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he that converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death," evidently implying it is our duty to try to convert him. These are only a few of the passages in which this obligation is enforced. What is our love to our neighbour, enjoined as the second great commandment; what is brotherly-kindness, what the charity so beautifully personified and enjoined by the apostle, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, but a constant

regard to the happiness of our fellow-creatures and fellow-christians, and an endeavour to promote it? And can it comport with love to leave its objects to perish in sin?

Think what interests are at stake in the case of an erring brother. If his body were liable to mutilation, or to wasting disease; if his property were exposed to destruction; if his children were in danger of being lost, through any act of his misconduct or neglect, should we not feel emboldened, yea, compelled, to go and deliver the language of faithful warning? And is the duty less incumbent, the necessity for this remonstrance less urgent, because it is his soul that he is in danger of losing? In how many cases has the faithful and affectionate discharge of this duty been followed with the most blessed results! Backsliders have been reclaimed; sheep wandering from the fold and the pastures of the good Shepherd have been restored; souls that had set out in the road that led to the precipice have been turned into "the path to the bush;" sin that would soon have brought forth the fruits of death has been nipped in the bud; secret faults by timely warning have been prevented from growing into great transgressions; the church has been saved from wounds in its peace, and the world from having fresh stumbling-blocks thrown in its way; and all this by performing the office which the good Hottentot woman did for her sister in Christ.

Christians, I entreat you by the love you bear to souls, deal faithfully with those whom you know to be declining in piety, and advancing in sin. Who can tell but you may gain your brother? And oh to be the honoured instrument of saying a soul from death,

and hiding a multitude of sins! Blessed reward of fidelity! Conducted in a right spirit, and in a proper manner, no efforts are more hopeful to succeed, none more likely to be followed with the desired results, than those which I now recommend. Hard indeed must be the heart, obtuse and seared the conscience of the man that does not feel kindly and listen patiently to one who in the exercise of a self-denying friendship addresses him, not to accuse, to arraign, or to reproach, but to warn, to in treat, to restore him. A momentary wound to the proud feelings of the heart may be felt, and irritation, for a short season, may follow, but still in the presence of that tender form of love which stands before it, pride sinks into humility, passion subsides into meekness, and the heart which at the first approach to it, closed like the petals of the flower to the coming storm, will open as that same flower does to the genial rays of the sun. Who of us has tried the experiment, and tried it in a proper method; of winning back a stray brother to Christ? Who of us has put all the vigilance and tenderness of love into operation for the benefit of those for whom Christ died? I would not call upon christians to slacken the hand of zeal in plucking sinners as brands from the burning, but I would have them more diligent in extending their holy benevolence to their erring brethren. It should be the object of our solicitude not only to enlarge the church, but also to improve it. The church was intended to present to this selfish world a community which should be the very home of love, where charity should dwell, animating guiding and blessing all; where its busy assiduity and tender watchfulness, in preventing or excluding sin, as the intruder upon its sanctity and the violator

of its peace, should be seen and admired by those who are without. Were all the members of our churches living in the exercise of this heaven-born heaven-descended grace; were we all seen in the attitude and act of watching over each other for good: sparing no pains to keep others from sin, or to recover them when they have fallen into it; labouring to stop the sins we could not prevent, and weeping over those we could not arrest; nothing, no not even the re-institution of the primitive community of goods, could invest Christ's redeemed people with a brighter display of the beauties of holiness. But, alas! we are wanting in this part of our duty. We care not for our brother: we let him alone in his sins, and suffer him to render himself more vile. We see the grass growing in the path to the bush, and inquire not after the feet that formerly trod it bare by their visits to the scene of devotion. We need that converted Hottentots should come and show us what brotherly love means, or that we should be stimulated to its exercise by the relation of their simple virtues which is borne to us by their honoured teachers.

I have already conceded that the duty of rebuking a brother is a delicate and a difficult one: for such is the pride of our hearts, that we do not like to know our faults, much less to be reproved for them. Hence the indispensable necessity of paying peculiar attention to the spirit and manner in which we perform this too often unwelcome office of christian charity. The surgeon who is solicited to perform some painful operation does it with as gentle a hand, and as kind a look and voice as possible, and does not by a rude, rough manner inflict more anguish than is necessary. Much less should those who undertake without being asked the healing of the

soul, be careful not to offend by a want of delicacy of touch, nor inflame the disease which they are anxious to cure. "There arc three things," said the excellent Philip Henry, "requisite in the setting of a bone, an eagle's eye, a lion's heart, and a lady's hand; so also in reproofing." There was a wisdom and a gentleness in the good Hottentot towards her negligent sister which are as much to be admired as her fidelity. There was no prying curiosity, no groundless suspicion; the path to the bush was overgrown; it was evident to the senses, that the feet that once trod it bare had ceased to frequent it: she had visible proof of the fact of a neglect of prayer. And then how gentle was the inquiry, "Sister, has not your soul declined in religion?" There were no haughty airs, no angry tones, no railing accusation; but merely an affectionate inquiry. Here is our pattern. If we cannot do the thing in this manner, we had better not attempt to do it all. We must be quite sure of our motives, that they are pure and disinterested; that we love our brother, and are solicitous for his welfare; that we have no concealed feeling of exultation over his faults, or of readiness to appear superior to him by reproofing him. If reproof does not come from love, it shows malice, however adroitly concealed, or under whatever pretence it is carried out. In our manner we must be all gentleness, and kindness, and humility. It must be evident to the object of our solicitude that we have nothing in view but his good; that we have no inferior or less worthy end to accomplish. Nor should this delicate business be entered upon without sincere and earnest prayer, both for help and for success; that we may be assisted in administering reproof,

and the brother whom we are anxious to reclaim be disposed to receive it. We may give reproof, but God only can give repentance. We should introduce all we say with professions of regard that carry the evidence of their own sincerity with them. It may soften the mind of our brother if we acknowledge with unaffected candour our own infirmities, and mention, but without flattery, any good we know of him, in order that it may be obvious that we do not reprove him because we are alive only to his faults. If there be an appearance of relenting, and a disposition to confess, we must beware of aggravating the offence, and of investing it with the darkest shades of which it is susceptible. Indeed in all cases we must be careful, if we wish to produce conviction, not to make the matter really worse than it is, or to begin even with the worst features of the real fact. Nothing can be conceived of more likely to harden the heart of the offender, and to place him in the attitude of resistance and self defence, than his perceiving in you a disposition rather to aggravate than to palliate. If at any time we are not met in the first instance, with the spirit we desire or expect, but should discover the feelings, and hear the language, of irritation, where we hope to find concession, and to produce conviction, we must possess our souls in patience, and not allow ourselves either to be provoked or disheartened. If with unruffled serenity, or undisturbed meekness, we can allow the gust of petulance to expend itself, we may, by persevering but judicious assiduity succeed in our object, and win our brother.

We must also remember, that much discretion is requisite for selecting the right time, as well as for

adopting the right manner of rebuke. It should be as soon after the sin has been committed as possible, before the conscience has had time to reconcile itself to the transgression, or has acquired an indifference in the contemplation of it. Sin is of a hardening nature, and it cannot lie long upon the conscience unrepented of without a process of induration. When Peter denied Christ his injured Master instantly turned and looked upon him; and that look, which no artist's pencil could portray, melted his heart into genuine repentance. He had no time to become carelessly familiar with his crime. This of course does not apply to the cases in which the indulgence of the irascible feelings constitutes a part of the offence. In a time of anger reason is out of the way, and in the absence of it, success is hopeless; we should always wait for its return, and endeavour to bring it back. Passion has no ears; and is not a fit state of mind for either the reprover or the reprovèd. Wait till you are cool before you give rebuke, and till your brother is cool before you expect him to receive it. It is never in season to reprove another just after he has been reproving us; for that will have all the appearance of a refined species of revenge. There are favourable times, which a sagacious eye will discern, when the mind, softened by events, pensive and serious by affliction, is like ground mellowed by frost for the reception of the seed. And especially must we be mindful of our Lord's direction, to cast out the beam from our own eye before we attempt to take the mote from our brother's: and also to go to our brother alone, when there is none whose presence shall check the progress of conviction, and prevent the disposition to confess. Public reproofs wound, mortify, and irritate, and call up

a false shame, instead of producing the ingenuous emotions of that holy affection which has no tinge of anger's fiery red in its blush. It is in privacy, where none but God and conscience are present with ourselves and our brother, that we are likely to bring him to repentance. He can then have no suspicion that our object is to expose, rather than to reclaim him; or to display our own excellence, instead of removing his imperfections. Pride and vanity have not unfrequently assumed the censor's chair, but no ambition of this kind can be suspected in him who chooses to have no witnesses of his holy and graceful reproofs.

But now let us turn from him who gives the reproof of holy and affectionate vigilance to him who receives it. Something profitable for instruction in reference to the latter may be found in "the path to the bush." How meekly did the child of the desert fall under the remonstrance of her friend; instead of resenting, as impertinently officious, this intrusion on her habits of secret intercourse with heaven, how promptly, and how wisely did she apply herself to profit by it! What a beautiful exemplification did she present by her conduct, of the words of the psalmist, "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." It is not for me to determine which of the two is more easy, to administer reproof with wisdom affection and dignity; or to receive it with meekness gratitude and benefit: great grace is necessary for both. When delivered in a right spirit, and for proper ends, it is one of the most salutary and at the same time most self-denying acts of friendship, and demands to be considered and acknowledged as the very refine-

ment of kindness. Through the deceitfulness of sin, aided by the treachery of the human heart, we are all in imminent danger of committing transgressions, the evil of which we may not see, and the guilt of which we may not feel, till they are disclosed to us by the voice of a friend. What a striking instance of this have we in the case of David, who, till the faithful voice of the prophet plainly said, "Thou art the man," remained for months insensible of the guilt of murder and adultery! "When the conscience is not tender, it allows us to do many things without rebuke, and needs to be awakened and instructed by the warnings of those around us: and if we have any anxiety, certainly if we have any deep anxiety respecting it, about our own spiritual welfare, we shall feel truly thankful to those who will so far concern themselves about us as to reprove us for our faults. The greatest favour anyone can do us is to point out to us wherein we are doing wrong, or are neglecting to do what is right; and if there be one kindness which beyond all others ought to be received and acknowledged with ardent gratitude it is this. Could we know the painful struggles which our reprover carried on in his own bosom with his amiable fears, before he brought up his courage to the purpose and the act of telling us our failings; could we have seen the palpitating heart and the hesitating step with which he came upon his errand of love; instead of receiving him with a frown, or suffering our pride to be wounded, our temper to be ruffled, and our lips to give utterance to the language of resentment, we should instantly convince him, by every demonstration which a friendly hand, a beaming eye, and a thankful tongue could give, that his generous kindness was not bestowed on one who was insensible of

its value: and we should send him away with his richest reward, in the acknowledgement of our fault, and the promise of amendment. How great and good is that man, who in love and dignity can give rebuke; how much greater and better is he that can receive it in gratitude, and follow it with improvement! Our fallen, sunken nature rarely rises to a higher pitch of moral beauty than in such cases as these.

“This is a hard saying, who can bear it?” will be the reply of many. Various are the excuses which are alleged by different persons for the difficulty they find in complying with this part of christian duty, and for the uncourteous manner in which they have resisted it. “I could have borne it,” says one, “but it was an inferior that inflicted it; and who likes to be humbled by one below him?” Is not reproof a kindness, and do we reject other favours at the hand of inferiors? “It was a person whose own failings rendered him unworthy and unmeet to assume a superiority over me.” Whatever may be his conduct in other things, admit his excellence in this one; and leaving his imperfections to himself, accept his attempts to do you good. “He has no good will towards me.” You may have mistaken his intentions, and formed an erroneous opinion of his disposition. At any rate, in that act he has manifested a benevolence which you should not be backward to feel and to acknowledge. “He did not manage the reproof wisely.” Perhaps not; but will it not be a still greater want of wisdom in you to refuse on this account the benefit of his vigilance? “He was too short and severe.” Probably you are not the best judge of that: and if he were do not lose the advantage of the medicine, because it was made unnecessarily

nauseous, or was not administered with a tender hand. "His motives were not good." As you cannot search the heart, you may have mistaken his intentions, and imputed that to him which he would disclaim. Besides, you should never refuse good, even when it comes with an evil design, but should convert a malicious purpose into a beneficial result. It is both our wisdom and our duty to be so convinced of our imperfection, and at the same time to be so anxious for improvement, as to feel indebted to any and to everyone who will give himself the trouble of attempting to do us good. If in the management of our health, or of our business, we were committing some great error, and a neighbour came to us unsolicited, to point out the error, and to warn us of its consequences, instead of being offended, and repelling him as an impertinent intruder, we should justly feel, and frankly express, our sense of deep obligation for his friendly warning: and are our souls of less value than our health or our property, that we should refuse the aid of christian vigilance in promoting their welfare? Shall we allow the pride of our nature to operate to the prejudice and danger of our salvation? Shall we thank the man who would warn us of the danger of taking, or neglecting, an article of food, or giving, or withholding, our confidence in the transactions of business, and resent the still more friendly and important offices of him who interposes between us and the perils of our souls? Why is it that, in the fellowship and intercourse of christians, united as they are by the tie of the holiest bond in existence, the reproof of brotherly vigilance is so rarely given, but simply because in general it is so ill received? We are afraid to attempt it, even when prompted by the strongest affection, and con-

scious of the greatest delicacy and experience, lest we should excite animosity where we wish to produce improvement. What a reflection is it on the christian church, and what a proof of the low state of its piety, that it should be so wanting in humility, as to deprive itself of the full benefit of mutual vigilance, and rather go on in evil, than he willing to have it removed by the voice of brotherly reproof.

Must we then go to converted Hottentots, Negroes, and South Sea Islanders, to witness the performance, and see the beauty of this christian duty? And is it only in the countries where they live that the grass withering in the path to the bush shall be noticed, and the fear which it excites shall be expressed in the language of affectionate inquiry and faithful warning? Shall there be more brotherly love, and more of its blessed fruits, among those, who so lately were savages of the woods, and children of the desert; whose hearts have been the homes of such malignant passions, that their hands have been stained with each other's blood, than among us? Is theirs the soil where charity, that heavenly exotic on earth, shall flourish in greatest vigour, beauty, and fragrance? Shall the Hottentot woman watch over her backsliding sister in Christ, with a more faithful and tender affection, than the polished matron of Europe or America? Shame upon us! May the virtues which we have taught by our missionaries to these till lately untutored tribes be invigorated in ourselves by observing the manner in which they are cultivated among them. By such facts as that which has given occasion for these reflections, (and many such are furnished by the details of our missionary operations,) may the effect referred to in the preface be

realized, and a reflex power upon our own hearts be produced by our zeal for the salvation of the heathen; and among the fruits and the rewards of our liberality to them, may it be one that through the knowledge of their simple piety a stimulus has been given to our own. May many of the readers of this tract be roused from a neglect of private prayer and brotherly-kindness, by this interesting anecdote of “the path to the bush;” and be led to the great and only Saviour. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”

REFLECTIONS ON THE STORY OF SIMEON GREEN,

THE MAN THAT KILLED HIS BAD NEIGHBOURS BY KINDNESS.

I. WE cannot fail to observe, and to admire, the tact displayed by Simeon Green in accomplishing his object, and in subduing the churlish and malignant spirit of Reuben Black. His weapon was kindness, which is the most powerful thing in the world. He employed kind actions rather than kind words. Reuben was not a man to be talked much with. He would not bear that; he must be dealt with: and even his savage heart was susceptible to the power of love. How mighty is love! But in subduing such a heart as this, we must be judicious, choosing the best time and the best manner. We must be uniform, not kind at one time and harsh at another, but always alike and always kind. And we must be persevering. We must not expect to be successful at once. Many efforts may appear to be quite in vain; but we must still persevere. Simeon Green was often defeated, but he was sure that by patient continuance he should conquer at last, and he did so. And if we would succeed, let us add prayer to labour, and beg the help of God's Spirit to aid our

endeavours, to give us control over our own tempers, and to soften the heart we wish to subdue.

II. We see in this narrative a striking exemplification of that true practical christianity, which, both by the example and words of its Divine Author, and by the precepts of His holy apostles, teaches us to love our enemies: to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them that despitefully use us. These are the warns of Christ; and how exactly did He act up to them Himself when He prayed for His murderers, and died for His enemies. To the same effect is the language of St. Paul, "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink; for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." To return evil for evil is beastlike; to return evil for good is fiendlike; to return good for good is manlike; but to return good for evil is Godlike. This is true practical christianity, and the fulfilling of both law and gospel.

III. How much the forgiveness of injuries and this victory over our own temper and our neighbour's also tend to happiness. Sin is misery. Malice is torment to the soul that indulges it, and though it is said "revenge is sweet," it is the sweetness of honey accompanied with a sting. A quarrelsome temper is its own punishment, while on the other hand a forbearing and forgiving one is a perpetual feast. Reuben was never happy: his bad temper involved him in constant troubles with his neighbours; while Simeon was ever happy. His conscience told him he did right, and he had the unutterable delight of seeing his ill-natured neighbour at length subdued.

IV. What a happy world we should live in, if all people acted upon the principles and plan of Simeon Green: that is, if all people lived under the influence of the Bible. What a cruel and wicked spirit is that of infidelity, which would rob us of the Scriptures and abandon us to our own corrupt passions, to worry and tear one another! The influence of the christian religion, if it were universally and powerfully felt, would put a stop to the wars of nations, to the divisions and alienations of families, and to the quarrels of neighbours. Infidelity would take away the great peacemaker, and leave us to the fury of our own bad passions.

V. We see what encouragement we have to pursue the works of peace and the conquests of love. Kindness could never have a more unpromising subject than Reuben Black. He seemed abandoned to his evil temper, even by those who could bear with ordinary churls. It required, it is admitted, unusual patience and forbearance to subdue such a ferocious and snarling creature. But Simeon, conscious of the power of persevering and untiring kindness, and of his own unruffled spirit, smilingly said, "I shall kill him." And he did. Now let us try. Perhaps we have neighbours as bad, almost so at any rate, as Reuben Black; and we may be able in this way to kill them too. But if we should not, our kindness will return into our own bosoms, and if we cannot make our neighbours better, we shall at any rate improve ourselves.

VI. Can we read such a narrative, and admire the patience and kindness of man, and not think of the infinitely greater loving-kindness of God? "Scarcely for a righteous [that is a just] man will one die: yet peradventure for a good [benevolent] man some would

even dare to die. But God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." What were all the offences of this quarrelsome man against the neighbour who so generously forgave him and returned good for evil, compared with a thousandth part of our sins against God? And yet God freely forgives all the offences of those who truly repent, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. This conduct of Simeon Green is, in his measure, just God's way toward us. He follows us with kindness to subdue us with mercy: "I drew them," said he, when speaking of the Israelites, "with cords of a man, with bands of love." Reader! can you stand out against this any longer? See how he loved you. Not only has he showered upon you, notwithstanding your manifold and aggravated sins, the bounties of His providence, but He has sent His Son to die for those very sins upon the cross: "Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Repent! Believe! Love!

VII. Since this forgiving temper, and this disposition to overcome evil with good, are required of us all, and required in absolute perfection, how impossible is it for anyone of us to be justified in the sight of God by the works of the law! And this temper to overcome evil with good is required, for this is the love which is the fulfilling at the law. Have we kept it perfectly, are we constantly keeping it? Alas! alas! in how many thousand instances have we broken it, and, indulging a spirit of revenge, have returned evil for evil! Must we not say then "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who

shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.” Yes, by faith in Jesus we can obtain that righteousness which makes the sinner just. Quit, then, quit all dependence upon your own righteousness, and look by faith to Him who “is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.” “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” “In Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” “Now abideth faith, hope, charity, (love,) these three: but the greatest of these is charity, (love.)”

HAPPINESS ITS NATURE AND SOURCES DESCRIBED

AND

MISTAKES CONCERNING IT CORRECTED.

READER, this little tract comes to you with the high pretension, (and a higher one it cannot make,) of pointing out to you what true happiness is, where it is to be found, and how it is to be obtained. To such a subject you cannot be, ought not to be, and are not, indifferent. As one among the countless millions whose dwelling-place is in a vale of tears, and as a part of the “whole creation, which groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now,” you are interested in a treatise which addresses you in the character of a comforter, to perform the charitable office of lightening your weeping eyes, and hushing the sighs of your troubled breast. Or if, peradventure, you have not been the subject of actual, or oppressive sorrow, but only of those restless and insatiable cravings after some suitable and adequate good, which all men feel, you may still profitably employ a few minutes, in reading these simple pages, the desire of which is to put you in possession of what you so ardently covet, and which you have hitherto, perhaps, so fruitlessly sought. It may be you have commenced

the desperate effort to reconcile yourself to dissatisfaction and sorrow. You have tried one experiment after another to extract happiness by various processes and have been unsuccessful in them all. The elixir could not be obtained. The ethereal spirit could not be caught; and in despondency you have abandoned exertion and hope, saying of happiness, as Brutus, just before he stabbed himself, said of virtue, that he had sought it wherever it was to be found, and had at length discovered that it was but a name. Revoke such a conclusion, at least till you have perused this tract. There may be one source yet unexplored: one method untried: and that one may contain the object of your research. The writer of this work is not a speculative theorist, he gives the result of extended observation, he embodies the testimony of thousands with whom he has conversed, and of multitudes besides; and, what is more, he offers the result of his own experience. He has tried the subject, and “has tasted, and handled, and felt,” that which he presents to you. He has drunk at the fountain of living waters, and now offers his friendly hand to guide you to the crystal stream, of which, if you drink, you will thirst for no other, but in glad and grateful content say “It is enough.”

“There be many that say, who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.

“Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than In the time when their corn and their wine increased.”

PSALM iv. 5, 7.

MAN is formed with a capacity for happiness, and with an innate, urgent, and irrepressible desire after it.

This is an universal propensity, and appertains to him as man, irrespective of external and adventitious distinctions. His bountiful Creator has placed him in a situation where it may be obtained, and has not implanted in him an appetite for which he has made no suitable or adequate provision. If anyone therefore be actually miserable it is his own fault; and he has only himself to blame. Yet how few comparatively are happy, even in that lower degree which is obtainable by us in this present World! How small is the number whose aspect and conversation lead us to infer that they are contented, or even moderately satisfied! There is a hurry in their step; a carefulness, not to say a sorrow, in their look; a tone of complaint in their language; a restlessness in their habits; a perpetual change in their pleasures, which indicate, plainly enough, that they are not happy, and know not what bliss means, or how it is to be sought.

I may at once assign and explain the reason, why this is so; or, rather, I will quote the language of God himself, who, in addressing the Jews, has disclosed the secret. "My people," said he, "have committed two evils, they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and have hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Yes, there it is. Man was created for the enjoyment of God. His soul wanted, and still wants, an infinite object to love, serve, and delight in, and nothing less will satisfy him. God offered, and still offers Himself for the enjoyment of man; but instead of serving his Creator, man serves himself, and instead of seeking his felicity in the favour of God, he seeks it from other sources. Thus he forsakes the fountain ever full and flowing; hews out a cistern

which breaks under his hand; lives the discontented victim of his folly and sin in turning away from God to the creature; and dies with the sorrowful lament of Solomon, "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

It will be allowed by all, that Adam was perfectly happy in Paradise before his fall. No tear suffused his eye; no care wrinkled his brow; no fears disturbed his peace; no groan escaped his breast. He was at rest. He rose in the morning without dread; passed through the day without a sense of want; and lay down at night without a sigh. Perpetual sunshine gilded his countenance, and untroubled serenity reigned in his soul. 'What made him happy? Not company, for one sole partner of his bliss shared with him the new-made world: not the pleasures of the table, for he ate only of the fruits that grew around him, and drank of the springs that watered the garden; not public amusements, for they had no existence: not music, for, with the exception of the feathered choir of the grove, there was but one voice besides his own, and no instrument, on earth: not the arts, for they were not invented: not science, for it had not begun its discoveries: nor literature, for it had not commenced its studies. Yet, notwithstanding the absence of all these sources of gratification which fallen man depends upon for the little bliss he has, the perfect and un fallen man was happy. And what made him so? The enjoyment of God. He looked up with filial eye to heaven, and said, "O God, thou art my God. Thy favour is life, and Thy loving kindness is better than life itself."

Think also of "the spirits of just men made perfect" in heaven. Are not they happy? What makes them

so? None of the amusements of earth are there: no gay parties, no festive scenes, none of the delights which now please the votaries of pleasure, are there. No, it is replied, for it is impossible they should be: they suit not that state. Just so. Yet those holy beings are happy. What are the springs of their felicity? The favour of God. Surely that must be happiness which was enjoyed by unsinning man in Paradise; and will be enjoyed by restored man in heaven. But perhaps it will be thought and said, that what suited the sinless man in Eden, and the sinless spirit in heaven, will not suit the sinful man on earth. Why not? For no other reason, that can be imagined, but because he is sinful. It cannot be because the favour of God is not suited to his nature as a rational creature; or because he has not faculties for such a kind of delight. What can be more adapted to the nature of a finite mind than the enjoyment of the favour of the infinite mind? If, therefore, the soul of man cannot enjoy God, this must be, not from any natural cause which is excusable, but from some sinful cause; and how sinful must it be? What a degradation and debasement of nature is it to have no taste, no disposition for the enjoyment of God; to turn away from our God for happiness; to have no inclination to seek it in him! To prefer many things, anything, everything, to God's favour, as a source of happiness! How startling!

But let us now look back to the passage from the Psalms which stands at the introduction of this tract. It presents to us two obviously distinct classes of persons, which I will describe by designations very generally used, and as generally understood. "The people of the world," and "The people of God." Each class is

marked by their peculiar views on the subject of happiness.

In the “many that say, who will show us any good?” we recognise at once the people of the world. Observe what it is they want, and are inquiring after, good. By this we are to understand, something that will please, gratify, satisfy: something that is adapted to give contentment and enjoyment. There is nothing wrong in such a desire. It is the instinctive and natural inquiry of a dependent, rational creature. It belongs to God alone to be the fountain of His own blessedness, and to contain all the springs of happiness in Himself. God, and He only, is self-sufficient. All created beings are dependent, not only for existence, but for bliss. Man, especially as a fallen creature, must look out of himself; must travel, so to speak, from home for good. This desire and inquiry after “good,” is neither virtuous nor vicious, it has no moral character, but is simply an instinct. It is right or wrong according to the choice we make to gratify the desire. It is a positive, absolute, and uncontrollable necessity of our nature to wish to be happy; for it is an impossibility to wish otherwise. In common therefore with the people of God, the people of the world desire good.

But notice also the indefiniteness of the inquiry, any good. True, the word “any” is put in by our translators, and is not in the original Hebrew: but it is implied in the vagueness of the general term, “good.” Now what should have been the inquiry? What should now be the inquiry of every rational creature? I answer, it should have been this, “Who will show us the good? Tell us what is the chief good? Instruct us what is that good which our souls need, which God has provided

for us, and which, when possessed, will satisfy us?" Is it not evident that such should be the nature and object of our inquiries? Ought we to be satisfied with anything, whether suitable or unsuitable, satisfying or unsatisfying? Is it worthy of a thinking being, in reference to so important a matter as his own happiness, to set out with so vague a guide as that word "any," in quest of bliss? Ought we not to institute a most rigid and anxious investigation into the constitution, condition, wants, woes, and capacities of our souls; and also into the provisions which God has made for our contentment and enjoyment? If there were no means of ascertaining these matters, or if all things were equally adapted to satisfy us, then it were rational to follow our own fancies: but when there is danger that shadows may be pursued instead of substances, and poison may be taken instead of food, we should be more intelligent, discriminating, definite, and settled in our choice.

Yet is not this the way of the multitude? Have they any precise notions of true happiness, either as to its nature, its sources, or the method of obtaining it? The great question "What is good?" is to them unsettled. The whole subject is to them wrapt in impenetrable darkness. And hence they are running up and down in the world, and amidst the confusion of many voices we hear hut one distinct and prevailing sound, and that is "Any good." What they want beyond the vague notion of happiness they cannot tell you. One supposes it is wealth; another, rank; another, fame; another, pleasure; another, friendship; another, knowledge; another, love; and others, perpetually changing their opinion, conclude by turns that it is all these. About

nothing have the minds of men been more divided and unsettled than the nature of the supreme felicity. Varro, a learned heathen, reckoned up more than two hundred opinions on this subject which existed in his time: a striking illustration of, and comment upon, the expression, "There be many that say who will show us any good;" and no less convincing a proof of the necessity of an infallible oracle to decide the question; of a heavenly revelation to develop the mystery. The oracle has been uttered; the revelation has been given, and yet "the many" with the response in their possession, are still inquiring for "any" good.

You cannot fail to be struck with the sensuality of the question "Who will show us any good?" I use the term "sensuality," not in its grosser sense, as importing the indulgence of the lower appetites of our animal nature, but in a somewhat more refined meaning, as signifying the exercise of the mind on objects of sense, distinct from objects of faith. To such objects the inquiry is directed; it is a desire after something to be seen or heard, or handled, or tasted, or felt: something that can be known and apprehended apart from any special revelation from God; and which is adapted to our instincts, appetites, and propensities as corporeal beings, and as placed in this present earthly state. Is not this also most accurately descriptive of the disposition, ideas, tastes, and pursuits of the great bulk of mankind? They have not a notion of happiness but what stands associated with something seen and temporal? They live in a world of sense, not only as to their natural position, and their bodily habitation, but equally so as to all the exercises of their minds. They have no conception of any happiness which does not come from

objects of an earthly nature. "They mind earthly things." Their joys and their sorrows; their hopes and their fears; their aspirations and aversions; are all wakened and sustained by what can be shown them, as objects of sense.

Now let me ask, is this rational? Only on the supposition, certainly, that this visible world is the whole comprehension of being, the sum total of existence, the universe. But is it so? You know it is not. You know there are "things unseen and eternal," whether you look at them or not. The visible world as compared with the invisible, is but as the leaf on which the insect spends its short-lived existence, and which is all the region he sees or knows, to the great globe which we inhabit; or as the single drop of water, in which a community of animalculæ find the only world they know, to the boundless ocean. What a simplicity of language, and what a sublimity of subject is there in the expression, "The things that are unseen and eternal!" But how, it may be asked, do we know anything about that invisible world? By revelation. And to make it known is the grand design of the inspired volume. This reveals an unseen God, an unseen Saviour, an unseen heaven, an unseen hell, an unseen eternity, unseen angels and spirits, and all these are apprehended not by sense, but by the "faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Do consider that we are as sure of the existence of an invisible world and its objects, as we can be of a visible one. Invisible excellence is infinitely greater than that which is visible, for the objects themselves are infinite. We are in reality a great deal more concerned

with what is invisible, than with what is visible. Yea, the invisible things of another world are capable, from their and our own very natures, of being better known to us, and we may be more conversant with them in some respects, than we can be with such as appeal to our senses. Think upon the great and blessed God, our Creator, Preserver, and Benefactor; inhabiting his own eternity, filling immensity, possessing in infinite fulness all the sources of being, life, wisdom, power, goodness, holiness, and whatsoever else of perfection and glory we can conceive of. Contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ, the image of the invisible God; the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person; the Saviour of men; the Head of the Church; the Ruler of the universe. Behold the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory. Look up into Heaven, the region of immortality, the world of unclouded light, the holy habitation of the eternal God, where Christ sits at the right hand of the Father; with the innumerable company of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect, inheriting a fulness of joy in his presence. Are these realities, and have we no concern with them? What, is there a God who, though invisible, is so near to us, that he can be conversant with us wheresoever we go, and as soon as we are minded to be with him we find him with us?

“As soon as we close our eyes on things seen and temporal, and retire into ourselves, with a design to converse with him, he is immediately present with us, and it is as easy to converse with him, as it is with our own thoughts. As soon as we think we are with God, and He with us, in the twinkling of an eye we find Him. We look unto Him and are lightened; with the cast of an eye the soul may be filled with happiness, and replenished with a divine, heavenly, and vital light.”

Is all this fact, and shall we not see and admit the folly and sin of turning our back upon such a world; of wandering away from such fountains of delight, with the inquiry, "Who will show us any good?" Is all this nothing, because it cannot be seen except by the eye of faith? Shall that which constitutes the glory of these objects, I mean their invisibility, be the ground and reason for despising them? Shall they be forsaken and forgotten because they are not visible to the eye, or audible to the ear, or palpable to the touch? Oh, is it come to this, that they who, to suit their twofold nature of body and spirit, are placed on the confines of both worlds, the border country of the visible and invisible states, that such creatures, so fearfully and wonderfully made, and so fearfully and wonderfully placed, should look for their happiness only to the visible and material, the mortal and corruptible, instead of the invisible and immaterial, the immortal and incorruptible? That all their excursions and researches after bliss, should be made, not into the unseen and eternal world, by means of faith, but in the world that is seen and temporal, by the aid of sense? Made with rational and immortal minds; made to be creatures rather of reason than of sense, and of faith even more than of reason, shall we abjure our high distinction, shall we put aside our prerogative, and by a voluntary degradation, and willing descent, come down and place ourselves on a level with the Atheist, who says, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die?"

Is it necessary to point out the result of such a course as this? Solomon proclaims it; "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity! All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear

filled with hearing.” Oh, with what a bitter emphasis of utterance would those who lived and died strangers to the blessings of religion, and the love of God; who sought all their enjoyments from the visible world; who were contented with what could be shown them; who hewed out their broken cisterns that could hold no water; with what a bitter emphasis of utterance, I say, would they, could their voice be heard from beyond the impassable gulf, certify to us the truth of the verdict, all is vanity! Though warned by solemn voices from without, and gentle yet intelligible whispers from within; though admonished by impressive events in the history of others, and the painful experience of their own, they trifled away life in seeking the gratification of sense, instead of the joys of faith. Each period of existence, and each change of situation, found them urging the inquiry, “Who will show us any good?” No disappointment cured their folly, no experience corrected their mistake. The visible, and that only, engaged their attention; they determined to have happiness from that or not at all; and they died with the sullen conviction, if not with the candid confession, that they had lived un blessed.

Not that I mean to affirm that none suppose themselves happy, and have in reality a considerable portion of enjoyment, from visible things exclusively. Many doubtless have. There is pleasure certainly in the gratification of the appetites; in the enjoyment of health, friends, property, applause. Even sinful objects have their pleasures. There could be no power in temptation if sin yielded no enjoyment. But what is designed in all I have said is that man, as a rational, moral, and immortal creature; as a sinner subject to

the stings of a reproachful conscience, and under the displeasure of the God he has offended; as liable to all the vicissitudes of a tearful existence, and ever exposed to the fear and stroke of death, needs something more for his happiness than can be found in the objects of sense. He has wants which they cannot supply; cravings which they cannot satisfy; woes which they cannot alleviate; and anxieties which they cannot dispel. For one that is even tolerably successful in gaining felicity from visible objects many utterly fail. Their schemes are frustrated; their hopes perish; their air-built castles vanish as they journey on in life; and each ends a course of worldly-mindedness, by adding another to the millions of examples which had proved it to be vanity. In some cases abundance and unobstructed enjoyment produce satiety. Tired of old pleasures they look about for new ones, and urge the oft-repeated inquiry, "Who will show us any good?" Novelty perhaps comes to the relief of their discontented, restless, and dissatisfied minds; but novelty itself soon grows old, and still something new is wanted. There remains an aching void within, a craving, hungry appetite for bliss, unsatisfied, unfed. They hunt for enjoyment in endless parties of pleasure, in every place of amusement, in every scene of diversion; in the dance, and in the game; in the theatre, and in the concert; on the turf, and in the field; amidst the scenes of nature, and in the changes of foreign travel; but happiness, like a shadow ever flitting before them, and ever eluding their grasp, tantalises them with its form, without yielding them its substance, and excites their hopes only to disappoint them.

Such is the consequence of seeking happiness only

from the objects of sense. This train of reasoning will be resumed in a subsequent part of the tract.

I now turn to the other class of persons presented to us in the text we are considering, and whom I have called "The people of God," because they are thus acknowledged in the Holy Scriptures. I mean those who live by faith; are born again of the Spirit; and love God supremely, habitually, and practically. They too have a desire after good, or happiness; and what is more, they know what it is, where it is to be found, and now it is to be obtained, and they also possess and enjoy it, at least in its beginning. You have heard the prayer of the other class, now listen to theirs. "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!" Such is their desire, and such the sublimity of its object. Upon the supposition that their petition has been heard and granted, and indeed in the consciousness that they possess the blessing they have sought, they declare that they experience a joy far superior to the joy with which the men of the world rejoice in harvest or in vintage, the times and sources of their wealth; a joy, bright, and pure, and serene as the region from which it descends: "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased."

Is it necessary to say, that by the light of God's countenance is meant his favour? The light of the countenance, the shining of the face, is a smile, and a smile is the symbol of complacency. It is therefore as if the Psalmist had said, "Let the multitude, in their ignorant anxiety after felicity, seek their happiness from earthly sources, and from objects of sense: as for me, O God, I see, and thank thee for having by thy grace enabled me to see, that true blessedness can

only be found in the enjoyment of thy favour. With thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light alone can I see light. Thy favour is the life of my soul, the bliss of my existence.”

Observe then that the people of God consider his favour to be the very element of bliss for a rational and immortal creature. It is; for, as I have already shown, it was the bliss of Adam in Paradise, and is the happiness of angels and saints in heaven.

It is a question worth asking, and ought to be asked, how, since man as a sinner is under the displeasure of God, he can become an object of the Divine regard, and in what way those who were by nature children of his wrath can become the sons and daughters of his love. The New Testament explains the mystery. “God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by His life.” Wonderful scheme! Glorious plan of infinite mercy! This is love, its brightest manifestation, its richest commendation! God is love, and here He shows to the universe what His love can do, all it can do. No wonder the Apostle prayed for the believing Ephesians that they “might be able to comprehend what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge.” The people of God (and it is thus they have become such,) have believed the love that God hath to them. They have given credence to the Gospel which declares the wondrous truth, and have, through faith alone, been reconciled to

God. The enmity of the carnal mind in them has been slain by faith in the cross of Christ; and now they love God, because God has first loved them. A new world has opened to them in their views of a God of love, and in their apprehensions of the love of God. That new world they enter by faith, and as its objects of contemplation, sources of interest, and springs of consolation present themselves to their minds, they take up the exulting strain of the apostle, even as they taste something of his delight, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." This is now their happiness, the favour of God; and this is the way in which they have gained it, by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,

In this you see something Definite; the child of God is decided in his choice; fixed in his object; resolved in purpose; and settled in his plans. The mists of ignorance have rolled away and presented to him the object of his heart's desire, a fountain of bliss, near at hand, certain and satisfactory. Suspense is at an end. In-certainty is over, Vagrancy terminates. "Here it is," he exclaims; "This is it; the very thing; all my soul can desire; provided by God; satisfying, infinite, eternal; the love of God in Christ."

And as it is something definite, so it is something Suitable; just what man wants; something for the mind, for the heart, for the whole soul; the restoration to him of that which he possessed and enjoyed when he came fresh and pure from the hand of his Maker in Paradise; and for which he was in fact created, but which he lost by the fall; the leading him back to the tree of life in the midst of the garden, to

feast again upon its precious fruits. What is so suitable for man's spirit as the love of God; indeed, where is there any thing that suits it but this? What are all the pleasures of sense, all the objects of this visible world, for man's heart, but as the dropping of pebbles into a deep chasm, which, instead of filling it up, only tell him how deep it is, by awakening the dismal echoes of emptiness and desolation? No, nothing but reconciliation to God, and the going back of the filial spirit through faith in Jesus Christ to enjoy the smile, and be assured of the love of the Father of spirits, can be ever deemed a suitable bliss for any of the children of Adam. This the christian has. He feels the arms of everlasting love around him, and is sustained by the enfolding of these: he looks up to meet the light of God's countenance beaming upon him, and hears at the same moments the gracious words that fall from the lips of infinite benignity. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

This is indeed "the chief good!" The supreme felicity, good in the full meaning, and deepest emphasis of the word. "What being can we find greater than God to make us happy, and what can we find even in God that is greater than His love? The smile of God is the daylight, yea, the noon-tide glory of heaven, in which redeemed spirits bask, and angels spread their wings and soar with ecstasies unknown to us, The highest and the lowest intellect meet here as in their common centre. Reason and revelation alike proclaim that the supreme good of every rational and moral being must be the enjoyment of God.

"The love of God! How transporting would the thought of it be to an enlightened, apprehensive mind! No one whose nature is

not over-run with barbarism, would entertain the discovery of the harmless, innocent love, though it were not profitable to us, even of a creature like ourselves, otherwise than with complacency, yea, though it were a much inferior creature. Men are pleased to behold love expressing itself towards them in a child, in a poor neighbour, in an impotent servant; yea, in their horse, or in their dog. The greatest prince observes with delight the affection of the meanest peasants amongst his subjects: much more would they please themselves if they have occasion to take notice of any remarkable expression of his favourable respect to them! But how unspeakably more if he vouchsafe to express it by gracious intimacies and by condescending familiarities! How doth that person bless himself! How doth his spirit triumph, and his imagination luxuriate in delightful thoughts and expectations, who is in his own heart assured he hath the favour of his prince! And can it be thought the love of the great and blessed God should signify less? How great things are comprehended in this, 'The Lord of heaven and earth hath a kindness towards me, and bears me good will!' How grateful is the relish of this apprehension, both in respect of what it is in itself, and what it is the root and cause of! How dignifying is the love of God! How honourable a thing to be his favourite! And how strange! O wonderful! O the depths, breadths, lengths, and heights of his love, that so infinitely passeth knowledge! And here the greater the wonder the greater the delight." Such is the choice and preference of the people of God: it may be, and sometimes is, ridiculed by the people of the world, and they taunt christians with a sneer about their enjoyment of God. But they know their ground; they are not to be laughed out of their convictions and their experience.

"The sobriety of their spirits, the regularity of their workings, their gracious composure, the meekness, humility, and denial of self, the sensible refreshing, the mighty strength and vigour which hath accompanied their enjoyments, sufficiently prove to them that they did not hug an empty cloud, or embrace a shadow, under the name of enjoying God. That rich and unimitable fulness of living sense, could not but be from the apprehension as a real somewhat, and that of a most excellent nature and kind, whatsoever may be the motive that may be most fitly put upon it." Howe's "Delighting in God."

How consonant is all this with what reason teaches us of the nature of the chief good; which demonstrates that, whatever it be, it must include the following characteristics; it must be something which all men,

if not wanting to themselves, may be possessed of; it must be one and the same to all mankind; it must be something, which, while in itself fitted to make the possessor happy, is not prevented in its operation by some other thing which keeps him from relishing it; it must be something which is not referred to or dependent on any other, but all other things must be embraced for the sake of it; it must be immutable, and not vary with the changing seasons and circumstances through which man is called to pass; and it must be sufficient to furnish a happiness adequate to the capacities of human nature, and of equal duration; it must not only be perfect while it lasts, but everlasting.

None, surely, will contend that anything can be man's supreme good in which these criteria cannot be found; or deny that to be it in which they all unite. According to these characters we may infer, that neither pleasure, wealth, health, nor even virtue itself, constitutes the chief good. That high distinction belongs to the favour of God, obtained through faith in Christ. To this all the criteria apply, all men to whom the Gospel comes are invited to possess it; it is one and the same to all, to the savage and the sage, to the rich and the poor, to the young and the old: it is independent of external circumstances, and may be enjoyed in sickness as in health, in poverty as in wealth, in solitude as in society, in the prison as in the palace, in death as in life, nothing but itself being necessary to enjoy it; it exists by itself, and for itself, subordinating all other sources of enjoyment to its own supremacy, and imparting even to them, from its own infinite fulness, a limited capacity to make us happy; being infinite, it is more

than adequate to our nature, and being eternal, it is equal to our duration. How exactly does the good provided for man by revelation, agree then. with that which reason demonstrates to be necessary for him! Let any man give to the human soul, with all its faculties of intellect, will, heart, conscience, memory, and limited prescience, his profoundest attention and deepest study; let him fathom the depth of its capacity, and measure the height of its aspirations; let him attend to its yearnings after the infinite, and eternal, and immutable: let him read the record of its disappointments, as well as the journal of its experiments, and its discoveries; above all, let him do all this in reference to that one soul which is part of his own nature, and with which he may be supposed to be more intimately acquainted than with any other souls, and let him say, if it be not insult and a mockery offered to such a being as this, to invite it to any other source of happiness than the favour of God? Let him, when he has studied himself, and when he has found out that he has really a capacity for enjoying the infinite, eternal, and immutable, and can in fact be satisfied with nothing less; let him then study the nature of God, as he is revealed, not simply in the scenes of nature, which are his least glorious manifestations, but in the pages of the New Testament, where his whole name appears complete; let him think of the infinite collection of infinite moral excellences which make up the character of that Great Being we call God; let him recollect that it is the design of the whole scheme of redeeming mercy to open a way honourable to God himself, to bring back apostate man to the favour of God, and that every page of

the inspired record is inscribed with an invitation to the naked, hungry, and degraded prodigal soul of man, to return to the arms, and house, and heart of his Divine Parent; and then let him say, if it be not as truly a dictate of sound reason, as it is a lesson of true religion, that man's happiness must consist of the favour of God, obtained through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

You have seen, then, the two classes, and their respective sources of enjoyment; now institute a comparison between them.

Look at the worldling. Does he succeed? Is he satisfied? Let him possess all he seeks, all he wishes, all that earth can furnish; let rank be added to wealth, and fame to both; let a constant round of fashionable amusements, festive scenes, and elegant parties, follow in endless succession, till his cup be full to overflowing; and what does it all amount to? Solomon shall again give evidence, and answer the question. "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards; I gathered me also silver and gold; I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts: so I was great, and increased more than all that came before me in Jerusalem; also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them; I withheld not my heart from any joy: for my heart rejoiced in all my labour; and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works which my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." Have not multitudes since Solomon's time

made the same melancholy confession? Is it not a general admission, that the pleasure of worldly objects arises more from hope than possession? They are beautiful like bubbles, which, as they float, reflect the colours of the rainbow, but dissolve and vanish when grasped? Tell me, votaries of earthly good, have you realised what you expected? Are not the scenes of festivity and amusement resorted to by as many aching hearts as happy ones? Does not the smiling countenance often conceal a troubled spirit, and is not the laugh resorted to in order to suppress the sigh? The history of Colonel Gardiner, that once gay, afterwards pious, and always brave officer, is an affecting illustration as well as proof of this.

“His fine constitution,” says Dr. Doddridge, his biographer, “gave him great opportunity to indulge in sinful excesses, and his good spirits enabled him to pursue his pleasures of every kind in so alert and sprightly a manner, that multitudes envied him, and called him by a dreadful kind of compliment, ‘The happy rake.’”

But no; such an association cannot be formed. Vice and happiness cannot be united. There may be gratification, amusement, pleasure, mirth, but not happiness, in sin. It is a profanation to call sensual pleasure by the sacred name of happiness: and it is an impossibility to derive contentment, satisfaction, blessedness, from vice. So Colonel Gardiner found, for his biographer continues the account thus:

“Yet still, notwithstanding his gay appearance, the checks of conscience, and some remaining principles of a good education, would break in upon his most licentious hours; and I particularly remember he told me, that when some of his companions were once congratulating him on his distinguished felicity, a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself, ‘Oh, that I were that dog!’”

Such was then his happiness, and such is the happiness of multitudes who have nothing but objects of sense to gratify them. While there appear to be sunbeams on the countenance, there is a dense black cloud overshadowing their spirit; a gay flower may seem to bloom upon the brow, and a thorn all the while be pricking it, or a worm be gnawing at their heart. They are gaily wretched, sumptuously unhappy, splendidly miserable. And even where the heart is not thus wretched, it is restless and dissatisfied. If it have not the pain of a diseased stomach, it has the craving of an empty one. It is subject to a morbid hunger, which nothing satisfies.

The following striking contrast between sensual and intellectual pleasures, is taken in the main from a learned treatise on "The Light of Nature," by Culverwell, one of the most brilliant writers of the seventeenth century: "The nobler any being is the purer pleasure it hath proportioned to it; that of the soul is more vigorous and masculine; that of the Lady is more soft and effeminate. Sensitive pleasure hath more of dross; intellectual more of quintessence. If pleasure were to be measured by corporeal senses, the brutes that are more exquisite in sense than men are would, by virtue of that, have a choicer portion of happiness than men can attain to. There can be no greater pleasure than that of the understanding embracing a most clear truth, and the will complying with its fairest good: and it was a fine remark of an ancient Greek writer, 'There can be no pleasure unless it be dipped in goodness; it must come bubbling up from a fountain of reason, and must stream out in virtuous expressions and manifestations.' Corporeal delights, like some temporary meteors, give a bright and sudden coruscation, and immediately disappear; whereas, intellectual joy shines like the stars with a fixed and undecaying brightness. Sensual pleasure is limited and contracted to the present moment, for sense has no delight but in the enjoyment of a present object; but intellectual pleasure is not at all restrained by any temporary conditions, but can suck sweetness out of time past, present, and to come, the mind being not only able to drink pleasure out of present fountains, but can taste those streams of delight that are run away long ago; and can quench its thirst with such as yet

run under ground. Does not memory reprint and repeat former enjoyments? And what is hope but pleasure in the bad? Sensual pleasure is mixed and impure. Tell me, you that crown yourselves with rose-buds, do you not at the same time crown yourselves with thorns, since they are ever the companion of rose-buds? But intellectual pleasure is clear and crystalline joy, there is no feculency in it. Men are ashamed of some corporeal pleasures; but who ever blushed at intellectual delights? Men grow weary of sensual pleasure, and languish and faint amidst such effeminate delights; nay, it is the law of our nature, that our body will better endure extreme grief than excessive enjoyment; but who ever was tired with intellectual learning? Who ever was weary of an inward complacency, or who ever surfeited with a rational joy? Other pleasures ingratiate themselves by intermission; whereas intellectuals heighten and advance themselves by frequent and constant operations. Other pleasures do not fill and satisfy the soul; whereas rational ones fill it to its brim, nay will make abundant compensation for the want of sensitive, and turn a wilderness into a paradise. The lowest and worst of men glut themselves with sensual pleasure; the greatest and wisest delight themselves in intellectual enjoyment. Sensual pleasures make most noise and crackling; but such as are mental, like the soft touches of the lute, make the sincerest, yet the stillest and softest music of all. Sensual pleasure is very costly; there must be much preparation and attendance, much plenty and variety. It is too dear for every one to be an epicure; whereas rational delight freely and equally diffuses itself: you need not pay anything for this; the mind itself proves a Canaan that flows with milk and honey. Sensual pleasure only suits some palates; a sick man cannot relish it, an old man cannot embrace it; but intellectual pleasure, like the manna, suits every taste; it is a staff for the old to lean upon, a cordial for the sick, and fit either for a Cato or a clown. Sensual pleasures are toilsome and agitating, attended with turmoil and anxiety: intellectual ones quietly lift and satiate the soul, and give a composed and sabbatical rest. Men that are taken up with intellectual joy trample upon other inferior objects. See this in angelical pleasures; those courtiers of heaven, much different from those on earth, come not near any carnal gratifications. The painted or feigned heaven of Mahomet would form a real hell to an angel or a glorified saint. Sensual pleasure is the delight of men, but intellectual delights the joy of angels, of spirits made perfect, yea of God himself; he is the blessed God and, as possessing all other perfections, so also the perfection of all true and real pleasure, in a most spiritual and tram-

endant manner. He has an infinite satisfaction in his own essence, attributes, and operations. His glorious decrees and contrivances are all richly pregnant with joy and sweetness; and every providential dispensation is an act of choicest pleasure. The laughing of his enemies to scorn must be a pleasure fit for infinite justice; the smiling upon his church, a pleasure fit for mercy and goodness. Miracles are the pleasure of his omnipotence. Varieties are the delight of his wisdom. Creation was an act of his pleasure, and it must needs delight him to see so much of his own workmanship, so many pictures of his own drawing; and Redemption was an expression of that singular delight and pleasure which he took in the sons of men. To conclude, sensual pleasure is short-lived and soon over; 'time is short,' is its history and its sentence; but intellectual pleasure reaches to perpetuity, and lasts through eternity.

"Wherefore convince the world that the very pith and marrow of pleasure doth not dwell in the surface of the body, but in a deep and rational centre. Let your triumphant reason trample upon sense, and let no corporeal pleasures move you, or tempt you, but such as are justly and exactly subordinate to reason. Envy not the garlic and onions of unbridled sensual delights, while you can feed and feast upon more spiritual and angelical dainties.

"Yet I could show you a more excellent way; for the pleasures of mere natural reason, are but husks in comparison of those gospel delights, those mysterious pleasures, that lie hid in Christ: in the former you look only upon the candle-light of pleasure, but in the latter you have the sunshine of pleasure in its full glory."

But if it were granted that the possession of wealth, the gratifications of taste, and the indulgence of appetite, could give happiness in seasons of health and prosperity, they must inevitably fail in the day of sickness and adversity. If they were satisfying, they are uncertain. All the enjoyments of this life are like gathered flowers, which are no sooner plucked than they begin to lose their beauty and their fragrance while we look at them and smell them; and which, however gay and beautiful they appeared while they were growing, begin to wither as soon as they are in our hands.

What is it we are looking to and depending upon for

happiness? Health! How soon may we be smitten with disease, and doomed to wearisome nights and months of vanity in the chamber of sickness. Will riches smooth the pillow of sickness? Will the counting money or the surveying estates, when it can be done only in imagination, beguile the sleepless hours, and cheer the long sad days of ceaseless pain? Will the recollection of the parties you have met, the pleasures you have enjoyed but cannot any longer enjoy, enliven the gloom of the solitary chamber? Will the roll of carriages at midnight, taking the votaries of pleasure to or from the scenes of fashionable resort, impart to your feverish frame any relief, or to your distressed mind any comfort? Oh, what, in that long, dark season of trial which may be coming upon you, will the pleasures and possessions of earth do for you?

Is Wealth your idol, and the source of your happiness? How justly is it called in Scripture uncertain riches! the “deceitful mammon.” “Riches,” said the wise man, “make to themselves wings and fly away as an eagle towards heaven.” And is it not most strange folly to stake your happiness on that which, like an uncaged bird, may at any moment be upon the wing, and soaring where we cannot follow? What changes have we witnessed in the circumstances of men; what rapid falls from wealth to poverty! How many do we know who, by those vicissitudes which are ever going on in this commercial country, and in this speculating age, have descended from the sunny heights of prosperity, to dwell the remainder of their days in the gloomy vale below! This may be your case. Your treasure, like the volatile quicksilver, may slip through your fingers when you think you hold it fastest. What will you do for

comfort then? Your friends, like summer birds, will migrate when your winter has come upon you. You will no longer be able to have parties: and who invites the child of misfortune to theirs? Those who once shared your hospitalities, will forget you in the season of your humiliation, for your presence will no longer grace their circle. What, then, will you do, when the world frowns, and you have none else to smile upon you?

Is Pleasure your dependence? How soon may you be unfitted by sickness or change of circumstances for this, and have the sweet and intoxicating cup dashed from your lips! How soon may your place be vacant at the resort of the gay and the fashionable; and then with what melancholy feelings will you contrast the amusements of the ball-room, the concert, or the rout, with the abode of poverty or disease!

Are you dependent for happiness on your Friends? Alas! alas! how soon may the spoiler enter your earthly paradise, and convert that joyous scene into a desert, by the death of the most endeared objects of your affection! What! depend for your supreme felicity on the frail tenure of a beating pulse! Death enters, not only the scenes of discord and strife, but also into those of the purest love and sweetest harmony: and, disregarding the entreaties of connubial or parental love, bears off the object to which, more than all the universe besides, you looked for your bliss. Where, then, will you find satisfaction? The finite has failed, and the infinite has not been sought; the human and earthly has been taken away, and the divine and heavenly has not been acquired? That one death has covered earth with sackcloth, and has thrown a pall over all that it contains. Is happiness, then, to be found amidst such uncertainties? Is it not

building upon a quicksand, or pitching our tent upon the banks of a river perpetually liable to be swollen by inundations?

And if no affecting changes take place, what mixtures of care and vexation corrupt the nature and diminish the amount of earthly enjoyment! What labour is necessary for the acquisition of it! How is the strength exhausted and the spirit wearied in the chase, till the pursuer sits down jaded and faint, confessing with a groan that the object, let it turn out what it may, can scarcely pay for all this expenditure of toil and time. Then there is the disappointment of high-raised hopes, and exaggerated expectations; for, does not fruition always fall short of anticipation? Every object of earthly hope looks best when viewed in profile, or from behind; its face rarely equals expectation when it stops, turns round, and yields to our possession. Then there is the care about retaining, and the fear of losing our comforts. Care is the shadow of possession, and the larger the substance the broader the shadow it reflects. Fear, in such a world as this, where there are so many things to disturb and distress, is the natural associate of our enjoyments, and the stronger our affection the deeper is our jealousy, and the greater our dread of losing them. Then, what a slight admixture of what is painful disgusting and annoying will taint and spoil the greatest abundance and possession of what is agreeable and delightful! How full and sweet a cup will one drop of wormwood embitter! Reckon up how many things must enter into the composition of earthly enjoyment, the absence of one of which will spoil the whole! Calculate the number of ingredients, company, health, ease of mind, weather, and self-approbation,

necessary for a single day's pleasure! A man may have riches, but not health; he may have both these, and not have pleasant friends; he may have all three, and not an easy conscience; and he may have even this, in addition to the rest, and yet have a fear of to-morrow. The least untoward accident is enough to cross all our delight. Such is the peevishness of human nature, that if we have not all we want, we find little pleasure in what we have. And as we are more prone to dwell upon our crosses than our comforts, how vain it is to expect happiness from a world where the former are so numerous and the latter so precarious!

How soon also the pleasures of earth grow insipid, to him who has them ever at command, and in abundance! Enjoyment exhausts itself, and the laugh ends in a tear, He who fathoms worldly delights soon touches the bottom, and finds it to be mud, Time, repetition, and custom, wear out enjoyment; and reflection breeds satiety, if not disgust. It is with those who give themselves up to worldly good, as it is with those who dwell among perfumes, they enjoy them not, as others do who come but seldom within their influence.

What will these things do in the day of Death? I pass by many of the scenes of life, or only allude to them in the general manner I have already done, such as the hour of sickness and the season of an unquiet conscience, and call you to anticipate the last and greatest change you must pass through, I mean the hour of death, Oh! think of that awful scene, when you will find yourself beyond the possibility of mistaking your position, and feel that you are upon the very borders of the grave, where you will see the world every

moment receding, and eternity as rapidly advancing! Oh! to feel hope each day growing weaker, and the dread reality of death becoming each day more certain and more near! To read your sentence in the solemn awe of every countenance, and to feel it in the unutterable sensations of your own exhausted frame! What can stand by you then, and comfort you, if this world has been your only object? What will shine into your dark chamber and still darker mind? What will calm your perturbation and enliven your spirit? Your gay companions like not the bed of death; it is not a scene for them, and they will forsake you, or only prove a kind of external conscience reminding you of your sins, as your own internal conscience reminds you of them from within; their presence will accuse you of sins they committed at your enticement, or that you committed at theirs. Will riches comfort you then? What, when you have nothing to do with them but sign them away to another, and nothing shall remain of them to yourself, but the guilt contracted to obtain them to the neglect of your soul, and the loss of salvation? Sensual pleasures will depart. Honour, rank, and fame, will not stop a single pang of the body, quiet a syllable of the accusations of conscience, or give one cheerful hope of immortality. All things will look ruthfully and impotently upon you, and, like ghosts of former possessions, glide silently and sullenly away before you, shedding no ray of light upon the gloom that is thickening around you; nor uttering a whisper of consolation in answer to your calls for help. How will your sins rise to your recollection in that fearful scene! Conscience will seem then to be busy in collecting them altogether; multitudes that you had for-

gotten it shall now remind you of in death; and shalt bind them as an intolerable load upon your spirit, with which to go into eternity and through it.* Fearful is the death of the worldling! Oh, from what he departs, to what he goes! What a parting! To leave all he loved and admired, and go he knows not where! To have acquired nothing; saved nothing, but what he can no longer keep; and to be about, after crossing the dark waters of death, to be set ashore in a vast and black eternity, naked and destitute, with nothing to relieve, support, or comfort him. Such is the end of those who spend life in saying “Who will show us any good?”

And who shall describe the scene that follows? It is done by one whose awful pencil was guided by an unerring hand. “The rich man died and was buried, and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments.” Luke xvi. Turn to the chapter and read it through.

This is a fearful picture. Of what? An infidel? No. An immoral and profligate man? No. A bloody tyrant? No. A remorseless oppressor of the poor? No. But of a worldling. Of a man who said, “Who will show us any good?” Of a man whose sin was that he sought his happiness entirely from earthly sources. It was not our Lord’s intention to describe a man of ill-gotten wealth, but one whose whole happiness was derived from his wealth: one who cared for nothing but what he saw, and tasted, and handled, and felt, who had what he sought, and then, having passed his time in a life of sense instead of a life of faith, went away to spend his eternity in a state of banishment from that God whose favour was never, in his estimation, essential to his happiness.

* See Bishop Hopkins on the “Vanity of the World.”

Such a termination of his sensual course is just what the worldling might expect and ought to expect; for if he slighted God's favour, and did not even seek for it; if he made himself, or strove to make himself, happy without it; if he valued everything more than God, and set his wealth, or rank, or fame, or pleasure, above God's love; if he cared not for salvation, and thought heaven of such little consequence, as not to be worth his pursuit; has he any reason to complain of being denied that which he never asked for, and which he is not fit for? In banishing such a man from heaven God does but give him his choice: does but leave him to himself. There ends the earthly course, and begins the eternal one, of him who seeks for happiness below the skies.

Now observe the people of God in the enjoyment of their sources of happiness. We have considered its nature, and have seen that it is the same in kind as that of Adam in Paradise, and of the inhabitants of heaven, though of course far less in degree than theirs, it is the favour of God. They have indeed their happiness. Dream not that their place of abode is a barren desert, where no floweret is seen, and nothing verdant ever grows; or a gloomy vale, so dark, so deep, as to exclude every ray of sunshine; a region of sighs and tears, where no smile of delight ever irradiates the brow, no note of joy ever sounds from the lip. Spare your pity; they need it not, but keep it for yourselves. They have discovered the springs of true delight, and, with a joy something like that of the ancient geometrician, exclaim, "I have found it! I have found it!" "O God, thy favour is life, and thy loving-kindness is better than life." Religion is bliss, The truly pious man is the truly blessed

one. Christianity contains the secret of happiness. It was foreshadowed by the prophets as blessing all the nations. It was ushered into the world by an angel's voice as glad tidings of great joy to all people, and it lighted on our sorrowful earth in the form of the infant Saviour, as the messenger of peace. Its developement by the ministry of Christ and the writings of his apostles, while all the philosophers of Greece and Rome were ignorantly inquiring in what happiness consisted, and where it was to be found, revealed its true nature and its only source. The Bible is for ever challenging attention to the blessedness of the children of God. And believers in reply to its repeated injunctions to them to "Rejoice in the Lord," and to "Rejoice evermore," respond, "We joy in God through Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the reconciliation." Yea Christianity has so great a power, and so obvious a tendency to bless, that the very frame and temper of a truly christian mind is an habitual joyfulness, prevailing over all the temporary occasions of sorrow that can occur. Nor is this a mere theory, which cannot be reduced to practice; for we find, from the testimony of Scripture, observation, and experience, that true christians have seen in the Gospel such causes of joy as have lifted them above their trials, and enabled them to say, "Though sorrowful, we are always rejoicing, and glory in tribulations also with joy unspeakable and full of glory." Not only have christians been comforted in their afflictions, but also upon their death-beds, as we shall presently consider, and martyrs have sung in their dungeons and in flames, by the power of faith in Christ.

In a former page I have represented the happiness of

the people of God as arising from the Divine favour, and I shall now set before you in detail, the various benefits which are the fruits of this favour.

1. As one of the fruits of this love all a christian's sins are pardoned, and he himself is received into the number of the justified ones. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Blessed state, to be freed from the condemnation of the law and the wrath of God, to stand justified before him, and looking up through Christ, to see a smile upon his countenance, and hear his voice proclaiming, "Go in peace, thy faith hath saved thee, thy sins are all forgiven thee!" How ineffably delightful to approach the infinite and Holy One, with the consciousness that now no bolt is in his hand, no terror clothes his brow, but that his paternal love beams forth in every look! Who shall tell, or who can doubt, the felicity of living under the unclouded sun of God's forgiving love?

2. Connected with this, or in one view identical with it, is the blessedness of being considered and loved as a child of God. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God!" A child of God! What an idea! How much of dignity and felicity must attach to such a relationship! To stand related to the infinite and eternal Father of the universe, by the choice of his own adopting mercy, as his child; and as his child to be considered, owned, treated, loved! Mysterious condescension! Marvellous grace! Unparalleled honour! Yet this is the felicity of every true christian: and to complete the distinction, he is blessed with the spirit of adoption. Thus said the apostle, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the spirit

of adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father!" And in this childlike spirit we have the evidence of our childlike relation, for it is added, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." To consider God as our loving Father, to look up to him, to come to him, to feel towards him as such! Is not this happiness?

3. Another fruit of God's love to us is the exercise of our love to him. "We love him because he first loved us." The christian who believes the love that God has to him, cannot but love him in return. The exercise of love on any object which the judgment perceives to be worthy of it is a pleasurable state of mind, and the pleasure must necessarily increase with the worthiness of the object and the intensity of the affection. Think then of the felicity of loving God in his infinity! Think of the state of that heart which goes forth in supreme regard to a being of boundless perfection, of that soul which contemplates his peerless glories, and rises in a flame of pure and strong affection to him. "I want," said the accomplished and beautiful daughter of the celebrated Cuvier, "an infinite object to love." And so do we all; and as the heart can never be satisfied without being beloved by an infinite being, so neither can it be satisfied without loving an infinite being. This is the bliss of a christian, to have one object above all on earth, which has no defect, no fault; which is unlimited and eternal; in which, as in a measureless height or a fathomless depth, it may soar or float without being confined or restrained.

4. The love of God has provided for our sanctification. Yes, this is "the will of God" and his love too,

“even our sanctification.” His affection could not leave us in our sins. Our sins are our enemies: they rob us of our peace, and fill us with wretchedness. God’s goodness bestowed not only being, but purity on Adam at his creation. His holiness was his happiness. God’s image was no less essential than his favour to Adam’s felicity. Paradise would have been no Paradise without holiness, and was none as soon as holiness was lost by the fall. It is sin that has brought misery into the world, and as long as sin reigns in the human heart it must be the seat of misery. This is the cause of the restlessness and wretchedness of the human race; they blame their circumstances, and trace up to them the causes of their uneasiness; but those causes exist in themselves. Take a dislocated body and lay it upon a bed of down, it is almost as uneasy as upon a bed of wood or stone, for the cause of pain is in itself. So it is with the soul. Let a man be in health, he is restless and discontented; and, amidst the greatest abundance, is almost as dissatisfied as the poor man in his cot. And why? Because his heart is under the power of sin. Till the soul is renewed and sanctified, the passions subdued, the appetites controlled, the corruptions of the fallen nature mortified, the temper regulated, and besetting sins abandoned, there can be no peace for the mind. Now the love of God has provided for this in the scheme of redemption. Faith in Christ works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. It operates an entire change of mind, heart, and conduct. It puts away the works of the flesh, and produces the fruits of the Spirit. It does not make a man perfect, but it makes him holy. It cuts off sinful

actions, expels sinful tastes, and casts out sinful feelings. It breaks the fetters of sin, and gives the liberty of true holiness: and this is happiness.

5. The Word of God assures the believer that “all things work together for good to them that love him, to them that are called according to his purpose.” “What an assurance! How tranquillizing, amidst all the trials, calamities, losses, and anxieties of life, to know that infinite love is employing omniscience and omnipotence to render the mixed good and evil, of which our history is made up, productive of benefit to us: to be assured that every tear is to end in a smile; every groan in a song; every loss in a gain; and that all our pains are ultimately to increase our pleasures! This is to gather grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles. And this is the happiness of those who live by faith instead of sense.

6. The christian who seeks his happiness in God finds delight in the various exercises of devotion. What to others is a mere duty reluctantly performed, gladly ended or laid aside, is to him a privilege: what to others is a penance, rigorous and unwelcome, taken up to still the clamour or to avoid the stings of an uneasy conscience, is to him the indulgence of his taste, the impulse of affection, the enjoyment of a blessing. Prayer is the offering of a heart that feels honoured and happy to speak to God; the spirit of adoption in a child crying Father Father, to God, and loving to lighten its cares, to alleviate its sorrow, to give utterance to its affection, and to express its wants by pouring out its soul to the God of love. Oh, what a felicity is there in prayer to him who presents it in faith, fervour,

and the spirit of adoption; its words as they flow from his lips, come over the stormy cares and sorrows of the troubled spirit, like the voice of Jesus to the winds and billows of the sea of Tiberias, saying, "Peace, be still!" It lifts the soul half way between the conquered earth and the opened heaven; raises it above the shreds and fragments of the broken cisterns and their spilt contents, and places it at the fountain of living waters, opening the heart to receive the fulness of God, and bringing the fulness of God into the opened heart.

How precious to the christian are God's thoughts expressed in God's words in the Scriptures: and how delightful is the perusal of them! In reading this Divine Book he exclaims, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honey-comb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned, and in keeping them there is great reward." Everything connected with the Bible is dear to his heart, and its parts contain so many sources of pure enjoyment, whether its sublime truths, its gracious invitations, its precious promises, its boundless prospects, its holy precepts, or its cheering prophecies. A single passage sometimes dwells upon his mind for hours, and feasts his soul as with manna from heaven. The discovery of a new meaning in some promise, precept, or prediction, unseen before, is like the joy of the botanist or geologist in coming upon a new specimen in his favourite science. Some blessed

word is ever coming with fresh and balmy power to his anxious or troubled mind, proving its adaptation to all the various and changing scenes of life.

And then the sacred and solemn repose of the sabbatic rest, of that hallowed day which the worldling devotes to sensual delights! How calm, how serene, how soothing the hymn of praise, the communion of saints, the unfolding and application of the word, the remembrance of the crucified, and the anticipation of the glorified Saviour in the sanctuary of God! is there no happiness in this?

All these exercises are not only duties but privileges to true christians, to all who, as the sons of God, have a blessed freedom in his ways. They are not drawn to heavenly things by the terrors of the law, or dragged to them by the chains of death and hell. Their duties are not extorted from them by the pressure of a spirit of bondage; nor are they the convulsive motions of a carnal dead soul, produced by the shock of some spiritual galvanism; but the spontaneous, intelligent, and pleasurable activities of a living soul, into which a holy vitality has been infused by the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. The law is in their hearts; yea, the divine law-giver himself dwells there; the beauty of the command attracts them; the rectitude of the authority convinces them; the love of Christ constrains them; the delightfulness of the service engages them; the great rewards in heaven nerve them; the Holy Spirit inspires obedience into them; holiness becomes as natural and as agreeable to them as it is for the eye to see, the ear to hear, the palate to taste;

“They walk, run, fly all, in the pure ways towards eternal happiness; they are no longer shut up in the straits of sin, nor their

faculties confined in the narrow dimensions of earth: but they walk abroad in the liberty of an emancipated spirit amidst the amplitude of divine, heavenly, and eternal realities; their hearts rest not in finite things, but go to the Infinite One; their thoughts are upon the first good, their aim at the last end; their liberty is joined to its great fountain; their motion is to the true centre; and this is a right, noble, royal posture of soul towards God, in whom all! our happiness is."

7. Then behold the people of God in the believing, hopeful prospect of everlasting life. "Rejoicing in hope of the glory of God." What an object, what a hope, and what a joy! Infinite and eternal glory, awakening an assured hope, and giving rise to an exuberant felicity. With them heaven is not a mere word, a term for some place they know not where, and of some bliss they know not what. They know its meaning as importing the arrival of the soul in the presence of God, where there is fulness of joy, and at its station at his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore; where it will see Christ as He is, and be like Him; where it will be perfectly holy: and in the light of perfect knowledge, the glow of perfect love, the purity of perfect virtue, and in communion with saints and angels, be happy without imperfection, interruption, or end. Such is the heaven which the believer hopes for, and which shines upon his earthly path from the page of Scripture, like a glowing firmament above his head, and which follows him with its rays into every place, illuminating the darkest and gilding the dreariest scenes through which he may have to pass. Blessed man, whether he dwell in an earthly paradise or a wilderness: whether he enjoy the activity of health, or suffer the languor of disease, he carries about with him a hope full of immortality. If all be dark below, brightness comes from above. If earth be one vast desert, where no verdant spot can be

seen in all the future, yet in the distance arc seen “the delectable mountains,” the everlasting hills, on which the souls of the blessed shall rest, and breathe the air of immortality: and he is moving towards them: every step brings him nearer, and he will soon be there. Hope, with him, is not a mere vague, loose, fluctuating expectation; but a firm, well-grounded, settled anticipation. He can say “For we know that if the earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” He has much, perhaps, on earth, and if he die he must lose it all; but still to die is gain; for if he goes from much he goes to infinitely more. On the other hand, if he has little except sorrow, the moment of his death is the termination of his grief, and the commencement of his everlasting and uninterrupted felicity. Is not this happiness?

Such, then, is the nature, and such are the sources of a christian’s felicity; and it may be mentioned as one of its strongest recommendations, that it is independent of external circumstances, it requires neither wealth nor fame; neither health nor company, for its enjoyment. When by the vicissitudes of life the child of God is deprived of his property, and he is called to descend from the lofty heights of prosperity into the dark and humble vale of poverty, his faith, and all its blessed fruits and privileges, descend with him, to irradiate the gloom, and throw a cheerful aspect over the scene of desolation. “All is not lost,” he exclaims, as he looks up to heaven and onward to eternity; “I am still rich in spiritual blessings and immortal hopes. I am surrounded by the wrecks and fragments of broken cisterns, but there is the fountain still full and flowing. My

noblest fortune is untouched, for that is God. I seem to rejoice more than ever in Christ, now that I have nothing else to rejoice in; and the objects of Divine and immortal glory appear the brighter, like the stars of heaven at night, by the darkness that surrounds me, and from the midst of which I view them.”

But besides the loss of property, christians, like others, are exposed to the attacks of disease. “Wearisome nights, and months of vanity, are appointed to them;” but their religion follows them into the sick chamber, and is their nurse, their companion, and their comforter, giving patience in the day, and songs even in the night. How soothing are its consolations, how pleasant are its reflections, how bright are its anticipations! It speaks to the sufferers of the sources of their sorrows, and tells them that they all proceed from their Father in heaven; reminds them of His unerring wisdom, His infinite love, His unfailing fidelity, His gracious presence in the scene of woe, His merciful design in every chastisement of His hand, and the blissful issue in which He will cause all to terminate. They can bear confinement, for God is with them. Their hours are not made heavy and irksome by the recollection of the gay scenes from which they are cut off, and the amusements to which they have no longer access. Their entertainment has come with them; they have brought the cup of their pleasure with them, and they can drink it amidst the languor of disease, as a refreshing cordial, or an exhilarating draught.

Nor is the dark valley of the shadow of death a land of barrenness and drought, a scene of unmixed gloom, a spot impervious to every ray of true felicity. The christian can see the lights of his earthly comfort go out

one after another without the fear of being left in rayless night. Generally speaking, he is more than submissive, composed, and tranquil amidst that awful scene. No accent is more common, from the lips of a dying believer, than "Happy! happy!" Yes, happy even then. Their faith in Christ, and hope of heaven, seem then to put forth all their power. They see the last enemy advance, step by step, losing something of his terrors at every step of his approach, till, as he stands before them, lifting up his dart, and preparing to strike, they look at him with a smile, and exclaim, "Strike! I am prepared. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Though I fall I shall arise, and be more than conqueror, through him that hath loved me. Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." God seems in a very remarkable manner to bless and comfort his dying children. Many who have walked their pilgrimage amidst some degree of doubts and fears about their safety, have lost it all then, and have gone through the gloomy passage singing with raptures the song of assurance, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day." Such has been the fulness of grace poured into their souls, and such the light of glory that has beamed upon them from heaven, that fond mothers have been willing to leave their children, and affectionate husbands their wives, to depart and be with Christ.

But I do not mean to say or insinuate that even the people of God are perfectly happy in this world. For that is impossible! Subject to all the ills of life in common with others, and to the imperfections of a nature but partially sanctified, they can have acquired only the

knowledge of what is happiness, with the mere commencement of its enjoyment. But even this is a blessed privilege, It is an unspeakable advantage to have our mistakes rectified, and to possess the truth au such au important point. It is a matter of thankfulness to be taken off from the pursuit of shadows, and to be introduced to the path that leads to the substance and the reality, If they have only the seeds of felicity sown in them, that is a mercy. In this respect they are favoured; for light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart, And though they often appear but clods of the earth, ploughed up, harrowed, and broken by affliction; yet is there that blessed seed cast in them, that will certainly sprout up to immortality and eternal life; as all the beauties of a flower lie couched in a small unsightly seed. But the children of God have more than the seed of heavenly bliss upon earth, they have its first fruits, In the joys of faith and holiness, the consolations and graces of the Holy Spirit, they have the earnest of heavenly felicity. They know the kind of happiness that awaits them, though they are as much at a loss to know the full measure of it, as a child of a year or two old can know the kind of life he is to live, all earth, and the full measure of animal, intellectual, moral, and social existence he is to enjoy in the maturity of his age and of his acquirements. This is heaven; the perfect knowledge of God, the perfect enjoyment of his favour, the perfect love of his infinite excellences, perfect obedience to his commands, perfect conformity to his image, all this by a soul refined in its tastes, enlarged in its capacity, and immortal in its duration: and there is nothing of all this which the child of God does not begin to receive on earth. What other

sources of enjoyment will be open to the blessed in heaven it is not for us now to know, or even to conjecture, doubtless there are some which it is impossible for us to understand; but the fountain of delight will be God, and its essence the enjoyment of his love. He is the first truth; the chief good; beyond which nothing higher remains to be known, nothing richer to be enjoyed.

And now, reader, may I ask to which of these two classes you belong? Are you among the "many" who say, "Who will show us any good?" or among the few who pray, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us?" Are you seeking happiness from earthly, or from heavenly things? To one or the other you must belong. There is no neutral ground, no midway spot, between things seen and temporal, and things unseen and eternal. What is it you covet, count upon, look to, for happiness? Is it the favour of God, or the world? What way does your heart turn, and to what does it point? You must know; you do know.

Perhaps some are attempting to unite both, and are seeking to derive happiness from the world and from religion too. It is a vain attempt, an impracticable effort. Remember, the question is whether we can give our hearts both to God and the world. I am now speaking of the supreme felicity; and, as there cannot be two supreme objects, the question is, which is supreme, God or the world? He who loves anything, or covets anything, more than God's love to him cannot be a christian. And it is perfectly clear that while to every real christian there is nothing that can be loved more, and enjoyed more than God, so there are many things that cannot be loved and followed at all. They

are of a nature so opposite, that they become tasteless and even nauseous to the soul that delights in God. He who is taken up in seeking after the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, who believes and rejoices in Christ, who loves to commune with his Father in heaven, who is in the habit of enjoying the favour of the Most High, who is looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is daily conversing with such matters as are revealed in the Bible, and makes them the subject of meditation and prayer, cannot really be supposed to have any taste for the fashionable follies and gay amusements of life. To enjoy the love of God in the morning, and the theatre, ball, or rout in the evening; or, on the same evening to go from a pious and delightful meditation upon the Scripture, to enjoy a game of cards, a dance, or a fashionable soiree, are tastes so dissimilar that they cannot co-exist in the same mind. So neither can a supreme love of wealth, or a supreme delight in home, or friends, or science, or literature, comport with a supreme love to God. If there be anything we prefer to God's favour, no matter what it is, we cannot be his children. All attempts, therefore, to reconcile the love of God and the love of the world are vain and nugatory. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." So says the word of God. And Christ himself has declared that we cannot serve God and Mammon. You must, therefore, make your choice.

Perhaps you are ready to say you do not see that christians are happier than others; and that many of them appear far less so. There is some truth in the

remark, but it admits of a satisfactory answer. Many that call themselves christians are not so in reality. They are not hypocrites probably, but mere self-deceived formalists. They have never truly believed in Christ, nor experienced that great spiritual change, which is called being "born again," and without which there is no true love to God, or delight in His favour. Their profession of religion has separated them from worldly society and worldly amusements, without introducing them to the felicities of religion itself. They are like Lot's wife, apparently fleeing from Sodom, but still leaving their hearts there. Others again are good people, but are yet only partially instructed in the extent and richness of their privileges; it is the infancy of their knowledge, and they do not fully understand the right and title of a believer in the Gospel, to joy unspeakable. Or perhaps some whom you may happen to know are of a gloomy and nervous temperament, constitutionally prone to melancholy, and whom nothing earthly or heavenly can make as cheerful as some others. And then again your idea of happiness may be incorrect. You may confound it with laughter, merriment, levity, frivolity, or amusement, and suppose, that because you do not see these things in the people of God, they must be miserable. Their enjoyment, however, is serious, deep, inward. It is peace, contentment, satisfaction. It is the stillness not the bustle of enjoyment; it is the repose, the tranquillity, and serenity of a heart that has found rest from its weary pursuits and frequent disappointments: it is the sanctity of happiness, the happiness of sanctity: grave, but not gloomy; serious, but not sad: and, on the other hand, cheerful, but not

light; lively, but not trifling; in short, it is the commencement of the bliss of heaven, deep, devout, holy, which the worldling can as little understand as he does the source from which it flows.

In addition to my own remarks, I introduce those of a justly celebrated writer:

“It is true they are not happy after the manner in which you account of happiness; not happy if the true signs of that state be a volatile spirit, a continual glitter of mirth, a dissipation of time and mind among trifles, a dread of reflection and solitude, all eager pursuit of amusements; in short, a prevailing thoughtlessness, the chief propensions of which are for the study of matters of appearance and fashion; the servile care of faithfully imitating the habits and notions of a class; or perhaps the acquirement of accomplishments or show. It must be confessed they have thoughts too grave, the sense of too weighty an interest, a conscience too solicitous, and purposes too high, to permit them any rivalry with the votaries of such felicity. Certainly they have a dignity in their vocation which denies them the pleasure of being frivolous. But you will see them often cheerful, and sometimes animated. And their animation is of a deeper tone than that of your sportive creatures; it may have less of animal briskness, but there is more soul in it. It is the action and fire of the greater passions, directed to greater objects. Their emotions are more internal and cordial; they can be cherished and abide within the heart, with a prolonged, deep, vital glow; while those which spring in minds devoid of reflection and religion, seem to give no pleasure but in being thrown off in volatile spirits at the surface. Did you think that these disciples of religion must renounce the love of pleasure? Look then at their policy in securing it. The most unfortunate calculation for pleasure is to live expressly for it: they live primarily for duty, and pleasure comes as a certain consequence. There is also, in the happiness of religion, what may be called a principle of accumulation; it does not vanish in the enjoyment, but, while passing as a sentiment, remains a reflection, and grows into a store of complacent consciousness, which the mind retains as a possession, left by what has been possessed. To have had such pleasure is pleasure; and is so still the more, the more of it is past. Whereas the delights of the children of fully when past are wholly gone, leaving nothing to go into a calm, habitual sense of being happy. Their

pleasure is a blaze which consumes entirely the material on which it is lighted." Foster's Introduction to Doddridge's "Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul."

It is possible you may have been also led to form incorrect notions of the happiness of religion, by the somewhat injudicious and even inaccurate representations given of it by some writers and preachers. In their benevolent ardour for the salvation of souls, and their deep conviction of the necessity of religion for this purpose, they have drawn a picture of true piety in which they have suppressed all the darker shades, the austerer characteristics of personal godliness; and have given a representation illuminated nearly all over with delightful images. There is the way of pleasantness and the path of peace, but not the hill of difficulty, and the slough of despond; the bright sky and flowery verdant path, but not the storm and the rugged road; the shout and laurel of victory, but not the tug of war; the glittering crown, but not the heavy cross. The christian is represented rather as in Paradise, than as urging a hopeful though often a weary course to its happy bowers. But religion has its pains as well as its pleasures, just because it comes from heaven to maintain a deadly conflict in the soul with principles and dispositions which are rebellious against heaven, and destructive to the soul itself. It lights upon the path of man in the capacity of a tutelary spirit, to take in charge "a perverted, sinful, tempted being, who must be humbled and reclaimed, taught many mortifying lessons, disciplined through a series of many corrections, reprov'd, restrained, and incited, and thus conducted onward in advancing preparation for the happiness of another world." Such an agent, having such a subject

in charge, having to train the wayward child of earth for the pure felicities of heaven, “must be the inflictor of many pains during the progress of its beneficent guardianship.” This is sufficient to account for that serious and occasionally sombre aspect under which piety presents itself to your notice in those who are its true subjects. And what does all this prove and teach?. Not that the ways of wisdom have no pleasantness, and her paths no peace; but that the pleasure is not so unalloyed, nor the peace so unmolested, as some of its injudicious friends would represent.

Of those, and they are many, who in the midst of wealth, fashion, and pleasure, are ready at times to fancy they want nothing, or but little, to complete their felicity, I ask, are there no moments when even you echo the word “vanity!” which comes from so many quarters around you? When even your spirit sighs for something higher and better than all you possess? Are there no seasons of satiety, langour, disappointment, and ennui, when you are made to feel that the soul of man cannot be satisfied with things seen and temporal? No midnight communings with your own heart, when the painted vizor falls off from the face of the world, and it stands before you a detected impostor? Be admonished, then, to turn to the fountain of all good. Seek the favour of God, through Christ. Drink the crystal stream at which angels and spirits made perfect inhale full draughts of bliss. Share the felicities of immortality. Anticipate heaven. Begin the everlasting career of a soul going on from joy to joy in the presence and favour of God.

But there are others, who sitting down amidst the wreck of their possessions, the memorials of their de-

parted happiness, the scenes of disappointments, and the presages of future woe, exclaim with a sigh, "These tell me of enjoyments past, and those of sorrows yet to come." "I have been so often," say you, "and so bitterly mocked with the shadows of enjoyment, that I have abandoned the pursuit, and under the iron hand of necessity am engaged, as the last resource of despair, in endeavouring to reconcile myself to wretchedness, and to extract one single drop of comfort, the only one I can hope for, from the consideration that felicity is in my case an impossibility." Stop, ere you come to such a conclusion, and weigh well what I now address to you. Have you never heard of one who came into our world "to bind up the broken heart, and to comfort all that mourn?" One who, as he stood amidst the sinful and sorrowful children of man, said, in accents of exquisite tenderness, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." How soothing is this language! What music to the troubled spirit! It is the language of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, speaking as the Saviour of man, and inviting all the sons and daughters of woe to the fountain of happiness which is opened in the gospel of his salvation. Thousands attracted by the sound, and led merely by the instinctive longings after enjoyment which every heart feels, but which in them had been so often disappointed, have come to the Gospel as to a last and forlorn experiment, when every other resource has failed. And oh, what an unlooked for discovery have they made! They who had found no resting place in the world, and who had wandered through it in quest of some object, however insignificant, that might inte-

rest them, and for a moment at least remove the sense of that hopeless languor which lay dead upon their hearts, find now an object which their widest desires cannot grasp, even filial communion with God here, and the full enjoyment of him through the glorious eternity on the very threshold of which they now stand. They who have felt themselves too weak to resist the storms and roughnesses of life, have learned to lean with confidence on Omnipotence; and they who saw nothing in their present circumstances, or their future prospects, but one interminable waste of woe, in which even the grave had lost its terrors, compared with the desolate path which led to it, suddenly found themselves surrounded with the provisions of all-sufficient love. And what caused the wondrous change? What saved them from despair and raised them to the full assurance of hope? What produced a transition so great and so sudden, and which gave them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness? What? Mark well the answer! Faith! They believed the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is the grand secret of human happiness. It is all wrapped up in that common, but transcendently momentous monosyllable, Faith! As our Lord said to the agonized parent who brought him his possessed child to be healed, "Only believe;" so do I say to the man searching after happiness, "Only believe!" That one step transports the soul, from the regions of otherwise hopeless sorrow, to the land of peace and joy. Nothing stands between the sad heart and immediate blessedness but unbelief; that gone, and faith come in its place, happiness begins.

The Gospel is the grand catholicon, the comforter

of sinful and sorrowful man. But what is the Gospel? The glad-tidings announced in such passages as the following: "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." Such is the Gospel: the announcement that God loves our guilty race, has given his Son for their salvation, and will pardon, sanctify, and eternally save all who believe these facts and with a penitent heart rest upon Christ for salvation. The real belief of this, which is faith, cannot fail to give peace to the conscience, joy to the heart. Can a man really believe that God loves him, that the Eternal is favourably disposed towards him, that all his sins are pardoned, and heaven secured to him, and not be glad, grateful, and happy? This faith we are called upon to have, and to exercise the next moment. It is true now that God loves our race, that Christ has died for us, and salvation with all its infinite and eternal blessings is offered; and therefore we are invited without a moment's delay to believe and come into the favour of God, the blessedness of his children, and the hope of eternal life. It is in Christ we are to rejoice, as well as to believe, and therefore are called upon to rejoice at once, for he is all, and his salvation is all, that they ever will or can be. No long waiting or pious works can meeten you for faith: on the contrary, faith is the spring and principle of all good works. We can do nothing good till we believe.

It is this wondrous and beautiful simplicity of the Gospel method of salvation that prevents multitudes from understanding it; they are searching about for

some great thing which they think they must do to conciliate the Divine regard by making atonement for their past sins; forgetting that the atonement has been made by the Lord Jesus Christ, and that the only thing required from them, in order to participate in its effects, is to believe this fact, and to take to their bosom the peace it is calculated to afford. It is a mistake to suppose that God is unwilling to save the sinner; it is the sinner that is unwilling to be saved by God. "As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." "God is love," and is waiting and willing to confer all the benefits of His infinite benevolence on those who really believe in His mercy, and in a spirit of confiding dependence trust to His promise. You can easily perceive how great an influence such a faith must have on all your feelings, actions, and character. Though there is no merit in faith, there is wondrous power. It is the inlet both of happiness and holiness to the soul. To believe that the eternal God is reconciled to us through the mediation of His Son, that He pardons all our sins, receives us to His special favour, gives us a title to eternal life, must from necessity be a source of ineffable delight, and the cause of an entire change in all our tastes, pursuits, and character. If there were a fellow creature on whose favour our life, liberty, or fortune depended, whom we had made our enemy, and whose anger we had incurred, we should of course dread and dislike him as long as we believed him to be opposed to us; but if a kindly message was sent by him, assuring us of his favourable disposition, that he was still our friend, and waiting, after our acknowledging our fault, to lay aside his displeasure, and to bestow upon us inestimable benefits, our belief of the

message, if we really did believe it, would instantly change the whole state of our mind and conduct towards him; enmity would give place to love, dread to desire, fear to hope, sorrow to joy. We should hasten to his presence, throw ourselves at his feet, express as far as words could allow it, our gratitude, and be very anxious to please him. Like this is the change which faith in the Gospel produces in the heart and conduct of a sinner towards God, as soon as he believes the love which God has for him, as that love is expressed in the Gospel. It is the element of happiness, the means of holiness, the spring of all religious action, and the true basis of the religious character.

Sorrowful reader, here is happiness. "Men shall be blessed in him," said the Psalmist, when speaking of the Messiah. The fountain of human happiness was unsealed when Christ was born. "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy!" said the angel; "for unto you is born this day a Saviour, which is Christ, the Lord!" This message was dictated by him who made the heart, and knows what is fitted to give it joy. The Gospel addresses us not simply as sinful, but as miserable. God invites us to come and be made happy. He meets the natural cry of misery, and the weary and undefined cravings of the unsatisfied spirit. His loudest and most general invitations, both in the Old and New Testament, are all addressed primarily, not to the moral, but to the natural feelings; to the sense of misery and the desire of happiness. "Oh, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for

that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." Try this simple, and Scriptural, and effectual way to happiness; it is the shortest, the best, the only road. Countless millions have tried other methods, and have all failed, and have died lamenting their folly in seeking their felicity from earth and earthly things. Who ever lamented their folly in seeking their happiness from God? Who in sickness, in misfortune, in death, repented they had believed in Christ, and attended to religion as a personal and experimental concern? Seek that happiness then which will stand by you when everything else fails, and abide with you amidst the changing scenes of life; which will sustain you amidst the agonies of the last conflict; which will go with you into the unseen world; and which in eternity will fill and satisfy the powers of your glorified spirit: and fill and satisfy them for ever, without satiety, and without interruption. To possess this you must quit the many who say, "Who will shew us any good?" and be among the few who adopt and present the prayer of the Psalmist, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us!"

**THE SABBATH,
ITS RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE A NATIONAL DUTY AND A
NATIONAL BLESSING.**

A TRACT FOR THE TIMES.

If I appeal, in this tract, to the subjects of the British Empire at large, from the Queen upon the throne to the meanest individual in the realm, it is not that I have the vanity to suppose I shall be heard by an audience so comprehensive and so august; but because, in common with my fellow-labourers in this good work, I present a topic which is interesting to all alike, and demands from all the most serious and solemn attention. The man in whose bosom the ardour of patriotism glows will not allow his modesty to hush his voice in silence, when, however obscure he may be, he can by lifting it up, multiply the echoes of an injunction from heaven on obedience to which the welfare of his country depends. It is therefore not only excusable but commendable in the humblest member of the greatest nation, to address his country when he has anything to communicate for the promotion of its welfare, provided it be uttered in language at once serious dignified and respectful.

The Sabbath is appointed for a nation collectively, as well as for the churches families and individuals of which it is composed; and though the religion of a country is but the amount of the practical piety of its individual inhabitants, and thus there can be no hope of national regeneration which is not based upon the regeneration of individuals, it is well sometimes to consider the aspect which this subject bears upon the obligations and the interests of the empire viewed in its aggregate form. I

appeal then to my countrymen viewed as citizens as well as christians, and beg from their patriotism that attention which would possibly be refused me by their religion. Yet why should these two be separated, and indeed how can they be separated? If patriotism mean, not what it signified to the ear of an ancient Roman (the wish and the right to crush other nations to build upon their ruins the greatness of his own), but a sincere desire, by every legitimate means, to promote our country's welfare, then is this virtue nothing else but true religion viewed in its relation to the land of our nativity. I crave then attention to the following remarks from every inhabitant of this United Kingdom into whose hands this tract may fall. The substance of many if not most of them may have been anticipated by some of the writers who have preceded me in the fellowship of literary labour on behalf of the holy Sabbath; this is what must be expected, considering that no specific subject of discussion is allotted to me, and that I have only to deliver a concluding practical address.

I. Religion is essential to the well-being of a nation. When I say religion I of course do not mean any system of ecclesiastical polity, or any mere ritual observances. On those points good men differ; but there is no conviction in which they are more entirely agreed, than that such matters are not identical with religion, but are only the means of producing or preserving it. By religion is meant a real intelligent cordial submission of the whole man to the revealed will of God. In the absence of such a religion as this, the most scriptural form of government and of sacramental observance will avail nothing for individual salvation, and very little for national welfare.

There is a twofold way in which religion promotes the

well-being of a nation: the first is, by its own nature and tendency. It is actually necessary to the existence and continuance of national organization. A nation of atheists could not be formed so as to endure. The dreadful experiment was tried by the authors and abettors of the French Revolution, and the result has been written upon the page of history in characters of blood and horror, for the instruction of the world to the latest posterity. In the absence of religion the fabric of society is without a basis, and without cement; a mere heap of loose materials, each one of which has a principle of repugnance to all the rest. Religion, by teaching men to regulate and control their appetites and passions by reason enlightened by revelation; by subjecting selfishness to benevolence; by imprinting the idea of an ever-present God, and of accountability to him; by adding the motives of future rewards and punishments to those derived from the present advantages of virtue; by the enforcement, not only of the duties common to all, but of those which are appropriate to each individual man; by directing peculiar attention to the anti-social vices, and to the social virtues; by the support it gives to the authority of government and the force of law; and also by the encouragement it offers to the practice of righteousness in the promised help of the Holy Spirit; in all these ways promotes, as must be obvious to every thoughtful mind, the welfare of nations as such.

Nor is this all, for, secondly, Providential appointments and interpositions add their influence to the natural tendency of religion to promote national prosperity. Is it not declared in scripture that "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people?" So that while iniquity eats as a cancer into

the vital strength of an empire, the judgments of the Almighty scathe and destroy it from without, like the lightning's flash. What illustrations, as well as proofs, of this are furnished by the faithful page of history! Where are the mighty empires of antiquity which once made the earth to tremble? Scarcely a vestige of even the very ruins of some of them remains, to guide the foot of the traveller to the site of their former greatness. What caused their destruction? The inspired seers of God's chosen nation tell us with one voice, "Sin." Read or recollect the history of modern Europe, and see what countries have drunk deepest of the cup of tribulation in the times in which we live. Are they not France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, countries where tyranny, persecution, superstition, and infidelity have most extensively prevailed? If nations, as such, are ever rewarded or punished, it must be in this world, where only they exist; and though we are no longer under the covenant of temporal promises, we still may expect that God will put forth, in some intelligible manner, the tokens of His favour, or the expressions of His displeasure, according as the nations offend Him by their impiety, or please Him by their religion.

It is evident that the most religious nation, other things being equal, must, by a kind of moral necessity, be the strongest, inasmuch as the subjugation of selfishness to benevolence must concentrate general attention upon the public good. It must, at the same time, be the wealthiest and most prosperous nation, because the vices that drain off its riches will be suppressed, while the virtues which replenish the public treasury will be promoted. And then it follows of course that such a people

will be the happiest, so as to realise the beautiful language, and accomplish the patriotic words of the Psalmist when he says: "It is he that giveth salvation unto kings: who delivereth David his servant from the hateful sword. Rid me and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and whose right hand is a right hand of falsehood. That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store; that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets; that our oxen may be strong to labour; that there may be no breaking in, nor going out; that there may be no complaining in our streets. Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

From all this it is evident, sin is not only rebellion against God, but treason against our country; while piety is the purest and most efficient patriotism. The Bible is the best book yet written on the true political economy of nations, and without exhibiting a system of theoretic principles on population and wealth, it lays down precepts in reference to human conduct and the social relations, by the practice of which any nation will be prosperous and happy.

II. The general observance of the Sabbath by a nation is essential to its religion.

This observance is itself one great duty of religion, and it is necessary to the due performance of all other duties. Religion consists of two parts, piety and morality. By the first I understand a right state of heart towards God, that is the existence of supreme love, aris-

ing out of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, manifested by complacency in God's nature, reverence for His character, obedience to His commands, gratitude for His services, and all those acts of worship which He himself has enjoined in His word. By the second part of religion I mean all those moral duties which we owe to our fellow-creatures and to ourselves. Now even if it were contended that we could perform the latter without the observance of the Sabbath, we could not the former. The Sabbath is God's institute, His memorial set up for Himself first of all, and subsequently for the welfare of man. It is God's witness to the world as its Creator and Redeemer, ever delivering a most solemn and impressive testimony for him as regards his existence, works, attributes, and authority. It is a weekly proclamation from heaven of the claims of the maker upholder and governor of all things. On the dawn of every Sabbath a voice goes forth over the earth, "There is a God: Jehovah is He: He made and redeemed the world: arise and worship Him." It is true that men have other witnesses for God, especially the Bible, the church, and the Saviour, but how heedless would they be of all these if the Sabbath were forgotten! They could meet for divine worship, and thus acknowledge God on other days, if they did not assemble then: but would they? Is it probable? There are meetings on other days, but by whom are they attended? Only by those who keep holy the Sabbath, and by only a few of them. So that if the Sabbath were given up, public worship would soon be given up also, and every people would abandon all appearance of religion, and assume the aspect of a nation of atheists. How impressive a testimony for God are the silence and repose of the day of rest! How the

closed shops and the open churches, and especially the stream of population flowing through the streets at the hour of worship into the sanctuaries of religion, remind us of God! This observance of the Sabbath is the visible type, the outward expression, of a nation's religion, and is a far more emphatic testimony for Him than the buildings themselves in which the congregated multitudes assemble. Not the lofty spire nor ample tower; not the gorgeous pile, upon which architecture, sculpture, and painting have lavished their affluence, and which by the power of association fills the rapt soul with the shadows of departed centuries, bear such an impressive witness for God, as the intelligent minds, holy hearts, and heavenly-tuned tongues, gathered on the sacred day beneath its ample dome to worship God at his own selected and appointed time.

While the observance of the Sabbath is of itself one part of national religion, consider how it tends to support all other parts of it, whether relating to God or man. Let anyone examine the varied exercises of the christian sanctuaries, the prayers, the psalmody, the reading of the Scriptures, the eucharist, and especially the sermon, and he cannot fail to perceive their intimate connection with public morals and genuine piety. It may be said that the general circulation of the word of God and religious books and tracts renders the people less dependent upon the pulpit than they once were. But is it not a fact, that where one sinner even now, amidst all this abundance of religious publications, is converted from the error of his ways by private reading, twenty or even fifty are reclaimed by hearing sermons? Preaching is God's chief instrument of regeneration; it is the power of God unto salvation, and so it must

ever remain. Nothing ever will, or ever can, supersede the preacher and the sermon: the press will never supplant the pulpit. Public speaking is, in its power, in strict accordance with all the principles of our mental economy. There is a singular adaptation in the living voice and “human face divine” to the work of instructing and impressing the soul of man, the chords of which are made to vibrate to the various modulations of the speaker’s voice. What lessons of purity, temperance, and industry; of relative duties, (amongst which subjection to magistrates holds a high place), of justice, integrity, and benevolence, are taught every Sabbath: and as the result, even when the soul is not truly converted to God, what a multitude of base thoughts, unworthy inclinations, shameful designs, destructive plans, suggested by ambition, avarice, or voluptuousness, are stifled in their birth, and their execution happily prevented! How much of the peace of families, the order of society, and the well-being of nations, depends then upon the ministry of the word of God! I know very well that education, regard to public opinion, the power of law, and the salutary dread of justice, all help to repress crime and promote virtue; but what multitudes are there who need something else besides all these, to restrain them from transgression when temptation is urgent, and the hope of impunity is flattering! And what can supply this so well, and what has supplied it so frequently, as the ordinances of divine worship and the preaching of the word of God? These do more to keep up our national morality than the stringency of law and the terror of its penalties, the solemnities of trial and the most dreadful inflictions of justice. Let anyone conceive of the myriads of

churches, chapels, and school-rooms which are open every Sabbath to the millions upon millions of children and adults who are assembled within their walls, and also of the amount of moral and religious instruction which is thus made to bear upon these masses of our population, and imagine, if he can, the quantity of sin which is thus kept out or rooted out of the public mind, and the amount of virtue and piety which through God's blessing is introduced. Were all these churches chapels and school-rooms closed even for a few months; were sermons discontinued, and Sabbaths employed in business or amusement, not only would the influence of religion over the minds of the pious be well nigh extinguished, but the hold of moral obligation upon the unconverted would be relaxed, the laws of God and man would be trampled under foot, and an awful reign of unbridled sin commence. "Blind is that country, and wretched must it be, where pure religion is not taught, and where the worth of the faithful watchman is not known till the want of those true friends of the prince and of the people introduces envy, strife, confusion, and every evil work."

I will strengthen and recommend all I have said on this subject by the testimony of a pious and learned foreigner. Dr. Merle D' Aubigné, the eloquent historian of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, has the following remarks in a work just published, entitled, "Germany, England, and Scotland:"

"There is no people to whom religion is so necessary as the British. The material, agricultural, manufacturing, and mercantile interests are so predominant, that were not religion to counterbalance them, the nation would be undone. The energetic activity which distinguishes the Britons; those gigantic enterprises that characterise

them; the founding of an immense empire in India; the gates of China which her powerful hand has wrenched open; that creation of Australia; those expeditions to the poles, and every climate; that abolition of the slave-trade and slavery itself; all these giant-like labours require that a pure religion should animate the people, that oil should be always pouring into the lamp, and that a holy moral force should inspire, moderate, and direct these efforts. If the Britons, and even the Germans, are much better colonisers than the French and the nations under the papal rule, it is to the gospel they are indebted for it. Neither is this all. Even the admirable political institutions of Britain have need of the rule of faith; the liberal in politics should be conservative in religion. If the people of the United States, notwithstanding their many elements of disorder and dissolution, are not only still in existence, but increasing more and more in power and importance, it is because they are the sons of the Puritans. From the very moment that England begins to yield, nay from the very moment she ceases to press onward in religion, we think she will decline towards her abasement, perhaps to her ruin. Evil elements are not wanting. She possesses, to a greater extent perhaps than any other country, a low, impious, and impure literature; and the efforts made to diffuse it among the public are very great. If ever the flood-gates which religion and morality oppose to these infamous publications are thrown down, the torrent will break forth and overwhelm the whole nation with its poisonous waters.” * * *

“I do not hesitate to say, that this submission of a whole people to the law of God is something very impressive, and is probably the most incontestable source of the many blessings that have been showered on the nation. Order and obedience, morality and power, are all in Britain connected with the observance of the Sabbath. Amidst the activity which pervades all things, the bustle of the towns, and the energy with which the inhabitants pursue their earthly callings, what would become of them if they had not a day of rest in which to recruit themselves, and laying aside things temporal, which are seen, to look forward to things eternal, which are unseen? Yes, no doubt, if a remedy is not found out for the evil, immorality and disorder will be brought into England by these new roads. The old Puritan habits are disappearing. This claims the earnest attention of the friends of religion and their country. We say again, the severity of England as to the Lord’s day and other institutions, is, in our eyes, an essential feature of the national character, and an imperative condition of the greatness and prosperity of her people.”

Such a testimony from such an authority will, it may be expected, have much greater weight than any thing my pen could write, and I therefore adduce it, though a long extract, to corroborate what has been already written in this tract.

III. The general and cordial co-operation of all classes of the community is required to maintain the observance of the Sabbath, and to resist the encroachments upon its sanctity which are in progress in this age.

The Sabbath is a national blessing, and its preservation should be sought by the whole nation. All classes and all individuals should regard it as to a considerable extent the palladium of our safety, and rally round it as for the defence of one of our best and brightest hopes. It is within the reach of every inhabitant of the land to do something for his country's weal or woe. That was a beautiful description of patriotism which Demosthenes gave, when, speaking of the Athenians, he said, "It was a principle fixed deeply in every breast that man was born not to his parents only but to his country." This principle should be rooted in the soul of every Briton, and with it the religious truth that no man lives more effectually for his country's best welfare than he who promotes the sacred observance of the Sabbath. At how cheap a rate may this kind of patriotism be maintained! Fleets and armies would be unnecessary for that land of which Omnipotence saith, "I will be a wall of fire round about it, and the glory in the midst thereof."

In this great duty even royalty itself may set the example. The monarch is as much bound by the fourth commandment as the subject. Illustrious Queen of

these realms, enthroned not only in the palace, but in the hearts of your loyal and devoted subjects, long may God preserve you to an admiring people, the pattern of every personal and relative virtue; and ever may he vouchsafe to you his grace, to acknowledge an authority higher than your own, and to enable you, in subjection to Him by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, together with your Royal Consort, to keep holy the Sabbath-day, that so the sanctity of the court, as well as its purity, may always be maintained, and an example continue to be given from the throne, of that righteousness which exalts a nation! No record of your Majesty's personal conduct (where all is so pleasing and so welcome,) is more honourable to yourself, more gratifying to your pious subjects, or more conducive to the welfare of that great nation over which your sceptre is stretched, than those accounts which are published of your Majesty's attendance upon the solemnities of public worship. The jewels which sparkle in the royal diadem reflect a dim lustre compared with that which will be derived from your Majesty's observance of God's holy Sabbath.

Nor let the rulers of our country be backward to follow the pattern which may be set them in this particular by their royal mistress. As they would guide with a steady hand and a clear vision the helm of the state, and obtain from above the wisdom profitable to direct; as they would bring upon their councils the blessing of Him without whom nothing is wise or strong or good, let them take heed in their own households, and in the various departments of the state over which they severally preside, to remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy. Let not the officers and servants of the government be employed unnecessarily in the affairs of secular

business, and thus be prevented from obeying the commands of a still higher monarch than it is their honour and delight to serve as their sovereign upon earth. Should a spirit of commercial cupidity, grudging the day of rest to hands already full, to minds already jaded, and hearts already engrossed with the cares of business, wish to open the central post-office to its daily avocations and pursuits, may we ever have a government which will resolutely resist the effort, and secure to the metropolis this opportunity of repose and enjoyment!

Senators of the land, Representatives of the people, Makers of our laws, and Guardians of our liberties, take heed to yourselves, to keep this the law of your God. What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness? You are set as a city on a hill which cannot be hid. I ask not for the interposition of your power* to enforce or uphold the religious observance of the Sabbath. Men cannot be made pious by Acts of Parliament, nor compelled by statute to worship God. But legislation may, in my opinion, be righteously employed in protecting the poor man from oppression and from being robbed by the craving unsatisfied and remorseless spirit of trade, of his opportunity to give rest to his weary limbs, and to worship his Creator. The Sabbath is especially the poor man's day, it was for him above all that the day was instituted in the view of a repose from toil. It is given to him by a divine provision; it is his by vested chartered right. God has commanded him to lay aside the implements of his toil, and He has

* The author must on this point be considered as uttering only his own view of the subject. Some of his brethren would go further than he as to the right of Parliament to interfere with Sabbath observance, and some not so far.

commanded his employer to give him an opportunity for so doing; and He looks to you, our legislators, to stand between him and his master, when that master would take from him his day of rest and refreshment. His body as well as his soul needs this respite from labour: and never is the authority of law more rightfully or mercifully interposed, than to secure to the sons and daughters of poverty this day, to go if they so will to the house of their God, and think of a world where “the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.”

There is another view of the subject as connected with the interests of the labouring classes, and that is, the effect which the abolition of the Sabbath would have upon their wages and their comforts. His labour is the only article which a working man has to carry into the market, and this will of course be cheapened down in price according to the quantity which is offered for sale, till at length he will get only as much for his seven days as he formerly did for six. It is on this ground that legislation should interfere to protect the interests of the poor man from the ever encroaching spirit of trade, and to secure to him his weekly rest, leaving it to his judgment and his conscience as to the way in which he will spend his Sabbath when he has got it. How senseless, then, is the cry against legislation for preventing Sabbath trading, as if it were oppressing the poor, when they in fact are the very persons whose interests most require it! But after all, considering the extreme difficulty of making laws that can be effectual and impartial, many are of opinion that no means but such as are moral, that is the united power of example the pulpit and the press, will ever reach the case, and secure that which every en-

lightened patriot, and every sincere Christian, most ardently desires, the more general and sacred observance of the Lord's day.

But leaving legislation out of consideration, we may ask, and have a right to expect you would concede what we require, your example and your influence on behalf of the sacred day. You are supposed, from your situation, to have a deeper interest in your country's welfare, and better opportunities for knowing what will conduce to it; and both God and man look for more from you, and the gentry of the land, than from any other class of laymen. You have station and influence: give both to God. Neither senatorial rank, nor the ermine of the judge, nor the coronet of the peer, so much adorns humanity or becomes it, as genuine piety. Not only be found then in the sanctuary of God revering his authority, but abstain from your Sunday parties, from travelling, and from every other violation of the Sabbath which would throw the weight of your example into the scale of our national sins, and, as a necessary consequence, into that of our national decay.

Editors and publishers of our periodical literature, and especially of our newspapers, remember the tremendous responsibility which attaches to you. There is no class of men, next to the ministers of religion, whose life and labours stand in such close connexion with national religion and morals as yours, or which have such a powerful influence upon them. It is yours not merely to reflect the public opinion, but to form and guide it; not only to delineate and establish, but to a considerable extent, to mould the national character. Consider the momentous results of your high vocation. You speak to the multitude in our crowded cities, and

to the scattered few in our rural districts, and are ever impregnating the mass of our teeming population with the seeds of moral good or evil. A single paragraph, out of the many that are ever flowing from your pen, by patronising or even palliating evil, may produce mischief in the minds of thousands, which can never be estimated but by the Omniscient mind, and which all your future labours, however you may lament it, may never be able to undo. It is matter of unutterable regret that too many of your profession, in its lower grades, are doing all they can to subvert religion; and as the most effectual method to accomplish this dreadful purpose, are endeavouring to blot out the Sabbath from the calendar. Sunday newspapers are the bane of our country's religion and morals, and are doing all that in them lies, if not by arguments, by acts, to form a nation of atheists. By some of these the poison of concealed and in others of undisguised infidelity, is circulated through the length and breadth of our country, and an appetite for irreligion is created where it did not previously exist, and is fed where it did. It is calculated that no less than thirty million copies of infidel and demoralizing publications, a large proportion of which are issued and sold on the Sabbath-day, are annually circulated among the population of this country; and that one of these Sabbath-breaking irreligious newspapers consumes nearly one million more stamps yearly than the thirteen religious newspapers. Unhappy men who write for these works, thus to prostrate your talents, and to hire out your faculties to contravene the laws of God, subvert the foundations of religion, destroy public morals, and ruin the souls of men! If you have no mercy upon your country, whose best interests you are

poisoning, if none for your fellow creatures whose souls you are ruining, have mercy upon yourselves. The time is coming, or if not the time, the eternity is at hand, when, in the lost spirits whom you have seduced by your profane and licentious publications, you will see the mischief you have done. It may furnish matter of fresh ribaldry, and an occasion for more wickedness, to remind you of that awful day when the nations shall be gathered to the bar of Him whom you now make the objects of your impious jests: but every line by which you are now endeavouring to write down the truth of revelation, the reality of religion, and the sanctity of the Sabbath will then come to your recollection, and light upon your spirit as a spark from the quenchless fire, and be as a pang inflicted by the venomous tooth of the never-dying worm.

It is to be lamented also, that in the higher departments of journalism, which commands the attention of nations, there are few writers who are zealous for the Lord of Hosts, and who advocate with courage and consistency the claims of the Sabbath. When shall the time come that those noble intellects which pour forth in such endless profusion, and with such rapidity, their thoughts of surpassing power in the paragraphs daily read with delight by millions, shall feel it to be the highest employment of their pens to promote religion, by calling upon nations to "remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy?"

Ministers of Religion, we turn to you, as to our strongest hope, as to the most earnest, constant, and zealous advocates of Sabbath observance. You are appointed to be the guardians of every divine institution, and of this especially, I might almost say pre-

eminently. Christ intrusts to you above all men the safe keeping of this precious memorial of His glorious and finished work. Be faithful to your trust. The Lord's day is your day, as the other days of the week are given to the rest of mankind for their occupations. You can do little or nothing without it. Give it up, and you have surrendered your chief means of usefulness. Consider, then, your pulpit as among the high places of the earth, whence you may send over a careless and worldly-minded generation the solemn fourth commandment of the decalogue. Enforce the obligations of this holy day in all their strictness, and in their full extent. Listen to no compromise. Heed no railing. Shrink from no discussion. Turn your back upon no enemy. Take counsel of no time-serving policy. Disregard as so many empty angry gusts of wind the reproaches cast upon you as morose enemies to the happiness of the people; and go on steadily and boldly to urge the performance of a duty, in which you know arc bound up the interests of your country, and of each one of its inhabitants. Let your precepts be enforced by example, remembering that he who preaches the sanctity of the Sabbath, should beyond all men observe it in his own conduct. The sins of teachers are the teachers of sin; and of all Sabbath-breakers, none are so guilty before God, nor do such mischief among men, as they who, whatever they say, teach men, by their actions, to break the commandments of the divine law.

Next to ministers, if not even before them in influence, are the Heads of Households. Parents read, mark, learn, and tremble. Yours is a delightful but at the same time an awful duty. It is on the family hearth, and around the family altar and table, that the citizen

and the christian should be trained. The family is, to a considerable extent, the mould of both the church and the state. As then you would have the one replete with intelligent and sanctified patriotism, and the other of evangelical piety, let your domicile be a scene of cheerful sanctity on the day of holy rest. I say of cheerful sanctity: for as the Sabbath is a feast-day and not a fast-day, your dwelling should be enlivened by smiles of gladness from every countenance, and be vocal with thanksgiving and the notes of melody. There can be no objection to the feast of fat things, provided it be prepared the day before, and none are employed or cumbered about cooking or much serving. Let God's good creatures be enjoyed, and they who have adored Him as the God of grace in His house bless Him as the God of nature and providence in their own: the family table is, when not spread by Sabbath-breaking, a good sequel even to the Lord's. But still piety should be the presiding spirit of the whole, and, like a ministering angel dropped from the skies, should be there to bless the household. One of the loveliest scenes which ever poetry has delighted to pourtray, is that of a christian family in cleanliness neatness and order keeping holy the Sabbath, where the parents, by their intelligent and cheerful religion, blended with kindness gentleness and love, diffuse an air of peace and delight over the circle of happy beings that rejoice around their board, bend before their altar, and pour out their gleeful, yet chastened feelings round their chairs. Parents, as you would be saved from the misery of seeing your children turning aside to crooked ways, and especially as you would have the joy of seeing them

walking in the truth, teach them from the dawn of memory and conscience, to reverence the Sabbath of the Lord.

Sunday-school Teachers, learn and do your duty. Look upon the group of children collected on your bench and looking up to you for instructions every week. You know the moral dangers to which, from their peculiar situation in life, they are constantly exposed. You have read, if not heard, the confessions of many of those who have been brought by vice to an ignominious end, that it was Sabbath-breaking which first lured them from wisdom's ways, and initiated them into the course which terminated at the gibbet. Think of the numbers of the labouring class whose children are collected in our Sabbath-schools: how large a portion of the population they form. You are employed, by educating them, to form the character of those who are the base of the pyramid of society. Take heed therefore what you do, and how you do it. Whether our working classes shall be virtuous or vicious; whether they shall be consigned as a prey to the wolves, the vultures, and the serpents of infidelity, which are ever waiting and watching to devour them; or shall be gathered under the eye and arm of the good Shepherd and Bishop of souls, depends greatly upon you. Be diligent, anxious, earnest, and persevering in teaching them to keep holy the Sabbath-day. Be it one great object in all your instructions, to impress this upon them. Read to them, and hear them read in the most devout and solemn manner, all the passages which relate to the Lord's day. Cause them to commit all these to

memory, and endeavour to give light to their judgment, and tenderness to their consciences on this momentous subject.

Merchants, Manufacturers, and Shopkeepers, how much is it in your power to promote or obstruct the progress of religion, and by that means the interests of your native country. Will the time ever come when by the just and generous principles upon which commercial affairs are carried on, by the personal religion of those who are engaged in its pursuits, by the restriction of all secular affairs to the six days of labour, and by the consecration of their profits to the cause of religion, "Holiness to the Lord," shall be written upon our merchandize? Let this be the hope, the effort, and the prayer of every christian tradesman. In order to this it is essential that the day of sacred rest should be rescued from the pursuits of commerce. Not only close your shops, your counting-houses, and manufactories, which is already generally done, but do not in any covert way, employ any of your servants in works of labour on that day, which God has set apart for hallowed repose. Do not open your business letters, much less set out on journies, or return home from them on the Sabbath. Remember that by such conduct you are not only sinning yourself, but leading others to sin. Money gained thus, brings no blessing with it. The manna gathered on that day will breed worms in it. Forego the profits of such unhallowed trading. "Better is a little that a righteous man hath, than the riches of many wicked." "What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Professors of religion, our strongest appeal is to you.

To whom should we appeal if not to you, and to whom can we appeal with so much justice and propriety? You are commanded to be the light of the world, on this point as well as on every other; "and if the light that is in you be darkness, how great is that darkness." In the hour when you joined yourselves in fellowship with the church of Christ, you entered solemnly into covenant with God, and in effect swore to be his liege subjects, to honour all his institutes, to observe all his statutes, and to obey all his laws: sustaining a high place among these, is the Sabbath. Will you break, forget, or think lightly of your bond? Will you ever be seen trampling under foot your Lord's command, and your own engagement to obey it? Will you be the persons to proclaim revolt, and set the example of rebellion? Will you buy and sell, and get gain on the holy day? Will you travel for business or for pleasure on that day? Will you read newspapers, have parties, saunter away the hours over your dinner-table and your wine? Will you be heard pleading for a relaxation of the strictness of Sabbath observance, and seen joining with those who are seeking its desecration? Professors, will you forsake the Lord's side and go over to that of his enemies? What, you who profess to know the worth of the soul, the importance of salvation, the danger of being lost not only by the practice of sin, but by the love of the world? What, you who know, or profess to know, the connection between the right observance of the Sabbath and personal religion? Ye followers of Christ, will not ye keep up the remembrance of his work in our world? Ye servants of the living God, will not ye maintain his authority in his own domain? Ye friends of religion, will not ye keep up an

institute on which religion so vitally depends? Ye that are lovers of the souls of your fellow-creatures, will not ye stand forward to promote that on which more depends for arresting the tide of perdition, and advancing the cause of salvation, than any thing else that could be mentioned? We call upon you, by all these considerations, to come forth and to rally round the law of your God. Upon you, under him, it depends whether the Sabbath shall remain or not. The children of this world love it not; yea hate it with regard to its original design as a season of devotion, however much they love it as a day of rest and worldly pleasure. They would get rid of it if they could; and desperate, though unavowed and unorganized, efforts are being made for that purpose. If it be retained in its religious and spiritual character, it must be kept by you. Some of the Tractarian party would gladly introduce again the Book of Sports in connection with the Book of Common Prayer; and after the sacrament in the morning at church would have athletic games on the common in the evening. Thus superstition is confederate with commercial cupidity pleasure-taking and infidelity, to rob our country of its best and surest defence against irreligion immorality and the consequent judgments of Almighty God. Against this felonious and sacrilegious confederacy, those who worship God in the spirit must be banded together in a Holy Alliance. But no organizations that may be set up can be sufficient, in the absence of individual and personal example; and therefore let everyone who shall read this tract, each man by himself, and for himself, consider that it is not only a subject for the nation, but for him. We are too apt to lose ourselves in the crowd,

and to sink individual in social obligation. It is thus that we are enabled, by the deceitfulness of our hearts, to shift off our duty from our own conscience to that which in fact has no existence, except in our own imaginations, the collective conscience of a nation or a church. Let us avoid this subtle method of escaping from our duty, and let us each re-study the subject of the Sabbath in its spiritual design, the perpetuity of its obligation, the devout manner of its observance, the infinite blessings of which it is the means of conveyance to the children of men, and the moral desolation which would be occasioned, not only by its abolition, but by its general desecration. And witnessing, as we do, the encroachments upon it which are perpetually made by its avowed enemies, and even by its pretended friends, let us, each one for himself, be roused to a more conscientious exact and spiritual obedience in this particular of the law of our God.

Britons, my last appeal is to you. Look at your country, "great, glorious, and free," the temple of religion, the sanctuary of freedom, the mart of commerce, the hall of science, the school of learning, the greatest subject of history, and the loftiest theme of song, the land of your birth, your pride, and your boast; look, I say, at your unequalled country, and be filled with gratitude and gladness. But rejoice with trembling. Portents are not wanting which indicate that Jehovah has a controversy with our nation. Can you forget the famine, so mysterious in its origin, which raged last year over Ireland and the north of Scotland? Can you be ignorant that pestilence may be now lurking among the nations of the Continent, like a lion crouching ready to spring upon us? Can

you be unmindful of the financial crash which has lately convulsed our commercial fabric to its very foundation? Can you be unobservant of the unquiet heavings with which the European nations are agitated, and which threaten us with the earthquake of another war? Is there nothing in all this to awaken solicitude and exalt alarm? Is this the time, and are these the circumstances, in which you should insult the authority, kindle the wrath, and provoke the vengeance of Almighty God, by trampling under foot his laws, and subverting his institutes? I implore you to consider your ways, and, by the prevalence of a spirit of national religion, to raise a conductor over your country, which, when the tempest shall rage, will protect her from the flashes of heaven's fiery indignation. You would be patriots: remember that the truest patriotism is not that which advances its glory in arms, arts, science, commerce, or liberty, but that which stands by religion as the strongest pillar of the state, and by the observance of the Sabbath as the main prop of religion, and which maintains its position by the ark of the Lord, amidst the scorn and contradictions of men, who have no eyes to see the indissoluble connection between the ruin and impiety of nations.

I shall now conclude in the language of an American writer, not more eloquent than true:

“But for the moral power of Sabbatical institutions, whose property or reputation would be safe for a single day? Much as the Lord's day is profaned in this country, even now it does more than our magistrates and prisons, and other legal terrors, to perpetuate and multiply our social, civil, and religious blessings. Take away this barrier, and you open the flood-gates of vice and irreligion upon a godless and suffering people. You may try to prop up your free and admired civil institutions, but all your efforts will be in vain. The overflowing scourge will pass through, and neither you nor your

children can hope to escape. Give up the Sabbath, blot out that orb of day, suspend its attractions, and the reign of chaos and old night would return. The waves of all unquiet sea, high as our mountains, would roll and dash from west to east and east to west, from south to north and from north to south, shipwrecking the hopes of patriots and the world. Who and where is the patriot that would thrust out our ship, from her peaceful moorings, on a starless night, upon such an ocean of storms, without anchor or rudder, compass or chart? The elements around us may remain, and our giant rivers and mountains. Our miserable descendants also may multiply and vegetate, and sit in moral darkness and putrefaction. But the American character, and our glorious institutions, will go down into the same grave that entombs the Sabbath, and our epitaph will stand forth a warning to the world: Thus endeth the nation that despised the Lord, and gloried in wisdom, wealth, and power.”*

* Dr. Humphrey on the Sabbath.

**SKETCHES OF THE PROTESTANT
NONCON-
FORMIST DENOMINATIONS IN
ENGLAND**

**EXTRACTED FROM "THE HISTORY OF PROTESTANT
NONCONFORMITY IN BIRMINGHAM."**

SOME have expressed a wish that the author had spoken out more decidedly against religious systems, so widely different from what he believes to be essential truth. It is to be recollected however that the work is simply historical, and not controversial. No one can hold more firmly, or teach more explicitly, than he does, the importance of definite and right sentiments on the subject of religion. The Pyrrhonism which represents all theological opinions as equally good and equally uncertain, appears to him to be more dangerous than most positive forms of heresy: and there may be a zeal against creeds so expressed and maintained as to undermine the foundation of all religious belief. Men are usually held to revelation by some definite views of its contents; and if those be given up, and replaced by such vague generalities as appertain to all systems alike, they are in danger of letting go their hold, and dropping into the vortex of a false philosophy, or of absolute unbelief. [From an advertisement by the Author subjoined to the "Olive Branch and the Cross."]

PRESBYTERIANS.

HAD the state of things continued which the Long Parliament set up, Presbyterianism, as recommended by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, would probably have been arranged and established after the Scotch and Genevan form; preparations were commenced for such an organization, but they were never carried forward, so that in point of fact at that time Presbyterianism was not put in actual operation in England except in some of the northern counties, which bordered on Scotland. And from the time of the Revolution, even those who called themselves Presbyterian were Independent in their actual government, though certainly not Congregational. The Presbyterian congregations, as they were called, were no further Presbyterian than as they vested the power of government pretty much in a body of trustees instead of the Kirk session of the Scotch Church, or the whole body of the people as among the Congregationalists. In most of the congregations now bearing the designation, (they are generally Unitarian,) even this relic of Presbyterianism is laid aside, and all things are directed by the popular voice. The only real Presbyterians in this kingdom are those who adopt the principles and polity of the national Church of Scotland, of the Free Church, or of the United Presbyterian Church, of all which communions, especially of the second, there are many congregations south of the Tweed.

The government of the National Church of Scotland, as set up by John Knox, at the Reformation, and, after bloody struggles by the Stuarts to subvert it, confirmed at the Revolution 1688 was Presbyterian. At the

time of the union of the two kingdoms all the privileges of the church were guaranteed in their inviolability. Among those was the right of every congregation to have a voice in the choice of its own minister. During the latter part of the reign of Anne, the system of patronage was again set up, through Jacobite influence. The church resisted, but in vain, and finding itself unable to prevent it, entered from year to year its solemn protest against this oppressive law, as an invasion of its spiritual rights by the secular power and a violation of the Treaty of Union. Patronage however was continued, and continued as ever to corrupt the church. This so grieved the minds and wounded the consciences of some of the Scottish clergy, that under the leadership of Mr Ebenezer Erskine many of them seceded in the year 1733, and founded what afterwards received the designation of "The United Secession Church." In the year 1753 a second secession took place under Mr Gillespie, which organised another Presbyterian body called "The Relief Church." Both these churches seceded on much the same grounds, the law and corruption of patronage. They have lately coalesced, and in their associated form take the title of "the United Presbyterian Church." Both at first, like the early Nonconformists in England, allowed the union of church and state in things temporal, but like them also, they have now adopted and hold most firmly the voluntary system of church government.

In the year 1834, when the evangelical party in the Church of Scotland had become strong in their supreme court, called "The Grand Assembly," which is composed of ministers and lay elders, a law was passed in the assembly granting a veto to every congregation upon

the nominee of a patron. This was, of course, a limitation, and in effect a subversion, of the law of patronage, and, as might have been expected, brought on a great contest between the church and the state. The Presbytery of Auchterarder refused to admit a licentiate presented by a patron, because he was rejected by the people, and was prosecuted and cast in heavy damages; while that of Strathbogie was suspended and deposed by the General Assembly for ordaining ministers in opposition to the law of the church, but as they conceived in conformity to the law of the state. The matter having been tried in the supreme law courts of Scotland, and decided there against the non-intrusionists, (as the party was called which upheld the right of the people to choose their own minister,) was carried by appeal to the House of Lords, which, confirming the judgment of the majority of the Lords of Session, or Judges) it was finally determined that the civil power could legally interfere, as the law then stood, to regulate all church matters as well its spiritualities as its temporalities.

Upon this, after a hard and protracted struggle, a disruption of the church took place. Many conferences were held, and much prayer was presented, as the meeting of the General Assembly drew near, in 1842, and a scene unprecedented in the annals of ecclesiastical history then took place.

[A long extract is here given from the "Farewell to Egypt," by Dr. James Hamilton, describing the Secession of the majority of the members of the General Assembly.]

Such an event is fraught with blessings for Scotland, lessons for England, and admiration for the world. It

must be held in recollection that "The Free Church of Scotland," (this being the designation which it has adopted,) still admits the scriptural authority, and therefore the lawfulness, of national religious establishments, but restricts the interference of the civil magistrate to temporal matters. They are voluntaries in many matters from necessity; and how mighty has been the operation among them of the voluntary principle! There is no such instance in modern times: they have built nearly seven hundred churches, almost as many school-rooms, and are proceeding to add a parsonage house to each church: and they have also raised a sustentation fund sufficient to allow a stipend of a hundred pounds a year to each minister: all this, besides the erection and support of colleges, and all the usual benevolent and missionary institutions of the day. Altogether the disruption of the Scottish national church must be regarded as the most extraordinary religious event of our age and empire.

There have been always some congregations in this kingdom, both in London and the provinces, which owned a relationship to the Church of Scotland, though they could not be included in its organization. These at the time of the disruption, retained according to their views their attachment to the establishment, or espoused the cause of "The Free Church."

INDEPENDENTS.

The Independents assert two principles: First, personal religion is a matter in which each individual man is independent of all human authority and control

whatever, and accountable to God alone. Secondly, a christian church is a company of christians, voluntarily associated together for fellowship and worship, and vested with the right and power of self-government, so as to be entirely independent of the authority and control of all other bodies of men civil or sacred.

Independency admits of the association and co-operation of churches, but not of the jurisdiction of any number of churches over one. It allows of the moral influence of the collective wisdom, experience, and counsel of several churches upon the decision of any individual church, but not of their legislative or judicial authority over it.

The Independents claim, as the model of their church polity, the primitive churches planted and organised by apostles, which, for aught that appears in inspired history to the contrary, were separate and self-governed bodies of professing christians. The church at Rome, for instance, had no authority over that at Corinth, nor that at Corinth over that at Rome. Nor is there the appearance of the organization of any number of the apostolic churches in a systematic form of polity. The meeting at Jerusalem (mentioned in Acts xv.) presents the nearest approach to this, but that was convened, not to arrange and settle an ecclesiastical system, but to decide a question of doctrine by apostolic authority. It was a meeting of the church at Jerusalem, to which deputies were sent from the church at Antioch, and from that church alone, and not a meeting of delegates and representatives from various churches, in the form of a synod or presbytery: and though the decision of that assembly went forth in the names of the apostles elders and members of the Jerusalem church and the others

joined with them in the conference, it was made by apostolic and inspired men, and does not affect the question of church government.

The independence of the first churches of Christians has been conceded by both Episcopalians and Presbyterians.

The learned Dr. Barrow, an Episcopalian, in his *Treatise on the Pope's Supremacy*, speaking of the primitive state of the Church, says, "Each church separately did order its own affairs, without recourse to others, except for charitable advice, or relief in cases of extraordinary difficulty or urgent need. Each church was endowed with perfect liberty and a full authority, without dependence or subordination to others, to govern its own members, manage its own affairs, to decide controversies and causes incident among themselves without allowing appeals or rendering accounts to others. This appeareth in the apostolical writings of St. Paul and St. John to single churches, wherein they are supposed able to exercise spiritual power for establishing decency, removing disorders, correcting offences, deciding causes, &c." *Unity of the Church*.

Lord Chancellor King, in his learned "*Inquiry into the Constitution and Discipline of the Primitive Church*," affirms "That every church was independent, that is, without the concurrence and authority of any other church."

Bingham, in his "*Antiquities of the Christian Church*," says, "There is one thing more must be taken notice of whilst we are considering the proper office of bishops, which is the absolute power of every bishop in his own church, independent of others." This refers to a post apostolical age, when the bishop had to a considerable extent grasped church power into his own hands, but it still proves the independency of the churches upon each other.

Dr. Campbell, a Presbyterian says, "The different congregations, with their ministers, seem to have been in a great measure independent of each other. Every thing regarding their own procedure in worship, as well as discipline, was settled among themselves." *Lect. ix.*

Traces of Independency, in an undeveloped form, are to be found in various ages and different sections of the christian church, through the whole range of ecclesias-

tical history. But it was never advocated in this country in a systematic form till the time of Elizabeth.

I have already [Vol. xiv, p. 312] introduced Robert Brown to the reader's attention, who, whatever was his character, was the first who propounded in form the principles of Independency, and after whom the pious who held those principles were called Brownists. Brown's opinions, in consequence of his popularity as a preacher, spread fast and wide, for Sir Walter Raleigh, in his speech in Parliament, in 1580, when speaking of the severe measures then in contemplation against the Brownists, said, "I am afraid there are near twenty thousand of them in England." Among those who embraced these opinions were a Mr Barrow, a gentleman of "a good house," according to the testimony of his great contemporary, Lord Bacon; and a Mr Greenwood, a graduate of Cambridge. They were too active in their writings and their conduct to escape the notice of the Church party, and were soon arrested and thrown into prison. After lingering in jail for six years, they were brought to trial, and sentenced to death, and commanded to prepare for immediate execution. The next day they were brought out of prison, their irons were struck off, and they were about to be bound to a cart which was to carry them to Tyburn, when a reprieve arrived, obviously for the purpose of allowing them an opportunity to recant. The respite was of short duration, for in eight days after they were conveyed to Tyburn, and exposed under the gallows with the fatal rope round their necks. They were permitted to address the people with a dying speech, and had scarcely finished their supposed last words, when a reprieve again arrived. They returned to prison amidst

the greetings of the people, elated with the hope that their lives were really now about to be spared. Vain expectation! In another week the dreadful mock execution was turned into a real one, and they died as felons or traitors for their zeal in the cause of Independency. Such was the manner in which the persecutors of those days sported with their victims in the presence of death. If there were room, and it were necessary, I might here introduce the life, labours, writings, and martyrdom of John Penry, a Welsh Independent, and present one of the most touching narratives to be found in the pages of English martyrology; Hallam, in his Constitutional History, remarks, "Penry's protestation at his death is in a style of the most affecting and simple eloquence."

As a further proof and example of the sufferings of the Independents, during the reign of Elizabeth, I may mention that there was a congregation which had been accustomed to assemble in various places in the city and its suburbs, of which Mr Greenwood, just alluded to, was teacher. In summer they used to meet in the fields, where sitting upon a bank, they expounded the Bible to each other. During the winter they assembled at four o'clock in the morning in some house, and continued in prayer and exposition all day. They dined together, after which they made a collection to pay for their diet, and to supply the wants of their brethren in prison. They were at length discovered at Islington, in the very apartment which had been occupied by a Protestant congregation during the reign of Mary, and upwards of fifty of them were apprehended and committed to prison. In a petition to the Privy Council they bitterly complained of the treat-

ment which they received from the bishops; and they presented another to the Lord Treasurer, which is one of the most affecting appeals ever made by the oppressed to the oppressor, was signed by fifty-nine prisoners, and had appended to it the names of ten others already deceased in consequence of their confinement. Among those who died in prison was Roger Rippon, on whose coffin the following inscription was written by his fellow-sufferers:

“This is the coffin of Roger Rippon, a servant of Christ, and her Majesty’s faithful subject; who is the last of sixteen or seventeen which that great enemy of God, the Archbishop of Canterbury, with his high commissioners, have murdered in Newgate, within the last five years, manifestly for the testimony of Jesus Christ. His soul is now with the Lord; and his blood crieth for speedy vengeance against that great enemy of the saints, Mr Richard Young, a justice of peace in London, who, in this and many like points, hath abused his power for the upholding of the Roman antichrist, prelacy, and priesthood.”

Many copies of this inscription were dispersed, and tended to awaken sympathy with the sufferers and indignation against the clergy as the cause of their wrongs.

Surely when such cruelties were inflicted upon men for no other crime but forming- and expressing their own opinions on the meaning of the word of God, we cannot be surprised that they should sometimes be goaded to use language in their writings which not only violated the law of christian meekness, but increased the ferocity of their persecutors. It is impossible to justify the bitter irony, the angry vituperation, and the coarse and vulgar abuse contained in the Marprelate Tracts, which, from their obscure and concealed batteries, assailed at this time, with such effect, the bishops and their supporters. Such were not the weapons most likely either

to defend the oppressed, or to conquer their oppressors; nor was the use of them sanctioned by our Lord in his sermon upon the mount.

Among the most distinguished of the Independents of the time of Elizabeth, was Henry Ainsworth, one of the most eminent scholars of his day.

This great man rose from the lowest rank, being nothing more at one time than a bookseller's porter, living upon ninepence a week, and some boiled roots. In this situation he studied Hebrew, and at length rose to be one of the greatest proficient in that language of his times. He appears to have first joined himself to the Independent exiles at Amsterdam, in connexion with

Mr Johnson, a learned and able advocate of their principles. Ainsworth was the author of numerous works of great merit, but his fame rests principally on his "Annotations on the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Song of Songs." Bishop Hall, in his "Apology for the Church of England against the Brownists," often mentions Ainsworth as the greatest man of his party, their doctor, their chief, their rabbi. And they have no need to be ashamed of him.

Under the reign of James, the Independents were not wanting in authors or preachers to set forth their principles, though they were few in number or perhaps in weight, compared with the Presbyterians. But one name must be put forward as sustaining a high rank among those few, I mean John Robinson, whose history having been given in the sketch of Nonconformity, need not be repeated here. It was by Robinson, that the principles of Independency were brought more nearly to the systematic form they now bear. The cause of Independency in England, so far as the controversy is concerned, was

maintained also by a Mr Henry Jacob, by whom the designation of Independent was first employed. After residing for some time with other exiles in Holland, as minister of a congregation at Leyden, he returned to England, and formed in London, in the year 1616, what was said to be the first Independent or Congregational church in this country. This however was not correct, as there were some societies of this denomination formed even as early as the time of Elizabeth, though they were much less known than that of Jacob, whose writings as an author gave to him, and therefore to the church under his care, considerable notoriety. It must not be supposed however that the Independents of the time of which we are now speaking, thoroughly understood the great principles of religious liberty, or the distinction between things civil and things sacred. They asserted the independence of the churches of each other, but not of the magistrates' power. Jacob allowed the interposition of the secular power for the establishment of truth, and so did many others. Brown was much nearer the truth on this subject than Jacob. Perhaps the Baptists were among the first to assert the unfettered rights of conscience. The earliest work in which this was avowedly advocated was that of Leonard Busher, a citizen of London, and entitled "Religious Peace, or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience." 1614.

At the latter end of the reign of James I. the Independents, though still vastly out-numbered by the Presbyterians, were rising into notice, as will appear evident from a remark in a sermon by Bishop Hall before the King, in 1624. "Surely," he says "if we grow into that anarchical fashion of Independent congregations, which I see, and lament to see, affected by too many, not

without woeful success, we are gone, we are lost in a most miserable confusion." It must not be supposed, however, that they were all separatists from the Established Church. They were not allowed the liberty of open worship and ecclesiastical organization according to their own principles, and could only meet stealthily and in such places as they could obtain with least danger of being discovered. In London, in Kent, in Norfolk, in Gloucestershire, and Wales, there were many who followed the congregational system more or less perfectly developed, and more or less in a state of separation from the established worship.

In addition to Ainsworth, Robinson, and Jacob, they could boast of, as among their leaders, Dr. Ames, one of the best scholars of the Jay, and equally eminent as a controversialist, of whom Mr Hooker, who was his assistant at Amsterdam, when in exile, says, in his preface to Ames' last work, written a little before his death, "With the coming forth of this book into the light, the learned and famous author, Dr. Ames, left the light, or darkness rather, of this world ... a pattern of holiness, a burning and shining light, a lamp of learning and arts, a champion of truth." To Ames must be added Canne, the author of many works, but now best known by an edition of the Bible with marginal references, to be found in the library of the antiquarian. He subsequently became a Baptist, and a fifth monarchy man. Another individual who, soon after this, signaled himself as an advocate of Independency, both by his writings and by his sufferings, was Mr Burton, the associate of Mr Prynne and Dr. Bastwick in the cruelties and indignities heaped upon them by Laud, through the instrumentality of the Courts of High Commission

and the Star Chamber. These three confessors, for writing against Episcopacy were sentenced to have their ears cut off, and to stand in the pillory in Palace-yard, to pay a fine of five thousand pounds each to the King, to be perpetually imprisoned, and Prynne, in addition to all this, to be branded by a hot iron in the cheek with the two letters S. L. seditious libeller. This sentence was executed amidst the sympathy, indignation, and so far as regards the courage and noble bearing of the sufferers the admiration, of an immense crowd, who, to shew their opinion of the proceedings, strewed with sweet herbs the path along which the martyrs were taken to the pillory.

During the contest of Charles with his parliament the Independents increased in numbers and in influence, till at length there sprang up in both houses of parliament what was called "The Independent Party:" they were few in number, but of great ability and energy. Cromwell was an Independent, and the first that ever sat in the House of Commons: Hampden probably favoured their opinions. Sir Harry Vane openly espoused them. In the Upper House were Lord Brooke, and Lord Say and Sele, who made no concealment of their Congregational views. It must not be imagined, however, that it was the Independents who originated the war against Charles. The Long Parliament, as I have already shewn from Clarendon, consisted at its commencement almost exclusively of Episcopalians, and had not one separatist. Independency, as a form of religious opinion, had nothing whatever to do with this rupture, for not only were those who favoured it few in number, but their principles were opposed to the sentiments of the great body of the members, and

were discountenanced by legislative enactments. It was as patriots, and not as Independents, that Cromwell, Hampden, St. John, Vane, Lords Brooke and Say and Sele, entered upon this contest, whatever other sentiments and objects came up during its progress. Mr Macaulay, in speaking of them says,

“There had been from the first, in the Parliamentary party, some men whose minds were set on objects, from which the majority of the party would have shrunk with horror. These men were in religion Independents. They considered that every christian congregation had, under Christ, supreme jurisdiction ill things spiritual: that appeals to provincial and national synods were scarcely less unscriptural than appeals to the Court of Arches or to the Vatican; and that Popery, Prelacy, and Presbyterianism were merely three forms of one great apostacy. In politics they were, to use the phrase of their time, root-and-branch-men, or to use the kindred term of our own times radicals. Not content with limiting the power of the monarch, they were desirous to erect a commonwealth on the ruins of the old English polity. At first they had been inconsiderable both in numbers and in might, but before the war had lasted two years, they became not indeed the largest but the most powerful faction in the country.”

It may, however, be fairly questioned whether this party, if we except Sir Harry Vane, had, at the commencement of the rupture of the King with the Parliament, any serious thoughts of setting up a commonwealth, or even wished to do so. These views arose as the struggle progressed, when the duplicity of the King had disgusted them with monarchy altogether. No doubt, as Mr Macaulay says, after the death and defection of some of the great parliamentary leaders, the Independent party, “ardent, resolute, and uncompromising, began to raise its head both in the camp and in the parliament,” and I must add, it was that party which afterwards directed the course

of events that ended in the downfall of the Monarchy and the establishment of the Commonwealth.

We have already seen that in the Westminster Assembly there were only six Independents, and that they were regarded with jealousy and dislike by the Presbyterians, who denied them toleration: they enjoyed it however in common with others, under the Protectorate, as Cromwell favoured their sentiments, by nominating their principal divines to be his chaplains, and to fill the most important places in the Universities. Dr. Owen was Dean of Christ Church, and Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, and Dr. Goodwin President of Magdalen College. Milton gave to the Independents all the glory which his illustrious name could confer, for though he does not formally set forth their principles, yet, throughout the whole of his prose works, he is incidentally an ardent, sincere, and eloquent advocate of their views. How rapidly they spread may be inferred from the fact already mentioned that, at the Savoy Conference, held a little while before Cromwell's death, the representatives of a hundred churches were present.

Under the tyranny of the Stuarts Independency had little opportunity of extending its influence or propagating its principles, and together with Presbyterianism, was crushed as far as it could be under the iron heel of oppression, and, like that, rose again in vigour and in strength, under the provisions of the Toleration Act. This nominal Presbyterianism however, for it was only such, soon coalesced with Independency.

A few things may here be noticed.

1. Independency, as it now exists, was a thing of slow growth and very gradual development. The idea of each separate congregation having the right and

power of complete self-government, did not spring up all at once in the minds of the founders of this system, hut grew up into a system by successive discoveries of the meaning of the New Testament.

2. Independency was not at first identified with separation. Many who held the system did not come out from the Establishment in the first instance, and for an obvious reason, because they were forbidden to do so at first by law, and afterwards by scruples about the matter. There was a vast difference in the measures of light which the holders of this system had received, as a perusal and comparison of their works attest.

3. Independency, as I have already proved from a quotation from the sermons of Dr. Owen, did not at that time disallow of state support of religion. Most of the followers of this form of polity held not only the lawfulness but the duty of the civil magistrate, to support truth by authority and endowments.

4. Independency, as is evident from the records of ecclesiastical history and the present state of religious denominations, has commended itself to the judgment of a very large portion of the professors of christianity. It is maintained by the Unitarians and the Baptists, as well as by those to whom the designation is now conventionally applied. It is the system which almost exclusively prevails in the New England States of America, and of course is supported by the Baptists in that country, who in the Southern States are the most numerous body of professing Christians. If this be considered, and it be recollected also that in the United Kingdom there cannot be much less than four thousand congregations formed upon this principle, and that these congregations are composed of persons who hold the

scriptures to be the only infallible rule of church order and discipline, who profess to be guided solely by that unerring rule, and who exercise an unfettered right of private judgment in the interpretation of the word of God, it will surely appear to every unprejudiced mind that this, though certainly not a proof that the system is true, is a strong presumption that it is neither so extravagant, nor self destructive, as many of its opponents represent it to be. It has spread too widely among thinking men to be regarded as altogether an insignificant, contemptible, or irrational heresy, and lasted too long to be viewed as a mere experiment which is sure to fail in the trial.

5. The element of Independency is, to a certain extent, to be traced in all churches, except that of Rome. That arrogant communion with daring ambition claims to be the head, the only head, of the whole christian community on earth, and asserts a right, which it would exercise if it had the power, to hold all other churches in a state of dependence and subordination. In every age of the christian era there have been churches, which assert, and practise, their independence of the Roman See. The Church of England is independent of Rome, and so are many others, and these are all independent of each other. The Independents only carry this principle still further, and in the exercise of their liberty claim for each congregation independence not only of the Church of Rome and Church of England, but of each other.

6. Congregational Independency, it is candidly admitted, requires much intelligence, piety, and self-government on the part of its members, in order to its harmonious working: and for want of those qualifica-

tions no doubt many contentions and divisions arise, as was the case in nearly all the churches planted by the apostles. There is a strong centrifugal force in each congregation which requires the balance of a centripetal power of much personal religion to prevent confusion and mischief.

7. Independency admits not only of the friendly intercourse, association, and co-operation of neighbour churches, but of advisory councils. Brown recommended them; Robinson practised them; Dr. Owen makes room for them; the Congregational Church at Amsterdam adopted them, and so do all the Independents in New England: and the adoption of the plan by English Independents would save us many strifes, divisions, and injudicious settlements. The fact is we are too independent, and most deplorably need a little more disposition to seek and take advice. Our Independency, though right in its general principles, is certainly not infallible and perfect in its practical working. Perhaps all the denominations might learn something from each other: we are none of us either entirely right, or entirely wrong. A determination to reject all standards but the New Testament, a loving spirit towards each other, combined at the same time with a still stronger love of truth, and the maintenance of candid, generous, and respectful controversy, would bring us much nearer to each other, and help us to find out a more excellent way than any of us have yet discovered. Shall we ever see the subordination of Episcopacy, the union of Presbyterianism, and the liberty of Independency, combined in one system, and that system removing all prejudices, harmonizing all parties, spreading through the state without being, in modern phrase, a state

religion, sustained by the voluntary offerings of its friends, and so adequately sustained as to need no other support? Yes, but I am afraid not till the millennium. Then let us pray for that consummation so devoutly to be wished.

BAPTISTS.

This section of the great body of Nonconformists is a very large and influential one, and every way entitled to a respectful mention in this history. It is well known that while they entirely agree with the Independents in their views of church government, (in which they are strictly congregational,) they differ from them on the subject of baptism, restricting the application of that ordinance, as regards its subjects, exclusively to those who make a profession of faith; and as regards its mode, to immersion. It is thought to be an unfair assumption to take to themselves the designation of the Baptists, as if they were the only persons who practised that rite: but in reply they say, that as immersion is the only mode sanctioned by the meaning of the term "baptism," and by the word of God, and as believers are the only proper subjects of it, the practice of Pædobaptism is a mere nullity, and consequently they are the only persons entitled to the designation of "baptists."

Leaving the vexed question as to the principles and practices of the primitive Christians, which are claimed by this denomination to be in support of their views, it is admitted that in almost every age, as far as the records of ecclesiastical history are our guide, and in almost every country where Christianity has been professed,

there have been many who held their opinions and adopted their usages. Councils and edicts as early as the beginning of the fifth century condemned their sentiments, and subjected the holders of them to anathemas and death: a plain proof that they then existed. Their history may be traced through subsequent ages in Germany France and other parts of the continent, and in Africa and the East, by the blood of their martyrs. And their historians claim for them the same existence, and the same honours of martyrdom, in the histories of Saxon England, and of Wales. Attempts have been made by prejudiced and mendacious writers to disparage this denomination, by mixing them up with the "anabaptists" of Munster, a race of fanatics who, at the time of the Saxon Reformation, committed the greatest excesses, and rushed from fanatical austerities to boundless licentiousness; against whom Luther rolled the thunders and darted the lightning of his genius. It is however calumny, and nothing less, to confound the Baptist body with these incendiaries.

At the time of the Reformation under Henry VIII. they emerged into notice, and became the subjects of sanguinary treatment. During the reign of Edward VI. such was the furious bigotry with which they were pursued, that when an act was passed granting pardon to Papists and others, the Baptists were excepted from its provisions, and were consigned in many cases to the stake. Mary, of course, showed them no mercy, and Elizabeth issued a proclamation commanding them and other heretics to quit the land. In 1575, the seventeenth year of Elizabeth, a congregation was discovered in Aldgate, London, of whom some were banished, twenty-

seven were imprisoned, and two were burnt in Smithfield. The first regularly organised Baptist church, of which any authentic account is preserved, was formed in London, in 1607, by a Mr. Smith, who had been a clergyman of the Church of England. This church was founded on what are called General Baptist principles, that is, they were believers in the doctrine of general redemption, as opposed to the Particular Baptists who believe in the eternal and individual election of believers to eternal life, and thus bold the doctrine of a particular redemption. In a subsequent period, the General Baptists included Socinians, Arians, and all indeed who denied the Calvinistic view of the scheme of redemption. As a body, they are now generally orthodox on the subject of the Trinity, but are Arminian in their views of the other points of Christian doctrine.

The first Particular Baptist Church, of which there is any record, was formed in London, under Mr Spilbury, in 1633. During the time of the struggle between Charles and his parliament they were very numerous, and abounded in the ranks of Cromwell's army. Baxter, in his "Life and Times," makes constant reference to them, classing them with "separatists and sectaries," and speaking of them with considerable ill humour. Public disputations, rarely productive of much service to the cause of truth, and of great disservice to the cause of charity, were very common in those days between the Baptists and their opponents. Nor has the controversy, as otherwise conducted, been: always conducive to charity, whatever it may have done for truth. Mr Baxter gives the following account of the controversy

between them and their opponents, as it came under his notice.

“Whilst I was at Gloucester, I saw the first contention between the ministers and Anabaptists that ever I was acquainted with; for these were the first Anabaptists I had ever seen in any country, and I heard of but few more in those parts of England. About a dozen young men, or more, of considerable parts, had received the opinion against infant baptism, and were re-baptized, and laboured to draw others after them not far from Gloucester: and the minister of the place, Mr. Winnell, being hasty and impatient with them, hardened them the more. He wrote a considerable book against them at the time; but England then having no great experience of the tendency and consequences of Anabaptism, the people that were not of their opinion did but pity them, and think it was a conceit that had no great harm in it, and blamed Mr. Winnell for his violence and asperity towards them.”

“But this was but the beginning of miseries for Gloucester; for the Anabaptists somewhat increasing on one side, before I came away, a good man, called Mr. Hart, came out of Herefordshire with Mr. Vaughan, a gentleman, and they drew many to separation on another side: and after them in the wars came one Mr. Bacon, a preacher of the army, and drew them to antinomianism on another side, which so distracted the good people, and ate out the heart of religion and charity, the ministers of the place not being so able and quick as they should have been in confuting them, and preserving the people, that the city, which before had as great advantages for the prosperity of religion among them as any in the land, in the civility, tractableness, and piety of the people, became as low and poor as others, and the pity of more happy places, whilst these tares did dwindle and wither away the solid piety of the place.”

And alas! alas I of how many other places and times may the same melancholy condition be traced up to the bitterness of controversy on points confessedly of inferior importance to many others. It has been said that religious controversy becomes virulent in the inverse ratio of the importance of the subject, and that polemics become fierce in proportion as they approach nearer to each other on more momentous points. This

applies with some truth to the baptismal controversy. Not that I mean to say little importance attaches to this topic of theology; especially when baptism is represented to be regeneration. The dogma of baptismal regeneration, as understood by Papists and Puseyites, is one of the most destructive errors of the day: but between the dissenting advocates of infant baptism and the advocates of adult baptism by immersion, the difference, though great, should not be felt so great as to embitter their spirits against each other, or to destroy the charity which endureth all things.

Amongst the names of men of former times, of which the Baptist body may be justly fond, Keach, and especially Bunyan, may be mentioned. The author of a book which is at once the delight of children, the instruction of saints, and the admiration of critics, deserves the place which he has obtained, not only in the annals of the church, but in the history of our country. Like his coevals among other nonconformists he was the object of relentless persecution, but exceeded most of them in suffering, for twelve years of his life were spent in prison. He was hunted from place to place by spies and informers. The more effectually to evade them, he sometimes disguised himself as a carter, and was introduced to meetings through back doors, with a smock frock on his back and a whip in his hand. His influence with the common people was such that government would have gladly bought him; but he was not to be bought, and one of the last acts of his virtuous life was to decline an interview to which he was invited by a government agent.

[The sketches by Lord Macaulay of Bunyan and Kiffin follow here.]

It is not necessary I should trace further the general history of the Baptists, when, in common with other denominations, they were protected by the Toleration Act, and when taking advantage of their liberty they diffused themselves over the country.

THE QUAKERS OR FRIENDS.

The founder of this small but eminently philanthropic and truly respectable section of the christian community, was George Fox, who was born in 1624 at Drayton in Leicestershire, of respectable parents who were members of the Church of England. Being of a meditative and serious turn of mind, and being often occupied in keeping sheep, which afforded him opportunity for reflection and contemplation, he devoted much of his time to fasting, private prayer, and studying the scriptures. He was thus brought to deep religious concern, and applied for solution of his doubts and relief from his oppressive solicitude, first of all to his own parish priest, then to other episcopal clergymen, and last of all to the Puritans; but finding no benefit from the counsels of any of them, he withdrew from them all, entered into much solitary communion with God, and at length believed that he was divinely commissioned to become a public teacher of views of religion received by him directly from the Lord: these on divers points were contrary to the creed both of the Church of England and of the various bodies which dissented from it. In 1647 he commenced his itinerant labours, which soon became incessant and exhausting. He first made known his views to such small companies as he casually met, and afterwards to

larger assemblies convened for the purpose of hearing his statements. As his opinions were antagonistic to those of all parties, all parties combined not only to oppose them but to persecute their advocate. He was or wished to be a reformer of all, a character very sure to be more or less hated of all. But though threatened and maltreated by mobs, assailed by ministers, insulted by magistrates, though often imprisoned and often arraigned, Fox went forward in his career with the courage of a hero, and the constancy of a martyr, and with such success that before many years had elapsed he found himself surrounded by a numerous band of fellow-labourers and a widely-diffused and respectable society of religious friends, some of whom quitted for the sake of his principles livings in the church, commissions in the army, and seats upon the magisterial bench.

The Quakers are generally Arminian in doctrine; they assert also that man for his religious guidance has not only the outward revelation in the Bible, but an inward revelation or communication of divine light, which they affirm to be necessary for the production of true faith; and which, though it neither does nor Call contradict either the outward testimony of the scripture or sound reason, is something different from and in addition to both. They profess to wait for the guidance of the Spirit in the affairs of life, but especially in what concerns religion or the worship of God. Hence they are opposed to all liturgical services, all predetermined extempore prayers, and all pre-composed sermons. They practise neither baptism nor the Lord's supper, believing that these, though practised by the first Christians, were relics of the Jewish ceremonial law and not intended

to be permanent christian institutes. The early members of the body did not hold the divine obligation of the Sabbath, which is still the view of many of the Friends, (as it is of some members and ministers of other denominations), but they still hold most strenuously the expediency of the day as a season for rest and worship. Joseph John Gurney contended for the divine obligation of the Lord's day, and published on the subject, and his views are now held by the body generally. Their opinion of the impulse of the Spirit in directing their worship must of necessity exclude the singing of psalms or hymns. They totally disallow the separation and education of a particular class for the work of the ministry. They have ministers, but they are called out exclusively by a divine impulse, and after trial approved by the body, and they are neither separated from secular callings, nor do they receive any stipends. They allow the public ministry of females. Their meetings for worship are usually silent, except when anyone feels himself moved by the Spirit to speak or pray. They do not read the scriptures in their public worship, though they are known to be exemplary in this exercise in their families and in their private retirements.

The Quakers go beyond all others in bearing their testimony against the interference of the magistrate with religious matters; and hence suffer themselves always to be distrained upon rather than pay tithes or church rates. They never take oaths; and condemn all war, even that which is defensive, as unchristian and therefore unlawful, and of course never bear arms. They very rarely go to law with each other, but settle matters by arbitrators chosen by themselves. They support their own poor, and never allow them to receive parochial

relief. Marriages are always celebrated among themselves, and none are allowed to intermarry with persons of other denominations under pain of being disowned. They refuse to use titles; and, believing that the use of the plural pronoun in speaking to a single person originated in childish flattery, they address any individual, even the sovereign, with the singular "thou" and "thee." Because the names of the months and days of the week are borrowed from paganism they reject them, and replace them by ordinals. Their dress is singular, and adopted to the utter rejection of what may be called the finery follies and changes of fashion. They never take off their hats to any mortal, even to the monarch, conceiving this a mark of homage exclusively due to the Deity. In their discipline they are exceedingly watchful over the moral character and conduct of their members.

The government and discipline of the Quakers are unique, and cannot be classed with either Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or Independency. Monthly meetings, usually comprising several congregations, are held, at these meetings are admitted, discipline is carried on, overseers are appointed to take superintendence of the society, and other matters are attended to. In addition, quarterly meetings are held of the members of several monthly meetings, and their business it is to receive reports from the monthly meetings, and to hear the appeals from them, which every one has a right to bring who feels himself aggrieved in the lower tribunal. Then comes the yearly meeting, which has the general superintendence of the whole society, and to which appeals may be carried up from the quarterly meetings. The yearly meeting is partly representative.

as delegates are appointed to attend it from the quarterly meetings, but any members who may feel inclined have liberty to attend them. This meeting gives its advice, adopts rules, transacts by committees various matters connected with the body, and issues an annual epistle of counsel and consolation. To a certain extent then so far as the yearly meeting is concerned, the government is democratic, and yet in the gradation of the meetings it resembles Presbyterianism. No president is ever appointed at any of the meetings, as they look up to and rely upon God's illuminating Spirit to preside over their deliberations. Besides these meetings, they believe that as women may be called to the work of the ministry they may bear a part in the support of their christian discipline, and that some parts of it appertaining to their own sex devolve on them with peculiar propriety. Accordingly, separate monthly quarterly and yearly meetings of the women (but without the power of making rules) are held at the same time as those of the men.

In the promulgation of such a system we are not surprised that in an age of intolerance they should have been for a sign, a wonder, a gazing stock, and a reproach to the ignorant and bigotted of all parties, and the objects of much bitter and cruel persecution. And this, it must be admitted, was increased by the very injudicious manner in which some of them obtruded their sentiments on public attention. Not content with preaching them, and explaining and defending them from the press, they were in some instances aggressive upon the peace and order of other assemblies. Fox himself would sometimes, in his early career, interrupt public worship in bearing his testimony against what he considered to be the errors of

the preacher. Those mistakes of judgment he subsequently corrected, and adopted more legitimate methods of promulgating his opinions. His errors, however, were venial indiscretions compared with the rancour with which he and his followers were treated by nearly all parties, not excepting the Independents.

It need be scarcely mentioned that the designation of Quakers is not that which this body appropriate to themselves; they have selected a name to which their conduct entitles them, "Friends." When George Fox was brought before two justices of the peace in Derbyshire in 1650, one of them indulged himself in a vein of scoffing merriment against the serious manner and strange doctrine of the individual who stood before him, but nothing daunted, Fox turned upon the magisterial buffoon and bade him tremble at the word of the Lord: upon this the scoffer in derision gave him and his followers the name of Quakers. Their early history consists in a great part of a detail of buffetings, imprisonments, and spoiling of goods. So early as 1659 they stated to parliament that in the preceding six years about two thousand individuals had suffered in person and estate for being Quakers; and this representation was accompanied by one of the most extraordinary public acts on record. One hundred and sixty-four Friends offered themselves by name to the House to be imprisoned in the place and stead of an equal number of their body, who, from sickness or the hardships of their confinement, were conceived to be in danger of perishing. Their congregations were broken in upon by the military and the mob: their meeting-houses were burnt or pulled down; and the worshippers treated with the greatest indignities and cruelties.

Whatever was the feeling of many of his followers and friends, who indeed were not exempt from the crime of persecuting the Quakers, Cromwell was himself far more tolerant. His eyes were ever open and upon every thing, and perceiving the increase of their numbers he deemed it prudent to guard against any danger from that quarter, and therefore required Fox to undertake not to disturb his government. This engagement was to be given in writing, but to be expressed in whatever terms the writer chose to employ. Fox therefore wrote to the Protector by the name of "Oliver Cromwell," declaring "that he did deny the wearing or drawing of a sword, or any outward weapon against him or any man." Cromwell afterwards admitted Fox to an interview, when the preacher delivered some wholesome truths, which were received in a manner highly to the Protector's honour. He who held the sceptre of Britain and the balance of Europe, with true magnanimity, so far condescended to meet the scruples of this humble man as to allow him to remain covered in his presence.

In 1665, a hundred and twenty Quakers were in Newgate sentenced to transportation under the "Conventicle Act." The masters of ships generally refusing to carry them, an embargo was laid, and it was made a condition of sailing to the West Indies, that some Quakers should be taken there by every vessel. Unwilling to be active in their own banishment, the sufferers refused to walk on board, as did also the seamen to hoist them in, till a mercenary wretch was found who, assisted by some soldiers from the tower, carried fifty five of them to the ship. The vessel being detained till the plague broke out, twenty-seven of them died of

that fearful scourge, and the vessel having been taken by a Dutchman, the rest were liberated in Holland, and sent home. Other parties were set on shore by different vessels, so that only few of them were in the end sent to the West Indies.

The Quakers held their first general meeting, 1660, at Skipton in Yorkshire; a few years after which meetings for discipline were established through England and Ireland, chiefly by the incessant personal labours and epistolary recommendations of George Fox. At this period the society received a considerable accession of respectability by the conversion of William Penn and Robert Barclay; one the founder of the Transatlantic State called after him Pennsylvania, and the other the writer who first gave to the world a full and methodical account of their doctrines and discipline in his celebrated Apology.

It is impossible not to admire the intense zeal of the Quakers during their early history in the promulgation of their principles, and the self-denial and sufferings they have endured in prosecuting their missions. Delicate and defenceless women have travelled as female apostles to distant parts of the earth, and endured the most cruel indignities. In 1656, Margaret Fisher and Ann Austin arrived at Boston in Massachusetts. They were apprehended ere they could land, committed to close prison, searched in a brutal manner by being stripped naked, lest they should be witches. They with eight others who arrived afterwards were sent away as a pestilent sect; but the precaution was in vain, for their principles had entered the city, and remained behind when they left. An aged citizen and church member of Boston, who was found to be the first man favourably

inclined towards them, was fined, imprisoned, and banished in the depth of winter. In Rhode Island he was hospitably entertained by an Indian chief, who offered if he would live with him, to make him "a warm house," observing "What a God have the English who deal so with one another about their God." What a rebuke to the persecutors of all sects and parties from the lips of the red man of the woods! The most savage laws were passed at Boston against the Quakers; the scourge was first applied without regard to age or sex; mutilation by cutting off the ears followed; but as these brutalities were found insufficient to wear out the zeal of the patient and heroic sufferers they were ordered to be sold for slaves; and though this law was too bad to be executed, it was soon followed by another which doomed them to death if found within the colony after a certain time: and this statute of blood was fulfilled in the year 1658, in the martyrdom of William Robinson, Marmaduke Stevenson, William Liddra, and Mary Dyar, who were hanged at Boston. The persecutors in this case were undoubtedly Independents. It was now only thirty-eight years since, driven out by the fierce intolerance of the English hierarchy and the court of High Commission, the Pilgrim Fathers had sailed in the *Speedwell* and *May Flower* to the wilds of America, and gathered in their varied sufferings the bitter fruit of persecution on that desolate shore; now, while some of them might be yet living, and when the bulk of the acting generation must have been their children, did they exercise a cruelty which was an imitation of that which had driven them from their native country, and an improvement upon the copy. Spirit of Robinson, where wast thou that with frowning aspect thou didst not visit those thy descend-

ants, now turned recreants to the cause of religious freedom! To the honour of the English Independents, however, it must be recorded that by the pen of Dr. Owen they wrote a letter to dissuade those of New England from pursuing the bloody work.*

The Quakers partook, in common with others, of the benefits of James's Indulgence; and then, with the rest of the nonconformists, came at the Revolution under the protection of the Toleration Act.†

To the powerful influence of a natural establishment of religion this small but truly respectable body of professing Christians, though more widely separated from it than any other, has not shown itself to be insensible; for though their fellowship is fenced in by most stringent laws, they, like the members of other nonconformist bodies, are often found withdrawing to join the Church

of England. It would be invidious to select and mention individuals, otherwise names might be inscribed on this page, not unworthy to be recorded with those of Joseph John Gurney and his illustrious sister, Mrs Fry, the heroine of Newgate. The members of this community are always to be found conspicuous in all works of christian benevolence. If the slave is to be

* In extenuation of this conduct of the Independents of New England it is asserted that some of the female sufferers were guilty of great indecorums as signs of divine judgments; and that some of the other sex disturbed public worship by their conduct. If this were true, the magistrates should have known how to preserve the peace of the colony without the sacrifice of humanity.

† The conduct of Penn during the reign of James has always been the subject of severe animadversion, and Macaulay's History does but little to dissipate the clouds of reproach which even at the time, and from some of his own body, had collected round his name. [The author in the advertisement partly reprinted on p. 414 expressed his wish that this note should be considered as entirely cancelled.]

emancipated, they are foremost to strike off his fetters: if the children of the poor are to be educated, they were among the first to set up schools for that purpose; if the victims of intemperance are to be reclaimed, they enrol themselves among the members of temperance societies; and when the starving and pestilence-smitten population of Ireland were to be rescued from misery and death, they took the lead in the liberality of their contributions, and the wisdom and energy of their active endeavours; in short, wherever the squalid form of human misery is to be seen, there also is to be seen the Quaker form of christian mercy seeking to relieve it.

WESLEYAN METHODISTS.

THE OLD CONNEXION.

John Wesley was one of the most extraordinary men who have lived in our world in modern times. To that servant of God and man millions in time and through eternity will turn with gratitude as the instrument directly or indirectly of their salvation. He was the founder of a society which is already planted in every quarter of the globe, and is exerting a powerful influence over the moral interests and eternal destinies of its inhabitants. When the names of heroes will be detested, and those of statesmen philosophers and poets will be forgotten, his will be perpetuated in memorials radiant with the glories of paradise, and lasting as the ages of eternity. Mr Wesley, in the year 1729, was Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, and there, under the influence of a vague notion of the importance of religion,

he spent some evenings of the week in reading the Greek Testament, with his brother Charles and one or two more, who at length admitted three or four of the students to join with them in those exercises. This little band commenced visiting the sick in different parts of the city, and the prisoners in the jail. Two years after they were joined by three others, of whom one was the celebrated George Whitfield. It was impossible that the candle thus lighted could be put under a bushel. The singularity of their conduct attracted notice, and, perhaps in the way of sarcasm, they were called Methodists, on account of the regularity of their living, and the manner of spending their time. It is a little remarkable that the three designations of "Christians," "Puritans," and "Methodists," though imposed in the way of contempt, should have been received and appropriated without scruple or shame.* Soon after their first religious concern was felt by this pious band at Oxford, some of them had a strong desire to preach to the Indians of North America, and as an indirect means of accomplishing this object, John and Charles Wesley, with two more, engaged themselves as chaplains to the colony of Georgia.

It would seem that, at this time their views of evangelical religion were very dim and confused, but meeting on the passage with several pious Moravians, who better understood the scheme of salvation by grace, and continuing their intercourse with them in America Mr Wesley became acquainted through their teaching with

* It is however doubtful whether the name Methodist was not self-assumed, and denoted a new "rule" or "order," in distinction from a new communion. ED.

the momentous doctrine of justification by faith, the knowledge of pardon of sin, and peace with God. His faithful preaching of those great truths having brought upon him much persecution, his brother Charles returned to England in 1739, as he did the following year. From that time he commenced a course of ministerial exertions in the metropolis, and of journies into various parts of the country, of the most arduous and laborious kind, and the fervour of his zeal bore a proportion to the degree of obloquy he incurred. The effects of his preaching were very striking, for though it was calm and unimpassioned, and quite unlike that of his more eloquent though less learned fellow-labourer Whitfield, yet it was earnest and impressive. He still considered himself, and wished others to consider him, as a member and minister of the Church of England; a somewhat irregular one certainly, but still really such. He, therefore, desired to associate with him in his schemes, the pious clergy of that church, of whom at that time there were but comparatively few. In this he succeeded so partially that he determined upon the employment of pious and talented laymen, reserving to himself the right of appointing them to the work, and being guided in his choice by the opportunities he had of judging of their qualifications at meetings for prayer and exhortation.

Hitherto Whitfield had acted in conjunction with Wesley, but he having embraced the doctrines of Calvinism while those of Wesley were Arminian, they separated and each moved in his own appropriate sphere. The preaching of Wesley excited less public attention than that of Whitfield, and was perhaps less effective at the time, but from the beginning his plan of

action was more systematic, and in the end more successful. His great compeer's personal labours were to a considerable extent his system, and he had not policy enough to extend it. He was intent chiefly upon the impression and success for the time being of his wonderful oratory; while Wesley, in connexion with his itinerant labourers, was always laying or strengthening the foundations of the system which bears his name. He was a man of profound sagacity in his judgment of the men and the means that would accomplish his purposes; and though he might occasionally consult others, he reserved to himself the sole right of ultimate decision and appointment; and it was a proof of the resources and power of his own mind that he acquired such command over the minds of others. As his congregations increased, which they did rapidly, notwithstanding what some would call the enthusiasm and extravagance of a few of his followers, and the violence and mobbing of their opponents, he took the entire regulation of them all upon himself, and not only appointed the preachers, but furnished them with rules for their government.

As Wesley, either from policy or from principle, or in part from both, wished to avoid as much as possible the character and the charge of being a separatist from the Church of England, he did not, when he could avoid it, preach in church hours, and directed his preachers to follow his example in this particular, as well as in another, the not administering the sacrament of the Lord's supper in any of his chapels. It need scarcely be said that in both these respects his society have long since ceased to make the practice of their founder their rule, and are now as completely severed from the Church of England in all their practices as the Dissenters, not excepting

the celebration of marriage in their own places of worship. In a few of their chapels, both in London and in the provinces, they still use the liturgy of the Church of England, but these are the exceptions not the rule of their practice. The followers of Wesley are now everywhere called either Wesleyans or Methodists. The latter is the term more generally employed not only by others but by themselves. Methodism is a term of more than magic power over their minds and hearts. It has been questioned by some whether the spell of that mighty word is not sometimes greater than it ought to be, by holding them in the fascination of sectarian exclusiveness. Yet it must be admitted that no section of the Christian Church entered more generally or more cordially into the scheme of the Evangelical Alliance than they.

In doctrine the Methodists are Arminian, in ritual Pædobaptists, and in government hierarchical. Their arrangements for the government and working of their body are skilful and efficient. The supreme legislature is the Conference, which properly speaking consists of a hundred of their oldest, wisest, most experienced men, who fill up vacancies in their body. This Conference is confined exclusively to ministers, and has not yet shewn a disposition to throw open the doors to the admission of laymen; and if they were inclined to do it, it is prohibited by their deed of settlement; so that nothing short of an act of parliament could authorize so important a re-modelling of their constitution as this. The privilege of membership consists of admission to a class. A class is formed of a number of serious persons, amounting to from twelve to twenty or even more, one of whom is styled a leader. It is his business to meet this little company once a week to inquire

into the state of their souls, to watch over their conduct, to advise exhort and warn as the case may require, to collect the weekly contributions of the members, to meet periodically the ministers and stewards in order to report the condition of the class and to pay over the monies received. The class, it will be perceived, is the vital principle of Methodism, and in a body governed as this is must be allowed to be a most admirable contrivance; besides furnishing the pecuniary support of the ministry, which is obtained by this means, it is fraught with many spiritual and connexional advantages. A number of these classes forms a congregation, and a number of congregations a circuit, which generally includes in country places, a market town and the circumjacent villages to the extent of ten or fifteen miles. London and the large provincial towns are divided into several circuits. To each of these circuits are appointed two, three, or more preachers, one of whom is appointed a superintendent, and this circuit is the sphere of their labour for not less than one year, or more than three years. A number of circuits from five to ten, more or fewer according to their extent, form a district, the preachers in which meet annually. Every district has a chairman who fixes the time of the meeting. These assemblies have authority to examine candidates for the ministry, and to try and suspend members for heresy, immorality, or incompetency; to examine the demands of the poorer circuits for the support of the preachers and their families from the public funds; and to elect a representative to attend and form a committee to sit previously to the meeting of Conference, in order to prepare a draft of the stations of all the preachers of the ensuing year. The judgment of the district meeting is con-

elusive till the meeting of the Conference, to which an appeal is allowed in all cases. Besides the representatives chosen specially to form this committee, the superintendents of circuits and as many other preachers as each district may allow to attend the Conference, go up to the annual convocation and have all the privileges of speaking and voting with the centumvirate.

THE NEW CONNEXION, OR KILHAMITE METHODISTS.

It is pretty generally known that Mr Wesley at the commencement of his career, like Luther, did not clearly foresee his future career, or whither his new views, principles, and modes were leading him and his followers. He had no thought, as I have already stated, of separation from the established church, and therefore directed his preachers neither to officiate in church hours of service, nor to administer the sacraments of baptism and of the Lord's supper. In a sermon preached only a year before his death, speaking of the functions of his preachers, he says "We received them wholly and solely to preach, not to administer sacraments." Who that compares the present ecclesiastical practices of the great Wesleyan body with those laid down by their venerable founder, must not be constrained to admit that Methodism has very materially altered, and that therefore all arguments and resistance against innovation and improvement founded on the principles and plans of their great founder, are without force? The Methodists, I repeat, are now in every essential feature as fully separatists and nonconformists as the Dissenters. But

though they have worship in church hours, administer the sacraments, celebrate marriages, and generally practise extempore prayer, they refuse to designate themselves Dissenters. And indeed if the term necessarily implies, as perhaps it does in modern use, one who in all circumstances disallows the union of the church with the state, the Methodists, who many of them at least hold the abstract principle of the lawfulness of state support of religion, cannot be thus designated. During Mr Wesley's life, there were some who in their views of christian liberty, especially in relation to the established religion, saw much more clearly, and went somewhat further than he did; and who felt his views on this subject a yoke grievous to be borne. This soon manifested itself after his death in an earnest desire to add the celebration of the Lord's supper to the other ordinances of religion which they observed in their own chapels. Marvellous it is that their good great and sagacious founder, who found himself before his death at the head of a connexion numbering nearly a hundred thousand members, with preachers chapels and a full ecclesiastical organization in other respects, and with all the means motives and energies of indefinite extension, should yet imagine that all this could remain long in connexion with the Church of England, or that so slight a tie could hold them to it as receiving baptism and the Lord's supper at the hand of its ministers, disgusted as they often were by the known ungodliness of some of those by whom they were administered.

Mr Wesley had not been more than a year in his grave when a controversy arose upon the right and propriety of the Methodists to observe the Lord's supper among themselves. This brought into the field Mr

Kilham, then a very acceptable minister of about seven years' standing in the Newcastle circuit. He appeared as the advocate and champion of Methodist liberty. The matter was brought into Conference, and there decided against the advocates for the celebration of the Lord's supper. So warm was the contest that at one time it seemed almost to threaten the disruption of the Conference. Mr Kilham had now become the leader of the liberty party, and very soon, as was not unnatural, had his views led onward to other points, especially to the desirableness of lay delegates participating in the direction of the society's affairs. Many, and those of no mean name or low standing, sympathised with Mr Kilham in his views; and a conviction gained ground that the government of Methodism must be re-modelled, and such a constitution adopted as would unite the people with the ministers in the administration of affairs. At length there appeared a pamphlet from Mr Kilham's pen, and bearing his name, entitled "The Progress of Liberty." In this pamphlet he advocated the right of the people to a full share in the government of the body, and proposed a constitution carrying out that view. For the publication of this pamphlet he was tried by the Conference in 1796, and expelled from the ministry.

Mr Kilham's pamphlet had been widely circulated, and it was to be expected that his views would be embraced by many who read it. This, coupled with his expulsion, which it should be recollected was solely on the ground of his opinions and the manner of his expressing them, and not at all for immorality, made no small stir in the body. Various attempts were made to bring about a reconciliation between Mr Kilham and

the Conference, but these proving fruitless, a meeting was held in Ebenezer chapel at Leeds, on the evening of the 9th of August, 1797, which was attended by many of those who were favourable to a plan of church government that should unite the clergy and laity; which then adopted the principle of this mixed government, and laid the basis of a new society in accordance with it. Of this new organization, from that time called "The Methodist New Connexion," Mr Thorn was the president, and Mr Kilham secretary. At the time of its formation only two preachers besides Mr Thorn and Mr Kilham seceded from the Conference. But the cause was espoused by the laity in many places, and it immediately received an accession of about five thousand members. An unhappy controversy was the result of the separation, and much ill feeling was generated. The first Conference of the New Connexion was held at Sheffield in 1798, and was attended by fifteen preachers and seventeen lay delegates. Mr Kilham was not permitted long to direct the body of which he may be called the founder, as he died before the close of the year of the first Conference at the age of thirty-six. Of this connexion Mr Watson, afterwards one of the brightest ornaments of the Old Connexion, was for eight years a member and minister, and the following mention is made of him in the "Jubilee Memorial of the New Connexion."

"It is not so generally known as it ought to be, that to the New Connexion belongs the honour and joy of having brought this extraordinary man from obscurity and placed him in a position whence his path was as a shining light till it emerged in the glories of eternity. His respect for the New Connexion did not cease when he had rejoined the Wesleyans, and shone like the sun amongst the most popular and gifted of their ministers. He did not disparage the friends he had

left, he held them in grateful esteem, and the ministers of the New Connexion invariably met a cordial welcome at his residence. Honour to his memory. He was a great, good, and useful minister of Jesus Christ. May his mantle rest on the rising ministry of both the Old and the New Connexion."

This reference is as honourable to the memory of Mr Watson, (who was all that it represents him to have been,) as it is to the candour of the body who by his secession was deprived of such an ornament and tower of strength.

It will be borne in mind by the reader that the only difference of importance between the New Connexion Methodists and the Old one, consists of their views of the constitution of Conference; the latter contending for an unmixed hierarchy, and the former for a mixed government of clergy and laity. In the jubilee volume of this body, published in 1848, an able temperate and impartial work, the authors, while expressing their high admiration for Mr Kilham's irreproachable moral character, and their support of his views, disclaim the opinion that their denomination had its origin in personal sympathy with him under his expulsion from the Wesleyan Connexion. Highly as they respect his memory, (of which in the volume just alluded to they have given full proof in a beautiful effusion of love and respect,) it is still, they assert, the principles of christian liberty which he advocated, round which their connexion clusters, and to which as cherished by many of Mr Kilham's contemporaries, the origin of their denomination is to be traced.

THE WESLEYAN ASSOCIATION METHODISTS.

The Wesleyan Methodist Association was formed in the year 1835. There had previously existed much dissatisfaction among many of the lay officers and private members of the Old Methodist Society in consequence of the itinerant preachers having in the year 1828, (when the connexion was disturbed by certain proceedings relative to the erection of an organ at Leeds,) declared themselves possessed of more authority over the members of the society than was by many of the lay officers and private members regarded as being either consistent with the constitution of Methodism, as settled in 1797, or agreeable to what they regarded as just and scriptural. This discontent was greatly increased in the year 1834, by certain proceedings which were taken by the Conference for establishing a theological institution for the training of ministers. This subject had been under the consideration of several conferences and committees. Many of the lay officers and private members, and some of the itinerant ministers, were strongly opposed to the establishment of a theological institution. At the Conference of 1834, the Rev. Dr. Warren, (who had concurred in some of the previous preparatory steps taken by the Conference,) warmly opposed the measure, and in consequence as he stated of the clamour with which he was assailed in the Conference, he there obtained an imperfect hearing. He therefore published a pamphlet, in which he complained of the proceedings of the Conference, and denounced the intended theological institution, as likely to prove highly injurious to the best interests of the connexion. For publishing this pamphlet, contrary,

as it was alleged, to the rules of the connexion, he was tried before a meeting composed of the itinerant preachers of the Manchester district, and by that meeting was suspended from the exercise of his ministry. Many persons thought that he was thus subjected to unmerited punishment, and that the Conference ought to have consulted the Methodist societies as to the establishment of the theological institution, and that no further steps should have been taken until the judgment of the societies on this matter had been obtained. Dr. Warren refused to submit to the sentence of the district meeting, and persisted in occupying the pulpits in his circuit. In this he was warmly supported by a large portion of the lay officers and private members. Appeals to the Court of Chancery followed) and decisions were obtained, which excluded him from the pulpits of the chapels.

Under these circumstances loud complaints were made of the power assumed and exercised by the itinerant preachers, and an organization was formed to obtain the redress of alleged grievances.. Many persons joined in the movement who were very little concerned about the establishment of the theological institution, but who were desirous that the government of the societies should be so vested in the lay officers conjointly with the preachers as that there might be an efficient protection against ministerial absolutism.

Appeals were made to the ensuing Conference for the removal of alleged grievances. These appeals were unsuccessful. The Conference resolved to maintain all the authority which had been claimed for the itinerant ministers; laws more decisively declaring such authority were enacted; and it was determined that those

who refused to submit to those laws, should be expelled from the connexion, unless they withdrew from it. Some on account of bearing their testimony against these laws, (which they regarded as violations of the established constitution of Methodism, and as unscriptural and oppressive,) were expelled, and many thousands withdrew from the Conference Connexion. Most of them united to form new societies in various parts of the kingdom, and these societies appointed representatives, who met together and formed the Wesleyan Methodist Association.

Doctrinally this community holds similar opinions to those held by the Old Connexion, hut secures to the lay officers, private members, and churches, a larger share in the exercise of church discipline, and in the management of the connexional affairs.

THE PRIMITIVE METHODISTS.

According to the last report of this branch of the Wesleyan body, they have 513 travelling preachers. They have also established missions in Canada, in Australia, and in New Zealand. They hold an annual Conference, have a book room, publish annually minutes of Conference, and have both their denominational hymn books and magazine, together with funds for the support of their ministry, and also committees of various kinds for the management of their ecclesiastical affairs. In short, they are in a state of complete and effective organization, and furnish one of the most extraordinary instances on record of what may be accomplished in a land of religious liberty, by fervid and indomitable

religious zeal, even where it has neither wealth, rank, education, eloquence, nor fanatical peculiarities of doctrine to sustain it.

In the year 1780, a child was born at Burslem, in the Staffordshire Potteries, who when of proper age was apprenticed to learn the trade of his native place. William Clowes, for such was his name, was a youth of great energy mid activity, forward and foremost in the sins and follies of his neighbourhood. He was however not without the visitings of compunction, and the remonstrances of his conscience, even in the midst of his vices. His relentings were of short continuance, and usually ended in greater excesses than before. He went at one time to such an extreme of impiety as to hold with his dissolute companions a mock prayer meeting at a public house, at which the other and less abandoned bacchanalians were so shocked that they turned the profane crew into the streets, where these hardened sinners continued their blasphemous comedy. William Clowes seems to have been a ringleader of this company, and of their sport. At this time of his life dancing singing drinking and fighting occupied the chief part of his time, and as the wages of a journeyman potter could not go far to supply indulgences such as he delighted in, it is no wonder that the drunken mechanic was by idleness and extravagance soon plunged into debt.

At length however the conscience of William Clowes was roused from its deep and torpid slumber, and by attending the meetings of the Methodists he became a true convert from the error of his ways. The native ardour and energy of his mind were carried into his religious profession. He was always a man of strong feeling, and of excitable temperament, and the habitude

of his mind now was that of rapturous emotion. In his solitary musings and in the exercises of social devotion, he would give audible expression to his feelings, which he was unable, perhaps unwilling, to restrain. He soon became a class leader and a local preacher among the Methodists, by whom he was known, and not altogether approved as an unusually vociferous devotee. They wished him to be somewhat more restrained in his gestures, tones, and words, but William Clowes thought this would be quenching the Spirit, or at any rate damping the fire that burned within him. About the year 1810, assemblages of people were convened in the fields of his native place and neighbourhood for preaching and other religious exercises, which were called "camp meetings," and were an imitation of convocations held fifty or sixty years ago, by the Methodists in the hack woods of America. These were the delight of Mr Clowes's heart, and he had a conspicuous part in them as one of the preachers. This practice, and especially the part he took in it, gave offence to the more sober members of the Wesleyan body, and called forth the remonstrances of the superintendent of the circuit. Mr Clowes was informed he must discontinue some of his practices, especially his beloved camp meetings. He pleaded the example of Wesley and the primitive followers of that extraordinary man. This was to no avail, his name was struck off the list of preachers, and his ticket of membership refused, which amounted to a virtual exclusion from the body.

Mr Clowes's expulsion caused a great sensation in his neighbourhood, where his zeal and his eccentricities had excited much attention; many sympathised with him, and some adhered to him; among the latter were

Hugh and James Bourne, James Nixon, and some others. They after a short time formed themselves into a new confederation, took to themselves the name of Primitive Methodists, and proceeded to arrange a plan of denominational organization and action. This occurred July 26, 1811, at Tunstall, when seventeen preachers and seventeen places were enrolled, or at least this number had been reached by the following September.

Previous to this, Mr Clowes had been released from his daily labour by two friends who had engaged to raise him a little support. In reference to this he remarks in his journal,

“My wife began to feel that the allowance so disinterestedly given by the two pious and zealous friends was inadequate to our support, for in consequence of our peculiar position and religious connexions, we had many comers and goers, and to make them comfortable, and to maintain hospitality, we endeavoured to practise self denial to the utmost to avoid being in debt. We, therefore, used coarser food, dining, when by ourselves, on a little salt and potatoes, or a piece of bread and a drink of water. But as we found our expenditure still to exceed our income, we sold the feather bed we slept on; for it was a maxim with us, to which we regularly adhered, never to go in debt without a possibility of paying that debt. My proceedings, however, in these instances of self-denial, were unknown to my christian friends and coadjutors in the infancy of Primitive Methodism: it was enough for me to know, that God knew all! my conduct, and the motives that influenced it in every particular movement.”

I am no advocate for the modes of Primitive Methodism, nor an approver of all Mr Clowes's plans of action, but I should be strangely wanting in perception of the just, the disinterested, the contented, the generous, the modest, the heroic, not to express my admiration of this remarkable passage.

Scarcely had this new association been formed ere

they received an affectionate invitation to return to the Methodist body from which they had separated. This, after much reflection, consultation, and prayer, they respectfully declined, thinking it would be for the general good and their own freedom of action to remain as they were. Mr Clowes and his coadjutors, and he above and beyond them all, continued in labours more abundant. Not confining themselves to their own neighbourhood, they went every where preaching the ward. In cottages, in barns, in theatres, in public houses, in market places, in streets, in lanes, and in fields, they held meetings for prayer and exhortation. They were assailed by mobs and by magistrates; they were interrupted by bands of music, by vociferation, by being pelted with eggs and mud, by animals being turned loose into the midst of their assemblies, and by water engines being played upon them; their preachers were assailed by personal violence, and put in peril of their lives; but they persevered in meekness and in gentleness, and have conquered by their passive power.

Such is the account, as furnished by their own documents, of this body of professing Christians. In doctrines they are identified with all the other branches of Methodism, so that they have not excited attention nor acquired popularity by any alleged new revelations, like Joanna Southcote, or the apostle of Nauvoo. In their general machinery they copy the Old Connexion Methodists, and in the composition of their Conference they imitate the New Connexion and the Association in the admission of lay delegates.

It is neither slander, nor intentional insult, nor depreciation, to say that their preachers are uneducated, and their members generally poor. They feel it to be

their vocation to go out into the highways and hedges, and to labour on the great waste of ignorance poverty and crime, the cultivation of which is, to a considerable extent, neglected by others. Their sermons as compositions, and their modes of delivering them, will not be relished by the educated classes, and many wish they were somewhat different for the uneducated. It would be easy, without any extraordinary degree of fastidiousness, to raise objections, not only on the ground of taste and decorum but of piety, against their too familiar mode of addressing the Supreme Being in their prayers. Their audiences are however not such as would have their ears annoyed by too loud speaking, or their sense of propriety wounded by illustrations unclassical and vulgar. Moreover, in all these things they will improve and are improving as education diffuses its influence over those among whom they chiefly labour. That they have turned multitudes from sin to righteousness, (and what more could the loftiest eloquence, and the most finished elegance do?) cannot be doubted. Ninety thousand members attest this fact. Make what allowance we may for the insincerity and deep delusion which too extensively prevail, not only among them, but among all denominations, there must be a vast amount of christian morality in these myriads of professors. No religious community can long exist in a state of organization, of which manifested propriety of conduct is not a term of communion, and a bond of fellowship. It may be assumed as a fact, that neither drunkard, swearer, fornicator, adulterer, nor thief, known to be such, would be allowed to retain his membership in this body for a single day. This is saying something, and indeed not a little for the

usefulness of a body which counts nearly a hundred thousand members, won not from other bodies of professing Christians, but from the great moral waste. There are not wanting those who, in the success of this denomination, see a striking proof of the power of religious truth, the great fundamental truth of the evangelical system, to effect under the most disadvantageous circumstances, the ends for which it is granted from heaven, the conversion of the soul to God, the reformation of the human character, the promotion of domestic comfort, the support of social order, and the happiness of our species.

In glancing back on the past history of Methodism, and surveying its present condition, including all its four divisions, we must be powerfully struck with the expansive power of religious zeal, and the wonderful consequences which sometimes result from individual effort. And it is not the church of Rome only that can exhibit instances and proof of this, though she boasts of her Loyola, and the services he rendered her by the order he founded, threatening as it did at one time to hold a large portion of Europe in the deepest slavery beneath the papal yoke. But while the Jesuists have been plotting against the liberties of nations, and forging chains for their consciences, the followers of Wesley have been diffusing the blessings of spiritual freedom, and emancipating millions from the thralldom of sin and Satan. Including the Methodists of the United States, and all the sections of the body, there are nearly two millions in the membership of this community; and perhaps fifty thousand voices, if we comprehend the local preachers, are every Sabbath lifted up among them to publish the glad tidings of salvation to the perishing

world. What a result, if we look only to the past and the present, from the life and labour of one man; and who can predict the future? What intense bigotry must pervert the judgment and petrify the heart of that individual, who in his devotedness to his ecclesiastical system, whether Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Independent, can dwell upon such a scene with other feelings than those of delight and gratitude.

THE NEW JERUSALEM CHURCH, OR SWEDENBORGIANS.

EMANUEL Swedenborg was the son of a Swedish bishop, and born at Stockholm in the year 1689. He was distinguished by great talents great application and great acquirements in literature and science which introduced him to the notice and patronage of his sovereign Charles XII. He became eminent as a mathematician, an astronomer, an experimentalist in natural philosophy, an anatomist, and a mineralogist. His published works in all these departments of knowledge interested and astonished the learned and scientific world. About the year 1743 his attention was turned to spiritual subjects, by what he declared to be a personal appearance of our Lord, and a direct revelation of spiritual truth and the invisible world. He then published in various works the communications he had so received from Christ. His zeal in propagating his revelations was so ardent that he travelled into distant countries and circulated his books at an immense expense. He declined worldly honours and employment, which were at his command, and devoted his time labour and

property to what he conceived to be the instruction and benefit of mankind. He died in London in 1772. The following is a brief summary of the opinions which he taught, and which are embraced by his followers.

They believe in the Unity of the Divine Nature, and also in a Trinity. This however is not a Trinity of Persons, but a Trinity of Essentials, for they maintain a Unity of personality in the Deity as well as a Unity of nature. The one God is Jesus Christ, in whose glorified humanity dwells “the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” The Father being the inmost Divinity; the Son the Divine Humanity; and the Holy Spirit the joint operation of both. So that the Lord Jesus Christ, in this view of his nature, is the one Jehovah, the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Regenerator. He is the Trinity in Unity, just as the soul the body and the operative energy of man form one man; or as the understanding, the reason, and the will form one mind. They hold that the word of God (consisting of those portions of the sacred Scriptures which are plenary inspired) is to be interpreted by what is called the science of correspondence, or the relations which they assert exist between causes and their effects, between God and man, and between celestial and spiritual realities and the objects and appearances of the natural universe. They do not hold the doctrine of the vicarious sufferings and death of Christ, but still contend that his whole life on earth was sacrificial, a hallowing of the human nature, which he had assumed in the glorifying process by which it was made divine and eternally united with the indwelling essence: by this work likewise the redemption of all men, or their deliverance from impending destruction, was accomplished, and the salvation of all men rendered possible. Nor

do they believe in the doctrine of justification by faith alone, in what is called the orthodox view of that doctrine; they hold that faith must be conjoined to charity, its living root, and that both must determine to good works, and the shunning of all known evils as sins against God, or that they are spurious and vain. That thus regeneration is a progressive work, of which the Lord's glorification was in every particular representative, and that it is effected by repentance and reformation; and is a purification, a renewal of the understanding, the heart and the life: and further, that the holy Sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, and the duties of worship and obedience to the divine commandments, are essential means of holiness and salvation, and that all power, and glory, and praise, and honour, are to be eternally ascribed to the Lord alone. They hold that there is an universal influx from God of divine heat and light, or love and wisdom, into the souls of men, uniting them with the divine, endowing them with reason and freedom, and imparting to them a constant ability to do the will of God from a pure conscience, which however requires their own co-operating energy. They maintain that man is in continual association with angels and spirits; that his soul at the hour of death rises immediately in a spiritual body, which during his earthly life was concealed in his material frame, (which is the true and only resurrection); and that his eternal condition depends upon the ruling affection of his life: with respect to such as die in childhood however they believe that they are all without exception saved by the divine mercy. What is commonly called the last judgment, and the end of the world, they say should be interpreted, as the same events were interpreted at

the period of the Lord's first advent, according to "the science of correspondence," as signifying the distinction or termination of the present Christian church, both among Catholics and Protestants of every description; and that the last judgment took place in the spiritual world in 1757, from which era they date the second advent of our Lord and the commencement of a new Christian church, which includes the good of every name, and is to be continued for ever; which they affirm is signified by "the new heaven, and the new earth "in the Apocalypse, and "the New Jerusalem," descending thence "as the tabernacle of God with men;" on which article of their faith they ground their denominational designation as "the New Jerusalem Church." In church government they are substantially independent with a partial mixture of the synodal and episcopalian forms.

Swedenborg never intended or even wished to form a sect, but to permeate all churches and sects with the leaven of his doctrine. Some of various denominations have embraced his opinions, who never separated from their religious connexions, and among them have been and still are a few of the clergy of the Church of England.

THE IRVINGITE CHURCH.

Inspiration, or the revelation of divine truth to the human mind by a direct communication from God, to which we owe the sacred scriptures, is a gift so splendid that it is no matter of surprise it should have been claimed by the enthusiasm of deluded men, or mimicked

by the machinations of Satan. Fanatical pretensions of this kind have often made their appearance in the Christian church. The case of the Montanists in the second century, "The Holy Maid of Kent," in the time of the English Reformation, Thomas Munzer and others, or "The Celestial Prophets" as they were called, soon after the German Reformation, "The French Prophets," about the close of the seventeenth century: naron Swedenborg in the estimation of most, and Mary Campbell, or "The Maid of "Fernicarry," with many others, were all instances of this kind: and to these may be added Mr Irving and his followers.

This gentleman was a minister of the Church of Scotland, and at one period of his life was associated in ministry with the late Dr. Chalmers, at Glasgow. About the year 1820, he removed to London, and became the minister of the Scotch Church in Hatton Garden. Tall in stature, of a most extraordinary and commanding and at times almost terrific countenance, with a voice of deep sepulchral tone, and uniting with this exterior a magniloquent diction, and a somewhat fanciful style of composition, he soon attracted notice, and rose into the loftiest altitude of popularity, especially among the higher classes. Peers, literati, ministers of state, judges, barristers, and others, flocked to the oracle of Hatton Garden, who was the subject of general wonder, criticism, and conversation. In the year 1823, Mr Irving published *Four Orations for Christianity*, in which he started as a reformer, and as the haughty and bitter censurer of the evangelical preachers. He shone for a season as the dazzling and fashionable orator; he then became a zealous Millenarian; then a prophet; then a credulous believer in

Mary Campbell, as the subject of a divine inspiration, and the unknown tongues; and closed his brilliant but eccentric career at Glasgow in 1834, in the forty-third year of his age. That he was a good man none doubt; that in some respects he was a great man many believe; and that he was a deluded man is the opinion of most. His course presents an affecting lesson, and is one of the most impressive warnings which the modern history of the church affords against that mysticism which consists of setting up the impulses of our own mind, instead of the word of God, as the standard of truth and the rule of action.

As far as I have been able to learn the religious sentiments and practices of the congregations which are usually considered as his followers, they are contained in the subjoined general summary.

They repudiate the idea of considering Mr Irving as their founder, and refuse to be called by his name, or by any other sectarian name whatever; professing only that they belong to the one Holy Catholic Apostolic Church. They admit, however, that Mr Irving was raised up by God to revive some truths which the church through a want of faith and neglect of watchfulness, had lost, or at any rate forgotten; such for instance as the gift of prophecy and other extraordinary endowments of the Primitive Christian Church. It is a fundamental principle with them that the church is still possessed, potentially, of the powers and gifts spoken of in the twelfth chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians. They contend that the boon bestowed upon the church by the ascended Saviour in the various offices spoken of in Ephes. iv. 11, "And he gave some apos-

bles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ," was not to be restricted to the Primitive Church, but was intended to continue till the coming of Christ to reign personally and visibly over his kingdom. Hence, they contend that the church is still to be governed by the fourfold ministry of "apostles," "prophets," "evangelists," and "pastors." Besides these the presiding minister of each congregation is called by them after the designation employed in the apocalypse, "The Angel." Under him the elder evangelist and pastor perform certain functions of ruling teaching and visiting the sick. The apostles are the supreme authority to whom the angel is subordinate, and by whom his decisions may be controlled or revised. The apostles bear no special relation to any particular congregation, being intended as office bearers for the whole church, and each has a distinct portion of the country or of the globe allotted to him as the sphere of his influence and duty. This mode of government makes them of course in principle opposed to the union of Church and State, as now maintained in the English Church. In doctrine this body of professing Christians accord pretty nearly with the theological articles of the Church of England and other sections of orthodox Protestantism. They hold in the firmest manner the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Baptism is in their view a most high and sacred privilege, being the introduction of the subject of it as a member into the true Catholic Church. All persons baptised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit, whether by their own ministers or others, whether by Protestants or Papists, constitute the Catholic Church. But this Catholic Church being grievously defective in its views of Christ's spiritual kingdom, it is their vocation to be witnesses for the truth to those who have erred, and to call and gather them back to the one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, as revived by them. They are Millennarians in the modern sense of that term, as holding the belief of the pre-millennial and visible advent of our Lord. In their public services they use a liturgy partly selected from other formularies, and partly composed for their own special use, in which there is a collection of very beautiful and spiritual devotional exercises mixed up with a few of a questionable character; such for instance as prayers for departed saints. Their ministers use the sacerdotal costume of the alb and the surplice: and they also observe many of the days held sacred by the Churches of Rome and England. But they would contend that no representation of their sentiments in this manner can convey an adequate idea of their ecclesiastical system: it is only those who have received it by a divine teaching who can altogether comprehend its spiritual nature.

Many will recognise, or think they do, in their system a mixture of Popery and Protestantism, of sound theology and erroneous ritual, of conformity and nonconformity, of scriptural truth and the ordinances of man, but still it is instructive and impressive to observe in their liturgical forms how they deplore the broken unity, the tarnished beauty, the prostrate honours of the one true church of God, and how with deep humiliation for this state of things they breathe out their

desires after its healing and re-union. Whether their views of what constitute this unity, and of the means by which it is to be effected, are the right ones, will be doubted by multitudes, but no right-minded and right-hearted Christian can do otherwise than add his amen to their prayers for the manifestation of this unity.

**GOD'S VOICE FROM CHINA TO THE
BRITISH
AND IRISH CHURCHES,
BOTH ESTABLISHED AND UNESTABLISHED.**

THE CALL.

CHINA is open! open from one end to the other for the introduction of the Gospel. If what is done on earth be known in Heaven, I can imagine Morrison Medhurst and other departed missionaries rising from their seats in glory and uttering the shout "China is open to the Gospel!" while the heavenly hosts in millions of echoes, reverberate the sound, crying "Hallelujah, China is open." And shall we on earth be apathetic, dumb, inactive? Forbid it our zeal for the glory of God, and our love to man. Let the universal church join the strain and exult that China is open, and learn the lesson which Providence has taught by its recent wondrous dispensations towards that empire. I am not forgetful, I cannot be, (who is?) of what Providence of late has been doing also in India, where its rule has been more awful, and apparently more obstructive of the work of evangelization. From Hindostan, I am most willing to admit, the call of God to Britain for evangelistic efforts has been uttered in loud and terrible voices. The dreadful tragedies of

Delhi, Cawnpore, Bareilly, and other places, proclaiming as they do that the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty, and thus demonstrating the need of Christianity to subdue the ferocious spirit of Mahommedanism and Hindooism, put in requisition our energetic operations for the conversion of our Oriental empire. That country will be held to us more securely by the Bible than by the sword, by the missionary than by the soldier; and our government will but repeat the infatuation of their predecessors if by the neutrality they talk of they intend any the most distant approach to a concealment of the fact that the government of India is a christian government, or to a discountenance of evangelical operations, or to a friendly connivance at the crimes of idolatry. In advocating the cause of China, I am not therefore forgetting India. My own congregation has subscribed five hundred pounds, in addition to their ordinary contributions, for fresh efforts on behalf of Hindostan. But I am apprehensive lest the deadly and engrossing interest which attaches to India should lead to our overlooking China. India is now re-conquered if not tranquilized, and reduced to subjection if not yet restored to order. Let not India therefore be any impediment to efforts to convert the Chinese.

In default of some voice of more commanding power than my own, I have determined to call the attention of the churches to their duty and their privilege in reference to recent stupendous events affecting China. Disabled by the visitation of God for much bodily labour in his cause, I must, if I would do any thing, employ my pen. If intense interest for the spiritual welfare of China qualify me for the task of urging. the

claims of that country, I am not unmeet for it; for I can truly say that a day never passes over my head during which I do not let my thoughts fly to it, and my earnest prayers ascend to God for it. Perhaps I may, without assumption or arrogance, affirm that the subject belongs to me, since God by my pen, no long time since, called forth between two and three million copies of the Scriptures for China, and raised for the Bible Society between thirty and forty thousand pounds for this purpose. Having thus sent forth the call for a million Testaments (for such only was the original requirement), I seem almost authorized to raise another call for a hundred missionaries. These then are my reasons for undertaking to entreat British Christians of all evangelical churches, to rise in one mighty mass, and (with a shout more rational, more holy, and more resolute than that which shook the plains of Clermont when a hundred thousand voices, under the fervid appeals of Peter the Hermit, exclaimed "God wills it, God wills it,") to cry, "China for Christ, China for Christ, God wills it!"

Can we doubt that God wills it? Apart from the eternal covenant which has given to Christ the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession; and in addition to the general predictions of prophecy, which assure us that the knowledge of God shall cover the earth as the waters do the sea, we have a special and explicit assurance concerning China: "Behold, these shall come from far, and lo, these from the north and the west; and these from the land of Sinim." Modern critics and commentators of nearly all classes, even of the German school, agree in thinking that Sinim means China.

But my reference now is not so much to prophecy as to Providence; not to what God proclaims by ancient Hebrew seers as to what He has done by less holy instrumentalities in modern times; by the prowess of armies, the decisions of war, and the treaties of contending nations. Mark this. Twenty years ago, China was hermetically sealed against the entrance of foreigners to her dominions. Till then she retained the jealous isolation of thousands of years, and there seemed no more probability at that time of the doors of her empire being unbolted and thrown open than there was a thousand years ago. We have had for ages mercantile establishments outside the walls of Canton, but we were not allowed even to peep through its opened gates into the city itself. No foot of missionary was allowed to tread its streets, not a Bible nor a tract to be given to a single individual within its walls. O how we longed and prayed and waited for access to its teeming population! How we wished yea panted for unrestricted approach to its vast hive of people! Our Morrises and our Medhursts wore out their lives in anxious patience waiting for the opening of the door, and died "in faith not having received the promises, but having [only] seen them afar off." If anyone, twenty years ago, had ventured to predict that at the expiration of that time China would by treaty be thrown wide open not only for commerce but for Christianity, would he not have been to us as one that dreamed? Should we not have pronounced him the most extravagant of all enthusiasts? Or if, on the other hand, we had given credence to his prediction, would not our faith have filled us with astonishment and delight? Would not our imagination have gloated over the glorious anticipa-

tion? Should we not have made it our boast and our song, "In twenty years all China is to be open to Christianity?" Should we not have said, "Let that be realized and we shall be willing to make any sacrifice for its evangelization?" Well, behold it is done: China is open from end to end for the introduction of the Gospel. Marvellous fact! We can send not only as many Bibles, but as many missionaries as we please to any part of that country, under the sanction of a treaty. Am I writing fact or fiction? Can it be true? It is. Providence has done it by one of the most wonderful of all revolutions. There is nothing like it in modern, and hardly in ancient times. And yet now it is come, we seem to hear of it and speak of it with a cool and measured delight which is astonishing and mortifying. With what songs of joy ought we, as Christians, to go up to the temple of the Lord and thank Him that China is everywhere accessible to the Gospel!

God's Providence seems of late years to have been at work with China, and for it: and He has signally overruled even the bad passions of men for the accomplishment of His own benevolent purposes towards that vast empire. How iniquitous and abominable, and how disgraceful to this country, was the opium war. Yet God made it subservient to His own scheme of mercy in China, by opening five gates of entrance into that previously exclusive nation. And I, for one, denounce the injustice of the war which has lately terminated so wonderfully for China's own advantage, as I am quite confident it has done in various ways. But "God makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of that wrath does He restrain." On the dark cloud of human

passions and vices He imprints the bow of promise and of mercy. Upon how comparatively insignificant an event has His wisdom founded this stupendous change of the destiny of the most populous, and in some respects, most extraordinary nation upon earth. Who could have thought that the trifling affair of the Arrow would have ended in a treaty which should demolish the absurd jealousy, the irrational exclusiveness, the astounding prejudice, arrogance, and selfishness of thousands of years, and lay open to the world a people which during this long period had been shut out from the fellowship of nations? "This is the Lord's doing, and is marvelous in our eyes." It is the stately march of Providence in its usual way of acting, in bringing great effects out of what appear to us to be small causes, and making evil deeds terminate in good results. The redemption of the world was the issue of Jewish malignity against Christ.

And must we not especially mark the hand of God in moving the minds of the negotiators of the late treaty with China to stipulate for the toleration of Christianity? It is at any rate not very usual in modern times for diplomatists to take religion into account, and make it an article of treaties. Nor can we in this case fail to notice the unlimited extent of the toleration secured: in this case, all China is thrown open to Christian Truth! My heart glows as I write it; my very fingers seem to thrill as they pen the sentence. Had we at this moment a thousand missionaries to send, China is accessible to them all. They might land on any part of the coast, and the treaty would cover them all with its protection. O my God and Saviour, what hast thou not done in thy wisdom

and mercy for China's spiritual welfare! Yes, this is the chief end of God in those events. Statesmen look only to political power and influence, manufacturers and merchants look only to commerce, but the eye of God is upon the evangelization of the people. Christ, who is head over all things to his church, has in view the setting up of his kingdom; and depend upon it, he had this in contemplation and intention in the late events in China.

British Christians of every name, does not God call to you from China to consider his ways? Could an audible voice from heaven be more intelligible? Do you not see Divine Providence beckoning to you from Pekin? Why comparatively a few years ago it was death to a native to embrace, and to a missionary to preach, the Gospel; and now Providence has made way for all the population, if so disposed, to receive it, and for all the ministers in England and America, if they were so inclined, to go and publish it. When Providence calls so loudly, shall we not listen to its voice? When its course is so manifest, shall we not mark its footsteps? When it is so gloriously working and summoning us to work with it, shall we refuse to co-operate? or go reluctantly, grudgingly, and tardily to the work? The walls of Jericho have fallen flat to the ground, and shall we refuse to go up and possess the city? I address you as Protestants as well as Christians, "Up, and be doing!" You ought, you must, you will do something more, much more, for China. The people, as I shall show, are prepared to receive you. The fields are white unto the harvest. What is wanted? All that is wanted is, reapers to go and gather it in.

Nor does the wonder-working hand of God stop with

China. Lord Elgin has most wisely gone on, sent as I believe by God, to the neighbouring empire of Japan, and formed a commercial treaty with that country. He has obtained the guarantee of religious toleration for British residents; and although nothing is said about toleration for the natives to embrace Christianity, this will doubtless soon follow; so that another country will be thrown open to us. Those who do not see the hand of Providence in this, must be mentally blind; and those who do not hear its call to carry there the Gospel of Christ, must be wilfully and sinfully deaf.

THE PLEA.

I will now bring forward the arguments by which it may be proved to be our solemn duty at this juncture to interest ourselves in a peculiar manner for China, and will present the motives by which this concern may be urged upon us. I say to interest ourselves in a peculiar manner, with additional zeal, liberty, and earnestness. I am not forgetful of what has been done and is doing for China both by England and America, as well by the Church of England as by Nonconformists. For more than half a century the London Missionary Society has had missionaries in that country. But what I am now calling for is a vastly augmented effort for its evangelization. Taking all the Protestant missionaries of all denominations from Britain and the United States, there are less than a hundred at present engaged; that is one for every three and a half millions of people. We may well and sorrowfully ask, "What are they among so many?" What then I ask for is an effort by all

evangelical Christians, for China, in same measure proportioned to the present opportunity furnished by the recent Treaty. I want and seek a new consecration to the work, a fresh committal of ourselves to the cause, a feeling and conviction pervading all our churches that God has laid us under a most solemn obligation to do something new and noble, something worthy of the cause, of Him, and of ourselves. We owe China a debt of justice for injuries inflicted, as well as a debt of mercy for its own miseries. Arguments? Motives? Can we want anything more than the new opportunity, anything more than the trumpet call of Providence, anything more than to be told that China is open to us? If so, take the following:

1. There is the old, yet ever new and ever powerful one, the immense population of the "Celestial Empire." A third of the inhabitants of our globe are there, three hundred and fifty millions of immortal souls, for whom Christ died, and all hastening to heaven or hell at the rate of fifteen millions annually! I do not underrate or undervalue our missions to Africa and Polynesia; I would not abandon one of them, but if I could would strengthen them all; yet some single cities of China contain more souls than all the islands of the Pacific, or all the tribes of Africa which are yet within our reach. O what an object of missionary zeal does this mighty mass of perishing souls present! If Paul was moved by a single city given to idolatry, what should be our feelings when contemplating this stream of idolatrous population flowing in one awful cataract into the gulf of perdition!

2. Then there is the vicinage of Thibet, and especially of Japan, in the north, where the written language is the same as in China; and there are Cochin China, Siam, and

Birmah on the south; and the Eastern Archipelago with its innumerable islands, and Borneo, that continental island on the east. Let China receive Christianity, and its influence must be felt over the whole eastern world, that teeming hive of nations. From thence, as a centre, would radiate over nearly half the population of our world the light of Gospel truth. Let anyone take up the map of Asia, and he will see at once what must be the effect of the conversion to Christ of this vast section of the inhabitants of the globe.

3. We are connected with China by a territorial link in the possession of Hong Kong. Part of China is part of our own empire. The British sceptre stretches over to that wondrous country. We have colonized it, and have set up there our government and our laws. We are in this respect its neighbours, and ought to feel the claims of neighbourhood. As God has given us this territorial possession of a part of China, may we not look upon it as a pledge of his intention to give us the spiritual occupancy of the whole? Let us look upon Hong Kong as our advanced post in the spiritual invasion and conquest of the country.

4. Can we overlook the work of preparation which has been long going on, and is now so far advanced, for the evangelization of China? The whole Bible is translated into its mysterious language. This mighty labour has been achieved, and the revelation of God given to nearly four hundred millions of the human race, (including Japan,) in characters which they can read. That which was at one time supposed to be all but impossible, except the gift of tongues were restored, has been accomplished. The patience diligence and scholarship of our missionaries have, by God's help,

transferred the truths of the Old and New Testaments into the mystic characters of that extraordinary people, and the words of Christ are presented to them in the language of Confucius. Can we dwell without rapture on such a fact, and not feel also an intense desire to send missionaries to explain the Scriptures which previous missionaries have translated? The great instrument for China's conversion is completed, and now where are the hands to wield it? Here is the difference between Popish and Protestant missions. The former send the priest to the people, but keep back the Bible; the latter send both the preacher and the Scriptures. And what is the consequence? The converts of the one in many cases sink back again into heathenism, or remain half pagans; while those of the latter stand fast in the faith, and are altogether Christians. The Jesuit missionary Huc, in his book of travels through China, tells us of the numerous attempts made through a long succession of ages by the church of Rome for the conversion of China, and of the various means employed and the results which followed. As regard the means, he says that among others, the missionaries carried with them ornaments of the church altars and relics, to see if they would attract the people to the faith of their church. They sent Jesuits, physicians, mathematicians, artists, and men of science, anything and everything but the Bible. This they never gave the people. No wonder, therefore, that Huc has to complain, after all their occasional triumphs, in the following language, of the comparative failure of their efforts:

“The soil has been prepared and turned in all directions with patience and intelligence; it has been watered with sweat and tears, and enriched with the blood of martyrs; the evangelical seed has

been sown in it with profusion; the christian world has poured forth prayers to send upon it the blessing of heaven, and it is as sterile as ever. * * * The religious ideas do not, it must be owned, strike very deep roots in this country; and the seeds of the christian faith, cast into it in the earlier ages, appear to have entirely perished. With the exception of the inscription of Singan, no trace of the former missionaries or of their preaching was there to be found. Not even in the tradition of the country was preserved the slightest trace of the religion of Jesus Christ. A melancholy trait is it in the character of this people, that christian truth does but glide over its surface.”

What a proof of the insufficiency of the priest without the Bible! These missionaries kept back the Scriptures. They gave them altars, relics, ceremonies half pagan half christian, science, the arts, physicians, but they gave them not in their own tongue the word of God. No Wander that Hue had to complain of the continual unravelling of the work which the missionaries did; and that all they did had from time to time to be begun again.

Nor is it merely that the Scriptures are now circulated widely by Protestants in China, nor that missionaries are also there, but it is also a fact that both, even before the recent Treaty, were making progress. To convince himself of this let anyone read the last accounts sent home by Mr John, Mr Muirhead, and Dr. Hobson, our missionaries at Shanghae.

“The ease (says Mr. John) with which missionary excursions may be made in this part of China, and preaching everywhere carried on, even in the very busiest thoroughfares, is truly surprising. Some months ago, a brother missionary and myself visited Kiahing and Kia-shan, two large cities in the Oke-keang province, and about a hundred miles from Shanghae. We commenced preaching each day with the early morning, and kept on till late evening, to crowds of people in all the busy and narrow streets, without the least interruption or expression of ill-will on the part of the citizens. After spending seven days in these two places, we left pretty well satisfied that there was hardly a street or corner which had not been con-

verted into a temporary pulpit, and that the glad tidings of salvation had been preached to thousands for the first time. This is only a specimen of what may be and is done by Protestant missionaries in the towns and cities around Shanghai * * * After several attempts and disappointments, I at length succeeded in renting a house at Ping-hu, a distant city in the province of Oke-keang, where I have been residing with my family for towards of two mouths. Ping-hu is between 80 and 100 miles from Shang-hae, and contains upwards of 80,000 inhabitants. We open the doors for preaching about 2 p.m., and close them between 5 and 6. My native assistant and myself preach alternately, generally speaking to a large and attentive audience. We have not been without some tokens of the Divine approbation and blessing. On my first going there I established a Bible class, which I hold twice a week; all who seemed to feel all interest in the truth were invited to attend, and in a few days we had a goodly number of catechumens who were receiving spiritual instruction. Six of my catechumens received the ordinance of baptism, and are, so far as I can ascertain, walking worthy of their profession. Only a few years ago, 24 hours was the utmost length of the foreigner's tether, his visits were confined to villages and small towns in the vicinity of Shanghai; but now, in consequence of missionary perseverance and courage, large cities are visited openly, and the Western barbarians are permitted to dwell in the very houses of the highly polished and cultivated Celestials. While the English and French cannon were roaring and thundering within two or three days' journey of the Dragon Throne, missionaries were permitted to live in peace and quietness at the distance of 100 miles from Shanghai. The day is about breaking on China, and we are on the eye of more glorious times. The barriers are, in truth, about being swept away and wide doors flung open; but are the churches at home prepared to send men out to take possession of the land?"

The barriers are broken down, the doors are flung wide open, by the late Treaty. Yes, noble-hearted missionary, thy hopes are realized. There are as many doors thrown open as there are ports into which a ship may enter, along the whole coast of China. Thou mayest travel not only a hundred miles from Shanghai, but a thousand; and under the protection of the treaty, publish to listening crowds the glad tidings of salva-

tion. Who can read the account which this servant of Christ gives of the readiness of the Chinese to hear the gospel, and not feel his heart leaping within him for joy? What a strange, what a wondrous matter, Englishmen travelling without molestation, missionaries preaching the Gospel without hindrance, and settling in cities without opposition, setting up Bible classes without interference, in China! Even secular journals are referring with surprise and confidence to these events, and in a spirit of exulting anticipation the New York Herald thus alludes to them:

“As in the material so in the moral world of the East has a revolution been begun by the recent treaty. Christianity has secured an entrance there. The worldly maxims of Confucius must give way to the sublime teachings of the Saviour. Buddha must go the way of the Pagan gods of the Pantheon. The theories that have maintained the East stationary for thousands of years must give way to those which, out of the broken elements of the Pagan and corrupt Roman empire, were able to erect living kingdoms, and mould a dying world to progress.”

This is as truly as it is eloquently expressed.

O Christians! can you read this, believe this, and not say, “Shall not the churches of Britain send out a hundred more missionaries to that multitudinous people, so obviously prepared to receive them?”

5. In China there is no impediment of caste. That diabolical invention, which proves so formidable in the way of our efforts to evangelize India, has no existence in the “Celestial Empire.” There are the diversity of sects, and of course the usual religious bigotry of idolators; but there are no social barriers to separate one class from another by insuperable distinctions and exclusions: no Brahminical elevation and pride, no Pariah degradation and isolation.

6. The Chinese are a literary people, and possess the art of printing, which they knew ages before it was known by us, and are thus prepared to read our Scriptures and religious literature when it is translated. We have not to contend with a barbarism which has no written language, and therefore neither dictionaries nor grammars nor vocabularies, and in short no alphabet. All these are already prepared, and thus furnish at once to our missionaries the means of the great conflict with the powers of darkness, and to the people the means of profiting by their labours from the press as well as from the pulpit.

7. And now, as the last, and in some respects most cogent motive, I would put the momentous question, Shall China be a Protestant or Popish country when converted to Christianity? Shall she receive a corrupted Christianity through the Pope, or a pure one through the New Testament? Shall the crucifix or the cross be sent to her? Protestants, I speak to you; and with all possible solemnity and earnestness I tell you, that unless you rouse yourselves from your apathy, and exert yourselves to the utmost, the "Man of Sin" will be beforehand with you and take possession of China. Rome knows the value and importance of this great prize if you do not. The Vatican for many centuries has fixed its eye and set its heart upon that country. Its conquest has ever been a cherished object of Romish ambition. Pope after Pope has held it up to the gaze of the Roman church as worthy of its utmost zeal. Chinese literature has been studied, and priests in great numbers have been trained for the conversion of the people. They have been sent in disguise into the country, through the passes of the Himalaya mountains, when no other means of access could be found for them. At

other times, when more toleration was granted, they have gone as scientific men, and have been received at court. Missions have been formed, and at times have been followed with success. At one period, Popery entered the court, had its votaries among some of the nearest relations of the reigning monarch, and seemed likely to get possession of the throne. At the present moment it boasts of numerous bishops and millions of subjects. All this has been done amidst frequent opposition and occasional fierce intolerance and persecution. And Rome has had its martyrs as well as its followers in China. What then will be its zeal, and, if not met with equal zeal, what will be its success now? I believe that we are indebted in no small measure to Popish vigilance for the article of religious liberty in the treaty of peace. I hope and would believe that Lord Elgin had an equal share of the honour of gaining this act of toleration for China; but I am sure that the French plenipotentiary would not be backward. On a former occasion, if I mistake not, the representative of France was more forward in a similar matter than the representative of England.

Priests and Jesuits from the Vatican will now swarm into China. The Propaganda Society will beat its re-veill e, muster and marshall its troops, and invade in mighty force the coveted territory. Can we wonder at this, or blame them? Let us rather be provoked to jealousy by their efforts, and emulate their zeal. They have as much right to spread Popery as we have to diffuse Protestantism; and however we may condemn their tenets and deplore their success, we would not by any interdict, if we could, prevent their endeavours. Ours are not the carnal weapons of legal proscription or

brute force, but the spiritual ones of reason and Scripture. Rome will see in China the noblest prize it can ever obtain, the richest possession it can ever gain. There will be no lack of either men or money for this. Hundreds of priests are ready at a moment's call to start upon this career of conquest and glory; and wealthy zealots will be equally ready to lay their fortunes upon the altar for this crusade.

As additional proof of the eager hope with which the church of Rome is looking to China, and of the energy she will put forth for its conversion to Popery, I give the following quotation from the Roman Catholic periodical, called *The Tablet*;

“We hope that ere long China will be thrown open to European commerce, that the obstacles which have been hitherto opposed to the Christian faith will be removed, and that the Church will have free liberty to preach the Gospel of Christ to the innumerable inhabitants of that empire. * * * There are some persons who think there are scarcely any Christians in China, with the exception of a few in the cities which have been open to the commerce of the Western world; but we are happy to say they are mistaken, for there are between two and three millions of Roman Catholics there.” [How they swell the number of their converts may be learnt from what follows:] “Not long since we read in the *Annals of the Propagation of the Faith*, a letter written by a priest, who stated that he and a catechist baptized annually about 1,000 infants who were in danger of death.” [In this way they may, I should conjecture, easily multiply their numbers by millions!] “We hope, [the writer goes on to say] that ere long there will be many native Chinese prepared for the priesthood, who with great facility will be able to instruct their fellow-countrymen in the faith of Christ. In the year 1834, we met on board the French steamer *Casini*, in this bay, two intelligent young Chinese going to Rome, to prepare for the sacred ministry. We are happy to state that there is a great number of Catholic clergymen in China; Jesuits, Dominicans, Lazarists, and many priests of the Congregation of Foreign Missions, and also at least fifteen bishops.”

A missionary, who returned a few years since from Hong-Kong, on account of ill health, told me lately

that on one occasion he saw a brother missionary departing from that place to Amoy, and at the same time twenty stalwart Romish priests. "There," said he to himself, "in that solitary brother are Protestant zeal and means for converting China; and there, in that score of priests, are Popish zeal and means."

O Protestants, shall I appeal to you in vain for a zeal somewhat proportionate? Shall I address unlistening ears and unsympathizing hearts? Shall Popery have more enthusiasm for the crucifix than you for the cross? Shall Papists do more for their Papal Christianity, than we do for our Protestant Christianity? Shall the friends of truth have less ardour than the votaries of error? Spirit of Luther, hast thou for ever left our world and gone to the skies? Ye noble army of martyrs, if ye are cognizant of our conduct, ye must cry shame at our lukewarmness, and consider us recreant to the principles to which you set the seal of your blood, if indeed we can be backward in emulating the zeal of Popery to take possession of China.

Such, then, my Christian brethren, are the arguments and motives by which, with language too feeble, I appeal to your judgments, your consciences, to your Christianity and to your Protestantism, for new means and efforts in order to convert China to Christ. Have they any weight? Can you prove they are irrelevant, illogical, or feeble? I have not dwelt upon the scriptural facts and motives usually brought forward to urge missionary zeal, such as the crimes and miseries of idolatry, the death of Christ for the salvation of the world, and his command to preach the Gospel to every creature, the blessings of Christianity to every nation that receives it, the obligations founded on the moral law, and others

of a cogent nature; because all these apply equally to the whole world. I have dwelt only on those which refer, with special appropriateness and force, to China.

I say, then, "Is there not a cause?" I believe, and therefore have I written. To my own mind these motives have overwhelming force. I seem to myself, in enforcing them, to have done injustice, by the feebleness of the representation, to the theme. O that some more powerful pen would take up the subject, and write me into the shade. Ye master minds in our Israel; ye gifted intellects who can command the thoughts that breathe and words that burn; ye who can convince our understanding by logic and who can melt our hearts by sacred rhetoric, snatch the pen from the enfeebled and trembling hand of senility and move the hearts of the Christian churches to China, by the flood-tide of your genius. I care not who does it, so that it is done.

THE MEANS.

What must be done? This is a momentous question, and must be carefully considered. The conversion of a single soul is as regards its eternal destiny an event that, beyond others of its own kind, has no parallel in the affairs of the universe. What then is the conversion of an empire which contains more than three hundred millions of such souls? The conversion of China will form the most stupendous revolution that can occur in the history of our world. It should seize and possess our souls. And how is it to be effected? Not by the ministry of angels; though angels, were it committed to them, would exult in the work as an

ineffable honour. Not by human legislation: men may be made hypocrites, but not Christians, by mere compulsion. Not by the force of arms: souls cannot be converted by sword, musket, or cannon. Mahommed's war-cry and means of conversion was "The Koran or Death." Christianity holds no sword but that of the Spirit which is the word of God. Not by miracles: they were never intended to be the permanent means of converting the heart, they only established the credibility of the gospel which was to be the instrument of regeneration. China is to be converted by the energies of the church in the ordinary way of spreading the gospel by the pulpit and the press, the tongue of the preacher, the pen of the writer, and the endeavours of any and every one who has the ability and opportunity to communicate the glad tidings. God will not step out of His ordinary way, nor create a new agency and instrumentality for achieving the reduction of this greatest of the strongholds of Satan. The carnal weapons of the English and French cannon have prepared the way and opened a breach; but it is by the spiritual weapons, mighty through God, that the fortress must be taken, and the people subjugated to Christ.

This matter appertains, first of all to us ministers. My honoured brethren, a tremendous responsibility lies upon our country, a heavier still upon the churches, but the heaviest of all upon us. Over our pulpits the voice of God from China rolls in tones of thunder, and from thence it must be reverberated in ten thousand echoes through the length and breadth of the land. The pulpit has not lost its power if the preacher has not lost his zeal. There is more moral power in the pulpit of a holy, earnest, and intrepid preacher of the

gospel, than in most senate houses on earth. You and I should be the last to distrust that power over human minds, hearts, and consciences which we are called to wield. Without being inflated with personal vanity, and puffed up with individual consequence, we should have confidence in the truth we preach, in the God we serve, in the office we fill, and in the means we use. If we are the right men in the right place, "We have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind." We have great influence in all moral and religious subjects. The Bible is the lever to move the moral world, and the pulpit, beyond any thing else, is the fulcrum on which to place it. We should tremble therefore under the responsibility that is thus imposed upon us. A single sermon, like a flash of lightning from heaven, has in many instances kindled a burning zeal in a whole congregation. I deliberately say therefore that China's spiritual destiny depends in great measure upon us, and that God will require it at our hands.

Do you ask what you can do? Do? Get your own souls filled with the subject, let the fire be kindled there. Have you thought upon it, felt about it, talked about it, preached about it. Has the recent treaty turned your attention with palpitating hearts and eager hopes to the land of Sinim? Do? Pray, intensely pray, for it; privately, domestically, publicly. Do? Preach about it. Do? Talk about it in your private intercourse with your flocks. You, you must raise and support the cry, "China for Christ!" You must appear in the van of the movement. You must interest the public and call forth their liberality. You must look

round for the men who are to go out as missionaries, and call forth the money to support them. God demands at your hands, above all others, the conversion of China, so far as means and instrumentality can go; and you cannot meet him with the hope of hearing him say, in reference to this part of your duty, "Well done, good and faithful servant," unless in this matter you do what you can, when you can, and all you can.

But it is not the work of ministers alone: if they are to lead, the people are to follow; and I unhesitatingly say that the conversion of China is, one way or other, the business of every Christian upon earth, and every Christian upon earth can do something for it, and ought to do all he can. The man who says, "What have I to do with this matter?" is either ignorant, indolent, or covetous, and is altogether regardless of the cause of Christ. He that says, "What concern have I in China's conversion?" just asks the question, "What fellowship have I with Christ?" We are all too apt to think of what the church can do and ought to do, and not what we individually can do and ought to do; and either through modesty, timidity, or avarice, lose our selves and our individual obligations in the crowd. Do you ask then whose business the conversion of China is, I answer yours whosoever you are who may read this page. Yours I say as truly as it is of any other man on the face of the earth. Here it is. I offer it to you; and in the name of Christ bid you take it. Take it into your hand, your heart, your purse, your closet; you dare not refuse it! Still it will be asked what you can do. Attend then and I will shew you.

1. Ponder the matter. Let it become a subject of intelligent and deliberate consideration. Take out your

map, I repeat look at China, its position on the globe, its extent, its importance. Dwell on its amazing population; upon the desirableness of its conversion; upon the prayers that have been presented for it; and especially upon the wondrous events which have lately occurred by which it has been opened to the Gospel. Do not pass it off with a cold, careless remark, "China open, is it indeed?" and then think no more about it. Grasp the mighty idea, give it room to expand in your mind, and a lodgment to abide there. Repeat it to yourself till you feel your soul kindling and swelling with the mighty theme.

2. Talk of it to your friends. Make it the subject of remark, the topic of conversation. Speak of it as some great and beloved matter which you cannot keep to yourself. Talking of it will kindle a stronger passion in your own heart. Our words act upon ourselves as well as upon others. Introduce it in your social circles, and let it thrust out the trifling gossip which too much characterizes the intercourse of even Christians. Let it be seen and felt that they have something greater, better, holier, to talk about than the petty conventionalisms of the day.

3. Make it the subject of private, constant, earnest, and believing prayer. Selfishness too much characterizes the prayers of Christians. The closet they suppose is for themselves, and the prayer-meeting and the chapel the time and place for public matters. I believe there are multitudes of professors of religion who never pray for the conversion of the world, farther than by joining with others in the vestry or the sanctuary. Do they indeed then? Do they not consider all is over for them when the minister has ended his petition for the church and

congregation, and has come to intercessions for the world and the nation? Christians, you are taught better in the Lord's prayer, where the first petitions are for the conversion of the world. What we want for the world's conversion is for all the Lord's people to be wrestling for it day and night in their closets. I now propose China as a special subject for private as well as social prayer. Would God withhold his Spirit when millions of believing prayers were ascending to him daily for it? Our prayers must be earnest. What intense fervour should characterize those prayers which are presented for the salvation of more than three hundred millions of immortal souls? Nor should this be a mere occasional and intermittent exercise. I should in my own case think that day in part lost for duty in which I had not remembered China in my supplications to God. We must pray in a spirit of pure catholicity for all Protestant missionaries in China. The zeal which leads a man to pray only for the missionaries of his own denomination, is not zeal for Christ, but zeal for himself. O Christians, do not venture into the very presence of God, clad in the garb of despicable sectarianism. And we must pray in faith. China is to be converted. It is assured to us by prophecy. We must not go to God under the chilling influence of unbelief, but with all the boldness and importunity of faith. We must carry to him his Own promises, and humbly, yet confidently, ask for their fulfilment. We must plead as if we expected to prevail. We must not only pray and look up, but pray and look out. If ever there was a time when the whole church of God should be down upon their knees pleading for China with all the intensity of desire and the

importunity of faith, it is the time that is now passing over us.

4. The prayers of the churches should be earnest and general for a native Chinese agency. It is not wholly or chiefly by foreign ministers imported into the country that the nation is to be converted. A thousand, yea a myriad missionaries would be insufficient for this. It must be by men of native birth, who know the language and the habits of the people. I am duly aware that foreigners must first be sent from Christian lands, (and in great numbers too) but only as the means of raising up other missionaries upon the spot. We see the importance of this in the missions of the South Sea. It is by native teachers that the Gospel, in great measure, has been spread from island to island. So also in Madagascar, it is by native teachers that Christianity, in the absence of every foreign missionary, has been diffused among thousands of the people, in spite of the intolerance and persecution of the government. When the last missionary left the island there were less than a hundred converts: and now, by native teachers, they have been multiplied to thousands. The value of this agency has been already proved in China also. How eminently useful was LeangAfa, one of the first Chinese converts. And at the present moment, our invaluable missionary Dr. Legge at Hong-Kong has a Chinese co-pastor of great power of eloquence. Let us then send up incessant prayer to God to raise up more such men. To no field of missions in our world does the injunction of our Lord apply so forcibly as to China, "Pray ye to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers into his field, for truly the harvest is great, but the labourers are few." Who can tell but in answer

to the fervent, believing supplication of anyone person, who shall read these lines, and whose soul is interested in the subject, God may not only convert a Chinese man, but also call him forth into the ministry? Yes, reader, your wrestling importunity may give to China one of her sons for an evangelist! Oh, try the great experiment. Let the very idea fire your soul with a sacred ambition.

5. The conversion of China must be sought by the contribution of our property. It is by ordinary means, and not by miracle, that this great moral revolution is to be achieved. God will not, I repeat, step out of his ordinary course even to win this conquest. He will employ the wealth of his people; and he now, with imperial authority demands it. He appeals to our compassion for immortal souls, and says, "What will you give to redeem those three hundred million souls from sin and hell? He appeals to our zeal, and says, "What will you give to rescue those three hundred million idolators from the tyranny of their idols, and restore them to me?" "I will test," he says, "the truth of your professions, the sincerity of your prayers, and the strength of your principles by these events of my providence. There is China now open to you: see what I have done, and what I expect you to do. Have you mocked me with hypocritical prayers when you supplicated me to open that country to missionary efforts? What will you now give, what exertions will you make, what self-denial will you practise, what sacrifices will you submit to, in order to Christianize that empire? Remember, I am proprietor of all your wealth. You are but stewards, and I will require a most strict account, in the judgment day, of all I have

intrusted to your care. I want my property in your hands for China. I must have it; and I will consider and condemn you as an unfaithful steward if you withhold it.”

Rich men, hear you that voice? God wants His property in your hands, and you dare not withhold it. Oh, apart from the divine demand, where is your zeal, your gratitude, your high and holy ambition, if you can feel a moment's hesitation about laying down your hundreds and your thousands for China? Are there not some who, on reading these pages, will count up their thousands a year, and their hundreds of thousands of capital, and say, “I will at least give one thousand for China. I will have a noble stake in the conversion of that empire; for there is something mightier, loftier, sublimer, in that than in any thing I have yet set my hand to.” Aye, follow out that impulse: it comes from heaven, you are God-moved. Conscience echoes the voice of God, and says, “Set the example, and yield a thousand for China.” I know the claims upon your liberality in this marvellous age, in which it is our felicity and glory to live, and I would not abstract a farthing from any other object of your beneficence; but you never had, and never can have, such an opportunity and such an obligation as are now presented. I almost wonder you can keep yourselves from a liberality that verges on imprudence.

It is not, however, by the rich few only that a fund must be raised for China, but by the multitude in the middle and lower grades of society. You, too, are already exerting yourselves, perhaps you think, to the uttermost. No; not yet to the uttermost. “To do good and communicate,” says the Apostle, “forget not;

for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." I catch up that word sacrifice. What have we yet done for Christ that deserves the name of sacrifice? In what have we denied ourselves? Are we not as comfortably lodged, fed, clothed? Have we not as many luxuries, to say nothing of necessaries and comforts? For my part, I seem to see the followers of the Lamb growing more and more self-indulgent luxurious and expensive in their tastes and habits every year. When I see this brightening splendour, this increasing provision for the "lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life," I cannot for a moment believe, nor will God admit, that you have nothing, after what you have done for other objects, to spare for China. We want in the church the cry so often and so loudly raised in the world, "Retrenchment and Reform!" Christians, I place you beneath the cross, and with the blood of atonement streaming forth upon you, I repeat the Apostle's words, and for the Apostle's purpose, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich," He gave His heart's blood for China, and what can you withhold?

Let us then create a new fund for China, and call it "The Sacrifice Fund." It will be a more peculiar and sacred fund than has, in modern times at least, been raised. If we have luxuries, let us tax them; if we have only comforts, let us tax them; and if we have only what we have been accustomed to consider necessaries, let us tax them, even to the widow's two mites.

Take the following example of christian liberality:

"A devoted servant of Christ, who laboured much and successfully among the poor in the villages of Somersetshire, gives an instance,

with many others, of a striking conversion. Among his attendants was Blind George, an aged man, who was also so deaf that he could never hear an address from a pulpit; but what he had heard while sitting near the table in a cottage, brought him to the Lamb of God; and having found peace through His blood, he continued for some years to adorn the Gospel until gathered as a shock of corn fully ripe, into the heavenly garner.

“An anecdote of this poor and aged saint is worthy of record. His parish allowance was eighteen-pence a week, and of this small pittance one half-penny was brought every Lord’s Day to the chapel for missionary purposes. On one occasion he brought twopence, and on being asked the reason, he replied, ‘The Lord has been very good to me this week.’ Some one had given him sixpence, and of this, to him large bounty, one third was devoted to the Lord’s service.”*

O how desirable are such agents as Robert Gribble, (the village preacher who furnished this anecdote,) for the conversion of our rural population. How does Christianity elevate and bless the poor! How much might be done for missionary purposes even by that class which have the advantage, if not of wealth, of numbers! O ye rich men, contemplate this instance of christian liberality. “What, with your hundreds, and even thousands, have you done for Christ’s cause, compared with this humble disciple? And what have you in the middle class, done? Why, the liberality of Blind George, taken up by the christian world, would raise a Sacrifice Fund that would support a thousand missionaries for China!

I would not be ostentatious, but for the sake of example will offer the first hundred pounds for the Sacrifice Fund, if twenty thousand pounds shall be raised within a year. Oh, when I consider the millions that are annually spent by God’s redeemed people in luxuries that could be so well spared, and think how little is comparatively given for His cause, I must

* Recollections of Preaching. By Robert Gribble.

believe that the era of large-hearted benevolence, and warm-hearted zeal, is yet to come, though I rejoice to see it coming. The Sacrifice Fund for China must be raised; and if by no other means, if our resources are so utterly exhausted that we have no other means, it must be raised by first selling our own plate, and then the plate of our sacramental tables; believing that Christ would be pleased to see pewter vessels on His hoard if the silver were gone to convert the Chinese. Ecclesiastical history furnishes an instance of this. The primitive Christians were very charitable in redeeming captives. St. Ambrose was inclined to sell the sacred utensils of the church for this purpose. A christian bishop named Acacius, actually did it, he assembled his church and addressed to them this firm and sensible language, "God needeth not either dishes or cups, as He neither eats nor drinks. I think it right, therefore, to make a sale of a great part of the church-plate; and to apply the money to the redemption and support of captives." "He caused the holy utensils," said the historian, "to be melted down, and paid the soldiers for the redemption of the prisoners, maintained them all winter, and sent them home in spring with money to pay the expenses of their journey." "We are not; however, reduced yet to such necessity. We should look first at our own side-board, and surrender the glittering articles we see there before we replace the silver chalices and plates of the sacramental table by pewter or delf. Neither are we reduced to this necessity. Enough of elegance and articles of taste to satisfy a christian ambition and indicate rank and station may be left, and an abundant surplus he still left to send the gospel to China.

THE AGENTS.

I again remind my readers that men will not be wanting to spread the errors of Popery. Some years ago the subject of China's conversion came up, and was much discussed both by Protestants and Roman Catholics. At that time we were informed by the late Mr Abeel, an American missionary to China, that one hundred young Popish priests sent a letter to the Propaganda Society, each signing his name with blood drawn from his own veins, earnestly desiring to be sent as missionaries to that country. And to go further back for an example of Jesuit zeal, I may refer to Francis Xavier, that wondrous man "whose character," says Sir James Stephens, "may be summed up in these three words, he was a Fanatic, a Papist, and a Jesuit." Yes, and the terrible import of those words was never more powerfully illustrated than in his example. With an enthusiasm that bordered closely on mental aberration, and which on some occasions seemed to pass the mysterious and unascertainable line which separates sanity from insanity, he pursued his mission amidst scenes and circumstances the account of which is all but incredible.

"Weak and frail as he was, from the days of Paul of Tarsus to our own, the annals of mankind exhibit no other example of a soul borne upward so triumphantly through distress and danger in all their most appalling aspects. He battled with hunger and thirst and nakedness and assassination, and pursued his message of love with even increasing ardour amidst the wildest war of the contending elements. When on one occasion reminded of the perils to which he was about to expose himself by a mission to the barbarous islands of the Eastern Archipelago, he replied, "If those lands," such was his indignant exclamation, "had scented woods and mines of gold, Christians would find courage to go there, nor would all the perils of the

world prevent them. They are dastardly, and alarmed because there is nothing to be gained but the souls of men; and shall love be less hardy and less generous than avarice? They will destroy me, you say, by prison. It is an honour to which such a sinner as I am may not aspire; but this I dare to say, that whatever form of torture or of death awaits me, I am ready to suffer it ten thousand times for the salvation of a single soul.”

This is a sublime heroism, if not altogether in its object yet in its fervour akin to that of him who said, “None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me so that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord.” “Wondrous Xavier! whatever were thy errors, it would be the dregs of bigotry not to admire thy martyr’s zeal.

May we not all learn something from this misguided but intrepid follower of Loyola? After making exertions almost more than human, and enduring hardships, privations, and suffering which we marvel that humanity could sustain, in the prosecution of his mission in India Amboyna and Japan, whither he went alone and unbefriended, his mighty soul was possessed with the mightier idea of converting China to the faith.

“For that country, his imagination teeming with bright visions, and his bosom swelling with hopes as bright, he sailed to Sancian, an island in the mouth of the Canton river. But his earthly toils and projects were now to cease for ever. The angel of death appeared with a summons for his departure to another, and we hope to a heavenly country. At his own request he was removed from the vessel to the shore, that he might meet his end with the greater composure. Stretched on the naked beach, with the cold blasts of a Chinese winter aggravating his pains, he contended alone with the agonies of the fever that wasted his vital power. It was all agony in which his still uplifted crucifix reminded him of a far more awful woe endured for his deliverance. Tears burst from his fading eyes, tears of an emotion too big for utterance. In the cold collapse of death, his features were for a moment irradiated as with the first beams of approaching glory. He raised himself on his crucifix, and exclaim-

ing, 'In te, Domine, speravi, non confundar in æternum!' he bowed his head and died."

Thus departed this truly wonderful man on the shores of China, to which the last struggles of his wasted body, the last energies of his fervid intellect, and the last hopes of his capacious soul were devoted. What an example, O Xavier, hast thou set, and what a lesson hast thou taught, to men of a purer faith and of truly apostolic churches!

Young men of sincere and fervent piety, of ardent zeal for the glory of God in the conversion of souls, and of superior intellect, my first appeal is to you. Is there nothing in this subject that shall kindle your enthusiasm, fire your sanctified imagination, excite your holy ambition, and call forth your loftiest aspirations? Think of China's conversion to Christ, the winning of that vast empire from the power of darkness, and then say what is the acquisition of wealth to the laurels to be gathered on such a field! Shall no noble-minded, large-hearted, gifted youth, on reading these lines say, "Here am I, send me," and burn with unquenchable ardour to be thus employed? Dr. Lockhart, one of our valued medical missionaries to China, was sent for to visit a dying Roman Catholic priest, who told him he had five brothers who, like himself, were the sons of an Italian nobleman, all of whom had renounced the honours and blandishments of their high station to be employed as missionaries to China! Young men, think of this.

Students in our colleges, who are preparing for the work of the ministry, my next appeal is to you. "He that desireth the office of a bishop, desireth a good work;" but he that desireth the work of a missionary,

desireth a better and a greater. If a faithful and able minister of religion is the greatest man, the devoted missionary is the greatest minister. Oh, what a sphere for your talents and energies is the contracted circle of a village, a town, a city, or even the circumference of the British Isle, compared with the empire of China? If you have a soul susceptible to the impressions of the moral sublime, here is an object calculated to produce them. In imagination let this mighty country appear covered with the glories of millennial splendour and beauty, with yourself looking over it from the windows of heaven indulging the rapturous recollections and consciousness that you did something to produce that scene of ineffable loveliness. Start not at the difficulty of acquiring the language of China. You have already mastered in part difficulties nearly as great. You need neither the gift of tongues nor extraordinary genius for the acquisition of foreign languages to speak and even to write Chinese. Hear the report of our missionaries on this head:

“There is really no such difficulty,” says one of them, “in the Chinese language as has long been supposed. Men of average ability can readily acquire a sufficient vocabulary to preach freely and intelligibly; and as all classes are to be met with, no one need be intimidated by the fear of the whole nation, being composed of distinguished and learned scholars. What we want now is men who will give themselves to the work of preaching the Gospel. Every possible inducement might be offered to young men in good health, of active disposition, warm-hearted piety, and self-denying laborious habits. The climate, the scenery, the country, us a whole, present all possible varieties, and are far superior to many other parts of the world, to which the servants of Christ have been largely sent. If we consider the immensity of the population, their ignorance, superstition, and spiritual wretchedness, the wide and effectual door which is about to be [now actually is] thrown open, the readiness of the people to listen to instruction, and the manifold indications

of Providence at the present moment, it seems that the call to personal consecration on the part of ministerial students and others, is urgent in the extreme." Muirhead.

Let this call from China ring through the halls of our universities in England and Scotland, and of all our Dissenting and Methodist colleges. Hear it, ye devoted youths: China wants you and Jesus calls you. Shall the young priests of Rome have more zeal for Popery than you for Protestantism? Shall one hundred at a time consecrate themselves in their own blood to the work of evangelizing China, and you hang back? Where is your zeal for God, your compassion for souls? Is it usefulness you covet? Where can you obtain this on so large a scale? Is it holy renown? Where can this be won so largely and so lastingly as in the country we are now considering? Is it the warmest plaudits of your Divine Master? This is the way to secure them. Is it joyful reflections through eternity? These will be sure to follow your self-consecration to this work. Let bosom friends say to each other, "We will go out together, and live and labour and die in China."

And are there not some of competent talent who have not found employment at home who may be called upon to go abroad as missionaries? Perhaps in some few cases this is true. There may be men, capable of great service abroad, who have found no wide and effectual door open to them in this country, and whom God has shut out from our British churches, and shut up to a necessity of going from home to the heathen. These, however, are rare cases. The bulk of those who can find nothing to do at home, will find nothing to do abroad. Missionary work must not be taken up as a dernier resort, the refuge of the disappointed, the for-

lorn hope of the incompetent. For missionary labours we need, if not our best and strongest men, yet, men of decided competency and above mediocrity.

Are there are to be found in our colleges, or in our ministry, some servants of Christ possessed of sufficient property who could support themselves, and who, self-moved with intense desire, will go to China, perhaps unconnected with any society, for the love they bear to Jesus and to souls? Many years ago, a lady in this country, of highly respectable connexions and ardent piety, felt thus impelled by love for China to tear herself away from her friends and her native land, and devote herself to the cause of female education in that country. There, for more than twenty years, self-sustained and alone, she has laboured with considerable success in more places than one. She is still there, and now, when verging on the evening of her days, though less occupied on that account than formerly, is peaceful, happy, and thankful in the review of her self-denying and valuable labours. I am in correspondence with her, as are some of my friends, and it has been our pleasure to contribute, by a ladies' working party, somewhat to the support of the schools she has instituted. I make no comparison between her services and those of the ministering angel to our sick and wounded soldiers in the Crimean war; but without the intention or the wish to disparage the self-denying offices and wondrous labours of that heroic sister of mercy, it may be a question, whether, all things taken into account, the devotedness of this lady, and her privations, be very inferior to those of Miss Nightingale. Are there none of her own sex who will follow her noble example? And are there no men of competent means and fervent

self-denying piety, who, for China's sake, will go and settle in that country, carrying the power of a holy example, personal influence, and pecuniary resources? We want such men to counteract the mischief effected by civilians of an opposite character.

And now I ask how is the agency to be obtained, that we need for China and India and the whole of heathendom. Christ has answered that question, by sending us with earnest prayer to the Lord of the harvest. He could have commanded then, and could command now, by a word of His power, as many labourers as the harvest needs for its ingathering; but even for such a purpose He would not deviate from His ordinary method of procedure, and has therefore devolved the responsibility of obtaining the necessary supply upon the prayers of His church.

With this passage on record we cannot plead ignorance of God's method and arrangement for converting the world. For eighteen centuries it has been told us that this great work is to be achieved by preaching; that preachers are eminently the gift of God, and are to be obtained from Him by prayer. That these are fixed principles of the Divine government in reference to this matter, is as well known in the Christian church as any doctrine or precept of Christianity. Christians know that God's plan for evangelizing the world requires them to seek the needed supply of preachers by prayer: and they must and do know how imperfectly they have fulfilled what God has required at their hand. And what, oh what, are the awful consequences of their neglect? Hear it, Christians, and shudder. Hear it, and blush for your conduct. Hear it, and be stirred up to supply your deficiencies. For eighteen centuries, China,

India, and the whole Eastern world, have been wandering in the mazes of idolatry, and wallowing in the mire of iniquity, and going on without hope to eternity at an average of nearly ten millions annually! Only that mind which comprehends infinity and eternity can grasp the evil which is involved in such a result; yet the tremendous result has followed and will continue to follow while Christians refrain from falling in with the Divine arrangement.

Up, then, Christians, rouse from your guilty indifference and call upon your God. We have an active church, and a giving church. Now let us have a praying one. Acknowledge the omnipotence of prayer. You can do nothing without God, and God will do nothing without you. Do not stop to ask why God waits for your prayers. It is enough for you to know that He does so. His chariot wheels stand still for the impulse of your prayers. China wants a thousand missionaries; God can give ten thousand, but He waits to be asked. Go to Him, each one of you, in all the boldness and importunity of faith, and ask Him to give China a missionary in answer to your prayers. He may do it. Yes, your fervent believing supplication, I again tell you, may give a missionary to that vast empire. Seize the mighty conception, ponder it well, give it a place in your heart. Say to yourself, again and again, "My prayers may gain a herald of the cross to these teeming millions." Try this. Prove it. Eternity may reveal the fact.

THE HINDRANCE.

I PASS by the difficulties arising out of the peculiarities of the language, for these may be, and

have been, to a considerable extent, overcome. I do not refer to the habits and prejudices of a nation of idolators, sceptics and atheists, and the strong hold which Confucianism and Buddhism have upon the people. I do not allude to the intellectual and moral elements of the Chinese character: this I know is discouraging enough, in some respects more hopeless than that of the Hindoo; China is an exhibition of the final results of intellectualism without conscientiousness; but I advert to the formidable obstacle which our own nation, through the medium of the East India Company, is wickedly throwing in the way of missionary enterprise by the atrocious opium trade. What intemperance is as an anti-religious influence in this country opium smoking is in China. With the hope of doing something to enlighten and guide public opinion, and to rouse and direct public indignation against this enormity, I will give a condensed history of this nefarious traffic. A knowledge of the qualities and effects of opium appears to have long existed in China. The East India Company being aware of this, encouraged in their own territory the growth of the poppy, from which this powerful and mysterious drug is made. About eighty years ago, they effected their first importation of two hundred chests of the poison to China. Finding a ready sale for it, they went on steadily increasing in their exports. The Chinese government cognizant of the pernicious consequences of this traffic, more than sixty years ago forbade its continuance. In defiance of this prohibition, the Company went on with the ever-increasing trade. It will at once be perceived that this was a large and iniquitous system of smuggling, carried on by the English and connived at, in

opposition to their own laws and government, by many of the Chinese, who were bribed for this purpose. Remonstrance after remonstrance came forth from the court of Peking, and were followed by threats of extreme penalties. All was of no avail. The illicit commerce went on till the Emperor, finding words of no use, sent his commissioner to the coast to demand the surrender of all the smuggled article which was then at Canton. His demand was treated with derision by the British merchants, whereupon he seized, which he had a legal right to do, and destroyed, as we should have done, (and much more too), in similar circumstances, twenty thousand chests of the poisonous drug. The consequence was a war with China, in which we killed thirty thousand of her subjects, and by the cannon's mouth demanded compensation for our losses, and then signed a treaty, never meant to be kept, to be smugglers no longer. In defiance of this treaty the smuggling went on till, at the time of the breaking out of the late war, the importation into China was estimated at between seventy and eighty thousand chests annually, each chest averaging, if I mistake not, more than a hundred weight. A deeper or a darker blot than this opium war never stained and disgraced the British flag, or disfigured the escutcheon of our country. A century hence it will hardly be credited that Christian England waged war with an unoffending nation to defend the practice of smuggling, (a crime so severely condemned by her own laws), and to wreak her vengeance on a people who dared to resist the practice within their own territories. True it is we did not and do not compel the Chinese to buy the opium; but we throw the strongest temptation in their way, and are

thus *participes criminis*. We did not perhaps create the taste among the wealthy, but we have fostered it, and have extended it to the masses. Equally true is it that the smuggling is connived at by the Chinese authorities at the ports, just because, as I have said, in effect we have bribed them, and in addition to the sin of carrying on an illicit commerce, we have thus been guilty of corrupting the functionaries of the empire. The extent of this trade may be imagined from the fact that the East India Company derive annually a revenue of five million from these exports of opium, and clear by it between three and four million. We see, therefore, the grounds of their anxiety to maintain their ill-gotten monopoly and its gain. For ages our dominions in the East have been founded to a great extent on the blood of the Chinese, as will appear when we come to consider the effects of the opium on the comfort, the health, and the lives of the people.

But where is the mischief of the consumption of opium?

“First, there is the mischief inflicted upon India, where the poppy is grown. No less than one hundred thousand acres of the best land in north and central India, watered by the Ganges, are devoted to the culture of this plant. Here, where it is manufactured, as might be expected, it is eaten by the miserable ryot or native farmer, who, ground to the earth by fiscal oppression, consumes it to forget in its delirious visions his misery; while countless hosts of government spies and native sub-collectors of opium revenue also fall victims to its deleterious power. Of the effect of such indulgence Assam may be taken as a specimen. ‘The opium mania,’ says Mr Bruce, the superintendent of the tea plantations, is depopulating this beautiful country; the men are more effeminate than women; the women have fewer children than those of other countries; and the children die at manhood: very few old men are seen. It is turned into a land of wild beasts. The Assamese are become the most abject and demoralized race in India.”

And now look at the effect of opium smoking in China. I can use no language so strikingly descriptive of this as that employed by the Rev. W. Tait, of Rugby, who has done himself great honour by his endeavours to rouse the indignation and efforts of the people of this country against this abominable trade, in his four Tracts on the Iniquities, the Folly, and the Miseries of the Opium Trade.

“Opium indulgence lays the axe to the root of all happiness: it ruins health. Digestion is first impaired, then destroyed, and the nervous system is shattered. The eye becomes prematurely dim, the limbs totter, the once elastic step degenerates into a shuffle, and the form is no longer erect. The wretched man loathes his food, and sleep ceases to refresh him. ‘Within an hour,’ says a medical authority, writing from Singapore, ‘I could produce a thousand such miserable creatures, and of one hundred entering the door of all opium shop seventy-five or eighty would be found in this condition.’ It destroys parental joy, cursing man and woman with barrenness, or dooming them to see a diseased offspring the inheritors of their impaired constitutions, sink before them into the grave. It hardens the heart of the husband and father against his family: he will sell wife and children to possess himself of the maddening drug. It makes activity and industry impossible. The smoker awakes from troubled sleep, his mind full of wretchedness and his body racked with pain. He can think of nothing through the weary day but the longed-for dose of the evening, which alone can restore him to himself. The evening comes, and with it its indulgence, to be succeeded by the miserable night and miserable morning as before. Such is the smoker’s daily and nightly round, such the continued round of his brief and joyless existence. Brief indeed it is, the average duration of his vicious indulgence (unless intolerable misery relieve itself by suicide) being about ten years. Then comes incurable disease; diarrhoea, or dysentery, or dropsy, or the stoppage of the heart’s action, or some other of ‘the grisly family of death,’ to be followed speedily by death itself; the misery of time issuing in the unutterable woe of eternity!”

The horror of this description will be increased by the statistics of opium smoking in China. I again quote from Mr Tait:

“The opium chest landed along the whole coast of China, and rapidly making its way up the rivers and canals, is now in full course to cover the surface of this vast region, from a seaboard of a thousand miles and inwards a thousand miles. The number of smokers is variously estimated. Let us take the careful calculations of Dr. Allen, an American physician; they are more moderate than many, and are now manifestly under the truth. The number of smokers in China in 1849 was, he tells us, four millions, and of these four hundred thousand were brought annually to a premature grave. Supposing then one opium smoker to a family, a father or a mother, or the youth to whom his parents looked as the stay of their declining years, we have four millions of families into which this poison has been introduced. And as the indulgence once commenced is hardly ever abandoned, but goes on from intemperance to intemperance, we have at least one million of these four filled with misery; and we have four hundred thousand opium sots lost to themselves, to their families, and to society, sinking annually as self-destroyers into the grave! It is this which gives the opium trade its bad pre-eminence over its evil sister, the slave trade, not to mention that the slave trade does not occasion the one-fourth of this annual mortality, In it man is simply our victim, and we must answer to God as his murderers; but in the opium trade we make him his own victim; we add the pangs of self-reproach to the incurable misery we inflict on him; and having persuaded him to be a self-destroyer, send him prematurely into his Creator’s presence to answer for the mortal sin!”

I have seen a series of paintings, admirably executed upon rice paper by a Chinese artist, in which Hogarth’s conception of the “Rake’s Progress” is embodied, by an original and not a borrowed idea, in a description of “The Opium Smoker’s Progress.” In the first picture, a rich Chinese is seen, elegantly dressed, in an apartment superbly furnished, and in the full bloom of health and vigour. A chest full of silver also is seen in one corner of the room. In the next picture he is described with the same manifestation of wealth, but with the addition of the fatal opium tube in his mouth. In the third picture the effect of his newly-contracted habit begins to be apparent in his pale haggard looks, and his less

elegant costume. Picture after picture described his gradual descent, till in the last he was represented a poor wretched maniac, chained to the ground in his cell. Originals of these pictures could be found in thousands of instances in China.

Huc, the Jesuit missionary, bears the same testimony, in his travels through China, to the extent of the opium trade, its terrible effects, and the conduct of the East India Company in introducing it to the empire.

“With the exception of some rare smokers who are able to restrain themselves within the bounds of moderation, all others advance rapidly towards death, after having passed through the successive stages of idleness, debauchery, poverty, and the ruin of their physical strength and the complete prostration of their intellectual and moral faculties. Nothing can stop a smoker who has made much progress in this habit; incapable of attending to any kind of business, insensible to every event, the most hideous poverty, and the sight of a family plunged into despair and misery, cannot muse him to the smallest exertion, so complete is the disgusting apathy in which he is sunk.” Speaking of the merchants who carry on this contraband trade, he says: “These rich speculators live habitually in the midst of gaiety and splendour, and think little of the frightful consequences of their detestable traffic. When from their superb palaces, like mansions on the sea shore, they see their beautiful vessels returning from the Indies, gliding majestically over the waves, and entering with all their sails set into port, they do not reflect that the cargoes borne in those superb clippers are bringing ruin and desolation to numbers of families.”

If more evidence be needed of the dreadful effects and great wickedness of this trade, I refer to the testimony of the Bishop of Victoria Hong-Kong, who, while a missionary at Amoy, visited some of the opium shops, of which he was told there were a thousand in that city. The people, he says, in his admirable volume, laboured under the delusion that the missionaries [their friends] were all Americans, and the opium smugglers were all Englishmen. He examined the ten first cases

he met with as to the effects of their habit of smoking, and all, in various degrees, proved its dreadful and destructive consequences. His description of the scenes he witnessed is appalling. On expostulating with one of the vendors of the poison, the man replied, "Why do the foreign ships bring us the opium? Go, rather, and prevail on your countrymen not to bring us opium."

This, yes, this, be astonished, O heavens, and be thou terribly afraid, O earth; this, yes, this, hear it, Englishmen, and blush for your country; this, I say, tell it in London and in all our provinces; tell it in the ears of our nobles, our judges, our senators; yea, tell it in the ears of the noble lady who occupies and adorns the British throne, and blesses by her reign and her virtues the British empire; this, I say, this is the mass of indescribable, inconceivable misery inflicted by our christian nation, on idolatrous, defenceless China!

In an economical point of view, as Mr Tait has clearly shewn, we see the folly of this. What a market has the late Treaty opened for our manufactures in China! Yes, but the wares of Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, and Sheffield must to a great extent be pushed out of the market by the opium of the East Indies. In 1853, the exchange between the two countries stood thus: Tea and silk imported, eight millions and a quarter. British goods exported in return, one million four hundred thousand. What restores the balance? Opium and hard cash. Your country, Englishmen, is thus drained of her money, and your looms and your forges are only half worked.

But it is to the effect of this upon missionary exertions that I now particularly call attention. When retail opium shops in the large cities of China are

almost as numerous as gin-palaces beer-shops and public-houses in England, (there are a thousand in Amoy,) the same obstacle to evangelization is presented in one case as in the other. Our missionaries send home their lamentations over the growing prevalence of this desolating habit. What idea can the Chinese form of Christianity when those who profess it can allow themselves to grow rich on such inflictions of poverty, misery, and death? Alas, it is distressing to think how by our wars and our opium smuggling we are teaching the inhabitants of that vast empire not only to hate us, hut to hate our religion also. Oh! is it not wormwood and gall to the soul of the Christian, jealous for the honour of his religion, to think what prejudices against it have been raised throughout the whole Eastern world by the policy of our Government, the cupidity of our commerce, and the conduct and example of our countrymen? With what bitter irony must the heathen say to us, "When the men who profess to believe in your Bible are better men, we shall believe your Bible to be a good book, and your religion to be better than ours." Every chest of opium that is smuggled into China is a stone of stumbling thrown in the missionary's path. Read the testimony of one of these devoted servants of our Lord:

Amoy, 7th April, 1858.

"The missionaries [says the Rev. Douglas Carstairs] here have memorialized Lord Elgin and the American Envoy on the subject of religious toleration for Chinese Christians. On the opium question we said nothing, feeling that no words of ours could at all add to the fact of the universal hostility of missionaries to that most destructive traffic. The public opinion of Britain is the only fulcrum on which the lever call be placed so as to uproot this overshadowing evil. We are quite helpless here, as we have no doubt that the Plenipotentiary must have definite instructions from home on such a subject. We can only cry to Him who turns the hearts of men as the rivers of waters.

The progress of the evil is terrible, among the educated classes especially. It is really very difficult to find a teacher who does not smoke. The lower classes are also fearfully infected and seldom seek to be cured till they are past remedy. The only alternative is the mode in which death is to come, disease or starvation, or both combined. Let the people of God in Britain come to the help of the Lord against the mighty;’ it does seem like a special engine of the Wicked One to counteract the entrance of the Gospel into this now opening continent.

“As some may be inclined to hope at least that the statements in my Anti-Opium Tracts are exaggerated, they have in this letter the testimony of one whom I know to be a thoroughly trustworthy witness, and who writes from the spot. How long then is this to last; how long is England to lend herself to the Devil in inoculating China with this destructive vice that she may raise a revenue thereby? Will no one listen, will no one be aroused? Then the judgments of God shall arouse us. It is no presumption to say so. If the Bible gives a true account of God’s character, national sin of so foul a character must, sooner or later, bring after it a terrible retribution. What if this retribution should be the loss of India? We are provoking that wrath which overwhelmed the grand army of France amid the snows of Russia. What if the burning sun of India should receive commission to destroy ours! Lamentable as such a catastrophe would be, we have more than deserved it at God’s hand.”

What then is to be done? How are we to get rid of this enormous crime? How are we to rid ourselves of this stone hanging about the neck of our country? It will be said perhaps by rousing up the public sentiment, the popular indignation, the national protest against it. Alas! alas! I am afraid that the people who so quietly allowed themselves to be taxed so many millions for the support of intemperance will not very speedily be moved to liberate China from the tax of five millions for opium. Still, we must go on to appeal to our sense of national justice, mercy, and honour. People of England, will you consent to bear the disgrace of ruining the health, the morals, the souls of a native, and such a nation too as China, the disgrace

of being yourselves a kingdom of smugglers, the disgrace of waging war in support of such an iniquitous system? Will you insult the God of heaven by thus decoying to their death four hundred thousand Chinese annually? "Will you provoke a judgment that will make your Indian sorrows to be forgotten?" It is worthy of notice that the late mutiny and rebellion in India broke out in that part of it where the poppy is chiefly cultivated. What have you to expect when a minister of the crown no long time since, congratulated our parliament that a revenue derived from a source so evil is increasing, and promises still to increase? Attempts will probably soon be made to induce the Chinese government to legalize the trade, and then what is already rushing on like a torrent of destruction will swell into an inundation, and cover the land with its turbid waters. "Multitudes are ready," says a missionary now in China, "so soon as the road is open, to go to the utmost limits of the land with the intoxicating drug."

We must also instruct the pious people of the land, raise a religious public sentiment, and call upon the church of Christ to lift up that voice for the suppression of this wicked traffic which said that "slavery must be abolished," and it was done. Let ministers call the attention of their flocks to this subject. Let petitions go to parliament from every congregation in the land, asking the senate to resist all efforts for legalizing the trade; to put an end to the East India Company's monopoly of it and connection with it; and to restrict the growth of opium to the quantity needed for medicinal purposes. There is a power in the religious and moral voice of England which, when uttered on a subject that

involves national criminality, must be heard within the walls of St. Stephen's, and be respected by the august assembly which holds its convocation there. Let us call not only upon parliament, but upon Him by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, who has the hearts of all men in His hands and can turn them whithersoever He pleases. The prospect which is now opening for the extension of this poisonous and poisoning trade, the expectations of illimitable revenue from it are now so strong in the minds of the devotees of Mammon, the power of moral principle in trade is so feeble in opposition to the temptations of great though unjust gains, that I have no hope hut in the interposition of God. Let us then send up from all the churches one long, loud, and general cry to heaven to save China from the deep curse of this devastating evil, and our country from the deeper crime of inflicting it; and thus though that empire, indulging in the taste which we have taught her, should by manufacturing opium in her own territory lift a suicidal hand against herself, we at any rate shall cease to be her murderers.

**THE PARTIES TO WHOM THE VOICE OF
GOD IS ADDRESSED.**

It is a call, and a very loud and impressive one, to the universal church, to the whole of evangelical Christendom; and as far as my feeble voice can reach by these pages, I will send the call throughout the land. The conversion of the world to Christ, and therefore of China as a large portion of it, is as I have said every Christian's business in whatever section of the christian

church he may be found. Principles of ecclesiastical polity have nothing to do, and are felt to have nothing to do, in the way of releasing those who hold them from the obligation of spreading abroad the savour of the knowledge of Christ. In this there is no difference between established and unestablished churches, between Methodists and Dissenters; and hence we see, and rejoice to see, all denominations mustering their forces and marching to invade the territories of darkness, the domain of Satan. Missionary zeal is no longer the honourable badge of a party, the peculiarity of a sect, but happily the common characteristic of the Holy Catholic church. Let a man call himself Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Moravian, Baptist, or Independent, he is considered to be wanting in one essential feature of a true disciple of Christ if he is indifferent to the work of evangelizing the world. Happy feature of our age! Blessed recognition! In that view and sense of christian obligation we behold the dawn of the millennium.

And as it is the duty, and felt to be the obligation, of all denominations to seek the conversion of the world, so will it be the joint honour and glory of all to effect it. Neither the church of England nor that of Scotland, nor the various bodies of seceders from both, will achieve this mighty conquest exclusively of others. The glory will be shared among them. The man who is more intent upon converting the heathen to Episcopacy, to Methodism, to Moravianism, to Presbyterianism, or Independency, than he is to Christ, who looks with jealousy or even indifference on those who differ from him in those minor points, and who cannot unfeignedly rejoice over the missionary success of other bodies than

his own, is, however ardent his zeal and whatever he may think, carrying strange fire to the altar of God, and presenting the sacrifice of mere sectarianism instead of the appointed offering of christian love. I thank God I have no fellow feeling with such a bigot. It is my happiness to be a subscriber, or contributor, to every evangelical missionary society in this country, and He who knows the secrets of all hearts, is witness of the good feelings which I cherish and the earnest prayers which I offer for them all. When Cowper had just recovered from the first attack of his melancholy disorder and was in the house of God, there sat in the same pew with him an individual who sang so earnestly that he seemed to make melody to the Lord with his whole heart. The emancipated poet could not help saying to himself, "Bless you for praising Him whom I so much love." So say I to all who spread abroad the knowledge of Christ, "Bless you for thus serving Him whom I so much love."

I now, most respectfully but earnestly, address myself to Christians of the various sections of the universal church. And, first of all, to MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. To you I say, hear the voice of God which calls to you from China. Oh, what advantages you possess, in some respects, above all others for the conversion of that empire! Think of your numbers equalling all the other bodies of Christians collectively. Think of your power in the State; yours are the court, the aristocracy, the national universities, and to a great extent the senate. Think of your wealth: it was the boast of one of your members that this was forty times the value of that of the Dissenters. Think of the number of your

clergy amounting to upwards of twenty thousand. Think of the thousands of young men being educated to minister at your altars. Oh, what with such advantages you might do and ought to do for the conversion of the world, and especially of China. But I now refer to other and perhaps more appropriate grounds of appeal. You have a noble Missionary Society, with whose labours and success I am not unacquainted, and for which I give God thanks. You have already commenced your labours in China. There you have a Bishop worthy of your confidence, beloved, respected, and honoured by all other denominations. There you have already missionary clergymen worthy of their diocesan, and there you have your beloved liturgy translated, in the first instance by Dr. Morrison, one of our missionaries, and revised and corrected, as one of his last labours, by our other missionary, Dr. Medhurst. So that you have not now to do the work of commencing a mission to China, but only to strengthen it. Permit me, respectfully but faithfully, to remind you that you have done for China nothing yet as to extent worthy of yourselves or this object. You are yet behind the Americans and also the Independents. In the year 1816, Mr (now Bishop) Smith writes:

“‘One solitary missionary at Shanghai is the only representative of missionary zeal of the Church of England.’ The writer leaves China with the melancholy reflection that this is all that can be truly deemed missionary work among the Chinese, either in present operation or in immediate prospect, in which we can claim a part.”

How little could it enter into his mind, at that time, that he himself would return, adorned with the mitre, to carry on the glorious work of China's evangelization! But even yet the church of England has not done its

duty to China, considering its means, its resources, and its opportunities. I say this not to reproach you, but to provoke you, in the way of the apostle, to jealousy. I see how much, under God's blessing, you could do if you were so disposed; and such is my zeal for the conversion of China, that I want to call out all your incalculable resources for this great enterprise. Deem me not presumptuous in thus appealing to you. Many of you listened to my plea for the million Testaments, and did not scornfully say, "It is but the voice of a Dissenting minister." You helped to swell the contribution-list for that effort. Oh, listen to that same voice which now appeals to you for Christian missionaries. Why, you have the means, if you could be persuaded to think so, of sending out from yourselves a hundred devoted servants of the cross. But take heed what men you send. Send men that will not symbolize with the Popery which is already there. Men that will not exalt the church almost above the gospel, and the priest almost above the Saviour. Send men of catholic and not ambitious and exclusive spirit, who will not attempt to disparage the labours of those who are of a different communion, upon whose labours they would after all be compelled to build. Though a decided Nonconformist, I should despise myself if I did not bid God-speed to the labours of such men, and there are myriads of Nonconformists who are like-minded with myself.

THE ENGLISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. Fellow Christians! I greatly honour you; for though the youngest of the missionary organizations of this country, you have shewn a noble zeal in the cause of the world's

evangelization, and with a lofty, chivalrous ambition have soared at once to the loftiest object which could employ your energies or excite your hopes. Nothing less than China would satisfy your desires. Your Burns, Carstairs, and Grant, are known to us as devoted labourers in the "Celestial Empire." Nor is the name of the departed Sandeman unknown to us. If it be not unpardonable obtrusiveness to offer my advice, I would say, Go on as you have begun, and make China the exclusive field which you undertake to cultivate. Surely it is large enough to employ all the labourers you can send out. Thither let the stream of your Christian, your missionary labours flow without being poured into a number of lesser channels. Double, and if possible, treble the number of your missionaries there.

THE PRESBYTERIANS OF SCOTLAND. I would not be unmindful of what Scotland has done for the cause of Christian missions, if not by organizations of its own, yet by assisting those that have been formed by the various societies in this kingdom. For a long time it seemed content with this truly unostentatious liberality. It has found out, however, that it ought to do more than this, and to have societies of its own. Perhaps I am not sufficiently acquainted with the Institutions of the church of Scotland to pronounce an opinion on its missionary zeal, hut it does appear to me that it has not yet done what it could and what it should do in this way of Christian effort. I am aware of its missions in the East Indies, where it has representatives labouring with laudable zeal in Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay. I assume not the office

either of accuser or censor in reference to that church: it would be impertinence to do so; but may I respectfully ask if it is to be somewhat in this respect below itself; to say nothing of comparison with other bodies? What could not its numbers and its wealth enable it to do? May I venture most deferentially to call the attention of its ministers and members to China, as an object worthy of their attention? Shall not the voice of Norman McLeod, and the voices of others wont to be heard, and when heard sure to be listened to with attention and respect, be raised in this cause, till the halls of the General Assembly shall ring with the resolution, "We will, God helping us, have a mission to China."

The Free Church has already signalized its zeal by missions to India, Africa, and other places, and by an organization for the conversion of the Jews. Who has not heard of that Christian hero, Dr. Duff, and prayed for the continuance of his precious life? But has the Free Church any mission to China? Is it represented by a single herald of the cross in that vast field of Christian enterprise? I believe many of its members subscribe towards the maintenance of the labourers sent out by the English Presbyterian Church; but why not send messengers directly from their own body? Ought they to be, can they be, will they be, satisfied with being merely the sleeping partners of another company in this merchandize and traffic of the wisdom that is better than silver or rubies? Beloved and honoured brethren, what has not God wrought for you and by you in the course of your short but eventful history? And you shall see greater things than these. You must in your own name have a share of the honour of converting China.

The United Presbyterian Church is not without its missionary society. It has labourers in Calabar, Caffraria, and the West Indies, but it has none in China. True it is that one of its members from his own deep and open purse, supports a missionary there himself. Ah, this is what we want for the conversion of the world to Christ, gentlemen of fortune coveting and enjoying the rich honour of taking upon themselves the charge of a preacher to the heathen. What a blessed privilege, what a sweet reflection! O men of wealth, seize the wreath of renown which this act would weave around your brow! Imitate the example which the large-hearted individual to whom I allude has set you.

Congregationalism seems an exotic in Scotland. With the exception of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Dundee, it appears to droop and wither in the shadow of Presbyterianism. Yet has it not strength enough to send one missionary to China? Would not this give it a visible connexion with the mission family to send one servant of Christ to the most numerous people upon earth? Congregationalists! I appeal to you: consider what I say.

O Scotland! land of picturesque beauty, and Christian churches, and numerous ministers, to say nothing of thy poetry, philosophy, and literature; shall the honour of converting China to Christ belong to others and not to thee? Shall there be but one preacher of Christ crucified sent out from thee to that vast empire, and he sent from a society in this country? Shall thy universities, thy various churches, thy more than two thousand clergy, thy hundreds of students, thy hundreds of thousands of professing Christians, do nothing for

China? Shall thy Protestantism slumber and let Popery take possession of the land? O Scotland, come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

THE WESLEYAN METHODISTS. You, my friends, from the very commencement of your history, have to a considerable extent sustained the character and carried on the operations of a missionary body. Your great founder traversed the ocean to foreign countries, though not to heathen ones; and Dr. Coke and others became heralds of mercy to the West India islands before any except the Moravians had trodden that path. From that time to the present you have never ceased to be a missionary church. What would Wesley have said, had he been told that in far less than a century after his death his followers in this land alone would raise more than a hundred thousand pounds a year for evangelizing heathendom? Could he have credited the fact? You occupy, so far as regards finance, the second grade on the missionary scale. Your income surprises us and must surprise yourselves. Your field of labour is extensive in East and West India, in the Pacific, in Ceylon, in Africa, and in other parts of the world. We look on your operations and successes with the eye of envy, but with the heart of pleasure. And I rejoice to know you have made a beginning in China, where you had four missionaries before the late war. Yet it is but a beginning. It is only of late that you have entered that field. You seemed likely at one time to have had martyrs there. Permit me to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance of this great object of Christian zeal. Let China occupy your attention still more than it has ever yet done. Your polity gives you some

advantages for this which none but you and the Roman Catholics possess. I mean the selection and command of agents. You know your ministers more accurately than either the church of England or the Dissenters do theirs, and have greater influence over them. I am aware that you have neither power nor inclination to compel your ministers to enter the mission field; you administer to them no oath of unhesitating and unlimited obedience to leaders and superiors; but still there is a measure of influence ever attending collective advice over individual decision, which has the effect though not the power of authority. Exert it, I intreat you, on behalf of China; look round for, and look out, at least ten noble, able, devoted and willing spirits for this vast portion of our world's fallen population. Only let your Missionary committee hoist the signal, and send forth the cry of "Ten more missionaries for China!" and more than you call for will say, "Here are we, send us." Nor doubt for a moment the supply of means for supporting them. The name of "Methodism" was never yet sounded forth in vain for any new and worthy object of zeal; and you know full well that the potency of that word has not yet died out. There are men among you who, rather than that Methodism should not gain footing in China, would pawn not only their plate but their very watches! Not that I mean to appeal to you On the sole ground of your denominational distinction; but, as you consider Methodism as the best form of social Christianity, and the best means of propagating it, I may, without being accused of pressing sectarianism into the cause, urge you to adopt China as the widest field on earth for its expansive power.

THE INDEPENDENTS. Being more closely connected with the London Missionary Society than with any other body, and as it is mainly supported by that denomination, I make my appeal to them with additional boldness and earnestness. It was the honour of your society to be first among Protestants in modern times to have a mission in China. Your Morrison, Milne, Medhurst, and Dyer, were pioneers in the great work of evangelizing that country. Yours has been the still greater honour to have done more than any other single body for the translation of the Scriptures. You have already there, I know, a noble band of devoted men, both as medical missionaries, in Lockhart and Hobson, and as preachers, in Legge, Stronach, John, and Muirhead. You have been behind no section of the christian church in this field, and have been beyond most: "Let no man take your crown." Add by new labourers to your former zeal. Reap fresh harvests. Gather fresh laurels. You had better relinquish half the missions you have, though you need not, must not, do this, than neglect China. I say to the directors, I know what you are doing for India, and I am helping you in those efforts; but this must not release you from the obligation of doing more for China, the largest empire on earth. By the memories of Bogue and Burder, Waugh and Wilks, and by the spirits of your departed missionaries, restless on their seats in glory till they see how, in this wonderful juncture of your history, you conduct yourselves, I conjure you to call out the resources of our churches for enlarged efforts on behalf of China. You asked them for extra aid for India, and they gave it you. Now ask for help for China, and invite them to be foremost in raising the Sacrifice Fund, and they

will do it; but if not, and they tell you they have nothing to spare even in this way, bid them read Acts ii. 41, and 2 Corinthians viii and ix, and in the face of those Scriptures dare any of them say he has nothing left for China? At my time of life, and in my state of health, I cannot expect to do much more for you. Were I young instead of being old, and healthy instead of being infirm, I would offer my services to you as a Home Missionary for China; and would preach for it wherever I could find a pulpit, from the North of Scotland to the Land's End. As it is, I can aid you only by thus speaking to you, and, through you, to the denomination. I believe I shall not speak in vain.

THE BAPTISTS. You, my friends, have acquired a world-wide renown for missionary zeal and missionary success. I pass by your noble achievements in the cause of human freedom in the West India Islands, under the inspiring eloquence and heroic conduct of your missionary, Knibb, and others. Yes, to you and the Friends, beyond all others, we owe the wiping out from our national escutcheon of the blot of Negro Slavery. These however, great as they are, constitute the least and lowest of your claims to admiration for missionary zeal. The present and all future generations of real christians will point to the East Indies, and with exultation exclaim, There laboured the immortal Carey, who by his aphorism, "Attempt great things, expect great things," kindled the missionary spark in this country, and by the breath of his simple eloquence fanned it to a flame, and gave a lasting watch-word for every legitimate, wise and lofty undertaking; and there laboured with him his two noble compeers, Marshman and Ward. Serampore will

ever be a sacred name in the history of Indian Christianity, as the place where this holy triumvirate prepared and printed those numerous translations of the word of God, which are the elements of spiritual life to the teeming population of Hindostan. I know very well that India and the West Indies form of themselves an immense field, and may seem more than enough to swallow up all your resources of men and money, and you may plead this excuse for having yet paid little attention to China; but is it not possible to raise something yet, and something more for that country? Why, five hundred a year in addition to what you now raise would support two missionaries, and a thousand a year, four, to these three hundred millions of immortal souls. Can you not by some little sacrifice accomplish this object? Will you not make the attempt? Is it possible for you to relinquish this valuable prize to others? The East has been and is the principal object of your missionary zeal. Surely, then, the country which contains double the population of all the East beside must not be overlooked by you. you perceive by this appeal I am not jealous of you as Anti-pædobaptists and Immersionists. Of course I regret that you are not one with me all the subject of baptism, and that this difference of opinion is a thing to be lamented everywhere, and especially among a heathen population; but knowing that you hold and preach the same gospel, and that it is by the gospel and not by any mode of baptism that souls are converted to God, I do long for your most energetic co-operation with others who differ from you in this particular, for the conversion of China. And provided that the whole Chinese empire were converted to Christ, it would be matter of little regret to me that they were

Baptists, though of course I should be sorry that they deprived themselves of what I consider to be a scriptural ordinance and a christian privilege.

The Chinese Evangelization Society is fairly entitled to a place in this enumeration of Christian organizations for the spread of the gospel in heathendom. I shall not moot and discuss the question whether it was more desirable to have a separate society for this exclusive object, or to act with those already formed and which embrace this as one of its objects. Certainly if there be any portion of the Pagan world which deserves for its importance, and demands on account of its magnitude and present opportunities a separate organization, it is China. And perhaps the time will come when the great missionary enterprise will be carried forward by distinct and separate societies, and even by individual churches for special objects of Christian zeal and compassion. I am not well acquainted with the operations of the Chinese Evangelization Society, but it is enough for me to know that it is formed for the sole purpose of sending preachers of "the glorious gospel of the blessed God" to that vast empire, to insure for it my earnest prayers and best wishes. Already it has several servants of Christ there; and to its members and supporters I say, Go forward in your glorious career, multiply your messengers of mercy. You have selected the widest field on earth for Christian effort. Keep to your designation, continue to be a Chinese Evangelization Society and nothing else; and though you act separately from other societies, act harmoniously with them.

If I appeal not to that interesting, loving, and an ostentatious body of Christians, the United Brethren,

or as they are called the Moravians, who above all sections of the Christian community are entitled to the appellation of a "Missionary Church," it is because their missions to Africa, the West Indies, and Greenland furnish them with all and more than they are able, with such small numbers and limited means, to accomplish. The same remark will perhaps apply to the General Baptists. This section of the Christian Church by its mission at Orissa, in the East Indies, has, considering its resources, been remarkably successful in the domain of Juggernaut. It attempted at one time a mission to China which did not succeed. If however it shall find itself strong enough to renew the effort I shall rejoice.

THE PROTESTANTS OF IRELAND. Fellow Protestants of the sister Isle, you, like others in this country and America, will forgive my presumption in addressing you. I may remind you of that bright page of your history which tells us that before Popery had thrown its baleful shadow over our country, it was called "The Island of Saints," and sent out its missionaries to spread the gospel more widely over the continent of Europe. We long and pray to see this hallowed fire rekindled on your altars, and Ireland again distinguished for its zeal for a pure Christianity. Shall your hearts warm with the enthusiasm and generous ardour so natural to your country, and so ardent in the cause of our common Protestantism, beat languidly and coldly towards China? Will you have no hand in keeping it from the grasp of Popery? You know, not by report, but by observation and bitter national experience, what Popery is, and notwithstanding all kind and benevolent feeling towards your Roman Catholic fellow subjects, a

feeling I would be the last to arrest and the first to promote, you must deprecate the idea of China being annexed to the domain of the Vatican.

Ireland has yet done comparatively little for foreign missions, just because she has had so much to do for herself. Her historical, ecclesiastical, and social circumstances have been such as to prevent her from engaging very extensively in the great missionary enterprise. The dark clouds, however, that have so long hung over her and thrown their gloomy and chilling shadows upon her, are, I hope, rolling off, and the sun of her prosperity is emerging from its obscurity. Providence has solved, in part, the problem of Ireland's regeneration, which for so many ages has baffled the wisdom of statesmen. Her faded verdure begins again to put on a living green, and her down-trodden shamrock to lift again its head; while she herself is taking her harp from the willows of the Shannon to strike it in jubilant strains of deliverance. Now, therefore, let her arise and come forth to the help of the Lord against the mighty!

The Established Church of Ireland has no missionary organization of her own, but only an auxiliary branch of the Church Missionary Society of this kingdom; and it would be impertinently officious, and perhaps mischievous, in me to suggest the severance of that branch from its parent stock; but may there not be wealthy members of the Irish Church who could say to the Parent Society, "Here is a sum in addition to all we have hitherto subscribed to send and support a missionary to China." Or could they not find some devoted young clergyman, or some noble spirited graduate of Trinity College, with a heart fired with zeal and melting with compassion for the three hundred

and fifty millions of immortal souls in China, whom they could send out under the direction of the Church Missionary Society? Shall Ireland furnish soldiers for conquering China, and not missionaries for converting it to Christ?

I now turn to the Presbyterian body, so numerous, so active, and so influential. I know what your zeal and your liberality are already doing. I have been made acquainted with your Home Missions, and ill it would become you to neglect your own country, so overrun with Popery. I rejoice in your efforts for the conversion of the Jews, an object of Christian zeal too much neglected by many of us, but so zealously pursued by you. And I have heard not only from your own report but from one of your own missionaries of your important mission in Guzerat. The learning of your Young and your Glasgow, with the power and efficiency of your printing establishment, are known to me. No missionary organization has made more rapid progress in the same time than yours. In comparatively few years your income has increased from three hundred pounds a year to as many or more thousands. But you can and will do greater works yet. You are only in the infancy of your zeal. Now take up China, add this mighty empire to the field of your operations. With several hundred congregations, you must have both men and money to spare for China. Depend upon it Ireland will do something to convert China to Popery, and shall it do nothing to convert it to Protestantism? Maynooth will, in all probability, send some priests to Peking and other cities of that empire, even if Trinity College do not send some missionaries. The voice of God comes to Dublin and Belfast, as well as to London and Edin-

burgh, from “The Celestial Empire” to turn into reality its own vain boast of heavenly origin. I am not without hope that it has already been heard and will soon be obeyed, and Ireland be seen side by side with England, Scotland, and America, labouring in the harvest field of the Chinese empire, and gathering in the sheaves, rejoicing, into the garner of the Lord.

The Methodists and Congregationalists will, I presume, act in connexion with their respective bodies in this country.

THE AMERICAN CHURCHES. Some persons perhaps will wonder that in a pamphlet published in this country, I should have the folly to address the inhabitants of the United States, and the presumption to suppose that my tract will find its way, and my voice be heard, across the Atlantic. Some of my works, however, have been received in that land and gained some attention, so that my name is not unknown to the descendants of its Pilgrim Fathers. And as it is my intention to forward this pamphlet to America, I am not without hope that it may be read by some of its pious citizens to whom the subject is as applicable as it is to the inhabitants of the Father-land.

Christian citizens of the United States! notwithstanding what I have just written, I feel as if it were presumption in me to address you on a subject in which you must be supposed to be already as deeply interested as myself. Pardon then the obtrusion, and impute it to the ardour of my zeal in the cause of China’s spiritual welfare, and to my conviction of the assistance you can lend to this great cause.

I am most deeply impressed with the vast and almost

unimaginable importance of your country to the world's future history in all that concerns its civilization and religion. With a territory fast filling up that would support half the present population of the globe, what will your country be a century hence? Even now you nearly equal in number the inhabitants of Great Britain, and though the ratio of your increase may diminish, you will in all probability by that time reach the mighty aggregate of two hundred millions of human beings. What a moral as well as political and commercial power are you thus destined by providence to wield, provided you get rid of slavery, that enormous evil which is your sin, your shame, and your misery, which deteriorates your character and lowers your reputation, which is the cause of so much social disorganization and national weakness, and which Washington with fearful misgivings by a fatal compromise permitted to enter into your constitution! Till America has washed her hands of this crime she cannot be what Providence seems to have destined her to become, the model, the reformer, and the benefactor of the world. You are not, and cannot be, insensible to this. Of what consequence is it, therefore, that the philanthropic and evangelic principle should grow with your growth and strengthen with your strength; and thus fit you together with your Father-land to be the joint benefactors of the whole world through all its future history.

In common with myriads more in this country, I rejoice and give God thanks that whatever and however imperative the demands of your own internal state and home condition may be, you have still a Christian cosmopolitanism and a sympathy with the moral state of the earth's population. You are not, he-

hind us in missionary zeal and organization for the conversion of heathendom. Your Board of Foreign Missions supported jointly by Presbyterians and Congregationalists, the separate missionary organizations belonging to the Old School Presbyterian body, the missionary society connected with the Dutch Reformed Church, and the societies of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Baptists, all seeking, though with some minor differences, the same great object, the evangelization of the world, reflect honour upon your churches. You have generously thought of British India, and have sent some noble spirits to evangelize the idolators of our Oriental empire. We thank you for it, and beseech you to continue this labour of love. Your missions in Turkey excite our admiration and call forth our prayers and our property. To you seems destined the glory of re-kindling the smoking lamps of the "seven golden candlesticks," once lighted by apostolic zeal, and since all but entirely extinguished by Mahommedan fanaticism, and by a spurious and superstitious Christianity.

Nor am I ignorant or unappreciative of the labours of some of your missionaries in China; and it is to that country I beg now with great humility and earnestness to call your attention. You have long had commercial establishments, like ourselves, in that country, and like us have also bewailed the exclusiveness and endured the insults of that haughty people. You, as we, are also now exulting in the demolition of the barriers of barbaric jealousy which by recent events has been effected in that country. You also have negotiated a treaty with the court of Peking, and all China is open to you as well as to us and other nations. The cry will

circulate through your country, will float over your lakes, be carried down your rivers, and be echoed from your mountains, "China is open to the gospel!" It will be sounded from ten thousand pulpits, and be reverberated from millions of pews. Your joy at the new bond of union between our two countries formed by the electric cable did honour to your national character, even if the demonstration of it was somewhat premature and excessive. Another bond of union less liable we hope to disappointment, more honourable to the feelings of both parties, and more conducive to the world's spiritual welfare, is now to be created I trust in our joint labours for the conversion of China to Christ. We are already fellow-workers in this cause. Your missionaries in that country are already considerable and are doing great good; so that I am not speaking to you as if I thought you had done nothing, for you have done much, for that land. But you, like ourselves, are by recent events, called to do much, very much, more. You must hear, like ourselves, the voice of God coming over oceans and continents and calling you to go forth in still greater strength to the help of the Lord against the mighty,

Nor is it His voice alone that speaks to you. Your missionaries already there are calling to you; and in a vision more impressive than that of the man of Macedonia to Paul, are saying, "Come over and help us." They are in the situation of a detachment of an army that has long been besieging a mighty fortress, and when a wide and practicable breach has been effected in the walls, and the gates are ready to be thrown open, are too few to go and take possession of the city. "With what importunity do they cry to the main body, "Send us

reinforcements without delay! the rich prize is within our reach, but we are too feeble to take it!" Your missionaries want more labourers, and you can if you will send them.

This should be one of the rich ripe fruits and blessed effects of the present glorious revival with which God has visited your country. Let this be another and convincing proof to yourselves and to us of its reality as a work of God. Is it conceivable that so copious an effusion of the Spirit of God as you have received can have taken place, and amongst the hundreds of thousands who have been converted, there should not be many who will feel a holy ardour to spread the cause of God in our world? Has not the revival power been felt in colleges, and hundreds and hundreds of young men been wakened up into spiritual life? Among these are there none, are there few, who in all the hallowed enthusiasm of first love will say, "Here am I, send me to China?" Noble American youths, descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, inhabitants of the land of Elliott and Brainerd, Judson and Boardman, will none of you be baptized for the dead, and search for the mantle of ascended missionaries? Would to God that some voice of thunder from the lips of such a man as Henry Ward Beecher, or others like him, would penetrate your seats of learning, echo through their halls, and call from thence scores of men who grasping the cross would determine to bear it to Peking and other cities of the Chinese empire. Where can you find anything so worthy of your sacred ambition as this? Why, even in your own vast America there is no field so tempting to a high-souled follower of Christ as that which I now point out to you. I almost wonder there is not a rush

to this object of missionary enterprise, and that the committee-room doors of the Board of Foreign Missions are not literally besieged with applicants begging to be sent on this mission to China. When this great portion of our globe shall be seen from the windows of heaven to be covered with millennial splendour, what regrets will be felt by multitudes that they had no hand in the achievement of this mighty conquest! Oh, to wear out life in a little village when its yearnings and its energies might have such a circle as this to move in! Villages and towns at home, I know, must be supplied, and all ministers cannot, should not, go abroad; but I am not afraid that there is any danger, even from appeals ten times more fervid than mine, of creating a desolation at home and leaving our own country unsupplied with preachers and pastors.

Still, should this appeal, and others which it may stir up, be successful, and call out a considerable number of competent and devoted missionaries, the churches of America must stand prepared to send them forth into the field. And will they not? Is there not wealth enough yet unemployed to support a hundred missionaries? Shall not this be another fruit of the revival, a spirit of abounding liberality, a consecration of wealth, a surrender of superfluities, a spirit of self-denial, a disposition to make sacrifice of luxuries and even comforts for the cause of Christ? What is a revival worth that does not expel avarice and worldliness and extravagance from the church, and make it the seat of all that is generous and noble and self-denying? From the present revival there must issue a spirit of martyr-like devotedness to the cause of the Redeemer. Not only America but China must be the better for it. The blessed fruits

of the piety of New York, Philadelphia, Boston, and Baltimore, must drop in Canton, Nankin, and Peking.

American Christians, I leave the subject with you in the hope that the whisper of my voice may be lost in the thunders of your ministers, so much more worthy to be heard than that which now addresses you.

DIRECTORS OF MISSIONARY SOCIETIES, a heavy responsibility lies upon you. To you is intrusted, both by God and man, the executive of those organizations which are set up for the conversion of the world to Christ. Never since apostolic times, nor even then, had men so awful a burden laid upon them. The circle of apostolic zeal was narrow compared with yours. Their world was far smaller than yours. To you it appertains to select the fields of labour and the labourers that are to cultivate them. On your wisdom and energy, on your deliberations and decisions, the spiritual welfare of empires and the eternal destinies of a world depend. Your responsibility makes us, and ought to make you, tremble. You need our sympathies, our confidence, our prayers, and our contributions. And you shall have them. To you, then, I commend the evangelization of China. It is yours to take up this great charge. I know what a weight is already upon your hands. No matter; this must be added to it. You cannot, dare not, refuse it. Not even India, momentous as are its demands, must be allowed to divert your attention from China. Have faith in God, in the cause, in your constituents, in yourselves. Be bold in your counsels, your determinations, your appeals. Send out the cry over the land that something great must be done, and done immediately for China. Call for the Sacrifice Fund. Tell your

constituents that you can scarcely hold office with a good conscience if you do not attempt something more for China, and that if they will not help you to do this you must resign it into other hands. Send, I do not say the Highland fiery cross, but the cross of Calvary through the churches, and rouse and rally the sacramental host for this warfare of Christ against Chinese idolatry, atheism, vice and misery. Catch the inspiration of Carey's immortal aphorism, "Attempt great things, expect great things." And where can you find anything so great as China? I feel as if I had done my duty. May God help you to do yours; and through you may the churches be stirred up to do theirs.

THE RESULTS.

CHINA converted to Christ! What a conception, what a prospect, what a hope, and what a reality! Is there a Christian upon earth who does not feel his bosom swell, his heart beat quicker, and his irrepressible emotion gush forth in the prayer "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly. Come and add to thy many crowns, the diadem of this mighty empire?" If the conversion of a single soul raises to a higher tide the ocean of celestial pleasures, what will be the effect of the conversion of this empire? It is not for me to say what length of time will elapse before it takes place; how long the faith and patience of the church of Christ may be tried ere this great moral revolution shall be effected, or how soon the longing desires of the church shall be gratified by its accomplishment. It is in itself so truly great and glorious an event, that if it could be brought no nearer

to us than at the distance of a thousand years, it would be a blessed object of Christian hope, sufficient to call forth our joyful anticipations, and our unwearied exertions. But if one may judge by the events which have lately taken place in reference to that country we shall be led to think that the rapidity with which the scenes have been shifted and the curtain drawn up, look as if God were in haste to finish the wondrous drama. There are many things which might lead us to suppose that when the gospel has once taken deep root in a few places in China its diffusion will be rapid, provided it be not hindered by the spread of the opium mania. Its dense and crowded population, its freedom from caste, the feebleness of its sacerdotal class and the slight authority they possess over the mass of the people, its destitution of any but an effete mythology the power of which is continually declining; its literary character, its facilities for local intercourse, all inspire the hope that when God pours out his Spirit on that country the shower will fall in copious abundance. True it is that the apathetic character of the Chinese, and their total spiritual deadness and indifference to all concern about the unseen world, would, with some, lead to an opposite conclusion; but the power of God can and will be felt even in this valley of dry bones. The Jesuit missionary Huc, speaks somewhat despondingly of the ultimate conversion of the nation. His hopes, like our own, will now probably strengthen, and the bright vision of the conversion of the "Celestial Empire" will rise in splendour before his enlivened and excited imagination, and he will now probably believe that the time to favour China by annexing the country to the spiritual domain of Rome has come. And shall not we indulge the ex-

pectation that another and better conversion of the empire will take place? A vision it is of surpassing glory, when the names of Confucius, Lao-tze, and Buddha, shall be lost and forgotten in the name which is above every name, and their multitudinous followers become the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ; when the deadly scepticism and indifference to all religion, notwithstanding the retention of those distinctive names which now characterize the Chinese, shall give place to a deep and solemn interest in Divine truth and eternal realities; when that valley of dry bones, covered with the shadow of spiritual death, including so many degrees of longitude and latitude on the earth's surface, and containing the dry and mouldering skeletons of a third of its population, shall be instinct with vitality and motion, and present a countless multitude of living saints; when the millions of temples and pagodas planted so profusely over the country shall resound only to the name of Jesus, and the bonzes of idolatry shall be the ministers of the one living and true God; when the songs of Zion shall be heard floating along the rivers of the empire, and echo through its whole length, from its great Northern wall; when the science of Europe and America shall be added to the arts of China, and carry her yet unfinished civilization to its highest pitch of perfection; when constitutional liberty, public justice, and the reign of mercy, shall replace the despotism, the corruption, and the cruelty which now prevail; when Christianity shall influence the court of Peking, the Emperor do homage to Christ for his crown, and govern his multitudinous subjects in the name of Jesus; when the loftiest mandarins shall esteem it their highest honour to bow at the feet of the

Son of God, and the wealthiest merchants shall write upon their merchandise, "Holiness to the Lord!" Even the legends of China fall in with this expectation:

"While brooding over the different religions professed in China, half despairing for himself as well as for his people, an intelligent Emperor, Ming-te, about the sixtieth year of the Christian era, is reported to have had a most remarkable vision. According to one account there stood before him a resplendent figure of gigantic size and with a glorious nimbus round his head; and when his ministers of state were all consulted as to the most probable meaning of this dream or apparition, one of them replied that the description of it corresponded to a story he had heard of some great genius in the Western country, who might therefore be intending to solicit the notice of the Emperor. Another version of the legend is, that in the maxims of Confucius himself was one affirming that the 'Holy Man' is in the West, or will hereafter issue from the West." (Christ and other Masters.)

Yes, the "Holy Man," Christ Jesus, is issuing now from the West in our Christian missions, and, by God's Spirit, shall subdue China to the Cross.

Such, O Saviour of the world, shall be the results of thy reign, whenever it shall take place, in China. Such, O Christianity, shall be thy triumphs when the conquest of this great nation shall add it to thy domain. Such, O Christians, shall be the fruit of your labours and the answer of your prayers. If this be only a picture of the imagination, one of those bright visions of hope which an enthusiastic zeal raises within an excited brain, it is so beautiful in itself and has such a tendency to animate to the efforts necessary to give it reality, that we do well to dwell upon it as often as we conceive it; and if any part of it be rendered a reality, it will be worth all our labour. But it is not a mere vision. The world is given to Christ for a possession, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his

inheritance, and China is a part of it; and though now a desolate heritage, it shall, like other parts, be as the garden of the Lord during the thousand years when Satan is to be bound and cast into the bottomless pit: for the month of the Lord hath spoken it, and the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform it. Illustrious scene! thine it is to close the long series of preparatory providential events for the welfare of that mysterious people; thine to give meaning to those dark chapters of their history which for so many ages have shut them out from the fellowship of nations; thine to add another and a brighter gem to the crown, and to adorn with its richest honours the mission, of our Immanuel; thine to constitute the brightest beauty of millennial glory! Hasten, glad era, thine auspicious arrival! The groans of three hundred millions of immortal souls implore thine advent, and heaven and earth, when it comes, will join in the chorus, Hallelujah! for China is converted to Christ!

APPENDIX.

Since the foregoing Sheets were in type, the Russian Treaty with China has been received, One of the Articles of which runs thus:

“Article 8. The Chinese Government, being convinced that the doctrines of Christianity tend to the furtherance of order and unanimity amongst men, binds itself not to hinder its Christian subjects nor molest them in the execution of their religious ceremonies and duties, and they shall enjoy the same protection as that afforded to any other religion tolerated in the Chinese dominions. And as the Chinese Government considers Christian missionaries to be good and honest people who labour without seeking any material profit and advantages, they shall be permitted to extend Christianity amongst the Chinese, and for this purpose they may travel in all security in the interior of the empire. A certain number of missionaries shall be furnished with passports from the Russian Government.

In this Article, the most surprising and satisfactory testimony is borne by the Chinese Government to the excellence of Christianity in its practical working, and the Act of Toleration for its profession by the Chinese population is confirmed. "We here find a new motive for Protestant diligence, since it is certain the Greek Church as well as the Romish one, will be active in sending missionaries to China.

I FIND, also, by a communication from Professor Fairburn, of the Free Church, that Scotland does send and support two missionaries to China, Mr Smith and Mr Carstairs. May they be the harbingers of many more!

[Copies of this tract were sent by the Author to most of the English Prelates; and he received very kind letters in reply from the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Bishops of London, Winchester, Carlisle, Chester, Lichfield, Lincoln, Manchester, Norwich, Oxford, Ripon, and Worcester. Ed.]

THE FRENCH OCCUPATION OF TAHITI.

FROM THE INTRODUCTION TO THE MISSIONARY'S
REWARD, OR
THE SUCCESS OF THE GOSPEL IN THE PACIFIC

By **GEORGE PRITCHARD Esq.**

TAHITI, once the theme of holy song and the boast of christian piety, has become a name of disastrous import. The history of this beautiful island, with the exception of one short episode, has been written in blood, to be read with tears. When brought out of its deep seclusion amidst the waters of the Pacific by Wallis, and afterwards presented more conspicuously to British observation by our illustrious but unfortunate navigator Captain Cook, it concealed, under the exterior covering of its picturesque scenery and the enticing manners of its inhabitants, a cruel idolatry and vices the most revolting: even the very semblance of virtue was unknown, and man appeared superior to the beast by an intellect that was employed only to render him more systematically and bewitchingly wicked. Thither, in the year 1796, sent by a society then recently formed of all denominations of evangelical Christians for the conversion of Pagan nations, proceeded a band of holy and devoted men, impelled by no motive but love to God and souls, to convert those savages to the religion which they themselves professed. For sixteen long and weary years they laboured without so much success as the salvation of a single idolater to reward their self-denying course

and apparently hopeless exertions; but with a zeal that seemed to acquire intensity by defeat, and a perseverance which disappointment could not wear out, they continued at their post, amidst "abominable idolatries" which shocked their piety, obscenities that revolted their purity, and cruel orgies that severely tested their powers of endurance. In vain during all this time did they endeavour to prevail upon the deluded Tahitians to put a stop to infanticide, promiscuous concubinage, human sacrifices, and murderous wars: but they laboured on in prayer and in hope.

At length the time to favour Tahiti arrived, and "the set time was come:" God poured out his Spirit on its inhabitants, and led them to see the wickedness of their ways. The reward of their patient and enduring zeal now came in rich abundance upon the faithful and devoted men who had quitted the precincts of civilization to dwell among savages, and the more sacred territories of religion to take up their abode among idolaters; the false gods were abolished, and the places of their detestable rites were destroyed; and, with the cruel and licentious superstition that originated them, retired all the filthy and obscene practices which had covered with pollution those scenes with the loveliness of which they stood in hideous contrast. Christianity in all her power to reform to govern and to bless, and in her once primitive simplicity as she appeared when apostles introduced her to the world, took possession of Tahiti: under her beneficent reign not only was the worship of the true God through the mediation of Christ set up, Christian churches formed, the Scriptures translated, places of worship erected, the sacraments administered, and the Sabbath observed, but constitutional government was established on the basis of law, and, the stream of civili-

zation, ever waiting to fill the channels opened by evangelization, flowed in with all its rich and inestimable deposits. Religion and morality had begun to add new beauty to those romantic scenes where nothing but idolatry and crime had hitherto flourished in rank luxuriance.

What is here said of Tahiti, may with equal truth and justice be said of many other islands and groups of islands, both in the North and South Pacific. By the blessing of God upon the labours of the American Board of Foreign Missions, and of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, as well as upon the labours of the London Missionary Society, more than one hundred of these secluded spots, once the dark domains of Satan, have renounced his yoke, and submitted to the sceptre of Christ.

Nor does evangelization ever take place among barbarians without civilization. Christianity involves of necessity all the principles of human refinement, and comprehends the seeds of endless improvement, so that over whatever region it flows, however barren of intellect and virtue, it deposits a soil in which those seeds spring up to bear the fruits of social order and individual enjoyment, as well as of religious exercises. The printing-press the plough and the loom cannot be long after the cross. It would be contrary to fact to affirm that in no case has civilisation been carried on apart from evangelization, but it is a deduction from universal experience that the preaching of the brass is not only the most certain but the most speedy and the most effectual method of raising the savage into the civilized man. Many of the commanders of our British ships of war, as well as those of our merchant vessels, who have visited Tahiti, have, without conference and unasked, borne their willing and

honourable testimony to the beneficial change wrought by the labours of our missionaries in that island. And if nothing more were to result from the mission to Tahiti, and it were now to end in blood and slaughter, still it will have served an important purpose in the moral theories that affect the destinies of our world, by the demonstration it affords that no lengthened and elaborate process of civilisation is necessary to prepare barbarians for the reception of Christianity. Both in the Pacific Ocean and among the Hottentots and other savages of the African deserts, the attempt to teach the people reading writing and the useful arts was abortive, till they received the gospel and were brought under the motives to industry which it alone supplies, and when afterwards civilisation with rapid strides followed in its train.

Alas! that I should have now to turn from triumphs to tribulations, and instead of having to tell that Tahiti is still the scene of the unmolested and peaceful labours of the missionaries, and of the onward progress of Christianity and civilization, should be compelled to relate that it is the seat of a horrid oppression, an exterminating war, a general disruption of society, and a fearful suspension, if not a total extinction, of all missionary operation. In the language of the *Foreign Quarterly Review*, "I am reluctant to approach the sequel, and contemplate the intruders rushing like a hog into a flower-garden, to uproot and to destroy what the hand of industry had planted." Or, to borrow a somewhat analogous allusion from the scriptures, that I should have to exclaim in words of truth and amidst sighs of anguish, "The boar out of the wood doth waste our vine, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." It is not necessary, nor would it be convenient, here to go into the de-

tails of that horrible aggression which has been made by a nation, which boasts of its military glory, its chivalry, and its refinement, upon the female sovereign and the defenceless people of Tahiti; but though, for obvious reasons, the odious and affecting tale of French aggression may not be told here, yet nearly the whole civilised world has heard by this time, with unutterable disgust, of its successive robberies of that defenceless country, first of property, and then of sovereignty; of its Protectorate forced upon the protesting Queen and her outraged subjects; of its imposition of Popery at the cannon's mouth; of the perfidy fraud and violence of its authorities; and as the climax of its audacious and violent conduct, of the arrest imprisonment and expulsion of an accredited British functionary. These things are become matter of history, and will produce equal astonishment and abhorrence. In reference to the last act of aggression, the Prime Minister of our country acknowledged in his place in the House of Commons, "That a gross outrage, accompanied by gross indignity, had been committed upon a British Consul." Happily a far greater calamity than even what has happened at Tahiti has been averted, which, though at one time feared, and not altogether improbable, has always been deprecated by the friends of the Missionary Society, I mean a war between England and France.

In what a melancholy and heart-rending state has this aggression left the devoted island where its atrocities have been perpetrated! When the last accounts came away, the Queen was still a fugitive on board a British ship of war, dependent for subsistence as well as protection both for herself and her children upon the bounty and magnanimity of its generous commander; the natives, goaded by indignities wrongs and op-

pression almost too great for human nature to endure, had unhappily taken up arms; sanguinary conflicts likely to end in the extermination of the weaker party had commenced; the mission churches were dispersed and the exercises of public worship suspended; the missionaries had most of them fled from the scene of tumult and blood to the Leeward Islands; and that spot, once so peaceful and so happy, had become a scene of devastation and blood. "The confused noise of the warrior," never heard since Tahiti had received the Gospel, now rolls along those valleys where lately was heard the sound of the chapel-bell, the voice of the preacher, and the hum of missionary schools; while the thunder of artillery, the moans of the dying, and the shriek of widows whose husbands have fallen in battle, are reverberated from those mountains which till lately echoed to no sounds less glad or holy than the songs of the multitude who keep holy the Sabbath. Alas, alas, what a change! Who, upon contemplating this sad scene and its authors, can help thinking of Mr Hall's eloquent description of the invasion of Egypt by Napoleon Bonaparte? "Whilst he was looking round him, like a vulture perched on an eminence, for objects on which he might gratify his insatiable thirst of rapine, he no sooner beheld the defenceless condition of that unhappy country, than he alighted upon it in a moment. In vain did it struggle, flap its wings, and rend the air with its shrieks: the cruel enemy, deaf to its cries, had infixed his talons and was busy in sucking its blood, when the interference of a superior power forced him to relinquish his prey." Everything in this striking metaphor is applicable to the present case but its conclusion. The vulture is not scared away, but still holds in his talons, and sucks the blood of, his struggling, shrieking, and I am afraid I must add expiring victim.

Of these calamities however the final issue is yet uncertain; whether the labour of half a century is to be unravelled by the blood-stained and crafty hands which are at work there now, or whether, in a way unthought of by human wisdom, He whose path is in the deep and who covereth himself with clouds, will make justice truth and piety to triumph over oppression error and irreligion, remains to be seen. Little is to be expected from Prance in the way of relinquishing her prey, either from foreign diplomacy, or from the compunctious visitings of her own conscience, but it is not improbable, if we may judge from the tone of some of her papers, that policy may yet do that which nothing else is likely to effect. One would fain hope that her government must be ignorant of all the facts of the case, and deluded by the false representations of such men as Dupetit Thouars, Bruat, D'Aubigny, and others still more crafty, though not more cruel, it has been thus led to give its sanction to the establishment of a Protectorate which amounts to a virtual dethronement of a sovereign, who has done nothing to merit such cruel indignity and oppression. Is there no way of access direct to the ear of the King of the French? Would he sanction this did he know the facts of the case? Is M. Guizot himself in ignorance? Did he not say in his place in the Chamber of Deputies:

“The French force was bound to keep right on its side. We think it did not do so. * * * There were no instructions, there was no utility or necessity, neither was there justice towards the Queen and the natives. We are of opinion that the establishment of France in new regions, should not be accompanied by an act of violence towards the people among whom it appears for the first time.”

Is there no means of reminding M. Guizot of his own declarations?

It is now quite time I should consider in what state of mind we as Christians, and as the friends of missions, should regard these calamities; the lessons we should learn from them; and the duties they call upon us to discharge.

And do they not call upon us to enquire, wherefore the Lord has thus chastened us, and to examine whether in our spirit and conduct in reference to Tahiti in particular, and to the other scenes of our success in the Pacific, there has been any thing displeasing in his sight? Have we in our delight over our triumphs been boastful and vain-glorious, till we have forgotten to give Him the glory? Has our joy been sufficiently purified from self-elation, and characterised, as it should have been, by humility and gratitude? It is a time, and a call, for close examination and profound humiliation. The affliction will do us no good if it does not lead to this. It becomes us to bow down under the chastening hand of our God. Even this comes from the Lord, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. He has permitted it for wise ends we are quite sure. Perhaps it is to infuse a greater degree of devout seriousness into our whole missionary procedure, to check our levity, to cure our frivolity, to expel from our meetings and our spirit something of that noisy excitement and unseemly humour and merriment by which they are sometimes too much characterized. Tahiti was our earliest mission, and if by the death of this we shall be prepared to conduct ourselves better towards all the rest of the family, it will not be in vain that for a season we have been called to put on sackcloth and to mourn as for a first-born. Instead then of merely exposing the injustice of the French Government or the craft of

Popish priests, let us look well to our own spirits. It is a little remarkable, and it is a coincidence worth noticing, that this cloud should have come over us just as we were about to celebrate the jubilee of our society, and when we are soon to commence a new period in its history; and it will be our wisdom, as it certainly is our duty, to summon into existence and to exercise more of the deep and hallowed feeling of the fathers and founders of our institution. They laid its foundation in faith and prayer, but we perhaps have thought to build its walls by eloquence and excitement. Affliction sobers the mind, checks volatility, and calls forth a manly and resolute temper which is prepared for great and noble deeds. Uninterrupted sunshine and a constant high temperature enervate the frame, which the frosty nights and the cloudy days of winter brace and invigorate. If these disastrous events should prove sanctified. afflictions to us; if they should make us more solemnly in earnest; if they should cause our zeal to flow less in the noisy shallows, and more in the deep though silent channels of the majestic river; if they should make us more meditative and prayerful; if they should produce that resolute, intrepid, martyr-like courage which can exist only in trials and tribulations, a rich compensation in the future awaits us for the present loss, however costly, grievous, and deplorable that loss may be.

We should equally beware of a spirit of despondency. That we have much to fear for Tahiti, apart from the exterminating conflict now going on, if indeed it has not already ended in making the island the tomb of its adult male population, is but too evident. Apart from the insidious arts of Jesuit priests, think of the rank and putrescent profligacy now let loose upon the

people by a French soldiery and sailory, the unrestricted sale of ardent spirits, and the introduction of corrupting sports, and you will see the peril in which morality and religion are placed. Still remember that all that has been done cannot be undone. Paganism, with all its horrid progeny of vice and misery, will no more pollute the land. Popery, though in our view a dreadful perversion of Christianity, should it succeed in its attempts to establish itself in the island, is far better than the Paganism which once reigned there; and notwithstanding the perils of war, of bad example, and of Jesuit persuasion, there are, it may be hoped, not a few who, amidst this desolating flood, will stand fast upon the rock of ages. Or if fleeing from an island, embittered to them by such sad recollections and such odious corruptions, they will then carry with them the precious truths they have received, which, like seed borne upon the wings of the wind, will drop and vegetate upon other spots. But if even these hopes should not be realized, still there is one source of consolation remaining, and that is that French force and Hamish zeal cannot reach to heaven, where much of our labour is laid up beyond the reach of violence and injustice. The glorified spirits of just men made perfect, whose names our missionary chronicle preserves while it embalms their memory, and hundreds like them, cannot be plucked from their spheres and again be exposed to the seduction of error or of vice: they at any rate will remain everlasting monuments of God's grace and our success. "Blessed men, ye were taken away from the evil to come, and should the spirits of your slaughtered fellow-Christians bear to you the sad intelligence of 'the abomination of desolation that now maketh desolate' your once peaceful and beautiful

island, the disastrous news will reach you in a world where you will see in the light of eternity, the reasons of events, which, to our beclouded vision, appear as deep, unfathomable mysteries.”

Nor is this all; the grand experiment has been tried and tried with success before a sceptical world, and in a thoughtless age, whether there is any nation sunk so low in barbarous ignorance and pagan crime as not to be reached by the regenerating power of the gospel, when applied by Christian zeal and followed by the grace of God. The experiment has been tried, and tried with success, and it is this which has excited the envy, roused the jealousy, and called forth the efforts of the Vatican, whether the cross without the crucifix, the simple truth of the Bible without pantomimic ceremonies, and Protestantism and the doctrines of the Reformation, unaided by the pretensions and opposed to the authority of Rome, can turn man from dumb idols to serve the living and true God. It was at one time the boast of Popery that the attempt, the power, the success, and the glory of converting Pagan nations, belonged to its votaries; and Protestants were taunted with their indolence and impotence in reference to this matter. That boast is lost; that taunt is silenced. Force and cunning may extinguish the mission to Tahiti, but the record of the experiment and of its success remains as the theme of veritable history. It is not without reason, therefore, that Rome fears the success of Protestant missions, since they are spreading all over the face of the earth, and competing with her for one of her marks of apostolicity, I mean universality.

But this is not all that should check our desponding feelings in reference to this event: Tahiti, though the

first scene of our missionary operations and success, and though on several accounts the most interesting one, is but one among many. If in the deep mysteries of God it be lost, it is but the fall of one star from a galaxy. Whole groups of islands yet remain unvisited by French soldiers and Romish priests. I again mention the delightful fact that more than one hundred islands are computed to have abandoned idolatry. Much therefore as we should regret to lose Tahiti, yet even then a vast field of missionary enterprise in the Great Pacific, remains untrampled by the foot of oppression, inviolate to the hand of spoliation, though certainly not un coveted by that vast ecclesiastical ambition whose desires can never be satiated till the whole world be subject to its sway.

But let us turn our attention from human governments and these lawless proceedings to that which is divine. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. Clouds and darkness are round about him; righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne. A fire goeth before him and burneth up his enemies round about," Let the oppressed and their friends listen to this cheering announcement. Let them turn with calmness, with confidence and hope to Him who has prepared his throne in the heavens, and whose kingdom rules over all. With a policy infinitely more profound, and a power more mighty than that of France and Rome combined, he is looking with pity upon the oppressed, and indignation on the oppressor; and though for awhile he may permit the latter to triumph over the former, the day of vengeance is in his heart, and the year of his redeemed will come. "The Lord reigneth; let the people tremble; he sitteth between

the cherubims; let the earth be moved. The Lord is great in Zion, and he is high above all the people. The king's strength also loveth judgment; thou dost establish equity, thou executest judgment and righteousness in Jacob." Let the oppressors hear this and be afraid. Our appeal should be in the confidence of faith, and by earnest prayer to Him that sitteth upon the throne of the universe. Why have we not had a day of fasting and prayer? If I blame the Directors of the London Missionary Society for anything connected with Tahitian affairs, it is for their not inviting the churches by special appeal to set apart a day for humiliation and prayer. It would I believe have been responded to very generally, if not universally. The exigency of the case requires it, while the importance of the object justifies it. We are in a crisis of the history of our Polynesian missions, and yet there appears to me a disposition rather to complain than to pray, and to trust to our representations and petitions to human governments, rather than to our supplications to heaven. God only can help us. Why have we not then gathered as with one heart and mind round the throne of Him whose title it is that he hears prayer, and whose glory it is that he answers the supplications of his church by terrible things in righteousness; round the throne of Him who is our salvation, and the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea. Let us cease to blame our government for not doing all they could in averting this calamity, and blame ourselves for not doing what we could have done by prayer. Tahiti I repeat is probably lost to us, unless it be recovered by the power of prayer, and other islands will be lost too unless they are saved by the same means. Sermons will not do it,

speeches will not do it, money will not do it; we might have the eloquence of Cicero and Demosthenes, and the wealth of all the world, but without prayer it would be ineffectual. Let us have united prayer, individual prayer; let everyone in whom the spirit of prayer dwells cry mightily to God: and then "shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" The friends of the mission in the Pacific ought to know the danger in which these missions are placed, to show them the necessity of earnest prayer to God for their preservation. Their entire subversion is determined upon. What has occurred is only the first act of the tragedy. A spirit of propagandism at this moment pervades all France, at least its Catholic population.

And how are these endeavours of Rome to be met? How is this scheme to be frustrated? Not by laws forbidding its votaries to preach; not by restrictions upon the right of teaching; not by penal protections granted to any system of doctrine; these are not the ways by which error is to be resisted and truth promoted. Roman Catholics have as much right to spread their opinions as Protestants, provided they use none but the legitimate weapons of Scripture and reason. Prayer is our stronghold. France is strong, Rome is crafty, but God is stronger than the former and wiser than the latter; and to him let us appeal in all the power of universal, believing, and persevering supplication.

But prayer is not every thing we must do, the conflict must be maintained against the aggressions of Popery with increasing vigour, both in this country by sending out more missionaries, and by the missionaries themselves in laborious endeavours to train their

converts in the knowledge and right application of scripture truth. To slacken our efforts for the Polynesian missions now would be cowardly and criminal. True it is that the events which have transpired in the East are calling our attention to India and China. Doors are opening, and voices are calling to us; in that quarter of the world: and it may be that we have too much neglected mighty empires and vast continents for insular spots and scattered tribes. While engaged in surveying the beautiful pictures which our missionaries have presented to us of their success in transforming the most revolting scenes of barbarism idolatry and vice into spots covered with intellectual social and moral vegetation, in the romantic islands of Polynesia, we may perhaps have too much forgotten the teeming millions of Asia, and been somewhat impatient of the slower but stupendous process of permeating that vast mass with the principles of revealed truth. Still we dare not, we cannot, we will not, relinquish the great Pacific, and our possessions in it, to the aggressions of Rome and the Societies of France. We are summoned by recent events, as by a new and awful and commanding voice, to the scenes of our first labours, and our greatest triumphs. Our present object should be rather to defend the positions we already occupy there than to occupy more. We shall be attacked speedily, vigorously, and successfully, in each, and we must prepare for it. To denounce Popery is not enough; to despise it would be folly, and to be unnecessarily afraid of it cowardice; we must resist it by keeping up our missions, and taking care to fill the minds of our converts with Bible truth. The Bible is the antagonist of Popery: a Bible population,

whether at home or abroad, is the levy en masse that must be employed to repel the incursions of this invader: every man must be a soldier, be armed with a Bible, and be trained well in the use of his weapon. The Scriptures must be translated into every dialect, printed in every island, and put into every hand, and the great principles of Protestantism instilled into every mind; while at the same time, the true nature of religion, as consisting of something more and better than the heartless observance of ecclesiastical forms, having no foundation in the Bible and no influence on the conduct, must be taught to the people, and they must be made to understand that, in the absence of faith working by love, the most gorgeous ceremonies are but the exchange of one system of superstition for another. Adhering to this line of conduct, and confiding in the power, wisdom, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may allay our solicitude, though we have many reasons for vigilance and activity, and may wait in calmness and in hope for the result of the conflict between truth and error, which has but commenced in the distant islands of the Pacific, assured that present and partial defeat will end in complete and universal victory.

EXTRACT FROM
A LETTER ON THE EVANGELIZATION
OF
THE VALLEY OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

Printed in the American Home Missionary Magazine (July, 1832).

I TRUST that before this reaches you, you will be returned from your journey of moral investigation through the valley of the Mississippi; and that the result of it will be the stirring up of the hearts of God's people to make still greater exertions for providing the destitute population of that vast and increasingly important portion of your land with the bread of life. Popery has directed a longing eye to that immense tract of land, and has already felt the inward heaving ambition to compensate herself for her losses in the old world, by her conquests in the new. The valley of the Mississippi has been no doubt mapped as well as surveyed by emissaries from the Vatican; and Cardinals are exulting in the hope of: enriching the Papal See by accessions from the United States. Do, do, my dear brother, rouse and inflame the zeal of Protestantism in America, to disappoint the apostles of darkness of their wished for prey. Tell your countrymen that it will be their eternal shame, if they suffer Roman Catholics to outstrip their zeal. Tell them that it will go down to posterity on the page of history to their ineffaceable

dishonour, if they permit the followers of the Beast to be beforehand with them in providing for the religious instruction of so large a portion of their population as will be one day found there. Tell them that it will be a darker blot on their chronicles than even the long continued system of slavery, if they permit the rapid, swelling, and rolling tide of human beings that is flowing towards that part of your territory, to be received into the bogs and marshes of the Roman Catholic religion. Should this be the case, no part of your land will be safe, and a pestilential exhalation will arise, that will diffuse the moral miasma over your whole country.

I am deeply in earnest about this subject. We tell the people in this country that their religious establishment is not necessary either to propagate or to support religion; that the voluntary principle contains an expansive energy; that the cause of truth is more safe, more powerful, more artless and active in the hands of Christian principle, than of state policy. We say to them, let religion alone, leave her to herself, encumber her not with royal armour, but permit her to go forth with her own sling, and wallet, and stones, and her own confidence in God. Look at America! See what she is doing there, un fostered by state patronage, unaided by state power. But, my brother, if large tracts of your land are abandoned to Popery; if millions of your countrymen are left unsupplied with Protestant teachers; if Christians in America have not zeal and liberality enough to send to them their fellow citizens after God's own heart, to teach them the right way: our argument is snatched from us, our forts are stormed, our guns are turned upon us, and the advocates of establishments will tauntingly echo our appeal, and exclaim, "Look at

America; and see how fast for want of a Protestant establishment, she is becoming a Popish land!”

The object of your zeal must be your own country; to supply her rapidly increasing population with able faithful ministers. Your religious policy must be a home policy. Compared with the claims of your own land the claims of the heathen are but secondary. If you cannot attend to both, you must attend to your' own destitute people. You must cultivate the waste places of your homestead. Think what your country is, and especially think what she must be: not only for the magnitude of her territory and the multitude of her people, the vastness of her wealth and the greatness of her power, but for the importance of her example. You are supplying a grand experiment both in sacred and secular governments; I mean as to the best way to promote religion and human happiness. You are bringing all social institutions to the test of experience. On your land hang, in a great measure, the future interests of the globe. Hence the unspeakable importance of your churches concentrating, in a great measure, their religious efforts upon your own country. If it were necessary, in order to supply your people with pastors, one half of your male members should become ministers, while it should be the chief business of the other half to support them.

These are my deliberate views of the duties of the Christians of America.

ON ORATORIOS.

[From the Evangelical Magazine for January 1835.]

As that kind of public amusement which bears the name of oratorio is already very prevalent in this country, and is likely if we may judge from appearances to become still more so, and as many professing Christians attend oratorios, and others are in some doubt about them, I propose, in this paper, to examine the question, "Whether their lawfulness can be sustained by an appeal to the word of God?" I say by an appeal to the word of God; for this, of course, must be regarded as the only tribunal before which the question can be decided; and if condemned by this there lies no further appeal, and the fact of their sinfulness is ascertained once and for ever.

An oratorio, as the word is now employed, signifies a sacred subject set to music both vocal and instrumental, and performed by a hired band of professed musicians before a heterogeneous assemblage of persons brought together not for worship but for amusement, and is frequently associated, at what is termed a "musical festival," with balls operas and miscellaneous concerts.

Now I will first consider the oratorio with all its appendages as it is got up at a musical festival. Take, for instance, the celebrated one recently held in Bir-

mingham. The following is a description of it: The oratorios of David, (in which the parts of the monarch of Israel, the High Priest, Saul, and Jonathan, were sustained in character,) of the giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, of the Messiah, and of the Last Judgment, were followed in the evenings by miscellaneous concerts, a fancy dress ball, and parts of two operas at the theatre. There may not be exactly the same subjects, or the same arrangements at all musical festivals, but the difference is so slight as not materially to alter their character; there is always the same mixture of what is sacred and what is worldly in them all.

I shall adduce here one or two passages of Scripture by which to test this practice; and the following, among many others, will suffice: "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord." "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." "Come out from among them, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing." "Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God with reverence and godly fear, for our God is a consuming fire."

I now ask the question, "Is it glorifying God? Is it serving him with reverence and godly fear? Is it, or is it not, taking his name in vain? Is it using sacred subjects for the purpose for which they were revealed, to convert them into a public amusement?" Some, perhaps, may challenge me for a definition of the term amusement. I give it, a gratification of the senses and imagination apart from religion; an entertainment

of the same class, and resorted to for the same purpose, as miscellaneous concerts balls and dramatic representations. That oratorios are considered as belonging to this class is evident from their being usually associated with them. Can it be right then to convert the most solemn and sacred topics of revealed truth into a mere worldly amusement, a gratification of sense, imagination, and taste, apart from devotion?

A very deep, and, at the same time, a very correct impression is sometimes produced by a prima facie view of a subject, even before the mind enters upon any rigid analytical examination of it, the heart being often, on moral questions, beforehand with the judgment, and ready almost instinctively to pronounce its decision before the mind confirms the sentence by the slower process of logical deduction. Let anyone, then, who pretends to a reverence for the Divine Being, and who trembles at his word, view the following association of subjects:

The Giving of the Law from Sinai.
 The History of David, the type of Christ.
 The Redemption of the world by Christ.
 The Last Judgment.
 A Concert of Music, Songs, Glees, &c.
 An Opera at the Theatre.
 Othello.
 A Fancy Dress Ball.

What a strange and shocking mixture of subject and occupation! What incongruous associations! Enough, one should imagine, to shock common sense, to say nothing of the feelings of piety.

But let me now change the usual form of announcing

these performances, and suppose a placard stuck up at all corners of the town to this effect:

“During the following: week will be exhibited by men-singers and women-singers, and performers on musical instruments, hired on purpose for the amusement of the people of this town and neighbourhood, a representation of the incarnation sufferings and death of the Son of God for the salvation of lost souls, as set to music by Handel. In addition, the company will be entertained by a musical representation of David’s History, of the Giving of the Law from Mount Sinai, and of the Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to Judgment, set forth by all the power of the grandest harmony. In the evening of each day, except the last, the pleasures of the public will be augmented by a miscellaneous concert; and the whole will be crowned with the amusing scenes of a Fancy Dress Ball.”

This is in substance the announcement, paraphrased I admit, which is usually made of approaching musical festivals. Is this for the glory of God? Is this reverencing the Most High, and trembling at his word? What! this association of David and Shakspeare, Moses and Handel, the Messiah and Braham, Mount Sinai and the theatre, the gaities of the ball-room and the tenors of the Last Judgment! There is something almost irreverend, something nearly offensive to the delicate sensibilities of piety, in putting upon paper, or reading these matters in combination. What then are the realities? What, may it be conceived, would be the emotions of Moses, the servant of the Lord, in witnessing those scenes at which he trembled set forth in music for the amusement of a gay assembly? Or,

with what sentiments may it be supposed the Son of God beholds the scenes of his suffering life, atoning death, and final appearance in judgment, blended with all the hilarity of a musical festival, and sung by graceless men and women for the entertainment of the multitude? Let those whose moral vision is not quite obscured by their musical taste, compare the scenes of an oratorio when "the Messiah" is being performed, and those of the house of God when the Lord's supper is celebrated, and remembering that the subject is the same in both, let them ask if both can be right? Is that same cross on which the Saviour loved and died rightly appropriated when used both for the purposes of devotion and amusement? True it is, that while the soul is held entranced by the magic spell of melody, or subdued by the awful and overwhelming power of harmony, the attention may be as fixed, and the feeling may be as deep of its kind as during a sermon or a sacramental service; but no sooner has the melting solo died away in silence, or the exciting chorus been hushed, than all these delusive appearances of unreal devotion are lost again in one universal scene of gaiety and fashionable vanity. The subject of the "Messiah," as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, is given for the purpose of bringing men to repentance faith and salvation; to be the great means, through faith, of overcoming the world with all its lusts of the flesh, lusts of the eye, and the pride of life; to give a death blow to the love of the world in the heart of man; and to subjugate the senses and the imagination to things unseen and eternal; while in an oratorio, the cross of Christ, instead of crucifying us to the world, and the world to us, is employed as an amusement to add new attractions to

earth, and to yield new gratifications to sense, and thus to make man more effectually the captive of that enemy, of which he should seek by faith to be the conqueror.

An attempt will be made perhaps to evade the force of this by affirming that the oratorio, though associated with fashionable amusements, is in itself something different from them; that it is a devotional exercise, and is eminently calculated to produce devotional feeling. But it may be asked, even on the supposition that this is true, whether it is not a very incongruous mixture of the gay and the devout, the vain and the solemn. Think of a person melted by the touching strains of "The Messiah" in the morning, and fluttering through the dance in the evening. Is there not something profane in such an association? But, after all, is it true that there is any real devotion produced by an oratorio in the generality of those who attend it? In whose minds? Certainly not in theirs who are not usually and truly devout. We are sometimes indeed told that it is impossible to be otherwise than devout during the performance of Handel's sacred music, and that those who are susceptible of pious emotion nowhere else, who never weep, nor even feel under a sermon, are penetrated and softened by the pathos and the grandeur of his bewitching strains. This certainly is a very correct representation; but at the very same time is a very complete condemnation of the devotion which is produced by the oratorio; for, in fact, such piety begins and ends with the sounds that awaken it. But is it real piety? The religion of the Bible is an abiding principle, the effect of truth believed upon the mind, the heart, and the conscience, and not a vain pleasurable

emotion produced by fine sounds appealing to the ear and to the imagination. The greatest profligate in all the assembly, yea, a deist or an atheist, is conscious of the same kind of devotional feeling at such a time as many who are professed believers in Christianity. It is almost impossible, I admit, for anyone, however abandoned he may be to error or vice, to avoid being rapt into ecstasy, or melted to tears, under the magic power of the strains which are uttered on such occasions. But is this devotion? No; it is nothing but an excitement of our animal or our imaginative nature; for only observe the consequences of this excitement. Does any devout impression remain after it? Does any religious principle appear to have been implanted or strengthened by it? Is there a disposition felt by the gay multitude to come out and be separate from the world? Do they feel an increased disposition to read the Bible? Was it ever known that the tears shed during the performance of "The Messiah" induced one fair weeper to abstain from the ball in the evening? Or have the terrors felt at the performance of the "Last Judgment" induced anyone to forego the pleasures of the dance? Are the churches more crowded than usual on the Sabbath following a musical festival, and the communicants multiplied at the Lord's supper? On the contrary, is not the truth rendered powerless and unattractive when stripped of the decorations with which it is invested by the composer and performer of sacred music? The sermon that illustrates, yea, even the gospel that narrates, the sufferings of "the Messiah," are very dull things after the oratorio that has set them forth with all the fascinations of exquisite sounds. It may be truly affirmed, therefore, that the devotion awakened by these

means is of precisely the same kind and class of feelings as the compassion excited by a novel or a tragedy, a mere play upon the passions, which subsides as soon as the cause which produced it is suspended; and which, in fact, so completely exhausts the energies of the soul by the excitement of the imagination, as to leave no disposition to attend to the sober realities of life, the dictates of conscience, and the ordinary calls of duty. Nay, the mischief goes further than this, for a great delusion is practised on the human mind in reference to a subject, which it is of infinite consequence should be kept as clear as possible from all mistake or confusion, I mean the nature of true devotion. Let the mere excitement of feeling be once supposed to constitute religion, or religious emotion, and then, the man who can weep before a picture of the crucifixion, or while listening to a pathetic religious poem, or a touching strain of sacred music, will persuade himself that whatever may be his want of holy principle, or whatever his sinful excesses, he has a spark of religion still lingering in his soul, which may yet be fanned into a flame, and a feeling of piety which proves that he is not really as bad as he seems to be; and that he is a hopeful character, though not a saint.

Some pious persons who do not scruple to attend these performances, allege, in justification of their conduct, that they separate the good from the bad; and, leaving the ball, the miscellaneous concert, and the theatre, to the votaries of worldly pleasure, go only to the performance of sacred music, where, they affirm, they enjoy, if they can trust their own consciousness, as sublime devotion as they experience in any of the stated ordinances of religion. This defence, certainly, seems

to imply that such persons consider the strange mixture of the sacred and the gay which usually characterizes a musical festival, to be improper; that they do not approve of "The Messiah" and the "Dress Ball" being blended together in the same general entertainment. Then, I ask them, Why do any thing to countenance it? Why give the sanction of your example, in any way, however remotely, to such a shocking profanation? True, you do not go to the ball, or to the theatre, and thus may seem to bear your testimony against them: but you help those who make the arrangement to effect their schemes by your money and your presence. You are a partaker in their sins: you join in some measure in the desecration. The musical festival, in their estimation, is a whole; and you, by patronizing a part, are considered as patronizing the whole. And there are also other reasons which ought to deter you from attending even the sacred part, if indeed any can be sacred, of these fascinating amusements; I mean such as relate to the performers; who will come to be considered presently, as presenting a distinct and strong objection of themselves.

But let me examine a little this plea of devotional feeling in reference to the pious, as I have already done in reference to the gay and the worldly. Is it, after all, so clear as you have taken for granted, that you are on such occasions the subject of highly-raised devotion? Have you ever had the inclination, or indeed the leisure, to analyse your feelings at such a time? If so, are you sure that the excitement of the moment was the effect of clear and impressive views of the truth? You are aware that devotion consists of affections kindled, not by sensible objects, but by truth. That your emotions

at an oratorio are strong and pleasurable, and may be devotional, to a certain extent, so far as you contemplate at the time a scriptural truth, I admit, but I question whether there is so much of the sacred as you imagine. And even if there were it would not prove that the means are legitimate. It may be supposed, that in the case of pious Catholics, (the Jansenists for instance,) much of the same kind of devotional feeling as rises out of oratorios has been excited by pictures and crucifixes, but this does not establish the propriety of such aids to devotion. If the oratorio were restored to its original form, and were to come out as a sacred opera to be performed, not in the theatre, but in the churches, doubtless there are some good people who could really have devotional feeling excited on such occasions by sublime sentiment united to sublime music; but this would not prove the propriety of such feelings. The circumstance then of the pious emotion that is supposed to be enjoyed, or that in some minds may to a certain extent be enjoyed, is an insufficient defence of these attractive amusements; since they are not a means of grace commanded by the word of God, and are usually conducted in a manner directly opposed to it; they are not to the glory of Jehovah, neither designed for this end, nor actually accomplishing it; but, to the multitude, a mere entertainment, by which sacred things are shockingly desecrated.

Moreover, as it is at any rate, a matter of doubtful propriety to attend such performances, (by far the larger part, I may say an overwhelming majority, of truly pious people, and of those generally the most spiritual, whose senses are exercised to discern between good and evil, being opposed to them,) it becomes a

question, whether a professor of religion ought not, in a case of mere gratification of taste, to give up his own predilections. I am quite aware that the opinion of the majority does not decide the right or wrong of any question; and of that everyone should be fully persuaded in his own mind. Still however when it is not a doctrine, hut a practice, that is in question, and a practice too, that has so much in the way of personal gratification to plead for its propriety, the views of pious people on the subject should have great weight with us. Not only are their minds surprised and grieved by what they conclude to be a great impropriety, but some who are young and weak in the faith are likely to be led astray in less questionable and more sinful matters. The apostle's reasoning, expostulation, and example, seem to be very much in point here. "Take heed, lest, by any means, this liberty of yours become a stumbling-block to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge, sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him that is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall thy weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Therefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." Suppose then a weak brother hear of your going to an oratorio in a music-hall or a church, he will be emboldened to go a step further, and go to hear the same performance in a theatre, and, going there first for an oratorio, he may be led to go there afterwards for a play, and fall into the temptation which abounds in such places. Or,

perceiving that you go to the sacred music, he will go to the profane. Or, observing you mixed up with worldly people in one amusement, he may feel emboldened to go a step further, and mix up with them in another. So far as your own character is concerned, it seems to be a letting down of the strictness of Christian circumspection; and, in a world where such an unfavourable influence is perpetually produced by engagements and occupations into which we must enter, it is by no means desirable to increase the danger by voluntary and unnecessary temptations. It is at any rate but a very small sacrifice for any Christian to make to give up his entertainments for Christ's sake; and though we are not certainly, in default of greater demands upon our ease and comfort by the circumstances of the age in which we live, to go in quest of uncommanded sufferings, or to mortify ourselves by uncalled-for privations, yet we should manifest a willingness to deny ourselves in all matters of doubtful propriety.

I now go on to shew the impropriety of oratorios, even when unattended, which they sometimes are, by the usual appendages of other worldly amusements, as, for instance, the one exhibited no long time since at Westminster Abbey, and more recently at Exeter Hall. There were no balls, no theatrical representations, no catches, songs, and glees; no, nothing but sacred music. Here, then, is the oratorio by itself, and what is there to object to this? I answer, nearly all that may be objected to a musical festival. I ask again this question, For what purpose is this sacred music: performed? Will anyone pretend that it is a religious service; that it is an act of worship; that people are invited to it for devotion? No, it is for amusement;

purely for amusement. Is it, then, I ask, as I have already done, for the glory of God, or for the honour of religion, to convert the most solemn and sacred topics of divine truth into a source of public entertainment? To draw men together to hear the sufferings of the Messiah set forth for much the same purpose as they are called to witness a representation of the sorrows of Lear, Hamlet, or Romeo? That this is not overstating the matter I will prove by referring to a report of, and some comments upon, the performances at Exeter Hall, and which are thus given. “‘For unto us a child is born,’ and the ‘Hallelujah,’ were rapturously encored! Mrs W. Knyvett charmed the audience in ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth.’ Mr Phillips, in the bass songs, especially, ‘The trumpet shall sound,’ was admirable. Mr Hawkins sang, with exquisite purity of voice and style, two songs, ‘He was despised and rejected of men,’ and ‘Oh, thou that tellest;’ and moreover, in the anthem, ‘Worthy the Lamb,’ was received with cries of Bravo! Bravo! Encore! and clapping of hands.” Christians, Christians, you that love and adore the Saviour of the world; you that look through your tears of penitence to His cross for pardon and eternal life; is there not in this enough to rouse to hallowed indignation all the piety you have in your very souls? “Oh, it is an amusement of worldly, sinful, and dying men, fitted to make angels weep!” Is it to be wondered at that the sufferings of a dying Saviour do not impress the hearts, awaken the consciences, and melt the souls of sinners, when these topics are thus converted into a subject of public entertainment for the gratification of the lovers of music and of song? How can a real Christian patronize such profanation?

Is it not, also, a very strong presumption against the propriety of these performances, that the public are not yet agreed upon their proper locality, their appropriate ground? Some consider that places of worship are desecrated by them. But how can this be, if they are religious services? Where should devotion be cultivated, if not in the house of God? This, then, is a plain admission that they are purely matters of amusement. Others think, on the contrary, that they are improper every where but in a church. Some persons see no impropriety in their taking their turn, as they really do, at the play house, with Pizarro, the Stranger, the Hypocrite, and Tom and Jerry. Now, all this doubt and difficulty that hangs over their proper place, very much resembles the obscurity that sometimes attends the question to what parish an illegitimate child belongs.

But I now advance to a very strong proof of their impropriety which is deduced from the character of the performers. Should there be any persons who still contend for oratorios on account of their devotional tendency, even though they admit this is not their professed design, yet what will they say of the profanation of such sacred topics by many of whom it is not defaming them to say, that they are far removed, not only from religion, but even from morality. The great body of professional singers, performers, and actors, are strangely maligned, if their conduct will stand the test of a rigid scrutiny. Exceptions there are doubtless, and I would in charity hope not a few. But I speak of the many, of the generality. Let anyone imagine what is the composition of any orchestra, whether at Drury Lane or in our Cathedrals, or in any of our music. halls, at the time of the performance of an

oratorio. There will be found Jew, Papist, profligate, men and women of any religion, or rather of no religion, all uniting in singing, for amusement, the most solemn and sacred themes of revealed religion; all joining in singing "Worthy the Lamb;" "Hallelujah;" "The trumpet shall sound." A Jew or a profligate singing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Such persons, one night at the theatre, a little while after in a cathedral; at one time personating the heroes and heroines of the stage, at another, the church of Christ in its hopes, and the Son of God himself in his agonies: on one occasion harrowing up the feelings of the audience with a profane piece of diablerie in the play-house, and at another thrilling them in the house of God with the words of prophets and apostles set to music. Can this be right? Can it be proper to engage these persons, to hire them, to give them large sums of money, for an act in which they profane the name of God? Even if we admitted that the audience were rendered devotional by the performance, can we say this of the performers? Think of the scenes of levity and mirth which occur during the seasons of training, when they are taught to perform their parts with the precision necessary to give effect to such services. What an unhallowed familiarity is then acquired with subjects which made the hearts of prophets and apostles tremble as they touched them with the hand of devotion, and in the spirit of pious awe! What a continued breach of the third commandment is going on! What a hardening process is carried forward in the hearts of those persons in reference to religion! By their very profession they are taught to trifle with sacred things. Is there any hope of their ever profiting

by the doctrine of salvation which their very occupation leads them to sport with, and desecrate as a source of gain. Can any Christian who has a tender conscience, encourage his fellow-immortals thus to harden their hearts against the impression of the only truths that can be essential to their salvation?

I shall be told, for it is the usual reply, that by these remarks I condemn the practice of many of our ministers and congregations, who introduce selections of sacred music into their public worship. It is no matter to me whom or what I condemn, except as a matter of regret that there should be so much that calls for condemnation. The only question to be asked is this, Is my argument against oratorios sound? I do condemn, most severely condemn, the practice which, I lament to say, is becoming increasingly prevalent, and therefore increasing the sins and the stains of our dissenting worship, till there is reason to fear we shall soon err on this point as widely as the Established Church, of converting the Sabbath and the sanctuary into a place and season for Sunday concerts. I am indignant and ashamed at the follies of some of my brethren in the ministry, who, either to indulge the whims and tastes of their choirs, or to draw a larger congregation to a collection-sermon, hire singers of all characters, and from all quarters, to come and treat the audience with a display of sacred music. Placards are to be seen at every corner of the street, and in almost every shop window, announcing the coming performance; the names of the performers, the number and kinds of the instruments, and the fulness of the band. And, to complete the enormity, these performers either dine or sup together at a tavern, on the Sabbath when the concert is to

be held, and come, some of them, in a state that can be easily imagined, from the scene of their gluttony and drinking to that of their devotion, or, rather, of their amusement, in the house of God. In these statements I do not, in one particular, or in one degree, exaggerate; all this, and worse than this, has taken place in my own neighbourhood, and in other places, again and again. Oh, shame and scandal upon religion! Oh, shame and reproach upon the men by whom these things are patronized! It is high time that the protesting and indignant voice were raised. It is high time that this torrent of profanation, which in some places threatens to roll over the simplicity and spirituality of dissenting worship, were arrested. But to what is all this to be traced? To the oratorio; of which it is a lame and a humble mimicry. Instead therefore of attempting to justify these things, or stopping the course of my argument, lest it should doom these practices to destruction, I am anxious that it should sweep them all away in its course, as things that are utterly contrary to true religion. Still, however, it will be said that after all, bad as these things are, they are not quite on a level with the oratorio, inasmuch as they are, professedly at least, introduced into the worship of God, and intended to be a part of it. It is, however, only pretence; and adds the crime of hypocrisy to that of profanity, and is, at the same time, not only a desecration of sacred things, but of sacred times and places also.

It will also be objected to my argument, that, if oratorios are wrong because the performers are not pious characters, the same reasoning will lie against all public singing, as it is usually conducted in our places

of worship, where the choirs or leaders are not always, nor generally, godly persons. To this it may be replied, that though, it is true, our singers are not all pious persons, yet they are, or ought to be, at least, all moral and decent ones; for I hold it to be a scandal to have anyone in a singing seat, or in the clerk's desk, who is living in the known violation of any of the laws of morality. And, be it also recollected, that those who lead our devotions in this delightful part of the service of God, engage in it with the professed purpose of worship, and not of amusement.

Let the matter, then, be fully, fairly, and dispassionately examined; let all our love of music, and our delight in the concord of sweet sounds, be put out of the question; and let us ask if it is right thus to convert religious subjects, subjects that enter into the most solemn and sacred part of religion, into a source of worldly amusement; or if it is right to gratify our taste, or even excite what we may suppose to be devotional feeling, by encouraging ungodly persons to profane, by their very profession, and for hire, the holy name and revealed truth of God?

If it be wrong in itself, the wrong is not, cannot be made right, by devoting, as is usually done, the profits of the service to some charitable purpose. This is a very common, and a very catching, though certainly not a very scriptural or logical argument. What will become of the hospital, or the dispensary, it is asked, if the oratorio be given up? I answer, support it in some other way; for even charity must not be supported by sin. Musical festivals have done little in the way of producing pious or charitable feelings, if those who

countenance and attend them will not give their property for the relief of the necessitous, unless they can have value received for it in musical gratification.

I now leave the whole matter for the serious, candid, and prayerful consideration of those who have been in any doubt about this matter; adding only one or two general remarks. Of what tremendous consequence is it that nothing should be done to reduce religion, that only subject which can rescue the souls of men from hell, and raise them to heaven, to a mere entertainment! Of what tremendous consequence is it that nothing should be done to hide from men their own immortality, and help them to go merrily and thoughtlessly upon their eternal destiny! And, even in reference to professing Christians, how indescribably important is it that their own deadness to the world, the life of faith, spirituality, and heavenly-mindedness, should not be hindered by any unnecessary mixture with the world, and resort to worldly amusements, and that their example should not be given to aid the destruction of the souls of their fellow-immortals!