



**A PORTRAITURE  
OF THE LATE  
REV. WILLIAM JAY,  
OF BATH.**







FIRST PROOF-READING DRAFT

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**A PORTRAITURE  
OF THE LATE  
REV. WILLIAM JAY,**

*OF BATH:*  
**AN OUTLINE OF HIS MIND, CHARACTER AND  
PULPIT ELOQUENCE**

*WITH NOTES OF HIS CONVERSATIONS,  
AND AN ESTIMATE OF HIS WRITINGS ANB USEFULNESS*

*BY THE*  
**REV. THOMAS WALLACE,**

*AUTHOR OF "A GUIDE TO THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY,"  
PRIZE ESSAY,  
"THE HEAVENLY HOME," "THE HAPPY FAMILY,"  
ETC. ETC.*

*"Mr. Jay is the prince of preachers."  
The late John Potter, in conversation.*

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6 A PORTRAITURE OF THE LATE REV. WILLIAM JAY, OF BATH

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THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,  
 BY THE AUTHOR,  
 AS A TOKEN OF RESPECT AND REGARD,  
 TO THE  
 REV. HENRY POSTER BURDER, D.D.  
 AT WHOSE ORDINATION  
 THE VENERABLE WILLIAM JAY  
 DELIVERED ONE OF HIS EARLIEST AND MOST  
 VALUABLE CHARGES.

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**PREFACE.**

THIS Volume has not been prepared hastily, nor under the influence of any undesirable or unworthy feelings and motives. It has been the result of long-continued reflection and observation, and has been a cherished design of the Author for many years, should Divine Providence allow him to survive the revered individual and friend, whose intellectual and ministerial character he here delineates.

He had been collecting materials for some period, and preserving, in short-hand, notes of conversations with Mr. Jay, opinions on character, on preaching, on books and authors, which, at various times, he had expressed to him; and also his own estimate of his mental

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and moral habits—of his ministerial excellence and usefulness. He had, moreover, been frequently and earnestly solicited, by superior literary and ministerial friends, to have his



“Portraiture” prepared, in the event of Mr. Jay’s decease.

He ingenuously acknowledges that he had always been a *great admirer* of the venerable William Jay, in his ministerial capacity and in his character as an author of eminent reputation; and, so far back as the year 1830, he purposed, should he outlive him, to furnish, in addition to all which might be written, some truthful and affectionate memorial of him, carefully prepared, without at all interfering with Mr. Jay’s autobiography.

His object is not to detail the circumstances of his life—that he himself has done, in his own striking and impressive manner, and his own family will furnish everything additional up to the closing scene—but to submit some *personal recollection!* of him, and to present an *out-*

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*line* of his *character* and *usefulness*, which he hopes will be interesting to those who were more nearly connected with him, and which the religious public generally will approve. An unexpected providence, of a bereaving kind, peculiarly afflictive, and also a solicitude to recover his own health, required him to reside in Bath during the closing year of Mr. Jay’s pastorate, and hence he has been able more accurately and vividly to communicate his own impressions of Mr. Jay, as he really thought, felt, and acted towards the close of his valuable life.

The writer of the following pages has been frank and undisguised in the expression of his sentiments, wishing to be perfectly honest and ingenuous.

The volume has required thought and effort, and he has re-written the whole from his shorthand memoranda.



It will afford him peculiar pleasure to find that, like his other publications, it is received with kindness and cordiality by an enlightened

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 and discerning public; and, if it be deemed a just and descriptive view of the good and distinguished man whom it professes to delineate, he shall feel much gratified.

No person will perceive anything that is narrow, unkindly, or waspish in this volume. It is a little tribute—affectionate and filial—which he was desirous of offering: a token of sincere regard which he was anxious to proffer in relation to the character and memory of a most honoured servant of God. It is his strong desire that it may be neither unacceptable nor unuseful.

LONDON, 1854.







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I

**PORTRAITURE  
OF  
THE REV. W. JAY.  
CHAPTER I.**

**INTRODUCTORY OBSERVATIONS.**

FEW names in connexion with the Christian world, and especially in connexion with the ministers of the Gospel, have uniformly been mentioned with more respect—more profound regard, or, indeed, admiration—than that of the late revered and honoured William Jay. His character and important services, both as a preacher and writer of unusual excellence, and long-continued usefulness, have been, considerably beyond half a century, highly appreciated by the varied sections of the Christian Church; for, though he was a Nonconformist from principle and though his love of nonconformity was, intelligent and decisive, steady and unceasing,

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his spirit was eminently liberal and catholic—peculiarly marked by its largeness. There was nothing that was narrow or exclusive in his views; nothing that was ungenerous, bigoted, much less waspish, in his temper. He was no mere sectarian. He valued and loved all good men. He appreciated learning, excellence, and ability, wherever he found them; he honoured individuals of superior and consecrated endowments, in association with every religious body; and hence, while he lived, Christians and ministers of all denominations revered him, regarding him not only as one of the most distinguished ornaments of Congregationalism, but as the property of the common Church of Christ;



and, when he died, and “entered into rest,” the enlightened and devout members of all communions were ready to do him honour,—

“Strewing flowers on his grave,”—

viewing him as a servant of God who had been raised up, and eminently qualified, to accomplish a great work, and who had been signally blest, through the medium of the pulpit and the press, in every part of the British empire, and throughout America, indeed in almost every district of the civilized globe; so that, wherever the intelligent Christian might travel, however

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wide the range of his course, in glancing at any well selected library of a religious kind, he would be almost sure to see “Jay’s Sermons,” “Jay’s Exercises,” or “Jay’s Prayers,” among the volumes arranged. Thus, like Henry and Newton, Watts and Doddridge, his reputation and usefulness have not only been great and extended, but universal.

The unusually long period to which the ministry of Mr. Jay was protracted, advancing even towards seventy years; (for he began to preach the Gospel when a comparative youth;) the unblemished reputation which he was enabled to maintain; the number, variety, and uniformly excellent and profitable character of his publications; their adaptation to all classes, and to all countries where the English language is spoken or read, or where sound, evangelical, practical religion is valued,—are circumstances which have combined to render the name of William Jay, in the judgment and to the hearts of multitudes, peculiarly dear; and that name will be handed down, by the best men in all departments of the Christian Church, for generations, for centuries yet to come.



This distinguished minister of the Gospel was the last of a noble and venerable band of Chris-

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 tian worthies, firm in their attachment to great protestant principles, enlightened, catholic and generous in their temper, marked by the depth and mellowness of their experience, by the elevation and savour of their piety, and by the fervency of their desires to be useful. We have been accustomed to link his name with those of Berridge and Grimshaw, Venn and Wilberforce, Rowland Hill and Haweis, Newton and Simeon, Griffin and John Cooke, William Thorpe and Robert Hall, and other men of their stamp, and of their spirit; men differing materially in the character of their minds, in the extent of their learning, but all distinguished by the eminence of their sanctity, by the admirable tone of their spirit, by the profound acquaintance which they discovered with the Scriptures and sound theology, by the influence and authority which, in their several positions, they exerted, and by the great moral and religious benefits which, under God, they were the instruments of communicating, some of them even to multitudes.

When listening to the conversation or discourses of the revered Mr. Jay, we were wont to observe, "William Jay is the last of a small, but truly honourable band, and, when he is gone from the Church below, the last link in the

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 chain will be snapped asunder; the last of these venerable men will be removed. We shall not know where to look for another precisely like him." In many respects he stood alone. He was perfectly unique.

—"Like a star,  
 He shone apart."



There was in his appearance, in his voice, in his manner, in his conversation, in his habits, in his preaching, in his writings, something original, something peculiar, something very different from other men. No one could converse with William Jay ten minutes, or listen to one of his discourses for a quarter of an hour, without being struck; without being compelled to acknowledge,—“This is no ordinary man!” and now that he is taken from us, while we admire the learning of one, the piety of another; the eloquence of one, the genius of another; the fervid emotion of one, the boldness and energy of another; we know not where to look for a successor worthy, in every respect, of this truly venerable man. His place will long be unfilled. His niche will long be vacant. We have many of profounder erudition, of a much higher order of oratory and mind; still he was one *sui generis*;

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and, though God often raises up honoured instruments to accomplish his own purposes of wisdom and mercy in the Christian Church,—sometimes, too, very speedily, and in a remarkable manner,—it is not frequently that he raises up a minister, or an author, like the sainted William Jay, and continues his existence during so long a period, to be instrumental in benefiting thousands, and tens of thousands, throughout his protracted career, and in being signally favoured by being rendered the agent, through the medium of his valuable publications, of conveying the blessings of salvation to unborn generations. Thus, like Bunyan and Watts, Baxter and Doddridge, with many others, he will be always, by God’s blessing, doing good. Thus—

—“His light will ever shine,  
His influence aye he felt.”



It is known to all, that the ministry of Mr. Jay commenced at a very early period of his history, and arose out of striking circumstances, wisely and divinely appointed. It is very obvious that he was born to be a distinguished minister of the Gospel, and, whatever might have been his early difficulties or drawbacks, when the period of development arrived, no-

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thing could check or defeat the object for which by a gracious providence he was specially designed, and specially qualified.

His original condition and employment were very unpretending and lowly, and none could have predicted his subsequently long and elevated position in the Christian Church, and his honourable and eminently useful career. God, however, "moves in a mysterious way." He seeth, as man does not. He arranges, as man cannot. He works, as man is unable to operate. He brought out William Jay from comparative obscurity. Circumstances developed his excellence. Some were raised up to appreciate him in early life, and to be the instruments of his publicity and usefulness.

The providence and grace of God singularly, but effectually, unfolded his character and abilities. He was taken kindly and firmly by the hand, and led from one step to another, until he was placed under the care, and blest with the tuition, of that meek, humble and preeminently devout man, Cornelius Winter, whose fine character he ever appreciated, whose seraphic spirit he ever loved, and whose name he ever honoured; indeed, to him it was like fragrant ointment. It could not be referred to in any way, even in the most incidental manner, without a beam



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of the most chastened pleasure irradiating his countenance. The writer cannot forget the glow of satisfaction which kindled his fine face when Mr. Jay remarked to him, at the termination of the year 1849, when conversing with him in his well furnished study,—“I much liked your article in the Evangelical Magazine,\* on ‘the Character and Letters of Cornelius Winter.’ Your views and judgment, I need not state, are mine. It shows, that ‘the memory of the just is blessed, long fragrant and precious after the good man is gone to heaven; and, indeed, what peculiar honour has God stamped on the name, spirit, and labours of my sainted tutor, so many years after he has taken possession of his rest! Thus, however, God fulfils his word, and honours those who are resolved to honour him.”

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was always popular, from the earliest until the latest period of his career. He commenced his ministry in the villages and towns of Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, and Somerset; but his light was soon to be much more widely diffused, and to radiate in a much more important sphere.

His public labours attracted large and deeply interested crowds in the metropolis, to which he

\*Vide Evangelical Magazine, December 1819.

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was introduced, under the most auspicious circumstances, by the eccentric, but sagacious and benevolent Rowland Hill, who was strongly and increasingly attached to Mr. Jay, and who recognised his peculiar and superior excellences. He was admitted when very young, to his pulpit, at Surrey Chapel, where immense crowds were assembled to hear him; numbers being struck with the juvenile appearance of the preacher, and all



much interested and instructed, in consequence of the freshness, originality, wisdom, unction and power of his preaching, and the remarkable acquaintance with Scripture which his sermons discovered.

From this period, William Jay became a general favourite. He started into publicity and fame at once. He was popular in all directions. His ministry was solicited for the benefit of important institutions in every quarter, and such applause, at so early a period, so total and unexpected a change from his former condition, was enough to damage, to endanger him materially and inevitably,—for very few can receive high popular approval aright; few can enjoy it without becoming inflated. Mr. Jay, however, was kept humble. His piety was not injured. He was preserved from any thing like undue vanity, or

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pandering, in the slightest degree, to the false taste even of the professedly religious public; fond, very often, of tinsel—of mere glitter and show—losing sight of what is simple and unpretending, and of those substantial qualities which endure. Mr. Jay observed more than once to us, “I think I never preached more plainly, more boldly, more pungently, than when I began my ministry in London, and made some noise in the religious world. My taste was formed, my habits were decided, and I was resolved, especially as I had such opportunities of usefulness, to give the large congregations collected *the pure truth* of the Gospel, and come home to their consciences.”

Still, admitting all this, and admiring the decision of William Jay, the situation of so young a man, in the metropolis, followed by immense, delighted and riveted audiences in all directions, was one of extreme peril; and not a little grace





was necessary, to keep him in his appropriate position, and to enable him to exemplify the spirit of the Apostle, "less than the least of all saints." From the time of his settlement in his much-loved city, Bath, until the termination of his ministry, so protracted as to extend beyond sixty years, his popularity was maintained; so that it was not the result of mere impulse: it

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was not devoid of an adequate foundation; it was not loud, noisy, springing from feeling or passion, but was quiet, steady, and the fruit of intelligent judgment and decision; and as, for half a century, he was an annual visitant to the metropolis, where, for several weeks in succession, his best efforts were put forth, and his best discourses were delivered, his celebrity, as one of the most useful and honoured of preachers and writers, was greatly augmented. This marked and universal approval of the most intelligent and devout of the religious public, he continued to realize, until his services on earth were closed.

Thus was Mr. Jay favoured by the kind and sovereign providence of God, and thus was he signally honoured; and, having had advantages of so special a character furnished him, during so long a period,—preaching the Gospel plainly and boldly, in all quarters, to assemblages so numerous, and often immense—his ministry must have been rendered uncommonly beneficial. Eternity itself can alone disclose what spiritual and permanent blessings resulted from the labours he performed, through a succession of years, in the metropolis exclusively.

In concluding these introductory observations, we would just remark, that we do not at all



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wonder at the early and continued popularity and success of the ministry of Mr. Jay. It was marked by its raciness and originality. It was adapted to human nature. It was full of great practical principles, and was singularly impressive. There was nothing affected, nothing little, nothing tawdry or meretricious about it. It was associated with everything that was solid, manly, reflective, sagacious, practical, devout, and truly Christian; and whatever might be the public labours, or the popularity of this venerable minister, nothing could induce him, under any circumstances, to neglect reading, study, and holy meditation: he was a most diligent student of the word of God; and in his retired chamber he worked vigorously, and in the most assiduous manner, that he might be furnished more amply and effectually for his anxious and onerous engagements. Matthew Henry was one of his most favourite commentators; he told us that he found Henry very valuable for his simplicity, his ease, his unction, his sweetness of observation, and his evangelical richness and fervour; and, accordingly, he read and studied his exposition again and again, in the most careful and methodical way. We well remember an excellent judge of ministers saying to us,—“You cannot wonder

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that Mr. Jay was always so popular, and that his discourses were so excellent and useful, when you consider how closely he studied—how much he admired, Matthew Henry, and how much of his raciness, and point of remark, as well as of his spirit, he brought into all his sermons.”

Mr. Jay was habitually an early riser, even to extreme age. Long before his family were up, he would be busily employed in his study, en-



riching and filling his mind, and preparing for his pulpit labours; and, by this means, he was so well furnished, and his discourses were uniformly listened to with so much interest and edification. He never gave God, or the people, that which cost him nothing.

This was the secret of his popularity and success—of his long-enduring approval and efficiency. The lamp was replenished with “oil well beaten.” The stores which he possessed were extensive, and they were always augmented. His mind was always at work. He gained knowledge from every quarter. “He brought out of his treasury things new and old.” He was “a scribe well instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of God.” The Bible was his text-book, his manual, his classic—and all his reading, all his observation, all his studies, he made to bear on this; hence

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the attention which, for so many years, he secured—the pleasure he communicated, the instruction he conveyed, and the impression which, by the Divine benediction, he made on thousands.

“He communed with his God; and light  
Stream’d upon his mind—shedding its radiance  
There, and that was pour’d on others.”



## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF MR. JAY.

OUR recollections of Mr. Jay go back to our boyhood, and memory spontaneously delights to recur to his character and ministerial labours. The parents of the writer were members of his church, and were warmly attached and devoted to him—and his father, especially, was one of Mr. Jay's greatest and most enlightened admirers. He often remarked to his son what benefit he had derived from his ministry, and what delightful associations were connected in his history and remembrance with Argyle Chapel, and the preaching of the lamented minister whose character we are endeavouring to portray. There was one observation which he frequently made to his family. "I value Mr. Jay's ministry more than that of any other man, for its instructiveness. I always learn something from it. I never hear one of his discourses without getting

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my views enlightened, and having some fine, great principles presented before me. This," said he, "I consider to be one of the marked features of the ministry of William Jay."

We well remember how the Sabbath was anticipated by our parents, arising, in a large degree,



from the privilege of attending his ministry, and with what regularity and pleasure we were taken, as a family, to our pew in Argyle Chapel, as uniformly as the Sabbath returned; and, though but a boy at the period to which we refer, we have, even now, the recollection of many of the interesting conversations which took place on the Sabbath evening, after the public and hallowed services of the day, respecting the discourses to which we had been listening, and the subjects which had been unfolded to us in so luminous and impressive a manner.

We have, at this moment, a vivid impression on our mind, of the appearance and demeanour of Mr. Jay, when we were accustomed to hear him in early youth.

His fine manly form in the pulpit always struck us at once, and his unique head, his deep-toned, sonorous voice, his natural, grave, impressive delivery, ever interested us; and one thing we can never forget, namely, as regularly

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as the chapel clock struck the hour of eleven in the morning, and six in the evening, Mr. Jay was seen either ascending the stairs of his pulpit, or entering it. In this respect he was a model, and is deserving, by ministers, of *universal* imitation. He has often remarked to us, "I wait for *none*; when the hour of worship arrives, I *begin*."

Then, we well remember, how, in early youth, we were riveted by Mr. Jay's prayers,—so simple, so weighty, so scriptural, so solemn, and how we were struck by the profound stillness of the assembly, while they were being presented; and the beautiful and fervid manner in which he repeated, with his fine musical voice, the Lord's Prayer, particularly interested us during our



early attendance on his ministry. Feeling so much pleasure in regularly attending the ministry of this excellent man, though yet not acquainted, experimentally, with “the truth as it is in Jesus,” we invariably carried with us ample rolls of paper, to bring home extended notes of his discourses; and well do we remember how our attention was fixed, how our pleasure was increased, how our mind was instructed, while these beautiful sermons were taken down, and when they were carefully re-written, during the

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following week. We have just been looking at some of these ample notes of Mr. Jay’s discourses, penned by us in our youth, and they strike us exceedingly. They are full of interest. They are beautiful specimens of Mr. Jay’s preaching, in his *best* days. They are connected in our mind, with the most pensive and touching associations, awakening thoughts and recollections that

“Lie too deep for tears.”

When we look back,—when we consider *who* were with us when we heard these sermons—when we dwell on the changes which have occurred—on the separations which have been effected—on the bereavements which have been experienced since the period to which we now refer, we can say nothing,—the heart cannot tell its emotions.

One thing we well remember, during our attendance on Mr. Jay’s ministry in our boyhood, that his chapel was always full, and even crowded, in the morning of the Sabbath especially. Nothing could be more striking than the large audience, composed of such a mass of respectable and intelligent individuals, many of them professional men, and convened from all parts of the



country. Our parents told us that, on one occasion, they had counted three doctors of Divinity,

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three clergymen, nine medical men, and seven attorneys, listening to a discourse by Mr. Jay, on the morning of the Lord's day; and, often, on a Thursday evening, they had seen seven or eight ministers of the Established Church, besides non-conformist ministers, attending most closely, and with the most pleasurable feelings, to the experimental and admirable sermons, which Mr. Jay was wont to deliver on the week-day evenings.

We cannot forget, when Mr. Jay dropped in occasionally to see us, how kind he was in speaking to the children, addressing us in the most paternal manner. And never did we meet him in any part of the city of Bath, without his taking us kindly by the hand, and inquiring affectionately after all the family. On one occasion, he said to the writer, "I like to notice the boys, and to pat them on the head. It does *me* as much good as it does *them*." He had the mind and heart of a father.

When, as a family, we settled in the metropolis, there was nothing which was felt by us more deeply, than our necessary relinquishment of the ministry of Mr. Jay. It was felt by us, unitedly, to be a great calamity; the heads of the family particularly deplored it. The father of the writer was accustomed almost daily to

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observe, "I shall never meet with *another* William Jay, in London;" and much as he esteemed and valued one minister and another in the metropolis, he often remarked, "My judgment, which I expressed when I came first to town, I have found to be correct; I have not yet met with a *second* William Jay, nor any even

approaching him;" and when his former beloved and honoured pastor visited the metropolis to officiate for a season, with what eagerness and delight would he go to Surry Chapel, to listen to him, and return, saying, "Days of heaven upon earth have come to me again."

As we approached maturity, and had been taught, long before we were one-and-twenty, to appreciate the religion of the New Testament, to maintain it from principle and love, and to make a public profession of attachment and devotedness to it, the providence and grace of God eventually directed our steps to the Christian ministry, and we entered the Old College, at Hoxton, in connexion with the present Rev. John Harris, D. D., the distinguished president of New College; Thomas Chivers Everett, of Heading; Henry Crump, of Mill Hill, and several other theological students, who proved themselves to be most useful and honoured ministers, though

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not a few of those with whom we spent our collegiate course have been gathered to their fathers, and have entered on the rest of immortality. Well do we remember the interest which was felt at college by the students generally, when they ascertained that Mr. Jay was about visiting Surry Chapel, as one of the oldest and most honoured of the annual supplies, where his best efforts were put forth, and where, perhaps, his largest amount of usefulness was realized. During this period of four years, we listened to some of his noblest, his most original, his most powerful discourses, and often and often have we returned to the college with some intelligent and devout fellow-student, remarking to each other, "Well, have we not had a feast to-day?" and when the Tuesday evening arrived, how regu-



larly did we proceed to Surry Chapel again, that we might listen to one of the instructive, racy, and most evangelical discourses of this distinguished minister of the Gospel, in his palmy days!

Mr. Jay had a fine field for the exercise of his ministry at Surry Chapel. The noble congregation, amounting to three thousand,—the intelligent and devout audience,—the interest which he knew was felt in his labours, and the

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prospect, indeed the certainty, of great usefulness, were considerations which produced a very stimulating and beneficial effect on his mind. We well remember how we used to watch for his entrance into the pulpit there, when “a splendid gathering” was convened; with what interest we listened to his striking and impressive prayer, so simple, so full, so rich, so marked by its unction;—it was an admirable preparative for the sermon which followed. It was prayer in reality;—and then, with what interest we looked at his fine countenance, and his noble head, marked by its thoughtfulness and intellectuality!—when he rose to give out his text, how his beautiful, deep-toned voice, heard, without effort, in every part of the extended building; and when he announced his subject, which was always on some broad, important, uncontroversial point, involving great practical principles, we were sure to be riveted, to be instructed, to go away benefited.

There was no noise, no parade; there were no violent gestures; there was no theatric display, no flourish,—quite the reverse; but the utmost simplicity, a perfectly natural manner; a grave, manly, telling style of address. His sermons, also, which we heard at Surry Chapel, were remarkably full



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of the Gospel,—clear, searching, discriminating, and impressive.

We listened to many of his most admirable sermons there, to some of those published in the “Christian Contemplated,” and several on the Mediation and Atonement of Christ, and the Blessedness of heaven, which we can never forget. Impressions were produced on the immense auditory of the most powerful kind, which, we were persuaded, could *never* be obliterated. These were Mr. Jay’s best days, and the scenes of his most important labours, as well as of his greatest usefulness. We shall not forget one beautiful sermon of his, at Orange Street Chapel, Leicester Square, from the words in the Book of the Revelation, “And they cast their crowns before the throne.”

There was a crowded audience, and the discourse was listened to with unusual interest and delight. It was marked by peculiar beauty and originality; and though Mr. Jay has an “Exercise” on these words, we have nothing preserved at all approaching the beauty and excellence of this sermon. We went and saw him at the close of the service, and expressed our gratitude for the discourse, and we were delighted with the beam of complacency with

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which his countenance was irradiated, when he said—“Thank you! Thank you! I like to be encouraged by *young* ministers, and I want to benefit *young* ministers. I hope *you* will be ‘a good minister of Jesus Christ,’ and let the people have *plenty* of the *Gospel*, nothing but the *Gospel*. Don’t *dish up* the classics, or philosophy, instead of the bread of life!”



A season of delicate health allowed us opportunities of again sitting, for some little period, in the year 1830, under the ministry of Mr. Jay at Bath, and of occasionally assisting him; and during that time we had much intercourse and conversation with him, and never without being instructed and refreshed.

His preaching at this period, in his own pulpit, was peculiarly excellent. We particularly enjoyed his Sabbath Morning Expository Discourses. They were admirable; models of what Expositions from the pulpit should be;—not cold, dry, wire-drawn, desultory; but vivacious, instructive, animated, seizing on the main features of character portrayed, or the most important of the incidents unfolded,—abounding in great principles, full of illustration, and applied with great pertinence and power.

We shall not forget some very striking Expo-

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 sitions on the History and Labours of the Apostle Paul. “Paul at Damascus, Paul at Athens, Paul at Philippi, Paul at Thessalonica,” we particularly remember. They were some of the best to which we ever listened.

It was quite a treat, too, at this period, to attend Mr. Jay’s Thursday Evening Services. His discourses on these occasions were short, compact, experimental, and often very beautiful. He had, moreover, at the time to which we refer, a noble week-day evening congregation, generally numbering from four to five hundred persons. We could not avoid observing that Mr. Jay’s sermons, during the period respecting which we now write, were marked by their glowingly experimental character, and also, by their fulness and beauty of Scripture illustration. Several discourses on passages in the Book of

Psalms were characterised by extraordinary devoutness and unction, and by the original tone of thought and illustration pervading them.

And we often recur with deep interest to Mr. Jay's love of *Evangelical simplicity*, in connexion with sermons, and the uniform preaching of a minister of the Gospel. He once called on the writer, and said,—“Will you preach for me next Lord's day? I am going to London; and be sure you

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give my people two good, *plain* sermons. They love the truth, plain truth.” He was assured that his wish should be gratified, as his views of preaching so fully corresponded with our own.

“I knew it, I knew it,” he responded; “but I have a kind of morbid dread of anything like *finery* in the pulpit. I can't bear for the people to have flowers placed before them, instead of good, plain, solid food.”

Calling on him one day, at this period, and sitting with him in his beautiful study in Percy Place, he remarked to me—“You are bookish, and you see I have a goodly number of volumes. I have been a reader all my days.” He then took up a volume of Thomas Watson, the Puritan, and observed, “I like Watson, and have borrowed a good deal from him, and made an important use of much that he has written. I value Watson for his point, for his raciness, for his sententiousness. Thomas Watson gives you very much in a small compass, and which you can never forget. This is the kind of author I like.” We told him Watson had ever been a favourite with ourselves—“I am glad of it, I wish all our young ministers were fond of Thomas Watson.”

“How do you like,” he inquired of us one day, in

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the year 1830—"How do you like my study?" We at once responded, "Who can avoid taking quite a fancy to it? It is so ample, so nicely arranged, so well furnished with what a student loves; and so choicely supplied, too, with our best new works as they come from the press: besides it looks out so beautifully on an elegant garden, and on bold and lovely hills beyond, has a southern aspect, and is so marked by—

'Its still and quiet air.'

It is just the room which any studious minister, or any literary man, would love." The observation was then made—"With what neatness and care, Sir, your books are classified, and in what nice preservation they all are!" "Yes," was the reply of Mr. Jay, "I have taken great pleasure in my library,—I have jealously watched over my books,—besides, for years, I was always collecting. And this room is a *precious one* to me. Here I have composed the most of my sermons. Here I have prepared the best of my works for the press. Here I have received my friends, and ministers from all parts of the kingdom; and here I have spent the happiest hours of my life with my family. I never leave my study without regret. I am never so much at home as there."

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In the year 1831, when preaching in London, we had frequent opportunities of meeting with Mr. Jay, and hearing him on Tuesday evenings, and Friday mornings, at Surry Chapel, and his Friday morning sermons were unusually excellent.

We had much conversation respecting the great loss which had recently been sustained, by the death of Robert Hall. "Ah," said he, "Hall was, indeed, a great man, a giant in literature

and ability, a man of genius, and yet so simple, so unassuming, so candid, and so pleasant as a hearer!"

Having delivered two lectures on the intellectual character and writings of this extraordinary man in Bath, Mr. Jay said he should much like to peruse the lectures. They were put into his hands. He returned them in a few days, and was pleased to express his satisfaction, observing, "I find your views and mine, respecting Mr. Hall, correspond." He dwelt much on a passage in one of the lectures on the style of Robert Hall, and said, "I agree with all you advance on this point. *My own* style is very different. I have always aimed at *force*, at *pungency*. My object has been *impression*;—and I have adopted a plain, manly, and, what I wanted to make, a direct, straightforward, penetrating style,—one

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which every person could understand, and which every person would feel. I know I am very defective in this respect, when compared with Mr. Hall. His chasteness, his elegance, his classicality, I cannot too much admire; still, every man in his own order."

Walking with him one day from Surry Chapel-House into the city, he said:—"I am going this morning where few dissenting ministers go. I am invited to dine with the Lord Mayor, and a few distinguished guests—some even from Calcutta. I suppose something will be expected from me; but I shall be glad to get away. The Lord Mayor came to hear me yesterday, at Surry Chapel, and expressed his pleasure with my discourse, and the invitation to dine is the result: my habits, however, are simple and regular."

As we were proceeding along Blackfriars Road, Mr. Jay observed, in seeing a school pass by:—"I am fond of children, but this sight admonishes me. I have never paid that attention to the young which I ought; but, you know I cannot preach to children; still, I often wish I had taken a leaf out of the book of Alexander Fletcher, when I had been a young man. He is the prince of talkers to children. I wish I had gone

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into the Sunday-school, and have talked to the children. It would have done me good, and I might have been more useful."

I had been hearing a discourse from the late Rev. J. Harington Evans, and Mr. Jay asked how I liked his ministry. I told him I appreciated it much; that, very often, his discourses were peculiarly rich, experimental, and impressive. "I believe so," he rejoined; "but he has been much traduced, and charged almost with antinomianism; but, from what I have read," he added, "of his sermons, I consider that he is very sound and useful, and that he is an original."



## CHAPTER III.

### RECENT RECOLLECTIONS.

IN the year 1851, having been visited with unexpected and alarming illness, through calling on persons, in the course of pastoral duties, who were labouring under typhus fever, and having experienced a most painful and overwhelming bereavement, by the death of a lovely and only daughter;\* and, in a spiritual sense, the fruit of the writer's ministry, one early and fully ripe for the kingdom of God, and who expired most peacefully and happily, he was compelled to lay aside all pastoral engagements for a season, and, under medical advice, he resided for a time in his favourite city—the air of which was of material service, and had a renewed opportunity of meeting with his revered and highly-valued friend.

We well remember the morning when we first

\* *Vide* “Memorial of Early Piety”—*Evangelical Magazine*, October, 1850.

waited on Mr. Jay, and he observed: “Your case of bereavement much resembles my own formerly. I lost a beautiful and dear girl by typhus, and was called home, when travelling to fulfil a preaching engagement, to see her die, and to





bury her. These are the afflictions which *kill* parents. I thought I should be scarcely able to preach again after her death." We reminded him of the frequent observation,—“The best go first.” “Yes, so it is often; but then, you see, we have so many who are *bad* or *indifferent*, that we want to *keep the best*.”

“I have never,” he continued, “forgotten, and can *never* forget, the loss of my dear girl. It paralysed me for a time; but, like your interesting daughter, she was *ripe for Heaven*, and I have often thought, by her early entrance into the kingdom of God, from how much she has been exempted! Well, we must look forward to meeting with our departed ones before the throne.”

Going into the vestry, the first Sabbath morning, to inquire after him, as he appeared to be very feeble, and to thank him cordially for an admirable and richly experimental discourse, he said, at once,—“You must preach for me next Sunday evening, and I know you will endeavour to give my people what I call a *good* sermon—

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 plain, and full of evangelical truth; and let me have also ‘a *sermonette*’ on Thursday evening.” His wish was complied with; and as we rode home with him after the last-named service, he remarked,—“Hiked your subject this evening—‘I will abundantly bless her provision’—and I liked your discourse the better, because it was not *too extended* for a week-day evening. I think a neat, warm-hearted, experimental discourse of half-an-hour, or five-and-thirty minutes, on a Wednesday, or Thursday evening, much more desirable and effective than one of three quarters of an hour, or fifty minutes. Many then attend with difficulty; and they like, particularly at such a time, to calculate safely on a minister;



and I have generally observed, that what is short, pointed, and experimental on such occasions, is much more profitable than what is protracted, dull, or merely intellectual. Some ministers," he continued, "hold the bottle *so long* to their mouths, that you would think they would never let it go. One good thing you have done to-night, you have given me a subject for next Sabbath morning, before the ordinance of the supper. I intend preaching from the words:—'Lord, evermore give us this bread!'" He did so, and a beautiful and most appropriate sermon was

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delivered prior to the celebration of the Christian passover.

The writer had an opportunity, shortly after, of preaching before Mr. Jay on the recurrence of his natal day. The subject purposely selected, was the touching and beautiful circumstance mentioned in 1 Sam. vii. 12,—“Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.” Mr. Jay was gratified and affected with the selection of the theme; and, on returning with him, he said more than once, “Thank you, thank you! I felt the subject deeply. The sermon was made for *me*. I am now between eighty and ninety. Surely I may raise *my* pillar of memorial, not only every year, but *every day*, and say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped *me!*’”

Calling on him shortly after, he put into our hands a work professedly Expository of one of the most difficult books of Scripture, and inquired: “Have you read this?” “No.” “Well, then, read it, and let me know what you think of it.” After its perusal, we told him that we disliked it exceedingly for its want of simplicity



and chasteness, and for its destitution of good theology. There were some eloquent and sterling

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passages; but the volume, as a whole, was very tawdry and meretricious. Glitter and mere finery was its general characteristic." "Precisely my opinion," observed Mr. Jay; "I never read an Expository work so fantastic and singular; it has been much lauded, but it is one piece of tinsel throughout."

On another occasion, he kindly and generously remarked, "I have read your Prize Essay—'A Guide to the Christian Ministry, or Manual for Candidates for the Sacred Office,' and have been much gratified with your sentiments, and with the spirit of the book. You have kept very close to the conditions prescribed by the Congregational Union. You have treated the subject well, and your views and mine pretty nearly accord, except on visiting the people; but I never could visit. Dr. Morison gave a very just opinion of your essay in the Evangelical Magazine, and I am glad in these *levelling* days that you maintain so earnestly the Divine institution of the ministerial office, and the true dignity and sanctity attaching to the ministerial character when it is consistently carried out. But what a subject you had! I can conceive of no subject being more interesting, more weighty, more momentous. I am glad," he added, "that you so warmly recom-

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mend Doddridge and Matthew Henry, with his sainted father, to students of divinity. I, perhaps, am considered a little censorious by some young ministers, a little too sharp; but I want them to avoid what is cold, showy, and glittering, and to preach and live as the Henries and Doddridge did, and then their ministry must tell, and they

will be loved by all who are worth anything, and it is impossible that they can live in vain.

At this period we heard three admirable discourses from him—worthy of himself—and which evidently produced a deep impression.

One on Moab “settling upon his lees;” another on the fine exclamation of David—“Into thine hands I commit my spirit;” another, on the touching and beautiful request of the Psalmist—“Say unto my soul, thou art my Salvation.”

A singular incident occurred in connexion with the last-named discourse. We were sitting in front of the pulpit at Argyle Chapel, and just as the service commenced, a gentlemanly man, of intelligent and intellectual appearance, was shown into the pew which we were occupying, and, from his manner and appearance altogether, it was concluded by us that he was the deacon of some Congregational Church at a distance, who was visiting Bath, and who came to

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hear Mr. Jay. Sitting next him, our hymn-book was offered him, and we sung out of it together. He listened to the discourse of the venerable preacher with deep attention and interest, and appeared to feel many parts of it. At the close of the service he observed, “We have had an admirable sermon this morning,” to which we readily assented. “Mr. Jay,” he continued, “wears well. I have heard him occasionally for more than thirty years.” On the following Tuesday morning, we were sitting with Mr. Jay in his study, when he said, “Do you know with whom you were worshipping on Sunday morning last, and who was singing out of your hymn-book?” “I did not know,” was the reply, “that you observed us at all.” “Oh,” said he, “I had my eyes on the gentleman who

was next to you. Do you know who he was?" "No; we concluded, from his appearance and manner, that he was some intelligent deacon of a Congregational Church from a distance, who, visiting the city, was anxious to hear a discourse from you." "You are mistaken," said he, smiling. "You were sitting and singing with no less a person than Charles Young, the former great tragedian. He often comes to hear me, and is a very gentlemanly, intelligent man. He had

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 been on this occasion visiting the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and was, I suppose, stopping in the city."

We expressed our surprise and pleasure, and observed to Mr. Jay, "How strange that such a circumstance should occur! How singular for Charles Young, the eminent tragedian, and my-Belf, to be hearing you together, to be sitting in the same pew, singing from the same hymn-book, and conversing pleasantly respecting you! We well remember when, in early life, we saw him perform in the metropolis the prominent characters in 'Hamlet,' 'Othello,' 'Macbeth,' and 'King Lear,' and always admired the careful, intellectual style of his acting. What a contrast between Young performing 'Hamlet,' or 'Othello,' and listening to the Rev. W. Jay, at Argyle Chapel!" He smiled, and said, "You see, nothing is too hard for the Lord J and who knows but that Young loves the truth, and is thinking seriously about a better world?" The incident much impressed us, and will, indeed, never be forgotten.

During the years 1851 and 1852, we were particularly struck with the increasingly devotional and experimental character of Mr. Jay's preaching, and its simplicity—in distinction from anything showy or affected—was more obvious to



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me than it had ever been. When he selected a subject, especially from the Psalms, and dilated on it, there was an unction, and an evangelical simplicity and richness which few men could have discovered.

There was, also, no want of fulness, originality, or power. His Sabbath morning discourses, even when he could scarcely ascend the pulpit stairs, extended to sixty minutes, often beyond, and were delivered, with the aid of copious notes for reference, with all his accustomed distinctness, deliberation, and emphasis.

His dissection of character was also peculiarly fine, and his appeals to believers and unbelievers were remarkably pungent and admonitory. He seldom offered prayer before sermon himself, generally having that part of the service performed by the officiating supply; but when he did conduct the devotional exercises, it was quite a treat to his people, as everything was performed in so full, so reverential, so holy, so impressive a manner. His texts during the closing period of his ministry were commonly short and very striking, and one discourse for the Bath City Mission on the following words—"Bring him unto me!" produced a deep impression on his numerous congregation.

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His Monday evening addresses were as plain, as rich, as original, as experimental as ever, and, in the judgment of numbers, they were classed among the most admirable features of his ministry.

Mr. Jay often suffered much from his Sabbath morning's exertion, especially from the excitement occasioned. He has frequently remarked to the writer on the Monday—"I have spent a



sleepless night." Few would have supposed this, when they observed his calmness and extraordinary self-possession in the pulpit.

Even up to the last hour of his ministry at Argyle, Mr. Jay gained by far the largest congregation, with the exception of the occasional visit of such a man as his attached friend, the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, or Dr. Raffles; and hence, when sermons were required for the Bath General Hospital, for the schools connected with his place of worship, for the City Mission, or for other important institutions, he was generally requested to deliver one of the sermons on their behalf, as he secured the most numerous attendance, by far the most influential congregation, and the handsomest collection. He drew strangers from all quarters, and individuals from every Christian communion in the city.

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Mr. Jay's apt and abundant quotation of Scripture in his discourses, continued to be a prominent characteristic until the last; and, though he referred to a large number of them, and read them, yet he repeated a considerable number of passages, during the closing weeks of his ministry, with as much facility and accuracy as at any former period of his public career.

We had the pleasure of listening to his last discourse, in the summer of 1852, from the beautiful expressions of David in the 63d Psalm, the first two verses—"O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee:" and though Mr. Jay has given us much of that which he then delivered, in his "Exercises" on those words, there were many choice, tender, and beautiful passages with which we were not previously familiar. It was a discourse of a richly experimental character. It abounded in great principles; it breathed

a spirit of eminent devotion, and his observations on "*seeing* the power and glory of God in the sanctuary," or, as he illustrated it, "his glorious power," were full of beauty, originality, and elevation.

We returned from Argyle Chapel on that occasion at once edified and impressed, and the thought was awakened in our mind that we had

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then listened to his last discourse—at any rate, his last elaborate sermon—the last extended and carefully-prepared discourse which we should ever hear from our revered and distinguished friend; and so it proved.

On going into the vestry at the close of the service to inquire after him, and to bid him farewell previously to his departure for Worthing on the following day, which place he had for years annually visited for repose, we were struck with his pallid countenance, and with his extreme feebleness. On the hope being expressed, that his health would be improved by the change, he immediately remarked, "I am sorry I am going to leave home. I cannot bear the thought of going so far away. If I live another year, I will not go further than Bradford,"—where his beloved companion had a quiet residence to which he was much attached, and whither he often repaired. We said farewell to him, under the influence of pensive and peculiar emotions, apprehending that we should hear of his being ill; and so it was; for, shortly after, it was communicated that he was seized with diarrhoea, to which he had long been incident, and a painful disorder which occasioned him extreme suffering.



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After a period, however, of trying illness, he rallied, and returned to his much-loved habitation in Percy Place, when, shortly after, his illness returned with renewed violence, and his sufferings were frequently peculiarly acute and severe. When recovering a little, after some sharp paroxysms, he said, "I want to be placed where I can see my garden, and my flowers."

Mr. Jay was passionately fond of his garden, and his love of flowers had been most devoted throughout the whole of life. No man could have taken a deeper interest in his garden, or disposed more tastefully and elegantly his little beds of flowers than our revered friend; and we never entered his garden, and looked on the number and variety of roses, pinks, carnations, pansies, geraniums, and other beautiful flowers filling and adorning it, arranged so prettily in the various parterres, without experiencing peculiar pleasure.

"I cannot think," Mr. Jay has, more than once, remarked to us, "how any persons can be indifferent to a garden. I cannot look on such persons with much pleasure. I ask, where is their taste, where their love of pure, quiet enjoyment—where their correct, gentle, kindly feeling? I am so fond of a garden, and ever have been, that

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I think I could scarcely have been happy without one. At any rate, I have been much, very much happier, with one, and it has done me great good. My best tastes have been cultivated—my mind has been instructed—my heart has been warmed and benefited—my devotional feelings have been enkindled and increased. My garden is my pleasure-ground, and it is my study.



I get my best thoughts while I am attending to the culture of my fruit and flowers.”

We had cherished the hope that Mr. Jay would have been spared much and prolonged suffering during the closing part of his earthly career, but such was not the arrangement of Heaven. Such was not the will of God. Born in the same year as the late Duke of Wellington, and dying not long after him, how different were the circumstances of the two venerable men prior to their dissolution!

The great warrior, the hero of a thousand battles, when he came to die, was conscious only of instantaneous suffering, comparatively well in the morning, and, after some sharp convulsions, dead in the afternoon. How different was the experience of the man of God, the man of peace, the venerable William Jay, before he entered into rest!

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He, who had been spending his long and honoured life in the cause of truth, and the cause of peace and Christian benevolence and mercy, when the period of his departure drew nigh, was visited with stroke upon stroke, had to endure one pang after another, until at last the energy of his fine constitution was destroyed, the tabernacle was broken up, “the earthly house” was dissolved, and “the house not made with hands” was entered, and eternally possessed and enjoyed. Thus we see how various are the dealings of Divine Providence with his ministers and people in their closing hours, and that we are not to judge from external circumstances when a man comes to die and to appear before God; but from his previous character and history, from the principles he has possessed, from the habits he has formed, from the spirit he has



breathed, and from the conduct he has uniformly manifested.

Had it been the will of God, we should have rejoiced had Mr. Jay been spared acute suffering prior to his admission to the kingdom—had the closing days of this good and holy man been, in relation to *external* circumstances, calm and peaceful; we should have felt truly grateful, had he been exempted from nights of restlessness and

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days of pain, before the call was given, “Son, come up hither;” such, however, was not the Divine arrangement and ordination with regard to him. He was appointed to suffer long and painfully, before he was removed to his rest in heaven\*—to that tranquil and ineffably happy home, where he will ever dwell with his Lord and Saviour, and have “all tears wiped away from his eyes,” during a glorious immortality.

Mr. Jay resigned his pastorate in the month of October, 1852. That resignation was reluctantly accepted by his people; and, on the occurrence of an event so interesting and important, we could not refrain from writing to our revered and honoured friend the following letter, which we did from respect, gratitude, and love.

KENSINGTON, BATH,

*October 14, 1852.*

VALUED AND DEAR FRIEND,

Learning this morning, that you had resigned your pastorate at Argyle Chapel, which, by the grace of God, you had so honourably and usefully sustained during so long and unusual a period, I cannot, as one who has valued you from *childhood*, allow *such* an event to take place without expressing my sincere regret, that,

\* This applies to the early stage of his illness.



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in consequence of the painful illness you are now called to experience, you have been compelled to relinquish your ministerial and pastoral labours; and without, at the same time, thanking you as a friend, as a minister, and as a brother author, for all the instruction I have gained from your writings, and all the benefit I have derived from your ministry.

I look back to the period of *early youth*, when I *first* attended on your faithful and able ministry; and I bless God that from that time until the present my respect and regard have been maintained, and that in reference to the grand points of Christianity we perfectly accord. I am thankful that your health has been preserved for so many years, and that you have been rendered a signal blessing to large numbers.

The loss of your ministry will, I am assured, be sensibly felt in *this* city. *Never* will your old pulpit be *more* ably, more affectionately, more scripturally, more faithfully supplied, and I feel persuaded that your name and labours will be associated with the scene of your long-continued ministry from generation to generation. I hope, dear sir, that you will be graciously sustained during all your hours of solicitude and pain. May the Saviour ever be with you, and the promises of the Gospel be all your consolation and stay.

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May your beloved companion be cheered and strengthened in the endurance of all her sorrows; may your dear children and grandchildren be mercifully supported by the God of covenant love; and, at last, when all the changing scenes of this transitory world shall have passed away for ever, may you and they, and all of us, have a blissful meeting in paradise, never to be separated



more. I send you this letter, dear friend, as a *sincere* token of *long-standing* regard; and, should I be permitted to survive you, I may have an opportunity of doing ampler justice to a character which I have so much revered.

As I am called away by ministerial engagements for a month, I embrace the earliest season after your resignation of telling you my views and feelings.

“Your rest is in heaven,—  
 Your rest is not here;  
 Then, why should you tremble,  
 When trials are near p  
 Be hush’d, O my spirit!  
 The worst that can come  
 But shortens thy journey,  
 And hastens thee home!”

With best regards to you and Mrs. Jay,

I remain,

My dear Friend,

Yours ever.

*To the Rev. W. Jay.*

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After this period, Mr. Jay, to the astonishment of all, rallied and partially recovered. He was able to leave his house, and even to deliver two or three short addresses to his former charge; but an organic and painful disorder had developed itself, which occasioned acute suffering, undermined his fine constitution, until, at the close of the year 1853, this eminent minister of Christ was relieved from all solicitude and suffering, and translated to the world of ineffable glory and unbounded joy. We were not residing near him for some time prior to his decease, but all the touching circumstances connected with his departure and his funeral have been amply detailed in his biography;—and on that province it was not our intention to enter.



Delicacy and propriety forbade it. Our object has been to furnish a few personal recollections—to detail some interesting and instructive incidents, and to sketch concisely and with discrimination the prominent characteristics, mental, religious, and ministerial of a most honoured servant of God, who has been admitted to the celestial kingdom, to partake of the rest of immortality.





## CHAPTER IV.

### THE INTELLECTUAL FEATURES OF MR. JAY.

WE would enter on this department of our subject with much diffidence and modesty, and be solicitous to express our sentiments with discrimination and wisdom. We would studiously avoid all exaggeration; we would guard against a partial and inaccurate statement; we would simply and unaffectedly represent Mr. Jay, in his intellectual character and peculiarities, as he appeared to us, in our intercourse with him, and after long and careful observation.

It was evident to any accurate observer, that the mind of Mr. Jay had been *early* and *assiduously cultivated*.

He had paid close attention to its discipline and culture from the period when he commenced his early education and training for the ministry under the sainted Cornelius Winter; and during the whole of his protracted and laborious career,

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the process of mental cultivation had been vigorously going forward. This was the case until the close of his existence below. He had been through life a diligent and exemplary student, particularly one of a theological character. He was always reading—always investigating some great



subject—always exercising his reflective faculties. He had accustomed himself early to accurate, solid, forcible composition, and hence his powers had been, when a very young man, brought out and invigorated, and, in the course of years, they were admirably balanced, enriched, and matured.

The mind of Mr. Jay was marked by its *originality*. This, unquestionably, was one of its prominent and most characteristic features. It at once struck every intelligent observer. He was accustomed to think for himself on every subject, and to express his conceptions and conclusions in his own racy and peculiar manner. He was an *omnivorous* reader—reading on almost every topic—he gained something from every quarter; still he was no mere copyist or borrower. He did not derive his strength from others, or depend on them for support. His vigour was *native*. His observations, his sketches, his thoughts, his illustrations were his own. There was a fine *individuality* in his mental character, which

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always struck us, and deeply interested us. We acquired always something from Mr. Jay which we gained from no other person. There was a freshness in his remarks, and, sometimes, an impressive originality in his observations on men and books, and human life and religion generally, which communicated to us peculiar gratification.

No person of reflection, of any intellectual tastes, could be in Mr. Jay's company ten minutes, and listen to his converse, without being instructed and benefited by the original thoughts and remarks which the mind of this distinguished man poured forth. He would have something that was fresh—that was new.

The mind of Mr. Jay was characterised by its *fulness*. There was great breadth about it, and



it was well stored. There was nothing little in its features—nothing narrow in its range. Its comprehensiveness ever impressed us, as being one of its most striking peculiarities. The field was large, and it was full of treasures. As we have already observed, Mr. Jay had been throughout life a close and discriminating reader. His theological reading, especially, had been continuous and most enlarged. The whole range of theology had been regarded by him: he had gone through, again and again, the works of our

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great writers on doctrinal, practical, experimental theology. He had examined the productions of our most superior Biblical critics and expositors, and that with the utmost care.

He had perused extensively the best productions in the department of elegant literature; he was conversant with philosophy and history; he was acquainted intimately with poetry—had a fine taste in it—and was passionately fond of Cowper, Montgomery, and many distinguished poets to whom we might refer; he was versed in our periodical literature—from the Edinburgh Review downwards—which had been regularly, and from year to year, examined by him. The best books in divinity, biography, and general literature, as they came from the press, were perused by him; and, indeed, there was scarcely any work of interest and importance we could mention, which Mr. Jay at some period or other had not examined, either wholly or partially: and he was always *augmenting* his intellectual stores—his theological acquisitions—even until the last. He could not live without reading: almost the final conversation we had with our revered friend, he brought in two rare books of



a literary kind, and inquired if we had ever seen them, and stated that he had just perused them

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with much interest. This fulness of Mr. Jay's mind was ever prominently before us when we met with him.

The mind of Mr. Jay was marked by its *sobriety*. There was nothing wild or extravagant in his intellectual character,—quite the reverse. He was peculiar, and in some respects eccentric; still, judging philosophically of his mental character and habits, he was *remarkably sober and sound*. There were no obliquities—there were no monstrosities, but quite the contrary development. He never indulged in idle and visionary speculations. To use his own expression, he never blew the trumpets, or opened the seals. Indeed, he studiously guarded against it; his mind was too well cultivated, his views were too practical to allow him to be fantastic or wild; he was no theorist—he was no mere speculatist—he was not fond of novelties, nor did he indulge in paradoxes;—he reflected long and carefully on every important subject, and was generally, almost invariably, very enlarged in his views, and very sound in his conclusions. You might rely on his sentiments with regard to preachers or writers. His faculties were nicely balanced. There was no disproportion. The understanding—the judgment—the imagination were developed in a complete and

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harmonious manner. This was an obvious and prominent characteristic.

The mind of Mr. Jay was distinguished for its *shrewdness* and *penetration*: these properties were possessed and unfolded by him in an unusual degree. His sagacity was remarkable. He read character with great quickness, and with



surprising accuracy. He penetrated a subject at once. He detected error in a moment. He saw into a person's mind, and ascertained what was his intellectual or moral bias, in a very short period. Mr. Jay we often used to term a mental and moral dissector. The knowledge which he discovered of the human mind in all its phases, and of the human heart in all its peculiarities, often struck us with a certain degree of astonishment. He read a man almost intuitively—nothing could deceive him. He removed every flimsy veil—he tore away every disguise—every “cobweb covering.” When he perused a work, he measured the mind of the author at once, and discovered a breadth, a penetration, an acumen, in his observations which induced our acquiescence, and awakened our admiration; we scarcely ever found him wrong in his opinion of a work or an author.

The mind of Mr. Jay was *thoroughly unaffected in its developments.*

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There was no disguise, no artifice, no affectation whatever. Trickery he despised, all affectation, whether of mind or of character, excited his unmitigated abhorrence. There was a manliness, a fine healthiness about his intellectual character, if we may so express ourselves, which always deeply interested us. His mind was perfectly *English* in its features and characteristics. There was the utmost plainness and straightforwardness, sometimes blunt, and even coarse in its developments, still perfectly *English*, if the expression be admissible, in its features and manifestations. He could not endure idle ostentation, or foolish parade. The modern glitter and tinsel he studiously avoided; indeed, nothing was more despised by him. His intellectual manliness was that which we ever admired in



connexion with him,—it always fixed and charmed. He said to us, one day, in his own peculiar manner, “I hate a puppy, whether one of mind or character.”

The mind of Mr. Jay was *very vigorous*; *force* and *originality* we conceive to have been two of its *most striking* features. There was nothing feeble in its exercises, nothing weak or inane in its efforts. When we conversed with him on any great subject, or listened to his remarks on any

of our best authors, we were at once instructed and impressed with the energy of his thoughts and expressions. He often said, “I like *force* in connexion with a man’s mind and character: it strikes and rivets me. I like the energy of Johnson—the force of Franklin—the strength of Barrow. I much prefer power and impressiveness to mere elegance. Perhaps I have erred here, not having paid sufficient attention to elegance; but what I value, and what I have aimed at, is impression, energy, power. I like a Bermon or a book to strike, to penetrate, to come home.”

The mind of Mr. Jay, with all its characteristic and high excellences, confessedly wanted *finish*. Perhaps, had there been greater elegance, greater classicality about it, its originality and force would have been impaired, or at least endangered.

Still, we often felt, when conversing with Mr. Jay, or when listening to his admirable discourses, that his mind would have been improved by a *little more refinement*. He wanted frequently the touch, the beautiful touch which classical purity and elegance would have given: the exquisite taste and polish, for example, of Robert Hall. This at least is our judgment. There was often a want of correct taste in many of his



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remarks from the pulpit, a coarseness, and even a want of delicacy, in many of his illustrations, which we regretted. He could, like Rowland Hill, say anything. He knew he had full license, and hence he indulged this freedom often a little too much, deteriorating from his dignity and usefulness. His selection of terms was accurate, forcible and beautiful; his style was that of good, plain, vigorous English, that which every person could understand: we have often heard him say, "You know, I cannot bear to employ *hard* words." Still there was sometimes a colloquialism in his public addresses which rather descended too low. His pronunciation also of many terms was incorrect and peculiar, especially the words "spirit," "bosom," "wound," "spiritual." We were habituated to it, still it always grated on the ears of a scholar and classical listener. Admitting this, however, to which we reluctantly refer, Mr. Jay surprised his hearers, even until the close of his public ministry, with the accuracy, power, and luminousness of his language and illustrations.

There were three features in connexion with Mr. Jay's mental character, which were pre-eminently unfolded.

We refer, first, to his *memory*. This was amazing, even until the termination of his

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labours. The very last sermon we heard him deliver, extended to fifty-five or sixty minutes, and there was no faltering, no hesitation, no inaccuracy; but delivered with extreme precision and facility. There was not the slightest loss for a word. He was the closest and most minute observer, and forgot very little. He read continually, and what he read he made his own. You could gather, from his conversation



and preaching, that he was perfectly *familiar* with our giants in theology, and general literature, and that he vividly remembered a great portion of that which he had perused.

His memory to the last was unusual, and had been vigorously exercised during his long life. His acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, and his remembrance of their various parts, always surprised us. He seemed to have not only the richest, most devotional, and most familiar passages before his memory continually, but, also, the most recondite, the most prophetic and unusual, those which large numbers seldom peruse, and which few, if they read, can remember. He had them so fixed on his mind, as to be familiar with the very expressions employed.

Verses and paragraphs in the historical, and, especially, the prophetic books were remembered

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and quoted by him with the utmost facility, and with great beauty and effect; sometimes, indeed, with surprising point and power, reaching the hearts, and awakening the admiration of his audience.

We refer, secondly, to his *imagination*. This, to every intellectual man, was very conspicuous, though not unduly predominant. It was marked by its tenderness and beauty, rather than by its power and elevation. Still, it was one of Mr. Jay's prominent and most interesting characteristics, and was unfolded in a very chaste and impressive manner. He was a man of deep sensibility, of tender and intense emotion, and his imaginative power was developed to those who were acquainted with him, and who were favoured with his ministry, by its purity, its pathos, and its beauty. The rich and imaginative passages in his writings are very nu-



merous, and the strokes of pathos are very fine. Many pictures in his discourses, exhibiting the vividness of his imagination, are remarkably graphic and impressive. Numbers of his touches, his beauteous and radiant gleams, are exquisite.

We refer, thirdly, to his *wit*. This was racy, original, peculiar: it struck us invariably, and with power. We never met him without in some

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degree observing it, and often and often have we been charmed by it. It was genuine, it was very superior. Dry, playful, and vivacious,—sometimes brilliant. No person could spend a few hours, or even a few minutes frequently, with Mr. Jay, without marking that an original and dry humour *was* one of his most striking characteristics. Many of his remarks on character, on books, on preachers, and on the incidents of life, were unusually playful and witty, and, while they amused, they instructed; they remained with us; we could not possibly forget them,—sententious, aphoristic, pungent, vivid, they lodged themselves in the memory, and could not be displaced. There was nothing, generally, that was sour, biting, caustic in his humour; it was dry, animated, lively, and pleasant; withal, very intelligent.

These appear to us, after much and prolonged observation and reflection on the honoured man whose character we briefly portray, to have been the prominent features of his mind. We by no means class him with men of the *greatest* genius and mental power. He had not the profundity of Barrow, the elevated conceptions of Howe, the splendour of Jeremy Taylor, the ponderous weight of John Foster, the brilliance of Chalmers, or the classic beauty and elegance



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of Robert Hall; still, his mind was of a *very superior* order. It was individual and striking in its features, original, discursive, vigorous, full, and was the source, or the medium, of the most valuable instruction to multitudes while he was living; and will be, through the instrumentality of his writings, the means of conveying instruction, encouragement, and consolation of the most important and precious kind to multitudes, now that he has entered on the rest of immortality, and has had all his powers fully expanded and perfected in the realms of cloudless light and unending felicity:—

—“Where glory ever shines,  
And loveliness of mind and heart can never fade.”







CHAPTER V.

AN OUTLIKE OF THE MORAL AND CHRISTIAN  
CHARACTER OF MR. JAY.

WE always regarded the character of Mr. Jay as being one of a high order. We write from knowledge, from long and intimate observation: we are not hasty in our conclusions. He required to be known, and known well, to understand and appreciate him correctly. He was cautious, and wisely too, in unfolding his sentiments and feelings to strangers, unless their character and credentials were good; and he well knew how many eyes were fixed on him, and how many curious observers were continually marking him; besides, he had visitors of every grade from all parts of the united kingdom; and indeed, as he had a European reputation, and one as a preacher and theological writer, even world-wide, he was visited by distinguished persons, who valued and loved the Gospel, of every communion, from America, from France,

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from Germany, and occasionally from remoter countries, and, therefore, he was obliged to be cautious in developing himself to numbers with whom he had enjoyed no previous and intimate acquaintance; but we believe that no intelligent



and Christian stranger ever called on Mr. Jay, and had some converse with him on literary, religious, or general subjects, without being received with kindness, treated with respect and courtesy, and retiring with the most favourable and pleasing impression produced of Mr. Jay's mind, and of his moral and Christian worth.

To those who knew him accurately, who were in the habit of frequent converse with him, and by whom he was appreciated and loved, Mr. Jay unfolded his mind and heart without reserve, and exhibited to them his character in all its completeness and excellence.

In the course of years, and having had ample opportunities of forming an accurate judgment respecting the moral and Christian, as well as the intellectual character of Mr. Jay, we were induced to come to the following conclusions, and to regard the following as being among his *principal* moral features.

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by *great*

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*manliness*, this was palpably unfolded. It was a fine, direct, ingenuous English character, straightforward, somewhat blunt, assuredly, and at times even coarse; still there was great manliness and robustness. There was no affectation, no frippery, no nonsense, no weakness. It was, on the contrary, distinguished by its unaffectedness, by its being without disguise, by its openness, and downright sincerity. This ever interested us in Mr. Jay; we never saw anything else.

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by *great caution* and *wisdom*. Some deemed him too cautious, too slow, too hesitating; still they generally found at last that he was *right*, that the ground he had taken was *safe*. He was a

prudent, and, admitting our individual and characteristic infirmities, a truly wise man: he never involved himself in difficulty, or plunged himself into danger, through his imprudence; he always thought much before he decided and acted, and when he moved he felt that his ground was firm. He was cautious in abstaining from everything violent; he was no mere party-man; he never committed himself by any political demonstration; he studiously avoided the arena of warm and angry debate, of violent, of clamorous controversy; he strictly confined himself to

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his duties as a preacher, a minister, a Christian author, and assiduously discharged them; he never, like many, stepped beyond his own province; he knew what he had to do, and he did it; he was characterised by his sageness, and we found, in conversing with him, that this was increasingly developed as he advanced in years.

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by its *integrity*. He was "a right man and true." There was a transparency about him: you soon saw what his sentiments were, what his spirit was, what his habits were, what his aims were, what was his conduct,—he was enveloped in no cloud: there was no trickery, no shuffling. He was the same man from year to year,—the same in the study, in the parlour, in the pulpit. You could rely on him for instruction, for guidance, for control: you knew that you would not be misled: you were sure of this, that he would give you the *best* advice; that he would not, in the slightest degree, lead you astray. This transparency of character was manifested in everything, and gave to our revered friend much moral beauty, and materially increased the confidence which was reposed in him.



The character of Mr. Jay was marked by its *sobriety*, or rather his general habits. He was

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temperate in all things, simple and regular in his diet, and in all his personal and domestic arrangements. He was no lover of expensive and sumptuous tables. He never wanted *luxurious* feasts; quite the reverse; a plain, frugal meal at one o'clock, was that which he always preferred. He breakfasted and took tea early, and early retired to rest. For many years he abstained entirely from stimulating liquors. Water he preferred, and ever found, that for him "water was best." From this unaffected simplicity of regimen and arrangement, he could not happily or safely deviate.

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by its *devotion*: this was its peculiar feature, and one of its highest and most beautiful attractions. He was a man who walked closely with his God; he was one whose heart was above—whose "conversation was in heaven:" his fondness for retirement and meditation was undeviating, ardent, and proverbial; he was a most diligent and profitable student of the Scriptures, especially the devotional parts of the sacred volume, and his soul was deeply and habitually imbued with the love of everything which the word of God unfolded and required. Spirituality was his element, the atmosphere which he was accus-

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tomed, and which he delighted to breathe. His love to prayer was habitual and supreme, and no man could ever listen to his social or public devotions, without feeling that he was listening to the prayers of one who had intimate commerce with heaven—whose heart was in paradise—whose home was in the skies: it was real, fervent,



effectual prayer. This devotional spirit was the secret of his popularity—of his success—of his remarkable and lasting efficiency. It gave beauty, communicated life, and imparted a resistless charm to all his public ministrations.

The character and habits of Mr. Jay were marked by the *love of nature*, which he cherished. This was a striking feature in connexion with our revered friend, a fine peculiarity, one which was uniformly developed, and unfolded strongly and increasingly until the close of life. His admiration of the works of God was pure, high, unbounded. He viewed them not merely with the eye of an artist, with the eye of an intelligent and enraptured observer, but with the eye of a superior and affectionate Christian; and gazing on a beauteous or sublime prospect, he rejoiced in considering that his Divine Father had created and embellished each and all, giving beauty to one, richness to another, grandeur and sublimity

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to another. He could never take a walk or ride, he could not even enter a garden nicely arranged, and look on the varied and beautiful flowers with which it was adorned, without feeling interested and delighted, and expressing it with earnestness. His passion for the country, for fresh, soft, quiet, rural scenes, was as pure, as refined, as was Cowper's.

He would often say, "How choice this is! how lovely this is! how wonderful this is! how kind—how gracious is our Heavenly Father, in giving us so beautiful a world in which to dwell." "I cannot understand those," he would add, "who are insensible to the charms of nature. They are men and women, indeed, who are without souls."

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by great *fondness for home*. He passionately loved "the domestic hearth," his own "dear fire-side." His home was his greatest comfort, in a certain sense, his rest, his peaceful dwelling place. He never found himself to be so comfortable, so happy anywhere, as in his own habitation at Percy Place, where, during so many years, he had regularly prosecuted his studies, and quietly yet vigorously pursued his sacred preparations for the sanctuary. His sweetest pleasures, his highest

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satisfactions, were realized there. His choicest, his most hallowed associations were connected with it, and when absent, he always longed to return to it. His quiet parlour and study, and his beautiful garden, were his delight. He remarked to the writer one day, "I pity no men more,—and especially husbands and fathers—than those who are regardless of home, who have no concern for it, who have no love to it, who have no desire to remain in it, or, when absent, to return to it, indeed, who are always glad to get away. They are persons, I think, to be more deeply commiserated than any others. I bless God, that I have not their tastes, their feelings, their habits. I have always valued and loved my home."

The character of Mr. Jay was marked by *great sensibility*: this was an obvious and striking feature. He was peculiarly distinguished for the delicacy and tenderness of his emotions; he was a man of strong feeling; he was exceedingly affectionate; even his eye, the expression of his countenance, the grasp of his hand, plainly showed that; and there is a good deal of heart often developed by a simple look, or the grasp of

the hand. His domestic sensibilities were very lively and powerful. As a husband, none could

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be kinder, more considerate, more attached, more devoted. As a father, none could be more tender-hearted and faithful in his regards. As a minister of the Gospel, and pastor, though he visited but rarely, and had, be it remembered, large numbers of visitors, and most anxious and *multifarious* occupations, he was exceedingly kind, urbane, and Christian in his spirit; and often and often have we been melted by his beautiful domestic allusions in the pulpit, by his references to the love which should exist between husbands and wives, parents and children, brethren and sisters, and by the exquisite manner in which he has pointed out the duty and consequent happiness of exemplifying the true spirit of Christianity—the spirit of kindness, amity, forbearance, and love—in connexion with the domestic character and relations. Often and often have we seen the tear start into his eye, while he has been dwelling on these themes. They were congenial with his own mind, in accordance with his own heart; they were in unison with his own character and uniform habits. In respect of conjugal and domestic life, we always regarded Mr. Jay as a *pattern*, and all his beloved relatives who survive him can bear their ample and undisguised testimony on this point.

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There was no mistake, no disguise, no deficiency here.

Mr. Jay was also very *sincere* in his *attachments*. Where he felt regard, he cherished—he maintained it. He was not to be moved by one or another. A friend once, he was a friend for ever. When he found excellence in a character, he

appreciated it. Like Cecil, with his best books, he put the character on his shelf. He lodged his friend in his memory and in his affections, and gave him his undeviating esteem and confidence. The writer can recur with the utmost ingenuousness and pleasure to this point.

Mr. Jay was marked by the *catholicity* of his *spirit*. This was uniformly and nobly developed. There was nothing little, narrow, or bigoted about him, much less anything waspish or merciless. He never *rapped* another Christian body; he never breathed an unkind, much less an intolerant spirit; he loved and honoured good men of *all* communions; he appreciated godly clergymen, and respected Christian laity in the Church of England; and he well knew how *they* appreciated and revered him. And he was one who valued *all* his Christian brethren in the *nonconformist* body. He said to us on one occasion,—  
“How I dislike those little men who are always

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snarling and snapping at other bodies; who can see nothing good in any communion but their own! I find *much* excellence to appreciate, to admire, and to love in *every* Christian fellowship; and I am not only disposed to admire it, but I am bound by my principles to love it.”

This was true and noble catholicity of temper. This was Mr. Jay’s uniform characteristic, and that which was prominently developed by him; and it furnished, unquestionably, one of the reasons why he was so generally esteemed—why, indeed, he was so highly revered. There was nothing rabid in his sentiments or spirit, but every thing large and *generous*.

Mr. Jay was distinguished, moreover, by great *firmness* in *maintaining* his *sentiments*. He had, from early life, thought for himself on almost



every subject; and his thoughts issued in practical conclusions, in great and fixed principles. His opinions were retained with all the force of enlightened conviction. When he considered himself to be sound—to be right on any point, he was not to be shaken. If you asked for his sentiments, as an inquirer or as a friend, on any great subject, whether in connexion with Literature, Morals, Theology, Character, or Life, you had them at once, without ambiguity or disguise;

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there was no hesitancy or reserve. As a patriot he was liberal, enlightened, and consistent—*always* consistent. His political opinions were moderate, yet firm, and carried out from principle. As a theologian, he was very decided in his views. There was no mistake, no concealment, no uncertainty here. He was of the school of Henry, Bates, Flavel, Owen, Charnock, Howe, Doddridge, and Isaac Watts, and he was not the man to be diverted from his sentiments.

He adhered to them from love, and with the utmost tenacity; he felt that they were all to him as a Nonconformist; he was firm and straightforward; not one could be more so; without a particle of bigotry in his temper or the expression of his views, still decided and unflinching. “I like,” he would sometimes say to the writer, “I like to know a man’s mind, to see what he is, to learn how he thinks, to ascertain what he believes. I hate a *trimmer*. Such a man I cannot endure.”

Mr. Jay was characterised by great regard for *punctuality*—indeed, he was *punctuality* *itself*. His love of order was most strongly marked—was even proverbial: he could bear no disorder, no confusion; he wanted everything to be in its place—everything to be nicely arranged; and



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hence his love of punctuality. He was exceedingly anxious to maintain this throughout life. You could rely on him almost to the minute: hence he secured his prolonged time for study; hence he accomplished his multifarious writings; hence he had leisure for receiving his numerous visitors. He was a very early riser, and the habit of punctuality was discovered by him in everything until the closing scene of life. He was a fine example, in this respect, to young ministers: punctual in his rising—in his time for retiring to rest; punctual in his studies, in his preaching, in fulfilling his engagements—indeed, punctual in everything.

Mr. Jay was also very persevering in his habits. He was quiet, but active, regular, and unremitting: what he resolved to do, he executed. What he began, he was determined to finish. There was nothing fickle in his mind or character. A more genuine, persevering, unflagging student never existed. He laboured, he fagged in his study, not only in the early part of his ministry, but during the whole of his long and important life. He had always a book in hand, always some subject before him, always some theological themes which he was mentally pursuing. His perseverance as a reader often

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surprised us. Even when more than eighty-three years of age, we have been astonished to find what volumes he was examining, and with what interest he was perusing them: works, too, which demanded close and vigorous attention. His discourses to the last discovered what a persevering and continuous student he had been; any scholar, any man of genius, could see that



his mind had been well worked, his time well employed.

Mr. Jay was one who was determined to *progress*. He was always anxious to advance,—anything like indolence or stationariness he *abhorred*. He said to the writer, some years ago, in London, “My motto ever has been, *I will, by the help of God, improve*, I will not remain stationary. Hence I will read daily, have a subject always before me, and be seeking to get my mind enlarged.” It is represented of him, that when he first went to Bath, he formed the determination that he would be one of the most useful and efficient preachers in the city; and the history of more than sixty years exemplified that his determination was carried out. This resolution was never forgotten by him, and, hence, at his very advanced years he was reading most of the new works of excellence, and keeping pace with the

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age. This ever interested us in Mr. Jay. He was a growing man to the last.

The crowning feature of Mr. Jay’s character was its *exemplary consistency*: this was its beauty, its glory, its crown. There was no stain on his robe; there was nothing to tarnish the lustre of his profession. He had passed through life, maintaining, by the grace of God, an unblemished reputation. No person could correctly allege any charge against him. “He was a faithful man, and feared God above many.” In his domestic life, in his ministerial character, in his pastoral relation, in his intercourse with ministers and churches in all parts of the empire, he ever developed the character and spirit of “the holy man of God,” of the servant of Jesus Christ. There was elevated sanctity; it could be seen in his private deportment, it could be



marked in his conversation, it was peculiarly visible in his prayers, and in his pulpit efforts. The elevation of his moral and religious character shone out most resplendently; this was that which directed, which chastened, which beautified, which ennobled all.

Such, whatever were the infirmities or defects which marked him—and where is the Christian or minister who does not develop them?—such

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was the character,—the *broad*, the *general* character,—of the late honoured and revered William Jay.

There were, unquestionably, drawbacks, and they could be specified, and no person, we are aware, was more sensible of his infirmities, of his deficiencies, than he was himself. Still, his excellences were decisive, conspicuous and numerous, and, according to our impressions, and to our knowledge of him and love of his character, we have been anxious to unfold a few of them, with as much simplicity, dispassionateness, affection and brevity as possible; and we do it particularly, because we were well acquainted with his character, because we admired it, because we revered it; and, now that he has departed to the kingdom of glory, we would dwell on it increasingly, with deep interest and pleasure, until we shall be permitted to meet him in that world, where *character* will be consummated, as well as *bliss*; where there will be nothing to darken, nothing to mislead, nothing to injure, nothing to defile, for ever.

—“The sky will e’er be bright and cloudless,  
 Without a spot or freckle to deface  
 Its perfect beauty.”





## CHAPTER VI.

### OBSERVATIONS ON MR. JAY AS A PREACHER.

IN entering on this part of our subject, we are anxious to submit any remarks or illustrations we have to offer, with as much discrimination and care as possible. We would avoid all rashness and precipitancy, on the one hand, and all dogmatism on the other. We are very desirous of forming that estimate which every *enlightened* hearer of the late Mr. Jay will appreciate and approve, stating that it is accurate and fair; and to sketch that picture which will be deemed correct, vivid, and life-like in its general outlines, and in its several details.

Before, however, we state our honest views of Mr. Jay as a preacher, we must recur to the manner in which he observed the *devotional exercises* of the sanctuary.

His mode of conducting those important and solemn parts of divine worship, was very striking

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and admirable. His voice was very musical and sonorous, and some of its tones were exceedingly fine. He read the Scriptures in a very grave, distinct, and deliberate manner, and in this much-neglected part of the worship of God, often produced a deep and most holy impression.





He generally presented prayer kneeling, deeming *that* the most suitable posture, and preferring it to every other. As soon as he commenced offering public prayer, you found that you were listening to a man of God, to one who was accustomed to “enter within the veil,” and who interceded for the people with solemnity, earnestness and power. In one word, you listened to *real* prayer, to “the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man, which availeth much.” He began in a slow, serious, and truly deliberate manner, expressing deep-toned gravity and fervour, and maintaining this spirit throughout.

There was no noise, no vehemence, no rant: it was a touching, beautiful, solemn, and penitential address to God as the Searcher of hearts, as the Sovereign of the universe, as the Fountain of ineffable holiness, as the God of love.

The commencement of his prayers in the sanctuary abounded in the language of holy and reverential praise, or of enlightened and devout

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adoration. There was no unseemly or improper freedom in *talking* to God. It was the address of a humble sen-ant to his Divine Master—of an obedient servant to his Divine Lord—of a necessitous creature to his great Creator—of a repentant sinner to his offended Lawgiver; and yet, at the same time, of an affectionate child to his gracious and merciful Father in heaven. As he proceeded, short, scriptural, nervous petitions, appropriate to individual character and to the circumstances of the people, were offered, generally with the utmost simplicity, and expressed with the deepest solemnity and fervour. There was much unction pervading the whole; a fine, chaste, tender spirit, breathing throughout every part, and penetrating the very soul of every intelligent



and devout listener. He was very rich and full on the Lord's day morning, in praying for the Spirit of God to descend; for the influences of Divine grace to be largely enjoyed by the people, and for a special, a saving blessing, to result from the administration of the Word of Life. In his opening prayer, on the morning of the Lord's day, he was, generally, from fifteen to twenty minutes—rarely, however, did he exceed the quarter; and sure we are, if his people felt as *we* did, those prayers of Mr. Jay were some of the

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most beautiful, impressive, and important parts of the service, remembered by them in the most vivid and delightful manner. He invariably closed his intercessions by repeating the Lord's prayer, in a very distinct, devotional, and impressive way, which always told upon his auditory, and which wound up the whole in a beautiful and effective form. Seldom did the Lord's prayer appear to us so striking, as when he recited it.

We often felt, after hearing Mr. Jay in prayer, Would that *all* our ministers could pray as he did! How would the devotional feelings of their audiences be enkindled and increased, and how would all be prepared for the discourses which were to follow!

Mr. Jay, for some years before his decease, was assisted in the morning, by the officiating minister for the evening leading the introductory devotions of the assembly; but he remarked to the writer, that he generally preferred praying himself before the sermon; it solemnized his mind, it prepared him for preaching. "I like," said he, in his own characteristic style,— "I like to *whet my own scythe;*" and we always



thought that very few could whet it so nicely and effectually as he did. The prayer was an

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admirable preparative for the discourse immediately succeeding.

The appearance of Mr. Jay in the pulpit we always considered to be very striking. In his best days, especially when we used to hear him at Surry Chapel, we could not help thinking how truly noble and impressive his appearance was.

When he entered the pulpit, we were always interested in looking upon him; and his grave and solemn manner, admirably befitting his character, and the momentous work which he had to perform, ever struck us powerfully.

We were ever riveted with the *head* of Mr. Jay. It was a fine head indeed. You rarely saw one like it. You perceived at once, that you had a shrewd, penetrating, intellectual man before you—a man of genius. His face, and the *contour* of his head altogether were *unique*; and in later years, when his hair was white as the driven snow, his venerable, majestic appearance, whenever he stood up in the pulpit, to speak to the people the Word of Life, produced an effect on us we can never forget.

Mr. Jay's manner in the pulpit, while preaching, was very striking, and was sure to rivet the attention, and fix it until the close. His fine voice, and his natural and impressive delivery, told at

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once, arresting his hearers, and maintaining their interest. He had no airs in the pulpit. There was no *finesse*. There was nothing forced or artificial. He was beyond all trickery. He rose in the pulpit with much seriousness—gave out his text clearly and deliberately, and at once proceeded to its elucidation and enforcement.





The introductions to his discourses were generally short, pointed, original, leading the way very naturally to the subject on which he was to expatiate. His divisions were almost uniformly textual, and they were always succinctly and neatly expressed; they were, moreover, often marked by peculiar originality and beauty. He entered at once into his subject, keeping his eye generally fixed on the clock, scarcely moving any thing but a finger, or there might be an occasional elevation of his hand—expressing his ideas in a luminous, forcible, and often most riveting manner, throwing a clear and radiant stream of scriptural illustration on his subject, until he wound up all with the most pertinent, solemn, and pungent appeals, closing, generally, in about fifty-five minutes; though sometimes on the Lord's day morning he would exceed the hour, not rarely advancing to an hour and ten minutes, especially when his discourses were expository.

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His Sabbath morning and Thursday evening discourses we always considered his best. On the Sunday morning, for many years, he delivered a succession of Expository Discourses, and they were always our *favourite* compositions of Mr. Jay—those in which he was most at home—indeed, in which he was *unique*. He peculiarly excelled in lucid, instructive, evangelical expositions of Scripture—Scripture parables or incidents—Scripture biography—particularly the lives of the Patriarchs, of Christ, and his Apostles; and if we had wanted an intelligent stranger to form a just estimate of Mr. Jay, as a preacher, we should have taken him with us, to hear him deliver, in his own best style, one of his rich and admirable expository discourses.



Many years ago, he delivered a fine series of expositions on the history of the Apostle Paul. They were some of the *very best* we ever heard from him. They were delivered in his own pulpit. Several of them we have in short-hand, which we took down when we heard them. "Paul in Damascus," "Paul in Berea," "Paul in Philippi," "Paul in Thessalonica," were among those we heard with marked pleasure; they were preeminently excellent and valuable. Rarely have we heard any finer; and they were peculiarly characteristic of this gifted man.

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Mr. Jay was also very admirable and impressive on the Thursday evenings, when he delivered some choice, experimental sermon—a sermon which, he remarked to us, he always got up with care, as he could generally calculate on some hundreds of all denominations being present, and among his audience there was always a number of superior strangers. "I liked," he observed, "to be well prepared, when I saw before me, as I generally did, several clergymen, Doctors of Divinity, and intelligent, meditative, superior men, who were among my hearers. I did not like to be taken by surprise, nor to injure myself." We valued his Thursday evening discourses very highly. They were succinct, truly beautiful and edifying. Some of his most devout people preferred his Monday evening addresses,—“when he talked,” as he said, “to his old women.” It was often *beautiful* talk, rich and devotional in the extreme, and was quite a treat. Still, we often regretted that he occupied a position where only a few could *see* him, though perhaps at times some two or three hundred were assembled; but he would retain his old situation in the vestry.



He could preserve his freedom, and feel at home, no where else.

Mr. Jay, like the majority of ministers, was never heard to so much advantage any where

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as in his *own pulpit*, and among his *own people*. There, and among them, he was the most happy, the most unfettered, the most completely at home. He could not bear to be put out of his way. He was the creature of regularity—punctual in the utmost degree, and any little deviation would disturb him much. He liked his own pulpit Bible, and to arrange and fold down his verses before he entered the sacred desk. Having heard him in London, and in various parts of the country, on great public occasions, and always with deep interest, we bear our spontaneous testimony, that we never listened to him with so much pleasure and advantage as in the pulpit of Argyle Chapel. His best sermons, generally speaking, were delivered there. His whole heart was unfolded there, and those who *enjoyed* his ministry for twenty or thirty years, must have gained a large fund of important and evangelical instruction; if they did not acquire it, it was their own fault. Mr. Jay was not great, nor, indeed, happy, on the platform; besides, he had an aversion, almost an instinctive aversion, to it. He wanted, we think, the freedom, the animation, the tact, the spontaneity, the continual readiness, so important for an effective platform speaker. He

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remarked to us one day—"I cannot speechify." We begged to dissent from his observation. "No," said he, "I cannot *talk* on the platform. Put me into the pulpit, and let me have a good evangelical subject, and *there* I *can* talk; but I cannot

*spout* by the hour, as many do, on the platform." The truth is, when a young man, he had not cultivated the art of speaking on the platform, and from it he very rarely addressed an audience. Even at a social meeting, or anniversary of the members of his own congregation, it was very difficult to induce him to deliver a few words. This we often regretted, as his usefulness and efficiency might have been much increased. Still he appreciated a superior platform speaker. "John Burnet," said he, "is a giant there."

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was confessedly *unique*. He was one most decidedly *sui generis*. We have heard hundreds of ministers, but we never heard *one* like Mr. Jay. His appearance, his tone, his manner, his style, the structure of his discourses, and everything connected with his pulpit efforts, differed from those of any other minister, whether in the Establishment or out of it, to whom we have listened. He had a host of imitators, but not one approached him. He had a characteristic Excellence and peculiarity about him which none

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could reach—an individuality which none could perfectly attain. He shone brightly and apart in his own sphere.

In dilating on the preaching of Mr. Jay, and doing so heartily and admiringly, we would not admire *unduly*; we would not exaggerate. We would wisely discriminate—and we would honestly, ingenuously aver, that in our judgment, his preaching, with all its high excellences, had numerous and marked defects. This, however, is human. Every man has his faults, and every preacher, however admirable, his deficiencies. In the pulpit, Mr. Jay was often *very coarse* in his observations. There was frequently a want of delicacy, refinement, and true polish. There was a blunt-

ness, sometimes, almost amounting to rudeness; at any rate, a want of good taste, which we regretted. Many observations, uncalled for, and undesirable, not only grated on the ear, but pained and offended. This we deplored. It was, unquestionably, a great drawback.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was often *too sarcastic* and *cutting* in his remarks. His humour, as we have observed, was very dry, keen, superior; and hence, there was great danger of his going too far—of his being led astray. He could not repress, sometimes, a humorous, an extremely

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witty remark, which occasioned a titter through his whole congregation. In this respect, he a little resembled Rowland Hill, though his sallies were “few and far between,” in comparison of his. His wit, we confess, was original, and often fine, even brilliant; still, we frequently thought that, in the pulpit, it was out of place. His sarcasms there were often keener than any razor. His irony sometimes was not only most pungent, but withering.

Mr. Jay was very *singular* in the *selection* of his *texts*; and, we thought often, *objectionable* in this respect. There as, in our judgment, a want of taste discovered. They were, doubtless, frequently very striking and impressive; their very announcement struck you powerfully; still, they were often so strange, so unwonted, so remarkable, that some minutes elapsed before you recovered from the singular impression which the reading of some of them produced. In this, few ministers resembled him. The late shrewd and ingenious Matthew Wilks, of the Tabernacle, was very singular in the selection of many of his subjects for the pulpit. We heard him preach three striking and admirable sermons from the words,—“Heady,”—

“I am black,”—“Lord, by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days;” and his texts

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were often marked by their quaintness and singularity. But Mr. Jay was still more singular, often, in this respect, than Mr. Wilks. What strange texts at the opening of Chapels were the following,—“Is there any taste in the white of an egg?” “We are fearfully and wonderfully made!” “There be three things which go well, yea, four are comely in going; a lion, which is strongest among beasts, and turneth not away for any. A greyhound, a he-goat also; and a king, against whom there is no rising up.” It was, on his part, eccentric. We viewed it as being fantastic, unseemly, *objectionable*—and it would certainly be a bad example for young ministers at all to imitate. Plain, broad, rich, evangelical texts are the best.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was *not* commonly *very doctrinal*. You certainly had a very clear, consistent, beautiful exhibition of the doctrines of grace furnished by his valuable ministry; still he was not what we should term, by any means, a *doctrinal* preacher. He was more *experimental, practical* and *hortatory* in the uniform style of his ministry, than doctrinal. He was *very evangelical*; his sermons abounded in great principles; still he rarely preached a series of discourses on the leading doctrines of Christianity, which we deem

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so instructive and so important—of value inestimable—in days like these, especially for the younger and less experienced members of our congregations. It was often remarked to us, by intelligent and matured Christians, that if Mr. Jay’s ministry had abounded more in the development and illustration of the great doctrines

of the Gospel, presenting them distinctively yet *consecutively* before the mind, it would have been more beautiful and more effective. This was our own decided opinion. Its richness, fulness, and power, would beyond question have been much augmented.

The sermons of Mr. Jay were often *too long*—not too long for *us*, and for *some* who felt as *we* did—but too protracted for the *generality* of his hearers. And this should ever be regarded by a preacher; for we have almost invariably observed that, when ministers, however excellent, *exceed the hour* among their own people, or, indeed, before any mixed audience, they soon become tedious; their speaking *beyond that time* is, to the majority, flat and wearisome; the previously good effect is weakened, and is in danger of being seriously injured. This was often the case, even with Mr. Jay himself. We have left, observing:—“Well, if this discourse had been a quarter of an hour

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shorter, how much more powerfully would it have told!” This certainly was an error in preaching with which he was chargeable. The best men, and the best preachers now very rarely go beyond the hour—in general, scarcely reach fifty minutes; an admirable rule to observe.

The discourses of Mr. Jay indicated, frequently, *too much art*. If they had been more simple in their structure, more artless in their divisions and general character, we often thought they would have been more admired by intelligent and discriminating judges, and would have been also more effective. Assuredly the art, frequently, was very ingenious and beautiful; still, it was not sufficiently concealed—the mechanism was too apparent. Mr. Jay almost prided himself on the skeletons of his sermons; and they were certainly

fine specimens of textual division and arrangement; but we could not help thinking, that there was too much difficulty and complication often—too much wearing the appearance of labour and study in these outlines. This observation may be considered by some *hypercritical*—still, this was our frequent impression, when hearing our eloquent and distinguished friend; and even in his Thursday evening discourses, there was often the same extreme contrivance displayed.

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Less art would have been more beautiful, and would have told with much greater power.

But, having made these remarks respecting what we deemed the defects, in connexion with Mr. Jay's general preaching, we now come to a more pleasing theme; it had sterling, commanding, rare, indeed, *almost unrivalled* excellences, which his numerous and intelligent congregations, from year to year, highly appreciated, and to which the religious public of every communion, throughout the empire, for more than sixty years, affixed the seal of its strong approbation.

Let us concisely refer to the most prominent of these excellences.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was *very plain in his language*. This was one of the most characteristic features of his ministry, and, certainly, one of its greatest excellences. It was plain, in distinction from what is ornate, difficult, and obscure. The simplicity of his pulpit eloquence, indeed, was one of its finest attractions. He delivered full, rich, original discourses, carefully studied, but so *exceedingly plain*, that the remark was often made to us by intelligent individuals, who had gone through the range of English literature, after hearing Mr. Jay, "How strikingly,



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 how *remarkably plain* his language is!" In this respect, he could not be too much admired; indeed, he was a perfect *model*. He aimed at this simplicity uniformly. It was his invariable endeavour in the pulpit, to make everything, all his expressions, all his elucidations, as plain and luminous as possible. The language he employed, the illustrations of which he made use—so beautiful and effective; the imagery in which he so impressively indulged, as well as the sentiments he embodied; indeed, the whole tenor of his discourses, exhibited this, in the most striking manner.

It was, evidently, the object of Mr. Jay to preach always *to* the people, and not to *shoot above* them; to convey divine truth to their minds, in a simple and transparent manner; to unfold it in *such* a way, as that they should not go from the sanctuary labouring under any difficulty, or have any mistaken, any erroneous impressions produced. He did not use a number of *Johnsonian* expressions in the pulpit. Such a style he uniformly avoided. In some respects, his style might have been improved. It was, sometimes, too colloquial; sometimes, it stooped too much; it wanted, occasionally, elegance and finish; still, it was commonly excellent, most

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 excellent; it was sound, terse, idiomatic, plain, and, as he remarked to the writer, "for the sake of usefulness, he descended, often, to colloquialism. I want to reach, to strike." And, in connexion with the vigorous plainness of his language, the admirable way in which he *developed* the *idea* of his *text*, establishing or urging the *great* principle which it unfolded, contributed to render everything plain and obvious to



his stated or occasional hearers. They had the meaning, the bearing of the inspired writer completely before them. There could be no mistake. Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was one of the most admirable models of plainness of speech, on *all* occasions, with which any ministers or individuals could be conversant, and, on this ground especially, his published discourses cannot be too diligently perused, or too warmly commended. In them all, they will find specimens of a nervous and elegant simplicity, which no writer, or minister, has surpassed.

“He brought the truth before the mind,  
And made the doctrine clear.”

Candidates for the sacred office cannot too closely imitate the plainness of this distinguished Herald of Salvation.

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The preaching of Mr. Jay was marked by its *point* and *impressiveness*.

This at once struck every hearer, every person who listened to him for the first time, and it always peculiarly struck *us*. There are some men who enter the pulpit, but they never utter anything that *tells*,—all is dull, meagre, vapid, lifeless, common-place. There is no interest awakened. There is no impression produced—nothing seems to lodge, or to fix. “No nail is fastened in a sure place.” Nothing of the sermon remains, except an impression of its dulness, flatness and feebleness.

This was not the character of Mr. Jay’s preaching. We never heard a sermon from him, at any period, which did not tell, which did not fix attention, which did not inspire interest, which did not leave something weighty in the mind, that was worth remembering, and permanently retaining. In his best days, and before



his immense audiences in the metropolis, many, very many of his discourses were *remarkable* for their point and energy. His sermons were the result of thought, close, vigorous, continued thought, in connexion with much prayer; and, wherever this is the case, there will, invariably, be something to arouse even the most careless—

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to strike the most intelligent, and to interest, and impress, and quicken the serious and confirmed believer in Christ Jesus.

Besides, Mr. Jay, during the greater part of his long life, was a close student of our most pointed and weighty divines, such as Charnock, Flavel, Baxter, Hooker, Barrow, Gurnal, Brookes, Caryl, the Henrys; he also loved and imitated them; therefore his sentences, and ideas, and illustrations, after studying them with so much care, and for so long a period, ever had much that was striking and powerful associated with them.

In addition, Mr. Jay, we knew, always *aimed* at being pointed and impressive in his preaching. He told us, often, that “many ministers aimed at mere polish, elegance, and classicality in the pulpit; but such was not *his* object; *he aimed at force, at impression; he wanted something to lodge, to stick;*” and how admirably he succeeded!

The point and force of some of his sermons were unrivalled.

The preaching of Mr. Jay was peculiarly *experimental* and *devotional* in its spirit and tendency.

This, to us, was one of its finest features. Indeed, it pervaded the whole of his ministry. It was obvious to the writer, and to all who heard him with discrimination, that, whenever

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he dispensed the word of life, it was his solitude to do good, to benefit the heart, to raise

the soul from earth to heaven. He did not wish merely to gratify the taste, to delight the fancy, to captivate the mere curious and fastidious hearer, who came only to be amused, or to have some novelty presented before him. His aim was to be the instrument of communicating a permanent blessing to the immortal mind, to the deathless spirit. His addresses to the disciples of Christ, on the beauty and excellence of their true character, on the dignity and glory of their Saviour, on the surpassing value of their privileges, on the richness of their consolations, and the sublimity of their hopes, were some of the most devout, touching, and beautiful of any to which we ever listened.

His sermons uniformly embodied great principles. He fixed on the clear and practical parts of Christianity. He finely exhibited the influence of the Gospel in elevating the mind, and moulding the entire character. He made appeals to the heart and conscience with great power, and, consequently, his preaching awakened the best feelings, inspired the noblest energies of our nature, and the Christian and the sinner retired from the house of God greatly benefited.

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The vanity, the emptiness of the world, was felt; the evil of sin was perceived, the preciousness of Christ was realized, the incomparable excellence of religion was, in some degree, appreciated; the happiness of heaven, by the devout followers of the Saviour, was vividly and still more joyously anticipated.

Mr. Jay never excelled more, than when preaching on some *fine, devotional* subjects. His discourses on the work of Divine grace in the heart—on the experience of Job—on the Spirit of David—on the character of the Saviour—on the

sorrows, or the joys, on the privileges and the hopes of sincere believers—were among his happiest, his most interesting, his most useful. The last elaborate and carefully prepared sermon to which we listened from him, on the words, “O God, thou art my God!” was one of this character. His public discourses were the addresses of a wise and devout man, realizing the life of God in his own soul, and anxious that *that* life should be enjoyed by the people committed to his care. No experienced Christian could possibly hear Mr. Jay, without realizing how deeply he could enter into the views and emotions, the sorrows and the joys, of the children of God!

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Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was very *distinct* and *deliberate* in his *utterance*. Every word, even in the most spacious edifice, could be heard, until within the last year or two of his ministry. His clearness of articulation, his full and emphatic expression, much interested an intelligent hearer; and his *deliberateness* in addressing an audience was another and striking feature of his pulpit eloquence. There was no hurry, no precipitation; words were never chased over each other. Sometimes, perhaps, he was too deliberate; still it told, and he *preferred* it. He said once to the writer, “I speak from the pulpit as I wish to talk in the parlour, in a natural, easy, and deliberate manner. I do not ‘tear a passion to tatters.’ I do not like the *rushing* mode of delivery—the *galloping* manner—the *race-horse* style.” This he ever illustrated in his ministry, and we ask, is it not desirable for ministers to imitate him in this respect? Discourses thus delivered are far better remembered, and the probability is, more generally, more powerfully felt. There is, at any

rate, while the minister is thus proceeding, more time for thought.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was very *manly* and *unaffected*. Indeed, he was one of the manliest of speakers in the pulpit we ever heard. He

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thought for himself, and he *spake as he felt*. He was natural, easy, unconstrained. When he entered the pulpit, he felt that he had a message to deliver, and that message was delivered, as an intelligent, a serious, a good minister of Christ would deliver it, in the most unaffected manner. There was nothing assumed, nothing forced, no part played. You had the manly and unaffected address of one who desired to deliver his own soul, and to benefit the flock in connexion with which he was "appointed overseer." All trickery, all disingenuousness in the sacred desk he abhorred: he *spake* before all his honest sentiments, without disguise, and without fear.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was very *grave* and *serious*. This ever emphatically marked him in the pulpit. It was a commanding and a noble characteristic of his ministry, one which struck us in our youth when hearing him, and impressed us deeply until the close of his public labours. We felt that we were listening to one who was convinced that he was engaged in a most serious and inexpressibly momentous work, and who was resolved to be most serious in its performance. Anything like *levity* in the pulpit was his utter *abomination*. "Nothing," he remarked to us, "is a more serious and dread business than to

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preach the Gospel, to point men to Christ, to warn sinners to flee from hell; if ever I am serious anywhere, it must be in the pulpit." Occasionally there was a deep-toned solemnity in

his discourses, which was remarkable, and which must have left behind a permanent impression. We never heard him without feeling that, as a preacher and pastor, he was seriously conversing with his surrounding flock, and as a dying man full of earnestness, exhorting and beseeching them to "be reconciled to God."

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was *remarkably evangelical*. There was no mistake here; there was no uncertainty here; there was no disguise here; there was no defect here. His sermons were full of Christ; his whole ministry was, emphatically, a *gospel* ministry. It was his object, during his entire history, to exalt the Lord Jesus, and to magnify his "great salvation." This was one of the greatest charms of his discourses, and one important reason of his abiding popularity. There was the clearest, the amplest exhibition of Christ crucified, and Christ glorified. The people all felt this, and enjoyed this: we ever found this to be the attraction of his ministry. He remarked to us at the outset of ministerial labour, "Let your ministry be *full of Christ*. I find that such

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preaching is *sure* to tell, sure to do good: if we only regarded our *acceptance*, as ministers, we should aim at this, much more when we regard our *usefulness*." From the commencement to the close of his ministry, Mr. Jay could make his unhesitating appeal to the people, "I have not been ashamed of the Gospel of Christ."

The preaching of Mr. Jay was *remarkably full of Holy Scripture*. It not merely explained, illustrated, applied, and improved the Scripture, but it was even *full* of it. This was a feature which many deemed its *crowning* one, and which strikingly distinguished it from the ministry of almost every other preacher of his age: his dis-

courses abounded in fine, pertinent, impressive, Scripture quotations; introduced into his sermons with remarkable aptness and effect;—they were like “apples of gold in net-work of silver.” “The words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,” he would largely and habitually employ—and employ, too, in the most striking, the most impressive manner. His quotations from the sacred volume were never ill-selected, general or careless: they were beautifully chosen, were unusually appropriate and powerful, and often told amazingly,—often and often they were introduced in the most *unique* Way. It is the fault of many sermons, that no

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Scripture is quoted, or at least very sparingly. Mr. Jay *never* preached a sermon, without indulging most happily in quotations of the richest character from the word of God, and often was the reference, or the quotation so fresh, so ingenious, so extremely pertinent, that the attention was riveted at once, and the soul penetrated; it was felt that no words were like those of Holy Scripture.

The preaching of Mr. Jay was *remarkably sound*. It was most accurate, most enlightened, most discriminating: there was no approach to error; there was no trimming, no tampering, no paring away, no fluctuation; you could depend on it; it was the same from *first* to *last*, solid, Scriptural, weighty. You were sure, when you heard him, that you would have what was in accordance with the word of God: you were confident that you would be supplied with the Bread of Life. You were certain that you would not be sent away, either with husks, dry, tasteless and indigestible, or only with flowers. You were convinced that you would have no crude or erroneous sentiments. Mr. Jay’s mind was a thoroughly sound mind: his words in the sanc-



tuary were “words of truth and soberness.” His ministry throughout was one of the utmost correctness, one of Scriptural accuracy. There was no

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deviation from the principles or spirit of the New Testament; he wanted nothing but the Scripture, and supplied nothing but what the Scripture taught.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was *exceedingly faithful*. This was a prime feature of his pulpit ministrations. He was bold, straightforward, uncompromising. He feared no man, whatever his position—whatever his influence. He faithfully taught, warned, and rebuked, when necessary. He would let no sinner go unheeded. He would not suffer him to rest in his sins. He would tell him of their evil nature, and of their awful results. His appeals and admonitions to the careless, the undecided, the ungodly, were some of the most faithful and fearless to which we ever listened. He stated the truth frankly and most undisguisedly, pursuing it wherever it might lead him, and no man was forgotten—no sinner was overlooked. Character was portrayed. The conscience was powerfully appealed to, and he commended himself to the understanding, to the judgment, to the feelings of every person, as in the sight of God.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was *exceedingly tender and pathetic*. This was one of the most striking and beautiful characteristics of his pulpit elo-

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quence. It was full of tenderness—it breathed the very soul of compassion. Its pathos often was exquisite. The sensibilities of Mr. Jay were very delicate and powerful. His imagination was chaste and lively, and hence the inimitable pathos of many of his discourses. He not only

excelled in pathetic delineations and appeals, but was a *perfect master*. When preaching on the family at Bethany—on the love of Christ—on the prodigal son—on the incidents in our Saviour's history—on the sufferings and death of the Redeemer—on domestic afflictions and bereavements—his powers of awakening the tender emotions were very finely displayed. We have often been melted under his appeals, and have seen the largest congregations most deeply affected, numbers being dissolved in tears. And yet, there was no external, no physical force—no vehemence—no violent gesticulation. It was quiet, natural, tender, yet melting, pathos. You were quietly, quickly, completely subdued. Deep emotion would be spontaneously awakened, and the tear would start into your eye, almost before you were aware, and you could not check—you could not repress it—neither had you any wish.

Mr. Jay, as a preacher, was very *discriminating* and *sagacious*. No man could sketch character

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more accurately and vividly than he. He was very nice, as well as powerful in his delineations. He was "a discerner of spirits." His sagacity as a preacher was surprising. His penetration in the pulpit often astonished his hearers. He seemed to read every man. He appeared to judge all—to be acquainted with all. This communicated peculiar beauty, as well as force, to his ministry, for when character is accurately and nicely discriminated, preaching cannot be flat—cannot be ineffective. Mr. Jay was a profound student of human nature: he had penetrated far beneath the surface of humanity.

Mr. Jay as a preacher, was *very instructive*. It was impossible to sit under his ministry, even for a short period, without learning much. Indeed

we spontaneously acknowledge, that we acquired more sound, scriptural, evangelical instruction from a *few* of his discourses, than from a *large number* of those of ordinary men. His sermons were always nicely arranged, nicely illustrated, embodied great principles, and the elucidations of important truths were enlightened, racy, and striking; hence you never heard Mr. Jay without being greatly instructed. Besides, his ministry was characterised by great *variety*, and *that* circumstance increased its interest and instruc-

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tiveness. Some of his expository discourses, in particular, were the most instructive and devout, also, which we ever heard.

Mr. Jay's ministry, moreover, was *very comprehensive*. There was no one-sidedness about it. His range was large—his survey was wide—his scope was most extended,—hence the fulness of instruction which was imparted. He went through the land in its length and breadth.

Mr. Jay as a preacher was *very original*. This impressed us, when we *first* heard him with discrimination, and when we listened to his *last* sermon. He was unquestionably one of the freshest, the most original preachers whose ministrations we ever enjoyed. There was no ambitious craving after originality—quite the reverse; he could not descend to that, it was a quality, a characteristic of his mind. It was as natural for Mr. Jay to be original, as for many men, many public speakers, to be common-place. Dwelling, as he did uniformly, on the great points of evangelical faith and practice, there was nothing that was *stale* in his representations or embodiments of truth. There was a freshness both in his mode of thought and expression, which every

person of taste and piety could not fail to admire. The plans of his sermons were beautiful for their

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originality, as well as for their clearness. His introductions were often fine specimens of this property,—many of his illustrations were the simplest possible, and yet the newest and most striking. Some of his sentiments and remarks, his hearers could not fail to admire, for the freshness of thinking which they exhibited. Mr. Jay was accustomed to handle every subject in *his own way*,—he thought for himself on every point, he took, and could take nothing on trust. Every sentiment was carefully tested by his own mind. Hence there was a raciness, a point, a power about all his addresses, which gave to them a peculiar charm. Now this originality is one of the best features of mind, especially when it is regulated, disciplined, and sanctified by the grace of God, and a chastened, yet earnest desire to confer benefit on immortal souls. Such was that which marked the originality of this honoured man.

These appear to us, after long acquaintance, attentive and minute observation, to have been the characteristic features, the prominent excellences of the revered William Jay, as a preacher. We have stated them calmly, clearly, fully, yet admiringly. We do not think we have exaggerated. We conceive that every enlightened person

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who knew and valued the ministrations of Mr. Jay, will, in the main, sanction and approve our representations. We can never recur with indifference, much less with coldness to the late Mr. Jay as a preacher. His pulpit excellences, so prominent, so varied, so masterly, we shall always



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admiringly appreciate; and while memory holds  
her seat, they will never, *can* never be forgotten.

“O *how* he spake of things divine,—  
And raised the soul on high!”





## CHAPTER VII.

### THE CONVERSATIONS OF MR. JAY,—WITH MANY OF HIS REMARKS AND OPINIONS.

IT was a striking characteristic of the distinguished minister whose intellectual, moral, and Christian features we attempt to unfold, that he was superior, and even eminent, in conversation.

His conversational powers, in the estimation of every competent judge, were of a very high order.

He obviously possessed the rare qualifications for *first* class conversation.

He was very *social* in his temper. There was nothing close, ascetic, or recluse, in his disposition.

He was extremely *lively* and *vivacious*. He abounded in genuine and dry humour. He had great facility of expression, especially plain, manly, vigorous, Saxon phraseology. There was considerable *play* of *imagination*. There was great range of *thought* and *observation*.

His reading had been most discursive. He was ever marking character, and he would seize on the strong points of a character, or a subject, with the utmost promptitude and vigour; and, also, with great accuracy. He was never at a



loss with regard to a theme; and as his mind was so full, there was a variety of fine subjects continually presented before him, on which he would expatiate in his own peculiar and instructive manner.

Mr. Jay was never so much at home, as when he met with a few ministerial and literary friends, who would enter into thoroughly good conversation with him, and who would embrace, in their discussions, a wide field of literary, ethical, and theological subjects. He was well prepared for each and all.

The conversation of Mr. Jay was widely different from that of the late Robert Hall. The conversation of the latter eminent man was remarkably fluent and rapid. It dashed and sparkled along in a full stream. It was characterised by peculiar animation and vehemence. It was, often, the most brilliant. The *vivida vis animi* was remarkably unfolded by the conversation of the distinguished man to whom we refer.

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The conversational powers of Mr. Jay were widely distinct from his. In conversation, Mr. Jay was calm, deliberate, original, and instructive.

He was not animated, brilliant, dashing. By no means. His remarks and conversations generally abounded in nice and discriminating thought, in dry and humorous sentiments, in sage and original maxims, in short and pithy sentences, which struck you at once, as being full of truth and wisdom, and which you could never forget; and when he entered into the spirit of any theme, in the midst of an animated and congenial audience, he was exceedingly rich in his thoughts, powerful in his observations, and happy in his

allusions, while his eye would kindle in the most sparkling and brilliant manner.

One thing always interested us in the conversation of this eminent man; there was *no nonsense*, no trifling, no levity. He was playful, very pleasant and sunny; he liked cheerfulness as much as any intelligent Christian, but he never proceeded beyond the limits of strict propriety. He kept within the due, the wise boundary. This has been often forgotten by eminent talkers. There was remarkable solidity in his observations, everything had weight, had significance; it was bullion, not common ore.

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You saw also, that his conversation sprung from a *full*, a *very full* mind; that it was the result of a large and enlightened survey of character and life; and consequently it always told. There was not the shallow stream soon exhausted, but the deep and flowing fountain. You could, moreover, rely almost *uniformly* on his opinions; they were sound, sterling, incontrovertible. He said little precipitately, and he did not utter things as many distinguished men have done, either to show their wit or perverseness; to occasion a laugh, or to inflict a wound: what he advanced he believed, he maintained; and hence he was careful how he expressed himself; and this is very important for eminent men, and particularly eminent ministers of the gospel, to remember.

The conversations which the writer had occasionally for years with the lamented and honoured William Jay, he shall never forget, and he ever had a very deep impression produced on his mind by those conversations of the very superior and original character of Mr. Jay's intellect, and of its close and assiduous culture,



which was scarcely produced, at any rate, not exceeded, by any other circumstances, not even by his preaching or his writings.

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One of the most eminent of our living ministers remarked to us lately, "I never thought Mr. Jay *so truly great* a man, as I did, after having conversed with him on many literary and intellectual themes, in his beautiful study in Percy Place. I found in entering into spirited discourse with him, that he was acquainted with almost every subject, and that his views were expressed with all the fulness and force of a Johnsonian mind." The observation was highly eulogistic, but perfectly just. Mr. Jay was original and striking in the pulpit; but he was often much more so in the study, with a few choice and literary friends, who elicited his thoughts and drew out his powers; there his intellectual riches were displayed, his intellectual greatness was developed.

His conversation abounded, too, in the most *racy* anecdotes, short and telling narrations, sketches of character, notices of eminent men with whom he had been acquainted, and which were furnished in so simple, vigorous, and vivacious a manner, that you had the men and the scenes before you. This is the characteristic and the peculiar power of genius.

Mr. Jay was not fond of a large, starched, *set* company; he did not like to meet with a numerous, a formal, a fashionable audience in

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the drawing-room, to be *stared at*, or to which he was to be the *mouth-piece* for the evening. Indeed this he could not endure,—he abominated it: he loved the little quiet circle, the select few, persons of intelligent, accomplished, kindred minds; in *such* a company he would spontaneously unfold

himself, his sentiments would be freely given, instructively and beautifully conveyed. It was quite a treat, at any time, to spend an hour with Mr. Jay, and to enjoy

—“This ‘feast of reason,’  
And this ‘flow of soul.’”

It was a literary and intellectual feast indeed; and we can bear our spontaneous testimony, that whenever we had opportunities of conversing with this distinguished man—and they were frequent and ample—and of eliciting his opinions on a great variety of subjects, our interest was awakened and our admiration increased.

We found that Mr. Jay rarely took a *one sided* view of men or things; his thoughts were large, full and satisfying.

We preserved, during a series of years, in short hand, a considerable number of his remarks and opinions, particularly for our own reference and instruction;—we have deemed them exceedingly interesting and valuable; and we now introduce

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a selection, though necessarily miscellaneous, of his observations and sentiments, and we think they will be deemed varied, ingenious, and important.

Mr. Jay, as has already been stated, was a minute observer of character. No man, in this respect, was shrewder or more accurate. We append a few of his observations to us at various periods on this point, namely, *character*.

### Character.

I. “Some men you can never understand, never fathom. They always seem to be enveloped, not only in a mist, but in dense fog. I don’t want a man to unfold too soon, but I like to see of what stuff he is made. I like to find

that he is ingenuous; I like to read his sentiments, and to get into his heart."

2. "I value a character on which I can rely, a fine healthy, manly, Christian character, in which I can confide. There are some men I have known, and some ministers, respecting whom I have been able to say, '*These men I can trust; I know they will not deceive me.*'" Then referring to an excellent congregational minister in a respectable town in Wiltshire, lately deceased,\* he remarked, "I have

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\* The Rev. Richard Elliott, of Devizes.

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known Mr. E— very many years, but I have never found him tripping. This is what I like."

3. "Many persons are nearly always changing. 'They never continue in one stay.' Their minds, their sentiments, their feelings, are always varying. They are chameleon-like, never of the same colour. Now I ask, what are they worth? as to friendship, as to confidence, as to true excellence, they are of little value."

4. "Character may be operated on and moulded by a thousand circumstances which are continually occurring; but I do not like to be *too much* influenced by circumstances. Circumstances will tell on the mind and influence the character; but a truly elevated nature will rise in a great degree *above* circumstances. He will make circumstances *bend to him*, he will not bend to circumstances. These, I think, are the greatest characters."

5. "I love a *quiet*, in distinction from a *noisy* character. Some persons are all bustle, all talk, all pomposity, all confusion. There is no still-



ness, no repose about them. I have ever found that the *best minds* and the *best characters*, have

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been those which have been comparatively still,—which delighted in meditation, in retirement, in quietude.”

6. “Many individuals are just like the feather, as light and insignificant; breathe on it, and away it goes; blow, and up it mounts. They are trashy, empty, without weight and significance—all their opinions amount to *nothing*.”

7. “Many minds want depth and solidity. I compare them to corks,—they are light, and always *floating*. If you try to make them descend, it is a vain effort, up they come again quickly: they want thought, they want the solid properties; shall I say, *lead* is required, some weight, to keep them down. I cannot bear these cork-like minds.”

8. “How I love the Christian character, when it is consistently and invariably exemplified! There is true excellence, there is true beauty about it; by its modesty, by its gentleness, by its humility, by its meekness, by its kindness, by its benevolence, by its zeal, by its sanctity, by its love, I see not only what religion does, but what religion *is*.”

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9. “Nothing strikes me more, when I am walking in London, than the diversity of countenance, and the vast diversity of character; and when I am preaching at Surry Chapel, and looking on the thousands collected, one thing much impresses me, ‘Well, here is a multitude listening to me, but each one is marked by his



*individuality* of character, in distinction from the person who sits next him, or from the thousands by whom he is surrounded.' The thought is wonderful, and is, to me, full of significance."

10. "I love the character of a little simple child, full of vivacity, playfulness, and *without art*. I like children;"—and then recurring to his own offspring when young,—“Ah,” said he, “I love to go back, and think of my dear family, when *little*, when *all were together*. But what changes, what separations, what chasms, have years created!”

11. Walking with him many years ago from Surry Chapel into the city, as we were observing a room designed for Sunday Schools, Mr. Jay observed—“I wish I had gone into the Sabbath School when I was a young man, and a young minister. I wish I had taken a chapter out of

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the book of Alexander Fletcher—he is *a prince among children*; but, you see, I was pushed into public life *at once*. I made some noise, and occasioned some stir, and I was obliged to concentrate my energies on my public performances; the result has been, that I neglected the Sunday School, but I regret it, for though I cannot talk to children as Alexander Fletcher can, and indeed cannot talk to them at all, yet *I love the Sabbath School*.”

12. Mr. Jay was very fond of noticing children. We were out with him on the morning of the first of May, 1851, and some little children accosted him, on one of the beautiful hills not far from his own residence, and showing their May-day garlands, requested some trifling gra-



tuity. Mr. Jay smiled on the children, put his hand into his pocket, and gave them a penny, and turning to us remarked—"I cannot, for the life of me, let the little sportive creatures pass me on May-day, without thinking of them." He had a kind heart—the heart of a father.

He inquired, one day, after a poor girl who was in the habit of standing with her broom to sweep the crossing, not far from his and our residence, and asked of us,—“Pray, what has

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become of her? Is she ill? I have missed her—for I have been accustomed to give her a trifle as I passed.” On these little, but touching features in his character, we love to dwell. They are an index to his heart.

13. Mr. Jay, on one occasion, remarked to us—"I *never* notice anything which I see about me in print. I find many incorrect things, many exaggerated statements, and many *very foolish*,—but I *disregard all*. I adopt the maxim of Mr. Wilberforce. That great man observed, ‘I never reply to anything said about me in the public prints. Once,’ he remarked, ‘I was grossly misrepresented. I was walking in Bath Pump Room, and happened to look at a little volume, which I carried about with me, and in one of the Bath papers it was waggishly and unkindly stated, that Mr. Wilberforce was seen in the Pump Room, reading his *Prayer Book*. It was a take-off. It was intended to ridicule my profession of religion—to charge me with sanctimoniousness and folly,—and to damage me. It was *utterly untrue*. I did not, however, notice it. The truth is, I had been in the habit of carrying in my pocket a miniature edition of Horace, into which I very frequently looked;



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and it was my pocket companion, Horace, at which I was then glancing, instead of going through my devotions, ostentatiously, by publicly reading the Prayer Book.” Mr. Jay continued—“I have followed the advice of Mr. Wilberforce. I have left my character—my reputation, to *speak for itself*. That is the *best plan at all times*. If you notice what is said of you, or written against you, by waspish, snarling people, you will have little else to do. Live it down! Live it down!”

14. “I find, in passing through life, great numbers of people who are *all head*; there is no feeling, no sensibility, no heart. They are without any emotion—are as cold as the grave. Now, I would rather have a *little less head* and *more heart*. The charm is, to have the *two combined*—intellect and sensibility—mind and soul.”

15. “I value a *complete* character—such a one as that which was possessed by the late Dr. Waugh. His *was* a character! so well balanced, so mature, so elevated, so wise, so ripe, so truly lovely, that, if I ever met with a man who was nearly perfect, Waugh was the man. It was matured sanctity.”

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16. “We have many, in our congregations, who are *mere hearers*—always craving after novelty—the creatures of variableness and impulse. They are like gaudy butterflies, flying about from one place to another;—they are persons who are running after every fresh, every popular preacher. They want something that is glittering. They are fond of glare, of noise, of parade,—what I call *mere tinsel*; anything that is plain, solid,



judicious, they dislike. How I despise these poor, empty things! But they are *very numerous* in London, in Bath, and, I fear, *throughout the kingdom.*”

17. “Few things are more annoying to any persons who have public reputation, than the manner in which they are troubled by idlers, curiosity-hunters, and those who really ought to know better. For years after I had made some impression at Surry Chapel, I was followed in all directions—my time consumed—my studies broken in upon—my comfort marred, and my temper, too, injured, by those who wanted to see me, without any *previous* acquaintance, and without any valuable object in view. Such intrusion, to which men of any notoriety or popularity are exposed, is a great evil, which they much

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lament, and which cannot be too deeply deplored.”

18. “Nothing, in the course of a long life, has grieved me more, than to observe the *religious deception* which is practised by so many, and from whom, in numerous instances, I expected very different things. There has been a want of simplicity and godly sincerity. There has been so much noise, without principle—so much profession, without real worth—so much tinsel, but *no bullion*. It is a *crying sin of the age*, that we have so much cant, hollowness, and sheer hypocrisy.’

19. “It is painful, indeed, for men of sensibility to pass through *domestic* afflictions. I *well know* what it is. I have had my share. Some have been *so acute*, that I cannot express how I felt.





I have not been able to pour forth my feelings, and my sorrows, to any *human* heart,—only to *my God!*”

20. Speaking to him of the decease of a lovely and only daughter, who was taken from us by typhus fever, after an illness *so distressing* that her parents were nearly overwhelmed;—“Ah,”

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said Mr. Jay, “your case puts me in mind of *my own*. I had to part with a dear child, a daughter, from typhus fever—and I cannot describe my feelings—I can *never forget* my loss. It drank up my spirits. Ah, Sir, no man knows what it really is to *be a father, until he has lost a sweet child!*”

21. “I have buried an old gentleman to-day, aged 89.” He paused, looked pensively, and then remarked;—“Some one will *soon* have to do the *same* thing for *me*.”

22. He called on us one day, and observed that we were reading closely; and at once said,—“That’s right! I like a *reading* man,—and what a blessing it is to have a taste for reading—good, solid, profitable reading! How it refreshes—how it invigorates—how it replenishes—how it adorns—how it ennobles mind and character!

“There is *nothing* for which I more thank God, than for a disposition to spend hours, and even *days* alone, in conversing with the mighty dead.”

23. “I am grieved to mark the superficiality of many. They go little below the surface, under *any* circumstances. Their thoughts—inquiries—reading—investigations—are all marked by their



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shallowness. There is no breadth—no depth. There is no awakening of the faculties—no exertion and concentration of mind. They never get beyond a certain point. They never *improve*. You can never learn anything from them. And they *do nothing*. We have a great deal of this superficiality at the present time. It is, I think, a feature of the age.”

24. “I like to meet with a man who makes me *think*—who grapples with me, that is, pleasantly—who brings out my mind. It is like testing me, to see what metal I am made of—whether I am genuine—whether I am *proof*.”

25. We had been carefully examining an American edition of Mr. Jay’s Works, in double columns, of large octavo size, and got up in a very neat and elegant manner, though printed in small and inconvenient type, and it was remarked to him, that we much preferred the original *octavo* edition of his writings to the smaller, yet more portable form. “And so do I,” he responded. “Still the smaller size is more convenient to numbers, especially as to *price*;—but this American edition I do not like. It has been a good thing, however, for the American.

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I had two copies presented to me, but I have understood that £2,000 have been netted by the publication.” It is well known that Mr. Jay’s writings are exceedingly popular in America.

26. “I have had a curious person conversing with me at Surry Chapel this morning, who heard me lately. He admired my Sermon, but thought, if I were *more doctrinal* it would be



better;—and, the other day, I was told that my sermon was valuable, but that it was *too doctrinal*. You see there is no possibility of pleasing some;—indeed, I *never try*. I aim to please myself—my own conscience, and, above all, to please my God,—then, I am satisfied.”

27. “I have made extended observation, and have had enlarged opportunities for so doing, but one thing I have seen everywhere, that we want *more Christian consistency*. Here the professing Church is sadly deficient. Consistency between profession and conduct—sentiments and habits—conversation and the life—this is what is *deplorably wanted*. I mourn over the little consistency I find in so many quarters. I wonder not that so little good is often done, while professors are so glaringly inconsistent.”

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28. “It is beautiful to see the development of excellent character, under *trying* circumstances,—circumstances of poverty, of extreme disappointment—of painful and overwhelming bereavement—of prolonged suffering. When humility and meekness, contentment and submission, gratitude and love, spirituality and holy obedience, an earnest desire to glorify God, are manifested, *then* I say, This is *true beauty!* This is *true religion!* This is the power of Divine grace! This is the *excellency* of the saints!”

29. Passing with Mr. Jay over Blackfriars Bridge one morning in the year 1830, he remarked when looking at the stream of population pouring on, and fixing his eyes for a moment on the river, and seeing the continual and extended traffic there, he observed,—“What a world is here! It excites me, and yet it depresses me. Every man

has an object, but still very few have a right one. It is money, or pleasure: O how few among them seek after God! How few are preparing in earnest for eternity!"

30. We saw Mr. Jay one Wednesday morning at Surry Chapel parsonage, and he observed—"I had a noble congregation *last evening*: were

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 you there?" Regret having been expressed for unavoidable absence,—“Well, it is a stimulating sight; and one thing, especially, to see so many of my *brethren* present, from all parts of London, and of every denomination. It does me good to see it. It shows their respect and regard; still it renders my duties more arduous.”

Thinking that Mr. Jay felt but little nervousness while preaching, from his apparent ease and self-possession, the question was asked, “Do you, Sir, feel so deeply, at any time when preaching, as to be positively uncomfortable?”

“Do I not?” he at once responded. “I *never* enter the pulpit, without feeling most acutely; and especially as I do not ascend it, at any time, without having many ministers, and most intelligent and superior men, present. Sometimes, in London, it is nearly overwhelming, but I have found that promise enough, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’”

We append a few notes which we have preserved, of Mr. Jay’s remarks to us at various periods,—

### On Preaching.

I. “Preaching the Gospel is a very solemn thing; indeed nothing can be more deeply solemn. I feel its awfulness. To stand between the living

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and the dead, to call men to repentance, to beseech sinners to be reconciled to God, to ‘warn them to flee from the wrath to come;’ I can conceive nothing more truly serious and awe-inspiring than our work. O that we felt our responsibility in the pulpit much more than we do!”

2. “I value *plain* preaching—not weak, vulgar, illiterate preaching, but that which is simple, perspicuous, transparent. I consider that one *great* object of a minister of Christ should be, to make the people understand the gospel, and to preach in *such* a way continually, as that *all may understand*.

“I have ever aimed to be plain, from a sense of duty, as well as on the ground of taste and correct judgment. With *my views* of the office and employment of a minister of Christ, / *must be plain*; and how much better it is on every ground to be simple and chaste, than to be fine, ornate, bombastic. I wish all our ministers would study to be plain, ‘it would be their highest commendation.’”

3. After hearing a beautiful and impressive sermon from Mr. Jay on the love of Christ, we remarked to him how much we, in common with

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all Christians, enjoyed these richly evangelical subjects. “Ah!” responded he, “there are *none like them*, none so beautiful, none so consoling, none so effective, none so elevating, none so adapted to answer the great ends of our ministry. I have ever made it my business to exhibit them in all their breadth, fulness, and glory. They are always interesting, and indeed *I* could not preach without illustrating and enforcing them.”



4. "Nothing pleases me so much, as to listen to an *earnest* preacher, one whose soul is in his work, who is all animation and energy, yet no *rant*." He then mentioned two or three living ministers of this character, finely eulogising them. "These are the men," continued he, "to operate on the mind, to penetrate the affections, to reach the heart: they will not condescend to play merely with the imagination, their business is to *save souls*, and that *ought to be our only business*."

5. "I have been much mortified to-day," observed Mr. Jay to us; "I have been listening to a discourse which was very fine in its way, all ornament, all show, all parade, some pretty figures, to be sure; still there was *no power*; it did not tell; there was no effect. I asked, what

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is the impression by all this? Such *glittering* sermons, I confess, are *very poor* things; I feel it. Give me the plain, manly, forcible discourse, which *impresses* me *at once*, and the sentiments and impressions of which I can never lose."

6. "Variety in preaching is very important. A minister, to maintain his ground, must preserve variety; and how can he do this, but by being a diligent student, reading much, thinking much, writing much? In the ministry of some men, there is *no variety*: there is a sameness that is wearisome, a monotony that is perfectly distressing. I do not wonder that some congregations get so soon dissatisfied, after the first few weeks or months; the people have nothing fresh. There is endless repetition. Variety is the life of preaching, and of the ministry."



7. “Experimental preaching is that which I enjoy; it is always appreciated by good people, and it is always most useful. When we see that a minister enters experimentally into his subject, ‘that he has tasted, felt and handled the word of life;’ when we perceive that he brings, what he gives to the people, out of his *own* treasury; when he can take a passage in the Psalms, or Job, or

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the Gospels, or the Epistles, and preach clearly and experimentally on it, he is *sure* to be valued. The people say, ‘this is *what we want.*’ It is not a cold, dead sermon, but a living, warm address. It is not a dry husk; there is the fruit within, full of milk and nourishment.”

8. “I think one great fault of ministers is, that they are *too set*, too stiff in the pulpit: they are not sufficiently easy and unfettered; they are afraid to descend; they eschew a colloquial plainness, which is most effective. If they would often talk to their people, if they would throw aside their starched air and manner, it would be very desirable and beneficial, greatly conducive to their prosperity and usefulness. I wish they would talk as Rowland Hill did, as Whitfield did, as Grimshawe did, as Berridge did, as John Newton did! *such* talk would not be ineffective.”

9. “I am apt to preach too long myself, but I do not approve of very long discourses in others. I have generally found that the *best* preachers are the *shortest*. Three-quarters of an hour I consider much better than an hour and a quarter. When a discourse is too long, the effect is unhappy; the people are jaded, worn out; they



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become impatient, they lose their temper, and the sermon has no power. I heard of a very common-place man at an association of ministers, reading a poor dry sermon, which took up *two hours and a quarter* of the service. *Half* the people left before he had finished two-thirds, and I should not have been surprised, if *all* had left before he had done, and left him" (smiling) "all alone in his glory. *Such* men know nothing of themselves—nothing of human nature."

10. "In preaching, I like a good, faithful, rousing application, something which will tell on the conscience, which will *nail the subject there*. Tell me not of giving offence. I am to aim at 'plucking the brand from the eternal burning.'"

11. "The *end* of preaching should always be regarded to *win souls to Christ*. We must not be party-men. There is, however, a good deal of this. One wants to make his hearers Churchmen; another Baptists; another Independents; another Wesleyans: should it not be the object of *one* and *all* to make them *Christians!* the followers of the Lord Jesus) When I preach, I want to preach Christ. When I invite the sinner, I wish to invite him to Christ. When I persuade men,

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I want to persuade them to flee to Christ When I warn the careless, I warn them to beware of neglecting Christ. When I apply the truth I do it only to glorify Christ. This is our business as ministers, yet it is often *lost sight of.*"

We now proceed to annex a few notes we have preserved and valued, of Mr. Jay's opinions and observations to us at various times, on





**Books, Authors, and Preachers.**

1. We remarked to him one day, "You have been a great reader, Mr. Jay."

"Yes, during the whole of my long life I have been fond of books—indeed, it has been *my passion*. I have thought much, observed much, and written much, and I have been anxious to maintain my standing, therefore I have read much. Besides, in any situation, I must have been a reader; such are my tastes and habits of mind. My reading, for many years, was close and methodical; in reference to Theology, I was a *systematic* reader. I read and investigated the best works more immediately connected with my office, *in order*. I rose early to do it; and hence, I laid the foundation, had my views enlarged and matured, and have seldom found any necessity for a *change* in

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my sentiments. The great principles which I received in early life I maintain now, when between eighty and ninety. I am *heartily sick of the theological vacillation and littleness of the present day*:—men professing to be *protestant* clergymen, and yet maintaining and unblushingly avowing Puseyite sentiments; and not only sanctioning, but *adopting* the idle ceremonies and mummeries of the Church of Borne. I wish they had been *well grounded in* their Theological training, *when* at the University, or *before* they entered it; then, we should never have heard of the versatility of theological opinion, and the gross errors in which numbers of them have been and now are, indulging."

2. "You are very partial to Matthew Henry, Mr. Jay."



“Yes, he has been with me a favourite from my youth, and a *growing* favourite until now. I perused his Exposition again and again with great care, before I entered on my regular ministry, and ever since. I have gained much from Henry, and have made considerable use of him; and I am *thankful* that I had such a relish for Henry, at the *early* part of my career. It has given me a love for what is simple, natural, easy,

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evangelical, affectionate, and experimental, which I have ever maintained. Henry is often fanciful; but take him altogether, *in his own style*, he is incomparable. How admirable is he, especially on Genesis, Job, the Psalms, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Gospels, and the Acts! I wish all our young ministers would make themselves masters of Matthew Henry. It would wonderfully improve their preaching.”

3. “Do you like, Sir, the miscellaneous writings of Matthew Henry?”

“Many of them I value greatly. His little Treatises on ‘Meekness,’ on ‘Communion with God,’—his ‘Communicant’s Companion,’ and several of his sermons preached on Ordination and Funeral occasions, are excellent. His ‘Pleasantness of a Religious Life,’ is very valuable; his ‘Scripture Catechism’ I prize; and I never read *any* of his writings, in the *right* frame, without being interested and edified. I think I have gained as much benefit from his Life of his incomparable father, as from any of his compositions. It is,” said Mr. Jay, “one of my classics. It is one of the most *precious pieces* of Biography with which I am acquainted. A young minister should have *this* book ever near him.”



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We at once expressed to him our pleasure, in finding his sentiments on Henry so accordant with *our own*.

“I thought,” he responded, “that we should not *differ* on the point.”

4. “Do you prefer Scott to Henry, Sir, as a Commentator?”

“Why, in some respects I do; in some, I do not. I go to Scott with *fall confidence* that I shall have the *sense of Scripture*; and I am not deceived. He is masculine, clear, full; his theology is Scriptural and admirable; his work is full of great principles, and the reading of it daily is an important Theological exercise; but I find him rather heavy, ponderous, and what many would call dry. Still, I love Scott. His essays I regard as one of the best compendiums of Theology in the language. Young ministers should study them well. His Biography, by his son, is a book of *solid bullion*. Few religious Biographies can compare with it.”

5. “Are you partial to Doddridge, Mr. Jay?” “Very!” was his immediate reply. “There is no greatness, but much chasteness, accuracy,

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tenderness; and I can *rely on him*. His ‘Expositor’ I have diligently and regularly consulted. It is the work of an accomplished, laborious, and devout student of the New Testament. His ‘Practical Reflections’ are the gems of the work. I consult Guyse and Orton with frequency and benefit, but not with the pleasure and advantage, generally, that I examine Doddridge. I love Doddridge, because he is so affectionate and devout.”

“Do you like his sermons?” we inquired.

“Nearly all. There is not much originality or vigour, but exquisite simplicity and tenderness. I think his ‘Sermons to the Young,’ and those on the ‘Power and Grace of Christ,’ are some of the most beautiful in our language. His ‘Rise and Progress’ must have been blest to the salvation of *thousands*. Who would not envy the *usefulness* of such a writer? His Lectures on preaching are very good, but, perhaps, too *mechanical*. They would improve our young ministers much to attend to them, still, I would not fetter them *improperly* by any rules. Every man has his own mind, and his own manner, and I like a speaker to be natural, in opposition to what is artificial.

“The Life of Doddridge, by Orton, is one of

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my choicest Biographical works. There the character of Doddridge stands out boldly and powerfully. We see what he was—and he was a fine, lovely creature indeed. Stoughton’s Memorial of Doddridge is very beautiful, but I like the *old* book, after all. I wish we had more of the *spirit* of Doddridge among us!”

6. We asked Mr. Jay, on one occasion, whether he was attached to the German writers on Biblical criticism, and theology generally.

His reply was: “I like a few, but, taking them as a mass, I do not admire them. They are learned, elaborate, but cold, speculative, heavy, and often very unsound; bold in their statements—rash and unwarrantable in their conclusions—and sceptical in their sentiments. They criticise the Bible, just as though it were a *common* book; not that volume from heaven which reveals salvation, and shows how we may

attain it. They investigate chapters, and discuss sentences, as though the sentiments involved were not connected with our life or death—with our happiness or misery. They want unction—spirituality—modesty—simplicity—deep humility. I should be sorry, indeed, if our young ministers were to become generally fond of writers

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of the German school. It is a very different school from that of sound *English* Theology.”

7. “You are an admirer of Saurin, Mr. Jay.”

“I am, with certain limitations. Many of his *tomes* on Scripture are remarkably learned and able dissertations; full of critical remark and historical research. His Sermons are his best known, his most popular compositions, and, in certain respects, are very fine; bold—eloquent—startling—vehement—most stirring and awakening; still, they want more *Theology*. They are not very evangelical, and, in experience, sadly deficient. His illustrations, however, of the Divine character—of the attributes, the government, and the works of God, are peculiarly impressive, and often very grand. You must read him in the original, to perceive his full beauty; but Robinson’s translation of his finest Sermons is admirable.”

8. “I am not very partial to the great French Divines, as *preachers*; they are too artificial for me. They want simplicity and nature. They are very eloquent—very striking—frequently there is great power; still, they are, by no means, my favourites. There is too much effort. There

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is a perpetual straining for effect. I like Massillon better than the rest; though Bourdaloue



is often very grand and impressive. Still, it is *French*, in distinction from *English* oratory. It wants simplicity—unction—and ease.”

9. Knowing that Mr. Jay was a continual reader of the great English divines of former periods, we were, from time to time, very anxious to elicit his opinions respecting them. We asked him, one day, as we had been reading Jeremy Taylor carefully, how he liked the *Works* of that distinguished man. He at once said:—

“I am astonished at their richness; I am dazzled by their brilliance, and their beauty often captivates me; but he is a *sorry Theologian*. I cannot depend on him. He often contradicts himself. His imagination was wonderful, but his theological views are very uncertain:—still, I never read Bishop Taylor without admiration; with all that is fanciful and erroneous, he is a *wonderful* author. Some passages in his Sermons, in his ‘Holy Living and Dying,’ in his ‘Life of Christ,’ in his ‘Liberty of Prophesying,’ and other Treatises, are unrivalled, almost unapproachable. His prayers charm me. They are beauty itself.”

We were delighted to find that Mr. Jay

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recurred to the prayers of Jeremy Taylor so admiringly. They are, unquestionably, some of the richest, the finest specimens of prayer with which we are acquainted; terse—simple—devotional—sublime.

10. Mr. Jay’s opinion of Richard Baxter was high. “Not,” said he, “that I like many of his works; for their arrangement, their divisions, their frequent deviations from the main subject, their introduction of so much learning, the philosophy and theology of the schoolmen. These



things much impair their value, and I fully agree with you, that he wrote hastily and too much; but who can equal his 'Saint's Rest,' his 'Call to the Unconverted,' and several of his best Treatises, not controversial, but *devotional*? In his appeals to the heart; in his addresses to the consciences of sinners, he is most direct, pungent, and thrilling. In this respect, I know none like him. Still, Baxter's Works, as a *whole*, I do not prefer to others."

II. We had just been perusing, with renewed admiration Howe's "Redeemer's Tears," and some of his Discourses, and observed to Mr. Jay,

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—"Sure we are, Sir, that you highly value John Howe."

"Who *ought*, *not* to value him?" was his reply. "Certainly, he has not the plainness, the force, the fire, the vehemence, of Baxter. They were men of a very different stamp and order. The one is more for the closet of the student and divine, the other is more for the plain and devout Christian, and for the careless, the impenitent sinner; to stimulate, to arouse, to warn, to alarm. Howe is calm, still, profoundly contemplative: Baxter is all energy and passion. I admire and venerate each; but they are entirely opposite. Both are great in their own peculiar style. Nothing in the language can equal, as a whole, Howe's 'Living Temple;' but his 'Blessedness of the Righteous,' is one of my favourite pieces. I read it again and again with renewed interest and delight. My friend Robert Hall studied Howe more than any other writer admired him more than any other, and borrowed more from him. The minds of John Howe and Robert Hall were congenial. Hall was never

breathing an atmosphere he so much loved, as when he was communing with John Howe in his study, calmly, profoundly, and for hours together.”

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12. “How do you like Bishop Hall, Mr. Jay?” “Why, he is very quaint, very antithetical, and fanciful, but I should be sorry not to read and admire his works. His ‘Contemplations,’ are his master-piece. I have borrowed much from them; but his ‘Maxims,’ and ‘Select Thoughts,’ are very racy and valuable, and his ‘Meditations’ and ‘Devout Soliloquies,’ are exceedingly fine. I like them much better than I do his Sermons. Josiah Pratt’s edition of the Bishop’s writings is far superior to any other.”

13. We took with us, one morning, a choice old volume on “Providence,” by that great divine, Stephen Charnock, and said to Mr. Jay, “This, Sir, is a favourite book of ours.”

“I do not wonder at it,” he responded. “Everything that Charnock has written is strong, well-compacted, and eminently worthy of regard. His great work on the ‘Divine Attributes’ is, as a piece of Theology, one of the noblest in the world. The theology of Charnock is full of thought. It requires application of mind to understand and enjoy it. It is very deep;—not obscure, but profound. His little treatise on the ‘Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ,’ on ‘Regeneration,’ on ‘Weak Grace Victorious,’ and

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many of his Sermons, cannot be too highly commended. *One* volume of Charnock is worth *twenty* of the flimsy and superficial volumes which so many read and admire.”



14. Mr. Jay often quoted Flavel in the pulpit, and, knowing his love of that holy man's writings, the inquiry was proposed, on one occasion,—

“Which do you consider, Sir, to be one of Flavel's best compositions?”

“It is difficult to answer. They are all good, very good, some of the richest, most experimental, most savoury, we have. To a minister, his ‘Method of Grace,’ and ‘Fountain of Life,’ are invaluable. These, I think, are his most *important* books;—but his treatise on ‘Providence’ is very rich, and his little work, ‘The Saint Indeed,’ cannot be appreciated too highly. I wish our young ministers would read Samuel Flavel more, and imitate his spirit and manner more closely. They would be *much more useful*.”

15. We had just been reading Thomas Watson on “The Art of Divine Contentment,” and remarked to Mr. Jay, “*This* is a little book which we always like to have near us. We know, Sir, *you* are an admirer of Watson.”

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“Yes,” was his answer, “I have read all Watson, and made his writings, in a great degree, my own. There is a quaintness, a pith, an originality, a *picturesqueness*, a beauty, a richness, a raciness, an experimental fulness, an evangelical charm, and a devotional fervour, about Thomas Watson, which I love.

“Besides, he is *very sententious*, and I like a book of that character, to which I can go, at any time, and find it ever fresh, pointed, and instructive.”

16. “Do you esteem, Sir, Brookes’ ‘Unsearchable Riches of Christ?’”



“Much. He is one of Thomas Watson’s order, but not so rich, so original, so pointed. I think, his ‘Mute Christian under the Smarting Rod,’ is one of the most valuable of his works. It has gone through an immense number of editions, and I do not wonder at it. It is fresh, edifying and most consolatory. Brookes will always be read, and will always be useful.”

17. “We are reading some of John Owen’s treatises; is he, Sir, a favourite with you?”

“Owen, as theologian, is a giant indeed. His works on the ‘*Spirit*,’ and on the ‘*Hebrews*,’ are,

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in every sense, that is, as to *matter*, great; but his volumes on the ‘Glory of Christ,’ ‘Indwelling Sin,’ ‘Spiritual Mindedness,’ and the ‘Mortification of Sin in Believers,’ I regard as his most interesting and useful publications. No man can read a page of Owen without learning much. Still, it is an effort to read him *long*, he is so intricate and involved in his style;—very profound, but heavy and unwieldy.”

18. We took with us, one morning, a fine old copy of Dr. Bates’s work on “Spiritual Perfection,” and inquired of Mr. Jay if he did not highly estimate Bates. He replied, as we expected, in the affirmative:—

“Especially,” said he, “do I value his ‘Harmony of the Divine Attributes,’ his Sermon on the ‘Divine Existence,’ his Treatises on ‘Divine Forgiveness,’ ‘Christian Resignation,’ and his ‘Four Last Things:’ several, too, of his single Discourses are admirable; particularly his Funeral Sermons on Manton, Baxter, and Clarkson. The neatness, the elegance of his style, in connexion with the beauty of his illustrations, much



interests me; but he wants the depth of Char-nock, and the force and vehemence of Baxter.”

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19. “I like to read Bishop Hopkins. He is one of my favourite writers. He is often coarse and severe, but he is very powerful. I never examine his works without much benefit. His Discourse on the ‘Vanity of the World,’ is one of the finest on the subject I have ever read.”

20. “We told him that we had recently been going carefully through Barrow’s Sermons.

“Have you?” said he. “They are fine compositions;—not for their evangelical character, or experimental unction and savour. How different are they, in this respect, from Flavel, or Watson, or Sibbs! but, for language, illustration, thought, and argument, most luminous, striking, and eloquent. He was a perfect master of the English tongue.”

21. “Do you think highly, Sir, of Dr. Jacomb’s Work on the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans?”

“I do, indeed. It would be surprising if I did not. It is a choice and most valuable book; and, in connexion with this, let me mention Preston’s works; they are full of fine thoughts; he is a capital theologian.”

We mentioned Sibbes’s “Soul’s Conflict,” as a

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favourite piece of ours. “A volume,” he rejoined, “which is a jewel of experimental divinity.”

22. We stated to him, when calling on him one afternoon, that we had been carefully examining several of John Bunyan’s Theological Trea-



tises, and found them full of the very best divinity.

“Like all that Bunyan has written, they are admirable. You have the plain truth, couched in plain, telling phraseology. They are full of gospel; very nice and accurate in their distinctions, very persuasive and devotional; they are adapted to lasting usefulness; but when we think of Bunyan, we always think of his far-famed ‘Pilgrim;’ even his ‘Holy War,’ though deemed, by many, his master-piece, is *comparatively* forgotten.”

23. “There is one book,” Mr. Jay observed, “which I much admire; indeed, it is one of sterling and peculiar excellence. Have you read it? Venn’s ‘Duty of Man.’” We replied in the affirmative, expressing our deep sense of its value.

“Take it altogether,” he added, “I know few books of its kind equal to it. I warmly commend

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it. It is a most able and impressive hortatory volume of divinity.”

24. “Do you form a high opinion, Sir, of the American divines?”

“Of a few; but there are many who have their crotchets. I cannot depend on many of them. I am, however, a great admirer of President Edwards, and consider his work on ‘Religious Affections’ to be one of the finest and most powerful pieces of theological writing which can be mentioned. Bellamy is an author I much value; and, of more recent writers, Albert Barnes’s Notes on the New Testament, and some of the Books of the Old, are exceedingly clear, instructive, and useful. Many of the Biblical



critics of America are very learned, able, and superior.”

25. “Are you acquainted, Sir, with many of the published sermons of American divines?”

“Yes, pretty extensively.”

“Do you value those of President Edwards?”

“I do; they are very plain, direct, spiritual, and impressive; but have, I think, been over-rated. Davies’s Sermons are eloquent and telling; and the theology of Dr. Dwight, as a collection

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of eloquent and powerful discourses, I estimate very highly. Some of them are master-pieces for clearness, beauty, and force.”

26. We had mentioned to him that we had been reading again, “Fuller’s Calvinistic and Socinian Systems compared,” and admired it more than ever.

“I am not surprised at your estimate. It is not only clear and convincing; to me, it is *perfect demonstration*. I much value some of Fuller’s best pieces; his precision, acuteness, and cogency, always tell. The estimate of his character and writings, by Morris, is very able and life-like.”

27. “We know, Sir, that you prize John Newton; but do you not think that his sermons are tame and poor?”

“They are, certainly, by no means great, but are very simple, devotional, tender, and persuasive. His ‘Letters’ are the gems of his Works, and *they* stand alone. In their way, they are peculiarly beautiful. But I must not forget his ‘Olney Hymns.’ You know how I read them, admire them, and quote them continually.”



28. "Have you read Richard Winter Hamil-

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ton's elaborate work on 'Revealed Rewards and Punishments?'"

"I have," replied Mr. Jay, "but it is not to *my taste*. It is very eloquent, very brilliant in many parts, but it wants simplicity, it wants repose. The style in which it is written is Hamilton's, but it is not the style I like. His work, as a piece of reasoning, is disjointed. He was a great man, but I think his small work on 'Prayer,' and his Biography of his friend 'Ely,' two of his most elegant, beautiful, and effective pieces. His two volumes of Sermons I have not read."

"They are," we remarked, "short Treatises more than Sermons; but few more eloquent or powerful, in our judgment, have ever been written."

29. He took down from his shelves, one day when we saw him, two volumes; the Lives of David Brainerd and Henry Martyn. "You are, I suppose, familiar with these books; but do read them again and again. Brainerd was too sombre, sometimes, almost melancholy, but he was a fine character. How near he lived to God; what humility, what penitence, what self-consecration! Henry Martyn was of the same temper-

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ament; we regret his depression, and his tone of melancholy; but how superior was his mind, how truly noble was his spirit: still he was soon cut down; in the prime of his days and faculties, as well as usefulness; but what glory has he left behind him: what a blessing to thousands and tens of thousands his Memoirs have been! Few books, to a minister or missionary, can be of



greater value. Indeed, by it our ministers and best missionaries have been inestimably benefited."

We remarked, that we should like to connect with it the Memoir of the devoted "Thomason," by the same biographer.

"Yes," responded Mr. Jay, "that is a choice book. Thomason was worthy to be classed with Martyn. Buchanan, Thomason, and Martyn; where will you find three nobler Christian heroes?"

30. The observation was one day made to him,—"We have ever seen, Mr. Jay, how fond you are of Cowper. There is no poet from whom you quote so frequently, and with so much pleasure, and even affection."

"It is true; I have ever *loved* Cowper—not only *admired* him; he has won my lasting regard. His poems are so natural, so chaste, so elegant—

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they abound in such fine descriptions, and in such great principles; they are so purely English, and so truly Christian, that I have never found any poet take so strong a hold of my thoughts and affections; and as for his 'Hymns,' what can be more chaste, more tender, more devotional, more exquisite? The muse of Cowper is the muse of England."

"We are exceedingly partial to Cowper's Letters," was added to his observation; "indeed, we are almost as fond of his 'Letters' as of his poetry."

"There," remarked Mr. Jay, "we shall not differ. Nothing in my judgment can be finer, as specimens of the epistolary style. I much liked your critique on them in the Evangelical Magazine.\* Cowper's Letters always please me, be-



cause there is no nonsense—no affectation, and because they are *so full of heart.*”

31. “Do you read Crabbe, Mr. Jay?”

“I have perused his best poems; his ‘Village,’ his ‘Borough,’ his ‘Tales of the Hall.’”

“Are you, Sir, an admirer of the poet?”

“Yes, a great admirer.—His accuracy, his minuteness, his originality, his power, his vivid

\*Vide Evangelical Mag., March, 1849.

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painting— must strike any intelligent mind; but I cannot read much of Crabbe at a time. His ‘Life,’ however, by his son, is a choice morsel of Biography.” Asking if we had read it, we told him it was one of our favourite books.

“Well,” replied he, “we have few more touching or beautiful biographies.”

32. Speaking of James Montgomery, he observed,—“How I value his poetry—his hymns and his lyrical pieces! As a writer of hymns and lyrics, few can compete with him. He will be admired while the English language endures, or while Christianity is loved. Like Cowper and Watts, he has been a blessing, in the highest sense, to thousands already, and will be to multitudes yet unborn.”

33. “I am very much pleased,” Mr. Jay remarked, “with many of our modern Hymn writers—especially Kelly, Conder, Beddome, Steele, Toplady, &c.—but the longer I am acquainted with Watts, the more I prize him, and the more good I gain from him. He is the Poet of the Scriptures—the Poet of the Sanctuary. We have many selections, and many supplements to Watts; but he will never be superseded; and





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I do not like to have him *mutilated*—even the alteration of Watts is mutilation.”

“By-the-bye, do you read his Sermons?”  
 “Yes, they are among those we most prize—not for their greatness, but for their evangelical fulness—for their unction—for their extreme devoutness.”

“I am glad to hear you thus speak. They are truly beautiful Sermons. His ‘Inward Witness to Christianity,’ his ‘Hidden Life of a Christian,’ his ‘Peace in Death,’ his ‘No Night in Heaven,’ and ‘No Pain among the Blessed,’ his ‘Joy at the Resurrection,’ are among the sweetest and most profitable sermons in our language.”

34. Many years ago, Mr. Jay wished to borrow from us Coleridge’s *Literaria Biographia*. We lent it to him; and after the perusal of the volumes, asked his opinion.

“It is a strange and extraordinary work indeed, but he was altogether a strange and extraordinary man—fantastic and wild in many of his opinions; but what a mind! what a child of genius!”

“Have you read his ‘Friend,’ Sir?”

“I have: splendid things in it, but not easy reading; very profound, but often very obscure.”

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“Do you like his poetry?”

“I do; his shorter pieces especially; they are very elegant and beautiful.”

35. Seeing the complete works of Edmund Burke in his Library, and a most elegant copy, we said to him,—“You, doubtless, admire Edmund Burke, Mr. Jay?”



“Who can help it?” he responded. “He was a wonderful creature, the Irish genius in perfection, combined with much solidity of thought, and power of argument. Some of his Speeches, or *Oration*s rather, astonish me. Still, he *overcharges*—and I think, many of his views are erroneous, and many of his principles and reasonings unsound. But his *mind always enriches mine.*”

36. “You knew something of Richard Brinsley Sheridan?”

“Yes, and an unhappy being he was. His genius was of the first order, and nothing could be more brilliant than his wit and eloquence: but how were his fine powers degraded and abused!” Sheridan termed Mr. Jay “the most manly orator he had ever heard.”

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37. Knowing that Mr. Jay was very fond of Mrs. More’s writings, we asked him which he considered to be her *greatest* work. “Do you not consider, Sir, her ‘Hints on the Education of a young Princess’ worthy of that appellation?”

“Yes, I do; still I think her ‘Essay on St. Paul’ most discriminating, eloquent, and original. Her ‘Cœlebs’ contains some of her finest writing. Her ‘Strictures on Female Education’ I much admire; and her ‘Practical Piety’ is most impressive and beautiful. She was a woman I knew well; she was a hearer of mine very often; she had a most vigorous mind—a most masculine understanding. Her writings abound in the richest and most powerful illustrations and appeals—and her range of thought and language was very wide. Among our female authors of genius and piety, her name will always occupy a high place; she valued my compositions—liked



my *Exercises* particularly, and considered them to be among the best of my writings. I am under great obligations to Mrs. More, as an authoress.”

38. Having with us, on one occasion, a volume of Boswell’s *Life of Samuel Johnson*, we remarked to Mr. Jay, that we were going through it for the fifth time, and that we always found it to be

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one of the most instructive and interesting of volumes.

“And so it is,” he observed; “it is one of my most valued books. Johnson’s portrait is there sketched fully, and in how masterly and consummate a manner! Nothing can be more vivid and life-like than the delineation. I read everything that Johnson wrote. I am very partial to his ‘*Lives of the Poets*,’ and consider his criticisms altogether to be the most acute,—though, occasionally, too severe—and of the ablest order. I have learned something from all which Johnson has written; however I may, at times, differ from him.”

39. “You are familiar with Addison, Mr. Jay, doubtless?”

“Yes, with all his *best* writings; his ‘*Essays*’ in particular.”

“Do you think Dr. Johnson’s estimate of him too high?”

“Not for his wit and humour, but he has *little force*. There is much beauty, but he wants *strength*. In quiet, easy, genuine humour, he is almost inimitable, and we owe much to him, even with regard to *style*. I would never, as some do, depreciate Addison.”



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40. We mentioned to him, one morning, when calling, that Swift's Works had been strongly recommended to us, but that we had an objection, on moral grounds, to purchase them. Mr. Jay at once said, " I don't like Swift; I don't like *the man*, and many of his writings are *so dirty*, that you only *defile your mind* by the perusal. His compositions are terse, luminous, and in many respects admirable, but they are blended with much impurity. He is no favourite, I assure you, with me."

41. We asked him, if he were familiar with the poetry of Byron, as he had often recurred to his life and letters. "I have examined his best poetic productions, but I do *not enjoy* them. They are very powerful, very grand, very original, but the impression produced on the mind of an intelligent, and particularly a Christian reader is *very unhappy*. His Manfred, his Lara, his Corsair, his Bride of Abydos, his Childe Harold, all leave a most unfavourable impression on my mind. I see in him the wreck, the prostitution, of a noble genius." Then sighing, he exclaimed, "Poor Byron!"

42. We had with us, on one occasion, Robert

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Hall's magnificent sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte, and remarked, that "we had been almost spell-bound again with its pathos, elegance, and beauty."

"Well you might," he observed, "I have read nothing finer, indeed, nothing *can be* finer. Mr. Hall was a man of genius, in the *noblest* sense. Look at his discourse on 'Modern Infidelity,' his 'Discouragements and Encouragements of the



Christian Ministry,' his sermon on 'War,' his 'Sentiments on the present Crisis,' his 'Discourse on Dr. Ryland,' his 'Biography of Toller,' his reviews of 'Foster's Essays,' and 'Zeal without Innovation;' what can be more finished and beautiful? I never expect to read anything more classical than his compositions. I revere his memory; he was pleased always to express his partiality for me."

43. Seeing the essays and other writings of John Foster in his library, we asked Mr. Jay how he enjoyed Foster's compositions? "I must ever consider him one of the greatest and profoundest of writers, but he is ponderous, he is somewhat heavy. Like the elephant, there is huge bulk, but unwieldiness; it is not an easy thing to read Foster: he drags along frequently.

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I cannot read much of him at a sitting; but he is a wonderful writer, one who will always be admired. His sarcasm is most powerful, his illustrations are the most original, and often the most beautiful, and his appeals are the most striking and impressive."

"Which do you consider, Sir, to be Foster's *greatest* work?"

"His '*Essays*' I would mention, but his 'Popular Ignorance' is very great, and also his 'Missionary Sermon.' Many of his reviews are uncommonly fine, and his Introductory Essay to Doddridge's 'Rise and Progress' is magnificent."

44. Taking up a volume of Mrs. Ellis, on the "Women of England," we observed, "How popular this book is, and how extensively it has been circulated!"



“It has indeed had a capital run, and I hope the *authoress* has been *benefited* by it. She is a vivacious and elegant writer, and I am glad she is sopopular, for the sake of her subject, and the great principles she conveys in illustrating it. Indeed, what subjects at any time can be more significant than the ‘Daughters,’ the ‘Wives,’ the ‘Mothers,’ of England?”

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45. Seeing a long range of the *Christian Observer* on his shelves, we remarked, “You are familiar, Mr. Jay, with the *Christian Observer*, a work to which we have long been very partial.”

“Yes,” he replied, “I have read the *Christian Observer* from the commencement, until there was so great a change in the spirit and views of its conductors. I thought it for many years one of the ablest and best in its temper and tone of our *Christian periodicals*, and it did me *good service* when I commenced authorship, at a period when commendation and encouragement were important. I shall always respect and value the *Christian Observer*.”

46. “Do you read, Sir, the *Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews*?”

“The *Quarterly*, not often; but I have read the *Edinburgh* from its origin. I have admired its learning, ability, and genius, but have frequently execrated its spirit. Still it has marvelously improved in tone and temper of late years, and the critiques of Macauley, Stephens. Mackintosh, Rogers, and others, have done it infinite credit. It contains, with, all its errors, some of the finest writing in the language.”



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47. “You read, we believe, Sir, the ‘British Quarterly?’”

“Yes, and much value it; it is very able and superior. Some of its articles by the learned editor are first-rate. It is a review which will do good service, especially in exposing the deficiencies of Modern Literature, and in battling against Modern Infidelity.”

48. Speaking to him on one occasion respecting our denomination periodicals, he remarked, “I have read the ‘Evangelical Magazine’ from its commencement, and have *ever admired its fine christian tone—its truly catholic spirit.* Under the editorship of Dr. Morison it has most materially improved in literary excellence; and I think it is one of the cheapest and best magazines we have in the congregational body. The ‘Christian Witness,’ too, is very varied and excellent. Dr. Campbell within the last few years has, I think, much improved it; it is more theological and less controversial. He puts much good writing into it. Still I often wish, especially for the aged, that the *type were larger*; it is a great drawback. If we had less in it, but *all of a bold, clear type*, it would be much more desirable;

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many, by its small type,—a large portion of it at least,—are prevented reading it. ‘The Christian’s Penny Magazine’ I do not often see; but when I have seen it, I have found it very suitable and excellent. The various ‘magazines’ and ‘serials’ of the Tract Society are admirable; and the ‘Leisure Hour’ cannot be too highly commended.”



49. Anxious to ascertain Mr. Jay's opinion respecting some of the journals published by the congregational body, we inquired, "What newspapers of our denomination, Sir, do you take in?"

"I read the 'British Banner,' and the 'Patriot;' it is impossible to take in all, or read all. I wish the papers connected with our body were more extensively supported: the 'Nonconformist' has struck me, when I have seen it, as containing much powerful and original writing. The 'Christian Times' I see occasionally, and there is a fulness of religious information, from almost every part of Europe, which I get nowhere else.

"I have regularly read the 'Banner'—and there is much of Dr. Campbell's vigorous writing in it, and it is very copious and comprehensive. Its Supplements are also an important addition, and the criticisms are sound and able. The

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'Patriot' is edited in a very careful and impartial manner, and discovers the taste and urbanity of a literary man. Still, our papers want more *general*, more *earnest support*. Their present circulation is *discreditable* to our body."

50. Mr. Jay was exceedingly partial to 'The Times' journal, not because he approved of all its sentiments and opinions—for he often widely differed from its views—but, as he said to us, "because of its boundless and ever fresh information, and of the remarkable talent it displayed. It is," he would observe, "a wonderful journal. Every other almost appears little, when compared with it. Its Parliamentary Reports are most finished; its arrangement is beautiful: even its Supplements alone are astonishing;—every copy of 'The Times' is a volume."





51. Mr. Jay asked one day, "If we had ever heard the late Dr. Waugh, of "Wells Street."

"Frequently," was the reply; "he was one of our special favourites, when a young man in the metropolis."

"I am glad to hear you say so. He was a fine, venerable man; when he got into one of his best frames, and when expatiating on

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one of his best subjects, he was a truly rich preacher, and produced some of the most beautiful illustrations, and the most elevated thoughts. As for his prayers—I have heard *none like them*. They were most heavenly. I do not wonder that Robert Hall was so partial to Dr. Waugh."

52. Observing three volumes in Mr. Jay's library, side by side, namely, Dr. Harris' Essay on "The Great Commission," his "Great Teacher," and his "Union, or the Divided Church made one," we remarked, "You have three charming volumes, Sir, near each other."

"Yes," he replied, "and in my *most select corner*. The Doctor is a noble creature. His writings are some of the most elegant and beautiful I know. No finery, but classic taste and beauty; much solidity, and a lovely spirit. He is a noble preacher—one it is a treat to hear. He *reads* a sermon much better than many men *deliver* theirs."

53. We had been reading the memoir of the late Theophilus Lessey, and were speaking to Mr. Jay, in high terms, of his mind and character, and inquired, "Did you not know Mr. Lessey, Sir?"



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“Yes; he was stationed in Bath some time, and a fine fellow he was. He was very partial to me, and I to him.”

We remarked, that we had rarely heard a finer preacher in the Wesleyan body, mentioning that a sermon we had heard from him, on the words, “God is light, and in him is no darkness at all,” was one of *extraordinary* beauty.

“I have no doubt of it,” was Mr. Jay’s response; “he was a man of finished education, of the most beautiful imagination, and of commanding powers of eloquence.”

54. Speaking one day to him of the late excellent and distinguished Bichard Watson, we remarked that we concluded *his* judgment of that minister and writer was high.

“Yes, very high,” said he; “it was not often that I heard him preach, but he was vigorous and profound. His ‘Sermons,’ his ‘Biography,’ his ‘Conversations for the Young,’ and his ‘Expositions’ show him to have been a great man. But,” he added, “I have always thought him the *greatest* as the eloquent and indefatigable Secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. Into that Society he threw his *whole soul*, and discovered the utmost mental and moral greatness. When he died, the

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Wesleyans lost their most *distinguished* man. His death was, indeed, *glorious*.”

55. We had been hearing a beautiful discourse from the late Rowland Hill, and we made a remark to Mr. Jay on the extreme beauty of the sermon, observing, that we scarcely thought Mr. Hill could preach *such* a sermon.



“Why, he was very unequal. Sometimes, you had the poorest and most rambling discourse, but occasionally one of the richest and finest. He required to be very well, in a good frame of mind, and to have a choice evangelical subject, and then you would have a most original and striking sermon from him.”

56. “Mr. Whitfield’s sermons, as reported and published, are poor, Mr. Jay;—not much, when read in the study.”

“They are, certainly, as we have them, bald and meagre. They, however, do *no justice* to the man; they are badly reported, and we must particularly remember that George Whitfield was not the *writer*, but the *preacher*. He was the preacher for the *people*, for the *million*; not the classical writer of discourses for the closet or the study. He poured forth his soul in the pulpit in the most

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intense and thrilling manner; but his taste was not the most correct, nor his composition the most pure and elegant. Still, what an *effect* everywhere his discourses produced! and *that*, after all, is the *grand test* of *eloquence*. The impressions made by his preaching were perfectly marvellous;—and is it not better to be a little less correct, and to have something of Whitfield’s *power*?”

57. “What an exquisite sermon, Mr. Jay, is Robert Hall’s discourse on occasion of the death of Dr. Ryland! how beautiful the subject,—‘The disciple whom Jesus loved!’”

“It is, indeed, a discourse! There are in it some of the finest passages which I have ever perused. It is one of the most beautiful of Mr. Hall’s sermons: and when he was pretty well, and in his best mood, he was, as a preacher, *almost*



*celestial*. You were raised to heaven,—you were carried up to Paradise,—and heard words almost worthy to be pronounced there. He was, in many respects, *inimitable*.”

58. “Are you, Sir, a great admirer of Chalmers?”

“Yes, I am. *All must* admire his force, his passion, his vehemence, his glowing eloquence: but I often wish he had had *greater simplicity*.”

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As a preacher he was amazing! but he wanted the *natural manner* of Whitfield. He *began* his discourse with intensity, and went on in the same strain until the close. Now Whitfield was calm at the commencement, and rose in his emotions as he does: he is so plain, practical, serious, by degrees. This, I think, is the perfection of address. But Dr. Chalmers, as a preacher, was wonderful, and the effect of his eloquence on *cultivated* minds was thrilling. Whitfield got into the hearts of the *masses*, and overpowered *them*.”

59. We mentioned to Mr. Jay that we had listened, many years ago, to a fine discourse, by the late Dr. Mason, of New York, and that the Johnsonian energy and grasp of his mind much struck us.

“Yes,” said he, “you are quite correct. It was Johnsonian strength. I was once preaching with him on a public occasion, at Liverpool, but he was not very well at the time, and we had not, in consequence, one of his greatest sermons.”

We told Mr. Jay, that we were exceedingly interested with Dr. Mason’s writings.—“And so am I,” he responded, “but it is Borne time since I have examined them.”



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60. We had been listening to a noble discourse from the Rev. J. A. James, of Birmingham, and we remarked:—"Few men, Sir, can preach like the author of the 'Anxious Inquirer.'"

"Yes," was his reply, "and few men can write as he does: he is so plain, practical, serious, direct, so much in earnest. His books will be sure to live and do good."

"Which, Mr. Jay, do you consider to be among his best? Do you not regard his work on 'Christian Charity' admirable, and his 'Christian Father's Present?'"

"*All* his works are valuable, and all circulate, but I think his 'Anxious Inquirer' will be the book for large and perpetual usefulness. It is an honour to be permitted to write such a book as that."

61. We were observing to him on one occasion, how much simpler the ministry of one of our most popular and able living preachers was than formerly.

"That is very true—but it is *very excellent*. He is a powerful and animated preacher; excellent, too, as a man, and a friend. He has always loved me, and I him. When I preached at the opening of Wooton-under-Edge Taber-

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nacle, he came considerably more than a hundred miles, very early in the morning, purposely to be in time to hear me; entering the chapel just after I had given out my text, and thinking it would be the last time he would hear me. Dr. R— is one of our choicest men."

62. We had been reading some Expository Discourses by Dr. Morison, of Brompton, and



commended the volume to him. He remarked,—"I have not seen the book. It is very scarce, is it not? Dr. Morison's numerous writings I value; he is a very laborious and useful man. I do not think any man has worked more, or harder, than he has,—and he has been very efficient as a preacher, a pastor, the editor of the Evangelical Magazine, and the author of many important theological works. All his writings, too, are very solid and practical. I consider him one of the soundest and ablest men in our body."

63. We had brought with us, one morning, Dr. Campbell's "Martyr of Erromanga," and remarked:—"There is much eloquence, as well as power, here."

"There is; but there is that in *all* Dr. Campbell's writings. His understanding is very mas-

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culine, and in combating error he is energy, he is vehemence itself."

64. We spoke of a very pathetic and beautiful discourse we had heard from Dr. Leifchild; observing, how much we had enjoyed it—it was so plain, so tender, so telling. "I am not surprised. Dr. Leifchild, in his best days, was one of our most intense and eloquent preachers. I have heard most rivetting sermons from him, and his beautiful tones towards the close have often melted a whole audience."

65. "What a speaker John Burnet is," we remarked, "on a great and stirring occasion!"

"Gigantic," observed Mr. Jay. We told him how often we had been charmed with his wit, with his quiet, yet telling sarcasm, with his eloquence, with his force, at Exeter Hall.



“On the platform, he is equal to anything. Scarcely any can compete with him *there*.”

66. We asked him if he were familiar with the writings of Dr. Candlish, of Edinburgh.

“Yes, with his ‘Expository Discourses on Genesis,’ and much admire them.” We told him how much we had admired him as a speaker,

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“I should like to have heard him,” he remarked, “for his writings are very elegant and able.”

67. He lent us a volume of Discourses, by the Rev. G. Smith, of Poplar, and when the book was returned, he inquired,—“How do you like the sermons?” We told him that we considered them almost models of pulpit composition; several, particularly. He heartily agreed with the commendation, adding,—“I like their elegant simplicity.”

68. “We told him, on returning from London, how much we had enjoyed a sermon from Dr. Archer.

“Yes,” said Mr. Jay, “he is a very superior man, and a preacher who is much admired. The Presbyterian body is now blest with very able men.”

69. We were near him on a missionary platform when Dr. B— spoke with much eloquence and power. Mr. Jay was becoming very deaf, but was very anxious to hear the speech of the eloquent Doctor—and held up his hand to one of his ears, that he might catch every word.



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After the meeting, we inquired if he had heard it. "Why, nearly the whole." We also asked how he liked the address. He replied, "Exceedingly. It was the speech of a man of genius,—bold, glowing, vehement, full of imagination; still, it would have been improved by a little more simplicity. I am such an advocate, you see, of simplicity; I am so accustomed to what is plain and chaste, that I like nothing which is very ornamented. Still, I consider the Doctor to be a man of great eloquence and fire, and displaying remarkable imagination."

The above are some specimens of Mr. Jay's observations to us, at one period and another, which we might have considerably multiplied. We carefully noted them down, shortly after they were made, and feel assured, from their variety, their acuteness, their excellence, that they will be appreciated and admired. And they show, in the clearest manner, what a range of thought Mr. Jay was accustomed to take; how extensive was his reading, how profound were his views, how sage were his opinions. In furnishing the selection we have done—which has been the result of considerable care, and with the utmost regard to accuracy—we have been desirous of

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presenting before our readers the concise, pointed, and valuable remarks of our revered friend on a considerable number and variety of interesting subjects; and all must admit that those remarks unfold the mind and character of the late observant, reflective, and eloquent William Jay.





## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE WRITINGS OF MR. JAY.

No material difference of opinion, we are persuaded, can be entertained among competent judges, among the enlightened and devout disciples of Christ especially, with regard to the character, the tendency, the results, of the writings of the late Mr. Jay. He was a voluminous author, but always *wrote well*, and never wrote *too much*. When he sat down to write for the press, he ever had a great design in view;—his supreme object was usefulness;—he aimed at doing good, in the largest sense, to his fellow-men. This is seen in every page of his works; and those works, taken as a whole, must be deemed by every intelligent person, and by every one imbued with the spirit of the Gospel of Christ, most sterling, most improving, most admirable, and, to Christian families especially, they have been almost invaluable.

The writings of Mr. Jay must not be unwisely or unduly eulogised. They have their character—

istic excellences, and, in their own way, those excellences are great; but we would not class Mr. Jay with our most renowned authors. No author has been more extensively useful; many



authors, by their splendid genius, have been much more illustrious. His writings, to refer simply to those of our own time, are not imaginative, vivid, dashing, brilliant, like those of Chalmers,—not profound and massively strong, like those of John Foster,—not precise, logical, argumentative, philosophical, like those of Dr. Wardlaw or Dr. Vaughan,—not classically elegant and beautiful, like those of Robert Hall or Dr. Harris. They are altogether dissimilar in their character and features. His mind was different from theirs, his object in taking up his pen was specifically to do good, and the scope of his writings is distinct and peculiar; still, with all the brilliance of one, all the depth of another, all the logic of a third, and all the power of a fourth author, Mr. Jay's writings are *full of excellence*, are peculiarly valuable; and, in the judgment of the distinguished men to whom we have just alluded, were exceedingly interesting, instructive, able, and important; calculated for lasting usefulness. Mr. Jay was popular as an author, almost as soon as he commenced his labours in that

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capacity. His *first* compositions through the medium of the press were received with marked public favour. Distinguished as a preacher, he became almost equally distinguished as a writer, in connexion with experimental, practical theology; and his celebrity as a preacher increased and established his celebrity as an author.

He laboured hard, through the channel of the press, for many years proving himself to be a most diligent and indefatigable writer; and his popularity in this department of service, as a most useful and valued author, has been uniformly maintained, without so much as ever faltering or flagging. His books have ever sold



well; they have ever been good property; they sell now most steadily;—a demand, from all parts of the empire, is continually made for them; and we believe that while the English language endures, and true Christianity is valued among us, the writings of Mr. Jay will be widely purchased, will be highly esteemed, and will be rendered a precious blessing to thousands. The circulation of Mr. Jay's volumes in this country, among all classes, has been surprising, even among those who have not been decidedly pious. Respectable and devout families, in particular, have procured his writings, and read them regu-

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larly, and with great benefit, in the domestic circle. This has been the case in connexion with *titled* families; and they have not only been *admitted* to the palace, but have been *perused* with pleasure and advantage even by Royalty itself. In the vast continent of America, the circulation of Mr. Jay's books has not only been wide, but universal; and they have been conveyed, not merely to our Australian colonies, but to the South Sea islands, to India, and even to China, for the benefit of thousands. We have been informed that in America, especially, his writings have been prized as highly as in his father-land. Now all this is very gratifying, and when the character and aim of his writings are considered, must have been to him, before his removal to the rest above, peculiarly grateful and delightful.

The price of Mr. Jay's works has ever been maintained, and even *second-hand* copies of his volumes have fetched higher prices than those of nearly every contemporary theological author. We have always sincerely regretted the *expensiveness* of Mr. Jay's writings. We certainly do not

admire, nor are we accustomed to purchase, very cheap works, with bad paper, and bad type, and altogether “got up” badly; and we want *authors*,

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as well as *publishers*, to be paid fairly and honourably; and we consider that it is of importance, on every ground, to have editions of standard works, in connexion with literature and theology, issued with a bold, clear type, and on good paper. We have also admired the neat, accurate, and elegant manner in which the writings of Mr. Jay have issued from the press; still it has been for years *universally lamented*, that his works have been *so expensive* to procure; indeed, many of them have been published at such prices, that *new* copies could not be obtained by hundreds, even thousands, who earnestly desired to have them in their possession. Their price, we conceive, *ought* to have been reduced materially, nearly one-third; cheap editions ought to have been issued for the convenience of numbers, as several of the most valuable of the Rev. J. A. James’s works have been, and their sale would have been doubled, trebled, quadrupled, and their usefulness would have been, of course, materially augmented.

A volume of Mr. Jay’s, sold at 12*s.*, if issued at 10*s.* or 9*s.*; or one sold at 1*s.* 6*d.*, if issued at 5*s.*, would have secured three times the number of readers and purchasers; and if his valuable book, “The Christian Contemplated,” had been issued,

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one edition, at least, at the low price of 4*s.* to have suited the convenience of the *masses*, its circulation and usefulness would have been surprising. As Mr. Jay, however, retained the copy-right of most of his publications, and as they sold so rapidly and extensively, their high price

was maintained; but we are persuaded it was a mistake; at any rate the public, and especially the humbler class in connexion with the *religious* public, has been the losing party to a large extent; and we cannot help expressing our earnest hope, in the event of new and successive issues of his works, that, while there is the high-priced edition for the more wealthy, there will be the portable, the neat, the cabinet edition, and one comparatively inexpensive, for *the masses*; and we feel assured, that a collected edition of his writings, in 2s. 6d., 3s., or 4s. volumes, with *good* type, would secure a large and steadily increasing sale, and the influence of his works, so practical, so truly valuable, would be extended a thousand-fold.\*

It is a pleasing and an important fact, that the writings of Mr. Jay have been much prized by the intelligent, the excellent, the truly devout of

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\* How many poor students and home missionaries have said to us, "O that we could get a copy of Jay's Works!" It gives us much pleasure to learn that a cheap edition of Mr. Jay's Works is in contemplation.

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*every christian communion.* There was nothing little about Mr. Jay's mind; there was nothing narrow or sectarian about his spirit; he did not preach to a *class*, or write for a *party*: he preached to *all*, and wrote for the benefit of *all*.

There is, moreover, nothing that is *controversial* in his writings. They are on great, catholic, practical, vital themes; valuable to all, interesting to all, necessary for all. He did not write as a nonconformist minister, but as a large-hearted Christian. He opened the New Testament as a man, and a disciple of Catholic mind, and Catholic spirit, and inculcated its principles, illustrated its truths, administered its encouragements, recommended its precepts, unfolded and extolled its beauties and its excellences, applied its



promises, enforced attention to its warnings, and enjoined the development of its spirit, with all the noble-mindedness of one who ardently loved the Saviour himself, and was anxious that *all* should love him too. Hence his writings have been read by all, and prized by all. The Episcopalian has read them with pleasure,—the Quaker has perused them with profit,—the Moravian has examined them with interest,—the Presbyterian has consulted them with advantage,—the Wesleyan has gone through them with edification,—the Baptist

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has studied them with benefit,—the Independent has investigated them again and again with renewed enjoyment; and thus, by Christians of all communions, his writings have been purchased with avidity, and perused with delight and advantage. Truly, this has been a *great honour* to be conferred on any author; it was, unquestionably, worth living for; to be aided and permitted to write books on the most momentous themes, which the enlightened and devout in *every* communion would value, and which they would peruse with ever fresh edification and pleasure.

Ministers of the Gospel, also, in connexion with every section of the Church of Christ, have been desirous of securing, if possible, a complete edition of the works of Mr. Jay; and had they been originally *lower* in price, almost every minister's study would have been furnished with a set. Students for the Christian ministry, in addition; have realized the greatest advantage from becoming familiarised with his excellent compositions, and have been much better prepared for preaching the Gospel with acceptance and efficiency. It is scarcely possible to estimate the benefit which theological students have derived from



frequently and carefully perusing the valuable discourses of William Jay.

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We well remember, when at College, writing out in short-hand the whole of Mr. Jay's Short Discourses, and those more extended; and the exercise, though laborious, was of much service to our mind, as well as general habits. We have the volumes before us now, in which this college exercise was neatly and accurately performed; and it refreshes and stimulates, after the lapse of many studious and eventful years, to look at them and observe the manner in which all was executed.

The sermons which are called his longer Discourses, formerly in two volumes octavo, were Mr. Jay's first important publication, and, unquestionably, among his most valuable. They took their standing at once, and their sale was rapid and extensive. They established him in the public estimation, not only as a preacher of deserved celebrity, but as a practical and theological writer, worthy of taking his place among the best authors of sermons in the language. The religious public bought these volumes with avidity,—the Reviews spoke of them in the highest terms, and they were universally regarded as being very striking, admirable, and useful. There was a breadth, a fulness, a manliness, a raciness, a vigour, a simplicity, a sagacity, a beauty and power of illustration, a theological accuracy, an

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evangelical savour about them, with which every intelligent Christian, as well as minister, was interested and delighted; and the impressive appeals in which they abounded produced a deep and general effect

Mr. Jay's "Short Discourses for Families" are certainly among his best and happiest efforts.



These discourses are numerous, varied, very appropriate in their subjects, vivacious, practical, telling, and not too extended. They have commanded from year to year a large and steady sale since the date of their publication, and, from their reputation and intrinsic excellence, will always be in request. They have been read in thousands and tens of thousands of families—intelligent, respectable, Christian households; and even in the habitations of numbers of the nobility they have been perused with regularity, and with the utmost interest and advantage. In the midst of thousands of families, these discourses have been read in succession on the Sabbath evenings, and have thus ministered instruction and improvement to multitudes, not only of parents, but of children and domestics; for their style is so plain, that *all* can understand; and their illustrations are so natural, so fresh, so striking, that the attention of all is riveted, Many of these

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discourses are exceedingly beautiful; indeed, in our judgment, some of them are the finest and most original of Mr. Jay's productions.

His charming discourses on incidents from the "History of the Israelites," on the "Family of Bethany," on "Blind Bartimeus," on "The Cure of the Paralytic," on the "Restoring to Life of the Widow's Son," on the "Resurrection of Lazarus," on the "Daughter of Jairus," and many more to which we might recur, are, of their kind, almost incomparable, as addresses for the religious instruction and benefit of families. They will ever be fresh, they will ever be in demand, and will ever be read with pleasure. If Mr. Jay had written nothing else than his "Short Discourses for Families," he would have conferred





an inestimable advantage on multitudes of enlightened, orderly, and Christian households.

Many of Mr. Jay's *Occasional Discourses* are very important and very superior. We never peruse them without reaping much benefit: they are so clear, so practical, so judicious, so sage, so devout, and several of them so original. There is something about them which we find in connexion with no other sermons. We say at once when reading them, "None but William Jay could have penned them."

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His discourse on the "Duties of Husbands and Wives," is a fine specimen; it is a truly valuable sermon on a delicate yet most important subject. It is very affectionate, very faithful, beautifully illustrated, and abounding in the most admirable counsels. It is a discourse which should be published *separately*, in a neat and elegant form, as an appropriate wedding present.

His "Charge to a Minister's Wife" is one of superior excellence: it is eminently characteristic of Mr. Jay's mind and mode of address. It is very sage, very comprehensive, and on every ground truly admirable. The subject is singular, but very important, and we deem it one of Mr. Jay's happiest efforts.

Several of his "Funeral Sermons" are peculiarly solemn, touching, and impressive, penned in his best style, abounding in strokes of the tenderest and most beautiful pathos. His funeral sermon for the late Rowland Hill is not one of our favourites; it has some fine passages, but it will bear no comparison with the solid, discriminating, comprehensive, and masterly discourse, on the same distinguished minister, by the late Rev. John Griffin, of Portsea.



Two of Mr. Jay's finest discourses on *funeral* occasions, were those delivered in consequence of

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 the decease of his valued friend, Mr. Whitchurch, and the excellent Mrs. Berry, of Warminster. They are both admirable in sentiment, illustration, and style, the last mentioned, particularly, is one of the most exquisitely tender and affecting discourses we have ever perused. It has always been one which we have exceedingly admired; no person can read it in a right frame of mind without being much impressed and benefited.

Mr. Jay's sermon before the "Bedford Union," on the delightful subject of "The Saviour being glorified by his people," is a beautiful sermon, containing some rich, evangelical thoughts, and some fine illustrations.

Many of his discourses at the Ordination of Ministers are exceedingly valuable, among his most characteristic and his best. Mr. Jay excelled in offering scriptural and wise counsel. *Three* of these discourses are peculiarly important: one at the ordination of the Bev. James Stratten, of Paddington; it is a very striking and original sermon: one at the ordination of the Rev. H. F. Burder, D.D., at St. Thomas's Square, Hackney, from the words, "Brethren, pray for us;" this is one of the most beautiful, touching, and significant of all Mr. Jay's sermons, and we devoutly wish that *all* churches and congrega-

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 tions, in reference to their *ministers*, would *practically* exemplify the wise and impressive counsels which it furnishes: and a third discourse, at the ordination of the Rev. Arthur Tidman, D.D., at Salisbury, on preaching Christ, is peculiarly rich, evangelical, and important.



When Mr. Jay was arranging a new and complete edition of his writings, we earnestly requested him not to forget comprehending in it the *above three* most admirable discourses. We have heard him deliver on similar occasions many sermons equal in wisdom, in richness, in general excellence, to those we have specified, and their non-publication we have deeply regretted.

Mr. Jay's sermon on the "Jubilee," is a beautiful discourse; also one on "The Protestant Reformation;" his sermon delivered to celebrate the fiftieth year of his own pastorate at Argyle, is one that is very full, pertinent, and impressive; his discourse before the professors, students, and supporters of Cheshunt College is very pungent, and contains many bold, discriminating, striking, and eloquent passages. It gave some offence, when delivered, to a few young preachers of a certain class, and some sentences are certainly very strongly expressed; still, as a whole, it is

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a very significant and telling sermon, and very appropriate.

Mr. Jay's admirable series of lectures entitled "The Christian Contemplated" is one of the most interesting, popular, and useful of his publications, and a volume which we should like to put into the hands of every individual who was anxious to form a correct and enlightened judgment of the mind, the style, the peculiar character and excellence of the writings of Mr. Jay. The *entire* series of discourses is most excellent. Each lecture is luminously arranged, is clearly and beautifully illustrated, is comprehensive in the distribution of thought, and abounds in rich, pathetic, impressive passages.



The *idea* of the work has a character of originality about it, and it is admirably carried out—though the volume on the “Christian Character,” by Archdeacon Hoare, was the one from which we think Mr. Jay derived the thought. The discourses entitled “The Christian in the Closet,” “The Christian in the Family,” “The Christian in the Church,” “The Christian in the World,” are four of the most characteristic and striking in the volume; and the two designated “The Christian in Death” and “The Christian in Heaven,” are among the most touching and

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beautiful in the language. It has been justly remarked, that “The Christian Contemplated” is the *most poetic* of all Mr. Jay’s publications. It is one which, we know, he considered to be among his *best*—unquestionably, his *most useful*. The Introductory Essay to the volume, on effective preaching, so extended and elaborate, is very important, and is full of the most valuable remarks and suggestions, in Mr. Jay’s happiest style. Every competent judge must highly appreciate this volume.

Mr. Jay’s volume of “Prayers for the use of Families,” has met with a large and even surprising sale. It has been circulated in all directions, especially among devout and opulent families in connexion with the Church of England. Many families of the nobility regularly use “The Domestic Minister’s Assistant;” and in *this way* Mr. Jay has not only been a helper, but has proved, under God, a *signal blessing*. The prayers in this volume are strikingly characteristic of Mr. Jay; they are very full and varied—devout and scriptural—simple, concise, and earnest. They are, also, remarkably adapted to the wants, vicissitudes, and bereavements of our



households. No head of a family using a form of prayer, can regularly employ a devotional

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manual which is more judicious, spiritual, fervent, and admirable. A good edition of "The Domestic Minister's Assistant" is much wanted in a bold, clear type, to sell at five shillings. It would have a large circulation, and would be a *great boon* to numbers.

Mr. Jay's Biographical portraitures have ever been most highly esteemed—classed by some among his best productions—and they are confessedly marked by great discrimination, power of delineating character, and ability and originality of observation. We have just re-perused his Memoirs of the Rev. John Clark, and Cornelius Winter, and we acknowledge our extreme partiality for them, especially the latter.

The Biography of Mr. Clark is not read by ministers of the Gospel, and students for the ministry especially, so often as it should be. It is full of excellence; it is a most accurate and beautiful portraiture of a highly devout and valuable man, and is interspersed with observations of the nicest and most important kind, expressed in Mr. Jay's racy and impressive manner. The Memoir of Cornelius Winter, with the extended correspondence annexed, is beyond question one of the best religious and ministerial Biographies in the language. To ministers and

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students it is invaluable, and ought always to find a place on their library table. It is a simple lively, touching, graphical narration; it is the unaffected delineation of a truly lovely character; it furnishes a large amount of important information; it abounds in great principles; and the remarks on preaching, on the ministry, and

many interesting and momentous themes, are extremely sagacious and powerful. It is one of the most advantageous memoirs which a minister can study. We always place this volume near Orton's Life of Doddridge, and Pratt's Memoir and Remains of Richard Cecil.

After carefully and habitually perusing and examining the works of Mr. Jay for many years, and with all our partiality for one portion of his writings, and another, we are disposed to think that his "Morning and Evening Exercises" may be regarded as his richest, his fullest, his most varied, his most important, his most characteristic publications, and those which will be of the highest value to the Christian, when he enters his closet for meditation and prayer; to families, when they meet for worship and devotional reading; and to the various sections of the Church of Christ, for generations yet to come. Those "Exercises" contain the substance—the marrow

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of his ministry, They are penned in his best, his most pointed and impressive manner. They are the produce of his ripe, his matured mind; they are very devotional and experimental; they are beautifully illustrative of Scripture; they are calculated to effect extensive and permanent good. They have been received with general interest—have been perused with general pleasure—have contributed to general edification; and, we believe, will hand down the name of William Jay as a sound, devotional, theological, and able instructor, to the latest posterity.

Clergymen and ministers are materially aided by them, in furnishing valuable hints and ideas for the pulpit—in suggesting important subjects, also trains of appropriate thought and illustration; and Christians in retirement, in the sick

chamber, and Christian families, uniformly read them with instruction and benefit. Mr. Jay informed us that the late Mrs. Hannah More and Robert Hall considered the "Morning and Evening Exercises" the most useful and important of his productions, and wrote to him to that effect—mentioning the benefit which they had personally derived from their perusal, and congratulating him on their execution. In this opinion, the honoured Wilberforce, by whom their composition

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was suggested, fully concurred; and *he* only expressed the sentiments of the *entire* Christian public. No works, for very many years, of a devotional and practical kind, have been more stamped with the seal of their cordial approbation than these valuable "Exercises."

The writings of Mr. Jay, regarded *at a whole*, as a connected series coming out prior to his decease, and under his auspices and supervision, are marked by their vigour, by their manly simplicity, by their sagacity, by their freshness and originality, by their soundness and theological accuracy, by their wisdom and sageness of remark, by their clear and beautiful exhibition of evangelical sentiment, by their just and striking delineation of character, by their illustration and enforcement of great practical principles, by their devotional richness and elevation, and by their application to Christian experience, in its numerous and diversified forms.

We think, however, that the *great*, the *peculiar charm* of the works of William Jay, consists in their *universal adaptation* to the British mind, and to the British, and particularly the *Christian* character—their *adaptation to human nature* universally. They were written, not for *one* class of the human family, but for *every* class—not for



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one section of the people, hut for the *entire body*; and hence, while they are read with pleasure and advantage by the pious cotter, by the devout artisan, by the Christian tradesman, they are perused with equal interest and profit by the enlightened and reflective nobleman, who wishes to serve God and to honour the Redeemer; and after perusing one page and another, each says, and all exclaim, when closing the volume—"How true this is! How plain and weighty this is! How excellent and instructive this is! How faithful this is in its adherence to the Word of God! How calculated all this is to do good to man, wherever man is found!"

This we conceive to be the *secret* of Mr. Jay's acceptance, popularity, and power, as a writer. This, after all, is the truest charm of his compositions. There is no vagueness, no affectation, no nonsense, no superficiality, no eccentricity, no deviation from simplicity, no love for mere generalities. He lucidly and correctly expounds the Scriptures; he never departs from the simplicity of Christ. There is no hunting after novelty;—he "holds the mirror up to nature,"—representing man as he is—dissecting his character—showing what he is in his original condition, and what he becomes by Divine grace, in his

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justified and renewed state, being transformed into the image of the Redeemer, and assimilated, in some humble degree, to the likeness of God himself. Now, we maintain this is the charm of Mr. Jay's compositions.

Many Books are much more eloquent and finished than any which he ever wrote, or possibly could write; but it must be uniformly remembered, that





**WILLIAM JAY WROTE FOR USEFULNESS.**

He adapte his writings to the *masses*. He wanted to do good to the multitude. This was his study—his supreme desire—his continual aim. *That* study of his has not been lost;—that desire, which he so warmly cherished, has not been ungratified;—that aim, which he placed always before him, has not remained unaccomplished. And, long after hundreds, and even thousands, of *merely eloquent* and *brilliant* volumes have been forgotten and have perished—the writings of William Jay will be fresh and fragrant, doing good to multitudes,—and thus he will be preaching, with force and evangelical power, to the men and women— and, especially, to the Christian families, of remote generations.

Where, we ask, is the person, of any just

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views or feelings, who does not *almost envy* the man, the minister, the writer, who was raised up by Divine Providence to accomplish an object so noble, so magnificent, and so permanently realized?

We just observe, in concluding this short estimate of Mr. Jay as an author, that his style, with all its excellences—and they are high,—is *defective*. It is often too colloquial. It is sometimes coarse, and even indelicate; terms, imagery, illustrations are introduced which would have been much better omitted. Very often, too, there is little connexion between his sentences. They want consecutiveness and cohesion. They are, moreover, frequently too short—too epigrammatic and antithetic. Still, take his compositions altogether, even as to language and style, few can surpass them. This has been the opinion expressed to us, by some of the most literary men, some of the most eloquent as writers. It



is good, plain, manly, straight-forward, impressive, sinewy English. There is no frippery, no gaudiness, no bombast, no stilted style, no nonsense; but we have the unaffected, manly, luminous expression of a vigorous and earnest mind; the direct, pointed, faithful, and fearless exposition of moral and Christian sentiment,

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We see, at once, as we read even one page of his numerous volumes, that it was the object of the writer, his fixed, his pure, his predominant aim, to glorify his God—to honour his Saviour—to illustrate and apply the truth of Christianity—and *permanently* to benefit the human race.

“Such was the aim—  
And signal, in its glory, is the end.”

The lectures on the “Female Characters of Scripture,” just issued, are a choice and beautiful specimen of the pulpit discourses of Mr. Jay, more than thirty years ago. The female character is nicely and admirably discriminated, and illustrations the most striking and appeals the most pathetic and powerful are furnished. This volume, in connexion with the autobiography, are affecting and memorable productions, now that Mr. Jay has rested from all his useful and much-loved labours below.



## CHAPTER IX.

### A GENERAL REVIEW OF MR. JAY'S LABOURS AND USEFULNESS.

IN terminating our remarks and reflections on the revered and honoured minister whose character we have endeavoured concisely, yet accurately, to delineate, and who has lately entered on the rest of immortality, we are anxious to submit a few observations, temperately and dispassionately, as they have occurred to us, with regard to the labours which Divine Providence and grace disposed and enabled him to perform, and the useful and important results which have issued, through the wisdom and mercy of God, from those labours.

And, we think, it must be palpable to all, that the exertions of Mr. Jay—especially his studious, his intellectual exertions—during his exceedingly protracted and honourable career, must have been vigorous and unremitting.

No man, unless he had been a diligent and indefatigable student—unless his mind had been habitually exercised—unless his pen had been regularly employed—unless the powers of his intellect, and the emotions and affections of his heart, had been awakened and concentrated on



the great subjects of the ministry, and of Christianity—could have accomplished what Mr. Jay, while he lived, was permitted to accomplish. When we consider the early period at which his ministry commenced—how soon he was not only brought into notice, but attained general celebrity; when we dwell on the large and influential congregations in Bath, and the metropolis, to which, throughout life, he administered the Word and ordinances of God; when we contemplate the number of intelligent and superior men among his hearers, at all periods; when we recur to the frequency and variety of public and important services in which he has been engaged—preaching on Ordination occasions—at the opening of large places of worship—delivering funeral discourses on the decease of eminent ministers—aiding by his advocacy, from year to year, great educational, benevolent, and missionary institutions; when we review the extent

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and diversity of his compositions, we must immediately perceive that the labours of Mr. Jay could have been of no common order.

Granted, that he did not accustom himself to much pastoral visitation. “This,” he said to us, “was *my vice*;” still it must be borne in mind that his time was much occupied in journies, in receiving visitors, in preaching on special occasions for one society and another, in preparing carefully for the pulpit, in working hard for the press, and in constantly replenishing his own intellectual and theological stores. We admit that Mr. Jay did not labour so actively and extensively as many eminent ministers have done, going from town to town, from district to district, on behalf of one great institution and another. This was not his practice, nor was it



in unison with his tastes and inclinations; and, as he remarked to us, "I could not have done it, and maintained my position, and have completed the writings which I have published;" still, after every admission that is made, Mr. Jay was a most conscientious, diligent and laborious minister of the Gospel, and a "pains-taking" and indefatigable author, and what was done by him in the study, the pulpit, or through the press, was

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done in the most careful and accurate manner. There was no precipitancy, no approach to slovenliness; he worked quietly, steadily, continuously; and what he did, he *did well*, as a Christian and ministerial workman of the right order, whom the Master greatly sanctioned and greatly honoured, and whose energies were always awakened in the best of causes, and for the honour of the best and the holiest of Beings.

And as the labours of Mr. Jay, as a universally admired preacher and writer, were important and extensive, and continued for so long a period, so their results have been proportionably great, and his usefulness has been remarkable. Few men occupying a prominent position in the Christian ministry have been, we believe, so useful as Mr. Jay, by his varied, unremitting, and important labours during a period advancing to seventy years.

His usefulness as a striking, faithful, and truly evangelical preacher, extending to between sixty and seventy years, must have been surprisingly great when we consider the large spheres in which he had laboured statedly and occasionally, and the immense congregations to which he had so often ministered the Word of God; especially when



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we dwell on the character of his preaching, marked, as it ever has been, by its beautiful plainness, by its directness and force, by its broadly evangelical features, and by the fidelity and pungency of its appeals.

Who can tell the numbers that have been converted to God, under the ministry of this honoured man, during the long period of his public career, verging on seventy years, when the large audiences in Bath, in Bristol, in London, and many other parts of the kingdom, are considered, to which he had proclaimed, in his own peculiar style, the Word of Life, applying its doctrines, its invitations, its precepts, its warnings, with so much faithfulness, solemnity, and power? And then, who can calculate the amount of instruction which has been imparted, and of edification which has been secured, by his clear, manly, intelligent, encouraging, experimental, impressive style of pulpit address? What direction must he have afforded, what consolation, under God, must he have imparted, what benefit must he have conveyed, to multitudes of believers in Christ Jesus, and members of Christian churches, in all parts of the empire during the last half century! The amount of

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his usefulness, in our judgment, must, in these respects, have been very large, particularly when it is considered, that for *forty* years he was an annual supply for four or six weeks, at Surry Chapel, preaching during his visit to three thousand persons, or more, every Lord's day.

We can never regard this point lightly. It is, to us, one of peculiar interest and importance. Often and often, when we have been listening to one of his most pungent and telling discourses,



either at Surry Chapel or at Argyle, we have asked the question, while the profoundest attention has been maintained by a large and crowded audience—"Can *such* a sermon, on such a subject, delivered in such a manner, fall to the ground? Must it not be accompanied with power? Must not a signal blessing result from its being delivered in so serious, so direct, so striking a style?"

The usefulness of Mr. Jay, in his large and important *pastorate*, throughout so extended a period as sixty years and beyond, must have been very extensive.

He had a noble congregation, and maintained it until the last—also a numerous and an important Church, which had been replenished and renewed

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under him again and again; for he had lived until nearly every member of the Church, when he commenced his *pastorate*, had died. There were, moreover, day and Sabbath-schools connected with his congregation, considerable in numbers and efficiency.

Few men, we think, could have maintained *such* a congregation as he did, under such circumstances; for his position was one of extreme delicacy and difficulty. In a fashionable city; in a city of refinement and fastidiousness; in a city, where, for a long period, general regard was by no means paid, even to the *public* ordinances of religion, though, happily, *now* the attendance on public worship is generally diffused—being regular, large, and respectable; having such a diversity of individuals attending his ministry; having such an influx of visitors during the season; having so many ministers and clergymen, generally, listening to his sermons; having to keep up his popularity and his well-deserved



reputation,—it is obvious, that his pastorate was one connected with *no ordinary solicitude*; and, when we consider all this, we can scarcely feel surprised that Mr. Jay visited so little. His time was much occupied at home, and, as he often remarked to the writer,—“If I had been

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more of a visitor, I could not have been *the author* I have been; my labours through the press could not have been executed.”

We frequently regretted, in common with numbers of intelligent and good men, that Mr. Jay, instead of having at his place of worship a succession of ministerial supplies, during one part of the Sabbath, from every quarter, and for several years, did not gain, as his valued friend the late Rev. John Griffin, of Portsea, did, so happily, an enlightened, amiable and affectionate co-pastor. It was a matter of delicacy; it would have been connected with some difficulty; but such an arrangement, we are persuaded, if the right individual had been selected, would have promoted his comfort, pleased his flock, and materially increased the usefulness of his Church and congregation. He, however, had an aversion, and, we believe, fixed, to a co-pastorate; thinking two ministers, under such circumstances, could not work together comfortably; that one must be preferred to the other; and, in addition, he found it difficult to meet with an assistant minister whose views, tastes, and preaching, corresponded with his own.

Besides, a *competent* man, one of sterling ability and of some reputation, objected to the

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office of merely officiating on the Sabbath and Thursday evenings, in connexion with the labour of visiting the sick and the poor, without being





regarded as the successor of Mr. Jay, in the event of his retirement or decease. The decision at which Mr. Jay arrived on this subject we always regretted, and consider that the view he formed was a mistaken one, and we only wonder that he maintained his numerous Church and congregation as he did, through so many years, when there was, comparatively, so little pastoral supervision.

It shows the extent of his influence, and the greatness of his popularity.

The usefulness of Mr. Jay in the city of Bath, during his unusually long pastorate, few, we are persuaded, can properly estimate; when we consider the regularity, the excellence, the efficiency, with which he proclaimed the word of God to the people, the interest awakened by his preaching, the number of young persons collected under his ministry, the circumstance that not only did the congregation grow up under him, but, also, "instead of the fathers there were the children," the grandchildren—even the great-grandchildren, so that the benefits of his ministry were extended, not merely to one generation, but to *two*, and even

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*three* generations. His usefulness, therefore, in his own much-loved city, must have been immense.

His consistency, too, had always told. He had maintained high excellence of character during the whole of his career, and was not only respected and valued, but revered.

Where, we conceive, Mr. Jay erred, with all our admiration of him, was in this point; he did not, as a Nonconformist, as a Congregational minister, *extend his borders*. He did not make inroads on the world, by gathering around him, while living, *any other* ministers and congrega-



tions, of the *same faith and order* with his own, in various parts of the city.

In a city of so much magnitude and importance as Bath, having a population at the present time of nearly *sixty thousand*, instead of there being only one Congregational or Independent society, numbering, at the utmost, twelve hundred, there ought to have been two congregations,\* at least, maintaining the same views of church polity, or even *three*, presided over by respectable and efficient ministers; and if Mr.

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\* We are happy to state that Bath has now two Congregational societies, and we wish each, with their valued ministers, the utmost prosperity and usefulness.

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Jay had, thirty or forty years ago, patronized such an undertaking, and taken an active part in it, it would have been accomplished, and nobly responded to, and he himself would have been regarded as the founder and father of all. Such, however, were not Mr. Jay's views and arrangements. It might have arisen from comparative apathy in respect of the matter—from not deeming it advisable, or from a feeling of apprehension that the cause with which he was more immediately connected would have suffered. It was, however, an error, and we lamented, with numbers of our best and wisest men and ministers, that the opinion was maintained.

The congregation assembling at Argyle Chapel would always have been very large. Mr. Jay's reputation, ability, and usefulness, were such that he would have been always regarded before any other, while the Congregational body would have had additional excellent and able representatives, as ministers, in the city and environs. By this indisposition to *colonise*, and to extend the denomination in Bath, great injury has been



sustained, for the result has been that *large numbers*, and among them some of the most intelligent and amiable families in the city, have long been worshipping in connexion with the

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Established Church, and regularly communing with its members, who would *otherwise* have been identified, beyond question, with respectable places of worship belonging to the Congregational body, and thus, instead of having three or four thousand Independents in the large and important city of Bath, there are, at the present time, perhaps, not more than two thousand;\* for a considerable number of those who attended, especially during the Sabbath mornings, on the ministry of Mr. Jay, were Episcopalians, Baptists, Moravians, Wesleyans, and persons of every religious communion. Sure we are, that if Mr. Jay's habits had not been so quiet and retiring, if he had come forward with energy, and developed greater public spirit, if he had come out actively and prominently, vigorously aiding and complacently smiling upon every other congregation in the city, the Baptists, the Moravians, and other Christian denominations in Bath would have had much more numerous and efficient congregations, and we should have witnessed the development of much greater closeness of Christian union. We offer the above remarks under the influence of the kindest and best feeling; we have no jealous, no narrow, no invi-

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\* We hope the two thousand will soon be augmented to three.

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dious sentiments; we submit them from a deep conviction of their truth and importance, and as the result of much acquaintance with the places of worship in Bath, with the state of the congre-



gations, and after careful, patient, dispassionate observation. We have *no party ends* to serve—we have not the spirit of the merely religious partisan. We want religion, pure spiritual religion, to prosper, both *within* the Church of England, and *beyond* its pale. We value *every* Christian society proclaiming and maintaining “the doctrine of the apostles and prophets,” and regarding Christ Jesus as “the chief cornerstone.” We are anxious for the augmentation of pure Christianity in the city of Bath, and for the progress of enlightened, catholic, protestant non-conformity; and we hope the time will come, and not be remote, when Bath, with regard to its Congregational churches of various kinds, presided over by intelligent, holy, efficient pastors, will emulate Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester and Liverpool; for we are increasingly convinced of this, though the Clergy of Bath, as a whole, are noble-minded and excellent men, and some of them *very able* and *superior*, that the Congregational body has materially suffered, for the last thirty or forty years, from comparative




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indifference in the city, to its growth and much wider extension.

We hope the above observations will not be misconstrued, nor that undesirable motives will be attributed to the writer; he has no interests to serve, but those of truth and Christianity, and he is only solicitous for the increasing honour of the one Teacher, the one Shepherd, the one Redeemer.

The usefulness of Mr. Jay, arising from his *intercourse with strangers and ministers*, during fifty or sixty years, must have been very great. Throughout his long residence in Bath, at his house in Percy Place, where he could be easily



and generally seen, and from his urbanity and kindness in receiving the visits of his brethren, and strangers from all parts of the kingdom, he must have been exceedingly useful to considerable numbers who called on him, and who were desirous either of soliciting his advice, or of having some conversation with so revered and honoured a man. Students of theology, and young ministers, were very anxious to see Mr. Jay at his residence, if an opportunity presented, and he was kind and urbane in inviting them to call on him, and in very many instances, up to his 83d year, to take an early breakfast with

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him at *seven* o'clock, or to dine with him at one.

Respectable ministers from all parts of England and Wales, Ireland and Scotland, when they came to Bath,—and from the beauty, importance, central situation, and salubrity of the city, there were always some there,—were sure to visit Mr. Jay; and this was the case with the ministers of all denominations, embracing large numbers of the best men among the Clergy. Ministers, too, from the Continent, and especially from America, were calling frequently on him, and he has told us, with how much pleasure—particularly during the earlier season of his ministry—did he receive the frequent visits of excellent and devoted ministers of the Established Church in this country, and of Episcopal ministers from the United States; for Mr. Jay was much valued and revered by the enlightened and evangelical among the Clergy, for his unsectarian and truly catholic spirit. Now, in this way, the usefulness of Mr. Jay must have been materially extended; conversations with him would never be forgotten; original and important sentiments



would produce a deep impression, and the effect, in many instances, would not only be powerful, but permanent.

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Intelligent and devout persons among the laity, when visiting Bath, called to pay their respects to the author of the “Morning and Evening Exercises,” from every quarter; and not a few of the *truly* excellent and noble among the aristocracy would seek to be acquainted with him. Now, from these visits, his usefulness must have been greatly augmented.

And then, we ingenuously and seriously inquire, in taking this brief summary of the labours and usefulness of Mr. Jay, who can estimate his usefulness as a popular, impressive, and truly Christian author? Is it not already exceedingly great?—and will it not be much greater? During the last half century, his writings have been before the religious public—purchased by them with avidity—read with interest and pleasure; their circulation has extended throughout the kingdom—the continent of Europe—and edition after edition has been published in America, and thousands and thousands of copies diffused among the multitude of professed Christians, of *all* communions, in that gigantic and wonderful empire. Their character and object, also, have been *pre-eminently fitted* for *usefulness*—being plain, practical, serious, vigorous, instructive; comprehensive, evange-

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lical, striking, original—like his preaching;—indeed, his preaching in *print*. Now, we ask who can estimate the amount of benefit which has been conferred already by the instrumentality of his compositions on thousands and tens of thousands in all parts of the world where his



writings have been circulated? It is impossible to tell what instruction has been conveyed, what impressions have been produced, what edification has been secured.

And when we consider how popular the works of Mr. Jay *now* are—what a steady, and, indeed, *increasing* demand is made for them, and how they will be *perpetuated* from their intrinsic excellence, from their just and luminous views, sound sense, fine delineations of the Christian character, sageness and *adaptation to all classes*, from generation to generation; we think we present before the mind an exhibition of the usefulness of the late revered William Jay, which is most animating and delightful, and for which his surviving children and grandchildren, and his sorrowing relict in particular, cannot be too grateful to Almighty God. It has been, indeed, *an honour* to be associated by domestic relationship with one whose preaching, whose conversation, whose writings the Head of

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the Church has so continuously, so extensively, so signally blest.

And we inquire, in relation to usefulness,—high, permanent, the noblest usefulness,—who, possessing Christian principles, and breathing the Christian spirit, would not infinitely rather be the author of Jay's "Short Discourses," his "Christian Contemplated," his "Morning and Evening Exercises," than the writer of some of the most eloquent and brilliant literary productions which have been ever penned? If Christian excellence be excellence of the *highest* kind, if Christian usefulness be usefulness of the *noblest* order, what, we ask, can, for one moment, compare with the usefulness of him who, either by his preaching or his writings, or by both, is the honoured instrument in the hands of the Spirit of God, of



saving hundreds of souls from moral and spiritual death—of converting many hundreds of sinners from the error of their way, and of “hiding,” in the case of no inconsiderable numbers, “a multitude of sins.” Such has been the honour conferred already by the sovereign and omnipotent grace of God, on the distinguished minister whose character we have been delineating; and while the English language endures, and sound, ster-

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ling, practical, impressive theology is valued, the works of William Jay will be appreciated, and hundreds of years from the period of his entrance into heaven will he be doing good, and speaking with divine power and efficacy to multitudes in this country, and in other lands.

“Such honours God confers on some:  
 Their wreath is ever fresh and green; the crown  
 Upon their brow is one which never fades;—  
 Its radiant lustre’s never dimm’d.”

We have now brought our observations to a close, as it was our wish not to extend them unduly. We have endeavoured to take a fair view of the mind and character of the honoured man whose intellectual and moral likeness we have been portraying. We have been anxious to do justice in our own way, and after long and accurate observation, to our revered friend.

We were solicitous to furnish a succinct, but correct, portraiture, and among the representations which will be given of him, to convey our own unpretending delineation. Our wish has been to avoid inaccuracy and exaggeration.

Some, in reading our pages, will consider that we have been too eulogistic,—that there are shades

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which we should have brought out, defects which we should have specified, and on which we should





have enlarged. We can only state, whatever our deficiencies, that we are not conscious of having set anything down lightly, precipitately, or unfairly. We think moreover, that the representation given in this Volume will be deemed correct and faithful, by Mr. Jay's numerous admirers, and by his surviving friends, and we can Bimply mention, that we have penned our observations under the influence of the best feeling—with interest and pleasure—*con amore*, and from a sincere desire to furnish that exhibition of William Jay, in addition to any Biography which may be furnished, which the intelligent members of his late congregation would approve,—which his family, who knew him best, would generally appreciate,—and which the enlightened and Christian Public, by its verdict, would sustain.

It has been our wish, for *many years*, if life should be prolonged, to drop a humble floweret on the grave of one whom we long knew, whom we ever valued and revered; and that wish is now gratified. Our closing petition to the God of infinite wisdom, to the Father of infinite mercy, is—that *another* William Jay may be raised up,

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to *preach* as he did, to *write* as he did, and to be the instrument of conveying moral and spiritual benefit to thousands and tens of thousands, as the providence and grace of Heaven enabled him to become. "Such honour have not all the saints" or *ministers* of the Word,—only a few in a generation are *thus* selected—thus qualified—thus dignified—thus blest.

Farewell! farewell! thou man of God,  
Till we shall meet above;  
And sweetly hymn the Saviour's grace  
In the bright world of love.



Then, with the mighty, joyous throng,  
 We'll circle near the throne,  
 And cast the golden crowns we wear  
 Before His feet alone!

LINES

WRITTEN BENEATH A PORTRAIT OF THE REV. W. JAY,

*Penned on occasion of the Fortieth Anniversary  
 of his Ordination.*

Servant of God, well done! The day's return,  
 With purest joy we hail, when first you came,  
 The teacher of our spirits, leading us  
 Direct to happiness and God. Many years  
 Have wing'd their flight since first we view'd  
 Your face expressive, and gazed upon your  
 Manly form. Long hast thou work'd for God,  
 In vigorous, yet delightful, service;  
 And every power was gladly braced for Him!  
 Thy light has aye beam'd pure, streaming brightness  
 From the holy Word of truth and love.  
 The men of God have found in thee an honest,  
 Genuine, ardent friend, without disguise or pomp.  
 All, in the sacred desk, have felt thy words,  
 So plain and pungent, coming down to each,  
 And piercing every heart. Oft has thy voice,  
 Clothed with persuasiveness, dissolved the spirit,  
 And we have pray'd and wept. We gladly bless

That gracious Providence, whose power has nerved  
 Thine arm and warm'd thy heart so long. Since first  
 Thy work commenced, what scenes have swept  
 before  
 Thine eye observant! How many storms have rag'd!  
 What strokes have fall'n! What friends have fled—  
 what foes  
 Are crush'd! Youth and health—forms of Grecian



Loveliness and Roman vigour,—genius  
 In all its might, and piety in all  
 Its bloom and usefulness, have pass'd away!  
 What sermons hast thou plann'd and preach'd! How  
 oft  
 Before the mercy-seat to plead for others!  
 Journeys innumerable; ceaseless toil of mind  
 And body; till now the head is silver'd  
 O'er by age, and many things betoken,  
 With silent, yet effective voice, the final  
 Lot of man. Dear minister of God!  
 Allow our fond and grateful hearts to bless,  
 And, with a gush of tenderness, pour forth  
 One fervid prayer, ere you spring to God!  
 May your remaining days be long and blest;  
 Your setting sun be broad and beautiful,  
 Streaming chaste splendour round! And, when your  
 end  
 Arrives, may all be calm and peaceful round,—  
 Sweet and gentle as the waveless bosom  
 Of a beautiful lake: then swift transported  
 To the embraces of your God, may pure

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And endless ravishment be yours, absorb'd  
 In bliss of immortality! Your worth  
 We'll ne'er forget; your name shall be  
 As ointment sweet; by your *works* you'll preach  
 With ceaseless force, and never, never die!

**A THOUGHT**

**PROMPTED AT THE GRAVE OF THE REV. W. JAY.**

HERE lies precious dust! within are urn'd  
 Ashes of one whose name will ever live!  
 The spirit is with God,—the soul that burn'd  
 With quenchless zeal that happiness to give,  
 Which comes from God and leads to him alone!  
 Be still, observer, while you gaze around,  
 This is no ordinary sepulchral ground!

*K. CLAY, PRINTER, BREAD STREET HILL.*