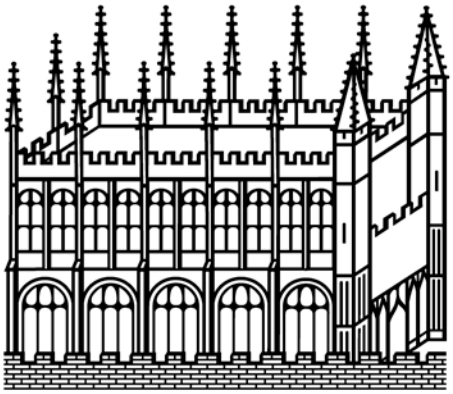

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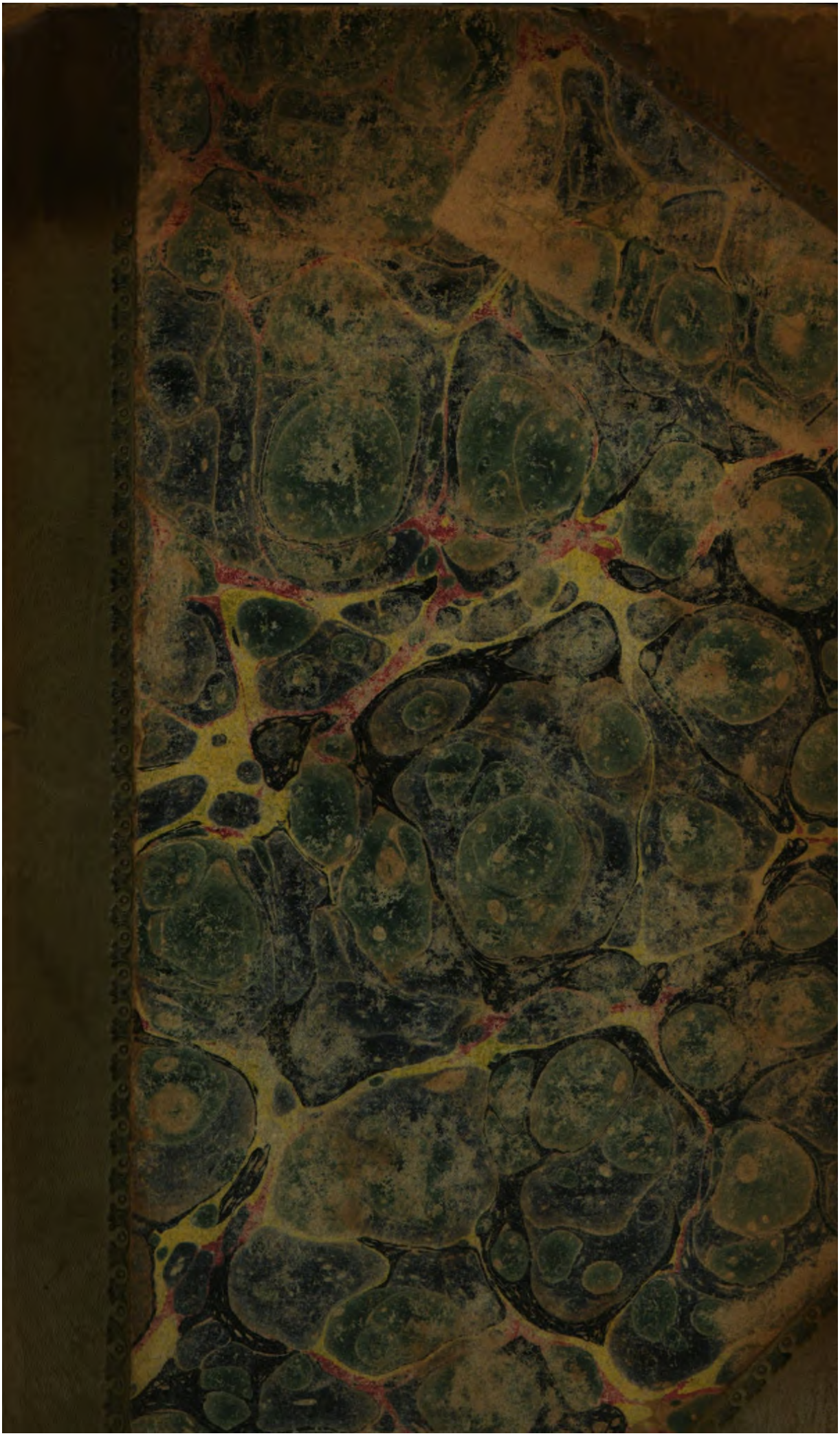

8.° Bs. T. 116.

Quære if the author is not
the Rev. Charles Bradley
of High Wycombe. See at
p. 165, where he mentions
his great uncle the Rev.
J. B.

ORIGINAL MEMORIALS;

OR,

Brief Sketches

OF

REAL CHARACTERS.

BY A

CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LONDON:

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TO THE

REV. W. H. HAVERGAL, A.M.

My dear Friend,

In sending these sheets to the press, I feel happy that I can gratify my friendship for you. Life may present me with no other similar opportunity; and, therefore, I cannot let this pass unimproved.

Your late abode was in the midst of scenes, with which, in my mind, are associated no small number of sacred recollections. Of these, many crowded upon me one starry autumnal evening, two years ago, when we walked together down the vale of S——. The visions of memory, indeed, resemble the views which we then caught of the surrounding landscape. Prominent and strongly defined objects alone met the eye, while minuter forms were enveloped in deepening gloom. So oblivion conceals the lesser and more numerous incidents of life, while the light of heaven, or the shades of earth, retain in our remembrance others, too distinctly marked with good or evil, with

pleasure or pain, to be forgotten. Nor ought they all to be resigned "to dumb forgetfulness a prey." The course of every observant man, through a world like ours, is attended by events, fraught with more instruction and interest to himself and others, than should be lost in the quick succession of passing griefs and joys, and the business of an active life. This consideration has made me resolve to send you a series of papers, containing a select number of those memorials, which have sometimes been the topics of our familiar conversation, before they are wholly erased from my memory.

The larger portion of these will be brief sketches of the characters of the dead; and chiefly of persons who lived and died in the privacy of domestic scenes, or in indigent obscurity; but in whose short history may be read some instructive pages from the book of divine providence, and many illustrations of the power of religion in life and death. From motives of prudence and delicacy, I shall withhold names. *You may, however, fully rely on the authenticity of the narratives.*

These papers owe their existence to the chamber of affliction—to moments snatched from anxious vigils, near the couch of sickness. The composition and

arrangement of them, beguiled and somewhat sweetened hours, which else, perhaps, might have been spent in the indulgence of grief, as bitter as unavailing. This circumstance will account for, if it does not excuse many inaccuracies, especially in the eye of a friend; and it probably may induce criticism to spare many a deserved lash.

It will be no mean reward of my pleasurable labour, if its produce meets with your approbation. Still I venture to aim higher. The honour of God in his dealings with mankind; the glory of the Saviour in dispensing the riches of his grace; and the spiritual benefit of immortal souls, are often promoted by instruments as intrinsically weak and insignificant as this little volume. Aid me by your prayers, that I may, in some humble degree, attain these most important of all ends; and accept a renewed assurance, that I continue, as I long have been,

Your affectionate Friend,

THE AUTHOR.

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ORIGINAL MEMORIALS.

The Walking Bible.

AT the residence of one of the earliest and best instructors of my youth, the aged P— was a frequent and most welcome visitor. He was a short, slender man, yet of venerable aspect, and when I last saw him, age had left but few locks upon his head, and they were grey. His hoary head, however, was a crown of glory, for it was found in the way of righteousness. His manners were saintly, at the same time that they were distinguished by simplicity and cheerfulness. His presence inspired awe, but it was the affectionate reverence which was excited by eminent, yet meek and gentle piety. I often in vain have wished, that a memorial of his sterling virtues and of the more remarkable occurrences of his life had been recorded. These occurrences indeed and these virtues were not of a description that would awaken the curiosity or procure the admiration of a world, which is generally taken only with splendid events, and with qualities

which are often more ostentatious and dazzling, than beneficial to their possessor or to mankind. "The short and simple annals of the poor," especially when those annals tell of principles drawn from heavenly sources, and of actions conducted upon such principles, are commonly scorned and overlooked as unworthy of attention and perusal. A few, however, esteem what the many despise. There are those who are more highly delighted by a bright exhibition of Christian graces in "the poor of this world, whom God hath chosen, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him;" than by contemplating the elevated attainments of the sons of science, the schemes of statesmen, or the achievements of warriors. By persons of this class, narratives like that which I now commit to paper are duly appreciated.

After the lapse of several years, I again met P— at the house of my tutor, Dr. W. He took a chair in my study, and at my request gave me some very interesting particulars of his former life. Of these, many have escaped my recollection. The following are all that remain upon my mind.

He was born in a lonely cottage, that stands near the wild and dreary summit of a very lofty hill, in the county of G—. I well remember the spot, for I once visited it in company with some beloved

friends,* and gazed in rapture from it on the loveliest and most extensive prospect afforded by that picturesque county. His widowed mother picked up a scanty subsistence for herself, and her two orphan boys and girl. She nevertheless contrived to give them a plain cottage education. The younger of her sons, who is the subject of this memorial, at a very early age evinced that he was truly a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Their humble dwelling contain-

---

* Of these was the eminently good Mr. S——. Nor can I refrain from here paying a small tribute to the revered memory of a man, who though now numbered with the spirits of just men made perfect, will long live below in the affections of hundreds. His piety was of the highest cast, and led him forward in a steady and consistent course, which he adorned by all that was lovely in the sight of God, and all that was of good report among men. His Christian character was the mature growth of more than half a century, and it remained firmly rooted, and ever verdant, through the changes and storms of a long life. He was so exempt from the spirit of theological parties, that his house was open to, and his heart embraced men of *apparently* the most opposite sentiments, when he traced in them the image of his divine Master. He was decided without bigotry. The tone of his conversation was heavenly and spiritual, without being affected or enthusiastic. Extended and commensurate with the utmost limits of the Catholic Church as was his charity, he was yet from principle a cordial friend of the Establishment; and when he died, the Government of his country lost one of its most intelligently loyal and unwavering supporters.

ed not the invaluable treasure of the Word of God, which, by a dispensation of divine mercy unparalleled in the history of the Church, is now placed within the reach of the most destitute. The boy, having discovered at the house of a friend a mutilated copy of the Holy Scriptures, from time to time borrowed various fragments, under an engagement to return each part as soon as he had read it, and before he applied for another. This loan of a few pages was diligently improved; and so ardent was his love, and so retentive his memory of what he read, that in his mind he gradually transcribed the oracles of God; and from his accurate and ready utterance of them, afterwards acquired the name of the *Walking Bible.* How happy would be the result, and how different a face would the Christian world quickly assume, if all, who now enjoy the common but too lowly estimated possession of the Scriptures, were so to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, as did this orphan boy! We cannot indeed expect this from men, whose hearts are averse to, and whose lives are at variance with divine truth. The natural and confirmed enmity of their hearts must be subdued by the operations of the Holy Spirit, before they can feel disposed thus to regard the inspired writings. But it is not unusual for professed approvers and lovers of the truth as it is in Jesus, to be criminally ignorant of a very large

portion of God's Holy Word. This often is the secret source of error both in doctrine and practice: the mind is perplexed with doubts, indistinct notions, and vacillating purposes; and the life displays a lamentable deficiency of consistent and decided conduct.

This young disciple of a Master, who is the ever-present and willing teacher of those who sit at his feet, and often largely infuses heavenly wisdom into a mind blessed with few external privileges, was not satisfied with a speculative knowledge, and a faithful remembrance of the Scriptures. They were to him, as many years after he said to me, with equal simplicity and beauty, when I was lighting him by night along a dark road, "a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path." Religion with him became a governing principle. As it was the joy of his heart, so it was the rule of his life. Of this his early years afforded an eminent instance. Nor is it probable that it was a solitary one. For the genuine piety in which it originated is not like the casually kindled fire of the traveller, which for a little time illumines a narrow corner of the wilderness, and then expires; it rather resembles the permanent and steady flame, which uninterruptedly burned upon the altar of Jehovah in the tabernacle and temple of ancient days.

In a very severe winter, the poor family on S— Hill found themselves both destitute of fuel, and too

straitened in their means to purchase any. They had completely exhausted the neighbouring woods of the scanty and precarious supply of decayed and broken branches, which, in the compassionate and minute arrangements of Providence, the fierce but friendly tempests rend from the trees and strew upon the ground to kindle the cottage hearth. It was an original of THOMSON's picture:

> "..... the lone widow and her orphans pin'd
> In starving solitude; while luxury
> In palaces, lay straining her low thought
> To form unreal wants."

In the garden that environed their hovel stood a large pear-tree, more venerated for its age than valued for its fruitfulness. The mother expressed a wish that this should be cut down for fire-wood, and the task fell upon her younger boy. He heard his parent in silence. She repeated her wish, and wondered that he for a moment hesitated to comply. "Mother," said he, "I ought to obey you, but I must first obey God. The tree is not ours. It belongs to our landlord; and you know that God says, "Thou shalt not steal." I therefore hope that you will not make me cut it down." Influenced by this touching reply, she desisted. Again they all explored the adjacent woods, and for a day or two more lingered through the cold. Nature at last spake with a louder voice than con-

science, and drowned it in the mother's bosom. She peremptorily renewed her command, that the pear-tree should be felled, to shield them from the inclemency of the weather. Her boy meekly repeated his conscientious objection, but she would take no refusal. He then said: "Mother, the good God has often helped us, and supplied our wants when we have been in trouble. Let us wait till this time to-morrow. Then, if we do not find some relief, though I am sure it will be wrong, yet, if you make me do it, I will cut down the tree in obedience to your command." She yielded, and he, in his simple manner, retired, and in secret earnestly prayed to the God of Daniel and his three faithful brethren, to interfere and prevent them from displeasing him by a transgression of his holy law. Early on the following day, he sallied forth to make another search for wood. He walked along the ridge of the hill to a distant part, where under the skirts of a copse ran a rough cross road from the town of D—. He there observed a stranger with a horse and cart at a stand, and went up to him. The man was in great perplexity and anger, for the ruggedness of the road had broken one of the wheels of his cart, that was laden with coal, and he could proceed no further. The boy kindly asked if he could help him. "Help me," said the man in a surly tone, "no; unless you can buy the coal of me. I'll sell it

you cheap: for I am many miles from home, and before I can get my cart mended and come back again, it will be stolen." "Oh!" replied the boy, "we have no coal in the house, though we want some bad enough. But we have no money to buy it, so I don't know what you can do." "Well," rejoined the stranger, "I can't take it, so you may. Do you live over there?" "Yes." "I'll trust you then; and if when I call you can pay me for it, well and good." He then emptied the coal into the road, and patching up his cart as well as he was able, drove away, and never after made his appearance. With an overflowing heart, young P—— bounded along the hill upon the hard frozen turf, told his tale, and with the assistance of the rest of the family, conveyed the shining mineral as an unlooked-for treasure to their cottage. Doubtless, to their astonished minds, the quickly-kindled fire seemed to burn with a brighter flame, and to send forth a more glowing heat than they had ever before witnessed. Tears of love, gratitude, and admiration must have filled the mother's eye, as she alternately gazed at the fire and her boy. "Thus," as he added, when he gave me the simple narration, "the pear-tree was saved, and I was saved from doing a thing which would have made me very unhappy. I took an early opportunity of kneeling down under its leafless branches, covered as they then

were only with the hoary foliage of winter, and pouring out my heart in grateful praise to Him, who thus graciously and surprisingly interposed on our behalf."

There may be presumption in looking out for extraordinary interferences in our favour in the dark labyrinths of a perplexed and intricate life like the present: but it is difficult to ascertain the exact point where a simple, implicit, enlarged confidence in the providential care of our heavenly Father degenerates into such presumption. A specious infidelity, which goes far towards denying the consolatory doctrine of a particular providence, not unfrequently lurks under the assumed garb of humility, and passes current in the world as sterling good sense, and as the happy medium between open scepticism, and presumptuous enthusiasm. Those who live under its sway, contemplating in cold light the Almighty as the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity and dwelleth in the high and holy place, are disposed *doubtingly* instead of *admiringly* to put the Psalmist's question: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" They cannot conceive that he who guides the planets in their orbits, and over-rules the rise and fall of empires, will condescend to notice and to superintend the circumstantial details of domestic scenes or of individual life. They may indeed concede this minute attention

to the attractive splendour of *his* course, who concentrates the gaze of a kingdom or a hemisphere on his philosophy or his achievements: but not to the ordinary occurrences of *their* progress through the world, whom GRAY commemorates in his incomparable elegy:

> "Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
> Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
> Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
> They kept the noiseless tenor of their way."

It is not perhaps from the often miraculous facts recorded in the pages of sacred history, that we can with the greatest safety draw our conclusions as to what a true child of God may expect at his Father's hands of relief in want, or of deliverance in danger. But the general tendency of scriptural precepts, together with an enlightened view of the attributes of God, sanction the language of that Christian Philosopher and Divine, whose writings are now widely diffusing a hallowed influence over every rank in society on both sides of the Tweed. "At the very time that God's benignant regard takes in the mighty circle of created beings, there is not a single family overlooked by him, and every individual in every corner of his dominions is as effectually seen to, as if the object of an exclusive and undivided care." "While his comprehensive mind can grasp the whole

amplitude of nature, to the very outermost of its boundaries, he has an attentive eye fastened on the very humblest of its objects, and ponders every thought of my heart, and notices every footstep of my goings, and treasures up in his remembrance, every turn and every movement of my history." "While magnitude does not overpower him, minuteness cannot escape him, and variety cannot bewilder him; and, at the very time when the mind of the Deity is abroad over the whole vastness of creation, there is not one particle of matter, there is not one individual principle of rational or of animal existence, there is not one single world in that expanse which teems with them, that his eye does not discern as constantly, and his hand does not guide as unerringly, and his spirit does not watch and care for as vigilantly, as if it formed the one and exclusive object of his attention."

These remarks are introduced to obviate some objections which possibly might be made to this and other particulars in the history of my old friend. For my own part, I fully enter into the sentiment of an ancient writer, that it would not be worth while to live in a world that was not governed by a Providence. Nothing is so tranquilizing and consolatory amidst the perpetual shiftings and fluctuations and uncertainties of an inconstant world, than the firm belief that my family and myself are wholly dependent on the sleep-

less and unremitting care of our reconciled God and Father; that he views with indifference nothing which can affect us either with good or ill; that every drop in the ocean of means is in his hand and at his disposal; and that he is making all things work together for our good. "His eye is upon every hour of my existence. His spirit is intimately present with every thought of my heart. His inspiration gives birth to every purpose within me. His hand impresses a direction upon every footstep of my goings. Every breath I inhale is drawn by an energy which God deals out to me. This body, which, upon the slightest derangement, would become the prey of death, or of woeful suffering, is now at ease, because he at this moment is warding off from me a thousand dangers, and upholding the thousand movements of its complex and delicate machinery. His presiding influence keeps me through the whole current of my restless and ever changing history. When I walk by the way he is along with me. When I enter into company, amid all my forgetfulness of him, he never forgets me. In the silent watches of the night, when my eyelids have closed, and my spirit has sunk into unconsciousness, the observant eye of Him who never slumbers is upon me. I cannot fly from his presence. Go where I will, he tends me, and watches me, and cares for me: and the same Being who is now at

work in the remotest domains of nature and of providence, is also at my right hand to eke out to me every moment of my being, and to uphold me in the exercise of all my feelings, and of all my faculties."

P— was emphatically the child of Providence, and through life he retained an habitual impression of these sentiments. Riches were never his; but he was elevated above his natural condition by a series of events, which I lament that I either never inquired into, or have now forgotten. There ever remained, however, that narrowness in his circumstances, which particularly endeared, and often brought home and illustrated to his mind the exquisitely beautiful address of One, who himself knew not where to lay his head, to those who had no treasure laid up on earth. "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye much better than they?—And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?"

While the life of my venerable friend was one of active usefulness, it was eminently a life of faith. He lived upon God. All his wants were modestly spread in prayer before that throne, where every petitioner is welcome. He regarded the minutest comforts he enjoyed as the immediate gifts of that God, who openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness. He daily contemplated the unspeakable gift laid by infinite love upon the altar of the cross, and he could doubt no more. "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

When rather advanced in years, he was spending part of an unusually hard winter in London. He suffered much from the extreme severity of the cold, especially as he was without a warm outer garment. His brother accommodated him with the loan of his, and perceiving how greatly he needed such a covering, generously offered to give it to him. "No, brother," he answered, "God knows my necessities, and, if he sees fit, in his own time and way will supply them. But you are even poorer as well as older than I, and I cannot believe that the Lord intends to clothe me by stripping you." He expressed his thankfulness, that he was thus able to repel what he conceived to be a temptation from

Satan, who would have persuaded him to let go his simple reliance upon the bounty of God, and to provide for himself in an improper manner. In the ensuing year, as he was about to repeat his journey from D—— to the Metropolis, a respectable clothier at U—— sent for him, and said: "Master P——, I hear you are going up to London. Have you a corner in your box to carry a piece of cloth, which I wish to send to a poor aged minister there, to make him a great coat against the winter?" "I am sure of finding room for that," he replied. The proper quantity was cut off, and the clothier, looking to see how much was left, said, "Why, here is just enough for another garment. How are *you* off for a great coat?" He hesitatingly acknowledged that he had none, and was immediately presented with the remainder of the cloth. This incident the old man viewed in a light, which may excite the contempt of the infidel, and the half-sneering smile of the nominal Christian; but which is perfectly accordant with the acknowledged operations of that beneficent Being, who clothes the lily and feeds the ravens. The unknown train of events to which I before alluded, acquired for P—— the respect and acquaintance of many of the wealthy and the good. He was welcome to their houses as a man of tried uprightness, sincerity, and unaffected simplicity. They

found his mind richly stored with divine wisdom, which he had a happy facility of communicating, and his memory replete with striking anecdotes, which he told with innocent vivacity. He was at once the sage companion of the aged, and the friendly counsellor of the young. By all he was received and caressed more as a patriarch, than as a member of the lowest rank of modern society. The obscurity of his birth and the inferiority of his station, were forgotten in the admiration excited by his superior Christian virtues; and as he never forgot himself, or embarrassed his friends by assuming more than belonged to him, he found a ready access to the company of many who, though raised far above him, delighted to recognise and befriend the genuine effects of religion, wherever they discovered themselves.

Being once left alone in the richly furnished apartment of an affluent banker, who kindly and gladly entertained him, he found his mind much affected by a comparison between his own lot, and that of his sister, who, with a young family to support, was straitened by extreme poverty, and whom, when it was in his power, he promptly and liberally assisted. Gratitude to the Father of lights, and the Father of mercies, from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift, drew forth his praise; while a recolle-

tion of the probable distresses of his sister filled his eyes with tears, and his sympathizing heart with unfeigned grief. He spread her wants before that God, whose presence he knew was equally with her as with himself, and prayed that he would pity her desolate condition. He afterwards walked out into the town of M——, to witness the solemn interment of eight poor seamen, who had been washed upon the shore from a recent wreck. "As I walked down the main street," said the old man, "a genteel looking stranger on the opposite side, stopped, and for a second or two looked earnestly at me: then, quickly crossing the road, he thus accosted me: "Your name is P—. I know you and your family, and *this morning* it occurred to me that your poor sister was probably much pinched by this hard winter, and I longed for an opportunity of sending her relief. I am therefore rejoiced to meet you, and beg that you will send her *this* the first opportunity that presents itself." Then putting a guinea into my hand, before I could sufficiently recover my surprise to express my thanks and to inquire his name, the gentleman turned a corner of the street, and I lost sight of him. I proceeded to the church-yard, and while waiting the arrival of the funerals, I stood unobserved behind one of the massy buttresses that upheld the aged walls

of the venerable church, and breathed forth the grateful feelings of my soul."

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Here in the same corner of the earth he displayed his compassionate and special regard to the sorrows and necessities of one family, and heard the unobtrusive and humble prayer of a brother on behalf of a sister; while he summoned away by a sudden death eight other individuals; clothed eight families in mourning; and gave a warning shock to the minds of a populous community assembled round their premature graves. The temporal dispensations of divine Providence throw a strong light upon, and closely accord with the great scheme and operations of his moral government, as made known to us by Christianity. Not only does the whole visible creation, from the lights of heaven down to the lowest depths of earth, exhibit the union of retributive justice and indulgent mercy, and corroborate the curse which darkens, and the hope which illumines, the condition of man; but the course of human events, carried on by the agency of man himself, or of the elements around him, confirms the fundamental doctrines of the gospel, and evinces the guilt of our nature, and the forbearance of God. An

enlightened recorder of this world's history, could not select a more appropriate motto than, "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." These considerations "seem forcibly to recommend a settled habit of contemplating the works of God with a devout and Christian eye; a habit of surveying them, not merely as objects of superficial curiosity, or of scientific research; not merely as teeming with proofs of power, and of benignity, and of exquisite design: but, as declaring the holiness, the justice, and the mercy of God; as corresponding, by a train of manifest and accurately adjusted relations, with the condition of fallen beings stationed under a dispensation combining penal and moral discipline with purposes and means of grace; as preparing mankind for the cordial reception of the plan of redemption through Christ, and as attesting the truth of the Gospel."

The wint'ry storms that fiercely sweep,
And seem to rock the world:
The foaming, toss'd, and wreck-strewn deep
In wild confusion hurl'd;
Aloud declare—An angry God,
And man deserves his vengeful rod.

But list! A still small voice succeeds!
The Zephyr gently breathes:
It softly whispers—Mercy pleads,
And wrath his weapon sheathes.

While raging billows lash the shores,
The stream its liquid music pours.

Of love and wrath th' alternate sounds
  Salute the ear from far:
From lowest earth's unfathom'd bounds
  To heaven's remotest star.
God's works and word alike proclaim
The grace and justice of his name.

I need not remind my reader how admirably this subject is handled by BUTLER, in his "Analogy of natural and revealed Religion," and by the Rev. T. GISBORNE, in his recent volume, "On the Testimony of Natural Theology to Christianity."

All the recollections which I have of P—— seem to combine their rays to illustrate the ways of God to man, and to elevate the mind above the contemplation of second causes to the great first cause of all events in the universe. While it is an eminent privilege of the Christian believer to walk by faith and not by sight; yet, in another sense, it is an imperfection attached to his earthly condition, which will be entirely obviated when he shall no longer see through a glass darkly, but face to face; and know even as he is known. Now it soothes his anxieties, calms his fears, and exhilarates his hopes, to believe that God is at work on his right hand and on his left, though he cannot perceive him: hereafter it will be an unfailing source of joyful admiration, to be-

hold without an interposing veil the whole machinery of eternal Providence, and the hand which formed its wheels within wheels, and directed all their movements. P—— was accustomed to take long journies on foot. On one of these he found himself at the close of day within sight of the town where he designed to rest for the night. Wearied by the length of his day's walk, he sought refreshment, as he was wont, in striving to beguile his fatigue and the remainder of his road by meditations on the comforts and mercies of the *present* moment. This was his habitual practice, and its advantages should recommend it to every stranger and pilgrim upon earth. Were we as sedulous to discover and render prominent the blessings with which we are favoured at any given point of time, even were it the darkest and most calamitous hour, as we are to dwell upon its immediately oppressing or its anticipated griefs, our burdened and sinking minds would acquire renewed strength to meet the present or the impending trial. This remark, trite as it may be, admits of an important application to the journey of life at the various stages of which our progress is apt to be heavy, and impeded by an indulged and repining sense of existing evils, or by the expectation of others which may await us. "I am a stranger in this part of the country," thought our pious traveller as he

approached the town, "and I might have no place where to repose my weary frame till the morning. How kind and admirable is that arrangement of God, whereby one class of men are disposed and enabled to procure a livelihood by opening their houses for the accommodation of travellers! Their's indeed must be a most unpleasant and ensnaring mode of life; and they are therefore entitled to our gratitude and commiseration. Let me be thankful to God and to them, that at such an hour as this, when night is advancing and my powers are exhausted, I am relieved from all anxiety about procuring a safe resting place and suitable refreshment."

It is both curious and instructive to notice the thoughts of different men in the same circumstances, and to mark how every object receives its colouring from the medium through which it is observed. That extraordinary man, Dr. Johnson, in whose character was united so much of baser metal with much of sterling worth, that one, who takes his principles of thought and action from the ungarbled and uninterpolated writings of inspiration, reads his memoirs with more painful astonishment than pleasurable admiration, looked at an inn with a very different eye from my humble friend. "In contradiction to those who, having a wife and children, prefer domestic enjoyments to those which a tavern affords, I have heard

him assert," says Sir JOHN HAWKINS, "that a tavern chair was the throne of human felicity." "There is nothing," said he to BOSWELL, when they stopped together at Chapel House in Oxfordshire, "which has yet been contrived by man by which so much happiness is produced as by a good tavern or inn." Surely it is a prostitution of language, as well as a dangerous incentive to the worst passions of our fallen nature, to affix the name of happiness to that description of enjoyment which is derived from unrestrained selfishness and self-indulgence. But as all earthly happiness is comparative, I can readily conceive that a natural man, (and I use the term, in its scriptural sense, for one who continues in the same moral and spiritual state in which he entered the world,) may find "a tavern chair the throne of human felicity." There he is best able to steep his mind in intoxicating forgetfulness of both temporal and eternal care, and of all that he owes to God, and to his own imperishable soul; and this is the acknowledged aim of those, who, from predeliction frequent a tavern. That is the school where thousands learn violently to break the hallowed ties of family and home, and habitually to forget or contemn the great purposes of their being. With the blunted sensibilities with which such men return to domestic and social scenes, we need not wonder that they

can fully sympathize with SHENSTONE'S melancholy stanza, which frequently was on the lips of JOHNSON,

> "Who that has travell'd life's dull round,
> Where'er his stages may have been,
> May sigh to think he still has found
> The warmest welcome at an Inn."

It may be worth while here to mention the very singular but holy desire of ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON. He used often to say, that if he were to choose a place to die in, it should be an inn, it looking like a pilgrim's going home, to whom this world was all as an inn, and who was weary of the noise and confusion of it. He added, that the officiousness and care of friends was an entanglement to a dying man; and that the unconcerned attendance of those that could be procured in such a place would give less disturbance. He obtained what he desired; for he died at the Bell Inn, in Warwick Lane, London.*

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* Of this great and good man Bishop Burnet said, "He had the greatest elevation of soul; the largest compass of knowledge; the most mortified and heavenly disposition that I ever saw in mortal; he had the greatest parts as well as virtues, with the perfectest humility that ever I saw in man; and he had a sublime way of preaching, with so grave a gesture, and such a majesty of thought, of language and pronunciation, that I never saw a wandering eye where he preached; and have seen whole assemblies often melt into tears before him: and of whom I can say with great truth,

P—— entered the door of the first respectable inn that presented itself; and though faint with fatigue, his feelings reached a higher degree in the scale of enjoyment, than is ever attained by men who resort to taverns with the sensual taste of JOHNSON and his friends. Having taken a simple repast, and being disposed to improve his evening hours to some good purpose, he called the landlord; "I have a mind to read, landlord, can you accommodate me with a book?" "I am sorry to say, sir, we have no books in the house." "No books! What, not one of any description?" "Why yes, sir, I forgot: there is one old large book lying on the table on the landing-place of the stairs, which nobody ever reads." "Allow me to see it." The cumbrous volume was brought and laid before the traveller. "It is a Bible," said he, as he opened its long closed pages. "I believe it is," rejoined the inn-keeper. "But do you never read it?" "No, sir, I have given that up many years." "Given up the reading of the Bible, my friend, what may be your reason for that? Do you

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that in a free and frequent conversation with him for above two-and-twenty years, I never knew him speak an idle word, or one that had not a direct tendency to edification; and I never once saw him in any other temper, but that which I wished to be in the last minutes of my life."

not believe its truth? Do you doubt its being the word of God?" "I believe it all, and therefore I cannot read it. It *condemns me* in every leaf of the volume." "Condemns you! If indeed you live in sin, walking according to the course of this world, and throwing off the restraints of religion, it does indeed condemn you: but not more than it does every man whose principles and conduct are opposed to the will of God. All such lie under a fearful condemnation. They are exposed to the curse and penalty of God's violated laws." "It goes further than that, sir; for it condemns me *by name. Publicans* and *sinners* are always ranked together, and there is not a word of good, or of encouragement for them in the book." His guest smiled at the man's erroneous interpretation and application of the word *publican*, and explained its scriptural meaning to be *a farmer or collector of taxes*, an office which the Jews held in the greatest abhorrence, and which was commonly held by men of rapacious and oppressive dispositions. The landlord, however, did not readily concede his own interpretation of the term, which from long custom had been affixed to his profession. "But even if the name did in a scriptural sense belong to you," said P——, "you are mistaken in your conclusion, that men of the class of publicans are shut out from the divine mercy. St. Matthew was

originally a publican; yet our blessed Saviour called him to follow him as one of his chosen disciples, and from his pen we have in this holy book the Gospel which bears his name. Zaccheus too was "chief among the publicans," or one who farmed some portion of the revenue, and employed others to collect it. His conduct had too fully justified the odium in which men of his stamp were held. But salvation came to his house and to his heart. His course of life was changed, although we have no authority for supposing that he renounced his secular employment. He lived to adorn it, and to exhibit an example of integrity and humanity; and became as eminent for his justice and charity as he had been for his rapacity and oppression; thereby shewing, that the duties of a station which *must* be filled, do not of necessity involve the sacrifice of upright principles; and that in any employment, not ostensibly, confessedly, and necessarily unrighteous, a man may be a faithful servant of Christ, and a kind brother to every member of the great human family. Jesus did not disdain the appellation so reproachfully given to him of the "friend of publicans and sinners." He was frequently in their company, and they thronged to hear him. Not that he ever loved or winked at their offences; but he found them miserable as well as sinful. Their consciences

were burdened; and under a sense of guilt which his heart-exploring addresses excited in their minds, many of them embraced his gospel, renounced their evil ways, and entered the kingdom of heaven before their more moral and decorous countrymen, whose ostentation and hollow virtue inflated them with pride, that looked scornfully down upon the lowly Saviour, and with a conceit of superior wisdom that treated his doctrines as foolishness. The *publican's* humble mien and self-abasing prayer were graciously accepted by the Lord and rejoiced in by angels, while the haughty, self-approving *pharisee*, with all his boasted excellence, was rejected. But I hope you go to church, my friend?" "No: I never cross its threshhold for the same reason that I never open the Bible. What the minister reads and what he preaches likewise condemn me. And besides, I think it altogether inconsistent with my employments to attend to any of the observances of religion. It is impossible for a publican to be religious." "Nay, but what will you say, if I shew you a passage in this book of God, which not only declares that even you *may* be religious, but affirms that you were fixed in your present situation for that very purpose?" "I cannot believe that there is any such passage. Some years ago I searched the Bible from beginning to end, and, as I said before, I found

nothing in my favour, but all against me, from Genesis to Revelation." "Allow me to ask, how you became master of this house? Is this your native town, and were you brought up to your present way of living?" "No: I was born in London, where I lived some years, and followed the trade of a baker. But by chance coming down here I got acquainted with my wife, who was then a widow and kept this inn. We married, and here I have remained ever since." "Do not call it *chance* that led you here. It was Providence; and your change of employment and abode was a very remarkable event in your life. Now open this book, the truth of which you profess to believe, and read out to me from the 24 to the 28 verse of the 17 chapter of the Acts of the Apostles." He opened it and read aloud the passage. "Now attentively consider those words. "God, that giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from any one of us: for in him we live, and move, and have our being." You are here told that God has the controul and direction of all human events; that he exercises a direct and specific regard

to the particulars of your life; that he determines its times and periods; and that he appointed the bounds of your habitation. Here then you are by the immediate arrangement of God. Nor is that all. The end of that arrangement, his design in placing you here is, that you should seek the Lord, feel after him, and find him. He has not only not put it out of your power to serve him by stationing you in this inn, but he has called you to it, that herein you may honour him and seek your own true happiness." For some moments the man stood in silent wonder, looking alternately at the open volume, and its interpreter. "Sir, you are right, and I am wrong. It is even so as you say. I am concerned at my own ignorance and folly, and will strive to mend my ways, to go to church, and read the word of God." The landlord spent the evening in conversation with his guest, which under the blessing of God left an indelible impression on his mind, that issued in the happiest consequences: for he seriously entered upon the study of the holy scriptures; devoutly and regularly resorted to the house of God; and in the difficult station he held, laboured to serve and please God through his remaining days. When our traveller on the following morning, was about to resume his journey, and requested to pay his reckoning, "No," said his host, "you shall not pay me one

farthing. You have done for me more than I have done for you, and more than I can ever repay you for." They exchanged a hearty and affectionate *farewell*, and parted.

The business of a publican is perhaps almost the last which a man of an enlightened and a tender conscience would choose. Its temptations are too numerous and too strong to be withstood by ordinary virtue. Its profits are not in most cases derived either solely or chiefly from accommodating travellers with opportunities of taking needful repose and refreshment: but its gains are mainly accumulated by the facilities it affords for the unrestrained indulgence of those passions, which, though sometimes falsely denominated social qualities, are the bane of human happiness. Yet I have known inn-keepers, who on a change having been effected by divine grace upon their hearts, have adorned an occupation, in the pursuit of which every difficulty is to be encountered in the discharge of moral, and much more of religious obligations. A systematic opposition to vice in every form; a prohibition of blasphemy and obscenity; a strict adherence to seasonable hours; and an observance of family devotion; militating as they apparently do against the pecuniary interests of the publican, have eventually been found even to promote those interests, by drawing the countenance and cus-

tom of the many, who still happily range themselves on the side of virtue and religion, and by checking or keeping aloof those through whom the publican is in danger of losing his property, his license, and his character.

Why must an inn be made a school for vice, for infidelity, and insubordination? Why must the labouring man, if at the close of his day's toil he feels the need of some beverage more supporting than what his cottage affords, be exposed to the corrupting atmosphere, the pestilential moral vapours, which usually fill the tap-room of a public house? Would that the masters and mistresses of these places of common resort seriously reflected, that they are to no inconsiderable extent responsible for the doings and the sayings of their guests; and that in the great day of universal account, they, if "weighed in the balance and found wanting," will be exposed to no small aggravation of the sentence pronounced on their personal delinquencies, from having been partakers of and gainers by other men's sins.

The last recollection I have of incidents in the life of this worthy man is, perhaps, not the least worthy of being recorded. He was pursuing another journey on foot, and in the heat of the day had retired to the shady recesses of a thicket for an hour's rest and meditation. He loved the solitary hour which

many shun; and with a taste refined by long and intelligent study of those pages, from which poets often borrow their finest images, and catch a portion of their fire, desecrated as those images too frequently are to aid an impure and infidel fancy, and destined as that fire is to burn upon an unhallowed altar, he delighted to follow COWPER's Christian

> "To regions where, in spite of sin and woe,
> Traces of Eden are still seen below;
> Where mountain, river, forest, field, and grove,
> Remind him of his Maker's power and love."

There, as he ate a plain morsel which he carried with him, his heart was filled with sentiments of gratitude correspondent with those of the poor widowed tenant of an Irish cabin, who was overheard by an eminent prelate to say, while sitting at her oaken table with a brown loaf upon it, "What all this, and Christ besides!" Again he fell musing on the ways and works of God, and particularly upon the many occurrences of his own life, wherein he had witnessed the unequivocal interferences of the Almighty. Affectionate love and adoring admiration pervaded his soul, and in the supposed solitude of the woody glen he was on the point of giving utterance to his emotions, when he heard the sound of footsteps and a human voice. It was a voice of distress. He looked round and observed a man at a short distance walking in a

manner which betrayed great mental agony. He was wringing his hands, and venting in broken sentences the sorrows of his burthened heart. His whole appearance was the true portrait of despair. P— rose from his seat, and walked gently towards him. The stranger started as he approached, and with a hurried step turned to another part of the wood. He was stopped by the kind voice of P——, who apologized for intruding upon him, and, in a manner which won the stranger's heart, begged to know the cause of his distress. The heart that knoweth its own bitterness, and is loth to let a stranger intermeddle either with its joy or its grief, is like a casket of exquisite workmanship, whose secret spring yields to a gentle and delicate pressure, but eludes the hand of violence. "Your heart seems bursting with anguish, my friend." "Yes, I am the most unhappy wretch under that sun. I am weary of a life that proves only a quick succession of miseries." "But sorrow told, is sorrow lessened. Though we are unknown to each other, you need not fear to tell me your griefs. I am no novice in the school of affliction, and I have there learned what can be learned no where else, to feel for and with the oppressed and labouring soul. I can weep with them that weep." "Oh! Sir, you overcome me. I had resolved to seal my woes in silence never to be broken. You seem to have pro-

fited by lessons which I have thrown away. And shall I tell you my distresses? My soul shudders as I attempt the recital. Yet there is a something in you that draws it forth. I am a tradesman in the town whose lofty steeple you may discern from the adjoining hills. There for many years I pursued a lucrative trade, and the blessing of God abundantly crowned my pursuits. A rising family around me filled my house with domestic enjoyments. I loved the ways of God, and endeavoured to lead my children in those ways to heaven. But at length my worldly affairs took an unfavourable turn. Loss succeeded loss. Affliction, instead of driving me to God, drove me from him. I sought to forget him, who, I was tempted to think, had forgotten me; and I strove to drown the sense of my daily increasing troubles by intemperance. I lived in a bewildering dream, till a fresh tremendous blow roused me to an overwhelming consciousness of my misery. Divine and human resources all appeared to fail me. I had no earthly friend who was able to rescue me from my troubles. I had forsaken God, and he had forsaken me. I thought hell itself more tolerable than earth, and in an hour of gloomy despondency I tore myself from my family, and hastened to this wood, where, when you just now discovered me, I was about to put an end to my present intolerable existence.

Your appearance has delayed the execution of my design: but it has not quieted my mind, or altered my ultimate resolve." "Be calm, my friend, be calm, and let me reason the matter with you." "I gratefully acknowledge your kindness: but I am fully persuaded that I am rejected of God, and that in the whole of my present circumstances, not one thing can encourage hope, and rescue me from despair. I have sunk in temporal sorrow below the reach of any human hand. I have sunk in sin below the reach even of divine mercy. Justly excluded from the favour of a holy God, I have no refuge left. It is better for me to die than to live, and at once to feel the whole amount of that misery which is my inevitable lot. Every object in the present world, and even the loveliest scenes amidst the works of God frown upon me, and seem to reflect the wrathful countenance of my justly offended Maker." "Nay, your case is not so desperate as you suppose. I hope yet, with God's blessing, to calm your mind." "Kind as you appear, you can never do that, unless you can point some more solid ground of hope, than I am able to perceive: unless you can shew me some evidence that I am not a cast-away." "I do not despair of leading you to the discovery of that ground of hope, and of some satisfactory testimony that God has not cast you off. Only hear me patiently. You

came to this wood for the dreadful purpose of self-destruction. Another hour, perhaps a few minutes more, and your hand would have committed the awful deed. You might now have been in hell, beyond not only the hope, but the possibility of salvation. You were in the very same peril as the Philippian jailor. Now who directed me to this particular spot at the precise time when I met you? I might have paused on my journey at any other part of the road, or have entered this wood at any other quarter. It was, unquestionably, the gracious providence of God that brought me hither, and occasioned our meeting; and as St. Paul said to the jailor, when about to fall upon his own sword, so would I say to you, 'Do thyself no harm.' It is to me, and should be to you, a most encouraging evidence of the still unexhausted compassion of God towards you, that you have so surprisingly been withheld from accomplishing your horrid purpose. Return to your home and your family. Cast yourself upon the free mercy of the Lord in deep self-abasement, and plead his promise,—whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast him out. You may yet see brighter days on earth, and in the next world may have your portion with that "great multitude which no man can number, who came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, and are now before

the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." The man, with mingled emotions of hope and terror, wept bitterly. P—— took him by the arm, led him out of the wood, and proceeded at his side along the road towards the town, pouring into his wounded spirit the rich promises of the Word of God to a penitent backslider; and such his tears and humiliating acknowledgments declared him to be. The good old man accompanied the stranger to his home, tarried with him till the morrow, and then left him humbly resolving to walk penitently before God, meekly and submissively to bear the afflictions of life, and to make more strenuous efforts for the recovery of his affairs. Nor were his endeavours vain. God spared him many years, and by his grace rendered him an illustrious example of humility, faith, and active obedience.

In these memorials of my old friend I may have somewhat varied the language of the original dialogues, but the facts, and the substance of these dialogues are faithfully recorded as I had them from his lips. Venerable man! he now is a happy tenant of that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where his purified affections were previously fixed, during nearly the three-fourths of a century which he sojourned on earth. The recollection of his form and countenance, his virtues and his piety, will remain

with me while life shall last: nor can I desire for my reader and myself a temper of mind more surely productive of peace and joy, than that which he manifested. "In the day of prosperity rejoice, and in the day of adversity consider." It incalculably adds to the enjoyment of life's brighter days, to contemplate all their smiles as so many shining expressions of the divine benignity and goodness, and as foretastes of that overflowing cup of "joy unspeakable and full of glory," which the Saviour will give to all his people in the kingdom of his Father and their Father. Adversity drops many of its sterner forms when its subject is led devoutly to *consider* its origin and end: originating, as it does, in the will of that God who is too wise to err in his choice of means; and designed, as it is, to nurture the growth of christian graces and virtues in the soul, to promote its meetness for heaven, and to endear those promises, which include all that God can give or man can enjoy.

THE MOURNER.

Miss A—— was the beloved relative of some of my early friends, and deservedly possessed the warm affection of the wide circle in which she moved. She was intelligent, for she had bestowed great pains on the cultivation of her understanding. She was amiable, for she sought and acquired friendship by every effort to please and assist others, and she retained that friendship by urbanity and tenderness. Her moral character was looked up to as a model, and her constant and devout attendance in the house of God gave her the reputation of exalted piety. In their eyes, who measure all moral and religious attainments by that standard, the authority of which is acknowledged by the world, because it so little and so leniently interferes with its favourite principles and pursuits, Miss A—— would appear a very paragon of excellence, which could admit of no improvement. Nor was her own mind disturbed by any doubts of the correctness of her life in the sight either of God or of man. We meet with a very numerous class of persons of this description. Such was the young ruler, whom our Saviour, when he had listened to his in-

quiry after eternal life, beheld and loved. Such, too, was the intelligent scribe, to whom our Lord said, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." Clothed in the fair robe of virtue, unsullied with a stain in their own and the world's estimation; standing out amidst their friends as companions who gladden life by their unoffending vivacity, and improve it by their high sense of decorum and honour; active in every pursuit which can interest a benevolent and charitable mind; the zealous defenders of established order, and the reader oppugners of every thing wearing even the semblance of innovation; they live to be admired by the few who imitate, and the many who applaud, though they will not follow, their brilliant course; and they die to be eulogized in terms that would leave no doubt in his mind, who reads the inscription on their tombs, that they were the righteous, who needed no repentance, and the whole, who needed not a physician. It is painful to disturb the settled complacency which pervades the breasts of persons in whom every one sees so much to esteem, and so little the propriety of which even to question. To make the attempt is reprobated as arrogant and uncharitable. But the Holy Scriptures, rightly understood, awaken many anxious doubts of the identity of these applauded models, with those exhibited on its unerring pages as exemplars of Christian excellence. It will be found, upon close

examination, that the virtues which fill up the strong and prominent outline of their character, are deficient when brought to the high and uncompromising standard of God's revealed will. Their humility is not that prostration of soul, in the presence of infinite purity and justice, which is produced by an enlightened perception of the vast extent of the requisitions of the moral law, the exceeding evil of sin, and the defectiveness of their professed obedience. Acknowledging the lapsed state of the human race, they yet loudly protest against those views of man, which represent him altogether corrupt and debased, "very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore, in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation.*" Their vision is so deluded, that they take a mass of splendid ruins for a still magnificent and stately temple, which, though it betrays some of the effects of time and accident, and is occasionally defiled and profaned, yet is worthy of admiration from the spectator, and of the approving smile of its great architect. They can talk of the goodness of human hearts, the innocence of uncorrupted minds, and the sufficiency of human merit. Their conception of the

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* See 9th Article.

doctrine of atonement for sin, by the blood of Christ, is equally imperfect. They gaze upon the cross, and perhaps weep at the remembered agonies of Him who bled there. But this often results more from a refined taste, and natural sensibility, than from a heart touched and softened by the hand which was nailed to the accursed tree. They regard its virtue as simply designed to be thrown into the scale with their own, to compensate any deficiency which may and must arise from the unavoidable defectiveness of their mortal state. They do not look with thankful and overflowing hearts upon the blood that streamed upon Mount Calvary, as to "a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness," wherein they may and need to be cleansed from the daily and hourly defilement of their lives. They have no ever-tender conscience, which requires an incessant application of "the blood of sprinkling" to give it peace. On the contrary, their slight and unfrequent qualms of conscience find a ready quietus in the imaginary preponderance of their good works, or in the supposed atoning efficacy of bodily suffering, or of some self-imposed penance. The erroneous opinion which they form respecting their spiritual state, induces them either indignantly to repel, or lightly to regard, the asserted necessity of a renovation of their hearts by the power of the Holy Spirit. "This," say they, "may be requisite for the

heathen, or for those who have plunged themselves into the depths of iniquity: but wherefore do you urge it upon us, who, by baptism, have been regularly admitted into the christian church, and from infancy have been nurtured in the love and practice of religious duties?"

The accommodating system adopted by this class of religionists makes no resistance to that conformity to the world which God forbids, while it sets forth, as preeminently desirable, and to be purchased at any cost, that "friendship of the world" which "is enmity with God." How can these receive with thankful joy the offered garment of a Saviour's righteousness? The very mention of it excites a contemptuous smile; and the doctrine of a sinner's acceptance and justification before God, only by faith in the obedience and death of the divine Mediator, they reject with horror, as the true essence of licentiousness, and as though it had not the least authority or countenance from the Word of God, and had not been adopted as a leading* article of religion by all the reformed

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* "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings: wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."—Eleventh Article.

churches of Christendom. There is both a simplicity and a majesty in the essential truths of the "glorious Gospel of the blessed God," from which human pride shrinks with disdain and aversion.

O how unlike the complex works of man,
Heav'n's easy, artless, disencumber'd plan!
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;
From ostentation as from weakness free,
It stands, like the cerulean arch we see,
Majestic in its own simplicity.
Inscrib'd above the portal, from afar,
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,
Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quick'ning words—BELIEVE, AND LIVE.
Too many, shock'd at what should charm them most,
Despise the plain direction, and are lost.
Heav'n on such terms! (they cry with proud disdain)
Incredible, impossible, and vain!—
Rebel, because 'tis easy to obey;
And scorn, for its own sake, the gracious way.
These are the sober, in whose cooler brains
Some thought of immortality remains;
The rest too busy, or too gay to wait
On the sad theme, their everlasting state;
Sport for a day, and perish in a night;
The foam upon the waters not so light.

Miss A——, however, was led to suspect the error of her system, and the incompleteness of her own

righteousness. This suspicion was not thrown into her mind by any lucid and forcible statements from the pulpit of her parish church. The splendid and crowded auditory that thronged around that pulpit were not in the favoured situation of those whom the Psalmist mentions—"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound." Smooth things were preached unto them, and peace was whispered in their ears; and they departed from their single weekly visit to the temple of the Lord, well satisfied with the preacher and themselves.

Miss A—— was upon her knees, following the minister in the stated services of the day, when suddenly her mind was arrested by the force and spirituality of the prayers and praises which were being offered up at "the throne of the heavenly grace." They no longer appeared to her in that dry light in which she had formerly viewed them. Embodying so large a portion of the Holy Scriptures, it seemed as if the Church spake to her in the language of the Lord Jesus—"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." She could accompany the minister no further. It instantly flashed upon her mind, that for years she had been acting the part of a hypocrite, in the habitual utterance of words, the sense and force of which she had never felt. The painful conviction followed her from the house of God to her

home and her chamber, and fastened immoveably on her soul. An unalterable melancholy settled in her countenance, and exhibited a true index of what was passing within; and every effort made by her friends to dissipate the gloom of her spirit, either by gaiety on the one hand, or by religion on the other, were alike fruitless. Labouring under the burden of guilt, which she deemed unpardonable, and which rose up before her in gigantic and increasing magnitude, she could never be persuaded to bend her knee or to open her lips in supplication for its remission. She "restrained prayer before God." An excruciating and incurable malady into which she fell, seemed to her an immediate judgment from the Almighty, and an unequivocal expression of his just and inexorable anger.

A valued friend of mine, and an eminent minister of the established church, visited her, and endeavoured, but in vain, to encourage her approach to the Saviour. In a long conversation I had with her, I placed before her the boundless mercies of "God, in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "I thank you for all your kind suggestions," she would say, "but those mercies must have a limit, and they stop before they can reach me." I spoke of our Lord's undistinguishing invitations, but none of them brought consolation to her heart. I pointed to the blood of Christ as

cleansing from all sin, and to his righteousness as securing the believer from the heavy penalties of the violated law; but her "soul refused to be comforted." She feared to dishonour God by doubting the infinite value of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and its competency to meet any case but her own. There were in her, however, many evidences that God's thoughts were not as her thoughts. Her abasement of soul on account of sin; her humble and grateful attention to those who unfolded to her the riches of God's free grace; and her meek and patient endurance of the tormenting pains of her complaint, which never extorted a complaint from her lips, were hopeful indications of the divine compassion. When the time of her dissolution drew nigh, she spent the last effort of exhausted nature in prayer, and then calmly expired.

Undoubtedly we may say there was "hope in her end." She passed away into his presence, who, while "he beholdeth the proud afar off," "will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax;" and who has left these words on record, "to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Let her sorrowful experience be heeded by the many who take up and are satisfied with the "form of godliness without the power thereof." The devotional services of our British Zion, consisting of the devout aspirations of patriarchs

and prophets, of apostles and evangelists, of saints and martyrs, are but a dead letter in the hands of the formalist. To the enlightened and humble supplicant for the grace of the Redeemer, they are inestimably precious. They breathe the true spirit of the returning prodigal, who, though duly sensible of his guilt, and self-condemned, yet stays not till he utterly perishes in his sins, but with an humble hope, and filial fear, resolves to arise and go to his Father.

To adopt the eloquent sentiments of a noble and reverend encomiast of our Liturgy, the prayers and thanksgivings offered in our national temples are "suited to the case of a being, once depraved and lost, but now penitent and preserved. They are fashioned to meet the wants of a soul, helpless in itself, and looking for strength, mercy, and safety, only through the atoning blood and perfect righteousness of a Mediator, granted to us by the sovereign benevolence of God. They pre-suppose the deadness and darkness of the human heart and understanding, and the absolute necessity of conversion and sanctification by the power and Spirit of God. They refer the contrite and heavy laden to the eternal faithfulness of Him, who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and guide the weak and desponding to the knowledge of those gracious purposes and designs of God, which are to be fulfilled and glorified in the all-sufficiency of

Jesus Christ. They unfold the character and duties of a Christian, as of one separate, both in heart and life, from the views, maxims, and principles of the world; and they are adapted to him as to a pilgrim and stranger, passing quickly, through a troublous world, to an eternal and blissful home in the vision of God!"

If the rigid self-scrutiny, which awakened Miss A—— from the delusive dreams of imaginary goodness and security, were followed by these enlightened views of our liturgical services, we should witness a mighty and blessed change in the moral and religious character of the millions, who still remain in connexion with the Established Church of our country. Then would our temples be filled with throngs, prepared unitedly to abase themselves at the throne of the heavenly grace, in penitential acknowledgment of the grievous remembrance, and the intolerable burden of their sins. In communion of heart, as well as of language, they would believingly plead the promises made unto them by their most merciful Father in Christ Jesus their Lord. The spirit of adoption would shed abroad in their hearts the love of their common parent, and excite in them a mutual affection so fervent, that they would appear to be one vast harmonious family. The instructions of a faithful pastor, with whom they had just approached the footstool of

God, would descend upon their opening minds like the dew and the rain upon the expectant earth. Glowing with hallowed fire, kindled at the altar of Jehovah, they would return to the bosom of their families, or go forth into the world, to diffuse, in a perpetually widening circle, the holy influence of virtues formed and nurtured by an unction from above. The spirit of grace and supplications, poured out upon their souls in the sanctuary, would accompany them to the closet and to the domestic shrine, and the habit of devotion, even in the absence of all its forms, would attend them through every scene and every employment.

MY FRIEND.

SHORTLY after I took up my abode under the roof of my tutor, he said to me, "Remind me of it, and I will seize an early opportunity of taking you with me to visit a valuable old friend of mine, who lives at the distance of a pleasant walk." Something in his manner excited my curiosity, and induced me very speedily to put him in remembrance of his promise, and to obtain its fulfilment. It was on a bright day in the month of March when we started for our walk. Our road lay along a winding valley formed by two ranges of well varied hills. The pastures were clothed with flocks browsing on the first grass of Spring: the rising wheat covered with a living green the ridges of the arable lands; and millions of swelling buds, waiting for warmer suns, and impatient to burst forth in foliage and bloom, relieved the otherwise barren aspect of the leafless woods. I surveyed with an inquiring and expectant eye each decent habitation on our route; but we passed by every dwelling which I could suppose to be the residence of my tutor's friend.

Instructive conversation rendered us unconscious of the distance, and we were several miles from the town before we deviated from the high road to C——, and turned off up a path, that seemed to be but little trodden by the feet of man. We made our way through a thicket, whose feathered inhabitants, by their number, and the freedom of their song, bespoke its remoteness from the busy haunts of human kind, and at last reached such a lodge* in the wilderness, as for its situation the author of the Task might have desired. The lodge itself might have supplied a *subject*, but not a *domicile* for the poet.

I saw before me a lonely cottage, more than half of which was a mass of ruins; and the other half did not promise to make long resistance to the hand of time. "There lives my friend," said my tutor, as we entered the wicket gate of the desolate garden. I silently followed him into the wretched hovel, admiring those holy principles, which led him to regard as a friend its humble tenant. A ragged boy was sitting within by the dying embers of a scanty fire. "Is your mother at home?" inquired my tutor. "No: there's nobody but I, and the baby, and grandmother." We proceeded up the tottering and broken staircase into a

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* See Cowper's Task, Book ii.

room, which in many parts gave ready admittance to the wind and rain. Two or three stump bedsteads, with a few rags for covering, furnished the comfortless apartment. Yet, perhaps, its nightly occupants reposed there in sleep more sound and refreshing, than that enjoyed by the children of fortune on costlier couches. We looked around and saw only the child, presenting in its unbroken slumber a lovely instance of the truth of this remark. A small closet, at the side of the chamber, with a broken casement, and without a door, drew our attention. There lay an object, the first sight of which made me shudder, and the impression of which years have not blotted out. It was a woman, laden with years, and consuming away under a loathsome disease. She was lying upon a heap of rags on the floor, half covered with some tattered linen, her head supported by a bolster of straw, and her principal coverlet was a piece of the rough outside packing-cloth used by clothiers in the West of England. So contracted was her body by disease, that she occupied but a corner of the closet. Her deeply sunk eyes, and haggard countenance, silently told of misery of no ordinary description. But on that face of misery, a complacent smile kindled as her pastor approached her side. The conversation which followed, unfolded the mystery of his calling her his *friend.* The light of divine truth had vi-

sited her understanding, and the Spirit of truth had impressed her heart. She expressed her cheerful resignation to the will of God, in whose name and character of a Father she greatly delighted; and, though in answer to our inquiry, she spoke of her bodily sufferings, no murmur nor complaint escaped her lips. In lowly dependence on the Saviour of sinners, she was patiently awaiting her change of worlds—"looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Her knowledge, indeed, appeared confined to the leading facts and principles of the gospel; but these had evidently served the great purpose of bringing home her soul to God. These supplied her with consolation equal to her sorrows, and with strength equal to her day. She knew but little, but she knew her God. Deplorable and destitute as were her outward circumstances, she was a temple of the living God, strikingly illustrating his condescending declaration: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." While her faithful pastor refreshed her memory by recalling to her mind passages of the word of God suited to her condition, she appeared to forget her pains; and, when he knelt by her side, and pleaded for her

at the throne of grace, the promised Comforter conspicuously poured into her soul a sweet foretaste of heavenly joy. A calm and settled peace filled her mind, and a hope full of immortality lighted up her faded eye.

It was not long before I paid a second and a solitary visit to the ruined cottage in the lonely glen. Her ghastly body was then much nearer to its resting place, the grave. Her soul stood on the verge of this world, prepared for flight to that bosom, where Lazarus and all the pious poor find an everlasting home of unspeakable glory. Very soon afterwards, as I sat in my study, the window of which gave an exquisite view of the valley that led to her hovel, the tolling bell announced that she had passed into heaven.

Natural benevolence may prompt a man to visit the habitations of the miserable, and hold forth a liberal and welcome relief to their temporal wants; but it is only the "heaven-born charity," inspired by the gospel, which can bring him to acknowledge as a friend, and love as a member of the same redeemed and adopted family, the pious child of squalid poverty, and the subject of loathsome disease. Christian, your Saviour may be found and served in scenes like this. (*Matt.* xxv.) In many a dark and lonely corner of this present evil world, you may discover some, to whom angels minister as being heirs of salvation, and with

whom you will rejoice to spend a blissful and a glorious eternity. Your ability to afford pecuniary aid may be painfully disproportionate to the wants which you will frequently find accumulated upon one individual. But, "she hath done what she could," was the delightful testimony, which he, by whom actions are weighed, gave of his approbation to one, whose memorial is never to perish. With the Bible in your hand, and the love of Christ in your heart, you may carry to the house of mourning, and to the pillow of its dying tenant, inconceivably more than wealth could purchase, when perhaps you may have little else to give. But, "whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."

THE THATCHER'S WIDOW.

ELIZABETH R—— was the widow of a thatcher, who left behind him a pleasing testimony, that he loved the ways of God; that the Bible was the guide and companion of his earthly pilgrimage; and that, as the best heritage he could give his children, he laboured to enrich them with such a knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, that they might be made "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." A wound, which he inflicted on his leg while pursuing his humble employment, in a very few days laid him in the grave. His widow, with her seven children, thus cast upon the world, immediately became the conspicuous objects of that care, which exercises a peculiar superintendence over the widow and the fatherless. She often spoke to me with tears of the amazing goodness of God, in enabling her to provide for her offspring, towards whom she evidenced a tenderness of maternal affection not often found in mothers of her lowly station. With equal tenderness she cherished the memory of her husband, and seldom

mentioned him without weeping. She became mistress of the village school, and gave to many the elements of that knowledge, which, if duly improved, will do for them what it did for her. But, in her way to the kingdom of heaven, she was called to pass through "*much* tribulation." Exemption from trials is no condition of the Redeemer's service. The world remark and wonder, and sometimes draw very erroneous conclusions from the fact, that religious persons are generally distinguished as much by their frequent and severe afflictions, as they are by their piety. They overlook the accordance of this fact with all the recorded dispensations of God towards even his most eminent servants in every age. They discern not the wisdom which ordains, the love which prompts, and the power which overrules this mysterious part of the divine government. They have no eye to perceive, that God is more glorified in and through the sorrows which he sends upon his people, than by all the prosperity which he showers upon those, who sometimes boast, that they make no profession of religion, and yet are more successful in life, and less troubled than the godly. More glory accrued to God from the beggary and extreme misery of Lazarus, than from the wealth and splendour of Dives. Even the pious friends of the great eastern patriarch, were misled in their judgment upon his case. "If

thou wert pure and upright; surely now he would awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous." But, behold "the end of the Lord!" The humility, faith, patience, and every grace of his suffering servant, were strengthened and displayed; the malice and machinations of Satan sustained a signal defeat; and God advanced his own glory, by the afflictions of Job, and by their issue.

Elizabeth R—— was the child of providence, nor was she less the child of sorrow. She was keenly distressed by losing successively three very promising children; but she was cheered by knowing that there was hope in their end. Towards the close of her life, she became a very grievous sufferer from a wen, or cancer, of an enormous size, which grew upon her breast, and rendered her an object of pity and commiseration. Under the gradual advance of this disease towards its crisis, which proved her death, she suffered long and greatly. But it doubtless was the means of drawing her nearer to the God of all consolation, and afforded an opportunity for the exhibition of the best principles. Long before this, indeed, she was a woman of prayer. Her children on their evening return from labour, often found her in some retired corner of their cottage in the attitude and employment of a supplicant at the throne of grace; and she was wont to spend many a sacred moment at

eventide in the same manner as did the contemplative Isaac before her.

Shortly after the providence of God fixed my habitation at S——, I discovered Elizabeth R—— to be a woman who feared and loved God, and who, in the diligent hearing and keeping of his word, was "looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." Humility was a prominent feature in her character. Every person spoke well of her except herself. While from many I often heard pleasing testimonies of her worth, from her own lips I never was pained to hear those frequent self-applauses, which are common in the mouths of many. They who are ignorant of the corruption of human nature in themselves and others, would have been astonished at her spontaneous confessions of her own guilt and unworthiness. When I called upon her in an almshouse, which was the asylum of her latter years, she would often mourn and weep over the wickedness of her heart. Not that she had any foul offence to charge herself with before men; but, in the sight of God, she felt and freely acknowledged herself to be a miserable sinner. "It grieves me to think," she would say, "of the wretched manner in which I serve the Lord. I cannot love and pray to him as I ought. This distresses me far more than the pains that I suffer in my body. But I do hate sin—I do hate those vain

thoughts that disturb my mind." I once asked her—"Seeing you have nothing of your own good enough to depend on for acceptance before a holy God, what is the ground of your hope?" She with much earnestness replied—"To whom can I go but to my blessed Saviour? He only has the words of eternal life." On her removal to the house of her children, a few weeks before her decease, that she might have the comfort of their affectionate attentions, I enjoyed many opportunities of witnessing the progress of her soul towards heaven. Her excruciating disease was then rapidly gaining ground. Till that period, her mind was often distressed by spiritual darkness, disturbed by fears and doubts, and molested by temptation. She may be truly said to have sown the precious seed of life in many tears; but, now she is reaping the full harvest in an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. But, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord; that obeyeth the voice of his servant; that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Her ultimate triumph over doubt and fear, holds out encouragement to mourners in Zion.

When I expressed my grief at seeing her suffer so keenly, she observed—"Yes; but ten times my sufferings would do nothing towards blotting out my sins. That can be done only by the sufferings of Christ."

She repeatedly disavowed all hope of pardon from any thing she ever did or suffered; and never was deluded by the too prevailing error of supposing, that severe temporal afflictions, either mental or bodily, constitute a kind of semi-atonement for transgression. "I hope that all my sufferings will be in this life," is the ambiguous sentiment uttered by many, who betray a lamentable ignorance of the end and exclusive virtue of the Saviour's "meritorious cross and passion, whereby alone we obtain remission of our sins, and are made partakers of the kingdom of heaven." Elizabeth R—— longed ardently for "the rest which remaineth for the people of God." "Is it," said I, "your excessive bodily pain, that makes you so long for heaven?" "No," she replied, "for though it would be a great mercy to be delivered from that pain, I chiefly wish to reach that blessed place, because I then shall be freed from the evils of my wicked heart." "What seems to you most desirable in heaven?" "The sight of my blessed Saviour."

Deeply sensible as she was of her unworthiness, and long as she had previously walked under a cloud, sighing for the light of peace, she now had no dread of death. "How great is God's mercy to you," I said, "that you do not fear to die. You know that death has a sting, and that sting is sin; and the strength of sin is the law, which shews us our guilt." "Yes,"

was her answer, "but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." It was her great grief, that her severe pains hindered her in prayer and meditation. She would say, "I long to see my Saviour, that I may serve him without sin, and without interruption." Her patient resignation was striking. "My pains are very great," she said; "but not my will, O Lord, but thine be done."

I offered to administer to her the Holy Sacrament—an offer which I never make to sick and dying persons, unless they evince an enlightened understanding of the nature of the ordinance, and are anxious to partake of it simply in affectionate and grateful remembrance of the Saviour's death, and as a means of grace and comfort, but not as a quietus to the conscience, or a passport to heaven. She manifested great thankfulness for my offer, adding, "I always loved to receive it. It lifted my heart to heaven, and I deeply grieved if ever my infirmities would not let me go to the Lord's table. It seemed like turning my back upon the command of my Saviour." At her desire, and a most interesting scene it was, to see her four children kneeling around their dying mother; her two sons, and two daughters, participated with us in the sacred feast: she sweetly remarking in the words of our Lord—"I shall take it no more with them till we together drink it new in the kingdom of my Father."

Her anguish of body was inconceivably great. "But," she was wont to say, "I trust the Lord will never leave me—never forsake me. He has brought me through many troubles, he will bring me through this." Though she did not fear death itself, yet her nature sometimes shrunk back from *the pains* of it. I remarked—"Even for these you will soon praise God; for the pains of temporal death will render the change from earth to heaven the more glorious." This comforted her, and she rejoiced, that Jesus had died to deliver her from the bitter pains of eternal death. The eye of her faith becoming still clearer as death drew nigh, was frequently fixed upon the River of Life, which is mentioned in the apocalyptic description of heaven. "Oh! that I could drink of that living water," she cried, "then I should be well. I long to drink of that river of the water of life. It seems as if I saw it flowing before me."

Whatever she might be called to endure, she felt confident that the promises of the gospel were enough to support her. "I had rather," she said, "suffer ten times more than all this, than be separated from my Saviour. In the midst of my most violent agonies, the words of Job are ever in my mind; 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.'" On one occasion, when I inquired how she was, she answered—"Sir, I cannot find one part of my body free from pain." "But the

time is short—you soon will be where there shall be no more pain." "I hope so. Indeed I can say, I have no fears, no doubts left." "Do you now enjoy more than usual comfort and peace?" "Yes, sir, I do. I have always felt myself a most wretched sinner. I never could pray as I wished, nor serve the Lord as I ought. This was my constant grief. This daily filled me with mourning. But for many years it has been my prayer, that, before I died, I might be enabled to rejoice in God my Saviour; and, now, blessed be his name, I do rejoice. My fears are gone. No doubts are left." During another visit I paid to her chamber, she said to me, "I desire to be within the gate of heaven. But I hope the Lord will give me patience for all I have first to go through." "When you do get within that bright gate, what of all you there shall see will most delight you?" "There will be every thing to delight me; but, especially, I shall rejoice to see"—and her tears flowed fast as she spoke,—"I shall rejoice to see my Saviour—his wounded side—his pierced hands—his head which was torn by the thorns—and all for me!"

On one other occasion she again complained of her sinfulness and unworthiness. I quoted the words of Isaiah, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money,

and without price. You feel that you have nothing to give in purchase of the pardon of that guilt, which occasions your complaints." "No, I have nothing—nothing to buy it with." "Then you see it is a free gift, and you will attribute to the Lord all the glory of your salvation." "I never can give him glory enough." She desired that her name might be put up with the public prayers of the congregation; but proceeded to say, that she would not consent to this unless her family went to the house of God. She scrupulously would not let them comply with the singular custom of all the other members of a family absenting themselves from public worship, when any one of them is publicly prayed for. There may be in the custom an appearance of tenderness and respect for the afflicted person; but, certainly, all, whose services are not needed in the sick chamber, should go and unite their own prayers with those of the great congregation, on behalf of their relative, and carry home, for the benefit of the afflicted, a portion of the instruction which they have been favoured to hear.

A few days before her departure, she derived much comfort from my repetition of the 23rd Psalm. "I have no fear of the dark valley," she said, "for the Lord is with me. I bless God that I have not neglected his service till now. A death-bed repentance must be dangerous. In youth and health is the time

to mind the business of the soul. But still, I am ashamed that I have served the Lord in so imperfect a manner. I place no dependence on myself; my righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Like every soul who is taught of God, and has imbibed the spirit of Christ, she felt for the dark state in which thousands live. They had her dying prayers—"O that the Lord may open their eyes before it is too late."

On the Thursday preceding her dissolution, she told me, that she had no trouble of mind. All was confined to the body. Her soul enjoyed unclouded peace and joy in believing the promises of the Word of God. She often remembered and repeated the words which fell from the dying lips of her own mother, and which were partly uttered by the Saviour on the cross, quoted from the 31st Psalm—"Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." On that same day she looked at me very earnestly, and said, "O sir, there is a great difference between life and death." The last time I saw this truly good old woman, I endeavoured to comfort her under her most dreadful sufferings, by directing her attention to the love and power of the Lord Jesus Christ; remarking, "He is a great, a glorious, an all-sufficient Saviour." "Yes," she replied, with an energy extraordinary for her reduced state of body, "he is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father,

the Prince of Peace." The agonies which she underwent, seemed, towards the last, to shut up the doors of her mind. Doubtless, in every moment of sensibility, the Lord manifested his presence with her soul; for the last words she was heard to utter, were—"The marriage supper of the Lamb! The marriage supper of the Lamb!"

Thus lived, and thus died, the Thatcher's Widow. Her life was a life of humble faith, and her end was peace. It may be asked, in what did Elizabeth R—— so differ from others, that she should be held up as an example? I answer, her *principles* were widely different from those of most persons, and she derived them from a different source. The principles, which in the majority of mankind give a form to the character, and a decided tenor to the life, are of a worldly nature and tendency, and originate in those false, though specious maxims, which pass current among men. Her's were of heavenly origin, for she drew them from the Bible: they were of a holy tendency, for they produced a sober, righteous, and godly life. Taught by the Spirit of God the evil of sin, "she sorrowed after a godly sort," when she discovered the bias of her nature towards transgression. An enlightened and enlarged understanding of the moral law, led her to form a lowly estimate of all her conduct. Seeing that she could not bring a single stone

towards laying the foundation of her eternal hopes, with simple faith and lively gratitude she built on Christ, as the sure and only foundation stone. Fair as her character stood with men, in sobriety, integrity, and in all the externals of religion, so that, if any dared, she might also have had "confidence in the flesh," she was fully prepared to harmonize with the Apostle—"What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ: yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Her moral deportment afforded a conclusive testimony of the practical influence of these truths, whenever they are received, not merely by the understanding, as constituting a theory to be maintained, but by the heart, as furnishing motives for the willing and cheerful practice of "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, and whatsoever things contain any virtue, and procure any praise."

There was also this essential difference between her and many others; that religion with her, as with the

primitive christians, was a matter of *experience.* She *felt* its power as well as acknowledged its authority and importance. She welcomed its descending and pervading influence upon her soul, and made it her prayer and her effort, that every affection and every power might be subjected to its controul. Nor was she of the number of those, who are contented to know and to converse about some scattered and unconnected fragments of christianity: she rather contemplated it as a perfect temple, reared by the great Architect, wherein to manifest his presence and unveil his glory; and wherein to meet his true worshippers, and hold with them a sweet and blissful communion. To enjoy this was the very summit of her desires. She could with propriety say, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Whereas, numbers are satisfied with speculative notions, which but indistinctly enlighten their minds, and leave their hearts cold, dead, and at enmity with God. They study to discover what is the smallest measure of duty which they may yield, and what is the lowest state of feeling in which they may rest, consistently with safety. They give to God only what they cannot withhold; but to the world every thing which they can possibly bestow. These few

remarks are enough to draw a strong line of separation and difference between the few who resemble Elizabeth R——, and the many who present to the eye no such resemblance.

It is sometimes confidently asserted, that such principles as this poor woman adopted, and such doctrines as she espoused, are not orthodox, nor accordant with the sentiments of the Church of England, but are imbibed either at the Meeting-house, or under the ministry of a certain class of clergymen, who retain all the peculiarities of Puritanism, though they occupy stations in the Establishment. It might, indeed, be sufficient to compare these religious views with the language of inspiration. If they run parallel with each other, no more need be said to establish the truth, to enforce the authority, and to illustrate the importance of such principles and doctrines. But it requires only a single eye, cleared from the film of natural corruption, and unobstructed by the mists of theological polemics, to discern, that the volume, which contains the formularies, and the accredited sentiments of our British Zion, may be correctly denominated, a compendium of evangelical religion. From this, and from the Holy Scriptures, and from no other source, did my humble friend derive her opinions.* From *principle*

* Her attachment was not the offspring of ignorance or superstition, nor of that popish bigotry, which ensures salvation

as well as from education and habit, she was firmly, and I may say affectionately, attached to the National Church. The sacred and venerable structure with which that church had provided her, was her beloved and constant resort: its services were her delight; and its ministers she revered and loved. No consideration ever induced her to leave that house of prayer, where she had ever sought and found the presence of Him, whom she was accustomed to call her "beloved Saviour:" and though towards the

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indiscriminately to all within, and denies it to all without, the pale of the Established Church. I remember calling at a cottage, in the first parish of which I was pastor, and found it inhabited by a couple in about their fiftieth year, whose swarthy countenances, stout limbs, and vigorous motions, bespoke perfect sanity of body. These cottagers I had inadvertently overlooked, as their dwelling was in a very sequestered corner. I endeavoured to draw their attention to those topics, which ought to distinguish and to consecrate a minister's converse with his people. In answer to a question I put to them, they told me, that their hope of heaven was founded on this, that they had always *kept to their Church*. To my great surprise, however, I soon discovered that they were wholly ignorant of my name and person. "What," said I, "have I been several months in the parish, and yet do you not know me? I fear this is a sign that you seldom go to the house of God." It was the fact. They had not crossed its threshhold since I had resided there, though they were within a few minutes' walk of the church, and their health and circumstances presented no impediment. Yet did these poor people rest their eternal salvation on their having *kept to their Church*.

close of life her perceptions of divine truth became more clear and vivid, they were substantially the same when I first knew her. Her wisdom was his gift who has said, "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

LADY M——.

LADY M—— was an accomplished woman of fashion. To a superficial observer, her life presented a wide and unbroken circle of enjoyments, as brilliant and as varied as rank and fortune could supply. Every day afforded her new delights, or brought back customary pleasures in a new form. Her character stood high with the world, for her splendid hospitality welcomed many to N—— Court; her affability gave ease to all who approached her; and her liberal charity drew forth the blessings of the surrounding peasantry. Her manners were highly fascinating. "In her tongue was the law of kindness:" not merely that glossy and smiling courteousness which is learned in the school of Chesterfield, and is regarded in the polite world as an essential accomplishment; but that cordial tenderness—that spontaneous and unassumed kindliness, which reaches the heart and captivates the affections. She never was forgetful of the courtliness becoming her rank, but her condescensions gave no pain. She was dignified without being repulsive, and complaisant without affectation. Her conversation was enlivened

with ready wit, and often unlocked and displayed the treasures of a mind well stored with general literature, and an extensive knowledge of the world, which she had viewed with an intelligent eye.

But Lady M—— was not in possession of happiness, though she had within her reach those ingredients which are imagined to compose the cup of earthly bliss. In the midst of that splendour by which she was encircled, when she thought that no eye was surveying her, I have seen by a glance her expressive countenance lose all its gaiety, and exhibit the index of a mind ill at ease. Deep thought gave a fixedness to her eye, and palid sadness clothed her hollow cheeks, except when a hectic flush, that treacherous colouring with which consumption beautifies its victims, betrayed the canker that was secretly preying upon her life. The recollection of her at such moments is associated in my mind with the reply which Dr. Johnson once made to his friend Boswell, who had said, that "things are done on the supposition of happiness: grand houses are built, fine gardens are made, splendid places of public amusement are contrived, and crowded with company." "Alas, sir," replied the great moralist, "these are only struggles for happiness. When I first entered Ranelagh, it gave an expansion and gay sensation to my mind, such as I never experienced any where else. But, as Xerxes

wept when he viewed his immense army, and considered that not one of that great multitude would be alive a hundred years afterwards, so it went to my heart to consider, that there was not one in all that brilliant circle that was not afraid to go home and think; but that the thoughts of each individual there would be distressing when alone."

> Oh, the dark days of vanity! While here
> How tasteless, and how terrible when gone!

Lady M—— sometimes appeared to find that distressing loneliness, even in the midst of enlivening company. When she sunk back into herself she seemed to experience an aching vacuity, which the whole world could not fill.

During one of her morning calls at the Parsonage, Dr. Young's Night Thoughts were brought into discussion. She seemed to have imbibed the very spirit of that assiduous, but disappointed votary at the shrine of this lying world, and spoke with rapture of his poems. I too expressed my admiration of his writings, and referred particularly to his sublime thoughts on the atonement.

> Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
> Through means that speak its value infinite!
> A pardon bought with blood! With blood divine!
> With blood divine of him I made my foe!

Persisted to provoke! Though woo'd and aw'd,
Blest and chastis'd, a flagrant rebel still!
A rebel, midst the thunders of his throne!
Nor I alone! a rebel universe!
My species up in arms! not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies;
Most joy'd for the redeemed from deepest guilt!

I added, however, that the perusal of Young generally left my heart cold; that he winged my imagination, but did not elevate my affections; that there was an indescribable chilliness in his compositions, which diffused over the soul a dreary melancholy. Lady M—— appeared struck with the agreement of my sentiments with her own, and looked to me with an inquiring eye to solve the difficulty. "It has been remarked," I said, "that the great Poet of the Night never recognized the invaluable and consolatory doctrine of the need and the attainableness of the promised influences of the Holy Spirit; and that this may account for that absence of hallowed and glowing feeling in his pages, of which a truly christian reader is painfully conscious." This observation produced in her considerable agitation, which she sought to conceal by instantly rising to depart.

We felt a lively concern for this interesting woman, and we felt it most when we noticed her demeanour in the house of God. No worshipper there was either more constant and timely in attendance, or more ap

parently devout in following the minister "with an humble voice to the throne of the heavenly grace." She had been educated, and through maturer life confirmed, in strong prejudices against those clergymen of the Established Church, who preach with fervour the doctrines, which are truly, though reproachfully, termed *evangelical.* Nor was she backward to express the suspicion and the dislike with which she viewed the promulgators of these *new doctrines,* "falsely so called." Yet was there in Lady M—— a happy inconsistency, which I fain would hope attaches itself to many, whom their lot in life keeps aloof from intercourse with men, whose honest aim is to tread in the path that is marked by the footsteps of patriarchs and prophets, of apostles and evangelists, of martyrs and reformers.* She had no distinct view of the doctrines which she dreaded, nor did she know the characters of the divines whom she condemned. Of

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* A gentleman of family and fortune, who, from the purest motives, took up the pastoral office, and became a faithful, laborious, and useful clergyman, acknowledged, that from his infancy to manhood, he had always connected with the term *Methodist*, which is so freely bestowed upon every man of serious and scriptural piety, the idea of something *monstrous*, both in principle and conduct; and that, when he first approached a church, whose minister was reputed "*Evangelical*," he expected to find the whole venerable and devotional order and services of the Establishment laid aside, and some wild and incongruous system substituted in their place!

this she gave a singular proof in her sedulous attention to my humble ministry. It was as curious as it was delightful, to compare her countenance, while she listened to a discourse from the pulpit, with that of an aged man, who commonly stood by the corner of her pew. In her look there was the steadfast and anxious gaze of one, who was hearing with a heart that trembled and shrunk at the discovery of its emotions, but which, like Lydia's, was being opened to attend to the things that were spoken. There was a pensive sadness that said, "This is truth — but it is painful truth." Nor seldom did her cheeks betray the traces of a tear, over which I hoped that angels might rejoice, as a token of that repentance, which was hidden from human observation. The old man's countenance I should have been pleased to see glowing on canvass from the pencil of a Raphael or a Reynolds. It formed a fine contrast with that of Lady M——. It concealed nothing. The hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of his heart, appeared there in succession, and every feature seemed to speak. He loved the truth, and lived under its sanctifying influence. Old R—— was tenant of a cottage, surrounded by a moat, which, in days of less refinement than the present, had been "the village preacher's modest mansion"—perhaps

> A man he was to all the country dear,
> And passing rich with forty pounds a year,

and realizing the best traits of Goldsmith's portrait of a country parson—a portrait which, in my boyish days, was perpetually recurring to my mind, and kindling an ardent desire, that, in after life, I might fill a similar station among my fellow candidates for immortality.

But to return to Lady M——. The *never-acknowledged* ardour of her soul for religious knowledge, discovered itself in a manner, which as much encouraged our hopes, as it excited our surprise. I officiated at another church, about three miles distant from N—— Court. The path thither lay across numerous fields, through a low, marshy country, whose clayey and adhesive soil very greatly added to the fatigue of pedestrian travellers. Yet, with every convenience at command, during a most inclement autumn and winter, and with a cough upon her, which, though unperceived by her, was making daily ravages on her constitution, she regularly walked to the church of L——, usually accompanied by her daughter and a servant, after having attended at our parish church. There, though a stranger, and of elevated rank, she with difficulty was persuaded to accept of any superior accommodation. She would often enter pews crowded by the poor population of a parish, which contained no genteel inhabitants, and there upon her knees, on the uncovered floor, set a dignified but humble example of devotion. She appeared absorbed in never vacillating

attention to the prayers and praises that were being offered up, and to the instructions of one, who had not seen half her years, and who was but a novitiate in the ministry of reconciliation between God and man.

On her yearly visit to the metropolis, we parted with her for ever. For ever!—I retract the words. Though amidst the changes of this mortal life, our lot was cast in another and a distant province, and we never met her again, I cannot but anticipate that we shall greet her amongst the countless millions of the redeemed before the throne of God. I sent her copies of the Rise and Progress of Religion, and the Refuge. She most kindly and thankfully accepted them, and promised to give them an attentive perusal. The rise of religion in her mind was obscured by many clouds, and its progress was impeded by all the formidable obstacles which rank and wealth could throw in her way; but I confidently hope that she found that blessed refuge, which is admirably pointed out in the latter mentioned volume. Within a few months afterwards she was called into eternity.

Many reflections are suggested by this little sketch of Lady M——. I must content myself with a few. "How *hardly* shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven." Wealth is of the number of those comprehensive blessings, which the corrupt heart of man often converts into an equally com-

prehensive curse. It presents not, indeed, impediments absolutely insuperable to the attainment of that kingdom, which is more frequently inherited by the poor of this world; but it throws up barriers of awful elevation, which no human and unaided power can surmount. They whom Providence has raised above the meaner cares, and grosser wants of life, would do well to inscribe that saying of our Lord, with its context, over every avenue to their hearts, and, in imagination, over every chamber of their mansions. It is more than probable, that had Lady M—— occupied a lower station in the scale of human society, her piety would have shed around her a clearer light, and would have illuminated a wider circle.

The charity that hopeth all things, where any ground of hope appears, is strongly appealed to in a case like this of Lady M——. "The day of small things" is not despised in heaven, nor should it be contemned on earth. The kingdom of God cometh not with observation. It makes many a conquest without the noise of victory. The appropriating standard of the cross is planted in many a department of the spiritual world, where few mortal eyes may have an opportunity of observing it. Still, however, we may well lament the loss accruing from such instances to the best interests of surrounding relatives and dependants.

So widely does the contagious influence of a baneful example spread, that we can afford to lose nothing of the power of that antidote, which might be efficaciously exhibited by the decided and consistent piety of those, who walk where every eye can see them, and the effect of whose example descends to the very lowest of the community.

Lady ——M was one of that class, a personal acquaintance with whom led Burke to say, "that to the great, the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions. They, too, are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain, and domestic sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of the imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to these, our often unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing on earth to hope or fear; something to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do; something to excite an appetite to existence in the palled satiety which attends on all

pleasures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight; and no interval, no obstacle, is interposed between the wish and the accomplishment."

VISITS TO A FARM-HOUSE.

THE recollections of College days, which recur at every turn of progressive life, are not only amongst the most interesting and fascinating memorials treasured in the mind, but in many instances are invested with a solemn sacredness, which redeems them from the oblivion into which they might otherwise gradually sink, and from the vanity which too commonly is inscribed upon our remembrances of the past. Were I to traverse my native land in its length and breadth, and then to launch from its shores, and cross the ocean which intervenes between it and the eastern and western hemispheres, I should find the companions of those days, who shared my joys and griefs, my hopes and fears, my walks and my studies, remotely scattered through the widening space, over which the church of Christ is extending its spiritual empire. My feet would be arrested at the premature graves of several, who, having just entered with glowing zeal, and lofty purposes, on "the work of an evangelist," were suddenly accosted with the summons, "Come up hither," and were removed to serve their divine

Master in a higher world, and in a purer temple. Their silent tombs would send home to my heart the admonition of their Lord and mine, sanctioned as it is by his application of it to himself: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work." With a few I should meet, who have failed of the fair promise of their earlier years, and whose goodness was as a morning cloud, and as the early dew that goeth away. Others I should exult to contemplate walking on elevated ground, guiding their flocks in the narrow path of salvation, and themselves pressing forward to that glory, to which they beckon and direct their followers. With two of this latter class it would give me unspeakable delight to review the times, and places, and circumstances, which recur as I transcribe the subjoined recollections. For they were my beloved companions in walks, of which nothing is forgotten but the transient fatigue that may have arisen from them; and, should these pages meet their eye, I doubt not but they will pleasurably retrace the paths we trod together in long past years, and dwell in not unprofitable reverie on the retrospect. "Happier hours than those," which were thus spent with them, "I never expect to see in this world. Very pleasantly did they pass, and moved smoothly and swiftly along. They are gone, but have left a relish and a fragrance

upon the mind, and the remembrance of them is sweet."

It was the last morning but one of the month of April, and such a morning as Thomson would have chosen to ramble forth and cull the flowers of poesy, when with H—— at my side, I quitted my College cell to perform my promise to the sister of Mrs. B——, that I would visit the abode of the latter. Bounding along in all the vivacity and vigour of youth, we quickly passed the walls, and towers, and spires of Alma Mater, and took the road to B——n. One in sentiment, taste, and affection; pursuing the same studies; and making our way through the initiatory discipline of the University to the same high office, we were at no loss for topics of discourse to beguile the length of our road. We loved to enthusiasm

> the boundless store
> Of charms which nature to her votary yields!
> The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
> The pomp of groves and garniture of fields;
> All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
> And all that echoes to the song of even;
> All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
> And all the dread magnificence of heaven.

Conversation, suggested and varied by the infinite diversity of objects, which met our roving eyes in every direction, and called up in more pleasing forms

the beauties of the sacred and of the classic page, flowed without effort or restraint. Our path was new to us. We were about to visit strangers, and little did we anticipate the lively interest with which in after years we should revert to the incidents of that day. We made pleasure subservient to usefulness, and often stopped to converse with the labourer as he paused from his toil; with the child as it was conveying a noon-tide meal to its father; and with the cottager as she sat at her door. We left with each an appropriate tract, to enlighten, to admonish, or to comfort them amidst the ignorance, the thoughtlessness, and the sorrows of their condition. Through our unacquaintedness with the direct road, we made a wide deviation from our proper course; and after having passed over many miles of ground, we began to despair of reaching our destination. We at length reached the brow of a verdant hill, crowned with nine lofty and luxuriant elms, and looked round if haply we might discover the dwelling which we sought. A column of smoke ascending through the calm atmosphere proved the friendly token that our journey and our wandering were at an end. We quickly descended to the sequestered vale, where stood the picturesque farm-house of Mr. B——. All the flowers of spring were blooming in the neat parterre through which we passed to the readily opened door. Though

strangers and unexpected, we were quickly relieved from every uneasy feeling by the open and liberal hospitality, which usually attends one's reception under the roof of a respectable English yeoman. Another and a superior order of feelings increased our welcome. He, who while on earth often retired to Bethany, and sanctified by his presence the abode of the little family whom he loved, had, unseen, but not unknown, entered here, and prepared a cordial reception for any who could speak of him and his salvation. Mrs. B—— received us with overflowing kindness as the friends of her beloved relative; but to my surprise did not open a letter of which I was the bearer. She afterwards told me that her sister's letters were too precious to be read with a divided attention. To that sister this was but partially known. On Mrs. B——'s part, the languor of a fatal disease had long interrupted their correspondence, and the real state of her mind was but imperfectly understood. From the time of our visit this became better known, and diffused through many kindred hearts a measure of the joy that angels feel, when the prayer of a soul, returning to its God, is heard in heaven.

Far advanced in a pulmonary consumption, which baffled all the skill of her medical attendants, Mrs. B—— was reclining on a sofa, receiving the tender caresses of her group of four beautiful

children, whose vigorous limbs and blooming cheeks formed an affecting contrast with the palid countenance and emaciated form of their mother. When we entered the parlour, one of them was tenderly pressing her mother's hand to her heart, and looking more than she spoke. There was a sweetness and simplicity in her manners that immediately won our regard, before we discovered the lovelier features of her character. These soon, but unobtrusively, attracted our notice. Once when she walked across the room to solicit my friend H—— to touch her long-closed piano, she seemed like one just ready to drop the burden of the flesh, and to enter on the joy and felicity of disembodied spirits. His hand and voice called forth the energies of her soul, and as she sat and selected portions of sacred poetry for us to sing, her pains and languor were forgotten. Two of her relatives were present, and aided our little choir as we sang

Children of the heav'nly King,
As ye journey, sweetly sing;
Sing your Saviour's worthy praise,
Glorious in his works and ways.

Ye are trav'lling home to God,
In the way the father's trod:
They are happy now, and ye
Soon their happiness shall see.

Shout, ye little flock, and blest,
You on Jesu's throne shall rest:
There your seat is now prepar'd,
There your kingdom and reward.

Nor did we omit our own favourite hymn, with which for several years we were accustomed to close our Sunday evenings at College, and which was exactly suited to the present moment.

When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies;
I bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.

Should earth against my soul engage,
And hellish darts be hurl'd,
Then I can smile at Satan's rage,
And face a frowning world.

Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow fall;
May I but safely reach my home,
My God, my heav'n, my all!

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heav'nly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.

Mrs. B——'s countenance was lighted up with joy as we sang these songs of Zion, and she seemed at a loss to express the peace and delight which reigned in her

breast. We saw that the name, the work, the promises, and the person of the Saviour were precious to her soul, and that these were the constant subjects of her waking thoughts, although the retiredness of her natural character, and her little intercouse with religious persons, were not favourable to her making them the themes of her discourse. Her's was that form of piety that shuns the gaze of men, and is sometimes matured in the shade before many know that either flower or fruit is there. Our conversation with her, according with the tenor of her private thoughts and feelings, seemed to draw aside the covering which till then had much concealed the work of God in her soul, and from that time she communicated with increasing freedom, though with not less modesty, the great things which the Lord had done for her.

Drawn with her family to attend the faithful and affectionate ministry of our beloved friend and tutor, at H—— G——, her mind was first roused to an inquiry into its state by an address from the Rev. D—— W——, which was the *only* sermon he ever delivered in that pulpit. She withdrew in much agitation, and for many days was very dejected. At home she lighted upon an old edition of Jeremy Taylor's Holy Living and Dying. This she read with intense eagerness, but it yielded her no comfort. It rather enlarged and inflamed the wound, which the two-edged sword

of the Spirit had made in her heart. As often as her infant family and the distance, which was considerable, permitted, she most gladly resorted to H—— G——. There she gradually obtained a clearer understanding of the way of pardon and reconciliation with God through the mediation of that Saviour, whose name ever after was as ointment poured forth, and she became warmly attached to her instructor. She loved to sit at his feet that brought good tidings of good, and published peace and salvation. But her pastor knew nothing of the effect of his ministrations; and often when he perhaps rode homeward with a heavy heart, such as ministers of the gospel are no strangers to, she retired gladdened by the joyful sound, and blessing God for enabling him to speak a seasonable word to her soul.

So naturally amiable, however, were her spirit and deportment in her several relations in life, that the change in her heart proceeded in a manner characteristic of the advance of that kingdom, whereof she was now being made a subject. It was "without observation;" so that even her nearest relatives knew little of its progress, and the prayers of one of her sisters were being answered in secret. It was a fulfilment of that remarkably gracious promise, "It shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and, while they are yet speaking, I will hear." A most en-

couraging instance this to the faithful minister of Jesus, who often "goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed," knowing not which shall prosper, this or that, and dejected lest all should prove alike unproductive of joy to himself, of saving benefit to his flock, and of glory to God. Angels may bear to know the entire result of that unobserved but ceaseless ministry which they are sent to exercise in the church of Christ, as ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation. But God perceives that the holiest and humblest of his servants on earth cannot safely be made acquainted with the full extent of the blessing with which he is crowning their labours. The knowledge of this would endanger their being exalted above measure.

Thus occupied at G—— farm, we counted not the hours, and lingered till the lengthening shadows reminded us of O——, and the distance we had to walk. Old Mr. B——, the father-in-law of the interesting invalid, as he crossed the adjacent meadow on our return, said, (and a manly tear stole down his florid cheek as he spoke,) "I have followed to the grave several of my own children, who in quick succession have been carried off by declines; and I see that it will not be long before I shall be called to follow my daughter-in-law to the same tomb." This hale intelligent old man survived the object of his tender

anxieties but a few years. He gave upon his death-bed a most decisive testimony that the gospel is the power of God to the comfort, the support, and the salvation of every one that believeth.

We returned by a different and nearer track, our minds surcharged with conflicting emotions of pleasure and pain. Sitting for rest and reflection upon the trunk of a fallen tree in a sequestered meadow, we lifted up our hearts to him, who was wont to retire apart from the crowd and his disciples to hold communion with his Father.

> Cold mountains and the midnight air
> Witness'd the fervour of his prayer.

We implored his grace to fix upon our minds an indelible and profitable impression of the scene we had just quitted.

Mrs. B—— had now for eleven months been excluded from the public means of grace. These ordinary channels of divine influence and teaching being closed against her, she drew nearer to the fountain of living waters; and though she most highly estimated the privileges she had lost, and often longed again to enter into the courts of the Lord, she was taught by her privation to rely less upon man, and more upon God. And, truly, this is both the chief end and benefit of affliction. It not only strips the

world bare, and exposes the insufficiency and emptiness of its resources, but also reduces the externals of religion itself, its forms and ordinances, to their proper level, and forces into full light, and raises to their due elevation and importance, those principles and exercises of the heart which constitute the very life and soul of true religion. Humility and love, faith and hope, may have a being and a sway in the soul, when health, and peace, and joy, diffuse around their exhilarating beams; but it is in sanctified affliction that those Christian graces, like the stars and planets, stand out to the eye in the fulness of their native lustre, when all other light is withdrawn. To be enabled to interrupt the groans extorted by the pangs of suffering humanity, by confessions of unworthiness and guilt, which justly merit deeper woes, and by acknowledgments of still granted mercies that outnumber even innumerable griefs; to love as a father the God who inflicts the chastisement; to hold fast the oath-bound promises of the Lord with the firm resolve of Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him: he also shall be my salvation;" and to cherish hope in Christ as the sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, are exhibitions of Christian virtue in its highest excellence, which owe their very existence, under God, to the occasion that calls them forth. "We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh

patience; and patience experience; and experience hope: and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

On the following Sunday the friend and minister, from whom her distant residence had so long separated her, called and sat with her two hours in delightful surprise at her advance in enlightened conceptions of divine truth, and in an experimental acquaintance with its efficacy to quiet the solicitudes of an awakened conscience, to detach the heart from the fondest and the strongest of earthly ties, and to clothe death itself with the robes of an angel of light.

Many days did not elapse before we retraced our steps to that spot, whither in our daily walks on classic ground our thoughts and conversation continually reverted. It was the sabbath; and we resolved to attend our friend and tutor to the scene of his pastoral labours, and to repeat our visit to G—— Farm.

After uniting with the rustic congregation at H—— G—— in that incomparable liturgy, which is so admirably constituted as to meet the taste and the wants equally of the refined and the unlettered Christian, and listening to a faithful, plain, and useful exposition of the offices sustained by him, whom "God hath exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour,

to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins," we there joined Mrs. B——'s sister, who had recently arrived. She wept as we crossed the intervening fields at every mention of her relative. But in this instance "the same fountain sent forth both sweet water and bitter." She said, "I cannot but keenly feel for the bodily sufferings of my dear sister. But when I see the state of her mind, my anxiety and pain almost vanish. She is so greatly altered.—The work has been done in a short time.—The goodness of God is wonderful."

When we entered the same room as on our first call, we met the husband, the children, the sister, the aged father; but the wife—the mother, was not there. Her decline within ten days had been rapid. But there was no declension in the renewed habits of her soul. Distrustful of herself, and thoroughly humbled; harassed by many temptations to unbelief, yet simply reposing in steady faith and tranquil hope upon the covenanted grace of the Saviour, her mind's eye was immovably fixed on eternity. So wholly and happily was she taken up with the high theme of her salvation, that no reply could be elicited to inquiries respecting her health. She would smile, express her gratitude to the inquirer, and turn off the question by saying, "But oh! I have so many mercies—God is so good to me!" She would fixedly gaze upon her sister, and a

tear of delight would steal from her eye, when she discovered that they were now more closely united than ever, as being one in Christ. "The communion of saints" with each other is not a matter of barren credence. It is a sacred reality, less frequently known, indeed, than acknowledged, but the perennial source of pleasures the most refined and exalted, and inferior only to those which flow from "the communion of saints" with their Father and Redeemer. None of the "yesterdays" of life look backward with a smile so sweet and satisfactory as those, which were marked with the true bliss "of hearts in union mutually disclosed" on all that gives a character of interest to the present and the future scene.

O! days of heav'n, and nights of equal praise,
Serene and peaceful as those heav'nly days,
When souls drawn upward in communion sweet,
Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat;
Discourse, as if releas'd and safe at home,
Of dangers past, and wonders yet to come;
And spread the sacred treasures of the breast
Upon the lap of covenanted rest.

In the enjoyment of such holy intercourse, we left the sisters, and we ourselves were not unconscious of a portion of its blessedness during our return to O——.

In a subsequent walk, not many days afterwards, to the house of mourning, we could not venture to expect any other than a great and evident reduction in the feeble remaining vital powers of our invalid friend. Even the hope, which generally hovers over the closing days of consumptive persons, had fled her habitation, when we again entered it. But a better hope was there—a hope full of immortality—a hope, which sustained the suffering saint as upon eagle's wings, and which, in the saddest moments which occasionally were her's, never flagged. By her surrounding family and friends she was no longer looked upon as belonging to this world. Her sufferings might remind them that she was still in the flesh; but her steady contemplation of that other state, on which she was shortly to enter, began to cast as it were a holy radiance round her fading form. Her eye, when her lips were silent, spoke of joy unspeakable and full of glory, although we saw nothing of that ecstacy and triumph which appear to throw the very light of heaven into the chambers of some departing Christians. Her conversation was truly in heaven. Her entire deportment became the situation wherein she stood, just on the separating line of time and eternity. She never lost sight of her character as an offender against the laws of that Holy God, in whose presence she was about to be placed. This maintained in her mind a

reverential fear, a filial awe, that was alike distant from the unfounded fearlessness of the self-deceiver, and the desponding dread of the alarmed but impenitent transgressor. Our dying friend was enabled to enfold herself in that perfect and satisfactory righteousness of the Mediator and surety of his people, which "is unto all, and upon all, them that believe." That "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth:" that, on her behalf, he had answered all its requisitions by his own obedience, and endured its curse to atone for her disobedience, was the consideration that delivered her from the dread of condemnation, and confirmed her inward peace. So simple and calm was her repose on the grace of the Holy Spirit, and the promises of the Saviour, and so abidingly did her thoughts rest where her treasure was, that as I before hinted—

> —— Oft converse with heav'nly habitants
> Began to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
> The unpolluted temple of the mind,
> And turn'd it by degrees into the soul's essence,
> Till all was made immortal.

Thus was she being rendered meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Her soul daily advanced in preparedness to enjoy intimate communion with Abel and all the martyrs, with Abraham and all the patriarchs, with Moses and all the prophets, with

St. Paul and all the apostles, with Luke and all the saints, and, above all, with Jesus himself, the Mediator of that new covenant which secured her brightening hopes. She eyed the world of glorified spirits, through the dim glass of Revelation, with eager desire to mingle with its inhabitants. That desire was not the languid wish of the unregenerate and ignorant, who neither relish nor know ought of heavenly things; nor was the end of her desire, in her estimation, a mere refuge from the wrath to come, and more desirable for the shelter it affords from the direst of evils, than for its rich provision of every spiritual good.

The next time I saw Mrs. B—— she appeared to be sitting at the gate of the holy city, quietly waiting to hear—"Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." Her affectionate pastor esteemed it both an enjoyment and a privilege to tarry for hours at her side, either listening to her unaffected disclosure of her feelings, as she drew nearer to death and the grave, or as the helper of her faith and joy. After that interview I suffered but few days to pass before I retraced a road, which I never trod but with pleasure and benefit. My friend P——, who is now in a far distant clime, helping forward the chariot of salvation over lands peopled with them that are lost, whom the god of this world hath blinded, accompanied me. Our hearts were as cheerful as the day was bright, and we hastened along

our path, recalling to mind our absent living friends, or the memory of those whose sojourn upon earth was ended, and who were become inhabitants of an abiding city. P——, "the son of parents passed into the skies," was emulous of their brilliant example, and panted for what was denied to his beloved father, a dwelling on the banks of the Ganges, from whence he might diffuse around him the knowledge of "the river of life," whose waters effectually cleanse and save the humble and believing pilgrim. Pointing to the neat and modest mansion of a village pastor, my companion said, "Such will be your abode when I am on the other side of the globe: but I would infinitely prefer for myself the meanest hut on the shores of the sacred river. May you turn many to righteousness in this land of light, while I am directing my poor efforts to reclaim and recover a few of those who have reached the farthest point of departure from God, in regions covered with darkness that may be felt."

On reaching the Farm-House, we found that still the afflicted saint was lingering; but it was just on the verge of glory. Resigned, without unconcernedness; cheerful, without affectation; weaned from the world, without being unconscious of the strong ties of a husband, an infant family, and many domestic and relative enjoyments, she was sinking to the tomb with unperceived decay. One thing, and only one thing,

at this time disturbed the serenity of her mind, the unavoidable departure of that beloved sister, whom imperative duties forced away. Gladly would she have retained her by her side to receive her last breath. But meek submission to the divine will sustained her under the privation; and an assurance of his presence, who has said to his people, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," restored the prevailing tranquillity of her soul.

It is comparatively easy for them, whose affections were never kindled into fervent love, and never ardently fixed on any earthly connexions, coolly to contemplate the disruption of every temporal relationship; but for one who enjoys the warmest and tenderest regard of many hearts, and who is reciprocally susceptible of the strongest affection, to descend into the grave unattended by any of the beloved companions of life, and alone to enter the unseen world, is truly appalling to feeble nature. The spectacle of an emaciated female, in the prime of her days, with every temporal consideration to make life desirable, not only without dismay, nor merely with that acquiescence which protracted sorrow may produce, or that weariness of acute suffering which makes some eager to escape into the narrow house, as a refuge from misery; but with a cheerful and longing soul, contemplating the approach of death, not as an inevitable evil, but

as the door of admission to every good, was to me a scene of greater glory than the warrior risking life on the field of battle. In *her* chamber and situation every external circumstance had a direct tendency to augment the native horrors of the grave, and to clothe, in the most direful garb, the king of terrors. She was advancing towards them with a slow and measured pace, which gave her time to view and dwell upon every object that could alarm and depress her mind. But in the field, where the soldier seeks a blood-stained laurel to wither on his haughty brow, or on his untimely grave, all "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war," as it is termed, conspire to give a false colouring and a delusive form to man's last enemies. It is forgotten that the costly monument, which a grateful country may raise over its defenders, hides but a *grave;* and that the plaudits of admiring crowds reach not, or, if they reach, avail not at the throne of God. In most cases the valour of the warrior is but a species of mental inebriation, which urges him into the thickest of the fight, without fear, because without reflection.

About this time a gentleman, whose religious sentiments were very different from Mrs. B——'s, being at the farm, went up to see her. On leaving her chamber and joining her husband, he wept, and said, "Mr. B——, I am now persuaded, that if any thing

can support in a dying hour, it is the religion of your wife."

The elevated and blissful character of her thoughts cannot be better illustrated than by the reply she made to her sister, who, coming into her room early one morning, inquired how she had passed the night. "I have passed it," she said, "without sleep, but not without comfort. My mind has been engaged in dwelling upon *one* thought, which was suggested by the hymn you kindly read before you quitted my side last night. The thought was, that when my liberated soul enters the heavenly world, although at the very entrance, and through all the distance I may have to pass, I shall be surrounded by ten thousand objects of unutterable glory and attraction, I shall not for a moment be detained by the contemplation of them, but shall eagerly press on till I reach the throne of the Lamb that was slain, and, falling down at his feet, give him all the praise and honour of my salvation." In this manner did she, through her declining days, evidence her saving acquaintance with God, not only as her Maker, but also as her Redeemer, "who giveth songs in the night."

The last time I enjoyed the privilege of seeing this excellent woman, was in the evening of one of the longest days of that summer of which she just saw the close. After a wet and lowering day, the weather

cleared up, and the descending sun was pouring the full stream of his light through the chamber window, and on the bed of Mrs. B——. Our brief conversation was of the most affecting cast. All was peace within. The outward frame scarcely retained its immortal tenant, who was ready to depart. At her request I read the last nine verses of the seventh chapter of that sublime book which terminates the volume of inspiration. She listened with all the lively attention of one who was already familiar with the picture, and who was daily expecting to see the original. Nor would she allow me to leave her without first bending at her side in prayer. When I rose from my knees, the sun's last ray fell upon her countenance, which already seemed to shine with light sent down from above. She grasped my hand with a strength which I deemed her incapable of exerting. Calmly and firmly she said, "We shall again see each other before the throne."

I had no opportunity of revisiting G—— Farm, until its amiable and pious mistress had been some months in heaven. The short remainder of her earthly pilgrimage was of the same tenor with that part which I have described, and which, till the end of my own sojourn upon earth, will afford me the sweetest and most sacred recollections.

Saw you that light which glow'd upon the sky?
Heard you that echo from the courts on high?
'Twas more than solar light: a radiant beam
That 'scap'd heav'n's portal—a bright stream
From glory's fount: it cloth'd in living light
The spirit of the saint, now pure and bright
As shine the stars that gem the crown of night.
Disburthen'd of the flesh, she left the bed
Of languor and of pain: she sigh'd, and fled,
On wings of seraphim, to life and bliss.
That echo! Sweeter that when breezes kiss
Æolian strings, charming the ravish'd ears
Of trav'lers. 'Twas the music of the spheres
Hymning high themes of praise: no—sweeter far
Than when the sons of God—each morning star—
Together sang, shouting for joy. The sound
Was the mix'd song of saints and angels round
The throne of God. "All hail! All hail!" they cry—
The welcome echoes o'er th' etherial sky,
And reaches earth. . . . .

THE PENITENT.

Mr. R—— was a tradesman, who, by persevering industry and economy, amassed very considerable property. But till very late in life he remained destitute of the true riches. So neglected and uncultivated was his mind, that he had passed the common boundary of human existence, three score years and ten, before he gained possession of that key of knowledge, the art of reading. Moved by some measure of solicitude for his eternal welfare, he at that advanced age taught himself to read by the aid of a Common Prayer Book, printed in a very large type. That solicitude, however, was not sufficiently strong to bring him regularly to the house of God. I have observed him constantly attend public worship for a few weeks, and then I saw no more of him for as many months. Yet, though himself not governed by religious principle, he always entertained a sincere respect for those whom he knew to live under its power. He once told me, that he never could join in the scoffs he sometimes heard vented against pious persons, and that he was accustomed to rebuke, rather than encourage, such

impiety. But the influence of his general example upon his family may be readily conceived. They habitually stood aloof from all that bore the form and semblance of religion. I often sighed as I passed by his dwelling, viewing it as inaccessible to my pastoral labours.

One Sunday I was greatly surprised by a pressing request to visit Mr. R——, who was seized with his last sickness. I hastened to his chamber; and when I entered, he was sitting on the side of his bed undressed, and in evident perturbation of mind. I begged him to be composed, and he lay down. "You come," said he, "to see a wretched man who has spent a long life in scraping together a heap of muck—a heap of money. That has had all my thoughts. I have cared about nothing else. Now I am a dying man; and I would give ten times all that I possess if it was in my power to get any good for my soul. O! I am a poor miserable wretch. What must I do?" Again I entreated him to be calm. I commented on what he had told me, the truth of which I too well knew, endeavouring to probe the wound to the bottom, to see whether it had reached the heart. His tears flowed abundantly as I spoke, and he listened with all the intentness of a man who felt himself perishing, and was eager for deliverance. I then directed his attention to the cross, and to him who hung upon it, as

"able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by him;"—even at the uttermost verge of a life spent in the uttermost iniquity, if repentance overtakes and arrests the sinner before he passes the fixed gulph, which separates life from death, heaven from hell, and hope from despair. Having, at his request, knelt by his side, and presented at the throne of grace petitions for mercy and grace to help in his time of urgent need, which he fervently repeated after me, with an affecting earnestness of manner, I commended him to the compassion of that Saviour who heard and saved the penitent malefactor, and withdrew. He lingered for some weeks, and expired a few days after I quitted the town. I have, therefore, no knowledge of the circumstances which attended his final hours.

In the frequent visits I paid him, I was gratified at finding that he daily advanced in scriptural wisdom. His convictions of his own depravity, and of the evil of his worse than wasted life, were expressed in language that exceeded in strength and abasement, any I ever heard from the lips of a repenting sinner. His abhorrence of the sin of covetousness, which had ensnared his soul, his dread of going into the presence of God unpardoned, and his desire to make the best use of his few remaining days, were such as I have seldom or never before witnessed. It gave me great delight to discover how strong a hold various parts of our admi-

rable Liturgy had taken of his mind. He frequently introduced, either in conversation with me or in occasional ejaculations, passages strikingly appropriate to his own character and situation. He often repeated with fervour those animated and pathetic sentences, "O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world; have mercy upon me! O Christ hear me! Lord have mercy upon me! Christ have mercy upon me! Lord have mercy upon me!" If he joined me with more ardour in any prayers than others that I offered in his chamber, they were those which I purposely brought in from various parts of our liturgical services. These appeared the true echo of his feelings. By degrees he acquired confidence in God's numerous promises to the returning transgressor. He cast himself upon the mercy of God in Christ, renouncing every other plea, and never urging any extenuating apologies for his sins. One morning he said to me—"I have been much awake during the night, and much in prayer. I besought the Lord to shew me some token of his mercy, that I may not die without a comfortable hope of heaven. It pleased him to pour down into my soul a sense of peace and consolation, to which before I was altogether a stranger. I feel an humble confidence that the Lord has accepted me, and pardoned all my iniquities. I can now depend upon his gracious promises, and if I do desire

to live, it is that I may serve him, and teach my family to do the same."

From this time his mind became more tranquil and cheered by the hope of pardon and salvation. If at any time he wept, his tears flowed from another cause. They were tears of mingled penitence and gratitude. Whenever I entered his chamber, the old man received me with an affectionate warmth, which was as affectingly pleasing as his previous spiritual alarm was distressing. With many tears he would hold out his hand and grasp mine, saying, in a manner truly touching and overcoming, "Come near, come near, thou blessed man. You have been the means of saving my soul. I can never love you and thank you enough." In this frame of mind he continued till the last interview I had with him, which was not many days before he died.

He had formerly lived on very unfriendly terms with many members of his family. The influence of religious principle quickly manifested itself in the alteration of his deportment towards them. He once invited the whole of them to dine together in his chamber, and there exhorted them to live in harmony with each other, to attend to the concerns of their souls, and to frequent the house of God.

I must confess that I approach the greater number of sick beds with a heavy heart. Languor and disease

often so overpower the soul, as to leave it little even of natural power to give heed to instruction. Here those barren religious notions, which in the days of health brought no glory to God, bring as little comfort and support to their possessor. They betray their inefficiency, their unsoundness, and their comfortlessness. Sometimes, indeed, the more awful truths of revelation come with such power into an awakened conscience, that confessions of aggravated guilt, deprecations of merited wrath, entreaties for pardoning mercy, and promises of amendment, if life is prolonged, are drawn from the lips. A minister, trembling with anxiety for the condition of a soul apparently just about to enter eternity, gladly seizes hold of every promising appearance. He indulges that charity which "hopeth all things," though he dares not yield to that spurious charity, which, from false tenderness, would allow the dying to perish in self-deception rather than create a salutary alarm. But when life is lengthened out, how seldom, how very seldom, are his hopes confirmed! With health, the love and power of sin return; the world regains its ascendancy; and Satan re-establishes his lately tottering dominion over the heart. The face of death, and the throne of judgment are forgotten; and, in many instances, respited life is the more abused. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking

rest; and finding none he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out. And when he cometh, he findeth it swept and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh to him seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first." In my own ministry I never yet have met with a decisive instance of the durability of a repentance extorted at the gates of death and hell, when the sinner has been restored. I make these remarks, not by way of limiting the Holy One of Israel, for with him all things are possible; but to obviate objections which may be made by some against narratives of this description, and to prevent others from deducing, from these recollections of Mr. R——, any conclusions favourable to the presumption and procrastination of the carnal mind. It is not for me to determine whether or not his religious impressions would have proved of an abiding character had his days been prolonged. To me, indeed, those impressions appeared so deep, and he brought forth so many fruits meet for repentance, that I can entertain no doubt but that he, who willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness and live, accepted in him the work of his own Spirit, pardoned the aged and dying man's remaining defects, and admitted him to his kingdom on the same grounds of gratuitous mercy as

he saved the crucified malefactor. The presumption of which many are guilty in persevering in acknowledged error against light and knowledge, and the hypocrisy of some when under spiritual alarm, is not to bar the door of mercy against the true penitent, wherever and whenever his repentance takes its rise on this side of that grave, beyond which there is no repentance. For

> ——if the wanderer his mistake discern,
> Judge his own ways and sigh for a return;
> Bewildered once, must he bewail his loss
> For ever and for ever? No—the cross!
> There, and there only, (though the deist rave,
> And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave;)
> There, and there only, is the power to save.
> There no delusive hope invites despair;
> No mockery meets you, no deception there.
> The spells and charms, that blinded you before,
> All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

This memorial of one of their own class, speaks loudly to men of business. You are necessarily much occupied in the duties of your calling. But those duties, like all other things of an earthly nature, as objects viewed through a mist, may be enlarged in your sight far beyond their true magnitude. You may, you often do, toil on for three parts of a century, and yet acquire no adequate recompense for your

labour. Yet, amidst the fluctuations and uncertainties of mercantile pursuits, success may attend your plans and toils. You may amass property. You may become rich. But you may not in this world have your eyes opened to discern the intrinsic value *to yourselves*, which attaches to accumulated wealth. When abused to the entire occupation of the heart and life, it is stigmatized by the divine penman as "filthy lucre." In my dying parishioner's eyes, purged as his sight was from the films which had hitherto beclouded it, wealth, unimproved to the glory of God and the good of man, seemed but "a heap of muck." The man who is greedy of filthy lucre for its own sake, or for the temporal pleasures and honours it can purchase, drowns himself in a fountain which ought to water all around him. That is no mean passage in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, which represents the Interpreter taking Christiana and her companions "into a room, where was a man that could look no way but downwards, with a muck-rake in his hand; there stood also one over his head with a celestial crown in his hand, and proffered him that crown for his muck-rake; but the man did neither look up nor regard, but raked to himself the straws, the small sticks, and dust of the floor." Then said Christiana, "I persuade myself that I know somewhat the meaning of this: for this is the figure of a man in

this world; is it not, good sir?" "Thou hast said right," said he, "and his muck-rake doth shew his carnal mind. And whereas thou seest him rather give heed to rake up straws and sticks, and the dust of the floor, than to do what he says, who calls to him from above, with the celestial crown in his hand; it is to shew, that heaven is but as a fable with some, and that things here are counted the only things substantial. Now, whereas it was also shewed thee, that the man could look no way but downwards; it is to let thee know that earthly things, when they are with power upon men's minds, quite carry their hearts away from God." Then said Christiana, "Oh! deliver me from this muck-rake." "That prayer," said the Interpreter, "has lain by till it is almost rusty, Give me not riches, *Prov.* xxx. 8. It is scarce the prayer of one in ten thousand. Straws, and sticks, and dust with most, are the great things now looked after."

THE RASH VOW.

EVERY well authenticated instance of judgment, following close upon the footsteps of daring offenders against the laws of heaven, is a valuable, though an awful evidence of God's immediate superintendance of human actions, and goes to establish the doctrine of a particular providence. The occasional and palpable supernatural interference of God, which mankind are called to witness, more impressively demonstrates, that, doubtless, "there is a God that judgeth the earth," than if retribution universally and instantaneously overtook transgressors. Under the existing dispensation of this world's affairs, the Lord displays the high perfections of his character in lovely harmony. Propitiated by the offering of his Son, while "justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth go before his face." He does not the less intently observe his offending creatures, nor the less abhor their iniquities, though he pities and forbears to crush them by the thunderbolts of his wrath. The general tenor of his ways appeals to the hopes and fears, to the hearts and consciences of men.

"Despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But, after thy hardness and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds." But the Lord has given to the world many recorded, and more unrecorded illustrations of his word, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Now and then he cometh out of his place, and fearfully makes known his power, his justice, and his holy indignation.

When I entered on my charge at C——, my excellent predecessor one evening conducted me round to several cottages, occupied by persons or families in whom he felt an extraordinary interest. Among these, Mary M—— was one. She was a woman in years; and when we entered her lowly dwelling, was sitting in a corner of her spacious chimney hearth. We conversed with her, and received from her own lips a confirmation of the circumstances which I am about to detail, and concerning which I often afterwards made more minute inquiries. She had been accustomed to wash for a neighbouring farmer, and, on one occasion, something being missed, she was questioned about it, without any express suspicion of her honesty. She was, however, so highly offended at

the bare mention of the thing to her, that she burst into a passion, and exclaimed, "If I ever wash here again, I wish my arm may rot." For a length of time she maintained her resolution, supported as it was by obstinacy on the one hand, and by her vow on the other. At last, urged by the solicitations of her mistress, she yielded, and one morning resumed her employment. While in the act of washing, a quantity of blood gushed from her arm. She bound it up and expected it would heal; but it *never closed.* A disease, which to the eye had every appearance of perfect rottenness, settled in the limb, and defied every medical effort to effect a cure. Her frame, also, wasted away. Her illness was lingering, and gave me frequent opportunities of being with her. Her visage, her wasting arm, and her whole demeanour, gave pain to a beholder. She always welcomed me to her humble abode, and was at all times desirous for me to pray with her. She felt, and often acknowledged, that her complaint was the result of "those wicked words," which she had passionately uttered, and in her poor, simple way, implored pardon. She would sink down upon her knees when alone, and seek the remission of her guilt. But her state of mind ever appeared to me to be little short of despair. *I never saw her smile.* A melancholy, bordering upon wildness, settled in her countenance, and every feature seemed to say, "Have

pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye, my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me. The arrows of the Almighty are within me; the poison thereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me." If ever hope and peace in their lowest degree visited her soul, as the fruits of a trembling faith in the Son of God, it was more than I was permitted to witness. She died; and I preceded her to her grave in solemn sadness at the recollection of her gloomy history.

There is in man a singular propensity to form rash vows, and declarations like that of this woman are too frequently made to cover a lie. No evidence appeared that her declaration was for this purpose, but it was made in a passion, and afterwards undeniably brought down upon her the severe and heavy displeasure of God. Jephtha's rash vow was awfully marked with the divine disapprobation in its disastrous consequences, and stands as a warning beacon.

THE BLASPHEMER.

ANOTHER incident, plainly indicating the interposing hand of God in the instantaneous punishment of sin, occurred under the observation of a venerable relative of my own, who, after having by a faithful and laborious discharge of the pastoral office led many to heaven, at a good old age followed them to glory. Riding in a part of the kingdom remote from his own residence, he suddenly stopped his horse to notice the singular conduct of a labouring man, who was walking frantically up and down the high road, wringing his hands and weeping abundantly. Many persons were gazing at him; and they informed my relative, that, on the preceding day, the man, exasperated by some trifling cause, burst out into a fit of the most violent and appalling blasphemy, swearing in a manner which exceeded all they had ever heard, and which shocked even those who themselves were not over scrupulous about the use of that language which derives its origin from the bottomless pit. In the midst of this, his speech suddenly stopped. Again he tried to swear, but his voice was gone; nor had it since returned. My relative went towards the man, inquired if the

account was correct, and was answered in the affirmative only by signs, the signification of which no one could misconstrue. He requested the man to lead the way to his house, which he did, and there a large family, consisting of his wife and several children, were in tears. They confirmed the report of the neighbours, and were beyond measure afflicted at the judgment which had overtaken the husband and father. My relative addressed them in kind but solemn terms on the enormity of the offence, which had thus provoked the Almighty. He laboured to awaken in them all, and especially in the man, a sense of their guilt in living, as various circumstances too fully proved that they did live, without the fear of God. He persuaded the weeping family to kneel down around him, while in their names he confessed before God the justice of this fearful visitation, and interceded for the pardon and relief of the blasphemer. On rising from his knees, he exhorted the man to lift up his heart incessantly to God, for the forgiveness of his aggravated guilt in having been an habitual blasphemer, and for the restoration of his speech in testimony of his forgiveness. He also charged him, if it should please God to afford him relief, instantly to fall upon his knees, confessing his sin, and praising the divine compassion. On the following day he returned by the same road, and on approaching the

village was met by a little girl, who, with a smiling countenance, exclaimed—"O sir, father can speak again. Pray come and see him." He readily complied with her invitation, and proceeded towards the cottage in silent astonishment. That astonishment was not diminished, when, on entering, he was welcomed by the man, and received from his loosened tongue the following account. His mind, impressed and alarmed by the loss of his speech, and still further led to ruminate on his guiltiness by the words of his unknown instructor, had been inconceivably agitated and restless. The night came, but it brought him no repose. He spent it in weeping and in silent aspirations for mercy at the hands of that Being, whom he had so offended and insulted. He lay tossing to and fro in the utmost distress, or humbling himself before the divine majesty in self abhorrence. While thus passing the hours of the night, and often involuntarily and ineffectually making an effort to exercise his lost faculty, he suddenly found it restored. His tongue was loosened. He instantly sprang out of bed, and falling prostrate on the floor, employed his forfeited but now restored faculty in a manner in which it never before had been exercised. Humiliation and praise, self reproach and adoring gratitude, gave him freedom of speech, and he was now in a temper of mind which gave a fair promise of future renewal of life. My

revered relation did not let slip the opportunity of pouring into his ear important admonition and instruction. Again he gathered the family around him, and led them in presenting an offering of grateful praise for mercy so extraordinary and so unmerited. He left them, and soon going to a distant part of the kingdom, saw them no more.

Of the authenticity of this narrative I have not the shadow of a doubt, because I received it from lips on which truth invariably sat. How conspicuously glorious is the view we obtain of the long-suffering of God, when we contemplate him, not only forbearing to transfix and plunge into hell the millions who daily provoke his wrath by blasphemies, which perhaps are scarcely exceeded in the regions of lost spirits, but imparting to them a liberal portion of the bounties of his hand, and extending over them the preserving care of his providence. The vice of swearing, appearing as it does among all the tribes of men, from the polished European, who frequents the temple of that Deity, whom he insults and defies, to the barbarous inhabitant of earth's remotest isles, who alternately worships and abuses an idol of his own workmanship, is a most singular and terrific feature in the character of our fallen race.

If I enter the habitation of a wise, liberal, and indulgent father, and see around me in every apartment

the most bountiful provision made for the accommodation, sustenance, and happiness of his family, I naturally expect to observe in the conduct of his children every indication of veneration, love, gratitude, and obedience. My ear listens to their communications with each other to be regaled by expressions of filial respect, and tender affection. My eye watches their countenances to catch the kindling glow of ardent love, and looks for the most prompt and cheerful compliance with the known wishes of their parent. How painful is my surprise if I am met with the very reverse of this picture! I think

> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child,

when I mark the sullen silence, the rude reply, the pitiful excuse, or the absolute refusal, with which his commands are received; and the murmuring discontent, the base ingratitude, or the total insensibility, with which his bounties are enjoyed: when I hear no kind mention of his name and goodness during his absence; and when they manifest no cordial respect, and perhaps not the bare consciousness of his presence. But I recross the threshold with dismay and horror, if, in addition to this, my ears are stunned by mutual imprecations, and by the use of their father's name in connection with every thing that is contemptuous, in-

sulting, and blasphemous. Yet all, and more than this, I cannot but witness and am compelled to hear in my walks among the children of that universal family, of which God is the omnipotent Father. With what wise discrimination and foresight; with what affectionate consideration and regard; with what unbounded and varied liberality has he framed and furnished the spacious habitation, where he has placed the millions of his dependent offspring! But not only is his wisdom unnoticed; not only is that bountifulness, with which he openeth his hand, and filleth all things living with plenteousness, ungratefully enjoyed, or prodigally abused; not only is his love requited by hatred, or, at least, by forgetfulness, but I cannot pass through a village, nor scarcely take my seat in a domestic circle, where I am not disgusted and horror-struck, either by the levity with which the name of the Lord is mentioned, even by the moral and decorous, or by the profaneness and blasphemy which attend its utterance among others.

Yet excuses are at hand to extenuate an offence that is committed through little or no temptation, and is accompanied by no gratification. Availing and quieting as those apologies may be with men, whose guilt on this point is eager to shelter itself under any covert, they are without the semblance of plausibility to a well instructed and well regulated mind: they

strike with deeper horror the devout Christian; and at the judgment-seat of Christ they will aggravate rather than lessen the weight of the final condemnatory sentence. "A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is my honour? If I be a master, where is my fear, saith the Lord of Hosts, *unto you that despise my name.* And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name?" This excuse of ignorance, or habit, or non-intention, is the flimsy apology of all transgressors of the third commandment, from the decent formalist, who in common conversation deems it either emphatically expressive of astonishment, or even ornamental, or a mere trifle, to exclaim again and again, "Good God!" while he has no thought or care of God or his goodness, down to the man of oaths, who passes not a waking hour without incurring the guilt of blasphemy. There is, however, an object, which, if seen in all its solemn light, will strike dumb the tongue of blasphemy, and then unloose its strings in praise and prayer. There is a stream which can wash out even the foul stain contracted by this odious vice. That object is the Saviour, stretched upon the cross in terrific agony, to provide an atonement for human guilt. That stream is his most precious blood. Swearer! look, and learn to blaspheme no more. Go, wash; and be clean. But take heed, lest you despise and perish.

REVENGE.

THE Gospel is "the power of God to the salvation of every one that believeth." This fully compensates for the natural imbecility of those to whom it is entrusted by its divine author, and satisfactorily accounts for the effects which are expected from, and produced by, its faithful administration. So vast, indeed, is the disproportion between these results and the human powers which are exerted in effecting them, that not unfrequently the world transfer, or rather extend, their contempt from the humble agents to their high commission. But the record and the fact will ever confound the calculations of this world's wisdom, that "it pleases God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe." It must be evident to a devout and reflecting mind, that the feebleness of the agency whereby the Gospel is brought to bear upon the consciences, the hearts, and the conduct of men, at once demonstrates and honours the might of that unseen hand which accomplishes the work. This directly tends to humble the man whom his heavenly master may employ in the effectual application of the truth to the souls of his fellow sinners. For when he contemplates

that dispensation of mercy, which exceeds all others in glory, in connection with his impotent and yet successful administration of it; while he is elated with joyful gratitude at perceiving "the hearts of the disobedient turned to the wisdom of the just," he feels abased by the consideration of his own incompetency to the production of consequences which run on into eternity.

Too often, indeed, vanity, self-confidence, and self-approval, find their way into the pulpit, and mar the goodly purposes of the Christian minister. In such hours the most elaborate and eloquent discourses are likely to fall inefficiently on the ears of an audience. At other seasons the Christian pastor, with a dull and joyless heart, delivers his message. He summons all his affections and his abilities to the task, but they are cold and languid. He resumes his seat in afflictive consciousness of his insufficiency, and as he surveys his flock passing away from the sanctuary, he sighs at the probability, that no heart has felt what many ears have heard. He thinks within himself, that another opportunity of glorifying the Saviour, and of saving souls has been lost, and he retires to his home desponding over the inadequacy of his efforts, and his powers to accomplish the great ends of his ministry. His closet witnesses the prostration of his soul before God in solicitation for the pardon of his unprofitable-

ness, and for the bestowment of those gracious influences, which are indispensably necessary to prosper the ablest administration of the Gospel, and which can render the meanest discharge of the ministerial function availing to the salvation of souls.

It was with feelings of this cast that I once withdrew from my pulpit to my study, after having explained to my flock the former part of the second chapter of St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, a portion of scripture descriptive of the unregenerate and of the renewed state of man. I more than usually felt that depression of mind to which no teacher of divine truth is a stranger. On the following day I was informed, that R—— S——, a small tradesman, living in the town, had been deeply affected by my discourse on the Sunday afternoon, and was exceedingly eager to gain possession of my sermon to read it. I sent a kind message, requesting him to call on me. But his timidity overcame his inclinations. I therefore took an early opportunity of calling on him. When I entered the house, his mother met me, and immediately said, "Oh! sir, what a change there is in my son since Sunday last. He has for years been the trouble of my life. Obstinate and self-willed, I could do nothing with him; but now he is so altered! He is become gentle as a lamb." She uttered this with tears that spoke her sincerity and gratitude. In a

small room I found her son sitting with his Bible open before him, in much agitation of mind. He rose from his seat, and expressed his pleasure at seeing me, though without a smile. On conversing with him, I found that strong convictions of his sinfulness and danger had taken fast hold upon him. He applied to himself many humbling and alarming passages of God's word. I strove to allay the tumult of his soul by referring to the gracious offers, and the exceeding great and precious promises of the Gospel. To these he listened with attention, and welcomed them as his only hope. I made several subsequent visits to his abode, and rejoiced to perceive that the impression made upon his heart promised to be permanent. But in all these visits, a something in his manner pained me. There was a mysteriousness in his aspect, and a hesitation in his answers to my inquiries, which hung like a cloud over the time we passed together. I was inclined to attribute this to a natural reservedness of disposition, and to his being unaccustomed to converse upon religious topics, and especially with his minister. The first ideas of an awakened mind are indistinct, and do not find an easy utterance. But even these probable causes did not fully account for the peculiarity of manner which I observed.

One day, however, as I sat with him, the mystery was developed. "I must tell you, sir," he said,

"what you do not yet know. I feel that I cannot talk with you as I wish, and with freedom, till I have told you all the truth. Several years ago I took offence at one of our ministers, and sinfully made that an excuse for keeping away from church. I endeavoured to quiet my conscience by reading my Bible at home, and gained such an acquaintance with it, that I can remember and repeat a great deal of it. But this had no influence on my conduct. I continued to do business on the Sabbath-day, and remained as passionate as ever. Some months ago I was unjustly surcharged by the surveyor of taxes in this district. I made my appeal to the commissioners, but it was overruled; and the tax and surcharge were confirmed. I felt this very much, for every body saw that I was wronged; and being a man of strong passions, I resolved on seeking revenge. I determined to take away the life of the man who had so cruelly and unjustly treated me. I sought an opportunity for accomplishing my design; but, mercifully, none occurred." Here he paused. When I recovered from the surprise and terror into which this narrative threw me, I said to him—"But had you no fears as to the consequences of such a dreadful act?" "As to the consequences in this world, I did not regard them. I knew that I should forfeit my own life; and this I would cheerfully have done if I could have had the

gratification of taking his. But then I was not quite certain how it might fare with me in the next world. I knew that God was a just God, and hated injustice; and I thought that he would allow me to take that satisfaction for the injury done me, which others denied. I was not, however, free from some uneasy qualms of conscience. At last I made up my mind to go to church, and there to ask God's leave to take away the life of the man who had injured me. I went to church, where I had not been since you came to the parish, nor for some years before; and, if I had come away with a persuasion that I might commit the deed without danger to my own soul, it is probable that, long before this, Mr. ——— would have been a dead man. But when I heard you describing the character of one who walks 'according to the course of this world,' and under the dominion of 'the prince of the power of the air,' I felt as though you pointed me out. It was Nathan saying to David, 'Thou art the man.' It was plain that I was one of those children of disobedience in whom Satan works, and I exceedingly trembled at the discovery of my condition. I returned home, and found no quiet till I saw you; and even ever since I have been very deeply distressed. But now that I have told you, I feel some relief." This narrative much affected me. I dwelt in strong terms on the heinousness of his intended crime, and

of the guilt which attached to him in the eyes of God, although it was not cognizable by human authority. He felt and humbly acknowledged all that I urged. To ascertain, if possible, the present state of his mind, I said to him—"Suppose you were this moment to see Mr. ———, and in a situation such as you once desired to meet him in, how should you feel towards him, and how would you act?" "I should be disposed to offer him my hand, and to do him any service in my power." This was no trifling evidence of the altered tone of his feelings.

From this period he became more closely studious of that word of God, which in him had evinced itself to be "quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." He often spent his evening with a pious neighbour in reading the sacred volume, and in conversation on the things of God and salvation. He was now regularly present in the house of God; and if one eye in the assembly never wandered from the minister, it was his. He lived in the shade, indeed, and attracted little notice. Few, if any, besides myself, were acquainted with the circumstances I have related, and he seemed, like one of old, to "go softly" all his days. His character, perhaps, never attained that Christian maturity,

which might have rendered him a conspicuous living monument of all that the grace of God can effect; and yet there were so many marks of his being a new creature,—so many old things in him passed away, and so many things became new,—that his case afforded matter of devout joy to many, and to none so much as to his pastor.

Fifteen months afterwards domestic affliction withdrew me from that scene of my pastoral labours;—a scene peopled by many whose simple and devoted piety, and whose warm and disinterested affection, will ever endear it to my remembrance above all others. Called, as every minister of Christ is, to mourn over the majority of his people, as either supinely indifferent, or strongly opposed to the standard of doctrine and morals which he deduces from the word of God and sets before them, and to the plans which he forms and pursues for the amelioration of his flock, he yet is seldom or never left without evidence, that his work of faith and labour of love is approved in heaven, and not unproductive on earth. The glowing and sincere attachment of a few, on whose hearts his ministry has been the honoured means of producing a saving effect, both remunerates and encourages his labours. The honest and silent tear, stealing down the cheek of the peasant, whose cottage and whose heart have been visited by mercy from

above, either through the public addresses or private instructions of his minister, while angels observe it not unmoved, constitutes a present adequate recompense for the agent in so blessed a result.

On the morning of my departure, I went to bid a hasty farewell to the subject of this memoir, and of the varied and conflicting emotions which agitated my mind as I afterwards ascended a hill that commands the town, and took a last view of the fold which enclosed my flock, those excited by my parting interview with him were among the strongest. As soon as he saw me enter his dwelling, he understood my purpose. He received me without a word. He took and grasped my hand with something like a convulsive strength, and while I expressed my deep regret on leaving him, and commended him to God, and to the word of his grace, assuring him that his future instructor would be to him a faithful guide, he remained speechless, alternately fixing his eyes on me and the ground, overpowered by feelings too violent for utterance. The past seemed to rush into his mind with overwhelming force. The crime he had meditated, the mode which God employed to prevent the execution of his purpose, and to snatch him at once from temporal infamy and eternal perdition, the consciousness of his remaining weakness and corruptions, and of the snares, dangers, and sorrows that

might yet await him, powerfully presented themselves before him. The moment was too painfully interesting either to be prolonged or forgotten. When I was forcing myself away, he at last found the power of utterance: but it was only to say and to reiterate—"And shall I never see you again?" I encouraged in him a hope, indulged by myself, that I might, at no distant day, revisit his native town. With difficulty I effected a separation from him, trembling as he was with excessive agitation. He was perfectly unmanned.

The remembrance of R—— S—— was almost daily with me when I had passed into other and distant scenes. A few months afterwards I wrote to him a long letter, of which, to my astonishment, I received no acknowledgment. But subsequent information gave me the affecting cause of his silence. Shortly after I left him he sickened, and recovered no more. His complaint disturbed his intellect; and when my letter reached him, reason had forsaken the throne of his mind. A neighbour visited him, and read that letter to him. He gazed in vacant earnestness, but manifested no consciousness of its meaning. This satisfaction, however, I received from one who often saw him in his latter days, that till his reason fled, and in the short intervals of its return, he gave pleasing testimonies that he had built an humble, penitent

hope of mercy on the only sure foundation, which is Jesus Christ.

To what a fearful extent may the malignant passions obtain ascendancy in the human breast! Hardened by the deceitfulness of sin, and by his habitual abandonment of the public means of grace, this man yielded himself up to the dominion of a wrathful and revengeful spirit, which goaded him on to the very brink of destruction. In the blind fury which took possession of his soul, he conceived himself authorized to take the scales and the sword of justice into his own hands, and having thus usurped the seat of Him who has said, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay," he never discerned the immense disproportion, even on the ground of equity and justice, between the injury he had sustained, and that which he intended to inflict. He saw not that what he had endured was a trifle compared with the blow which he meditated; and yet he imagined that divine justice would approve the deed. Thus far was he carried by the false principles he had adopted, and which met with no counteraction and opposition from those ordinances of religion, which, even in their external character, powerfully tend to moderate and humanize the natural ferocity of human passions. Had he continued to slight those ordinances, and had he not been led to enter the sanctuary of God in the posture of an inquirer, guilty

and monstrous as was the object of his inquiry, he, in all probability, would have imbrued his hands in blood, which from the earth would have called for heavier vengeance than that which he had inflicted.

But it is both wonderful and delightful to notice how, even in this instance, God honoured the means of his own appointment for the extrication of men from the snares which Satan spreads for their ruin. R—— S—— was not so wholly left to himself as to throw off all the restraints of religion. The Holy Scriptures were still his companions, and threw too much light upon the desperate course he pursued, to leave him in the dark about its ultimate issue. This kept up in his mind thoughts of God and a future state, which held in his passions from running the full course of their natural impetuosity. Had an all-seeing and righteous Deity held no place in his belief, and had he adopted the fool's creed, "There is no God;" or had he, with the more decent sceptic, confined the Almighty to some distant and sequestered province of his dominions, too remote to notice, and too engrossed by his own calm and glorious repose to take an interest in the affairs of men; had he excluded from the vision of the future, all that is to be dreaded in hell, and all that is to be hoped for in heaven; had he reasoned himself into the assurance, that he would have to appear before no other than an earthly tri-

bunal, and that the hand of the executioner would blot out his name from the book of existence, as well as from the list of mortals, no motive would have remained sufficiently powerful to withhold him from the speedy completion of his diabolical purpose. But, happily, the fear of God was not altogether removed from his heart. He was prompted to pray for light; and light, very different from what he sought, shone forth upon his soul, and revealed, not the promise of impunity which he desired, but his own fearful condition as the slave and tool of Satan, the god of this world. The eye of the Omniscient observed his approach to the long-forsaken temple, and was fixed upon him when he bent his knee to implore the commission of a destroying dæmon. That ear, which no sound escapes, heard his prayer for liberty to shed blood. Perhaps no knee was ever before bent on earth, and no petition ever before ascended to the throne of God for such an object! Angels, with all the solicitude of which their happy natures are capable, may well be conceived to have intently watched the expression of that eye which was turned towards so monstrous an offender. They might expect to see his anger rise, and the thunderbolts of his wrath descend and transfix the daring supplicant. But how high must their joy and their praise have risen, when they beheld the smile of pity, and heard the purpose

of mercy, and witnessed the descent of holy influence to smite, and break, and renew the sinner's heart.

And have we not here a resplendent instance of the freeness and sovereignty of that divine grace to which man is indebted for his conversion to God, and for every step in that process which gradually renders him meet for, and conducts him to, the kingdom of heaven? "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." For what did this man *will*, but permission to sin with impunity? What course did he *run*, but that which, had he reached its goal, would have crowned him with infamy, and plunged him into the gulph of dark despair and endless misery? God shewed him gratuitous mercy, and, by an act of grace, plucked him as a brand from the burning; pardoned, sanctified, and saved him. Let none, however, presume upon the divine compassion, as though this were the common rule of God's righteous government. Of the thousands who rush onwards towards that wide gate, through which none ever return, few, very few, are made the objects of such an astonishing interference. Those exempted few, just snatched from impending ruin, both warn others, by the scantiness of their number, against presumption, and hold out an encouragement to the penitent, that forbids despair.

TRUE HAPPINESS.

In the congregation who attended my church at S——, Mr. J—— was distinguished for his devout and teachable spirit. He frequented the house of God not merely as a hearer, but as a worshipper; and while he listened to the annunciation of divine truth from the pulpit, he sat not in judgment upon the preacher, but upon himself. He received the Gospel not as the word of man, but, as it is in truth, the word of God. He was superintendant of large gunpowder-works at O——, and resided in a dwelling surrounded by the machinery, buildings, and magazines of the manufactory. Danger and death necessarily lurk in every corner of such a place, and those who are employed in the manufacture of the great modern instrument of destruction, above all men ought to be prepared for an instantaneous removal to the world of spirits. Many harden their hearts against every fear of danger. They brave all the terrors of their situation, and are fool-hardy on the very brink of the pit which burneth with fire and brimstone. I introduce the case of Mr. J——, to shew how reasonable and unshrinking is that courage which the Gospel can infuse into the

soul. He passed the days of many successive years in fearless security; for having built his hope on the sure foundation of the divine promises, he felt that all was safe for eternity. He enjoyed a foretaste of that life, which fear cannot alarm, nor danger reach. On two or three different occasions the powder-works had exploded within a few minutes after he had quitted them, and he was miraculously preserved when others perished. Yet fully aware as he was of the solemnity of a dying hour, and especially of the awfulness of a sudden departure from life, he lived in cheerful tranquillity. The peculiar and prevailing tempers of his character were highly favourable to the serenity of his mind. He was remarkable for the sweetness of his spirit, the tenderness as well as strength of his affections, and his child-like docility.

I once found him, when I called, sitting after his dinner diligently reading Scott's Family Bible, and sedulously comparing the passage before him with the texts referred to in the margin. This was the favourite employment of his leisure hours, and he found it to be abundantly profitable. By thus "comparing spiritual things with spiritual," he acquired a very sound and extensive knowledge of the Gospel, and, unfettered by the shackles of human systems, proceeded joyfully along his course, exulting "in the liberty wherewith Christ had made him free," both

from the slavery of sin and the bonds and condemnation of the broken law. An old writer has wisely remarked, "I know not any way whereby the majesty, authority, truth, and perfection of the word of God can be more honoured and displayed, and the enemies of it so thoroughly convinced and silenced, as to make the Scripture its own interpreter." After most agreeably spending an hour with him in unrestrained converse upon those themes which were dear to us both, I left his house to return homeward, and he accompanied me to the summit of the adjacent hill. Our thoughts and words turned on the pleasures of holiness, in opposition to the pleasures of sin. His heart seemed "to burn within him by the way," while we dwelt on a topic which to him was ever welcome. "Sir," he said, with much life and energy, "I did not always seek my happiness where I now find it. I formerly was as gay and as thoughtless as any of the followers of this world. My vacant time—every hour I could spare or snatch from business, I devoted to pleasure. Sporting, in all its forms, and every species of amusement, carried away my affections. I know, for I have tried, what the world can do to make a man happy: but now I can with truth declare, that if there were no heaven hereafter—if I had nothing to hope for beyond the grave, I would prefer those *present enjoyments* which I find in a religious course, be-

fore the entire sum of this world's possessions and delights."

Some years afterwards I was distressed at reading in a newspaper an account of the death of this excellent man. Another explosion of the powder-works terminated his life in that tremendous manner which he had long regarded as probable, and for which he had long made daily and diligent preparation. Let the deluded pursuers of sensual, or even of refined secular pleasures, pause over the memory of Mr. J——. Will your enjoyments bear a solitary hour's reflection? Can you reverse the sentiment he uttered, and declare, that so completely satisfying are this world's delights, that, for them, you can deliberately and freely yield up the hope of the immense and inconceivable felicities of heaven? If you cannot arrive at this conclusion, and your restless passions testify that

> Not happiness herself makes good her name,
> Our very wishes give us not our wish;

let it settle down upon your hearts, in a weighty and unyielding conviction, that they who are "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God," can inherit no portion in the kingdom of heaven; and that, if you cast in your lot with them, you make a choice which time stamps with the grossest folly, and which eternity will mark with indelible and unavailing remorse. We

know, indeed, that you do not *avowedly* spurn and reject the fulness of joy which is in the presence of the Lord, and the pleasures which are evermore at his right hand. You thrust away the hand which would deprive you of the hope you venture to cherish, that the fair and bright inheritance will yet be yours. This hope is a delusion. "Whosoever will be a friend of the world, whether in the lust of the flesh, or the lust of the eye, or the pride of life, is the enemy of God." The love of carnal pleasure, and the friendship of the world, are ever necessarily associated with enmity to God. The existence of this in the heart is irreconcilably inconsistent with that meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, which distinguishes an heir of glory from an heir of perdition. A preference for the present enjoyments of the service of Christ must now become the habit of the soul, which would hereafter enter into the joy of the Lord.

THE HARPOON BOY.

In this country we hear and see much of the system of mendicity; and a wretched system it is; discreditable both to our national police, and our national character. But "the poor will never cease out of the land," under the present mixed arrangements of divine providence; nor will mendicity be exterminated, so long as corrupt nature prefers vagrant ease to steady industry. My servants are charged not to encourage vagrants and common beggars. This miserable race frequently support an idle and profligate life by obtaining those alms, which would be far better bestowed on objects of charity, who are well known, and in sufficient numbers, by all who are able and disposed to relieve the afflicted and the destitute. I nevertheless direct them to exercise their discretion, and to acquaint my family with any case which bears upon it the marks of evident or probable distress. We do an act of injustice to the community at large, and to the really miserable in particular, by the indiscriminate relief of every applicant for alms. But we may do an act of cruelty by an unbending rule of helping no stranger. By such a regulation, indeed, we may effectually ex-

clude an impostor; but we have divine authority for saying, that we may also shut our door against *an angel unawares.*

A credible witness has recorded the subjoined incident. A woman, in tattered clothes, with a pallid countenance, and an emaciated frame, called at some wealthy man's door, and implored relief, saying, that she was perishing through hunger. "We do not give to beggars," was the reply she received. She feebly crept to the next house, and renewed her pathetic application, and met with a similar reception. The poor creature crawled away—just reached the threshold of another door—lay down—and died!

A clerical brother once related to me another incident of this description, which had occurred to one of his friends. Walking early one bleak winter's morning in the suburbs of the metropolis, he was feebly accosted by a tall, thin man, imploring relief. The gentleman took him for a common beggar. "I, therefore," said he, "hardened my heart against him, and quieted some little uneasiness which arose in my bosom, by saying to myself, I am in haste; I may give him something on my return. The evening was closing with its shades the short-lived day before I retraced my route. When I came near the spot, where my charity had been solicited in the morning, I observed a crowd. I pressed through the mass, and, to

my terror and self-reproach, I beheld the poor man just breathing his last breath. He was famished."

"Saunders Welch, the Justice, who was once High Constable of Holborn, and had the best opportunities of knowing the poor, told Dr. Johnson, that he underrated the number, when he computed, that twenty a week, that is, above a thousand a year, died of hunger; not absolutely of immediate hunger, but of the wasting, and other diseases, which are the consequences of hunger. This happens only in so large a place as London, where people are not known."*

In the morning of one of the brightest days of last summer, a little boy, about the age of thirteen, clad in patched and threadbare garments, called at our door. "I have nothing to give you," said the servant. "You may not," replied the boy, "but I hear that your master gives away little good books, and perhaps he will give me one." I was called to the door, and was instantly taken with his appearance. The following dialogue then passed between us:—

Minister.—You ask for a little book; but perhaps you are hungry, and would rather have some breakfast.

Boy.—No, sir, I thank you; I have had a good breakfast given me by a kind lady; I should be glad if you would give me a book.

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* Boswell's Life of Johnson. Vol. ii. p. 312.

MINISTER.—But you are poor, my boy; would you not be better pleased with some money?

BOY.—No, sir; money is but vanity: I should like a book better.

MINISTER.—Why is it that you so much desire a good book? Of what use will it be to you?

BOY.—Good books teach me about God, and the way to heaven.

MINISTER.—And which is the way to heaven?

BOY.—It is by praying to God to make me good, and by trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for sinners.

MINISTER.—Why do you think that God will hear you when you pray? Do you deserve to go to heaven?

BOY.—No: none of us deserve to go to heaven. We are all too sinful for that. But I hope that God will hear my prayers and forgive me, because he has said he will.

MINISTER.—Do you then know any thing of the Bible?

BOY.—O yes, sir, I am very fond of it. But when my father and I were discharged from the ship, in our hurry we left our Bible behind us; and I have been sorry for it ever since.

MINISTER.—Discharged from the ship! Where then do you come from, my boy?

BOY.—I came, sir, from St. John's, Newfoundland. My mother died when I was a baby. My father is

employed in the whale fishery; and, since I have been big enough, he has taken me with him. We were on board a whaler, which brought us to England. The captain discharged the crew at M——, and we are now on our road to the fishery at C——, in hope of procuring employment till the spring, when we expect to get a ship to take us back.

MINISTER.—But employment is scarce; and you and your father being strangers here, must experience many hardships.

BOY.—God sends us friends, sir, every day. The captains of ships at the ports are all very kind to my father, and help him.

MINISTER.—You say you are fond of your Bible. Is there any particular part of it which you recollect, and which gives you comfort in your dangers and wanderings?

BOY.—I am very fond of the first chapter of St. John's Gospel; but I most frequently think of those words, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

MINISTER.—Pray who taught you to read, and instructed you in the meaning of what you read?

BOY.—I learned to read in a sunday school, which was opened by a Missionary at St. John's.*

* I believe the Missionary belonged to the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

This conversation excited in me an affectionate concern for the little fellow, who stood before me leaning on a staff, which was the companion and support of his steps. That I might both gain more information respecting his humble history, and satisfy myself of his sincerity, I proposed to him to come and weed in my garden, promising to recompense him with a little book. He consented, but said, I must first run after my father, and tell him what I am going to do, and that I will come after him to C——. In a short time he returned, with a pocket-knife in his hand, and expressed his willingness to be employed. I took him into my garden, and, for once, was glad that it contained some weeds. He worked with as much diligence as I could expect from a sailor boy, who had been accustomed to very different occupations. During the two hours that he spent in cutting up the refuse production of the soil, I often stood beside him and made further inquiries into his little history. Our dialogue ran on in the following strain:—

MINISTER.—How long were you in the sunday school at St. John's?

BOY.—Three months, sir.

MINISTER.—Only three months! Did you learn to read in that time?

BOY.—Yes, sir, with the help of my father.

MINISTER.—Why did you then leave the school?

Boy.—Because it was broken up; and the Missionary removed to another place, to teach other poor children.

Minister.—Do you ever think of the kind persons who taught you?

Boy.—Yes, very often. They were very kind to me, and took great pains to make me understand. I pray for them, that God would bless and reward them.

Minister.—Do you think they shewed you more kindness than if they had made you rich?

Boy.—O yes! they did more for me than that. I can never love them too much for all their goodness to me.

Minister.—Are you not exposed to many dangers in the whale-fishery?

Boy.—It is a dangerous business, sir. My employment is to give the harpoons to the harpooners, when they strike the fish, and to let out the line. Sometimes the angry fish will with his tail either strike the men into the air, or dash the boat in pieces, and endanger the lives of all in it. But God has taken care of my father and me, so that we never have met with an accident.

Thus did this poor child discern the hand of God in those circumstances, which too many abandon to the dominion of chance. He saw the interference, and

felt the presence of the Almighty, in the midst of scenes, where commonly he is forgotten, and where noisy and impious merriment drowns every serious thought. Should these pages ever come under the eye of a sea-faring man, let him attentively view the fact. Here was a little feeble boy, who could face death in some of his most fearful and dreary forms, and peacefully trust in the protection of an unseen and heavenly guardian. It was not the natural thoughtlessness of his age, nor the force of habit, which concealed or diminished the dangers which pervade the half-frozen waters of the northern sea. He had an eye to that Saviour, who walks beside his people on the tempestuous waters. Little Richard knew how tremendous it must be for an ungodly man to sink through the dark and stormy deep of the ocean, to a lower depth of blacker darkness, for ever agitated by fiery storms. But he also knew, that it must be a glorious transition for the humble believer in Jesus, to pass from the caverns of the fathomless sea, to the bright and calm regions of heavenly glory.

When my little friend had spent two hours at his work in my garden, he was supplied with some plain food. As I entered the kitchen, where he sat to his humble repast, I observed that he had not eaten the whole of what had been placed before him, although it was not more than enough for one of his years and

situation. "Can you not eat any more?" I asked. He answered, "I thank you, sir; but, if you please, I will take the rest to my father." This was a moving instance of self-denial and filial affection. Surely it was a fair and lovely specimen of the fruits of that christian culture which had been bestowed upon his youthful mind in the sunday school at St. John's. "My father," added he, "is a good father to me." Happy, thrice happy, the parent of such a child! Poverty and sorrow had not chilled the current of natural feelings in his bosom. I cannot but digress for a moment to say, that the cultivation of natural affection, on evangelical principles, in the children of our poor, and pre-eminently towards their parents, is highly important. Every intelligent observer of human life must perceive, how greatly the absence or diminished force of that natural affection augments the sorrows of the children of poverty. Reciprocal tenderness, especially between those who, in the lowest walks of life, are called to sustain together many privations, would lessen all their mutual sorrows, and increase their few common enjoyments.

Richard expressed much thankfulness for his refreshment. "I know," said he, "that God has to-day sent you to be my friend, as he daily sends me one friend or another." He was about to withdraw, as if satisfied with what he had received in recom-

pense for his labour, and too humble to renew his petition for a book. I gave him several small books suitable for his age and station. He looked at them with great pleasure, thanked me, and again made for the door. I then took from my pocket a small New Testament, and said—"My boy, take that; read it attentively with prayer to God, that he would instruct you yet more in its blessed truths. Never part with it." He looked at me with a countenance, the expression of which is still fresh in my remembrance. Pale as it naturally was from the weakness of his constitution, and from the hardships he had endured, it instantly was covered with a blush of gratitude and delight. His downcast eye was lighted up with more than usual brightness. He took the book; and, having warmly thanked me, added, "Part with it! No, never!"

A few minutes after he had left the parsonage, I followed him, desirous to bestow on him a small pecuniary gift, since, through his whole conduct, he had evinced a mind so free from sordid covetousness. Not but that the desire of money in him would have been justifiable, for his appearance bespoke the poverty of his earthly portion, and he was, at the very time, probably without a penny. I looked this way and that, but could not discover him; and I returned disap-

pointed towards my home, concluding that his nimble feet had carried him out of sight. By chance, as we are thoughtlessly apt to speak—"Such chances providence obey"—I took a circuitous path through our church-yard, different from any I usually trod. When I reached the lofty and aged village elm, which annually sheds upon the surrounding habitations of the dead its withered emblems and mementos of human frailty, I perceived the boy seated behind the trunk. A shower of rain was falling, and he had sought shelter under its spreading foliage. His back was towards me, so that he was not aware of my approach till I reached his side. I was delighted to discover his employment while under cover from the rain. He had drawn his New Testament from his pocket, and was reading it with all the intentness of one, who had been accustomed to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest its heavenly truths, as the very food of his soul. No miser counting over his hoard, no discoverer of a hidden treasure, could have been more engrossed with his object, and more abstracted from all the world beside. It was a subject which a painter might have selected for his pencil. Mine were the only mortal eyes which beheld it. From heaven it was doubtless witnessed with an approving smile, and the feelings of this youthful student of the divine

oracles were recorded there as a testimony of his interest in the best promises which those oracles convey from God to man.

About ten days after this, I met him retracing his road. His father and he, disappointed at the fishery, had till then procured employment in the hay-fields, and they had just received information of a ship about to sail from one of the neighbouring ports for their native land. I conversed with him a few moments, and they were all which circumstances then allowed me to spare, gave him my blessing, and bade him God speed.

This account of little Richard presents one of innumerable instances of the beneficial influence of sunday schools over the youthful mind; particularly when the instruction given in those sabbath seminaries is not limited to the mere mechanical act of reading, and the bare repetition of a set task. These have their important use; but sunday schools will languish, and greatly fail of their expected results, if the system proceed no farther. Kind, intelligent, and well-timed admonitions, simple and elucidatory questions, and expressions of an evident and tender interest in the welfare of the scholars, are indispensably requisite. These tell upon the hearts of children, and will remain in association with the best recollections of their early years. The communication of religious knowledge is

not, indeed, always a "delightful task." It is accompanied by numerous discouragements, and toilsome difficulties, arising from the common corruption of our fallen nature, and from the endless and capricious varieties of temper and character. Heavenly wisdom is less readily imbibed than human wisdom, because it has to encounter and overcome the pride and the evil propensities of the heart, whereas these are often flattered and gratified by secular knowledge. Happily, however, the incentives to patient perseverance, in cultivating this humble field, are neither few nor feeble. The probabilities of effecting the most important and the most lasting good, are sufficiently great to sustain the benevolent labourer among the children of the poor under the various discouraging, depressing, and perplexing circumstances of his employment. "Cast thy bread, or thy seed, upon the waters, and it shall be found after many days." It might seem a hopeless expenditure of labour, and time, and seed, to scatter it over lands covered with the waters of an inundation. But experience encouraged the Egyptian husbandman to expect a fruitful harvest. So the volatile and vitiated minds of children, often subject to all the destructive and counteracting influence of the worst domestic examples, may appear an unpromising soil in which to deposit the good seed of the kingdom of heaven. Yet, though for many

days and many years, it may seem decayed and lost, some will spring up, and, by the rich exuberance of its produce, in a measure compensate for that which the fowls of the air carried away, which never germinated, or which never came to perfection.

As the children of the poor reach an age at which they may by their labour diminish the burden of their parents, they generally are withdrawn from our schools, and are scattered over a surface too wide to come within the future observation of their instructors. But, surely, we may hope, and experience sanctions the expectation, that the oft-repeated, and gently instilled lessons of childhood, will recur to the memory, and retouch the heart, of many a wanderer through this world of change and sorrow; and, seconded by the ever returning storms of a disastrous life, may be made effectual in the hand of God to the renovation, the comfort, and the salvation of his soul. The dying warrior on the field of Waterloo, trembling at the approaching disclosures of a world, of which he had thought too little and too feebly to let him enter it with peace and hope, endeavoured, but in vain, to form his anxieties into prayer, till memory supplied him with some of the collects of our church, which, when a boy, and in a sunday school, he had been taught to understand and repeat. In the language of these he

breathed out the penitence and trembling hopes of his departing soul, and died in peace.

Many pages in the history of our charitable institutions for the diffusion of heavenly knowledge, are illuminated by facts of this description, which seem to echo in the ears of benevolent persons: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good."

THE PASTOR.

"You are going to the darkest corner of my diocese, and I wish you abundant success," said the bishop of H——, to my great uncle, the Rev. J. B——. Dark indeed, with the thickest shades of moral debasement and spiritual ignorance, my relative found the spot where he pitched his tent, and where it remained till death took it down, and bade him go forth and enter into the joy of that Lord, to whom he was long a good and faithful servant. Many years revolved, and yet he saw no heavenly light break forth upon his pastoral charge. They came and went. They heard and talked of his message; and as he "spoke the truth in love," they, with few exceptions, regarded him with affection, and his name and character were invested with all the veneration that was due to a messenger from God on an errand of eternal import.

For letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky;
He bore his great commission in his look,
But sweetly temper'd awe, and soften'd all he spoke.

He preach'd the joys of heav'n, and pains of hell,
And warn'd the sinner with becoming zeal;
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.
He taught the Gospel rather than the law,
And forc'd himself to drive, but lov'd to draw.

Yet had he long to mourn the apparent inefficacy of his labours. On not one of his flock did the word of life descend with renovating power. He might have been addressed in the words once spoken to *Ezekiel*, xxxiii. 31, 32. "They come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo! thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not."

It was winter—and winter in its most rigid garb. The snow lay on all the neighbouring hills and moors, when some pastoral duty called Mr. B—— to the distance of several miles from his home, and he had to return after the short day had closed in. His way lay across extensive moors, where the roads being marked by no elevated objects, were completely hidden, and every foot-print was speedily obliterated by the falling and drifting snow. The night was without a star, the cold was intense, and the bleak and

cutting wind howled fearfully around him. He entirely lost his track, and in vain urged his horse successively in several different directions, in hope of finding some habitation of man. After awhile the keen and piercing air began severely and vitally to affect him, and there seemed every probability, that, in that drear and fearful solitude, his master was about to call him home. He, however, felt no dread. His situation, awful as it was, awakened no terrors. The storm and the darkness were all without. Within, all was calm and light. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." Yet one thing there was which spread a temporary cloud over his soul. "How mysterious," he thought, "are the ways of God with me his servant. He brought me one hundred and fifty miles from my former abode, and has allowed me to spend many years in this remote corner as a minister of his Gospel. I have laboured to set forth that Gospel in all its simplicity, pleasing not man but God. Yet have I seen no fruit of my toils. To my knowledge not one soul has been awakened and brought to the Saviour, by my instrumentality. No circle of sinners, redeemed from this scene, will be my crown of rejoicing in the great day. It is a dispensation which only the light of God's presence will explain, that I should thus spend my strength for nought and in vain, and now be sent to

breathe my last breath in this dreadful situation." But this cloud soon passed away, and a sweet spirit of resignation to his Father's will prevailed over every disposition to complaint and doubt. He threw the reins upon the neck of his horse, and allowing him to take his own course, endeavoured to place himself in the hands of his Saviour for life or death. He was engrossed with such thoughts as became a man who expected within a few hours to stand before God, when suddenly his horse stopped, and on groping forward, for the darkness was so great that he could not see the head of his beast, he found himself at the door of a farm-house. The kind tenants instantly rose from their beds, and gave to the lost and half-frozen wanderer a cordial welcome.

By the morrow he was sufficiently recovered from the effects of the cold to regain his home, deeply impressed by the events of the preceding night, and looking upon himself as miraculously rescued from destruction, and bound by new and stricter obligations to devote his prolonged life to "do the work of an evangelist." Nor was he without hope that God had some great and gracious purposes to bring about in thus, as it were, sending him back into the world. Subsequent events shewed the correctness of his inference; for, within a short time, two occurrences were brought to his knowledge, which proved the

first-fruits of an abundant harvest of his pastoral toils. Those events threw a brilliant light on that characteristic in the dispensations of divine grace, which appears in the occasional selection of objects, around whom every barrier is self-raised against the advances of saving mercy.

A farmer and his wife, disgusted by that faithful exposition of the truth, which they received from the lips of Mr. B——, had for a long time absented themselves from his ministry, and formed a resolution to make that absence perpetual. One Sunday, however, shame induced them to accompany some visitors at their house, who expressed an earnest desire to hear him, whom they could not endure to hear. Arrived at the door, they were about to leave their friends and return, when a storm compelled them to take refuge in the porch. The tempest did not relax, but rather increased in fury, so that, very much in opposition to their will, they were obliged to enter the sacred edifice, against which they so long had turned their backs. When my relative announced his subject, one whispered to the other, "Now let us watch, and remember the parts of the Scripture to which he pretends to refer, and see, when we go home, whether it is not as we have thought and heard, that he preaches from a different Bible from ours." Unaccustomed, however, to such an exercise of their memories, which had

never been made the depositories of sacred language, when they returned, they had forgotten chapter, verse, and quotation. But being still more than ever persuaded, that the doctrines they heard, of the entire depravity of human nature, the necessity of a renewal of heart, and of justification by faith only in the Saviour, were drawn from a book widely different from that they possessed, and which they scarcely more regarded than as a piece of furniture, needful in every family, but to be more looked at than used, they agreed to go once more on the following Sabbath, and make another effort to discover his supposed dishonesty. They provided themselves with paper and pencils; and, on the return of the day of rest, stationed themselves in a pew convenient both for hearing and for taking down memoranda unseen. Mr. B—— was an admirable textuary; and, as all his quotations were precisely to his purpose, and not too numerous to be distinctly remembered in corroboration of his arguments and statements, he was accustomed to make exact references to the places in sacred writ where they were to be found. His two captious and incredulous hearers, intent upon their anticipated discovery, lost not a sentence of his discourse, and noted down, with minute correctness, all the texts he brought forward, and endeavoured to charge their memories with as much of his sermon as possible. They retrod their

steps to their habitation; and, after concluding a hasty meal, placed their *own* Bible on the table, and began, with busy anxiety and expectation, to compare their notes with the passages to which they referred. To their mutual astonishment and confusion, they soon detected, not the unfaithfulness of their pastor, but their own absurdity and ignorance. As they proceeded in their examination, they gazed in mute amazement at each other; and, when they had ended their employment, they closed the volume in a very different state of mind from that they were in when they opened it. They now saw that it was not merely the preacher who condemned them, but the law of heaven; that it was not the preacher who brought them to the test of a standard, which exposed their wretched faultiness, and who denounced heavy woes against unrepented and unpardoned transgression, but the word of God; that it was not the preacher who displayed the fallacy of all other hopes, and pointed to Jesus as the only refuge from the wrath to come, but the Gospel of truth. Convinced, ashamed, and humbled, they threw themselves upon their knees, confessed their sin and ignorance, and implored pardon and instruction from above. A daily enlarging knowledge, and growing sense of their necessities as spiritually wretched and miserable, and poor and blind, constantly drew them to the long-forsaken sanctuary,

where their invariable presence, their listening attitude, and their devotional demeanour, soon attracted the eye of their observant pastor, who, like every faithful occupant of the same holy office, was ever watchful to catch the first appearances of good, and to cherish them till they issued in complete return to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls. They became eminent for their devout and active piety, bringing forth in rich abundance the fruits of righteousness, which are, by Jesus Christ, to the praise and glory of God.

On another occasion, Mr. B—— was preaching on the nature and necessity of regeneration, or the new birth. He laid down the doctrine clearly and cogently as it is enforced in the Christian system, and described the dangerous practical consequences arising from the opinion, that regeneration is inseparably connected with the rite of baptism. He exhorted his hearers not to delude themselves by an imaginary security, derived from the conclusion, that all the needful renovation of their natures had been effected under the waters of baptism; but to judge faithful judgment on their own character and state, by comparing them with the requisitions of the law and the temper of the Gospel.

A respectable female present was so highly offended by the discourse, that, on repassing the threshold, she said to a friend, " What! rob me of

my best hope of heaven! Tell me that, although baptized, I must yet be born again, or I cannot enter the kingdom of God! Never will I go to hear such doctrines again." Like Naaman of old, she "turned and went away in a rage" from the minister of the Lord, who directed her to one, and that one the sole specific remedy for sin and guilt. For a long time she maintained her resolution. But being on a visit in the city of W——, and accompanying her friends to the house of God, she most unexpectedly found Mr. B—— officiating. Unable, without the grossest indecorum, to yield to her inclination, and quit the place, she kept an uneasy seat. In vain she strove to turn a deaf ear to the voice of the preacher. The more she closed her ear, the more she seemed to hear. The word of God from his lips, pursued her soul wherever it sought to wander or to hide itself, till at last her whole attention was arrested, her self-confidence and self-approbation were shaken and disturbed, and she retired to her chamber, sad, thoughtful, and inquiring. Within awhile she became warmly attached to the ministry, which had previously stirred up the enmity of her heart, and was long distinguished among Mr. B——'s people, for her steady, enlightened, and active piety.

To some, perhaps, it may appear singular, and even marvellous, that a man in the situation of Mr. B——,

on that dreadful night, should have his mind occupied with solicitude respecting the non-efficiency of his ministry, and that he should deem objects like these of sufficient moment for the Almighty, by an extraordinary interference of his providence, to send him back into the world to accomplish. They may think that it savours of presumption to expect, and of credulous fanaticism to believe, that the divine omnipotence should be exerted on occasions, in their esteem, so trivial. But a day will dawn, and pour so strong a light upon the secret arrangements and designs of providence, and upon the visible course of human affairs, that all the works and ways of God, and all the events of time, will be seen to form one harmonious and closely connected series, all conspiring and tending to the manifestation of the glory of God in the completion of his purposes of mercy through Christ by the Gospel. All are parts of one great scheme. Men of the world are not sensible of this. Their spiritual judgment is so vitiated, that they estimate the comparative importance of things as children judge of the magnitude and distance of the heavenly bodies. They know not the worth of the soul, the value of redemption by the blood of Christ, nor the full consequences of a sinner's conversion unto God. They see not in the simple and faithful discharge of the ministerial office the movements of an engine sufficiently potent

to engage an Almighty mover, and directed to the production of effects lasting as eternity itself. All these considerations they leave to fools, madmen, and enthusiasts; inconscious that, in the sight of God, and of the happy spirits who dwell in the habitation of his glory, the recovery of souls from sin and error, to holiness and truth, is of weightier moment than the rise and fall of kingdoms, and all the busy doings and perishing interests of this world.

THE DYING DEIST.

Mr. R—— was a gentleman of small but competent income, who resided for a short time in the house of my tutor. His time was chiefly spent in the pursuits of science and philosophy. Natural history spread before him a copious volume, in poring over the pages of which he never felt weariness. His learning, however, was not disfigured by pedantry or affectation; nor, in the acquisition of knowledge, did he neglect the arts by which esteem and friendship are procured and preserved. Unhappily, however, he drew illegitimate conclusions from the data given him in his favourite volume, and, dazzled instead of illumined by the lights it afforded, he ventured to reject revelation as inconsistent with the attributes of the Deity, as the invention of good but mistaken men, and as, therefore, destitute of the authority it claims over the faith, the principles, and the practice of mankind. He freely conversed on these topics with my tutor, unfolded all the doubts which led him into the dreary fields of infidelity, and was ever furnished with arguments to defend the system which he had embraced, and to impugn that which he had renounced. He

would insist on the irreconcilableness of the scheme of redemption, laid down in the Scriptures, with the majesty of the Eternal. He would ascend with the Psalmist to the very summit of his adoring admiration, when he exclaimed, "The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens;" but a spurious humility withheld him from adding, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high; who humbleth himself to behold the things that are in heaven and in earth?" He would often say, "I never can bring myself to think, that the mighty Being, who is occupied in sustaining and governing unnumbered worlds, can condescend to take a minute notice of me and my puny interests; or that he can, without demeaning himself, open his ear to my petitions, much less that he can be swayed by my intreaties, to impart the good I want, and which his essential benevolence would dispose him gratuitously and unsolicited to bestow, or to avert the evils I fear, which may form a wise and necessary part in the scheme of his general government.

The genius of infidelity which possessed his soul, had so miserably perverted his understanding, that he would most promptly have assented to the following sentiments of the school into which he had entered. "Such a humble portion of the universe as ours, could never have been the object of such high and distin-

guishing attentions as Christianity has assigned to it. God would not have manifested himself in the flesh for the salvation of so paltry a world. The monarch of a whole continent would never move from his capital, and lay aside the splendour of royalty, and subject himself for months and for years to perils, and poverty, and persecution; and take up his abode in some small islet of his dominions, which, though swallowed by an earthquake, could not be missed amid the glories of so wide an empire; and all this to regain the lost affections of a few families upon its surface. And neither would the eternal Son of God—he who is revealed to us as having made all worlds, and as holding an empire, amid the splendours of which, the globe that we inherit is shaded in insignificance; neither would he strip himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and light on this lower scene, for the purpose imputed to him in the New Testament. Impossible, that the concerns of this puny ball, which floats its little round among an infinity of larger worlds, should be of such mighty account in the plans of the Eternal; or should have given birth in heaven to so wonderful a movement, as the Son of God putting on the form of our degraded species, and sojourning amongst us, and sharing in all our infirmities, and crowning the whole scene of humiliation by the disgrace and agonies of a cruel martyrdom."

Mr. R——'s intellectual character proved that Dr. Chalmers, in his "Discourses on the Christian Revelation, viewed in connection with the modern Astronomy," has not created ideal objectors to the Christian system, nor vainly spent the energies of his great mind in grappling with imaginary difficulties. I should have exulted in an opportunity of placing those discourses before him, with a sanguine hope, that they would have afforded some sacred clue for his extrication from those labyrinths of a false philosophy, into which he had plunged, and that he would have seen that his arguments "go to expunge a perfection from the character of God;" of that God, whose being he acknowledged, and on whose attributes he professed to dwell in ineffable wonder and reverence. For "the more we know of nature, should not we have the loftier conceptions of Him, who sits in high authority over the concerns of so wide a universe?" I would have pointed out to him the paragraphs, which I subjoin for the sake of any into whose hands this little volume may fall, and who may have been led into similar errors, and anxiously should I have watched his intelligent eye as he perused them. "When I look abroad on the wondrous scene that is immediately before me, and see, that in every direction, it is a scene of the most various and unwearied activity,—and expatiate on all the beauties of that

garniture by which it is adorned, and on all the prints of design and of benevolence which abound in it,—and think, that the same God who holds the universe, with its every system, in the hollow of his hand, pencils every flower, and gives nourishment to every blade of grass, and actuates the movements of every living thing, and is not disabled, by the weight of his other cares, from enriching the humble department of nature I occupy, with charms and accommodations of the most unbounded variety,—then, surely, if a message, bearing every mark of authenticity, should profess to come to me from God, and inform me of his mighty doings for the happiness of our species, it is not for me, in the face of all this evidence, to reject it as a tale of imposture, because astronomers have told me, that he has so many other worlds and other orders of beings to attend to; and, when I think that it were a deposition of him from his supremacy over the creatures he has formed, should a single sparrow fall to the ground without his appointment, then let science and sophistry try to cheat me of my comfort as they may—I will not let go the anchor of my confidence in God—I will not be afraid, for I am of more value than many sparrows."

"The thing is inconceivable to us, whose minds are so easily distracted by a number of objects; and this is the secret principle of the whole infidelity I am now

alluding to. To bring God to the level of our own comprehension, we would clothe him in the impotency of a man. We would transfer to his wonderful mind all the imperfections of our own faculties. When we are taught by astronomy, that he has millions of worlds to look after, and thus add, in one direction, to the glories of his character, we take away from them in another, by saying, that each of these worlds must be looked after imperfectly. The use that we make of a discovery, which should heighten our every conception of God, and humble us into the sentiment, that a Being of such mysterious elevation is to us unfathomable, is to sit in judgment over him, aye, and to pronounce such a judgment as degrades him, and keeps him down to the standard of our own paltry imagination! We are introduced by modern science to a multitude of other suns, and of other systems; and the perverse interpretation we put upon the fact, that God *can* diffuse the benefits of his power and of his goodness over such a variety of worlds, is, that he *cannot*, or will not, bestow so much goodness on one of those worlds, as a professed revelation from heaven has announced to us."

The microscope was Mr. R——'s constant companion in his walks; by the aid of which, he examined, with enthusiastic ardour, all the minuter forms of created objects. We cannot but wonder and lament,

that every individual of the millions of objects thus brought within the reach of his contemplation, did not throw a beam of light into his mind, and rebuke him for the absurd and criminal inconsistencies of his infidel doubts. It might have taught him, that "no minuteness, however shrunk from the notice of the human eye, is beneath the condescension of God's regard;" and that, therefore, he involved himself both in guilt and unhappiness, by inferring, that he was the object of no divine attention, and, therefore, exempt from moral responsibility.

Yet were there not wanting hours, when his mind seemed somewhat open to conviction, and to a reception of truth, if he could have seen it in all its bearings. Nor was he without a kind skilful friend to aid his inquiries. Often did he and that friend sit together in close argument, till they mingled their tears, and Mr. R—— would say,—"I would give worlds, if I had them, to believe as you do; but I cannot." Infidelity had established one of its strongest holds in his mind, and was never brought to surrender its tyrannizing usurpation over his understanding. The peculiar doctrines of the Gospel were too humbling to his pride, and demanded the subjection of his reasoning powers, to a standard of truth, which, in his eyes, was foolishness.

But, I apprehend, that his infidelity might be traced to an earlier origin than his philosophical studies.

His youthful days were criminally neglected by his parents, so that his mind was left to luxuriate in all the wildness of nature. I remember an anecdote, at the horribleness of which I shudder as I give the relation, but which may, perhaps, throw some light upon the gloomy history of his apostasy from the principles of that religion, in the name of whose divine Author he had been baptized. Two of the family, of whom he probably was one, when boys, having procured a bone, and tied to it a long string, contrived to throw it into the midst of a small religious assembly, in their native village, and cried out as they ran away, "Behold the Lamb of God!" Can we wonder, if a heart so callous, in life's tenderest period, was never after softened; or, that a mind so early familiarized to such horrid impiety, never after admitted the Scripture testimony concerning that Saviour, whom, in the very morning of his existence, he blasphemously rejected?

Let this avail for a solemn and affecting caution to my younger readers, to shun, as the very offspring of the bottomless pit, every thought, and sentiment, and word, which lightly treats the holy and blessed mysteries of religion. An early-formed habit of profanely trifling with the high and awful things of God and the soul, of heaven and hell, may never be broken off; but, on the contrary, may be rivetted upon the soul as the shackles of the chains of darkness, till the judgment of the great day. He who once ventures

into the drear and desolate regions of infidelity, enters a clime as inhospitable, and pursues a path as likely to be closed against his return, as the mariner who is driven by storms, or enticed by gain, or impelled by the spirit of enterprise within the polar circle.

How different his onward course, and how transcendently bright the hour, when he reaches the goal, who from a child has known, and reverenced, and loved the Holy Scriptures, and by them has been made wise unto salvation! Scattering blessings as he goes; by his example alluring to brighter worlds; himself an argument for the truth he loves and believes; uncorrupted by prosperity, and undismayed by adversity; illumined by true wisdom, and not misled by science, falsely so called, he lives and dies in peace. Contrast, with his end, the final hours of Mr. R——, whom a lingering and insidious complaint brought to his grave in the noon-day of life. My tutor had requested to be called into his chamber when his end seemed near; and, accordingly, at midnight, he was summoned from his bed to witness the melancholy conclusion of a life, over the progress of which scepticism had spread its cheerless clouds, and on the termination of which it shed no consolation.

Where should the living, weeping o'er his woes;
The dying, trembling at the awful close;
Where the betray'd, forsaken, and oppress'd,
The thousands whom the world forbids to rest;

Where should they find, (those comforts at an end
The Scripture yields) or hope to find a friend?

Thus betrayed and forsaken by the worst enemies of human peace, friendless and hopeless, the disciples of infidelity are left in the most critical moment of their existence, either to the infernal horrors of despair, with the arch-apostate Voltaire; to the insane and pitiable flippancy of Hume; or to the sullen taciturnity of him, who, no longer sustained by the buoyant influence of free-thinking, sinks into the gulph of eternity, too miserable to smile, and too proud to weep.

Mr. R—— was lying on his bed in gloomy silence. His mind seemed perfectly collected, though its joyless state communicated no smile or placidity to his countenance. His friend was oppressed by the scene, and withdrew to the fire-place, where he took out his Bible, if haply he might be led to some inspired passage, which he might successfully apply to the conscience of the dying sceptic. He felt confounded and speechless, when, on opening the volume, his eye rested on the words—"Because they received not the truth that they might be saved; God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." He was not disposed to handle the Bible with the enthusiastic superstition with which some consult it; but he was startled and overcome by this tremendous declaration

of the divine oracles, and it seemed to point to the spectacle before him, as being an awful accomplishment of its fearful prophecy. That predictive declaration so engrossed his thoughts, that, for a few minutes, he appeared lost in terrible perplexity. Rousing himself, however, from the depression under which he was sinking, and by way of introducing some conversation with his expiring friend, he requested Mr. R——'s sister to ask him this question:—"My dear brother, do you ever pray?" He only replied, "Do not tease me," and then relapsed into his former silence. This was sufficiently discouraging; but the clergyman made another attempt. At his request, Mrs. R——, whose mind her partner had tainted with his own principles, but whose tears now betrayed their insufficiency, approached the dying man, and, in a tender manner, and a tremulous voice, asked, "My dear husband, have you any hope?" He returned the same answer as before; "Do not tease me." Nothing more could be elicited from him. "He died, and made no sign." My tutor retired to a sleepless pillow, with his mind the field of conflicting anguish at what he had witnessed, and of lively gratitude for the grace which had made him to differ, and had given him a living faith in that Saviour, who is the life and the resurrection of the dying and the dead, who sleep in him.

THE COTTAGER AND THE ATHEIST.

"THE fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." This sentiment of the most depraved of earthly beings, is discovered and recorded by the searcher of hearts. Were it not thus recorded by Him, who "knoweth what is in man," notwithstanding the daring language sometimes uttered or penned by men arrived at the extreme of human temerity, and who have avowed themselves atheists, I should with difficulty be brought to believe, that such a sentiment could ever settle down into a firm conviction in the mind of any rational being. For many years, indeed, I thought it not improbable, that, were I to carry round the proposition, that there is a God, to every inhabitant of our earth, whether he was a tenant of those deathly shades, where the lamp of natural science and of moral truth sheds no beam of light, or of those brighter regions, where that lamp gives out all its lustre, I should not have encountered one so ignorant as to question, or so daring as to deny it. A wider acquaintance with men and with books, the registers of human sentiments as well as of human actions, has undeceived me, and brought home accumulated evidence, that an atheist is not an empty name.

But whither should I direct my steps to come in contact with a fellow mortal, who has "ascended the dreary eminence, where he looks with complacency up to a vacant heaven, and down to the gulph of annihilation?" Where shall I find the man who has inspired himself with more than the heroism of devils, "for they believe and tremble;" and has assumed the hardy courage to take his stand on some point of our tiny province of creation, and fearlessly and undoubtingly to affirm, "There is no God?" Shall I meet him in the dark haunts of shameless vice and unlettered brutality? Perhaps I might; for guilt would rejoice in arriving at a certainty so remedial to the remorse of an ever-gnawing conscience. But I should with greater readiness discover the object of my search in the book-walled study of the man, who, under the name of a philosopher, conceals the bitterest enmity against true wisdom. Proud of the sceptre he sways over an intellectual empire, into every corner of which he imagines that his eye can penetrate, he boasts an heroical contempt for the vulgar errors, which for ages have misled the majority of mankind. "But, indeed, it is heroism no longer, if he *knows* that there is no God. The wonder then turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence, that can know that there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for *this* attain-

ment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of divinity, while a God is denied. For, unless this man is omnipresent,—unless he is at this moment in every place in the universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity, by which even he would be overpowered. If he does not know absolutely every agent in the universe, the one that he does not know, may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so, may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be, that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know every thing that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus, unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity, by being one himself, he cannot know, that the Being whose existence he rejects, does not exist."*

Some years ago I entered a cottage standing in one of those desolate districts of our country, which present to a beholder the anomalous appearance of a parish without a church, and without a pastor. The

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* A volume of admirable Essays, by John Foster.

mouldering relics of the once existing sanctuary were visible from the high road running between my two parishes, and stood covered with ivy and brambles, a monument of dishonour to the hands which had sacrilegiously dismantled the sacred edifice, or had suffered it to fall into decay. More favoured than the cultivators of the surrounding soil, "the sparrow had found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she might lay her young," even the forsaken and perishing altars of the Lord.

A woman, about fifty years of age, was sitting at her domestic employments in the humble tenement, and received me, though a stranger, with simple cordiality. I entered into conversation with her; in the course of which, the Bible was mentioned as the book of God, and as containing truths, the knowledge and power of which are necessary to the present peace and future salvation of the soul. She listened attentively, and replied, "Ah! sir, what a pity it is that all do not think as you do. There's my husband's master puts away the Bible, and says it is all a fable. He says, there is no God, no heaven, no hell. He lately lost a little child, and buried it in his garden, and says, that he shall set up a stone by its grave, and write upon it, 'Death is an eternal sleep.' He often talks about these things to my husband, who cannot read for himself, and to the other workmen; but I wish he would

give over doing so; *for I know that the Bible is the true word of God,* and I love to put on my spectacles, and read it by the hour together." The woman uttered this with an energy, that at once surprised me, and excited my curiosity. "And why," I asked, "do you speak so confidently? What are the reasons which satisfy your mind of the truth of the Scriptures?" "Sometimes," she replied, "wandering Jews call at our door, offering trinkets, or other things, for sale. When I look in the faces of these men, I see a sufficient proof that the Bible is the word of God. For, does it not foretel, that, because they crucified the Saviour, the Jews should be scattered over all the earth, and yet remain so marked a people, that every body should know them? I cannot doubt the truth of the book, as long as I see the face of a Jew, though master is always reading, and is a very great scholar, and ought to know better than a poor woman." I did not speedily lose the impression made by this simple, but forcible reasoning of an humble cottager; and it has always revived in my mind, when the value of education and the possession of the holy Scriptures to the lower classes has been the subject of discussion. Here was a small district of a Christian land left to itself. No church-going bell ever summoned its occupants to the common house of prayer. No appointed guide ever brought them tidings of the

heavenly country, and offered to lead them thither. They were as sheep who have no shepherd. The man of highest rank and chief influence among them, was not one whose active piety and bright example might, in some measure, have compensated to them their other disadvantages. Nor was he of that professedly neutral class, who, contented with supporting a decently moral character themselves, entertain too charitable an opinion of all around them, to indulge a thought that any, who have received Christian baptism, can fail of being sufficiently religious to pass safely through this world to a better. Nor did he belong to another class, who, with a professed regard to the established religion of their country, manifest their zeal for it, by a virulent opposition to its vital principles, and to all who act upon those principles. This gentleman belonged to the French school. In the writings of Voltaire, Volney, and other kindred spirits, he concluded that he had found, what the celebrated walking Stewart travelled the known world to discover, the polarity of moral truth. The *ignis fatuus* of atheistical philosophy conducted him onward, till, in his eyes, "the whole venerable magnificence of revelation was annihilated." "After inspecting those pages awhile, he raised his eyes, and the great Spirit was gone! Mighty transformation of all things! The luminaries of heaven no longer shone with his splen-

dour; the adorned earth no longer looked fair with his beauty; the darkness of night had ceased to be rendered solemn by his majesty; life and thought were not an effect of his all-pervading energy; it was not his providence that supported an infinite charge of dependent beings; his empire of justice no longer spread over the universe; nor had even that universe sprung from his all-creating power."

The husband of our cottager could not read, and the natural dulness of his uncultivated mind, aided by the pernicious counsels and example of his master, had reduced him to a state of moral debasement and intellectual stupidity, which resisted every effort to elevate or impress it. While I conversed with his happier partner, he sat in the chimney corner, sunk, not in the depths of reflection, but in those of unconscious vacuity: nor should I wonder if his atheistical instructor often contemplated his servant and disciple as an irresistible evidence of his own assumption, that man is but a piece of organised matter, doomed to decay and perish, the offspring of chance, and the inheritor of annihilation. The wife, happily, blessed with the ability to read, and enriched with that volume of revealed truth, which is all sufficient, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, to enlighten and save the soul, was enabled to baffle every effort to overthrow her faith: and while her wealthier and more literate neighbour

was roaming, without joy or hope, in the dark solitudes of satanic philosophy, she lived in a region bright with heavenly wisdom, governed by an ever-present God and Saviour, and peopled by millions of happy intelligences, either already inheriting, or on the way to, glory, honour, and immortality. It was an original of Cowper's picture.

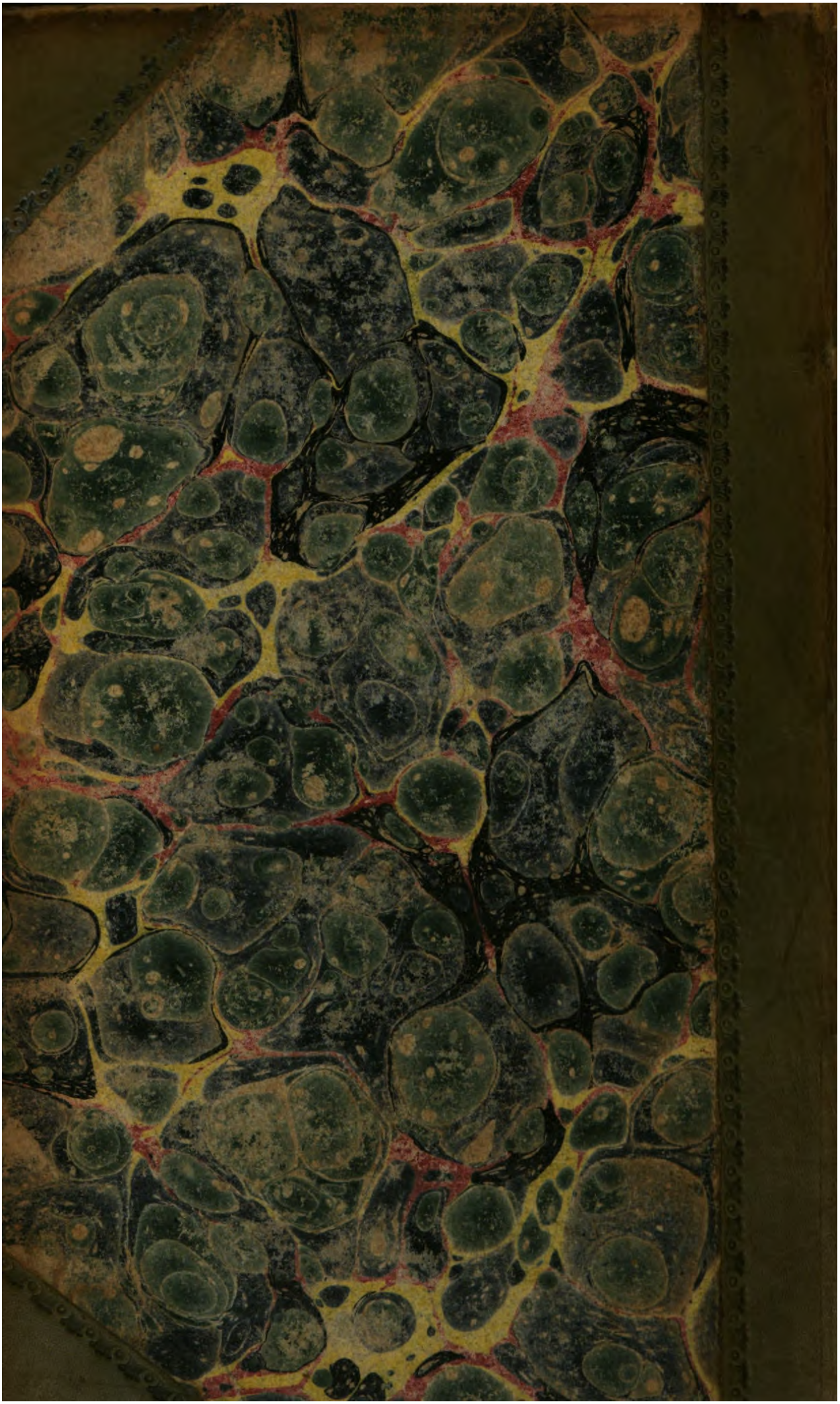
> Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
> Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
> Content, though mean, and cheerful, if not gay,
> Shuffling her threads about the livelong day;
> Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
> A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
> And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
> Her title to a treasure in the skies.

One of the ablest writers of our age, has eloquently and convincingly proved the natural tendency of atheism to loosen every social bond, to destroy every domestic charity, and to give unqualified licence to sensuality. The gentleman, of whom this cottager gave me the first information, and of whose character I afterwards learned more particulars, spurned the sacred as well as civil institution of marriage, as an unjust limitation of his freedom. The partner of his guilty life, and the victim of his lawless principles and passions, held just that low place in his abode, down to which woman is thrust by the moral system he had

embraced; if by moral system we may designate the indefinite notions of the nature and obligations of virtue, which make up the philosophy of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Diderot, Rousseau, and others, on the continent; and of Hume, Bolingbroke, and Gibbon, on our own island. She brought him children; and the grave and monument of one of these told, in plain terms, the extinction of parental feeling in the father's bosom.

The atheist, then, is on principle, an "enemy of all righteousness." He is under the influence of no motive, which leads to the formation and the exercise of exalted virtues; while he owns the authority of no efficient restraint from the basest vices. His family have no firm hold on his affections; his neighbours have no sure pledge of his benevolence; his country has no security for his patriotism; and the world has nothing to expect from his philanthropy.

But atheism and deism are not the only errors which prove fatal to man. "Many, without renouncing the profession of Christianity, without formally rejecting its distinguishing doctrines, live in such an habitual violation of its laws, and contradiction to its spirit, that, conscious that they have more to fear than to hope from its truth, they are never able to contemplate it without terror. It haunts their imagination, instead of tranquillizing their hearts, and hangs with

depressing weight upon all their enjoyments and pursuits. Their religion, instead of comforting them under their troubles, is itself their greatest trouble, from which they seek refuge in the dissipation and vanity of the world, until the throbs and tumults of conscience force them back upon religion. Thus suspended between opposite powers, the sport of contradictory influences, they are disqualified for the happiness of both worlds; and neither enjoy the pleasures of sin, nor the peace of piety.—It is this class of professors who are chiefly in danger of being entangled in the snares of infidelity."

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