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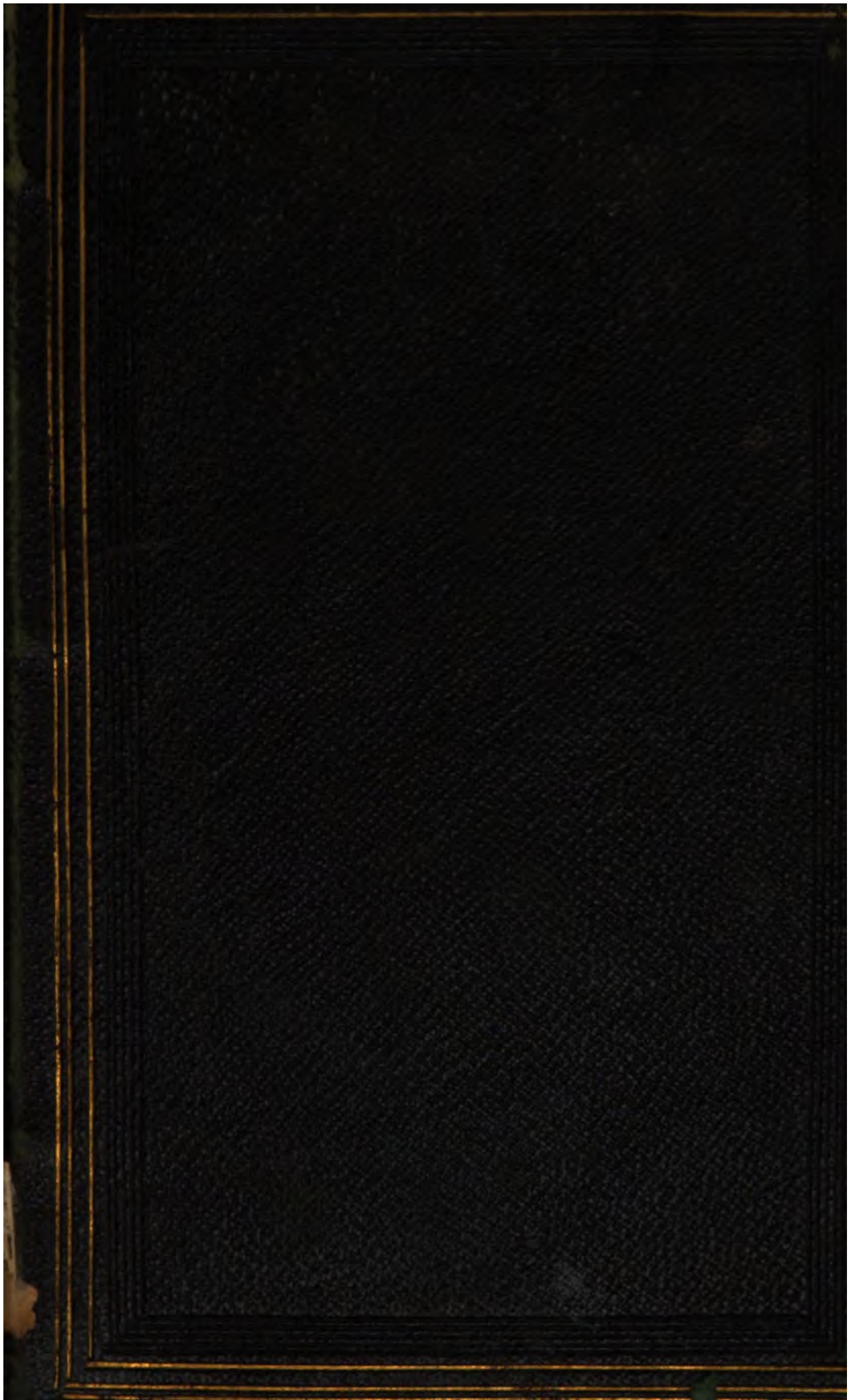
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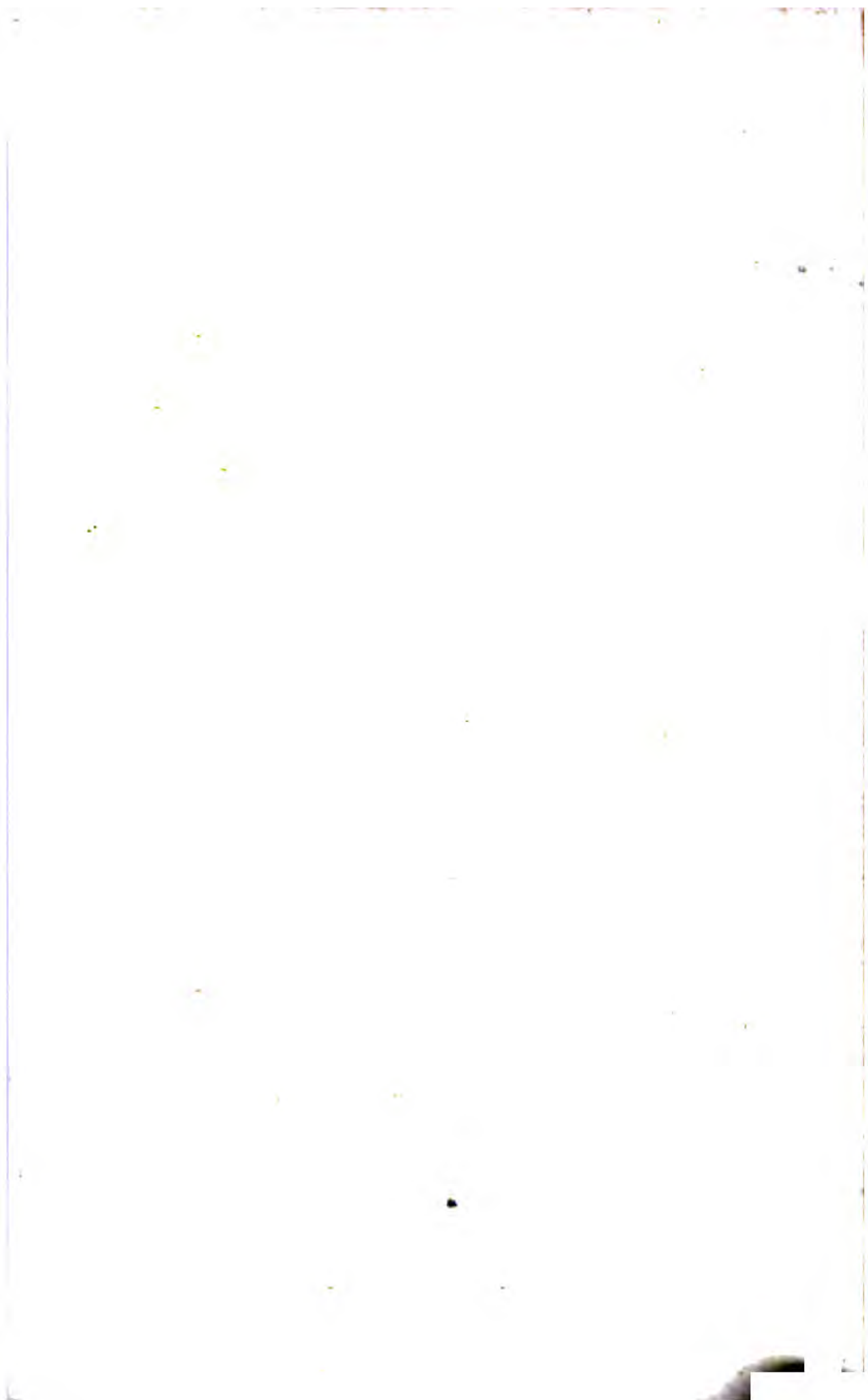
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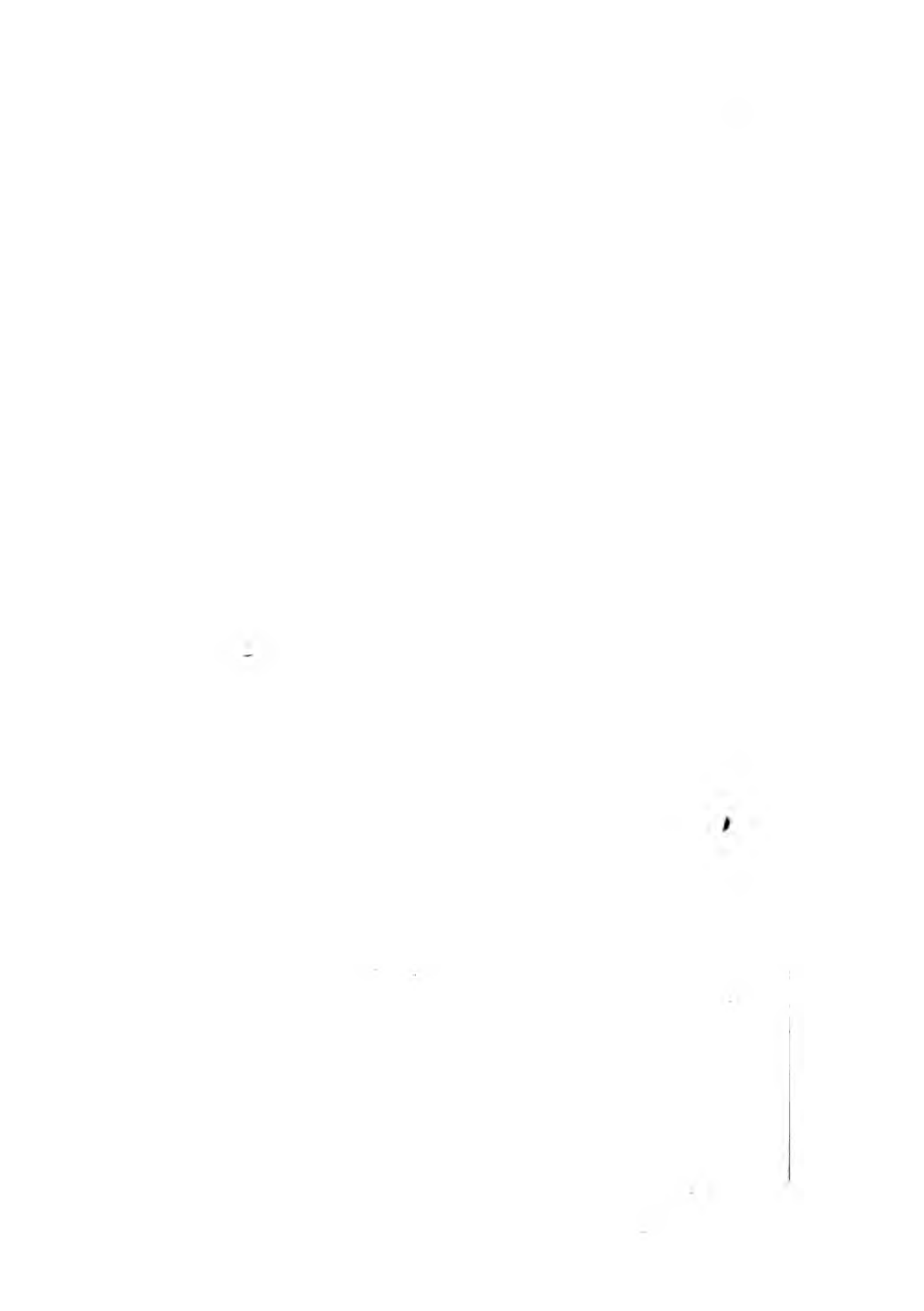
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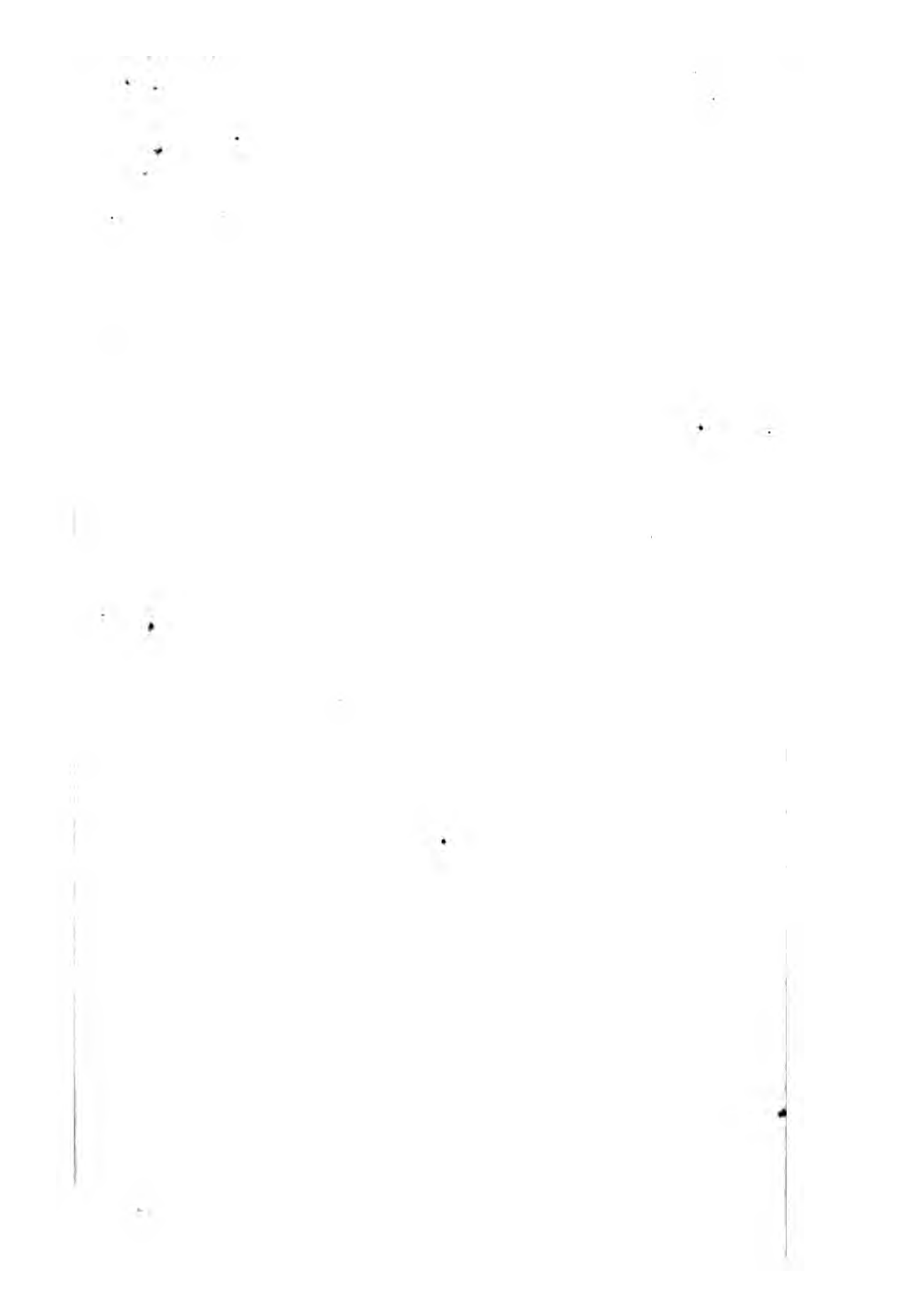
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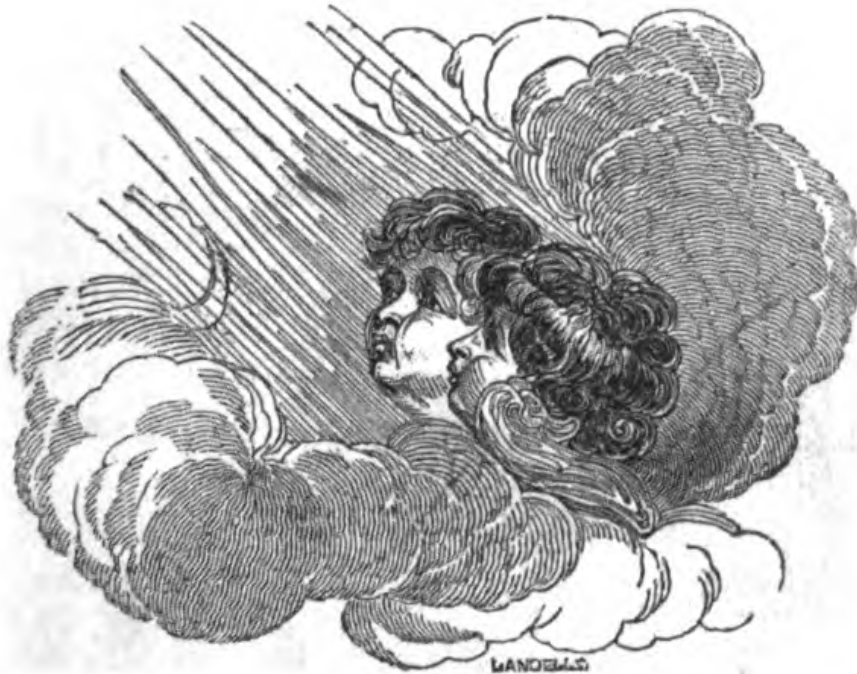
*From A. M.*



ROBERT HALL.

London, William Darton & Son Holborn Hill

THE  
**A M A R A N T H ;**  
A SELECTION OF  
RELIGIOUS AND PRECEPTIVE PIECES  
IN PROSE.



A NEW EDITION.

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BY THE REV. B. H. DRAPER.

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LONDON:  
WILLIAM DARTON AND SON,  
HOLBORN HILL.

BODLEY BR.  
21 JUNE 1917  
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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*The Editor acknowledges, that the title which he has assumed for his little volume, is one calculated to excite expectation ; yet he cannot but hope, and believe, that the truly candid Reader will find so much beauty, both of diction and thought, as fully to justify the appellation ; nor could it be otherwise, since the very first writers of our age and country have contributed to enrich his pages.*

*He trusts also, that he may be permitted to affirm, that there is not an article in the*

*work of an indifferent description. And certainly, there is not one, which is not in full unison with the noble sentiments of the angelic anthem,—since they all ascribe “glory to God in the highest,”—and inculcate “peace on earth, and good will towards men.”*

*The ready sale of the first impression, demands the thanks of the Editor ; and encourages the pleasing hope, that his labour has not been in vain. He now presents a new edition to the Public, with many additions, which he trusts will render the volume still more worthy of their patronage.*

*Southampton.*



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THE  
AMARANTH.



THE PRESENT LIFE IMPORTANT,  
CONSIDERED AS THE COMMENCEMENT OF  
IMMORTALITY.

THE smallest thing becomes respectable, when regarded as the commencement of what has advanced, or is advancing, into magnificence. The first rude settlement of Romulus would have been an insignificant circumstance, and might justly have sunk into oblivion, if Rome had not at length commanded the world. The little rill, near the source of one of the great American rivers, is an interesting object to the traveller, who is apprized, as he steps across it, or walks a few miles along its banks, that this is the stream which runs so



far, and which gradually swells into so immense a flood. So while I anticipate the endless progress of life, and wonder through what unknown scenes it is to take its course, its past years lose that character of vanity which would seem to belong to a train of fleeting perishing moments, and I see them assuming the dignity of a commencing eternity. In them I have begun to be that conscious existence which I am to be through infinite duration; and I feel a strange emotion of curiosity about this little life, in which I am setting out on such a progress; I cannot be content without an accurate sketch of the windings thus far of a stream, which is to bear me on for ever. I try to imagine, how it will be to recollect, at a far distant point of my end, what I was when here; and wish, if it were possible, to retain, as I advance, the whole course of my existence within the scope of clear reflection; to fix in my mind so very strong an idea of what I have been in this original period of my time, that I shall most completely possess this idea in ages too remote for calculation.

*Foster.*

---

## THE POWER OF RELIGION.

**THE** power of godliness, consists in a real and effectual conversion of the whole heart to God, in opposition to a merely external reformation. It will appear in a cordial reception of Christ Jesus in his whole salvation, "as the wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," of sinners, in opposition to a nominal faith in him. It will produce a simple and unaffected dependence on the mighty operations of the Holy Spirit, for every good thought, desire, and action, in opposition to a merely general reference to his aid. It will be seen in a spiritual and heavenly state of the mind and affections, which delights in prayer and communion with God; and honours the holy sabbath, in opposition to a cold performance of some of the duties of religion.

The power of godliness consists in a fervent love to Christ, which constrains the whole soul, and wins it to speak of his name, and glory in his cross, in opposition to indifference and neglect. It will shew itself in a circumspect walk, an abstraction from the world, and a dread of temptation, in opposition to a conformity to the manners

of the age. It will be seen in a zeal for God's glory, and an activity and enterprise in promoting the salvation of others, in opposition to a selfish indolence. It will appear in the humble, meek, and forgiving temper of Christ Jesus, in opposition to pride and revenge, and the spirit of party. In a word, the power of godliness is vital religion in the understanding, the will, the affections, and the life. It is the real deliverance of the captive. It is the actual erection of the spiritual edifice. It is the positive recovery of the patient. It is the perceptible warmth of life. It is the holy birth and growth of the soul in piety. It is "Christ dwelling in the heart by faith." It is the "translation from the power of darkness, into the kingdom of God's dear Son."

*Dr. Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta.*

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## DIVINE WISDOM AND GOODNESS

### CONSPICUOUS IN THE HUMAN FRAME.

WE cannot consider, but with gratitude, how happy it is, that our vital motions are involuntary. We should have enough to do, if we had to keep our hearts beating, and our stomachs at work.

Did these things depend, we will not say upon our effort, but upon our bidding, our care, or our attention, they would leave us leisure for nothing else; we must have been continually upon the watch, and continually in fear; nor would this constitution have allowed of sleep.

The skin and covering of animals is that upon which their appearance chiefly depends, and which, perhaps, in all animals is most decorated. But were beauty, or agreeableness of aspect, entirely out of the question, there is another purpose answered by it; it is concealment. Were it possible, to view through the skin the mechanism of our bodies, the sight would alarm and frighten us. "Durst we make a single movement," asks a lively French writer, "or stir a step from the place we were in, if we saw our blood circulating, our lungs heaving, and all the functions of life in action, which sustains an existence at once so frail and so presumptuous?"

It has been said, that a man cannot lift his hand to his head, without finding enough to convince him of the existence of a God. And it is well said; for he has only to reflect, familiar as this action is, and simple as it seems to be, how many things are

requisite to the performing of it; how many things which we understand, to say nothing of many more, probably, which we do not; namely, first, a long, hard, strong cylinder, in order to give to the arm its firmness and tension; but which, being in its substance inflexible, can only turn upon joints: secondly, therefore, joints for this purpose, one at the shoulder to raise the arm, another at the elbow to bend it; these joints continually fed with a soft mucilage to make the parts slip easily upon one another, and holden together by strong braces to keep them in position; then, thirdly, strings and wires, that is, muscles and tendons, artificially inserted for the purpose of drawing the bones in the directions in which the joints allow them to move. Yet, we have hitherto, only a machine standing still,—an apparatus. To put the system in a state of activity, to set it at work, a further provision, a communication with the brain, by means of nerves, is necessary. We know the existence of this communication, because we can see the communicating threads, and trace them to the brain; its necessity we also know, for if the thread be cut, if the communication be interrupted, the muscle becomes paralytic; but beyond this we

know little, the organization being too minute for our inspection.

To what has been enumerated, as officiating in the single act of a man's raising his hand to his head, must be added, likewise, all that is necessary, and all that contributes to the growth, nourishment, and sustentation of the limb, the repair of its waste, and the preservation of its health; such is the circulation of the blood, through every part of it; its lymphatics, exhalants, absorbents; its excretions, and integuments. All these share in the result, and join in the effect; and how all these, or any of them, come together, without a designing, disposing intelligence, it is impossible to conceive. *Paley.*

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### THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CONVERSION.

It is very difficult to draw the soul from the strong chains of sin, from the pleasing entanglements of the world, and from its own natural perverseness to yield up itself unto God, to deny itself, and live to him; and in so doing, to run against the main stream, and current of the ungodly world.

The most moving and persuasive way of discourse, is all too weak; the tongues of men and angels cannot prevail with the soul to free itself, and shake off all that detains it. Although it be convinced of the truth of those things that are represented to it, yet still it can, and will hold out, and say, "Thou shalt not persuade me although thou dost persuade."

The hand of man is too weak to pluck any soul out of the crowd of the world, and set it in among the number of believers. Only the Father of spirits hath absolute command of spirits. This powerful, this sanctifying spirit works sweetly, and yet strongly; it can come into the heart, whereas all other speakers are forced to stand without. That still voice within, persuades more than all the loud crying without; as he that is within the house, though he speak low, is better heard and understood, than he that shouts without doors.

When the Lord speaks by his spirit to a man, calling him out of the world, he no more disobeys. There is a secret but very powerful virtue in a word, or look, or touch of this spirit upon the soul, by which it is forced, not with a harsh, but a pleasing violence, to follow it. How easily did

the disciples forsake their callings and dwellings to follow Christ!

The Spirit of God draws a man out of the world by a holy light, discovering how base and false the sweetness of sin is, and how true and sad the bitterness is that will follow it; at the same time setting before his eyes, the free and happy condition, "the glorious liberty of the sons of God," the riches of their present enjoyment, and their far larger and assured hopes for a better world; making the beauty of Jesus Christ visible to the soul, so that it comes to him, though its most beloved friends, and most beloved sins lie in the way. It will tread upon all to come within the embraces of the Saviour, and say, with St. Paul, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

Such persons are alive to God. And as living men can have no pleasure among the dead, neither can these find it amongst the ungodly; they walk in the world as warily, as a man or woman neatly apparelled, would do amongst a sullied and polluted multitude.

*Leighton.*

---



**DEATH A BLESSING.**

**THE** death of a believer has been useful. It has encouraged and established those who were walking in the way to Zion, with many a trembling step, and many a shivering fear how it would go with them at last. When they have viewed a dying Christian, and have seen the grace of God, they have been glad; their courage has been revived, and they have rejoiced in hope. Why may it not be so with me? After turning their backs on a sermon, the careless have been convinced by a dying bed. There the evidence was too plain to be denied, too solemn to be ridiculed. The death of the saint has proved the life of the sinner.

The death of a parent has been useful. His expiring charge has never been forgotten. The thought of separation for ever from one so loved and valued, has awakened in the son a salutary fear. Returning from a father's grave he has met with God, saying, "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father! thou art the guide of my youth?" And the death of the parent has proved the life of the child.

The death of a minister has been useful. Some of the servants of God have laboured faithfully,

without seeing the fruit of their labours. One has sown, and another has reaped; the servant of God has been but little regarded while living; but when dead, his word has recurred with power to the conscience; his addresses, prayers, and tears, have been remembered by the people; and the expectation of meeting him at the last day, has forced them to exclaim, how shall we escape? And the death of the minister has proved the life of the hearer.

The death of the martyr has been useful. His patience and fortitude; his joy and triumph; his forgiveness of injuries, and his prayers for his persecutors, have struck beholders, rendered a religion honourable that could produce such marvellous effects, led to an examination of its evidences; and faith and zeal have been the result of enquiry. The wrath of man has praised God,—and the blood of the martyrs has been the seed of the church.

But where are we now? We have an example to produce infinitely greater than all these. Let us leave the disciples and behold their Lord. Jesus died; and his death is the life of the world. "I, if I be lifted up," said he, "will draw all men unto me."

*Jay.*

## MAN FORMED FOR ETERNITY.

MAN was created for the enjoyment of eternal blessedness. It is our high calling and destination ; and not to pursue it with diligence, is to be guilty of the blackest ingratitude to the Author of our being, as well as the greatest cruelty to ourselves. To fail of such an object, to defeat the end of our existence, and, in consequence of neglecting the great salvation, to sink at last under the frown of the Almighty, is a calamity which words were not invented to express, nor finite minds formed to grasp. Eternity, it is surely not necessary to remind you, invests every state, whether of bliss or of suffering, with a mysterious and awful importance entirely its own, and is the only property in the creation which gives that weight and moment to whatever it attaches, compared to which all sublunary joys and sorrows, all interests which know a period, fade into the most contemptible insignificance. In appreciating every other object, it is easy to exceed the proper estimate. But what, if it be lawful to indulge such a thought, what would be the funeral obsequies of a lost soul ? where shall we find the tears

fit to be wept at such a spectacle? or, could we realize the calamity in all its extent, what tokens of commiseration and concern would be deemed equal to the occasion? would it suffice for the sun to veil his light, and the moon her brightness; to cover the ocean with mourning, and the heavens with sackcloth? or, were the whole fabric of nature to become animated and vocal, would it be possible for her to utter a groan too deep, or a cry too piercing, to express the magnitude and extent of such a catastrophe?

“What manner of persons,” then, “ought we to be,” who are walking upon the brink of such an eternity, and possess no assurance, but that the next moment will convey us to the regions of happiness or of despair?

*R. Hall.*

---

### CONFIDENCE IN GOD, A SOURCE OF ELEVATED COURAGE.

THE last decisive energy of a rational courage, which confides in the Supreme Power, is very sublime. It forms a man, who intrepidly dares every thing that can oppose or attack him within

the whole sphere of mortality ; who would retain his purpose unshaken amidst the ruins of the world ; who will still press toward his object while death is impending over him.

It was in the true elevation of this character that Luther, when cited to appear at the Diet of Worms, under a questionable assurance of safety from high authority, said to his friends, who conjured him not to go, and justly brought the example of John Huss, who, in a similar situation, and with the same pledge of protection, had, notwithstanding, been burnt alive, "I am called in the name of God to go, and I would go, though I were certain to meet as many devils in Worms, as there are tiles on the houses."

The reader of the Bible will not forget Daniel braving in calm devotion the decree which virtually consigned him to the den of lions ; or Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, saying to the tyrant, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," when the fiery furnace was in sight.

*Foster.*

---

THE PROGRESSION OF THE MIND  
TOWARDS PERFECTION.

How can it enter into the thoughts of man, that the soul, which is capable of receiving new improvements to all eternity, shall fall away into nothing, almost as soon as it is created? Are such abilities made for no purpose? A brute arrives at a point of perfection which he can never pass. In a few years he has all the endowments of which he is capable; and were he to live ten thousand more, would be the same thing he is at present. Were a human soul thus to stand still in her accomplishments, were her faculties to be incapable of further enlargements, I could imagine it might fall away insensibly, and drop at once into a state of annihilation. But can we believe a thinking being, that is in a perpetual progress of improvements, and travelling on from perfection to perfection, after having just looked abroad into the works of the Creator, and made a few discoveries of his infinite goodness, wisdom and power, must perish in her first setting out, and in the very beginning of her inquiries?

The silk worm, after having spun her task, lays her eggs and dies. But a man can never have

taken in his full measure of knowledge, has not time to subdue his passions, establish his soul in virtue, and come up to the perfection of his nature, before he is hurried off the stage. Would an infinitely wise Being make such glorious creatures for so mean a purpose? Can he delight in the production of such short-lived reasonable beings? Would he give us talents that are not to be exerted? Capacities, that are never to be gratified? How can we find that wisdom which shines through all his works, in the formation of man, without looking on this world as a nursery for the next?

There is not, in my opinion, a more pleasing and triumphant consideration in religion than this, of the perpetual progress which the devout soul makes towards the perfection of its nature, without ever arriving at a period in it. To look on the spirit as going from strength to strength; to consider, that she is to shine for ever with new accessions of glory, and brighten to all eternity; that she will be still adding virtue to virtue, and knowledge to knowledge, carries in it something wonderfully agreeable to that ambition which is natural to the mind of man. Nay, it must be a prospect pleasing

to God himself, to see his creation for ever beautifying in his eyes, and drawing nearer to him by greater degrees of resemblance.

*Addison.*

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### RESPONSIBILITY.

WE are clearly responsible for the use of all the means of doing good which are put into our hands. This sentiment arises out of the very fact, that such means are in our possession ; for all of them are the gifts of God, and are bestowed upon us for the express purpose of diffusive beneficence. If he imparts wealth, or any other means of communicating happiness, it is not that it should be either hoarded or wasted, but employed : and the very possession of such means indicates both the will of God, and the imperative obligation of the possessor. This sentiment corresponds also with the second great commandment of the divine law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Now the love which we should show to ourselves, is such as leads us to use for our own good all the means which God has given us to promote it. The love then which it is incumbent on us to exercise



towards our neighbour, is plainly, that which will induce us to employ all the means we have of advancing his happiness too,—we are to love him “as ourselves.” This is a part of God’s holy law; it is the direct import of the single precept, which, in lovely and majestic loneliness, but with perfect comprehension, guides the whole of our duty to mankind.

This view of things is confirmed by the common sense and feeling of mankind. Hence the odium attaching to the miser: and scarcely less to those among the wealthy, who, with a lavish expenditure on their pleasures, allow but a scanty and reluctant pittance to the relief of the needy. Suppose there lies at your door a wretch perishing with hunger, and that with ample provision in your house, you leave him there to die; or that you discover a person drowning, and, with every means of saving him at your command, you remain without making any exertion; or that you discern some one in imminent peril by fire, while you know a method of escape, of which you give him no information; in such cases as these, your conscience would loudly condemn you, with having violated one of your most imperative obligations,

and the reproaches of your own heart would be justly re-echoed by every spectator of the deed.

*J. H. Hinton.*

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#### FOUR CLASSES WHO HEAR THE GOSPEL.

I. MANY "hear it, and understand it not." Its declarations lie on the surface of the mind; but no pains are taken to examine the evidence of its authority; nor to bring the heart into subjection to its precepts. In truth, the heart is never affected; the man remains within the hearing, but without the feeling of religion. Such is the case with seed which falls "by the way-side;" on ground unprepared, and unfit to receive it; where it is trodden under foot by every passenger, or carried off by the fowls of the air; destroyed by the scorner, or scattered by the tempter.

II. Others, instead of neglecting the Gospel altogether, are struck with some sense of its beauty, with the high views of mankind, and their future destiny, which it unfolds; or the ennobling relation to God which it offers, or the suitableness of its doctrines to the condition of the human race. So, when they "hear the word, they receive it with

joy;" listen to it gladly; and if there were no trials to come, no self-denial to be exercised, no duties to be performed, they would be something more than almost Christians. So corn might flourish on a rock, if there were no sun to parch it, or no storms to wash it away; it springs up for a time, though afterwards it withers. When difficulties arise, it is obliterated. The corrupt propensities of the heart prevail; or opposition ensues; if not such as menaced the early followers of the Saviour, the never-failing opposition of the indifference, contempt, and irreligious example of other men; and under these trials, religion gives way, if it have not been deeply rooted in the heart.

III. There is also a numerous class who persevere through life with no doubt upon their minds of the truth of Christianity; they pay some attention to its ordinances, and imagine, perhaps, that in the main they are living obediently to its precepts. And so they do live, in all those cases where the world and the scriptures agree. But the heart is still untouched, or at best, unsubdued; it is fixed on worldly advantages, worldly preferment, worldly pleasures, worldly approbation; and these snares so entangle it, that all those rarer

and peculiar graces which the Gospel requires, all that undivided attachment to its Author which it claims, all that uncompromising fidelity which constitutes and distinguishes the true Christian, is wanting. Such is he who "received the seed among thorns;" and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful. He is not like those who have never paid any attention to the word; he is a plant, that has leaves and blossoms; a show of fruit, but it reaches no perfection; it is not Christian fruit, such as belongs peculiarly to the Gospel, being estimated by its standard, and supported by its motives.

IV. There is a fourth class, upon whom the word is not lost, or destroyed without taking root; neither is it overborne by the opposition which it must encounter; neither is it choked among the concerns, and interests, and pleasures of the present state; but it grows among unfriendly plants, and flourishes in spite of an ungenial climate; and is distinguished by the fruits of humility, piety, holiness, and charity, in which it abounds. Yet among these there is not an uniform proficiency. All do not in an equal degree obtain

the mastery over their natural corruptions. All do not arrive at an equal height in Christian virtues. All do not labour equally in the service of their master. All produce fruit; but some "thirty-fold, some sixty, and some an hundred."

*J. B. Sumner.*

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## THE DIVINE BENEFICENCE

APPARENT, EVEN FROM A SUPERFICIAL VIEW  
OF THE WORKS OF GOD.

THROUGHOUT the universe we perceive traces of a system of universal benevolence. This is distinctly perceptible in relation to our own globe, in the revolution of day and night; in the constitution of the atmosphere; in the beautiful and sublime scenes presented to the eye in every country; in the agencies of light and heat; in the splendour of the sun, and the glories of the midnight sky; in the organization of the body of man, and the different senses with which he is endowed: in the general adaptation of the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, and of every element around us, to the wants of man, and other sensitive beings; and in the abundant supply of food which

is constantly distributed to every rank of animated existence.

We perceive traces of the same benevolent agency in the arrangements connected with distant worlds; in the rotation of the planetary globes around their axis; in the assemblage of rings and moons with which they are environed; and in the diversified apparatus by which light and heat are distributed in due proportion to the several bodies which compose the solar system. And in other systems, in the distant regions of space, we perceive that it is one great end of the Creator to diffuse light and splendour throughout all the provinces of his immense empire, in order to unveil his glorious works to the eyes of the unnumbered intelligences.

*Dick.*

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THE SUITABLENESS OF THE SCRIPTURES  
TO PRODUCE, BY DIVINE INFLUENCE, SERIOUS  
IMPRESSIONS ON THE HEART.

How clear are the statements of the Bible! What a flood of light it throws upon all topics of spiritual and eternal interest! How convincing are its reproofs, and how well-fitted to reach the

conscience of the transgressor! How accurate and diversified are its descriptions of character; tracing iniquity in every form, and unwinding all the sophistries by which a rebel against God would fain either exempt himself from his authority, or shelter himself from his wrath; "For the word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, discerning the thoughts and intents of the heart." How various and weighty are the motives by which it persuades! By what touching considerations does it appeal to the hopes and the fears of an immortal creature! Behold in it every thing just in obligation, or moving in kindness; every thing dreadful in ruin, or animating in deliverance; every thing awful in vengeance, or melting in redeeming love! Behold in it considerations drawn from every quarter; from God, from man; from life, from death; from the present, from the future; from time, from eternity; from heaven, from hell; nor is there any region which is not laid under contribution, in order to furnish motives for a sinner to flee from the wrath to come. How manifest is its truth; its declarations free from error, its promises faithful, and its threatenings inflexible! How supreme is its

authority; since it is not the word of man, but the word of God; not the mere counsel of an earthly friend, but the voice of the eternal Governor, who speaketh from heaven! It "is able to make wise unto salvation." If it does not move men, neither would "they be persuaded though one rose from the dead;" nor though they themselves were placed amidst the unveiled realities of eternity. —

*J. H. Hinton.*

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### TRUE CHRISTIANITY.

**CHRISTIANITY** in a renewed mind, is any thing but a cold and reluctant obedience extorted by terror; it is the voluntary submission of the heart to the wisest and kindest friend. It is the free and high anticipation of everlasting felicity in his presence. "Looking for that blessed hope," his eyes are fixed upon it; his interests are comprised in its veracity; his affections are embarked in its accomplishment. The world is not his home, nor its enjoyments adequate to sustain his peace. This scene is fading and defiled; its snares are many; its paths are rugged; its sorrows are frequent. His feelings are those of an exile, who, amidst



various comforts, still thinks of his home, his country and his friends. The hope of his return gilds the intermediate hours of his existence: he fulfils his duty, he refreshes his spirit by the objects of beauty or of interest around him, but his affections cling around his native shores. To that unforgotten scene the needle of his heart hourly tends. Thus is it with the Christian, on whom the mercy of God is exerting its sacred and purifying influence. Religion is to him, not the cold balance of certain restrictions and certain comforts; but the warm acknowledgments of infinite obligation, and everlasting love. It is the blessed and refreshing conviction that yet a little while, and the veil which hides him from his true happiness will be withdrawn; that yet a little while, and the Saviour, into whose hands he has confided the great interests of his soul, will return, and call him back from the grave, to gladden him with the accents of eternal tenderness; "Come ye blessed" children "of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." He thus "looks" for this event. He is intently interested in its reality. He connects with this ultimate happiness of his soul in Christ

all the intervening struggles of virtue, all the resistance of temptation, all the efforts of self-control, all the endurance of trial. This hope cheers the darkness of life, and brightens all its comforts. Every gift of temporal pleasure reminds him of this richer heritage, and throws the hue of Heaven's own gladness over the surface of domestic enjoyments. Oh! he is the happy man who takes his daily blessings as at a Father's hands, and who is yet able, when these are wrecked, to repose his thoughts upon the intercourse of eternity! These emotions thus dignify the practical morality of life, and render the ties of virtue, not the chains of fear, but the golden links of gratitude and joy.

*Hon. G. T. Noel.*

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### THE WAYS OF RELIGION WAYS OF PLEASANTNESS.

"GODLINESS," says an inspired writer, "has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come." The true Christian really participates with others, in the moderate enjoyment of earthly good; and has, over and above, the blessing of God, which alone maketh rich without

adding sorrow. More especially are the ways of true religion ways of pleasantness, because the truest felicity of which our souls are capable, proceeds from the favour of God, and communion with him. And although in this world we cannot experience that "fulness of joy," which is felt in his immediate presence, yet we may partake so much of it, as far to surpass all terrestrial bliss. Some sweet springs of that "stream which makes glad the city of God," refresh this wilderness below.

It is agreed, that the paths of religion are paths of peace; then we may truly say they are pleasant because they are peaceful. What real enjoyment can there be without peace of mind? And there is "no peace," saith God, "to the wicked." "My peace," said the Saviour, "I give to you,—not as the world giveth,"—but that which "passeth all understanding." It is this inward tranquillity, this well-founded sense of safety; this readiness for all changes, even for the last great change; and this meetness for another state, which alone can warrant a true enjoyment even of this life.

The true christian engages in his daily concerns with so sweet a persuasion of their being under

the direction and blessing of his heavenly Father, that he is in some good measure free from those disquieting cares which so often cloud the brow of those who are without God in the world. He has his trials indeed; but under the heaviest of them, he is the subject of strong consolation. In prosperity he knows that God is fulfilling his gracious promise, that to those who "seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, all other things shall be added." In the midst of all, he prizes the light of God's countenance lifted upon him, more than the brightest sunshine of this world. He lies down on his bed with the sweetest serenity, knowing that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." Is he young? The Lord then is the guide of his youth; and he hopes, by "taking heed to his way, according to his word," to escape the dangers and temptations of an evil world. And he can look towards advancing years, to the loss of his earthly friends, and to old age itself, without dismay; because, "when father and mother forsake him, the Lord will take him up." Such, then, is the peace that is experienced in the ways of religion; and is not this peace pleasantness?

O Reader! "taste and see that the Lord is good." But remember, you must not expect to experience the pleasantness of religion, without a hearty devotedness to it. That which makes the good ways of the Lord so uninviting, is, that so many walk irregularly in them; with a heavy, halting or wandering step. But the true pilgrim, who maintains a vigorous pace, who is never diverted from his course, who "presses towards the mark," and keeps it ever in view,—he it is who experiences the full truth of this assertion; he "goes on his way rejoicing," and finds indeed that the way he has chosen, is a way of "pleasantness, and that its paths are peace."

*Jane Taylor.*

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### CHARACTER OF THE PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANS DRAWN BY AN INFIDEL.

THEIR serious and sequestered life, averse to the gay luxury of the age, inured them to chastity, temperance, economy, and all the sober domestic virtues. As the greater number were of some trade or profession, it was incumbent on them, by the strictest integrity and the fairest dealing, to

remove the suspicions which the profane are too apt to conceive against the appearances of sanctity. The contempt of the world exercised them in habits of humility, meekness, and patience. Even their faults or rather errors, were derived from an excess of virtue. Ambitious to exalt the perfection of the gospel above the wisdom of philosophy, the zealous fathers carried the duties of self-mortification, of purity, and of patience, to a height which it is scarcely possible to attain, and much less to preserve, in our present state of weakness and corruption.

They despised all knowledge that was not useful to salvation, and considered all levity of discourse as a criminal abuse of the gift of speech. The candidate of heaven was instructed not only to resist the grosser allurements, but even to shut his ears against the profane harmony of sounds, and to view with indifference the most finished productions of human art; gay apparel, magnificent houses, and elegant furniture, were supposed to unite the double guilt of pride and sensuality.

*Gibbon.*

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## MAN CONSTANTLY DYING.

THERE is no point of life which we divide not with death; so as, if well considered, we live but only one point, and have not life but for the present instant. Our years past are now vanished, and we enjoy no more of them than if we were already dead; the years to come we live not, and possess no more of them, than if we were not yet born. Yesterday is gone, to-morrow we know not what shall be; of to-day many hours are past, and we live them not; others are to come, and whether we shall live them or not is uncertain; so that we live but this present moment, and in this also we are dying.

Life is given us by pieces, and mingles as many parts of death as there are of life; the age of infancy dies, when we enter into that of childhood; and that of childhood, when we become youths; that of youth when we come to the age of manhood; that, when we are old; and even old age itself expires, when we become decrepid; so that during the same life we find many deaths, and yet can hardly persuade ourselves that we shall die once.

As death is the total change of life, every change is the death of some part; sickness is the death of health; sleeping, of waking; sorrow, of joy; impatience, of quiet; youth, of infancy; age, of youth. All things which follow time, and even time itself, at last, must die.

*Jeremy Taylor.*



### THE LORD'S DAY.

A TRULY pious individual consecrates the whole Sabbath to the Lord, nor thinks it long. It fills him with great ideas; it excites his best principles

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to vigorous exercise ; it bears him forward in his spiritual career, and it forms a welcome prelude and preparative to that everlasting rest, which remains for the people of God. It is the day on which he consults his Bible at greater length, and on which he devotes more time to that communion with which the Father of spirits condescends to indulge him. Having shaken off the slumbers of the night, he approaches God, as on the other days, with this language, "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord ; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." But he adds, "I will come into thine house in the multitude of thy tender mercies, and in thy fear will I worship towards thine holy temple."

He will say also to his children and household, "O come, let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. Let us enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise. This is the day the Lord has made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."

When the public services are concluded, he recalls the substance of them to the remembrance of those around him ; and, having renewed those admonitions, which neither tire by their extent,

nor provoke by their spirit, he commends his listening family to the protection and blessing of his Father, and their Father, of his God, and their God.

*Jos. Hughes.*

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### THOUGHTS OF THE AWAKENED MIND.

I COME to thy throne, O my God, to call thee blessed. Surely, I am unspeakably indebted to thy goodness. Well do I recollect the period when I lived without thee, and without hope in the world. But thy grace has made me to differ from my former self, and from the world around me. I grew up in ignorance; my mind was full of prejudice; my heart was full of wickedness! I loved sin; I neglected,—I blush to say it,—I forgot God. I was a compound of vice and misery. I was never happy. I tried many things, but there was a void which I could not fill. Reflection came into my mind, and would be heard; yes, it would be heard, and heard in the dead of night, when all the world were absent from me; it spoke in thunder, it roused my attention; it broke my hard heart; and I cried, “God be merciful to me,

a sinner!" I tried to get rid of these convictions, but I could not. Mercy fastened them "as a nail in a sure place." When I rose, they rose, and went with me. When I went into society, they accompanied me. Every now and then they spoke home to my conscience; they said, "Remember! for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment." I could not enjoy my food. I could not comfortably visit my friends. Amusements were a pain to me. I could not rest, because I was not at peace with God. Never shall I forget, to my dying day, the happiness I found in discovering the love of God in Jesus Christ, to sinners like me. I fell upon the earth; I thought again and again, that God was love. I recollected that passage of Scripture which says, "He will not break the bruised reed; he will not quench the smoking flax." I took courage. I prayed. I pleaded the blessed promises. I said, "Carest thou not that I perish?" I heard his gracious voice; it said, "I desire not the death of a sinner!" O delightful truth; sweeter "than honey, or the droppings of the honey-comb."

I went to his throne of grace, I fell prostrate there. I said, "Father! I have sinned against

heaven, and in thy sight, and am not worthy to be called thy son ; make me as one of thy hired servants !” He raised me from the dust ; he looked on me in pity and in love ; he said, “ Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet ; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it, and let us eat, and be merry ; for this, my son, was dead, and is alive again, was lost, and is found.”

I wept,—I adored,—I loved,—I said, “ Other Lords have had dominion over me, but henceforth by thy name only will I be called.”

*Robinson.*

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## LOVE TO GOD, THE FOUNDATION OF LOVE TO MAN.

THERE is this peculiarity in the morality of the New Testament ; it is not only enforced by the consideration, but by a distinct and repeated reference to the divine goodness. Not that any motive is absolutely necessary to make a command binding upon our conscience, beyond God’s right to issue it : but as man is a creature that is capable of being moved by appeals to his gratitude, as well as by

motives addressed to his fear, it is both wise and condescending, on the part of Jehovah, thus to deal with him, and to "make him willing in the day of his power." He thus, not only drives us by the force of his terrors, but draws us by the cords of his love.

The great evangelical inducement to mutual affection between man and man, is God's love in Christ Jesus to us. God has commanded and manifested his love to us in a manner that will fill immensity and eternity with astonishment. He has "so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This stupendous exhibition of Divine mercy is presented by the Sacred Writers, not only as a source of strong consolation, but also as a powerful motive for action; we are not only to contemplate it for the purpose of joy, but also of imitation. Mark the beautiful reasoning of the Apostle John,—  
 "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." How forcible, yet how tender is such language. There is a charm in such a motive which no terms can describe. The love of God, then, in its existence and contrivances from

eternity; in its manifestation in time by the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; in its topless height, its fathomless depth, its measureless length and breadth: is the grand inducement to universal affection; and is it not enough to soften a heart of stone—to melt a heart of ice?

The love here spoken of is not merely natural kindness, but it is love for Christ's sake; it is not the mere operation of a generous temper, but it is the feeling which moved in the Apostle's breast when he exclaimed, "The love of Christ constraineth us;" it is not natural religion, but Christianity; it is so to speak, a plant which grows on Calvary, and entwines itself for support round the cross. It is a disposition which argues in this way; has God indeed thus loved me, so as to give his Son for my salvation? And is he kind to me daily for the sake of Christ? Has he forgiven all my numberless and aggravated transgressions? Does he still, with infinite patience, bear with all my infirmities and provocations? Then what is there in the way of the most generous affection, I ought not to be willing to do, or to bear, or to sacrifice for others. Do they offend me? let me bear with them and forgive them; for how has

God borne with me, and blotted out my sins! Do they want? let me be forward to supply their necessities; for how has God supplied mine! Here then is love—that deep sense of God's love to us, which shows us the necessity, the reasonableness of being kind to others ;—the feeling of a heart, which, labouring under the weight of its obligations to God, and finding itself too poor to extend its goodness to him, looks round, and gives utterance to its exuberant gratitude in acts of kindness to man.

*J. A. James.*

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#### WITNESSES TO THE REDEEMER'S GLORY.

THE *Heavens* gave witness; a new star passed through the sky at his incarnation; and for three hours, at his crucifixion, the sun was extinguished.

The *Winds* and *Seas* gave witness; when, at his word, the furious tempest was hushed, and the rough billows smoothed into a great calm; at the same word, the inhabitants of the waters crowded round the ship, and filled the net of the astonished and worshipping disciples.

The *Earth* gave witness. At his death and at his resurrection, it trembled to its centre.

*Diseases* gave witness. Fevers were rebuked; issues of blood were staunched; the blind saw their deliverer; the deaf heard his voice; the dumb published his glory; the sick of the palsy was made whole; and the lepers were cleansed at his bidding.

The *Grave* gave witness, when Lazarus came forth in the garb of its dominion, and when many bodies of the saints which slept arose.

The *Invisible World* gave witness. Devils acknowledged his divinity, and flew from his presence to the abode of misery. Angels ministered to him in the desert, the garden, and the tomb. Yea, a multitude filled the heavens with their melody in the air, in the hearing of the shepherds; and as our risen Lord ascended up to glory, they accompanied him with sound of trumpet, and the shouts of triumph.

*Anon.*

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## THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

“GOD forbid,” said the Apostle Paul, “that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” He had reason for saying so, for Christ



crucified is the substance of the Gospel. Here, natures the most opposite are united: interests, otherwise the most jarring, and divine attributes, apparently the most opposed to each other, are reconciled. Here we behold united, majesty and humiliation, life and death, God and man. Here meet the interests of the Creator and the creature, the sovereign and the subject, heaven and earth, time and eternity. Here, grace and mercy unite together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. Spotless justice, boundless wisdom, and infinite love, here shine altogether, and all at once, with united and eternal splendour. No where does justice appear so awful, mercy so amiable, or wisdom so profound, as in the blessed gospel of the grace of God.

It is easy to conceive the righteousness of God declared in the punishment of sin; but the gospel declares his righteousness in the remission of sin; it magnifies justice in the way of pardoning sin; and mercy in the way of punishing it. Here justice receives its full demand, and yet infinite mercy smiles on man. Both the law and the sinner may glory in the cross, for both receive eternal glory and honour by it.

In the gospel, the sinner reads his fall and his rise; his ruin, and his recovery; his desert, and his deliverance; what sin has done, and what divine grace can do. Beneath the cross, he sees the enormity of guilt, and the extent of forgiveness, the cup of wrath and trembling, and that of salvation. Here also, he sees the works of Satan destroyed; principalities and powers vanquished, and heaven opened to his view; and he hears the voice of infinite love, inviting him to "the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

Well then may we glory in the gospel, and exclaim with emotions of elevated gratitude, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

*Anon.*

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### ATHEISM.

WHAT can be more foolish, than to think, that all this rare fabric of heaven and earth, could come by chance, when all the skill of art is not able to make an oyster? To see rare effects, and no cause; a motion, without a mover; a circle, without a centre; a time without an eternity; a second without a first; are things so against philosophy, and

natural reason, that he must needs be a beast in his understanding, who does ~~not~~ assent to them. The thing formed, says, that nothing framed it; that that which is made, *is*, and that which made it, *is not*. This folly is infinite.

*Jeremy Taylor.*



### THE LAST HOUR.

OF all the periods and events of life, the concluding scene is one of deepest interest to the person himself, and to surviving friends. Various are the ways in which it comes, but in all it is

solemn. What can be more so, than the approach of that moment, which to the dying man, is the boundary between time and eternity ; which finishes the one, and begins the other ; which closes his interests in this world, and fixes his condition for a never-ending existence in the world unknown ! What can be more so, than these moments of silent and indescribable anxiety, when the last sands of the numbered hour are running ; when the beat of the heart has become languid ; when the cold hand returns not the gentle pressure ; when the weary limbs lie still and motionless ; when the eye is fixed, and the ear turns no more towards the voice of consoling kindness ; when the breath, before oppressive and laborious, becomes feebler and feebler, till it dies slowly away ; and to the listener there is no sound amidst the breathless silence ; when surrounding friends continue to speak in whispers, and to step through the chamber softly, as if still fearful of disturbing him,—whom the noise of a thousand thunders could not now startle,—who has fallen on that last sleep, from which nothing shall rouse, but “the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God.”

*Wardlaw.*

## FAITH.

“HE that believeth on the Son,” says John the Baptist, “hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him,” John iii. 36. In order, then, to avail ourselves of the means, which God in his unsearchable wisdom has thus ordained for our salvation, it is plainly necessary that we should believe on the Redeemer. Now this faith is not only an assent of the understanding to the history and doctrines of the gospel; such a faith is of itself a “dead faith;” and we read, that “the devils also believe and tremble,” James ii. 19. Saving faith is that living and active principle in our minds, by which, under the softening impressions of the love of God, we accept the Lord Jesus Christ as our only Saviour; spiritually feed upon him as upon the bread of life; place an humble, yet sure reliance upon his mercy and power; and, with full purpose and devotion of heart, submit our whole selves to his spiritual government. This is the faith which “worketh by love,” Gal. v. 6; this is the faith which enables us to bring forth the pure and lovely fruits of holiness, charity, gentle-

ness, patience, joy, and peace. And thus, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new," 2 Cor. v. 17.

Nothing, indeed, can be more futile, than even the most correct system of religious opinions, if our faith has no influence on the heart; and fails, therefore, to produce its legitimate consequence, a godly life and conversation; every thing in Christianity is directed to practical purposes; and in the day of righteous retribution, it will only aggravate our condemnation to have heard, understood, and approved the word of the Lord, if we shall have persisted in refusing to follow its dictates.

*J. J. Gurney.*

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### THE DOCTRINE OF THE CROSS THE GROUND OF HUMILITY.

WHEN the Apostles insist on self-abasement and humiliation as the ground-work of the Christian character, we have strong evidence of their being personally convinced that the death of Jesus was actually ordained as a ransom for men; a ransom required by sin. If they did not really

believe this, no reason appears why these new teachers should promulgate doctrines so unpopular and so difficult; should inculcate the strictest possible morality, and yet deny to man the gratification of self-complacency; should allow them no other satisfaction, either from the faith which they professed, or the obedience which they performed, than that of evidencing their title to the benefits which Christ's death had procured. If the condition of the world were not such as the incarnation of Christ supposes; if there be not that holiness in God, and that unworthiness in man, which sets one at a distance from the other; then there is no propriety in a confession of unprofitableness which sues for pardon, but dares not claim reward; which looks forward to eternal life, not as a recompence which is to be deserved, but as a boon which is to be bestowed through the merits of the Redeemer. Take away the judicial purpose of the cross, take away its expiatory effect, and there remains no basis for humility. And therefore, it is a natural consequence, that those who do not receive the doctrine of atonement, do not pretend to any such humility as the Gospel prescribes, and the Apostles profess.

If, on the other hand, human sinfulness is so heinous in the sight of the Moral Governor of the world, that it required a sacrifice like that of Christ; and if every individual is indebted to that sacrifice for reconciliation with God, or still remains unreconciled to him; the humiliation inculcated in the Gospel becomes natural, nay, necessary.

*J. B. Sumner.*

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### OUR BODIES NOT OURSELVES.

OUR gross organized bodies, with which we perceive the objects of sense, and with which we act, are no part of ourselves. We see, by experience, that men may lose their limbs, their organs of sense, and even the greatest part of their bodies, and yet remain the same living agents.

We have already, several times over, lost a great part, or perhaps the whole of our body, according to certain established laws of nature; yet we remain the same living agents; when we shall lose as great a part, or the whole, by another established law of nature, death, why may we not also remain the same? We have passed undestroyed through those many and great revolutions of



matter so peculiarly appropriated to us ourselves; why should we imagine death will be so fatal to us?

Common optical experiments show, and even the observation how sight is assisted by glasses shows, that we see with our eyes in the same sense as we see with glasses. Nor is there any reason to believe, that we see with them in any other sense; any other, I mean, which would lead us to think the eye itself a percipient. The like is to be said of hearing; and our feeling distant solid matter by means of something in our hand, seems an instance of the like kind, as to the subject we are considering. There are instances of foreign matter, or such as is no part of our body, being instrumental in preparing objects for, and conveying them to the perceiving power, in a manner like to that in which our organs of sense prepare and convey them. Glasses are evidently instances of this,—of matter, which is no part of our body, preparing objects for, and conveying them towards the perceiving power, in like manner as our bodily organs do. And if we see with our eyes only in the same manner as we see with our glasses, the like may justly be concluded, from analogy, of all our other senses.

So also, with regard to our power of moving,— upon the destruction of a limb this active power remains unlessened; so as that the living being who has suffered this loss, would be capable of moving as before, if it had another limb to move with. It can walk by the help of an artificial leg; just as it can make use of a pole or lever, to reach towards itself, and to move things, beyond the length, and power of its natural arm. There is not so much as an appearance of our limbs being endowed with a power of moving or directing themselves.

Thus a man determines, that he will look at such an object through a microscope; or, being lame, supposes that he will walk to such a place with a staff a week hence. His eyes and his feet no more determine in these cases, than the microscope, and the staff. Nor is there any ground to think they any more put the determination in practice; or, that his eyes are the seers, or his feet the movers, in any other sense than as the microscope or the staff are. Upon the whole, then, our organs of sense, and our limbs are certainly instruments, which the living persons ourselves make use of to perceive and move with. Nor is there any proba-

bility, that the alienation, or dissolution of these instruments is the destruction of the perceiving and moving agent.

*Bishop Butler.*

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**FACTS,**

**WHICH PROVE THAT MEN, IN THE PRESENT STATE,  
ARE IMMEDIATELY UNDER THE DIVINE  
GOVERNMENT.**

It is certainly matter of universal experience, that the general method of divine administration, is, forewarning us, or giving us capacities to foresee, with more or less clearness, that if we act so and so, we shall have such enjoyments; if so and so, such sufferings; and giving us those enjoyments, and making us feel those sufferings, in consequence of our actions. On this account, we are at present under the divine government in the strictest and most proper sense; in such a sense, as that he rewards and punishes us for our actions. It is not, indeed, so much a deduction of reason, as a matter of experience, that we are thus under his government,—and in the same sense, as we are under the government of civil magistrates. Because the annexing pleasure to some actions, and pain to others, in our power to do or forbear, and giving

notice of this appointment beforehand to those whom it concerns, is the proper formal notion of government. Whether the pleasure or pain which thus follows upon our behaviour, be owing to the Author of nature's acting upon us every moment which we feel it; or, to his having at once contrived and executed his own part in the plan of the world, makes no alteration as to the matter before us. For if civil magistrates could make the sanctions of their laws take place, without interposing at all, after they had passed them; without a trial, and the formalities of an execution; if they were able to make their laws execute themselves, or every offender to execute them upon himself, we should be just in the same sense under their government then, as we are now, but in a much higher degree, and more perfect manner. For, if God annexes delight to some actions, and uneasiness to others, with no apparent design to induce us to act so and so; then he not only dispenses happiness and misery, but also rewards and punishes actions.

*Bishop Butler.*

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## GAIN OF INFIDELITY.

WHAT boon, what reward have Infidels to offer for the renunciation of Christianity? To what would they convert us? What heaven have they to propose, what immortality to reveal? What sublime views of a creation, and a Creator? What authentic records of the past, what prophetic hope of the future! What account of our origin! What high intimation of our destiny! What terrors have they to offer to stem the torrent of corruption! What balm and consolation to the sons and daughters of anguish! They must answer, None,—none at all! They promise to him who disbelieves the Christian religion; to him who neglects and disdains the salvation of the Gospel; to him, who tramples under foot the blood of the new covenant; to him, who traduces Moses, Daniel, and Job; to him, who vilifies Jesus, Paul, and James, and John; to him, who devotes his soul to the lusts of the flesh; who disdains heaven, who deifies his appetites, who degrades himself to a mere animal, and eulogises philosophy, to this man they promise eternal sleep, everlasting death. This is the faith, the hope, and joy, for which they labour with so much zeal, and care, and pain.

*Campbell.*

THE CONTRAST; NAPOLEON AND  
WILBERFORCE.

WHEN the infamous traffic in slaves was abolished by a vote of the British House of Commons, the Solicitor General rose, and after a long and argumentative speech, in which he took occasion to recapitulate and to combat many of the objections that had been urged to the measure, he concluded with an eloquent representation of the gratitude, the decision of the House would call from all posterity, and of the happiness which many of the younger members would have in beholding the benign effects of this measure upon the negroes, and the whole property of the colonies, and the prosperity of the country at large. "When I look to the man," said he, "now at the head of the French monarchy, surrounded as he is, with all the pomp of power, and all the pride of victory, distributing kingdoms to his family, and principalities to his followers; seeming when on his throne, to have reached the summit of human ambition, and the pinnacle of earthly happiness; when I follow that man into his closet, or to his bed, and consider the pangs with which his solitude must be

tortured, and his repose banished, by the recollection of the blood he has spilt, and the oppressions he has committed ; when I contrast those pangs of remorse, with the feelings of which my honourable friend, (Mr. Wilberforce) must be conscious, when the vote of this evening shall have confirmed the object of his humane and unceasing labours ; when he shall retire into the bosom of his happy and delighted family ; when he shall lay himself down in his bed, reflecting on the innumerable voices, which will be raised in every quarter of the globe to bless him. How much more pure and perfect felicity must he enjoy, in the consciousness of having preserved so many nations of his fellow creatures, than the man, with whom I have compared him, on a throne, to which he has waded, through crimes, through slaughters, and oppression !”

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### CONSOLATION.

THEY who would always rejoice, must derive their joy from a source which is invariably the same ; in other words, from Jesus, who is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” O that

name ! what a person ! what an office, what a life, what a love, what a death, does it recall to our minds ! Let us leave our troubles to themselves awhile, let us walk to Golgotha, and take a view of his. We stop, as we are going, at Gethsemane, for it is not a step out of the road. There he lies bleeding, though not wounded ; or if wounded, it is by an invisible almighty hand. Now I begin to see what sin has done. Now let me bring my sorrows, and compare, measure and weigh them against the sorrows of my Saviour ! Foolish attempt ! To weigh a mote against a mountain !

“ Now let our pains be all forgot,  
Our hearts no more repine ;  
Our sufferings are not worth a thought,  
When, Lord, compared with thine ! ”

We are still more confounded at our next station ; now we are at the foot of the cross. Behold the man ! listen to his groans ! contemplate his wounds ! Now let us sit down, and weep over our crosses if we can. For our crosses ! Nay, let us weep over our sins, which brought the Son of God into such distress. I feel, that we, not he, deserved to be crucified, and utterly forsaken. For a fuller proof, let us take another



station. Now we are at his tomb. But he is not here, he is risen; the debt is paid, and the surety is discharged. Not here! Where then is he? Look up! methinks the clouds part, and glory breaks through them; behold a throne! what a transition! He who hung upon the cross is seated on the throne. Hark! he says, "I know your sorrows; yea, I appoint them; they are tokens of my love; it is thus I call you to the honour of following me. See, a place prepared for you near to myself. Fear none of these things. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life!"

It is enough, Lord! Now, then, let us calculate again. These scales are the balances of the sanctuary; let us put in our griefs and trials on one side; what an alteration! I thought them lately very heavy; now I find them light; the scale hardly turns with them. But how shall we manage to put in the weight on the other side? It is heavy indeed; an inconceivable, "an eternal weight of glory." It is beyond my grasp and power. I see, with a glance of my eye, that there is no proportion between this felicity and my sorrows. I am content, I am satisfied, I am

ashamed. From this moment I wipe away my tears, and forbid them to flow ; or, if I must weep, they shall be tears of love, gratitude, and joy.

*Newton.*

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### FAMILY RELIGION.

CHILDREN and servants should see us acting on the Psalmist's declaration, "I will speak of thy testimonies before kings." If a great man happens to be present, let them see, that we deem him nothing before the word of God-

Family religion is of unspeakable importance. Its effect will greatly depend on the sincerity of the head of the family, and on his mode of conducting the worship of his household. If his children and servants do not see his prayers exemplified in his temper and manners, they will be disgusted with religion. Tedioussness will weary them. Fine language will shoot above them. Formality of connexion or composition in prayer they will not comprehend. Gloominess, or austerity of devotion, will make them dread religion as a hard service. Let them be met with smiles. Let them be met as friends. Let them be met as for

the most delightful service in which they can be engaged. Let them find it short, savoury, simple, plain, tender, heavenly. Worship thus conducted may be used as an engine of vast power in a family. It diffuses a sympathy through the members. It calls off the mind from the deadening effect of worldly affairs. It arrests every member with a morning and evening sermon in the midst of all the hurries and cares of life. It says, "There is a God! There is a spiritual world! There is a life to come!" It fixes the idea of responsibility in the mind. It furnishes a tender and judicious father, or master, with an opportunity of gently glancing at faults, where a direct admonition might be inexpedient. It enables him to relieve the weight with which subordination, or service, often sits on the minds of inferiors.

*Cecil.*

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### THE PLEASING RESULTS OF THE SALVATION OF ONE SINNER.

WHAT abundant glory is brought to God, when one sinner turns from the error of his ways! It is then that an enemy to his Maker lays down his

arms, that he renounces his criminal hostility to his righteous Lord, and glorifies him by a willing submission to his blessed dominion. It is then that the God of mercy performs a miracle of grace, and renders his loving-kindness illustrious in the eyes of all worlds, by the forgiveness of multiplied iniquities, and the pardon of a rebel doomed to die. It is then that he achieves a victory of love; and, by the power of Almighty grace, triumphs over the stubborn enmity of his foe. It is then that the ranks of his enemies are thinned, and some progress made towards the total extermination of rebellion and sin. It is then that the dying Saviour receives part of the recompense of his travail in the day of his agony; that his heart rejoices in the accomplished rescue of the lost; and that his name is loaded with blessings, by the newly redeemed captive of Satan and victim of wrath. It is then that the host of the saints is reinforced, that one heart more glows with the common fire, that one lip more becomes vocal with the common theme, and that one hand more is employed in the common and all-glorious work of hastening the universal triumphs of their Lord. It is then, in fine, that there is born a child of

God, and an heir of glory, that a pilgrim sets out for the heavenly country, over whom there is already "joy in the presence of the angels of God," and who shall soon take his station in the midst of them, to glorify God for ever, both by the beauty of his salvation, and the ardour of his praise.

*J. H. Hinton.*



### THE CHRISTIAN A PILGRIM.

THE Christian is travelling through a strange country, in which he is commanded to execute his work with diligence, and pursue his course

home-ward with alacrity. The fruits which he sees by the way-side, he gathers with caution; he drinks of the streams with moderation; he is thankful when the sun shines, and the way is pleasant; but if it be rough and rainy, he cares not much, he is but a traveller. He is prepared for vicissitudes; he knows that he must expect to meet with them in the stormy and uncertain climate of this world. But he is travelling to a "better country," a country of unclouded light and undisturbed serenity. He finds also, by experience, that when he has had the least of external comforts, he has always been least disposed to loiter; and if, for the time, it be a little disagreeable, he can solace himself with the idea of his being thereby forwarded in his course. In a less unfavourable season, he looks round him with an eye of observation; he admires what is beautiful; he examines what is curious; he receives with complacency the refreshments which are set before him, and enjoys them with thankfulness.

Nor does he churlishly refuse to associate with the inhabitants of the country through which he is passing. But he neither suffers pleasure, nor curiosity, nor society, to take up too much of his

time, and is still intent on transacting the business which he has to execute, and on prosecuting the journey which he is ordered to pursue. He knows also, that to the very end of life, his journey will be through a country in which he has many enemies ; that his way is beset with snares ; that temptations throng around him to seduce him from his course, or check his advancement in it ; that the very air disposes to drowsiness ; and that, therefore, to the very last, it will be requisite for him to be circumspect. Often, therefore, he examines whereabouts he is, how he has got forward, and whether or not he is travelling in the right direction. Now he is cheered with hope, and gladdened by success ; now he is disquieted with doubts, and damped by disappointments. Thus, in the life of the true Christian, all is life and motion, and his great work calls forth alternately the various passions of the soul. Let it not, therefore, be imagined, that his is a state of unenlivened toil and hardship. His very labours are "the labours of love ;" if he has need of patience, it is the "patience of hope ;" and he is cheered in his work by the constant assurance of present support, and a final victory.

Let it not be forgotten, that this is the very idea given us of happiness by one of the ablest examiners of the human mind ; “ a constant employment for a desired end ; with the consciousness of a continual progress.” So true is the Scripture declaration, that “ Godliness has the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come.”

*Wilberforce.*

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### THE CHRISTIAN HEAVEN.

It is difficult to find in the volume of Revelation, a stronger internal evidence of its divine original, than the view it gives of the celestial state, combining, as it does, the perfection of human knowledge and purity. Every other representation which has been given of heaven, bears the mark of an earthly source ; the proof of being a human device. As, in seeking for a Deity, man found the prototype in his own passions, when he had abandoned the one living and true God ; so, in forming a heaven, he collected all the materials from the objects of his own fleshly delights. The Elysium of the Greeks and the Romans ; the



Hall of the Scandinavians; the Paradise of the Mahometans; the fantastic abodes of the departed Hindoos; are all adapted to their depraved appetites, and were suggested by their corrupt imaginations. Beyond the pleasures of a Seraglio, of a field of Glory, or a Hall resounding with a shout of victory; beyond the gratification of sense, man, when left to himself, never looked for the happiness which is to constitute his paradise. A Heaven made up of perfect knowledge, and of perfect love, is a vision entirely and exclusively divine, and which never beamed upon the human understanding, till the splendid image came upon it from the word of God. How worthy of God is such a representation of celestial bliss! It is an emanation from his own nature, as thus described —“God is light,—God is love.” The glorious reality is evidently the provision of his wisdom and grace; and the sublime description of it in the Scriptures is as evidently the delineation of his own finger.

*J. A. James.*

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## GOOD INTENTION

NECESSARY TO THE MORALITY OF AN ACTION.

THE morality of an action depends on the motive from which we act. If I fling a half-crown to a beggar with intention to break his head, and he picks it up, and buys victuals with it, the physical effect is good; but with respect to me, the action is wrong. Thus religious exercises, if not performed with an intention to please God, avail us nothing. So our Saviour said of the Pharisees, "Verily, they have their reward."

*Johnson.*

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## WE SHOULD LIVE UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE reason why what are called religious people often differ so little from others in small trials is, that instead of bringing religion to their aid in their lesser vexations, they either leave their disturbance to prey upon their minds, or apply to false reliefs for its removal. Those who are rendered unhappy by frivolous troubles, seek comfort in frivolous enjoyments. But we should

apply the same remedy to ordinary trials, as to great ones; for as small disquietudes spring from the same cause as great trials, namely, the uncertain and imperfect condition of human life, so they require the same remedy. Meeting common cares with a right spirit would impart a smoothness to the temper, and a spirit of cheerfulness to the heart, which would mightily break the force of heavier trials.

You apply to the power of religion in great evils. Why does it not occur to you to apply to it in the less? Is it that you think the instrument greater than the occasion demands? It is not too great, if the lesser one will not produce the effect, or if it produce it in the wrong way; for there is such a thing as putting an evil out of sight without curing it. You would apply to religion on the loss of your child; apply to it on the loss of your temper. Throw in this wholesome tree to sweeten the bitter waters. As no calamity is too great for the power of Christianity to mitigate, so none is too small to experience its beneficial results. Our behaviour under the ordinary accidents of life forms a characteristic distinction between different classes of Christians. The least advanced

resort to religion on great occasions, the deeper proficient resorts to it on all. What makes it appear of so little comparative value is, that the medicine prepared by the great Physician is thrown by instead of being taken. The patient thinks not of it but in extreme cases. A remedy, however potent, not applied, can produce no effect. But he who has adopted one fixed principle for the government of his life, will try to keep it in perpetual exercise. An acquaintance with the nature of human evils, and of their remedy, would check that spirit of complaint which so much abounds, and which often makes so little difference between people professing religion, and those who profess it not.

If the duties in question are not great, they become important by the constant demand that is made for them. They have been called "the small coin of human life," and on their perpetual and unobstructed circulation depends much of the comforts, as well as convenience, of its transactions. They make up in frequency what they want in magnitude. How few of us are called to carry the doctrines of Christianity into distant lands! But which of us is not called every day to adorn

those doctrines by gentleness in our own carriage,  
by kindness and forbearance to all about us ?

*H. More.*

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### DEISM.

No honest man can be a Deist; for no man could be so, after a fair examination of Christianity. Hume owned that he had never read the New Testament with attention. Christianity is the highest perfection of humanity.

*Johnson.*

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### THE ASSOCIATION OF IMMORTALITY WITH THE OCCURRENCES OF LIFE A PROMINENT FEATURE OF THE SCRIPTURES.

It is a leading characteristic of the Christian Revelation, that, having declared this life to be but the introduction to another, it systematically preserves the recollection of this great truth through every representation of every subject; so that the reader is not allowed to contemplate any of the interests of life in a view which detaches them from the grand object and conditions of life itself.


An Apostle could not address his friends on the most common concerns, for the length of a page, without these final references. He is like a person whose eye, while he is conversing with you about an object, or a succession of objects immediately near, glances with thoughtful consciousness every moment towards some great spectacle appearing on the distant horizon. He seems to talk to his friends in that manner of expression in which you can imagine that Elijah spoke, if he remarked to his companion any circumstance in the journey from Bethel to Jericho, and from Jericho to the Jordan; a manner which needed not to be changed, if he uttered yet a few sentences more after he saw the chariot and horses of fire.

The correct consequences of conversing with our Lord and his Apostles, would be, that the thought of immortality would become as habitually present and familiarized to the mind as the countenance of a domestic friend; that it would be the grand test of the value of all pursuits, friendships, and speculations; and that it would mingle a certain nobleness with every thing which it permitted to occupy our time.

*Foster.*

*You have passed into Heaven  
the which he was 72 m. long*

## PIOUS FRIENDSHIP.

*X*  
FRIENDSHIP is one of the fairest productions of the human soil, the cordial of life, the lenitive of our sorrows, and the multiplier of our joys; the source equally of animation and repose. He who is destitute of this blessing, amidst the greatest crowd and pressure of society, is doomed to solitude; and, however surrounded with flatterers and admirers, however armed with power, and rich in the endowments of nature and of fortune, has no resting place. The most elevated station in life affords no exemption from those agitations and disquietudes which can only be laid to rest on the bosom of a friend. 

The sympathies even of virtuous minds, when not warmed by the breath of friendship, are too faint and cold to satisfy the social cravings of our nature; their compassion is too much dissipated by the multiplicity of its objects, and the varieties of distress, to suffer it to flow long in one channel; while the sentiments of congratulation are still more slight and superficial. A transient tear of pity, or a smile of complacency equally transient, is all we can usually bestow on the scenes of

happiness or of misery which we meet with in the paths of life. But man naturally seeks for a closer union, a more permanent conjunction of interests, a more intense reciprocation of feeling; he finds the want of one or more with whom he can trust the secrets of his heart, and relieve himself by imparting the interior joys and sorrows with which every human breast is fraught. He seeks, in short, another self, a kindred spirit, whose interest in his welfare bears some proportion to his own, with whom he may lessen his cares by sympathy, and multiply his pleasures by participation.

The satisfaction derived from surveying the most beautiful scenes of nature, or the most exquisite productions of art, is so far from being complete, that it almost turns into uneasiness, when there is none with whom we can share it; nor would the most passionate admirer of eloquence or poetry consent to witness their most stupendous exertions, upon the simple condition of not being permitted to reveal his emotions. So essential an ingredient in felicity is friendship, apart from the more solid and permanent advantages it procures, and when viewed in no other light than as the organ of communication, the channel of feeling



and of thought. But if joy itself is a burden, which the heart can ill sustain, without inviting others to partake of it, how much more the corrosions of anxiety, the perturbations of fear, and the dejection arising from sudden and overwhelming calamity!

But it is not merely as a source of pleasure, or as a relief from pain, that virtuous friendship is to be coveted; it is at least as much recommended by its utility. He who has made the acquisition of a judicious and sympathizing friend, may be said to have doubled his mental resources: by associating an equal, perhaps a superior mind with his own, he has provided the means of strengthening his reason, of perfecting his counsels, of discerning and correcting his errors. He can have recourse at all times to the judgment and assistance of one, who with the same power of discernment with himself, comes to the decision of a question with a mind neither harrassed with the perplexities, nor heated with the passions which so frequently obscure the perception of our true interests. Next to the immediate guidance of God by his Spirit, the counsel and encouragement of virtuous and enlightened friends, afford the

most powerful aid in the encounter of temptation, and in the career of duty.

Wisdom, indeed, is not confined to any limited circle, much less to the very narrow one of private friendship; and sound advice may often be procured from those, with whom we have contracted no ties of intimacy. But the patient attention required to comprehend and encounter all the peculiarities of the case; the persevering ardour, the persuasive sympathy, necessary to invest it with authority, and to render it effectual, will be wanting: in the absence of which the wisest counsel is a wintry and sickly beam, which plays on the surface only; it may enlighten, but will seldom penetrate or melt. The consciousness, too, of possessing a share in the esteem and affection of persons of distinguished worth, is a powerful support to every virtuous resolution; it sheds a warm and cheerful light over the paths of life; it fortifies the breast against unmanly dejection, and pusillanimous fears; while the apprehension of forfeiting these advantages, presents a strong resistance to the encroachments of temptation.

There are higher considerations, it is true, which ought invariably to produce the same effect; but

we have not such superfluity of strength, as should induce us to decline the aid of inferior motives, when all are but barely adequate to the exigences of our state. The recollection, that we are acting under the eye of Omniscience, will lose nothing of its force, by being joined to the remembrance, that our conduct is subject to the scrutiny of friends, whose sentiments are in unison, whose influence coincides, with the voice of conscience and of God. And surely, it must be no contemptible aid in the discharge of his duties, which he derives, who has invited the benevolent inspection of his actions, the honest reprehension of his errors, and the warm encouragement of his virtues; who, accustomed to lay open the interior of his character, and the most retired secrets of his heart, finds, in the approbation of his friend, the suffrage of his conscience reflected and confirmed; who, delighted, but not elated, by the esteem he has secured, and the confidence he has won, advances with renovated vigour in the paths that lead to "glory, honour, and immortality." The pleasures resulting from the mutual attachments of kindred spirits, are by no means confined to the moments of personal intercourse; they diffuse their odours,

though more faintly, through the seasons of absence; refreshing and exhilarating the mind by the remembrance of the past, and the anticipations of the future. It is a treasure possessed when it is not employed: a reserve of strength, ready to be called into action when most needed; a fountain of sweets, to which we many continually repair, whose waters are inexhaustible.

Friendship, founded on the principles of worldly morality, may survive through all the vicissitudes of life; but it belongs only to a union founded on religion, to continue through an endless duration. This is destined to survive when the heavens are no more, and to spring fresh from the ashes of the universe; it partakes of the eternity of God; it is spiritual, and therefore unchanging and imperishable. The friendship which is founded on kindred tastes and congenial habits, apart from piety, is permitted by the benignity of Providence to embellish a world, which, with all its magnificence and beauty, will shortly pass away; that which has religion for its basis, will ere long be transplanted, in order to adorn the paradise of God.

*R. Hall.*

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## DEPARTED FRIENDS.

X OUR friends who have left us,—where are they? not lost, not perished. We are sure, that to them, to whom to live it was Christ, to die will be gain. Where are they? They are where they are perpetually and perfectly blessed in the immediate vision and enjoyment of God, within the veil; infinitely more happy where they are, than where they were. Where are they? Why, they are in the mansions of light and bliss, that are in our Father's house above, in the paradise of God, where they hunger no more, nor thirst any more. They are in the best company, employed in the best work, and enjoying a complete satisfaction. Where are they? Why, they are where there are no complaints; nothing to interrupt their communion with God, or cast a damp upon their spirits. Death has done that for them which ordinances could not do; has perfectly freed them from that body of sin and death, which was here their constant burden, and hath set them for ever out of the reach of temptation. The spirits of the just are there made perfect, beyond the perfection of Adam in innocency, for they are immutably con-

firmed in it. Where are they? Why, they are where they would be; in their centre, in their element. They are where they longed to be; in that blessed state, towards which, while they were here, they were still reaching forth, and pressing forward.

*M. Henry.*



### MISSIONARY OBJECTS.

WHAT the man of liberal philosophy is in sentiment, the missionary is in practice. He sees in every man a partaker of his own nature, and a brother of his own species. He contemplates the human mind in the generality of its great elements.

He enters upon the wide field of benevolence, and disdains those geographical barriers by which little men would shut out one half of the species from the kind offices of the other. His business is with man, and let his localities be what they may, it is enough for his large and noble heart, that he is bone of the same bone.

To get at him, he will shun no danger, he will shrink from no privation, he will spare himself no fatigue, he will brave every element of heaven, he will hazard the extremities of every clime, he will cross seas, and work his persevering way through the briers and thickets of the wilderness. "In perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by the heathen," in weariness and painfulness, he seeks after him. The caste and the colour are nothing to the comprehensive eye of a missionary. His is the broad principle of good-will to the children of men. His doings are with the species; and overlooking all the accidents of climate or of country, it is enough for him, if the individual he is in quest of be a man, a brother of the same nature, with a body, which a few years will bring to the grave, and a spirit that returns to the God who gave it.

But this man of large and liberal principles is a Missionary; and this is enough to put to flight all admiration of him and of his doings. I forbear to expatiate; but sure I am, that certain philosophers of the day, and certain fanatics of the day, should be made to change places; if those only are the genuine philosophers who keep to principles in spite of names, and those only the genuine fanatics who are ruled by names instead of principles.

*Chalmers.*

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### THE IMPERATIVE DUTY OF EXTENDING KNOWLEDGE.

I DID not expect to hear, that it could be a question, whether any nation, uninstructed in religion, should receive instruction; if obedience to the will of God be necessary to happiness, and knowledge of his will be necessary to obedience, I know not how he who withholds this knowledge or delays it, can be said to love his neighbour as himself; he that voluntarily continues in ignorance, is guilty of all the crimes which ignorance produces; as to him, that should extinguish the tapers



of a light-house, might justly be imputed the calamities of shipwreck. Christianity is the highest perfection of humanity! and as no man is good, but as he wishes the good of others, no man can be good in the highest degree, who wishes not to others the largest measure of the greatest good. To omit for a year, or for a day, the most efficacious method of advancing Christianity, in compliance with any purposes which terminate on this side of the grave, is a crime of which I know not that the world has yet had an example, except in the practice of the planters of America, a race of mortals, whom, I suppose, no other man wishes to resemble.

*Johnson.*

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## INTERESTING AND STRIKING THOUGHTS.

### No. 1.

THE fault the people of the world find with the good man, is excess; the fault which he finds in himself is deficiency.

If the external act constitutes the whole value of Christian virtue, then must the Author of all good be the author of injustice, by putting it out of the power of multitudes to fulfil his commands.

Every individual should bear in mind, that he is sent into this world to act a part in it. And though one may have a more splendid, and another, a more obscure part assigned him, yet the actor of each is equally, is awfully, accountable. Though God is not a hard, he is an exact master. His service, though not a severe, is a reasonable service. He accurately proportions his requisitions to his gifts. If he does not expect that one talent should be as productive as five, yet to even a single talent, a proportionable responsibility is annexed.

He who has said "Give me thy heart," will not be satisfied with less; he will not accept the praying lips, nor the mere hand of charity as substitutes.

A real Christian will be more just, sober, and charitable than other men, though he will not rest for salvation on justice, sobriety, or charity. He will perform the duties they enjoin, in the spirit of Christianity, as instances of devout obedience, as evidences of a heart devoted to God.

A Christian looks not on the work he has accomplished, but on that which he has to do,—alone, he has his thoughts to watch; in the family,

his temper; in company, his tongue. It will be his endeavour to illustrate his devotion in the morning, by his actions during the day.

Outward observances, indispensable as they are, are not religion; they are its aliment, but not its life; the fuel, but not the flame; the scaffolding, but not the edifice.

He who does not desire to be perfect is not sincere.

Outward attacks and troubles rather fix, than unsettle the Christian, as tempests from without only serve to root the oak faster; whilst an inward canker will gradually rot and decay it.

Sins, half forsaken through fear, and half retained through partially resisted temptation, make up but an unprofitable piety.

Till religion becomes the desire of our hearts, it will not become the business of our lives.

We should fairly adjust the claims of both worlds, and having determined their value, act on that determination.

Nothing raises the price of a blessing like its removal; whereas, it was its continuance which should have taught us its value.

Two things are necessary to the maintenance of

a devotional spirit ; habitually to cultivate the disposition, and to avoid whatever is unfavourable to it.

The constant habit of perusing devout books, is so indispensable, that it has been termed, with great propriety, the oil of the lamp of prayer. Too much reading, however, and too little meditation, may produce the effect of a lamp inverted ; which is extinguished by the very excess of that aliment, whose property is to feed it.

They will not pray differently from the rest of the world, who do not live differently.

Though we cannot be always thinking of God, we may be always serving him ; the father who labours for his children, does not always employ his thoughts about them ; he cannot be always conversing with them, or concerning them ; yet he is always engaged in promoting their interests.

There are three requisitions to the proper enjoyment of earthly blessings,—1. A thankful reflection on the goodness of the Giver : 2. A deep sense of our unworthiness ; 3. A recollection of the uncertainty of long possessing them. The first would make us grateful ; the second, humble ; and the third, moderate.

*H. More.*

## No. II.

**IF** we do not endeavour to imitate Him whom we worship, we do not worship him in sincerity.

Do small faults, continually repeated, always retain their diminutiveness? Is a bad temper, which is never repressed, no worse after years of indulgence?

Anger is the common refuge of insignificance. People who feel their character to be slight, hope to give it weight by inflation.

Flattery hurts not him who flatters not himself.

It is only by scrutinizing the heart that we can know it. It is only by knowing the heart, that we can reform the life. Any careless observer, indeed, when his watch goes wrong, may see that it does so, by casting his eyes on the dial plate; but it is only the artist, who takes it to pieces, and examines every wheel separately, and the spring,—and who, by ascertaining the precise causes of the irregularity, can set the machine right, and restore the obstructed movements.

If another deceive us, it is only in matters respecting this world; but we deceive ourselves in things of eternal moment.

Familiarity often makes us pleased with the society, which, while strangers, we dreaded; intimacy with ourselves might produce a similar effect.

We cannot easily hate the man for whom we pray.

Bossuet proves religion; Fenelon makes you love it.

It may be said of zeal among the virtues, as of memory among the faculties, that though it singly never made a great man, yet no man has ever made himself conspicuously great, where it has been wanting.

True zeal abounds in supplications, false zeal in anathemas. One is ever looking for something to commend, the other for something to condemn.

Our great duties are written with a sun-beam,—to believe what is true, to love what is amiable, to do what is right, and to suffer what is appointed.

That will be a false zeal which does not begin with the regulation of one's own heart.

The heart, where zeal is wanting, has no elevation; where it is not guarded, no security.

Insensibility to eternal things in beings who are standing on the brink of eternity, is a madness

which would be reckoned among prodigies, if it were not so common.

It is a striking fact, that the acknowledged uncertainty of life, drives worldly men to make sure of every thing depending on it, except their eternal concerns.

To sin on quietly, because you do not intend to sin always, is to live on a reversion, which will probably never be yours.

If a thing must absolutely be done, if eternal misery will be incurred by not doing it, it is fruitless to enquire, whether it is hard or easy.

We call down thunder on many a head, under pretence, that those on whom we invoke it are God's enemies ; when, perhaps, we invoke it because they are ours.

Genius ! what is it ? Without religion, genius is only a lamp on the outer gate of a palace. It may serve to cast a gleam of light on those that are without, while the inhabitant sits in darkness.

*H. More.*

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No. III.

WE pray for health, and God gives us a sickness that carries us to eternal life. We beg for a re-

removal from a present sadness, and he gives us that which makes us able to bear twenty sadnesses; a cheerful spirit, a peaceful conscience, and a joy in God, as an antepast of eternal rejoicing.

Idleness is the greatest prodigality in the world; it throws away that which is invaluable in respect of its present use, and irreparable when it is past, since it is not to be recovered by any power of art or nature.

He that is proud of his riches is a fool; for if he be exalted above his neighbours because he hath more gold, how much is he inferior to a gold mine? How much is he to give place to a chain of pearl, or a knot of diamonds?

The religion of a man, who serves God with his heart, has wings, and moves upon wheels of fire.

No man is fervent and zealous as he ought, but he that prefers religion before business, charity before his own ease, the relief of his brother before money, heaven before secular regards, and God before his friend, or interest.

The poor man feasts oftener than he who is rich, because every little enlargement is a feast to the poor; but he who feasts every day feasts no day.



Whither he can go, that goes from God, his own sorrows will soon enough instruct him.

Every sinner that repents, causes joy to the Saviour; and the joy is so great, that it runs over, and wets the fair brows, and beauteous locks of cherubim and seraphim, and all the angels have a part of that banquet.

Riches are often a blessing, like the present of a whole vintage to a man in a fever; he will be much tempted to drink of it; if he does, he is inflamed, and may chance to die of the kindness.

It is a great folly to heap up wealth for our children, and not to take care concerning the children for whom we gain it. It is as if a man should take more care about his shoe than about his foot.

Of all the gains of a sinner, nothing will finally remain, but the gains of a miserable eternity.

Twelve or fourteen years of life pass before we choose good or bad; and of that which remains, above half is spent in sleep, and the needs of nature; for the other half, the business of the world takes so much of our remaining portion, that religion and the service of God, have not much time left.

Future good, is greater than all the good of this world; and every man's share in every instant of his blessed eternity, is greater than all the pleasures of mankind in one heap.

There is no greater charity in the world, than to save a soul; nothing that pleases God better; nothing that can be in our hands greater, or more noble; nothing that can be a more lasting and delightful honour.

Felicity is not a jewel that can be locked in one man's cabinet.

No man can choose sin, but on the same ground on which he would choose a fever, or long for madness or the gout.

We must drive away with scorn and indignation, the foolish creature who says, that sense is to be preferred before reason, interest before religion, a lust before heaven, moments before eternity, money above God himself, or that a man's felicity is in that which a beast enjoys. The same argument, that a fly hath to enter a candle, the same argument a sinner hath that enters into sin; it looks prettily;—but rewards the eye with intolerable circles of reflected fire.

We should seek importunately for spiritual

blessings. I say, importunately ; for should we beg coldly, and tamely for those things, for which we ought to be willing to die ? which are more precious than the globes of kings, and weightier than imperial sceptres, richer than the spoils of the sea, or the treasures of the Indian mountains.

Now the hand of God's awful justice is restrained, and held back by the golden chains and fetters of his mercy ; but a day will come when it will be unloosed, and it shall strike sore strokes, and pity shall not break the blow.

*Jeremy Taylor.*

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No. IV.

The blood of the Saviour is called, "the blood of sprinkling." The highest current of repentance in the sight of God, does not purify the soul, or expiate wrath ; our very tears unless they be sprinkled with the blood of Jesus, are impure ; all our washings, without this, are but the washings of the Ethiopian,—they are "labour in vain." Jer. ii. 22.

The Christian accounts no command little, or of small value, which is from God, who is greatly

esteemed by him. No command hard, because all things are easy to love; and because there is the same authority in all, as James divinely argues. And this authority is the golden chain of all the commandments, which, if broke in any link, all falls to pieces.

Let us not deceive ourselves; this is a truth, if there be any in religion, they that are not made saints in a state of grace, shall never be saints in glory. The stones that are appointed for that glorious temple above, are hewn, and polished, and prepared for it here, as the stones were wrought and prepared in the mountains for building the temple at Jerusalem.

They that think they are bound for heaven in the ways of sin, have either found a new way, untrodden by all that have gone thither, or will find themselves deceived in the end.

Our Saviour tells us, that "one thing is needful;" importing, that all other things are comparatively unnecessary; and yet in these we lavish out our short and uncertain time, and let the other stand by till we find leisure; or we say, When I have done with such a business, I will sit down to this. But what if we attain not to the end of that business, but end ourselves before it?

All the peace and favour of the world, cannot calm a troubled heart ; but where the peace is, which Christ gives, all the trouble and disquiet of the world cannot disturb it. All outward distress to such a mind, is but as the rattling of the hail upon the tiles, to him that sits within the house at a sumptuous banquet.

Divine grace, even in the heart of weak and sinful man, is an invincible thing. Drown it in the waters of adversity, it rises more beautiful, as not being drowned indeed, but only washed ; throw it into the furnace of fiery trials, it comes out purer, and loses nothing but the dross, which our corrupt nature mixes with it.

How did it appear, that Christ had loved the apostle Paul ? “ He hath given himself,” says he, “ for me.” Certainly, then, there is no clearer character of our love than this, to give ourselves to him, who hath so loved us.

True joy is a solid grave thing, and dwells more in the heart than the countenance ; whereas, on the contrary, base and false joys are but superficial ; skin-deep as we say ; they are all in the face. The deepest streams are the stillest.

The greatest affliction doth not damp the hope of the Christian so much as the smallest sin.

*... reads: all that doth become a man. & the same is  
it now.*

When courtiers come down into the country, the common home-bred people, possibly, think their habit strange; but they care not for that, it is the fashion at court. What need then have the godly to be so tender foreheaded, as to be out of countenance because the world looks on holiness as a singularity? it is the only fashion in the highest court. Yea, of the King of Kings himself.

It is not the way to see our faults, to look into profane men's lives; but we should look into the clear fountain of the word of life, and there we may both discern our spots and wash them away; and consider the infinite holiness of God, and this will humble us to the dust. When Isaiah saw the glory of the Lord, he cried out of his own, and the people's unholiness.

The highest anger and enmity of all the world, is less than nothing in comparison of the smallest displeasure of God.

“The good man is bold as a lion,” Prov. xxviii. 1. he dares do any thing but offend God; and to dare to do that is the greatest folly, and baseness, and weakness in the world.

If the chains of sin are suffered to continue on a man, for any thing he knows, they may bind him over to chains of darkness, 2 Pet. ii. 4.

The preacher of the word, be he never so powerful, can cast this seed only into the ear, his hand reaches no farther; and the hearer, by his attention, may convey it into his head; but it is the Supreme Teacher above, who carries it into the heart, the only soil wherein it proves lively and fruitful. Look, then, above the poor messenger, and call on his almighty help, who is Lord of all.

Surely, they who are not born again, shall one day wish that they had never been born.

Light conceits, and flowers of rhetoric, wrong the word more than they can please the hearers; the weeds among the corn, make it look gay, but it were all the better they were not among it. Nor can those mixtures be pleasing to any but carnal minds. If any one's head or tongue should grow apace, and all the rest of the body not grow, it would certainly make him a monster; and they are no other, that are knowing and talkative Christians, and grow daily in these respects, but not at all in holiness of heart and life, which is the proper growth of the children of God.

The Hebrew word for *palace* and *temple*, is the same. God's temple is a palace; and, therefore, must be full of the richest beauty and magnificence,

but such as agrees with the nature of it, a spiritual beauty.

The glory of the Church of God, consists not in stately buildings, and rich furniture, and pompous ceremonies; these agree not with its spiritual nature. Its true beauty is, to grow in spirituality, to have more of the presence of God, and of his glory filling it as a cloud. The more the church grew in outward riches, the more sensibly she declined in spiritual excellence.

When the heart is given to God, the other faculties follow. This makes the eyes, ears, tongue, and hands, and all, to be holy, as God's peculiar; being once given and consecrated to him; and therefore it becomes sacrilege to turn them to an unholy use.

Can I choose but account him precious, who suffered shame, that I might not be ashamed; and suffered death, that I might not die; and who took of the bitter cup of the Father's wrath, that I might drink of the cup of his mercy for ever?

*Leighton.*





**REFLECTIONS FOR THE MORNING.**

**THE** solemn stillness of the morning, just before break of day, is fit and friendly to the cool and undisturbed recollection of a man just risen refreshed, and in perfect health. Let him compare his condition with that of half the world, and let him feel an indisposition to admire and adore his Protector if he can. How many great events have come to pass during the hours I have reposed? I feel my insignificance. The heavenly bodies have moved on, the great wheels of nature have none of them stood still, vegetation is advanced, the season is come forward, fleets have continued sailing, councils have been held; and on the opposite side of the world, in broad noon-day, what revolutions have taken place, without my concurrence, consent, or knowledge. Great God, what am I in the world? An insect! a nothing! In the morning, O Lord, thou Great Being, unto Thee will I look up.

How many of our fellow creatures have spent the last six hours in praying in vain for ten minutes' sleep! How many in racking pain, crying "would God it were morning!" How many in prison!

How many in the commission of great crimes !  
 How many have been burnt out of house and  
 home ! How many have been shipwrecked at sea,  
 or lost in untrodden ways on the land ! How  
 many have been robbed and murdered ! How  
 many have died unprepared, and are now lifting  
 up their eyes in torment ! And here stand I, a  
 monument of mercy, "the living, the living," to  
 praise God. In the morning, O Lord, thou patient  
 and merciful Being, unto thee I will look up. I  
 will bemoan the vices, and sympathise with the  
 distresses of my fellow creatures. I will try this  
 day, to shew my gratitude to my Preserver, by  
 taking care not to offend him.

*Robinson.*

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### DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS, SUITABLE TO THE OPENING OF THE DAY.

YOUR ignorance of the events of the day should engage you every morning to commit yourself, and all your affairs, by acts of humble adoration, to God. Profess your confidence in his good Providence. Confess and bemoan your imperfection and sin. Pray him to give you grace to help in time of need. Fill your heart brim full of just senti-

ments, and so prepare for whatever may come to pass in the day.

Amidst all our ignorance of the next hour, there are some things which we foresee conditionally, and others absolutely. It is absolutely certain, that some day we must die. Perhaps this may be the day. Let us this morning behave as if this were the day. It is absolutely certain, that some day we must be judged! perhaps this may be the day! let us examine this morning then, whether our accounts be ready to put into the hand of the Lord, whose stewards only we are? On condition we live through the day, we shall live, as we have done, supported by God for ends of his glory. Shall we not say, in the morning, "Our Father, who art in heaven. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." If we live, we shall live, as we have lived, preserved alive by eating, drinking, clothing, and so on. Shall we not then say, to the Preserver of men, "Give us this day our daily bread?" If we live, we shall offend God, and others will offend us. Let us pray in the morning, then, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." If we live we shall

live depraved creatures, in a depraved world, full of temptations to induce us to do wrong. Let us foresee this, and say to our heavenly Father, "lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." Let us rejoice, that there is such a being as God, and let us say to him, "Thine is the kingdom" of nature, providence, grace, and glory; "thine is the power" of upholding and regulating each; and to thee be "the glory" and the honour of the whole, "for ever and ever. Amen."

*Robinson.*

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**GENIUS, WITHOUT PIETY, INSUFFICIENT  
TO RENDER ITS POSSESSOR HAPPY.**

I HAVE for some time been pining under secret wretchedness; from the pang of disappointment, the sting of pride, with some wandering stabs of remorse, which never fail to settle on my vitals, like vultures, when attention is not called away by society, or the vagaries of the Muse. Even in the hour of social mirth, my gaiety is the madness of an intoxicated criminal under the hands of the executioner.

*Burns.*



## THE INVISIBLE GOD.

### No. I.

THE effect of indistinctness rousing the imagination, is finely depicted in Job iv. 14. "Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up; it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof." The senses in this description are but slightly affected. The eye could not discern any specific form; the touch could not examine the precise nature of the object; the imagination, therefore, had full scope. The

mind was roused beyond the power of sensible objects to stimulate it; and the body felt an agitation greater than if its senses had been more fully acted on.

Without enquiring what Eliphaz saw, let us apply these ideas to the Supreme Spirit; let us meditate on the invisible God; the more impressively important, because invisible.

Let us, for a moment, suppose the contrary to be the case. Suppose the Deity to be the object of our senses; he then loses much of his majesty; he becomes fixed to one spot, that in which we can see him; he must be distant from many other places; and when revealing himself in other places, must be far distant from us; and even, perhaps, at a time when we most need his presence. Yea, we should try to comprehend him. Were he vast as the starry heavens, we could measure him; bright as yonder sun, we should contrive to gaze at him; energetic as the vivid lightning, we should bring him down to us. In no form can we conceive of his being the object of sense, but we sink him to a creature, give him some defineable shape, so that he would need a temple made with hands for his accommodation.

There are proofs enough that he is on our right hand, though we do not see him; that he works on our left hand, though we cannot behold him. We ought with awe and reverence to say, "whither can I flee from thy presence? Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." An omnipresent Almighty, ought to fill us with seriousness; and the uncertainties which belong to his operations, where, how, and when he will work, should fill us with deep, lasting, and constant awe.

*He exists.* The thought makes a temple of every place I may be in. To realize it, is to begin actual worship, in whatever I may be engaged; to indulge it, is to make all other existences fade away. Amid the noise of mirth, I hear only his voice; in the glitter of dissipation, I see only his brightness; in the pursuits of business, I can only call upon his holy name.

*He is present.* He beholds my actions; he hears my words; he discerns my heart. Could I see him, I might, on that side, guard against his penetrating eye; or, on the other side, do something in secret safe from his inspection; but as he is present, without my being able to discern him, how watchful ought I to be; the slightest error may well fill me with awful apprehensions.

*He is near.* What may he not be doing! Even now, says conscience, he may be whetting his "glittering sword," or drawing to the head the arrow of destruction. Could mine eye see his movements, I might be upon my guard, might flee to some shelter, or shrink away from the blow. But an Almighty Judge so near, and yet so undiscernible, may well alarm me.

*He is a Spirit.* No placid countenance can deceive him, no plausible supplication impose upon him; no shield though of iron or brass, is any protection against his displeasure. He is present every moment, surrounds every object, and watches my every footstep.



## No. 2.

I SEE him "pass before my face," in the bright walks of nature; but "I cannot discern his form." The rich landscape shows him wise, good, and bounteous; but how bounteous, good, or wise, who can, from the richest landscape, be able to guess? The brilliant sun gives a glimpse of his brightness; the vast starry concave shews me his immensity; but how bright, how immeasurably great, it were



presumption to say. Hark! he speaks in that bursting thunder; see he moves in that crashing earthquake; he shines in that blazing comet; so much I can easily discern; but God is still far beyond my comprehension. I see nothing but "the hidings of his power."

He guides the affairs of Providence. I see "him pass before my face, but I cannot discern his form." I have seen him in the affairs of nations, putting down one monarch and putting up another. I have "seen him pass before me," in my own concerns, leading me in a path I had not known, stopping me when on the verge of destruction, filling my exhausted stores, and soothing my wearied mind to sweet serenity. I could not but say, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is wondrous in my eyes." But "I cannot discern the form of him." I know not what he will next do. I dare not walk with presumptuous steps, and say, "My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved;" lest he "hide his face but for a moment, and I be troubled;" or withhold his hand, and I die.

Ah! may this ever-present Invisible encircle me with his mercy, defend me with his power, fill me with his peace, and save me by his almighty

grace. Then, though "I discern not his form," I shall be conscious of his presence; and the delightful consciousness shall fill me with reverence, but not "make my flesh to tremble." It shall sooth my sorrows, inspire my hopes, give me confidence in danger, and supplies in every strait. The consciousness of his nearness, approbation, and mercy, shall enable me, like Moses, to "endure, as seeing him who is invisible."

*Anon.*

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### TESTIMONY OF AN INFIDEL

TO THE MAJESTY AND EXCELLENCE OF THE  
SCRIPTURES.

I WILL confess to you, that the majesty of the Scriptures strikes me with admiration, as the purity of the Gospel has its influence on my heart. Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all their pomp of diction; how mean, how contemptible are they compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible, that a book at once so simple and so sublime, should be merely the work of man? Is it possible, that the sacred Personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man?



What sweetness, what purity, in his manner! what an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! what sublimity in his maxims! what profound wisdom in his discourses! what presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live, and so die, without weakness, and without ostentation!

What prepossession, what blindness must it be, to compare the son of Sophroniscus to the son of Mary! What an infinite disproportion there is between them! Socrates, dying without pain or ignominy, easily supported his character to the last; and if his death, however easy, had not crowned his life, it might have been doubted whether Socrates, with all his wisdom, was any thing more than a vain sophist. He invented, it is said, the theory of morals. Others, however, had before put them in practice; he had only to say, therefore, what they had done, and to reduce their examples to precepts. Aristides had been just, before Socrates defined justice; Leonidas had given up his life for his country, before Socrates declared patriotism to be a duty; the Spartans



were a sober people, before Socrates recommended sobriety ; before he had even defined virtue, Greece abounded in virtuous men. But where could Jesus learn, among his competitors, that pure and sublime morality, of which he only hath given us both precept and example ? The greatest wisdom was made known amongst the most bigoted fanaticism ; and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues, did honour to the vilest people on earth.

The death of Socrates, peaceably philosophizing with his friends, appears the most agreeable that could be wished for ; that of Jesus, expiring in the midst of agonizing pains, abused, insulted, and accursed by a whole nation, is the most horrible that could be feared. Socrates, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed indeed the weeping executioner who administered it ; but Jesus, in the midst of his excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God !

Shall we, then, suppose the Evangelic history a mere fiction ? Indeed, my friend, it bears not the marks of fiction ; on the contrary, the history of

Socrates which nobody presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it; it is more inconceivable, that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the Gospel, the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero.

*Rousseau.*

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#### DELIGHT IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

To those who are what they ought to be, the Scriptures will be "sweeter than honey, and the droppings of the honey-comb." How emphatic are these expressions! In the preceding clause, the value of gold was heightened by the words "fine gold," and "much fine gold;" the word of God is not only to be esteemed as gold, but to be delighted in more than the most refined pleasures of sense. Honey, proverbial as it is for its sweetness, can only faintly express the pleasure which the Christian finds in the Holy Bible. He

esteems "the words of God's mouth more than his necessary food." Yes, there is a delight in the discovery of salvation, in the joys of faith, in the contemplation of the promises, in the duties of communion, which no words can express.

This is a point, which worldly persons can little understand. They have never felt their sins to be a burden; and, therefore, have never been in circumstances to experience this delight in the words of pardon and salvation. Like persons with a diseased taste, the sweetest food has no relish to them.

*D. Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta.*

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### MYSTERIES NO REAL OBJECTION TO THE TRUTH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WHAT right has man, in any Revelation, to require, that all should be light, and all level to his comprehension? Are there not mysteries in the works of creation, concerning which the wisest philosopher must confess his ignorance? Is not this the case in natural religion? Who can comprehend God's necessary existence, a Being without a cause producing it? Why then, should it be

considered as an objection to the New Testament, that there are some things in it which we cannot fully comprehend? If, after we have seen, on numberless occasions, faith uniting with reason, the writers should, in some instances, soar *above* reason, but never stand *in opposition to its dictates*, what just cause has man to complain?

When we were children, there were things in the conduct of our parents, the reason of which we could not comprehend. And shall the little child *man* imagine that he can understand every dispensation of the great Father of all? We have since seen the wisdom of our parents in that which we condemned; and should not man form the same judgment in respect to the government of God?

If the subject be duly considered, so far from its appearing suspicious that there should be mysteries in the Christian religion, it will rather be regarded as a proof of its divine origin. If nothing more were contained in the New Testament than we knew before, or nothing more than we could easily comprehend, we might justly doubt if it came from God, and whether it was not rather the work of man's device. Were there mysteries in the

*duties* of Christianity, an objection might justly be raised, but not so with respect to the *doctrines*. That there will be some things respecting the nature and government of God which are not fully revealed; some things which are merely hinted at on account of their connexion with other parts of divine truth; and some things which are just mentioned, but not explained, because they exceed the grasp of the human understanding, it is natural for us to expect; and what just ground is there of complaint? In a word, if in the phenomena of nature, and in the moral government of the Deity, there are many things confessedly mysterious; is it not more than probable, that this will be the case in a Revelation of his will, where the subject is equally vast, and in some respects far more comprehensive? Without mysteries, the Gospel would not be like the works of God.

*Bogue.*

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### MAHOMET AND JESUS.

Go to your natural religion; lay before her Mahomet and his disciples arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of



thousands, and tens of thousands, who fell by his victorious sword; shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements; show her the prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives; let her see his adultery, and hear him allege revelation, and his divine commission, to justify his lust and his oppression. When she is tired with this prospect, then show her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing both the ignorant and the perverse. Let her see him in his most retired privacies; let her follow him to the mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to God. Carry her to his table, to view his poor fare, and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see him inspired, but not provoked; let her attend him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which he endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies; lead her to his cross, and let her view him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

When natural religion has viewed both, ask

which is the prophet of God? But her answer we have already heard, when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion, who attended at the cross; by him she spake, and said, "Truly this man was the son of God!"

*Sherlock.*

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### THE TIME OF THE FORMATION OF MAN.

MAN, for whom all things were made, was himself made last of all. We are taught to follow the heavenly Architect, step by step, first in the productions of the inanimate elements, next of vegetable, and then of animal life, till we come to the master-piece of creation, Man, endowed with reason and intellect. The house being built, the inhabitant appeared; the feast being set forth, the guest was introduced; the theatre being decorated and illuminated, the spectator was admitted, to behold the splendid and magnificent scenery in the heavens above, and the earth beneath; to view the bodies around him, moving in perfect order and harmony, and every creature performing the part allotted it in the universal drama; that, seeing, he might understand, and understanding, adore its supreme Author and Director.

*Bishop Horne.*



### LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS.

PLACES and things which have an association with any of the events or feelings of past life, will greatly assist the recollection of them. A man of strong associations finds memoirs of himself already written on the places where he has conversed with happiness or misery. If an old man wished to animate for a moment the languid and faded ideas which he retains of his youth, he might walk with his crutch across the green, where he once played with companions, who are now, probably, laid to repose in another spot not far off.

An aged saint may meet again some of the affecting ideas of his early piety in the place where he first thought it happy to pray. A walk in a meadow, the sight of a bank of flowers, perhaps even of some one flower, a landscape with the tints of autumn, the descent into a valley, the brow of a mountain, the house where a friend has been met, or has resided, or has died, have often produced a much more lively recollection of our past feelings, and of the objects and events which caused them, than the most perfect description could have done : and we have lingered for a considerable time, for the pensive luxury of thus resuming, if I may so express it, the departed state of our minds.

But there are many to whom local associations present images which they fervently wish they could forget ; images which haunt the places where crime has been perpetrated, and which seem to approach and glare on the criminal as he hastily passes by, especially in the evening, or the night. No local associations are so impressive as those of guilt. It may here be observed, that as each one has his own separate remembrances, giving to some places an aspect and a significance which he

alone can perceive, there must be an unknown number of pleasing, or mournful, or dreadful associations, spread over the scenes inhabited or visited by men. *We* pass, without any awakened consciousness, by the bridge, or the wood, or the house, where there is something to excite the most painful or frightful ideas in the next man that shall come that way; or possibly, the companion that walks along with us. How much there is in a thousand spots of the earth, that is invisible and silent to all but the conscious individual!—

“I hear a voice you cannot hear;

“I see a hand you cannot see.”

*Foster.*

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## THE BODY ONLY A MACHINE, THE SPIRIT THE PRIME MOVER.

A MACHINE is a combination of parts composed of material substances, solid, or fluid, or both, as the case may be; having certain definite forms and arrangements, and possessing certain capabilities of transmitting force or motion. Its objects are to move, press, sustain, combine, divide, or otherwise modify, those substances to which it is

applied. But the machine itself, merely as such, cannot accomplish this. It possesses not its own principle of motion : it cannot urge its own levers, or stretch its own cords, or turn its own wheels, or put its own fluids into circulation. The application of some efficient cause, extrinsic to, and altogether distinct from the machine itself, is necessary to accomplish this. This extrinsic cause, whatever it be, from which the machine derives its motion and efficacy, is called the prime mover. The point on which I desire now to fix your attention is, that this prime mover is altogether distinct from, and independent of, the machine ; that it possesses, or at least may possess, no property in common with it ; and that its existence, or non-existence is not decided by the existence, or non-existence of the machine. The machine may be broken, destroyed, worn by age, or otherwise disabled, and yet the prime mover may still retain its original energy. Thus a steam engine is moved by fire, a mill by wind or water : the steam engine may deteriorate by age, and the mill be broken by accident, and yet the fire, and the wind, and the water, will still preserve their powers.

These observations, which correctly describe a

...the immortal soul" This alone we know  
at whether the spirit <sup>120</sup> retains or not its  
connection with the body - faithful in death  
of shell machine, may, with propriety, be applied to the

act human body. This body is also a combination of  
parts, composed of material substances, solid and  
fluid, having certain definite forms and arrange-  
ments, possessing certain capabilities of motion and  
force, destined and admirably adapted to obey the  
dictation of its prime mover, the living principle,  
the immaterial spirit. So long as it pleases the  
Great Engineer, who constructed this body, to  
permit its connection with that intellectual spirit,  
so long will it obey the impulses which it receives;  
nor does the decay in this bodily machine infer  
any corresponding decay of the moving spirit, any  
more than the wear and tear of a steam engine  
proves the destruction of the principle of heat  
which gives it motion.

Neither are we to infer, because this bodily  
machine, in its obedience to the vital spirit, acts  
mechanically, and follows all the ordinary proper-  
ties and laws of matter, that, therefore, the spirit  
which moves it partakes of the nature of matter,  
or is answerable to its laws, any more than we  
should infer that the levers, wheels, pumps, chains,  
cords, and valves of a steam engine, are regulated  
by the laws which govern heat. On the contrary,

I submit it to the candour of the most sceptical materialist, whether the whole tendency of analogy does not directly overthrow the hypothesis, that the principle of life is organic. We are assured in the Scriptures, that in the first instance, "God formed man of the dust of the ground;" that is to say, he created that curious and beautiful machine, the organized human body,—but that body was still an inert structure, without the principle of motion, or spontaneity; a more noble work remained to be performed,—the immaterial spirit, the divine essence, the prime mover of this machine was to be applied; and, accordingly, we learn, that God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life;"—and then, and not till then, "man, became a living soul."

*Dr. Lardner.*

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### COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN A BETTER WORLD.

As we have been together in the labour, duty, danger, and distress, so shall we be in the great recompence and deliverance. As we have been scorned and despised, so shall we be owned and



honoured together. We who have gone through the day of sadness, shall enjoy together that day of gladness and triumph.

Those who have been with us in persecution and in prison, shall be with us also in the palace of consolation. How oft have our groans made, as it were, one sound; our tears, one stream; and our desires, one prayer. But now all our praises shall make up one melody, all our churches one church, and all ourselves one body; for we shall be one in Christ, even as he and the Father are one.

*Baxter.*

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### THE CONNEXION OF ONE TRUTH WITH ANOTHER.

**THERE** is an intimate connexion in every branch of truth. God is holy; this is a first truth. A holy God can have no intimate communion with unholy creatures; this is a second truth which follows from the first. God, who can have no communion with unholy creatures, can have no communion with men who are unholy creatures; this is a third truth which follows from the second. Men who are unholy creatures, being incapable as such of communion with the happy God, must on

that very account be entirely miserable ; this is a fourth truth which follows from the third. Men, who must be absolutely miserable, because they can have no communion with the holy happy God, become objects of the compassion of that God, who is as loving and merciful as he is happy and holy ; this is a fifth truth which follows from the fourth. This loving and merciful God is naturally inclined to relieve a multitude of his creatures, who are ready to be plunged into the deepest miseries ; this is a sixth truth which follows from the fifth.

From the merciful inclination of God to relieve a multitude of his creatures from the greatest sorrows, follows the mission of Jesus Christ ; because it was fit that the remedy chosen of God to relieve the miseries of men should bear a proportion to the causes which produced it. From the doctrine of Jesus Christ's mission follows the necessity of the Spirit of God ; because it would have been impossible for men to have discovered by their own speculations the way of salvation, unless they had been assisted by a supernatural revelation. From the doctrines of the mission of the Son of God, and of the gift of the Holy Spirit, follows this most comfortable truth, that we are the objects of

the love of God, even of love the most vehement and sincere that can be imagined; for "God commended his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And, as we are the objects of that love, which God hath commended to us in his Son, it follows, that no bounds can be set to our happiness, that there is no treasure too rich in the mines of the blessed God, no duration too long in eternity, no communion with the Creator too close, too intimate, too tender, which we have not a right to expect; according to that comfortable, that extatic maxim of the Apostle, "God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Strictly speaking, we have not one virtue unless we have all virtues; nor are we free from one vice, unless we are free from all vices; we are not truly charitable, unless we are truly just; nor are we truly just unless we are truly charitable; we are not truly liberal, but as we avoid profuseness; nor are we truly frugal, but as we avoid avarice. All virtues naturally follow one another, and afford each other a mutual support.

*Saurin.*

**THE NOMINAL CHRISTIAN DEFECTIVE  
IN LOVE TO GOD.**

LET the question be fairly put to the test. Concerning the proper marks and evidences of affection, there can be little dispute. Let the most candid investigator examine the character, and conduct, and language of the persons to whom we have been speaking; and he will be compelled to acknowledge, that so far as love towards the supreme Being is in question, these marks and evidences are no where to be met with. It is in itself a decisive evidence of a contrary feeling in those nominal Christians, that they find no pleasure in the service and worship of God. Their devotional acts resemble less the free-will offerings of a grateful heart, than that constrained and reluctant homage which is exacted by some hard master from his oppressed dependents; and paid with cold sullenness, and slavish apprehension. It was the very charge brought by God against his ungrateful people of old, that, while they called him Sovereign and Father, they withheld from him the regards which severally belong to those respected and endearing appellations. Thus we likewise think

it enough to offer to the most excellent and amiable of Beings, to our supreme and unwearied Benefactor, a dull, artificial, heartless gratitude, of which we should be ashamed in the case of a fellow-creature, who had ever so small a claim on our regard and thankfulness.

It may be of infinite use to establish in our minds a strong and habitual sense of that first and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." This passion, operative and vigorous in its very nature, like a master spring, would set in motion, and maintain in action all the complicated movements of the human soul.

It would also soon terminate many practical questions concerning the allowableness of certain compliances; questions which, with other similar difficulties, are often only the cold offspring of a spirit of reluctant submission, and cannot stand the encounter of this trying principle. If, for example, it were disputed, whether or not the law of God were so strict as had been stated, in condemning the slightest infraction of its precepts; yet, when, from the precise demands of justice,

the appeal shall be made to the more generous principle of love, there would be at once an end of the discussion. Fear will deter from acknowledged crimes, and self-interest will bribe to laborious services; but it is the peculiar glory, and the very characteristic, of this more generous passion, to show itself in ten thousand little and undefinable arts of sedulous attention, which love alone can pay; and of which, when paid, love alone can estimate the value. Love outruns the deductions of reasoning; it scorns the refuge of casuistry; it requires not the slow process of laborious and undeniable proof that one action would be injurious and offensive, or another beneficial or gratifying, to the object of its affection. The least hint, the slightest surmise, is sufficient to make it start from the former, and fly with eagerness to the latter.

*Wilberforce.*

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### CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL.

PERHAPS, the idea of the apostle in this passage is, that there is every thing in the Saviour which a sinner can need. Is he in danger? Christ saves

him as a "brand from the burning." Is he dead in trespasses and sins? Christ quickens him by his almighty power. Is he guilty? Christ washes away his sins in his own blood. Is he polluted? Christ sanctifies him by his word and Spirit. Is he spiritually destitute of raiment? Christ clothes him with the immaculate robe of his righteousness. Is he poor? Christ enriches him by his grace. Is he afar off from God? Christ brings him nigh by the blood of his cross. Is he an enemy to God? Christ destroys that enmity, and sheds abroad his love in his heart, by his Holy Spirit which he gives him. Is he blind through the native ignorance of his mind? Christ opens the eyes of his understanding, to behold the divine glory. Is he a mourner? Christ as "the consolation of Israel," is his comforter; yea, he gives everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace. Is he weak? He strengthens him with might in the inner man, and makes him more than a conqueror over all his enemies. He translates him from the kingdom of Satan into his own. He makes him a child of God, and an heir of eternal life and glory.

*Anon.*

### THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

THE righteousness wherein we must be found, if we will be justified, is not our own, therefore, we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness for as many as are found in him. In him God findeth us, if we be faithful; for by faith we are incorporated into Christ. Then, although in ourselves we be altogether sinful and unrighteous, yet even the man who is unworthy in himself,—him, being found in Christ through faith,—and having his sin remitted through repentance,—him, God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it; taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto, by pardoning it; and accepteth him in Jesus Christ as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that was commanded him in the law. Shall I say, more perfectly righteous, than if himself had fulfilled the whole law? I must take heed what I say; but the apostle saith, “God hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” Such we are in the sight of the Father, as is the Son of God himself. This, though it be counted folly, is



our comfort and our wisdom. We care for no knowledge in the world but this, that man hath sinned, and the Son of God hath suffered; that God hath made himself man, and that men are made the righteousness of God.

*Hooker.*

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THE SAME.

IF I had the righteousness of a saint, says one, how happy should I be! If I had the righteousness of an angel, says another, I should fear no evil. But I am bold to say, that the poorest sinner who believes in Christ, has a righteousness infinitely more excellent than that of either saints or angels. If the law asks for sinless perfection, it is to be found in Christ, my divine Surety. If the law requires obedience that may be approved by the holy eyes of God, behold, it is in Jesus my Mediator. Should the strictest justice arraign me, and the purest holiness make its demands upon me, I refer them both to my dying and obedient Saviour. With him the Father is always well-pleased, and in him the believer stands complete.

*Hervey.*

## DIVINE INFLUENCE.

IF we would wish for much of the presence of God by his Spirit, we must learn to set a high value upon it; we must seek it by fervent prayer; we must cherish habitual dependence on divine influence; and we must take care to maintain a deportment suited to the character of that divine Agent. When the apostle exhorts us, not to grieve the Spirit of God, "by which we are sealed to the day of redemption," it is forcibly implied, that he is susceptible of offence, and that to offend him involves heinous ingratitude and folly; ingratitude,—for what a requital is this, for being sealed to the day of redemption!—and folly, inasmuch as we may fitly say on this, as Paul did on a different occasion, "Who is he that maketh us glad, but the same that is made sorrowful by us?" Have we any other Comforter when he is withdrawn? can a single ray of light visit us in his absence? Or can we be safe for a moment, without his guidance and support? If the immense and infinite Spirit deigns, by a mysterious condescension, to undertake the conduct of a worm, ought it not to yield the most implicit submission? The appropriate duty

owing to a faithful and experienced guide, is a ready compliance with his dictates; and how much more may this be expected, when the disparity between the parties is no less than infinite? It is evident, from melancholy experience, that it is very possible to neglect what is the obvious tendency of his motions, which is, invariably, to produce universal holiness. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, goodness, meekness, gentleness, temperance, faith;" whatever is contrary to these involves an opposition to the Spirit, and is directly calculated to quench His sacred influence.

From his descending on Christ in the form of a dove, as well as from many express declarations of Scripture, we may with certainty conclude, the indulgence of all the irascible and malignant passions to be peculiarly repugnant to his nature! and it is remarkable, that the injunction, of not grieving the Holy Spirit, is immediately followed by a particular caution against cherishing such dispositions; "let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven

you." Have you not found by experience, that the indulgence of the former has destroyed that self-recollection and composure which are so essential to devotion? Vindictive passions surround the soul with a sort of turbulent atmosphere, than which nothing can be conceived more opposite to that calm and holy light in which the blessed Spirit loves to dwell. The indulgence of sensual lusts, or whatever enslaves the soul to the appetites of the body, in violation of the rules of sobriety and chastity, it seems almost unnecessary to add, must have a direct tendency to quench His sacred influence; wherever such desires prevail, they war against the soul, immerse it in carnality, and utterly indispose it to every thing spiritual and heavenly. "That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit;" it bears a resemblance to its Author in being a spiritual production, which requires to be nourished by divine meditation, by pure and holy thoughts.

*R. Hall.*

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### WALKING WITH GOD.

**THIS** is the only walk in which we can never go astray; and happy he who amidst the innumerable paths by which he is surrounded, is led to the

proper walk. To walk with God, we must take heed to every step of his providence and grace; we must have a holy fear of not keeping close to him; though he will never leave us, if we do not leave him. We must maintain a sacred communion with him, and have our conversation in heaven rather than on earth: we must be perpetually receding from the world, and withdrawing from its attachments. We must feel our hearts glow with a greater degree of love to him, and by the influence of his Holy Spirit upon our affections, become gradually more assimilated to the Divine nature. We must take his word for our directory, his promises for our food, and his blessed Son for our sole reliance, making the foot of the cross our only resting place. If we thus walk with God through the wilderness of life, he will walk with us when we reach the dark "Valley of the shadow of Death;" and though we cannot hope for the same translation as Enoch, still like him, "we shall not be, because God hath taken us."

*J. M. Good.*

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#### THE SECURITY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

Blessed for ever and ever be he whose faith hath made him the child of God. The earth may shake, the pillars of the world may tremble under

us, the countenance of the heaven may be appalled, the sun may lose his light, the moon her beauty, the stars their glory ; but concerning the man that trusted in God, if the fire have proclaimed itself unable so much as to singe a hair of his head ; if lions, beasts ravenous by nature, and keen with hunger, being set to devour, have, as it were, religiously adored the very flesh of the faithful man ; what is there in the world that shall change his heart, overthrow his faith, alter his affection towards God, or the affection of God towards him ! If I be of this class, who shall make a separation between me and my God ? “ We are more than conquerors through him who hath loved us.” “ I know in whom I have believed ;” I am not ignorant whose precious blood hath been shed for me ; I have a Shepherd full of kindness, full of care, and full of power ; unto him I commit myself ; his own finger hath engraven this sentence on the tables of my heart, “ Satan hath desired to winnow thee as wheat, but I have prayed that thy faith fail not.” Therefore, the assurance of my hope I will labour to keep, as a jewel, unto the end ; and by labour through the gracious mediation of his prayer, I shall keep it.

*Hooker.*



### EARLY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

**CHILDREN** may, and should be taught, in their earliest years, the great principles of Christianity. For instance,

Young children may be taught that there is a God, a great and almighty God, who made them, and gives them every good thing. That he sees them every where, though they cannot see him, and that he takes notice of all their behaviour.

They must be told what they should do, and what they should avoid, in order to please God. They should be taught in general to know the

difference between good and evil. They may learn that it is their duty to fear, and love, and worship God; to pray to him for what they want, and to praise him for what they enjoy; to obey their parents; to speak truth, and to be honest and friendly to all mankind; and to set a guard upon their own appetites and passions; and that to neglect these things, or to do any thing contrary to them, is sinful in the sight of God.

Their consciences are capable of receiving conviction when they have neglected these duties, or broken the commands of God, or of their parents; and they may be made sensible, that the great and holy God, who loves the righteous, and bestows blessings upon them, is angry with those who have broken his commands, and sinned against him; and, therefore, that they themselves are become subject to his displeasure.

They may be told, that there is another world after this, and that their souls do not die when their bodies die; that they shall be taken up into heaven, which is a state of pleasure and happiness, if they have been good and holy in this world; but if they have been wicked children, they will go down into hell, which is a state of misery and torment.



You may also inform them, that though their bodies die, and are buried, yet God can and will raise them to life again ; and that their body and soul together must be made happy or miserable, according to their behaviour in this life.

They may be taught, that there is no way for such sinful creatures as we are to be received into God's favour but for the sake of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came down from heaven into our world, and lived a life of pure and perfect holiness, and suffered death, to reconcile sinners to the great and holy God, who is offended by the sins of men ; and now lives in heaven to plead for mercy for them ; and that, as the Lord Jesus is the only reconciler between God and man, so all their hope must be placed in him.

They may be taught, that their very natures are sinful ; they may be convinced, that they are naturally inclined to do evil ; and they should be informed, that it is the Holy Spirit of God who must cure the evil temper of their own spirits, and make them holy, and fit to dwell with God in heaven.

They should also be instructed to pray to God, that for the sake of Jesus Christ, the great medja-

tor or reconciler, he would pardon their past sins, and help them by his Spirit to love and serve him with zeal and faithfulness for the time to come; that he would bestow all necessary blessings upon them in this world, and bring them safe at last to his heavenly kingdom.

This is the sum and substance of the Christian religion, drawn out into a very few plain articles; and, I think, a child of common capacity, who is arrived at three or four years of age, may be taught some part of these articles, and may learn to understand them all at seven, or eight, or nine; at least, so far as is needful for all his own exercises of devotion and piety.

*Watts.*

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### BENEFIT OF AFFLICTION.

**AFFLICTIONS** are God's most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our heavenly rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and on the left, we should scarcely keep in the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it? When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how

doth sickness, or other affliction, reduce us? Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best schoolmasters, and with David may say, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept thy word." Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, "O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!" Not only the green pastures and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the Word and Spirit do the main work, yet suffering so unbolts the door of the heart, that the Word hath easier entrance.

*Baxter.*

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### THE PILGRIM ENTERING INTO REST.

"Thou shalt rest and stand in thy lot at the end of thy days." Christian Pilgrim! You shall soon reach the city of habitation; and then the wanderings of the wilderness, its solitude, its tempests, its privations, shall be forgotten; or, if they are remembered, remembered to make the communion of the heavenly Jerusalem, its perpetual sunshine, its fulness of joy, the more enrapturing. When

Joseph's two sons were presented to his father, the old man said, "I had not thought to see thy face, and lo! God hath shewed me thy seed." Similar to his, will be the feelings of good men in heaven. I often thought it very doubtful if ever I should arrive at paradise; but thou hast brought me to glory, and a happiness which it never entered into my heart to conceive. I thought I should be blessed indeed, if but admitted within its gates, and in the portion adjudged to one who was less than the least of all saints; but thou hast set me among the princes of the people, and from the threshold where I wished to kneel, thou hast called me to thy throne.

*Belfrage.*

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### OBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN HOPE.

THE perfect and everlasting happiness of heaven, is an object of a righteous man's hope in death. He hopes to drop all his sins, and their attendant train of sorrows, behind him; and to be perfectly holy, and consequently happy, for ever. He hopes to see his God and Saviour, and to spend a happy eternity in society with him, and in his service.

He hopes to join the company of angels, and of his fellow saints of the human race. He hopes to improve in knowledge, in holiness, and in capacities for action and enjoyment, in an endless gradation. He hopes to see "the face of God in righteousness, and to be satisfied, when he awakes in his likeness." In short, he hopes to be unspeakably happy through an endless duration.

What a glorious hope is this! This has made many a soul welcome death with open arms. This has made them "desirous of being with Christ, which is far better." And this has sweetly swallowed up the sensations of bodily pain. Indeed, without this, immortality would be an object of terror, and not of hope; the prospect would be insupportably dreadful. For who can bear the thought of an immortal duration spent in an eternal banishment from God, and all happiness, and in the sufferance of the most exquisite pain! But a happy immortality, what can charm us more.

*Davies.*

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### THE MERCY OF CHRIST.

"Go, preach repentance and remission of sins, beginning at Jerusalem,"—were some of the last

words of the Son of God. It is very affecting, that the first offers of grace should be made to those who, of all people in the world, had done it the most despite ; that the heavenly gift should be tendered to those first, who least deserved it ! not that any can deserve it at all, for then it were not grace ! but they, of all people, had most deserved the contrary ! That they who had abused Christ to a degree beyond the most pitiful description, should yet be uppermost in his care, and stand foremost in his pity, and find so much mercy from one to whom they shewed none at all.

One would rather have expected the Apostles should have received another kind of charge, and that Christ should have said, “ Let repentance and remission of sins be preached, but carry it not to Jerusalem, that wicked city, that has been the slaughter-house of my prophets, whom I have often sent. After them I sent John the Baptist, a burning and a shining light ; him they killed in prison. Last of all, I myself, the Son, came also ; and me, with wicked hands, they have crucified and slain. They may do the same to you ; the disciple is not like to be better treated than his Lord ; let not the Gospel enter those gates, through which they led me, its Author, to crucifixion.

“I have been preaching there myself these three years; I have mingled my tears with my sermons; I have supported my character and pretensions from the Scriptures of Moses and the prophets; I have confirmed them by divine miracles, and sealed all with my blood,—yet they would not give ear; O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! All that I have left for thee now is, what I have before dropt over thee,—a compassionate tear and wish, ‘that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belonged to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes!’ And so let them remain; for I charge you, my Apostles, to preach repentance and remission of sins to all other nations, but come not near that wicked city.”

But God’s thoughts are not as ours, neither are his ways as our ways; but as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are his thoughts and ways above ours.

Our way is, to make the chief offenders examples of justice,—to avenge ourselves upon those who have done us personal injury and wrong; but Christ chooses out these, to make examples of mercy, and commands the first offer of eternal life to be made to them, and all the world are to wait,

till they have had the first refusal of the Gospel salvation.

As if our Lord had said, "It is true, my sufferings are a universal remedy, and I have given my life a ransom for many, that the Gentiles afar off might be brought nigh, and all the ends of the earth might see the salvation of God. And, therefore, go into all nations, and offer this salvation as you go; but, lest the poor house of Israel should think themselves abandoned to despair, cruel and unkind as they have been, go, make them the first offer of grace; let them that struck the rock drink first of its refreshing streams; and they that shed my blood be welcome to its healing virtue.

"Tell them, that as I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so, if they will be gathered, I will be their Shepherd still. Though they despised my tears which I shed over them, and imprecated my blood to be upon them, it was for their sakes I shed both; that by my tears I might soften their hearts towards God; and by my blood I might reconcile God to them. Tell them I live, and because I am alive again, my death shall not be their condemnation.

"Tell them, you have seen the prints of the nails



upon my hands and feet, and the wounds of the spear in my side; and that the marks of their cruelty are so far from giving me vindictive thoughts, if they will but repent, that every wound they have given me speaks in their behalf; pleads with the Father for the remission of their sins, and enables me to bestow it; and by those sufferings, which they may be ready to think, have exasperated me against them, by those very wounds, entreat them to receive my salvation. Say, 'Repent, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.'

"Nay, if you meet that poor wretch, who thrust the spear into my side, tell him, there is another and a better way of coming at my heart, if he will repent, and look upon him whom he has pierced, and will mourn, I will cherish him in that very bosom he has wounded; he shall find the blood he shed an ample atonement for the sin of shedding it. And tell him, from me, that he will put me to more pain and displeasure by refusing this offer of my blood, than when he drew it forth. In short, though they have gainsayed my doctrine, blasphemed my divinity, and abused and tormented

my person ; yet, go to Jerusalem ; and, by beginning there, show them such a miracle of goodness and grace that may convince them of their sin ; and, at the same time, that nothing can be greater than their sin, except this mercy and grace of mine ; which where their sin has abounded, does much more abound, ‘beginning at Jerusalem.’ ’

*Grosvenor.*

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#### A PIOUS YOUTH CLOSING LIFE.

A SERVANT, who had lived fifteen years in the family, a pious man, occasionally slept in his chamber. In religious conversation with this humble Christian, he often beguiled a part of the night ; and, about the middle of the night, he usually requested him to pray. He now appeared to possess great consolation, from experiencing the faithfulness of God. His hope and trust in the great sacrifice of the Christian covenant, and the consequent peace and serenity of his mind, seemed daily to increase. He said, “I am surrounded with nothing but mercies ; but the greatest of all mercies is Jesus Christ. I want no other refuge ; none besides will suit me.” A friend asking if he had

any doubts of the divinity of the Saviour? he replied. "No, Sir; I must have a whole Saviour; a half Saviour won't do for me." "One night I felt such a sweet calm resignation to the will of God, that I could have left all immediately; not absolutely a longing to be gone, but entire resignation to the whole will of God." In this delightful frame of mind he continued till he expired.

O ye, who have partaken with him in the studies and amusements of younger life, come hither, and contemplate his last hour! Do you not envy such a death as this? Do ye not remember enough of his character, to know that insincerity was never among his faults? That his feelings and consolations must have been real? Do you not perceive, that his example calls on you, to pay an early and an immediate attention to the state of your souls towards God? Was he not as healthy, was he not as active, was he not as lively, as any of you? And yet did he continue to presume on length of days? Did he not early turn to God? Had he not also good sense and talents, beyond the greater number of you? And did he deem it weak, or vain, or foolish, to give up his heart to God, to search the Scriptures with earnest diligence, to

devote his morning and evening leisure to the duties of secret religion? Did he dare to presume on early religious advantages? Did he fancy, that correct religious notions, without religious feeling, or Christian practice, would save his soul? Did he not bow down in penitent self-abasement before God? Did he not lift up his head in humble hope through Jesus alone? Did not the power of godliness produce in him beneficial, impressive, and abiding results, to the praise of the glory of divine mercy? Are you hesitating and halting before you can make up your minds? O hear his dying testimony,—“What a mercy is it, that I have not now a Saviour to seek!”

*Bullar's Mem. of P. Whitty.*

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### CHRIST'S SORROW, THE SOURCE OF THE BELIEVER'S JOY.

CHRIST was weary that we might rest; he hungered, that we might eat the bread, and thirsted, that we might drink the water of life. He grieved, that we might rejoice, and became miserable to make us happy. He was apprehended, that we might escape; accused that we might be

acquitted ; and condemned, that we might be absolved. He died, that we might live, and was crucified by men, that we might be justified before God. In brief, he “was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

*Beveridge.*

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### EVIL OF SIN.

FROM the scheme of man's redemption, we learn, that sin must be something far more hateful in its nature, something of a deeper malignity than is generally understood. It could be no inconsiderable evil that could require such a remedy as the humiliation of the Son of God. It is not to be supposed, that any light cause would move the merciful Father of the universe to expose even an innocent man to unmerited sufferings. What must be the enormity of that guilt, which God's mercy could not pardon, till the only begotten Son of God had undergone its punishment? How great must be the load of crime, which could find no adequate atonement, till the Son of God descended from the bosom of the Father, clothed himself with flesh, and being found in fashion as a man, submitted to

a life of hardship and contempt, to a death of ignominy and pain!

From this scheme we learn farther, that the good or ill conduct of man, is a thing of far more importance and concern in the moral system, than is generally imagined. Man's deviation from his duty was a disorder, it seems, in the moral system of the universe, for which nothing less than divine wisdom could devise a remedy,—the remedy devised, nothing less than divine wisdom and power could apply. Man's disobedience was in the moral world, what it would be in the natural, if a planet were to wander from its orbit, or the constellations to start from their appointed places. It was an evil for which the regular constitution of the world had no cure, which nothing but the immediate interposition of Providence could repair.

*Horsley.*

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### THE WORTH OF THE SOUL.

THE Soul was the last, and the noblest work of God in the formation of the world,—the finish, and ornament of this material fabric, on which the divine Architect bestowed his most mature

deliberation, and expended his richest treasures. It stood, amidst creation, the fair and beauteous image of the Creator. This was the object, which, in its fall, dragged the creation into a vortex of ruin. This was the object selected by the great God, in the councils of eternity, whose salvation should be the means of exhibiting to the universe, the most glorious display of the divine perfections, —on which mercy, wisdom, and power, were to exhaust their united resources. This was the object, for which the Son of God could justify himself to all worlds, as not demeaning his dignity, nor disparaging his wisdom, when, for its salvation, he veiled his divinity in human flesh, was, for a while, made lower than his angels, tabernacled amidst the sorrows of mortality, and closed a life of humiliation and suffering, upon the ignominious cross. This is the object, for which all the revelations of heaven, and all the dispensations of grace; all the labour of prophets, priests and apostles; in short, all the splendid apparatus of redemption, were arranged. This is the object, whose interests render angels unquiet on their heavenly seats, and draw them with exquisite solicitude to minister to its safety. Such is the retinue attending on the soul

of man! What, then, must be the value of the human soul? Now appears the justness of our Saviour's language, "What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

*James.*

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### THE SAME.

SHOULD I suggest in some companies, that the conversion of a hundred sinners to God, is an event of more real importance, than the temporal prosperity of the greatest nation upon earth; I should be charged with ignorance and arrogance; but one soul is worth more than the whole world, on account of its redemption price, its vast capacities, and its duration. Should we suppose a nation to consist of forty millions, the whole and each individual to enjoy as much good as this life can afford, without abatement, for a term of fifty years each; all this good, or an equal quantity, might be exhausted by a single person in two thousand millions of years; which would be but a moment, in comparison of the eternity which would still follow. And if this good were merely



temporal good, the whole aggregate of it would be evil and misery, if compared with that happiness in God, of which only they who are made partakers of a divine life are capable. On the other hand, were a whole nation to be destroyed by such accumulated miseries as attended the siege of Jerusalem, the sum total of these calamities would be but trifling, if set in competition with what every single person that dies in sin, has to expect, when the sentence of everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power, shall be executed.

*Newton.*

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### ELEVATED CONTEMPLATIONS.

THE Christian hath still the image before his eye, of this world vanishing and passing away; of the other, with the everlasting affairs and concernments of it, even now ready to take place, and fill up all the stage; and can represent to himself the vision, not from a melancholy fancy, but a rational faith, of the world dissolving, monarchies and kingdoms breaking up, thrones tumbling, crowns and sceptres lying as neglected

things. He hath a telescope, through which he can behold the glorious appearances of the supreme Judge; the solemn state of his majestic person; the splendid pomp of his magnificent and vastly numerous retinue; the obsequious throng of glorious celestial creatures, doing homage to their eternal King; the swift flight of his royal guards, sent forth into the four winds to gather the elect, and covering the face of the heavens with their spreading wings; the universal silent attention of all to that loud sounding trumpet, that shakes the pillars of the world, pierces the inward caverns of the earth, and resounds from every part of the encircling heavens; the many myriads of joyful expectants arising, changing, putting on glory, taking wings, and contending upwards, to join themselves to the triumphant heavenly host; the judgment set, the books opened; the frightful amazed looks of surprised sinners; the equal administration of the final judgment; the adjudication of all to their eternal states; the heavens rolled up as a scroll; the earth, and all things that are therein, consumed and burnt up.

*Howe.*



### PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER FINDING MOSES.

By how many accidents, might not this most fortunate coincidence have been prevented? A day, an hour, earlier, or later, and the parties concerned had never met; the slightest alteration in the setting in of the wind, or of the tide; the particular temperature of the fleeting air; or the more variable temperature of a female mind, corrupted, as the children of kings generally are, by unbounded gratification and indulgence, unaccustomed to contradiction, following no guide but inclination, and occupied only with the object

of the moment. But these, and a thousand such like contingencies, unstable as water, subdued by the hand of Omnipotence, acquire the solidity of the rock, and the steadfastness of the poles of heaven. The mother could not part with her child a moment sooner, durst not retain him a moment longer; the Princess could betake herself to no other amusement or employment, could select no other hour of the day, could resort to no other part of the river, could divert her attention to no other object; the tide could not run, nor the wind blow in any other direction, nor with greater or less rapidity. Moses was not safer, when king in Jeshurun, encompassed with the thousands of Israel,—was not safer in the mount with God, is not safer within the adamantine walls of the new Jerusalem, than Moses in the flage, Moses at the mercy of the waves, of the monsters of the Nile, and of men more merciless than wild beasts.

What power threatened the life of Moses? The king of Egypt. What power preserved it? The king of Egypt's daughter. What were the steps which led to his elevation? Those which foreboded his destruction. Could all this have been the work of man? No, it must have proceeded from "the

Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." "Who doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?"

The usual train of common events led Pharaoh's daughter to the river side; the ark in which the little babe was laid, happened to catch her eye; curiosity prompted her to examine its contents, and pity at the sight touched her breast. If there be an object in nature more interesting and affecting than another, it was that which now presented itself to this great lady's eye;—a beautiful infant of three months old, deserted by its own parents, exposed to ten thousand dangers, and expressing by the tender testimony of tears, its sense of that misery of which it had not yet acquired the consciousness. "Behold, the babe wept!" Pity is a native plant in a noble heart. The story told itself. The situation in which the child was found, explained the cruel occasion. Compassion was fortunately connected with power, and Providence wisely balanced one thing with another, the jealousy and severity of the father, with the tenderness and generosity of the daughter.

*Hunter.*

## THE UNREASONABLENESS OF SPIRITUAL SLOTH.

**ROUSE** thyself, O my soul, from thy spiritual lethargy ! Remember, at every moment unnumbered beings take their flight into eternity. The infinite energy of the Eternal Mind is awake to all the events of his universe, and governing them all. The praises and melodies of heaven are unsuspending. The ever-prevailing Mediator continually intercedes. The day of thy summons into an unknown world, swiftly approaches by the unceasing hand of time ; and every little section of the dial or the watch, which the shadow, or the index traverses is a portion of thy unintermitted progress towards the home of spirits. "Behold, the Judge standeth before the door !" It will be but a transient succession, a swift continuation of hours and minutes, and thou shalt have to look back upon the consummation of terrestrial things, upon the awful disclosures and decisions of the great retributive day, upon the moment when thy own character, as viewed by the Searcher of hearts, stood first revealed, and with it thy allotment in a new untried existence. And now, while

those scenes are yet future, every action, every temper, every purpose and bias of the mind, is to be regarded as sowing for an eternal harvest. The influences of heaven, even of the Almighty, and all Holy Spirit, are offered to him that implores them ; and able to produce in the soul "fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." A celestial and endless blessedness is set before thy faith, with every solemn promise, and mighty work of Christ to guarantee its reality ; and he who is gone to "prepare a place" for his followers, has engaged to come again, and receive them to himself.

*Sheppard.*

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### ALL GOOD TO BE FOUND IN GOD.

WHERE do you think, in reason, that all the streams of goodness do finally empty themselves ? Is it not in God, from whom, by secret springs they finally proceed ? Where else do all the lines of goodness centre ? Are not all the sparks contained in this fire, and all the drops in this ocean ? Surely, the time was, when there was nothing besides God, and then all good was in him. And even now the creature's essence and

existence is secondary, derived, contingent, improper, in comparison of his, "who is, and was, and is to come," whose name alone is called "I am." What do thine eyes see, or thy heart conceive desirable, which is not there to be had? Sin, indeed, there is none; but darest thou call that good? Worldly delights there are none, for they are good but for the present necessity, and please but the brutish senses. Do you fear losing or parting with any thing you now enjoy? What? Do you fear you shall want when you come to heaven? Shall you want the drops when you have the ocean? Or the light of the candle when you have the sun? Or, the shallow creature, when you have the perfect Creator?

*Baxter.*

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#### FOUR ARGUMENTS FOR THE TRUTH OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THERE are four grand arguments for the truth of the Bible: the miracles it records; the prophecies; the goodness of the doctrine; and the moral character of the penmen.

The miracles flow from divine power; the prophecies from divine understanding; the excellence



of the doctrine from divine goodness; and the moral character of the penmen from divine purity. Thus Christianity is built upon these four immovable pillars, the power, the understanding, the goodness, and the purity of God.

I add, farther,—the Bible must be the invention either of good men or angels, bad men, or devils, or of God.

It could not be the invention of good men, or angels; for they neither would, nor could make a book, and tell lies all the time they were writing it, saying, “Thus saith the Lord,” when it was their own invention.

It could not be the invention of bad men, or devils; for they would not make a book, which commands all duty, forbids all sin, and which condemns them to misery for ever.

I, therefore, draw this conclusion, that the Bible must be given by Divine inspiration.

*Simpson.*

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### THE LORD'S DAY.

THE Lord's day is profaned, by selecting it as a day for travelling; by taking long journeys, which might as well be performed at any other

time. This is a direct violation of the fourth commandment, which expressly gives the sabbath as a day of rest to our servants and our cattle: Our own laws, as well as the Scriptures, allow works of necessity and charity, but no others. To these, therefore, we ought to confine ourselves, as nearly as possible; and with these exceptions, and with these only, consecrate the sabbath as a holy rest unto the Lord. The temporary suspension of labour on the sabbath, the refreshment and relief from incessant toil, is most graciously allowed even to the brute creation, by the Great Governor of the universe, whose mercy extends over all his works. It is the boon of Heaven itself. It is a small drop of comfort thrown into their cup of misery; and to wrest from them this only privilege, this sweetest consolation of their wretched existence, is a degree of inhumanity, for which there wants a name; and of which few people, I am persuaded, if they could be brought to reflect seriously upon it, would ever be guilty.

*Bishop Porteus.*

**THE REVOLUTION OF THE SEASONS,  
A PROOF OF THE DIVINE FAITHFULNESS.**

WHATEVER view we take of the works and ways of the Most High, we see that he is faithful to his word, that he is a covenant-keeping God. He has declared, that "whilst the earth remaineth, seed-time, and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease;" and they have not. We are living witnesses, that they have not. This morning's sun, shining with more than usual lustre, and writing with his every beam on creation, his Maker's praise; these reviving gales; the new-born leaves and flowers; the lark yonder rising to the gate of heaven, all seem to re-echo the sentiment, and to say, truly they have not. "God is not a man that he should lie." If we look back for a few months, we must recollect the driving snows, the showers of hail, the piercing blasts, the withered herbage, the shivering cattle, the stripped trees, and the barren fields; and why do we not still witness scenes like these? Who has driven away bleak Winter, with his army of winds and frosts, and snows, and hail? Who is it that has again made our fields smile with flowers? Who has

caused life to break forth in a thousand interesting forms, and has filled creation with verdure, fragrance, beauty, and harmony? Who has bid the valleys stand thick with rising corn? And who makes the little hills rejoice on every side? What voice is that which is heard from the heavens and the earth, from every field, and every tree? It says, "Arise, and come away; for, lo! the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land." It is his voice, who, at first, "spake, and it was done; who commanded, and it stood fast;" it is the voice of the infinitely faithful God;--

"One spirit,-- His,  
 Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,  
 Rules universal nature; not a flow'r,  
 But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,  
 Of his unrivall'd pencil!"

*B. H. Draper.*

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### HUMAN MERIT.

THE only thanks, says Dr. Franklin in a letter to a friend on whom he had conferred a favour, I desire for the kindness. I have done you, is, that you may be always equally ready to serve

any other person who may need your assistance ; and so let good offices go round, for mankind are all of a family. I am far from expecting heaven by my good works. By heaven, we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that, for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth.

*Franklin.*

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### REASONS FOR GOOD WORKS.

THERE are many reasons why we should be "zealous of good works." Among them are the following ; because they are commanded by the blessed God ; thus the Apostle says to Titus, (iii. 8.) "I will, that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works."

Real Christians are renewed for this very purpose, that they may bring forth good fruits. "We are his workmanship," says the Apostle Paul,

“created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,” Eph. ii. 10.

No one has any reason to believe that his faith is genuine, who does not practise good works. Thus we read, “Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; show me thy faith without thy works; and I will show thee my faith by my works,” James ii. 17, 18.

It is impossible for any man to show his faith without works. The Lord Jesus expects that we should show our love to him, by obeying his holy will. “If ye love me, keep my commandments,” John xiv. 15. Yea, “He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works,” Titus ii. 14.

We ought to imitate the example of Christ and his Apostles. The Lord Jesus “went about doing good.” His life was one of enlarged benevolence. “He hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps. The great Apostle of the Gentiles says, “Be followers of me, even as I am of Christ,” 1 Cor. xi. 1.

It is our bounden duty, in whatever situation we are placed, to glorify God. "Let your light," says our Lord, "so shine before men, that you may glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Good works are profitable and advantageous to our fellow creatures. Exhortations to this purpose abound in the holy Scriptures. "As we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially to them who are of the household of faith," Gal. vi. 10. "What does it profit, my brethren, though a man may say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding, ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?" James ii. 14, 16. "Whoso," says St. John, "hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" John iii. 17.

*Sir R. Hill.*

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**SPRING,**

**AN EMBLEM OF THE RENOVATION OF THE HEART  
BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**THE** pleasing change in the season reminds us very forcibly of that change which the Divine Spirit produces on the human mind, before it can enjoy converse with God; this alone enables an individual to say with the Psalmist, "My meditation of Him shall be sweet!" The wintry day is a striking emblem of the state of the soul of every individual, till it is renewed. Until this salutary change takes place, the mind of the sinner is so benighted, that he sees no glory in God, the most glorious object in the wide universe. He discerns no evil in sin, though it has brought

**"Death into the world, and all our woe."**

**He** perceives no loveliness in the Saviour, no vanity in the creature; he is conscious of no motive which should induce him to seek after a union with infinite excellence. His heart is so cold, that he is a stranger to the sweet emotions of love and gratitude; and his life is barren, like the wintry soil, of the wholesome fruits of righteousness. The day in spring, on the contrary, is



obviously descriptive of the renewed soul; all is life, animation, and fruitfulness. Then, in a spiritual point of view, the eye is opened, the ear is unsealed, and the tongue is loosed in the service of God. God has spoken; he has said, "Let there be light!" and there is light. It is the blessed dawn of an eternal day. Now,

"A voice is heard, that mortal ears hear not,  
Till God has touch'd them; 'tis the voice of song,  
A loud Hosanna sent from all his works.  
Which he that hears it with a shout repeats,  
And adds his rapture to the general praise."

It is the work of God to change the gloomy months of winter, for the delightful season of spring. "Every good gift, and every perfect gift, cometh from the Father of lights." No one but he who formed the spirit, can have access to it, and change its depraved passions. No human power could have introduced the spring a month earlier, or have introduced it at all. The efforts of the greatest and best of men for the renewal of sinners, without the gracious influences of the Spirit of God, will be equally inefficacious. Without these, parental instruction, awful or pleasing providences, the removal of beloved friends, the admonitions of

conscience, the most painful afflictions, surprising deliverances, or eloquent persuasions, are utterly in vain. God must speak to the dry bones, or they will not live,—

“ His word leaps forth at once to its effect,

“ He calls for things that are not,---and they come.”

*B. H. Draper.*

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### CHRISTIAN UNION.

GRACE produces in every believer a unity, and a unity it will always produce. But a unity of what? of opinions? of forms and ceremonies? of dress and phraseology? No; but of something infinitely superior, a oneness of reliance, of inclination, of taste, of hopes and fears, of joys and of sorrows. Though divided and distinguished from each other by a thousand peculiarities they *all* hate sin,—they all “hunger and thirst after righteousness,”—they all “follow hard after God,”—they all feel the spiritual life to be a warfare,—they all confess themselves to be only “strangers and pilgrims upon earth.” Thus, with circumstantial diversity, we have essential identity; the substance is unalterable as the modes are various; the dress

changing with times and places; the figure, the members, the soul, always the same. "For, by one spirit, we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one spirit."

*Jay.*

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### GOD IS NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS.

HE whose death is as little regarded as the fall of a leaf in the forest, and he whose departure involves a nation in despair, are, in one point of view, upon a level. Before the presence of the great I AM, into which they both immediately enter, all distinctions vanish; and the true statement of the fact is, that an immortal spirit has finished its earthly career; has passed the barriers of the invisible world, to appear before its Maker, in order to receive that sentence which will fix its irrevocable doom, "according to the deeds done in the body." An event has taken place, which has no parallel in the revolutions of time, the consequences of which have not room to expand themselves within a narrower sphere than an endless duration. An event has occurred, the

issues of which must ever baffle and elude all finite comprehension, by concealing themselves in the depth of that abyss, of that eternity which is the dwelling-place of Deity, where there is sufficient space for the destiny of each among the innumerable millions of the human race to develop itself, and without interference or confusion, to sustain and carry forward its separate infinity of interest.

*R. Hall.*

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### THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

THE veneration we should feel for the Bible, as the depository of saving knowledge, will be totally distinct, not only from what we attach to any other book, but from that admiration its other properties inspire; and the variety and antiquity of its history, the light it affords in various researches, its inimitable touches of nature, together with the sublimity and beauty so copiously poured over its pages, will be deemed subsidiary ornaments, the embellishments of the casket, which contains "the pearl of great price."

*R. Hall.*

**TIME.**

**TIME**, like an overflowing stream, makes haste into eternity, and is for ever lost and swallowed up there; and while it is hastening to its period, it sweeps away all things with it which are not immortal. There is a limit appointed by Providence, to the duration of all the pleasant and desirable scenes of life, to all the works of the hands of men, with all the glories and excellencies of animal nature, and all that is made of flesh and blood. Let us not dote upon any thing here below, for heaven hath inscribed vanity upon it. The moment is hastening, when the decree of heaven shall be uttered, and Providence shall pronounce upon every glory of the earth, "Its time shall be no longer!"

*Watts.*

**IGNORANCE OF FUTURITY A BLESSING.**

"You know as much as is good for you. For it is with the mind, as it is with the senses. A greater degree of hearing would incommode us; and a nicer degree of seeing would terrify us. If our eyes could see things microscopically we should be afraid to move. Thus our knowledge is

sued to our situation and circumstances. Were we informed beforehand of the good things prepared for us by Providence,—from that moment we should cease to enjoy the blessings we possess, become indifferent to present duties, and be filled with restless impatience. Or, suppose the things fore-known, were gloomy and adverse; what dismay and despondency would be the consequence of the discovery; and how many times should we suffer in imagination, what we now only endure once in reality? Who would wish to draw back a veil, that saves them from so many disquietudes? If some of you had formerly known the troubles, through which you have since waded, you would have fainted under the prospect. But what we “know not now, we shall know hereafter.”

*Jay.*

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### MORAL EVIL.

THE moral evil which exists, is, indeed, a mighty mass to us, who see nothing on earth that appears to be unmingled with it, or wholly unaffected by it; and could we much more clearly apprehend its extent, and its depth, in human society, and

human hearts, and estimate its penal consequences, it would then be a sight insupportable for our limited minds; which are always chiefly, and sometimes exclusively, affected, by what is known, and perceived, and at hand. He who sees a volcano showering its ashes on his native city; or a cloud of locusts, twenty leagues in breadth, darkening the whole sky, and spreading famine through the plains; will not easily reflect with attention and pleasure on the safety of a thousand other cities, or the unravaged fertility and plenty of whole regions and continents. But difficult as it is,—while we look on a world “lying in wickedness,” and a whole terrestrial creation participating in its penal effects,—to expatiate in fixed and rejoicing thought, over a pure and happy universe; yet faith and reason may rest assured, from the revealed character of God, that the sum of evil can be relatively but minute, being certainly the least possible.

Let us then aim at the widest views; for they are the most effectual to cheer and sustain the meditative mind. Unless we habitually seek to measure the superabundance of good, almost by the infinitude of its Author; we are in danger of

being troubled by the apparent magnitude and probable effects of evil. But if we could stedfastly adopt and maintain this just view of things, evil would become a sort of vanishing quantity. For even though the multitude of intelligent or sentient beings should be not absolutely infinite, which, I think, we can be no way certain that it is not; yet might the proportion of evil to good, in the whole of the divine works, be but as a rivulet to the ocean.

Should one of our female philanthropists, instead of visiting the prison and the hospital, bind herself to a constant residence in one of these, as nuns within their convents, it is hardly to be doubted, that a more oppressive sense of human wretchedness and calamity would weigh upon her mind. It would be more and more necessary to correct this feeling, by a frequent effort of reflection on the great excess of health and freedom, over disease and bondage, which is found in the whole city, or the whole island, or in the world in general.

*Sheppard.*



### CONSOLATORY THOUGHTS.

God doth but cast us down, to raise us up, and empty us, that he may fill us, and melt us, that we may be vessels of glory; loving us as well in the furnace, as when we are out, and standing by us all the while.

It is unthankfulness to forget our consolation, and to look only upon matter of grievance; to think so much upon two or three crosses, as to forget a hundred blessings.

True Religion, if we possess it, will bring comforts into our minds above our crosses.

In all storms, there is sea-room enough in the infinite goodness of God, for faith to be carried with full sail.

We faint not in affliction, saith Paul; but wherefore doth he not faint? Because the light and short afflictions work out "an exceeding weight of glory."

None ever have been so good and so great, or have raised themselves so high, as to be above the reach of troubles. Our Lord was "a man of sorrows."

It is no wonder, that those who are born soldiers

should meet with conflicts ; for travellers to meet with hard fare ; for mariners to encounter with storms ; or for strangers, in a strange land, especially among enemies, to meet with strange entertainment.

Whence proceed these complaints ? Such a friend has failed me,—I never thought to have fallen into this condition,—I had settled my joy in this child, in this friend, etc. This is to rest our comfort on things that have no firm foundation, and to build castles in the air.

There is a perfect rest for God's people, both for soul and body, but it is not in this world. Here we are on the ocean ; and we should not be surprised if we meet with storms.

Speak to God the Saviour, by prayer, that as he rebuked the winds and the waves, and went upon the sea, that so he would command a calm upon our spirits.

Come to this point at once. Trust God I ought ; therefore, trust God I will,—come what may. Job said, " Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

A man can be in no condition wherein God is at a loss, and cannot help him : if comforts be want-

ing, he can create comforts, not only out of nothing, but out of discomforts. The trouble which we think will swallow us up, may be a means to bring us to our haven; so mighty is God in power, and so "excellent in working."

By the bare word of God it is that the heavens continue, and the earth without any other foundation, hangs in the midst of the universe; therefore, well may the soul stay itself on that, even when it hath nothing else in sight to rely on. By his word it is that the covenant of day and night, and of the preservation of the world from any further overflowing of waters, continueth; which, if it should fail, yet his covenant with his people shall abide firm for ever, though the whole frame of nature were dissolved.

*Sibbs.*

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### DIVINE FORGIVENESS.

THE forgiveness which is with God is such as becomes him; such as is suitable to his greatness, goodness, and other excellencies of his nature; such as that therein he will be known to be God. What he says concerning some of the works of his

providence, "Be still, and know that I am God," may be much more said concerning this great effect of his grace. It is not like that narrow, difficult, halving, and manacled forgiveness that is found amongst men, when any such thing is found among them; but it is full, free, boundless, absolute; such as becomes his nature and excellencies. It is, in a word, forgiveness that is with God, and by the exercise whereof he will be known so to be. If there be any pardon with God, it is such as becomes him to give; when he pardons, he will abundantly pardon. Go with your half forgiveness, limited conditional pardons, with reserves and limitations, unto the sons of men; it may become them,—it is like themselves; that of God, is absolute and perfect, before which our sins are as a cloud before the east wind, and the rising sun. Hence he is said to do this work with his whole heart, and his whole soul; freely, and bountifully,—so as to cast them into the depths of the sea,—an emblem of his infinite mercy.

*Dr. Owen.*

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## THANKSGIVING.

WE are to give thanks to God; to God, I say; that is to Him, unto whom we are obliged, not for some small and inconsiderable trifles, but for the most weighty and invaluable benefits; from whom we receive not few or some, but all good things.

*To Him*, who is the Lord and the true owner of all things we partake of; whose air we breathe, on whose ground we tread; whose food sustains us; whose wholly we are ourselves, both in body and soul.

*To Him*, who hath created a whole world to serve us,—a spacious, a beautiful, a stately world for us to inhabit; who hath subjected so fair a territory to our dominion, and consigned to our use, so numerous a progeny of goodly creatures, to be managed, governed, and enjoyed by us.

*To Him*, who hath given us immortal minds, and impressed upon them perspicuous characters of his own divine essence; instructing us by his holy word, and admonishing us by his loving Spirit.

*To Him*, who vouchsafes to grant us a free

access unto, a constant intercourse and a familiar acquaintance with himself; to esteem and style us his friends and children; to invite us frequently, and entertain us kindly, with those most pleasant delicacies of spiritual repast; yea, to visit us often at our home, and to abide and dwell with us; indulging us in the enjoyment of that presence, wherein the life of all joy and comfort consists, and to behold the light of his all-cheering countenance. Is there any thing more? Yes, *To Him*, who, to redeem us from misery, and to advance our estate, hath infinitely debased himself, and eclipsed the brightness of his glorious Majesty; not disdainng to assume us into a perfect union with himself.

*To Him*, whom no ingratitude, no undutiful carriage, no rebellious disobedience of ours, could for one minute wholly remove or divert from his steady purpose of caring for us; who regards us though we do not attend to him; procures our welfare, though we neglect his concernments; employs his restless thought, extends his watchful eye, exerts his powerful arm, is always mindful, and always busy to do us good; watching over us when we sleep, and remembering us when we

forget ourselves ; in whom yet it is infinite condescension to think of us, who are placed so far beneath his thoughts.

*To Him*, who not lately began, or suddenly will cease, that is, either uncertain or mutable in his intentions ; but from everlasting designed, continues daily, and will, if we suffer him, to all eternity, preserve unmoveable in his resolutions to do us good.

*To Him*, who is as merciful and gracious, as liberal and munificent toward us ; who not only bestows on us more gifts, but pardons us more debts, forgives us more sins than we live minutes ; who with infinite patience endures, not only our manifold infirmities and imperfections, but our petulant follies, our obstinate perverseness, our treacherous infidelities ; puts up with the exceedingly many outrageous affronts, injuries, and contumelies continually offered to his supreme Majesty, by us base worms, whom he hath always under his feet, and can crush to nothing at his pleasure.

*To Him*, whose benefits to acknowledge, is the greatest benefit of all ; to be enabled to thank him, who deserves our greatest thanks ; to be sensible of whose beneficence, to meditate on whose good-

ness, to admire whose excellency, to celebrate whose praise, is heaven itself, and paradise; the life of angels, the quintessence of joy, the supreme felicity.

In a word,—*To Him*, whose benefits are immensely great, innumerably many, inexpressibly good and precious. For, “who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can shew forth all his praise?”

To this God, to this great, this only Benefactor of ours, we owe this most natural and easy, this most just and equal, this most sweet and pleasant, duty of giving thanks. To whom, if we wilfully refuse, if we carelessly neglect to pay it, I shall only say thus much, that we are not only monstrously ungrateful, and horribly wicked; but abominably foolish, deplorably miserable, and most desperately wretched and unhappy.

*Barrow.*

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### RESIGNATION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

GOD wills two things,—that we should be virtuous and that we should be happy; the first in order to the second. We should consider whose will it is that requireth our compliance.



**It is the will of Him, who founded the earth, and reared the heaven, whose will sustaineth all things in their existence and operation.**

**It is the will of our Maker, who did create and confer on us the very power of willing; and shall we turn the work of his hands, the gift of his bounty, against him?**

**It is the will of our Preserver, who, together with all that we are, or have, continually doth uphold our very will itself; so that, without employing any positive force, merely by letting us fall out of his hand, he can send us and it back to nothing.**

**It is the will of our sovereign Lord, who, upon various indisputable accounts, hath a just right to govern us, and an absolute power to dispose of us; ought we not, therefore, to say with Eli, "It is the Lord; let him do as seemeth him good!"**

**It is the will of our Judge, from whose mouth our doom must proceed, awarding life or death.**

**It is the will of our Redeemer, who has bought us with an inestimable price, and has, with infinite pains, rescued us from miserable captivity, that we might enjoy perfect freedom.**

**It is the will of our best Friend, who loveth us**

much better than we love ourselves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own dearest interest, and greatly delighted therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonstrated an excess of kindness to us; who in all his dealings with us, doth aim purely at our good; who never doth afflict or grieve us more against our will, than against his own desire; never, indeed, but when goodness itself calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto.

It is the will of him, who is most holy, whose will is essential rectitude; who is infinitely wise; who, therefore, doth infallibly know what is best for us. It is his will, who is uncontrollably powerful, and who must prevail.

*Barrow.*

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### THE DYING CHRISTIAN.

COME, my friends, enter into the chamber of a dying saint, in the lively exercise of divine faith, and with the bright prospect of immortality full in his view; observe the smile that sits upon his countenance; view his patience, his resignation, his peaceful serenity; hear the holy and heavenly language which drops from his lips; "I go the way of all the earth; and I long to be gone, to be where

my Saviour is. I have trusted in him for salvation ; I have committed my everlasting all into his faithful hands ; and I know whom I have believed. O the heavenly peace and joy that I now find in God's everlasting, sure, and well-ordered covenant. It has been my support through life, under many painful trials, and overwhelming sorrows.

“And now, when drawing near to the eternal world, and about to bid adieu to all things here below, it is the spring of joy unspeakable and full of glory. With my shepherd's rod and staff to support me, I can walk fearless and undismayed, through the valley of the shadow of death. ‘For this God is my God, for ever and ever ; he will be my guide even unto death.’ I have no righteousness of my own to plead at God's tribunal ; but I bless God, who hath given me faith to rely on the all-atoning efficacy of my Redeemer's blood, and the infinite merit of his perfect righteousness ; so that now, through faith in his name, I can triumph and say, ‘O Death ; where is thy sting ? O Grave ! where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law ! but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.’ ”

*Black.*



**THE GLORY OF CHRIST APPARENT EVEN  
IN HIS HUMILIATION.**

His birth was lowly, but it was celebrated with Hallelujahs by the heavenly host in the air above; he had a poor lodging, but a star lighted visitants to it from distant countries. Never prince had such visitants so conducted. He had not the magnificent equipage that other kings have, but he was attended with multitudes of patients, seeking and obtaining healing of soul and body: that was more true greatness, than if he had been attended with crowds of princes; he made the dumb who

attended him to sing his praises, and the lame to leap for joy, the deaf to hear his wonders, and the blind to see his glory : he had no guard of soldiers, nor magnificent retinue of servants ; but as the centurion, who had both, acknowledged, health and sickness, life and death, took orders from him. Even the winds and storms, which no earthly power can controul, obeyed him ; and death and the grave durst not refuse to deliver up their prey when he demanded it. He did not walk upon tapestry ; but when he walked on the sea, the waters supported him ; all parts of the creation, excepting sinful men, honored him as their Creator ; he kept no treasure, but when he had occasion for money, the sea sent it to him in the mouth of a fish ; he had no barns nor corn-fields, but when he was inclined to make a feast, a few loaves covered a sufficient table for many thousands. None of all the monarchs of the world ever gave such an entertainment.

By these, and many such things, the Redeemer's glory shone through his humiliation, in the several parts of his life. Nor was it wholly clouded at his death ; he had not, indeed, that fantastic equipage of sorrow that other great persons have on

such occasions. But the frame of nature solemnized the death of its Author; heaven and earth were mourners; the sun was clad in sackcloth; and if the inhabitants of the earth were unmoved, the earth itself trembled under the awful load; there were few to pay the Jewish compliment of rending their garments, but the rocks were not so insensible; they rent their bowels; he had not a grave of his own, but other men's graves opened to him. Death and the grave might be proud of such a tenant in their territories; but he came not there as a subject, but as an invader, and a conqueror; it was then the king of terrors lost his sting; and on the third day the Prince of Life triumphed over him, spoiling death, and the grave.

*M'Laurin.*

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### ALL THINGS.

DERIVE AN INTEREST FROM THE MISSION AND  
CHARACTER OF THE REDEEMER.

THE mission of the Saviour communicates a glory to all other objects, according as they have any relation to it; it adorns the universe; it gives a lustre to nature, and to providence. It is the

greatest glory of this lower world, that its Creator was for a while its inhabitant; a poor landlord thinks it a lasting honour to his cottage, that he has once lodged a prince, or an emperor; with how much more reason may our poor cottage, this earth, be proud of it, that the Lord of Glory was its tenant from his birth to his death; yea, that he rejoiced in the habitable parts of it, before it had a beginning, even from everlasting! Prov. viii. 31.

It is the glory of the world, that he who formed it, dwelt on it; of the air, that he breathed it; of the sun, that it shone on him; of the ground, that it bare him; of the sea, that he walked on it; of the aliments, that they nourished him; of the waters, that they refreshed him; of us men, that he lived and died among us; yea, that he lived and died for us; that he assumed our flesh and blood, and carried it to the highest heavens, where it shines as the everlasting ornament and wonder of the creation of God.

These things give also a lustre to Providence; they are the chief events which adorn the records of time, and enliven the history of the universe; they are the glory of the various great lines of providence, they point at these as their centre;

they prepared the way for their coming; after their coming, they are subservient to their design, though in a way indeed to us at present somewhat mysterious and unsearchable.

*M' Laurin.*

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### DYING EXPRESSIONS OF WILLIAM PENN.

HE was the son of the justly celebrated William Penn, and had just completed his twentieth year when he died. The following are some of the sentiments which dropped from his lips in his last illness,—

“I am resigned to what God pleases. He knows what is best. I would live if it pleased him, that I might serve him; but, O Lord, not my will, but thine be done!”

A person speaking to him of the things of the world, and how they would please him, should he recover; he said, “My eyes look another way,—even where the truest pleasure is!”

“The Lord comes in upon my spirit; I have heavenly meetings with him by myself.”

“Dear sister,” said he, taking her by the hand, “look to the good things; dear sister, there is no



comfort without them. One drop of the love of God, is worth more than all the world. I know it. I have tasted it. I have felt more of the love of God in this sickness, than in all my life before."

Two or three days before his departure, he called his brother to him, and looking solemnly on him said, "Be a good boy,—know that there is a God, a great and mighty God, who is a rewarder of the righteous and of the wicked. Avoid idle people, and idle company, and love good company, and good people, and the Lord will bless thee. I have seen good things for thee since my sickness, if thou dost but fear the Lord. And if I should not live, though the Lord is all-sufficient, remember what I say to thee when I am dead and gone. Dear brother! the Lord bless thee!"

Being asked, if he would have his milk, or if he would eat any thing, he replied, "No more outward food, for heavenly food is provided for me!"

"Come life, come death, I am resigned; O, the love of God overcomes my soul."

When his medical friend came to visit him, he said, "Let my father speak to him, and I will go to sleep;" which he did, and waked no more in this world; expiring calmly reposing on the bosom of his father.

## THE BLISS OF HEAVEN.

**REDEEMED** spirits abide at the source of all felicity, and enjoy inconceivable pleasures. They are completely released from all sins and sufferings, from all temptations and sorrows. Moral evil, with all its attendants, is eternally banished from those bright abodes; for the people who dwell there are all perfectly righteous; nor shall any of the inhabitants of that land say, "I am sick." Their garments are always white; their harps are always tuned. Being with Christ, according to his promise, they behold his glory, and are delighted with his beauty.

Now the immortal spirit is invigorated in all its powers, enlarged in all its faculties, on purpose to render it capable of taking in more copious views, and of receiving abundantly larger emanations of divine love, than it could possibly before enjoy. They have now traced up the streams to the eternal fountain; the beams to the very sun of love. With adoring hearts and ravished eyes, with animated devotion, and notes divinely sweet, they join the heavenly choir in that seraphic hymn, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts! Heaven and

earth are full of his glory! How inconceivable the pleasure! How divine the joy!

And all their sublime felicity is permanent. The infinite God is their portion, and their "exceeding great reward." Their happiness, therefore, is durable as the divine perfections they adore and enjoy. The limits of their capacities will be for ever enlarging, and for ever receiving greater measures of glory. For the Deity is an infinite source of blessedness; and finite vessels may be for ever expanding, and for ever filling, in that ocean of all-sufficiency.

*Booth.*

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### PHILOSOPHY AND CHRISTIANITY.

It may be readily proved, that every system of philosophy is little in comparison with Christianity. Philosophy may expand our ideas of creation; but it neither inspires a love to the moral character of the Creator, nor a well-grounded hope of eternal life. Philosophy at most, can only place us upon the top of Pisgah; there, like Moses, we must die. It gives us no possession of the good land; it is the province of Christianity to add, "All is yours!"

When you have ascended to the height of human discovery, there are things, and things of infinite moment too, that are utterly beyond its reach. Revelation is the medium, and the only medium, by which, standing, as it were, "on Nature's Alps," we discover things which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and of which it hath never entered into the heart of man to conceive."

*A. Fuller.*

#### ARGUMENT IN PROOF OF A DEITY.

X WHEN we examine a watch, or any other piece of machinery, we instantly perceive marks of design. The arrangement of its several parts, and the adaptation of its movements to one result, shew it to be a contrivance; nor do we ever imagine the faculty of contriving to be in the watch itself, but in a separate agent. If we turn from art to nature, we behold a vast magazine of contrivances; we see innumerable objects replete with the most exquisite design. The human eye, for example, is formed with admirable skill for the purpose of sight; the ear for the function of hearing. As in the productions of art, we never think of ascribing

the power of contrivance to the machine itself ; so, we are certain, the skill displayed in the human structure is not a property of man, since he is very imperfectly acquainted with his own formation.

If there be an inseparable relation betwixt the ideas of a contrivance and a contriver, and it be evident in regard to the human structure, the designing agent is not man himself, there must undeniably be some separate invisible Being who is his former. This great Being we indicate by the appellation of Deity.

This reasoning admits but of one reply. Why, it may be said, may we not suppose the world has always continued as it is ; that is, that there has been a constant succession of finite beings, appearing and disappearing on the earth from all eternity ? I answer, whatever is supposed to have occasioned this constant succession, exclusive of an intelligent cause, will never account for the undeniable marks of design, visible in all finite beings ; nor is the absurdity of supposing a contrivance without a contriver diminished by this imaginary succession, but rather increased by being repeated at every step of the series.

Besides, an eternal succession of finite beings involves in it a contradiction; and is, therefore, plainly impossible. As the supposition is made to get quit of the idea of any one having existed from eternity, each of the beings in the succession must have begun in time; but the succession itself is eternal. We have then the succession of beings infinitely earlier than any being in the succession; or, in other words, a series of beings running on to infinity, before it reached any particular being; which is absurd.

*R. Hall.*

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### INFIDELITY.

**INFIDELITY** is an evil of short duration. "It has," as a judicious writer observes, "no individual subsistence given it in the system of prophecy. It is not a beast, but a mere putrid excrescence of the papal beast, which, though it may diffuse death through every vein of the body on which it grew, yet shall die along with it." Its enormities, as we have lately seen in a neighbouring kingdom, will hasten its overthrow. It is impossible that a system, which by vilifying every virtue, and em-

bracing the patronage of almost every vice and crime, wages war with all the order and civilization of the world; which, equal to the establishment of nothing, is armed only with the energies of destruction, can long retain an ascendancy. It is in no shape formed for perpetuity. "Sudden in its rise, and impetuous in its progress, it resembles a mountain torrent, which is loud, filthy, and desolating; but, being fed by no perennial spring, is soon drained off, and disappears. By permitting, to a certain extent, the prevalence of Infidelity, Providence is preparing new triumphs for Religion.

*R. Hall.*

### THE CROSS.

THE whole Gospel is hung on the Cross. Where our Lord hung, there is sin nailed, the curse of the law abolished, death vanquished; there are, exhibited to open view, pardon and peace, glory and joy eternal. There is seen the love of Christ in its "heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths." It is a height without a summit, a depth without a bottom, a length without any limits, and a breadth which is unmeasurable.

*Richard Alleine.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RELIGION.

**SELECT** any individual in your imagination; surround him with every thing which men are accustomed to call fortunate, eminent, or enviable, —health, fortune, friends, fame, cultivated intellect; add richer colouring to the picture; add, till imagination and desire are exhausted; and when you have finished the portrait, it is the portrait of a finished wretch, if it be that of a being who knows not God; who has an immortal spirit within him, but knows neither its destination nor its dignity; who feels within him those cravings of unsatisfied desire that render all his present enjoyments, hollow, worthless, and unsatisfactory,—that poison them by an indefinite longing after immortality, of which his terror increases with his certainty.

**But** show me a being, crushed to the earth under all the accumulated evils of nature and fortune; one whom the rising sun wakens to suffer, and on whom it sets without bringing him the hope of rest; one whom the world has never regarded; but with the inverted eye of scorn or of hatred; and that being is blessed,—blessed above the lot



of mankind, if God be the stay of his heart, and the consoler of his sorrows; if true religion has shed its wine and oil into his wounds; if, as he toils through the wilderness of sin and suffering, he beholds the promised land bright before him; and knows, that "his light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for him a far more exceeding, and eternal weight of glory."

What must be the power and blessedness of the religion of Christ, which can make us, frail and feeble beings as we are, bound down with the chains of infirmity, forget them, or feel them not, when we are once brought under its gracious and superior influences! What must be its power, that when it is thus put into one scale, can counterpoise all the evils of humanity in the other, and make them in comparison as the dust of the balance!

Yes, such is its power, and our own hearts are witnesses of it, even when they wander most from God. However we may have walked unworthily of the Gospel of Christ, however we may have departed from the Lord, disobeyed his will, and disregarded his word,—is there one of us, who would at this moment accept all that man could bestow, or earth afford, to resign the hope of



would be an insult to humanity; yet such is the wretched consolation that the world can offer us; vain exhortations to support our spirits when there is nothing to support them; vain advice to forget our griefs, when the very effort awakens remembrance even to agony.

Thus says the world,—but what says the Bible? Or, rather, what says the Son of God? “Sorrow, but not as they who have no hope.” Simple and sublime language, alike conversant with the scenes of life, and the secrets of eternity! Awful and beautiful, revealing our destiny here, and brightening the prospect with a light borrowed from heaven! Let us submit our souls to this divine monition. Every thing conspires to call us from the world, to draw us to God, to bid us resign the husks of the present world, and banquet on the immortal bread in our Father’s house.

How frequently ought we to think, and with what solemnity, of that world to which we are approaching! a place of blessedness or misery unimaginable. God grant that our souls may be united hereafter in the former! The ancients consoled themselves with the thoughts of meeting poets and philosophers in their Elysium; but the

Christian's Heaven has a brighter company, prophets and patriarchs, saints and martyrs! And those whom we loved, and those whom we lost, shall we not hope to find them there? "The spirits of just men made perfect" are there; all holy, happy, and harmonious; the Son of God is there, "who loved us, and gave himself for us;" and God himself whose name is love, whose presence is eternal blessedness! And shall we not seek to be there! O yes; "let us seek, and we shall find; let us knock" at the door of mercy, and it shall assuredly "be opened unto us."

*Maturin.*

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## CONSOLATION UNDER THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

No. 1.

TO A LADY, ON THE LOSS OF HER HUSBAND.

SHALL I endeavour to depreciate your loss? I cannot. There is but one topic I can suggest for consolation; God! God all-sufficient! "Cast thy burden on him, and he will sustain thee." Should you be ready to say, "my burden is heavy, too heavy for me to bear." Remember that if Omni-

potence is pledged to support you, as it is in the word of promise, it matters not how heavy your burden may be. The weight of a feather without his aid, may be too much for a naturally gigantic mind ; with his aid, the feeblest saint, the merest child, may bear up under a mill-stone. "Without me ye can do nothing." "I can do all things,"—and, it may be added, suffer all things,—“through Christ who strengtheneth me.” Should you say, “I am unfit for the cares which now necessarily devolve on me; I want wisdom and strength for my duties; I have been so long accustomed to lean, that I am disqualified to walk alone;” let the declaration made to Abraham, recur to your mind,—“I am God Almighty,”—or, rather, God All-sufficient ! The broken reed has failed, but the Rock of true support remains, and his strength is made perfect in weakness.

Still you may meet at the mercy-seat in communion with God. Your bereaved friend is in the upper part of the presence chamber ; you are yet, for a season, in the lower. But the distance is imaginary. You are both still gazing at one and the same object ; you by faith, he in open vision. Christ is the uniting point. And even the differ-

ence in the manner of deriving happiness from the well-spring of life, will be of short duration. You, as a believer in Jesus, are on the threshold of glory; and your beloved friend has just stepped over it. All that is between you is, the narrow space of a few years or days. The partition is thin; so thin, that the sound of your beloved friend's voice, may, by faith, be heard, and you join in his notes of praise.

*Biddulph.*

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No. II.

ON THE LOSS OF A WIFE.

I HAVE been just informed of the loss of your dear wife. She was mortal; but she has now become immortal. Should this cause you to grieve immoderately? O that I was where she is now!

"Safe landed on that peaceful shore,

"Where pilgrims meet to part no more!"

She was once a mourning sinner in the wilderness; but is now a glorified saint in Zion. The Lord has become her "everlasting light, and the days of her mourning are ended." Does this overwhelm you? She was once afflicted with bodily pains

and weakness, encompassed with family cares, and harrassed with a crowd of anxious needless fears; but she is now arrived at her father's house; and Jesus has wiped away all tears from her eyes; and freed her in a moment from pain and care, and fear, and want; and shall this make you sorrow, as those who have no hope?

You have not left your wife; she has only left you for a little moment; left her husband on earth, to visit her Father in heaven; and expects your arrival there soon, to join her hallelujahs for redeeming love. And are you still weeping? weeping because your wife can weep no more,—weeping because she is happy,—eternally, gloriously happy,—weeping, because she is joined to the blessed assembly where all are kings and priests,—weeping, because she is, where you would be, and long to be eternally. The Lord Jesus has called her home to his kingdom, to draw your soul more ardently thither,—he has broken up a cistern, to bring you nearer, and keep you closer to the overflowing fountain of all felicity.

*Berridge.*

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**ON THE LOSS OF A FATHER.**

LITTLE did I think that a letter from you would afflict my soul; but yours received this morning has indeed done it. Seeing your hand, and a black seal, my mind foreboded what had happened; I made an attempt to read it to my daughters, but I could not; I got no further than the first sentence, burst into a flood of tears, and was obliged to retreat into the solitude of my study, unfit for any thing, but to think on what had happened; then to fall on my knees, and pray that God would evermore pour down his choicest blessings on the children of my departed friend; and, as their "father and their mother had forsaken them," that he would "take them up," and support them in time and eternity. Even so, Amen.

You ask comfort of me; but your truly excellent letter has suggested comfort to me, from all the proper topics; and I can only reflect it back to you again. All things considered, the circumstance which first marked the disorder may be termed a gracious dispensation. It at once rendered the event, one may say, desirable, which otherwise



carried so much terror and sorrow in the face of it. Nothing else in the world could so soon and so effectually, have blunted the edge of the approaching calamity, and reconciled to it minds full of the tenderest love and affection.

To complete the only consolation that remained, which we all know to be the fact, your dear father stood always so prepared, so firm in his faith, so constant in his Christian practice in every duty, that he could not be taken by surprise, or off his guard. The stroke must have been to himself a blessing, whenever, or however it came. His death was his birth-day; and, like the primitive Christians, we should keep it as such, as a day of joy and triumph.

Bury his body, but embalm his example, and let it diffuse its fragrance among you from generation to generation. Call him blessed; and endeavour to be like him; like him, in piety, in charity, in friendship, in courteousness, in temper, in conduct, in word, and in deed. His virtues compose a little volume, which your brother should carry in his bosom; and if that be well studied, it will make him the gentleman and the christian.

*Bishop Horne.*

## No. IV.

## ON THE DEATH OF AN ONLY SON.

I SINCERELY sympathize with you, says Dr. Erskine, in a letter to a friend, on your heavy and unexpected trial. I have drunk deep of the same cup; of nine sons only one survives. From what I repeatedly felt, I can form an idea what you must feel in so promising an only son taken from you. I cannot, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely, he allows you to weep; surely, there is a "needs be" that you feel heaviness under such a trial. But O, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not, how this, or a former trial shall work for your good, but it is enough that God knows. He that said, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that he accepted the surrender. If he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin, and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings.

If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished at the season, and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted; you know not what work and joy have been waiting for him in that world, where God's "servants shall serve him."

Should you sorrow immoderately when you have such ground of hope that he, and his other parent, are rejoicing in what you lament? I know that nature will feel; and I believe, suppressing its emotions in such cases is not profitable, either to soul or body; but, I trust, though you mourn, God will keep you from murmuring, and that you shall have to glory in your tribulation and infirmity, while the power of Christ is manifested thereby.

*Erskine.*

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No. V.

ON THE LOSS OF A SISTER.

MY dear Friend,

Permit me to express the deep interest I take in your distress, from the loss of the best of friends, and the best of sisters. How many losses are united! She has left a husband to lament the most

lovely of wives, you the most endeared of sisters, the church of Christ one of its brightest ornaments, and the world one of its fairest examples. Had I been permitted to draw aside the mysterious veil that hides futurity; could I have had any presentiment of what was about to occur, when I saw her the last time, how solemn would have been the moments, how awfully interesting my emotions! I know the heart when recently wounded, must be indulged in the luxury of grief; and, if there ever was an occasion which could justify the most poignant regret, it is the present, in which we lament the loss of so much excellence. But I hope you will, by degrees, inure your imagination to dwell less on your loss, and more on her happiness. What a glorious display of the power of Christianity! What a triumphant departure! O that my last end may be like hers! Her life was an ornament to Christianity; a pattern to her sex. Immortality dawned on her enraptured mind, even before it quitted its earthly abode; and her pure and elevated spirit made an easy transit to the society of the blessed. Her career was short, but illustrious; and she crowded into her little sphere the virtues of a long life. Short as her continuance

was upon earth, she was permitted to exemplify the duties of every character, and to imprint on the memories of all who were honoured with her acquaintance, the perfections of a friend, a sister a mother, and a wife. It is true she has slept the sleep of death; but she sleeps in Jesus; she has gone before you into the holy of holies; she will meet you at the great rendezvous of being, the assembly of the just; and, in the mean time, instead of being an object of your pity, probably looks down upon you with ineffable tenderness and compassion.

I must say, I never heard, on the whole, of so calm, so triumphant a death; it seemed as if she had been permitted to step into heaven before her final departure, that she might thence address herself to her friends with more serenity, dignity, and effect.

What, my dear friend, besides Christianity, can thus scatter the horrors of the soul? What else could enable a young lady in the bloom of life, with a prosperous fortune, beloved by a husband, endeared to her friends, and esteemed by all, to triumph in the thoughts of dissolution? Divine Christianity! it is thine only to comfort and support the languishing and the dying.

Her numerous acquaintance should ask themselves, whether the loose sceptical principles of the age are at all adapted to such a scene; whether they have any thing in them that will enable them to exert the calm heroism displayed in the most trying moment by this departed excellence. Let me hope, that some one, at least, will be impressed by this wonderful example of the power of religion.

The consolations of your dear deceased sister did not result from a general belief of the doctrine of immortality; but in specific views of Christ as a Saviour, and the prospect of being for ever with him. My dear friend, let us hold fast this kind of Christianity, without wavering, as the antidote of death.

*R. Hall,*

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No. VI.

ON THE LOSS OF A CHILD.

I SINCERELY sympathize with you in the loss of your child; but, my dear friend, do not suffer your spirits to sink. Remember the tenure on which all human enjoyments are held, the wisdom and sovereignty of their great Author, and the gracious

promise afforded to true Christians, that "all things shall work together for good, to them that love him."

Remember, also, the many blessings with which a kind Providence still indulges you. Ought you not to rejoice, that your affectionate companion in life is spared; and that, though your child is snatched from your embraces, he has escaped from a world of sin and sorrow? The stamp of immortality is placed on his happiness, and he is encircled by the arms of a compassionate Redeemer. Had he been permitted to live, and you had witnessed the loss of his virtue, you might have been reserved to suffer still severer pangs. A most excellent family, in our congregation, are now melancholy spectators of a son dying, at nineteen years of age, by inches, a victim to his vices. They have frequently regretted he did not die several years since, when his life was nearly despaired of in a severe fever. "Who knoweth what is good for a man all the days of this his vain life, which he spends as a shadow?"

*R. Hall.*

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### THE DEATH OF JESUS.

**THE** importance of an event cannot be accurately estimated by the degree of interest which it immediately excites, or the magnitude of the consequences which it immediately produces. Events, which, on their occurrence, excited deep and general interest, and seemed big with the fate of many nations and generations, have sometimes failed of producing any important or permanent result. They have passed by and are forgotten; or, if remembered at all, the recollection is accompanied by a sentiment of wonder, that incidents



so trivial, should ever have attracted so much regard. On the other hand, the most extensive and lasting revolutions in human affairs, have often flowed from incidents obscure in their origin, casual in their occurrence, and apparently trifling in their importance. There is not to be found, in the history of the human race, from the commencement of time to the present moment, an instance in which the apparent insignificance of an event was more strongly contrasted by its real importance than the death of the Lord Jesus.

In this event, if we look merely at its external circumstances, there is nothing to merit record, or to secure remembrance. Man's giving up the ghost, is an event of daily, of hourly recurrence. There was indeed something peculiar in this case, for Jesus died upon a cross. But is there any thing uncommonly interesting in the fact, that a poor and unfriended person, accused by his countrymen of violating the law of their fathers, should fall a victim to their hatred, and expiate his supposed crimes by crucifixion? The severity of his punishment might indeed be supposed likely to excite some degree of sympathy in the spectators; but certainly the probability was, that his life and

death, his guilt or his innocence, would soon cease to be an object of interest, and that every vestige of his existence would, in the course of a very few years, perish from the earth.

Yet, this event, so apparently trivial and inconsiderable, formed the grand and concluding feature in a scene the most interesting and important which ever was, which ever will be, which ever can be exhibited on earth. Amid apparent meanness there was real grandeur; amid seeming insignificance there was infinite importance. That Jesus, who on the cross yielded up his spirit, was the only begotten Son of God in human nature. That life, which he there voluntarily laid down, was the ransom of men innumerable; heaven, earth, and hell, felt the Saviour's dying groan. From that event consequences infinitely numerous, immensely important, and unspeakably interesting, have flowed; revolutions in this world, deeply affecting the present and immortal interests of mankind have been its result; while among its consequences in the invisible state, faith beholds a guilty world restored to the favour of its Creator; the rights of the divine government vindicated, the everlasting covenant ratified; and the gates of paradise set open.

While thrones, the most ancient and stable, have been crumbled into dust, and their proud possessors forgotten among men; while the renown of the warrior and the statesman, the philosopher and the poet, has passed away; the death of Jesus on a cross is not merely remembered, but remembered with the deepest interest, and the most profound veneration. And now, at the distance of nearly two thousand years since this decease was accomplished in Palestine, we, the inhabitants of a remote district in a distant island of the sea, meet together to celebrate a religious rite instituted for its commemoration; and thus testify our sense of its importance, and our wish that it may be held in everlasting remembrance.

*Brown.*

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### REFLECTIONS ON DEATH.

THE records of time are emphatically the history of death; a whole review of the world, from this hour to the age of Adam, is but the vision of an infinite multitude of dying men. During the more quiet intervals, we perceive individuals falling into the dust, through all classes and all lands.

Then come floods, and conflagrations, famines, and pestilence, and earthquakes, and battles, which leave the most crowded and social scenes silent. The human race resembles the withered foliage of a wide forest; while the air is calm we perceive single leaves scattering here and there from the branches; but sometimes a tempest or whirlwind precipitates thousands in a moment.

It is a moderate computation which supposes a hundred thousand millions to have died since the exit of righteous Abel. Yes, it is true, that ruin has entered the creation of God! That sin has made a breach in that innocence which fenced man round with immortality! Even now, the great Spoiler is ravaging the world.

As mankind have still sunk into the dark gulf of the past, history has given buoyancy to the most wonderful of their achievements and characters, and caused them to float down the stream of time to our own age. It is well; but if, sweeping aside the pomp and deception of life, we could draw from the last hours and death-beds of our ancestors, all the illuminations, convictions, and uncontrollable emotions of heart, with which they have quitted it; what a far more affecting history of

man should we possess! Behold all the gloomy apartments opening, in which the wicked have died! Contemplate, first, the triumphs of iniquity, and here behold their close; witness the terrific faith, the too late repentance; the prayers suffocated by despair, and the mortal agonies!

These once they would not believe; they refused to consider them; they could not allow that the career of time and pleasure were to end. But now, truth, like a blazing star, passing through a midnight sky, darts over the mind, and but shows the way to that "darkness visible," which no light can cheer. Dying wretch! we say in imagination to each of these, is religion true? Do you believe in a God, in another life, and a retribution? O yes, he answers, and expires.

But, "the righteous hath hope in his death." Contemplate, through the unnumbered saints that have died, the soul, the true and unextinguishable life of man, charmed away from this globe by celestial music, and already respiring the gales of eternity. If we could assemble in one view, all the adoring addresses to the Deity, all the declarations of faith in Jesus, all the gratulations of conscience, all the admonitions and benedictions to

weeping friends, and all the gleams of opening glory; our souls would burn with the sentiment which made the wicked Balaam devout for a moment, and exclaim, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my end be like his!"

These revelations of death would be the most emphatic commentary on the revelation of God. What an affecting scene is a dying world! Who is that destroying Angel whom the Eternal has employed to sacrifice all our devoted race? Advancing onward over the whole field of time, he hath smitten the successive crowds of our hosts with death; and to us he now approaches nigh. Some of our friends have trembled, and sickened, and expired, at the signals of his coming; already we hear the thunder of his wings; soon his eye of fire will throw mortal fainting on all our companions; his prodigious form will to us blot out the sun, and his sword sweep us all from the earth; for "the living know that they shall die."

It is a difficult thing to be a Christian. I feel the necessity of reform through all my soul; when I retire into thought, I find myself environed by a crowd of impressive and awful images; I fix an ardent gaze on Christianity; assuredly, the last

best gift of heaven to men ; on Jesus, the agent and example of infinite love ; on time, as it passes away ; on perfection, as it shines as beautiful as heaven, and, alas ! as remote ; on my own beloved soul, which I have injured, and on the unhappy multitude of souls around me ; and I ask myself, why do not my passions burn ? Why does not zeal arise in mighty wrath to dash my icy habits in pieces, to scourge me from indolence to fervid exertion, and to trample all mean sentiments in the dust ? At intervals, I feel devotion and benevolence, and a surpassing ardour ; but when they are turned towards substantial, laborious operation, they fly, and leave me spiritless amid the iron labour.

Still, however, I confide in the efficacy of per-sistive prayer ; and I hope, that the Spirit of the Lord will yet come mightily upon me, and carry me on through toils, and sufferings, and death, to stand on Mount Zion among the followers of the Lamb !

*Foster.*

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## CHRIST THE SINNER'S RANSOM.

WHEN no man could redeem his neighbour from the grave, God himself found out a ransom. When not one of the beings whom he had formed could offer an adequate expiation, did the Lord of Hosts awaken the sword of vengeance against his fellow. When there was no messenger among the angels who surrounded his throne, that could both proclaim and purchase peace for a guilty world, did God manifest in the flesh descend in shrouded majesty amongst our earthly tabernacles, and pour out his soul unto the death for us, and purchase the Church by his own blood; and, bursting away from the grave which could not hold him, ascend to the throne of his appointed mediatorship; and now he, the first and the last, who was dead and is alive, and maketh intercession for transgressors, is able to save to the uttermost all who come unto God through him; and standing in the breach between a holy God and offending sinners, does he make reconciliation, and lay his hand upon them both.

*Chalmers.*



## THE LAST DAY.

To every thing beneath the sun there comes a last day. Let the sanguine then take warning, and the disheartened take courage; for, to every joy, and to every sorrow, to every hope, and every fear, there will come a last day; and man ought so to live by foresight that while he learns in every state to be content, he shall in each be prepared, for another, whatever that other may be. When we set an acorn, we expect that it will produce an oak; when we plant a vine, we calculate upon gathering grapes; but when we lay a plan for years to come, we may wish, and we can do no more, except pray that it may be accomplished, for we know not even what to-morrow may bring forth. All that we do know beforehand of any thing is, that to every thing beneath the sun, there comes a last day.

A last day came to the old world in the time of Noah; to the guilty cities of the plain; to Babylon, and to all the great empires of antiquity.

In the life of every adult, there occur many last days. Man is ushered into the world from a source so hidden, that his very parents know him not till

he appears, and he knows not himself even then. He passes rapidly through the stages of childhood, youth, maturity, and old age; and to each of these there comes a last day. The transitions indeed are so gradual as to be imperceptible; no more to be remembered than the moment at which he fell asleep last night, and as little dependent on our will as was the act of awakening this morning. Yet so distinct are these several states of progressive existence, that, though all bound together by unbroken consciousness, the changes are in reality as entire as the separate links of one chain. In the issue comes a last day to the whole, and man is withdrawn into an abyss of eternity, as unsearchable by finite thought, as that from which he emanated at first.

It has already been observed, that in the life of every adult individual there are many last days. There is the last day of the nursery, of the school, of juvenile obedience, of paternal authority. There is a last day at our first home, and a last day at every other place that becomes our home in the sequel; there are last days of companionship, and of rivalry, of business, and of vanity, of promise, and of exertion, of failure and success; last days of

love and friendship, enjoyment and endearment ; every day in its turn is the last to all that went before it. Every year has its last day. Amidst the festivities of Christmas, arrives the close of the months ; to remind us of the end of all earthly fruition.

To every thing beneath the sun there comes a last day. To each of us there will come a last day. We should think of the solemn truth with feelings of awe, apprehension, and humility, prompting us to immediate and unsparing examination. From this there can be nothing to fear ; from the neglect of it every thing ; for, however alarming the discoveries of evil unsuspected, or peril unknown may be, such discoveries had better be made now, while escape is before us, than in that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed, and escape will be impossible ; that day, which, of all others, is most emphatically called,—The Last Day !

*Montgomery.*

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#### APPEARANCES OF EVIL TO BE AVOIDED.

A CHRISTIAN is called to refrain from some things, which, though actually right, yet will not

bear a good appearance to all men. I once judged it my duty to refuse a considerable sum of money, which I might lawfully and fairly have received, because I considered that *my* account of the matter could not be stated to some, to whom a different representation would be made.

A man who intends to stand immaculate, and, like Samuel, to come forward and say,—*Whose ox or whose ass have I taken?* must count the cost. I knew that my character was worth more to me than this sum of money. By probity a man honours himself. It is the part of a wise man, to wave the present good for the future increase. A Christian is made wise by counting the cost. The best picture I know of the exercise of this virtue, drawn by the hand of man, is that of John Bunyan, in the characters of Passion and Patience.

*Cecil.*

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### A CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

IN the meanwhile the secret of God was upon our tabernacle, and a consciousness of his favorable presence added a peculiar relish to all our enjoyments. The Lord himself was our shepherd; he

made us to lie down in green pastures, and led us forth beside the still waters; by his bounty our wants were richly supplied, and under his protection we felt security and peace; he anointed our heads with the oil of gladness; and while our cup was running over with comforts, we said in our hearts, Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life.

Every day was a day of tranquil satisfaction, in which we had little to wish, and much to enjoy; but the Sabbath presented us with peculiar consolations. We saluted every return of that holy day with undissembled joy, cheerfully laying aside all our usual studies and employments, except such as had a manifest tendency, either to enlarge our acquaintance with, or to advance our preparation for, the kingdom of God. It was a day truly honourable in our eyes, and marked as a season of sacred delight. Its various exercises, whether public or private, produced an exhilarating effect upon our minds, and never failed to set us some paces nearer the object of our supreme desires. It was a kind of transfiguration-day, shedding a mild glory upon every creature, and enabling us to view the concerns of time in connection with

those of eternity." Through all its happy hours we sat, as on the holy mount, looking backward with gratitude, and forward with confidence ; taking sweet counsel together for the advancement of our highest interests, and scarcely considering ourselves inhabitants of this lower world. The company of even our most intimate friends, on these occasions, would have rendered our intercourse with each other more reserved, and our pleasure proportionally less lively : but, unrestrained by the presence of witnesses, we gave an unlimited indulgence to all our affectionate and devotional feelings. We conversed together as parts of the same family ; we congratulated each other as members of the Christian church ; we rejoiced over each other as heirs of the same glorious promises.

Through these flowery paths we have continued to allure each other onward, refreshing our spirits, and feeding our immortal hopes, amid a thousand glorious appearances, till the New Jerusalem itself has burst upon our eyes, even that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God ; whose inhabitants are the spirits of just men made perfect ; and from whose holy walls we heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. Here

we have stayed our happy progress ; and, while standing to solace ourselves with the view of the goodly object before us, the scene of our future enjoyments and the place of our final destination, we have solemnly renewed our vows, resolving, for the joy that was set before us, to endure the cross, despising the shame, in humble imitation of our adorable Master.

*Gilpin.*

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#### THE EMPTINESS OF NATURAL VIRTUE.

WE stand on the high ground, that man is the subject of the Almighty,—nor shall we shrink from declaring the whole extent of the principle. Let his path in society be ever so illustrious, by the virtues which adorn it; let every word and every performance, be as honourable as a proud sense of integrity can make it; let the salutations of the market-place mark him out as the most respectable of the citizens; and the gratitude of a thousand families ring the praises of his beneficence in the world:—if the actor of this splendid exhibition carry in his mind no reference to the authority of God, we do not hesitate to pronounce

him unworthy; nor shall all the execration of generous, but mistaken principle, deter us from putting forth our hand to strip him of his honours. What! is the world to gaze in admiration on this fine spectacle of virtue, and are we to be told that the Being who gave such faculties to all of his children, and provides the theatre for their exercise,—that the Being who called this moral scene into existence, and gave it all its beauties,—that he is to be forgotten and neglected as of no consequence? Shall we give a deceitful lustre to the virtues of him who is unmindful of his God,—and with all the grandeur of eternity before us, can we turn to admire these short-lived exertions, which only shed a fleeting brilliancy over a paltry and perishable scene? It is true, that he who is counted faithful in little will also be counted faithful in much; and when God is the principle of this fidelity, the very humblest wishes of benevolence will be rewarded. But its most splendid exertions without this principle have no inheritance in heaven: human praise and human eloquence may acknowledge it, but the discerners of the heart never will. The heart may be the seat of every amiable feeling, and every claim which comes to



it in the shape of human misery may find a welcome ; but if the love of God be not there, it is not right with God,—and the owner of it will die in his sins ; he is in a state of impenitency.

*Chalmers.*

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### THE PRACTICAL TENDENCY OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL.

**PEOPLE** who draw consequences from the doctrines of Christianity injurious to morality, fall into the most gross and palpable of all contradictions. The single doctrine of Jesus Christ's mission naturally produceth the necessity of sanctification. You believe that the love of holiness is so essential to God, that rather than pardon criminals without punishing their crimes, he hath punished his own Son. And can you believe that the God, to whom holiness is so essential, will bear with you, while you make no efforts to be holy ? Do you not see, that in this supposition, you imagine a contradictory God, or rather, that you contradict yourselves ? In the first supposition, you conceive a God to whom sin is infinitely odious ; in the second, a God

to whom sin is infinitely tolerable. In the first supposition, you conceive a God, who, by the holiness of his nature, exacts a satisfaction; in the second you conceive a God, who, by the indifference of his nature, loves the sinner, while he derives no motives from the satisfaction to forsake his sin. In the first supposition, you imagine a God who opposeth the strongest barriers against vice; in the second, you imagine a God who removeth every obstacle to vice; nothing being more likely to confirm men in sin than an imagination, that to what length soever they go, they may always find, in the sacrifice of the Son of God, an infallible way of avoiding the punishment due to their sin, whenever they shall have recourse to that sacrifice.

*Saurin.*

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### CHRIST DWELLING IN THE HEART OF THE BELIEVER.

“CHRIST in you,” says the Apostle Paul, “the hope of glory.” This language describes the unspeakable importance and value of true religion. What an intimate union it supposes between the

soul and God! How holy, must be its character, how perceptible its influence, how elevating its joys! How necessary it must be, that we should be well persuaded, and see well to it, that the agency of the Son of God is exerted in us. "Know ye not that Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." Religion must be every thing with us, or it will be nothing. It must be supreme; superior to all things else with which our minds are interested, or upon which our affections are fixed, or it will possess nothing of that impression, vividness, and power, which we suppose to be intended by the in-dwelling of Christ in the soul.

How delightful is the thought of having a "hope of glory" to cling to, an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, amidst the billows and eddies of that turbulent stream on which we are embarked! "The fashion of this world passeth away!" Its scenes are continually shifting; its richest possessions are both transitory and mean, and are felt to be inadequate to the immense demands of our spiritual nature. We want something on which the mind can repose; in which it can find solace and satisfaction, even should nothing else remain to it but itself. When oppressed by per-

sonal and domestic distress; when compelled to drink the bitter waters of adversity; when the gourd, under which we have been accustomed to recline, suddenly droops and withers, and we are exposed to the burning blast, and "the fiery trial," how refreshing is it to possess even the feeblest hope of inheriting that world in which such changes never can occur! In prosperity itself, when we have all that the world can furnish, and all that the heart can wish, we need this hope to impart any thing like rational satisfaction, and to fill the void that continues to be felt; but in other circumstances, in those which are most common, and for which all should prepare, nothing is adequate to sustain a consistent calmness, or to insure a becoming fortitude, but a humble expectation and trust, that after this "earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, we shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

*Binney.*

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### THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

**THIS** is the most remarkable miracle in the Gospel. Peruse the history with care; and you must conclude, either that he rose, or that his disciples stole the body away. The more the last is considered, the more improbable it appears. Jesus had declared, that he would rise again on the third day. The heads of the Jewish nation knew this, and determined to prevent any craft or force being employed by his followers, to take the body from the tomb, and then pretend that he was risen. A stone is rolled to the mouth of the sepulchre; a seal is fixed upon it, and a guard of

Roman soldiers set. Will the timid disciples, who ran away when their master was seized, now attack a band of armed men ; or could they hope to carry off the body secretly ? What is more improbable ? Besides, if they had reason to think their master had deceived them, and filled their minds with false expectations ; instead of running any risk to get the body into their possession, they would rather have renounced all connection with him for ever. Had they even stolen away the body, as was said, that would have entirely cooled the ardour of their affection, and have banished the enthusiasm of love from their breasts, never to return. But their future lives, by the ardent fervour of their affectionate zeal, still more strongly confute the supposition.

It is evident the body is gone. The Apostles describe the resurrection of their Master ; and assert, that he appeared to them on the very day he rose, and frequently afterwards. Read the soldiers' account, Matt. xxviii. Observe the conduct of the Rulers. Why do they not order the Apostles to be seized ? Why do they not command the soldiers to be punished ? Why do they not bring the whole to a judicial determination ? Why is this neglect in men, who had been so anxious

to have a guard placed on the sepulchre? On the supposition of the resurrection of Jesus, the whole is natural and easy; on a supposition, that the disciples came and stole the body away, every thing is inexplicable.

*Bogue.*

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### FUTURE GLORY.

COULD I extract the choicest dignities and fortunes; could I inhabit the most temperate clime, and the most pleasant country; could I choose the most benevolent hearts, and the wisest minds; could I take the most happy temper, and the most sublime genius; could I cultivate the sciences, and make the fine arts flourish; could I collect and unite all that could please the passions, and banish all that could give pain. A life formed on this plan, how likely to please us! How is it, that God, who hath resolved to render us one day happy, doth not allow us to continue in this world, and content himself with uniting all these happy circumstances in our favour? "It is good to be here!" O that he would allow us here to build our tabernacles! Matt. xvii. 4. A life formed on this plan might indeed answer the ideas of happiness which feeble and finite geniuses form; but

such a plan cannot even approach the designs of an infinite God. A life formed on this plan, might indeed exhaust a terrestrial love, but it could never reach the love of an infinite God. No, all the charms of this society, of this fortune, and of this life; no, all the softness of these climates, and of these countries; no, all the benevolence of these hearts, and all the friendship of these minds; no, all the happiness of this temper, and all the sublimity of this genius; no, all the secrets of the sciences, and all the discoveries of the fine arts; all the attractions of these societies, and all the pleasures of the passions, have nothing, I do not say which exhausts the love of God in Christ Jesus, I do not say which answers, I venture to say which approaches it. To accomplish this love, there must be another world; there must be "new heavens, and a new earth."

O that I could describe the believer,—his unutterable felicity,—while all "the tribes of the earth mourn and smite their breasts:" O that I could describe the believer assured, triumphant, founded on the Rock of Age, "hastening unto the coming of the day of God;" aiming with transports of joy which we cannot express,—O may we one day experience these transports!—aiming to ap-



proach the presence of Jesus Christ as his tenderest friend and deliverer, literally proving the truth of the promise, "When thou passest through the waters they shall not overflow thee, when thou walkest through the fires, they shall not kindle upon thee;" O that I could represent him, crying, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" Come! receive a creature once defiled with sin, sometimes even rebellious, yet having in his bosom principles of love to thee, but now ravished with transports of joy, because he is entering on a world, in which he shall be always obedient, and always faithful.

*Saurin.*



J. May, Printer, Dover.





