



Doctor M O R S E 's

S E R M O N

ON THE

Death of the Hon. Thomas Russell.

MDCCXCVI.



THE
DUTY OF RESIGNATION
UNDER AFFLICTIONS,
ILLUSTRATED AND ENFORCED FROM THE EXAMPLE OF
CHRIST,

IN A SERMON

PREACHED AT CHARLESTOWN,

APRIL 17, 1796.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

THE HONOURABLE

THOMAS RUSSELL, ESQUIRE,

WHO DIED IN BOSTON, APRIL 8, 1796,

AGED FIFTY-SIX.

By JEDIDIAH MORSE, D. D.

MINISTER OF THE CONGREGATION IN CHARLESTOWN.

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MDCXCVI.

1796



MATTHEW XXVI. 42.

OH, MY FATHER, IF THIS CUP MAY NOT
PASS AWAY FROM ME, EXCEPT I DRINK
IT, THY WILL BE DONE.

IN consequence of the introduction of moral evil into this world, it has become a place of various sufferings. The path of life is strewn with thorns. Its cup is mingled with many bitter ingredients. By sin came death. From these calamities none are exempted. They are common to the rich and the poor ; the young and the aged ; the learned and the ignorant ; to the useful citizen and the profligate spendthrift ; to the righteous and the wicked ; to such as move in the honourable and elevated spheres of life, and to those in more humble circumstances. The present world is a state of trial, not of retribution. *The righteous, and the wise, and their works, are in the hand of God : No man knoweth either love or hatred, by all that is before them. All things, in this life, come alike to all ; there is one event to the*

the righteous and to the wicked ; to the good, and to the clean and to the unclean ; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not ; as is the good, so is the sinner ; and he that sweareth as he that feareth an oath. More or less of tribulation falls to the lot of every human being. And there is no man that hath power over the spirit, to retain the spirit ; neither hath he power in the day of death, and there is no discharge in that war. They that have a multitude of riches cannot, by any means, give to God a ransom, that they should still live forever, and not see corruption.

NOR is God, who made and who minutely governs this world, *unwise, unrighteous, or unkind*, in these his dispensations. He is not *unwise*. All the afflictions of the righteous are so over-ruled, in the infinite *wisdom* of God, as to issue in their advantage. Their good works are in the hand of God, and shall assuredly be recompensed, if not in this world, yet in that which is to come. And if there be wicked men to whom it happeneth in this life, according to the work of the righteous ; yet at the day of final retribution they will every one receive according to his own evil works. Nor is God *unrighteous* in his dispensations. All the evils of this life, whether they fall to the lot of the righteous or the wicked, are but the natural fruit of sin. The sufferings of none, not even the most innocent, exceed, nor indeed equal, their demerits. Each sufferer, under the rod of God, may truly

truly say, "*Thou, Lord, hast punished me less than mine iniquities deserve.*" Neither is he *unkind*. Afflictions are medicinal. They are made instrumental in the cure of our moral disorders. Their proper fruit is to take away sin, and to make us partakers of the divine holiness. It was love that influenced to the appointment of afflictions ; and therefore it is declared, that *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.*

IN such a world as this—subjected as we are to so many calamities, always trying to our nature, and sometimes almost insupportable, we have need of wisdom and strength, superior to all that is human, to guide and support us. Were our views and expectations limited to this world, existence could not be considered as a blessing. The truths which the Bible contains, are what alone render life desirable ; and, to a reflecting mind, supportable. These sublime truths are adapted to the present unhappy state of mankind ; and were designed, by their divine and benevolent author, to minister to their comfort, and to lay in them the foundation of a blessed and animating hope.

To bear afflictions with true magnanimity ; to possess and exhibit under sufferings, a right temper, such as shall be acceptable to God, exemplary to others, and conducive to the tranquillity of our own minds, are, in the present degraded and sickly state of human nature, difficult attainments. Men are
apt,

apt, on the one hand, to *despise the chastening of the Lord*—to be unaffected and insensible under their afflictions ; or, on the other, to *faint when they are rebuked of him* : In both cases they are equally destitute of a proper temper.

IN compassion to wretched and helpless human sinners, the ETERNAL FATHER, in his love, was pleased to send his own SON into the world, to do and to suffer whatsoever was necessary to their redemption and salvation. Most willingly did the obedient and beloved SON, though he knew what it would cost him, undertake to accomplish the will of his Father. He submitted to *suffer for us*, not only as a *propitiatory victim for our sins*, but also with a view to *leave us an example that we should follow his steps*. Under all that variety of grief and affliction which he endured during his residence in this world, he has exhibited a pattern, both in his temper and conduct, for our imitation. Of the state of his mind, and of his behaviour under the severest afflictions that ever fell to the lot of humanity, we are informed in the text. The life of our Lord, till this period, had been a life of great suffering. Now the time of his death drew nigh ; the hour of darkness was at hand. The treachery of Judas—the cruelty of his captors—the cowardly flight of his disciples—his mock trial before the High-Priest and the elders of the Jews—his iniquitous condemnation—the various indignities and

and insults of the high priest's servants—the mockings, the scourgings, and other cruelties of the chief priests—the agonies of the cross, and the hidings of his Father's face, constituting together a dismal group, a tremendous scene of woe—now appeared in near and immediate view before him. How far the guilt of those *sins*, which, as the atoning sacrifice, *he bore in his own body on the tree*, might now have served to aggravate and heighten his agony, is hard to determine. Certain it is, all these circumstances now combined their influence to distress, and wring the soul of our exalted Saviour. In the height of his woe, when his *soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death*, he gives vent to his grief in this impassioned supplication ;—*Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* With a fortitude, calmness and resignation, which it is far easier for us to admire than to imitate, he adds—*Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.* In our text, the same idea is repeated, and the same temper expressed, in language still more pathetick—*Oh, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.* If it be possible to describe more truly and emphatically the agonizing, agitated, tumultuary, yet heroick and submissive state of our Saviour's mind, in this hour of his extremest sufferings, it is done in the following passage in the gospel of St. John, which, in point of simplicity, descriptiveness and elegance, is unequalled in any human

man composition :—*Now is my soul troubled ; and what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour ? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name.*

NOTHING can minister such rational and solid comfort and support to pious, afflicted minds, as the contemplation of the sublime and excellent doctrines of the Christian Religion, particularly those of the resurrection and a future state. Next to these, a review and consideration of the example of good men under sufferings, and of that especially which was exhibited by our divine and blessed Saviour, is adapted to instruct us in all the branches of the great duty of resignation—and to suggest motives to the practice of it. On these topics I shall now proceed to make some observations, conceiving that they are not inapplicable to the present state and feelings of this congregation in general ; and that they are peculiarly suited to the tender sensibilities of those who mourn the loss of a most valuable and beloved relation. We observe,

I. UPON the duty of resignation.—We are taught in what consists true resignation under afflictions more clearly and effectually by example, than by the most laboured and ingenious definitions. It is happy for us that a duty, to the practice of which we are so often called, in the providence of God, in this sinful world, is so fully exemplified in several characters, whose history is recorded in the holy scriptures. I will just recal to your remembrance a few instances of this kind.

Abraham,

Abraham, you may recollect, received this severe trial of his faith—The Lord said unto him, *Take now thy son, thine ONLY SON ISAAC, WHOM THOU LOVEST, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt-offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.* What a shock to the affectionate, parental, and humane feelings of this venerable Patriarch, must this command have given? And yet, in the spirit of true submission, supported by an unshaken faith in the power and faithfulness of God, he proceeded, without delay, to obey the trying precept.

ELI, though not a faultless father, was exemplary in his temper and behaviour, when he was told by the young prophet Samuel what a series of awful calamities awaited his irreligious family :—*It is the Lord, said he, let him do what seemeth him good.*

DAVID, upon the death of a beloved child, expressed himself as became a rational, submissive and good man : *While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept : for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.* When Absalom rebelled against his father, and endeavoured to wrest from him his kingdom and his life, David, in his flight, *said unto Zadock the priest, carry back the Ark of God into the city : if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it and his habitation : But if he*
thus

thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him. Under the cruel insults of Shimei, this man of sorrows manifested the same resignation to the will of God :—*Let him alone,* said he to Abishai, who was desirous of *taking off his head, let him curse ; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction ; and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day.*

Job, who, next to our Lord, was, perhaps, the most perfect character that ever dwelt on earth, and next to him, was the subject of the most severe trials, in the depth of his distress, exclaimed, in the language of humble and genuine resignation—*The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord. Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil ?* The language of his grief was guileless, and expressed the feelings of a humble and pious heart.

THE conduct of these men, under their afflictions, was exemplary, and no doubt was recorded for our imitation. But Christ has left us a more perfect example of a proper temper and behaviour under afflictions. While encountering the trials ever attendant on the Christian race, and struggling under the various sorrows of this world, we are directed, by the apostle, to *Look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith ; who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* To Him we are taught to look as our pattern,

pattern, to instruct, to comfort and strengthen us under afflictions—*For, adds the apostle, consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* The path which our Lord has trod before us, and in which he has especially commanded us to follow him, is a path of suffering. *Who so ever, said he, will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*

Now our Lord, under his various sufferings, was calm, tender, patient, humble, heroick, devotional and submissive. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.—When he was reviled he reviled not again; when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him who judgeth righteously.—He shewed how tenderly he felt the sorrows of life, when he wept with Martha and Mary at the grave of his friend Lazarus. His affectionate devotion, and heroick submission, under afflictions, were most strikingly exhibited during his agony in the garden, where he poured out his soul in the strong words of the text, *Oh, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.**

THESE examples sufficiently instruct us what temper and feelings we should indulge and cherish, and what line of conduct we should pursue, while suffering under the afflictive hand of God; or in other words,
 what

what is implied in the duty of resignation. And it is easy to perceive that it implies, a firm belief of the existence, and of the wise and righteous government of God ; a humble trust in his faithfulness to fulfil his promises ; an approbation of the afflictions we suffer, however severe, as just and wise and good ; an entire subjection of our wills, and a due regulation of our passions and affections, while we are the subjects of them.

A DREAD of afflictions, and praying that they may not come upon us, or that they may be removed, are not inconsistent with the duty of resignation. Our Saviour prayed fervently that *the cup might pass from him* ; at the same time he added, *thy will be done*. Nor are we forbidden to weep when in trouble. There is neither submission, nor true philosophy, nor humanity, manifested in a stoical insensibility. Ancient philosophers, I know, have asserted, “ That a wise man is not subject to the vicissitudes and instability of things in this world ; that he suffers, in his breast, no conflict of opposing passions ; that he is above, in the *serene*, where no tempests can disturb, no eclipse darken his mind.” Such a wise man as is here described, never yet existed in our world. An entire insensibility to pain is neither consistent or possible in the present state : and if it were both, if insensibility to pain were actually attained, it would rob human nature of one of its noblest and most endearing ornaments. There is something amiable and charming in unaffected sen-

sibility. The tear of genuine sorrow dissolves the heart. There is a luxury in sympathy, in participating the sorrows of others, which evinces its congeniality to our nature, and proves it to be our duty. It is authorized by the example, and enforced by the positive precept of the Saviour himself. He wept while on earth with those who wept, and has left it in charge for us to do the same : And in the sad scene, which passed in the garden of Gethsemane, he has shewn us, that the most exquisite sensibility is perfectly consistent with the most sincere submission.

BESIDES, moral and religious considerations render it necessary that we should sensibly feel those afflictions which are wisely intended to correct and reform us. The good designed by them could not be effected, were we insensible under them. Godly sorrow for sin, often succeeds natural sorrow under afflictions. I pass,

II. To suggest, briefly, some motives to the practice of the great duty which we have attempted to explain.

I. A CONSIDERATION of the character of the Supreme Governor of all things, furnishes a motive of primary influence to the duty of resignation under afflictions. That Being, whose kingdom ruleth over all, without whose knowledge not a sparrow falleth to the ground, and who numbereth the hairs of our heads, is perfect in every attribute. It is not possible for him to do wrong, in the smallest iota, to any of his creatures. *Clouds and darkness* indeed, in respect to us, whose

whose views are limited, *are round about him* :— Nevertheless, *righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne*. His plan is before him, which is the result of infinite knowledge, wisdom and goodness ; and every event, which happens throughout the whole extent of his works, is exactly conformed to it. In no instance is he disappointed. *Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground*. All our afflictions, how melancholy and mysterious soever they may appear to us, are but the fulfilment of his will. Reflections of this kind upon the perfect character, and the universal and particular providence of God, furnish a very influential motive to submission under afflictions.

2. We may be assisted in the practice of this self-denying duty, from the consideration, that when God deprives us of our most valued blessings and comforts, he does us no injury, seeing that, by our sins, we have incurred the forfeiture of them all. A just view of the righteousness of God, in connexion with a proper sense of our own unworthiness, must always produce silent submission, even under the severest trials of life. Compared with the number and aggravation of our sins, and their demerits, our heaviest afflictions, and those of the longest continuance, are but light and momentary. It would evince a most criminal ignorance of ourselves, to indulge a thought, that our punishment, in any case, has been, or is, greater than we deserve.

3. THE necessity and adaptedness of afflictions to the present state—their influence in promoting our good in many ways—by mortifying our pride and lusts—taking away our sins—improving and perfecting our nature, and assisting us to overcome the world, by shewing us its emptiness and vanity—their tendency to make us think of heaven, where we shall be beyond the reach of sorrow—and to excite in us an earnest solicitude to be prepared for that blessed state:—These are so many motives which should influence us to be calm in adversity; and, in humble acquiescence, to *subject ourselves, in our afflictions, to the Father of spirits, and live.* Our Lord himself was *made perfect through sufferings*; and why should we be reluctant at being made perfect in the same way?—The apostle *reckoned that the sufferings of this present life are not to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us.* This consideration supported him under his uncommon sufferings. The consideration of the joy that was set before him, assisted even our Lord himself to endure the pain and shame of the cross. Let the same mind be in us that was also in him; and then, aided by the sublime motives which influenced his mind, we may, in our deepest distress, say with him, *Oh, my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.* But,

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emn providence which has deprived society of one of its most useful and brilliant ornaments, which has so deeply affected the publick mind in general, and wounded to the quick the hearts of his surviving relations and friends.

To the mourners, to whom I now particularly turn my address, motives to resignation, under your present afflictions, offer themselves, which, though not altogether peculiar, yet are not common. In common with many others, indeed, who have been called to part with pious friends, you mourn in hope; you have the consolations of religion—the prospect of the resurrection of the dead, and the retributions of eternity to support you. The language with which Jesus comforted Martha, in the death of her much-loved brother, may now, my afflicted friends, be addressed to you.—*Thy son,* thy brother, shall rise again.* What strong consolation does this thought minister to Christian mourners of Christian friends!—What an inestimable value does this doctrine, *of pure revelation*, stamp on our holy religion!—But other motives to resignation than these, of a far inferior kind, we admit, yet worthy of notice, offer themselves to you on the present occasion. If the sympathizing tears of thousands for his loss—if the sighs and groans of multitudes of widows, of the fatherless and the poor, who were supported or assisted by his bounty—if an unblemished character, and a life industriously

* The aged father, it was expected, would be present at the delivery of this discourse.

industriously filled up with uncommon and diffusive usefulness, and crowned with honour—if the general and tender sensibility, and unusual respect manifested at his interment—in fine, if his being a great blessing to his country, and an honour to human nature, while in this world, and a hopeful candidate for an inheritance in heaven, which fadeth not away—if considerations like these can furnish motives to acquiesce in the loss of friends, these motives in all their extent, belong to you. And although these considerations must unavoidably magnify in your minds, the loss you have sustained, yet they must, at the same time, soothe your grief, and excite your gratitude to God for giving, and preserving to you so long, a son—a brother—a relation, so highly respected. May the motives which have been suggested, by the blessing of God attending them, have their due effect in producing in your hearts, under your present affliction, that temper which our Lord has so emphatically expressed in the words of our text:—And may you, in reference to the event which grieves you, be enabled, in the true spirit of resignation, to say, *Father, thy will be done.*

I SHOULD disappoint the expectations of this congregation, deny the gratification of my own feelings, and omit a favourable opportunity of animating others, to the practice of that which is good and useful, by exhibiting before them an amiable and engaging pattern of virtuous conduct, if I did not now attempt to
give

give a sketch of the life and character of our lamented friend and fellow-citizen, THOMAS RUSSELL, whose recent death was the occasion of the foregoing discourse.

He was born in this town, April 7, (O. S.) 1740. He was a descendant of the fifth generation from the Honourable RICHARD RUSSELL,* who, in the year 1640,

* THE Honourable RICHARD RUSSELL was born in Hereford, in the county of Herefordshire, in England, in the year 1611, came to this town, lived and died, as above related. He represented the town in the General Court from the year 1646, till 1659, when he was chosen an Assistant or Counsellor; in which office he continued till his death. He was treasurer for the province for more than 20 years.

His eldest son, the Honourable JAMES RUSSELL, was born at Charlestown, October 4, 1640, and succeeded his father in his mercantile profession, and in his publick offices. He died April 28, 1709, aged 69.

His son, the Honourable DANIEL RUSSELL, was born November 30, 1685, and died the 6th of December, 1763. The following character of this excellent man was written immediately after his death.

“ THE Honourable DANIEL RUSSELL, for upwards of twenty years,
 “ was a member of his majesty’s council for this province: He also
 “ served the province as commissioner of impost; and the county of
 “ Middlesex, as treasurer, for more than fifty years; in the discharge
 “ of all which offices, such was his conscientious fidelity, and un-
 “ sullied integrity, as procured him universal approbation and esteem
 “ in publick and private life. His whole conduct was such as evidently
 “ shewed his invariable desire and endeavour to preserve a conscience
 “ void of offence, both towards God and towards man; and by the
 “ rectitude of his behaviour, to adorn and recommend the holy religion
 “ which he professed, and to approve himself to the all-searching eye
 “ of the Father of Spirits. His memory is greatly honoured by all who
 “ were acquainted with him, in whose esteem he was truly that noblest
 “ work of God, AN HONEST MAN.

“ It is observable, that in the several offices which he sustained, he
 “ succeeded his worthy father and grandfather, both of whom held and
 “ discharged the same, for a great number of years, with unspotted
 “ reputation.” “ The sweet remembrance of the just,
 “ Shall flourish when he sleeps in dust.”

1640, at the age of twenty-nine, came from Herefordshire in England, and settled in Charlestown. He was one of the most eminent merchants of his time; and died in 1676, at the age of sixty-five years, possessed of a very handsome estate, a very considerable part of which he bequeathed to publick and charitable uses, chiefly in this town.†

IN

His second son, the Honourable JAMES RUSSELL, born August 5, 1715, the father of the Honourable THOMAS RUSSELL, deceased, is still living in this town; concerning whom, delicacy forbids that I should say any thing more, than that he has succeeded to all the publick honours of his respected ancestors.

THE following circumstances are too remarkable to be omitted in a note of this kind.

IN the year 1646, the Honourable RICHARD RUSSELL was chosen representative of the town of Charlestown, in which office he served thirteen years: Just a century after, his great-grand-son, the Honourable JAMES RUSSELL, was chosen into the same office, and served the same term of years. In the year 1659, the Hon. RICHARD RUSSELL was elected an Assistant or Counsellor: Just a century after, (1759), his great-grand-son, the Honourable CHAMBERS RUSSELL, was elected a Counsellor. The gentleman last named, sustained, at his death, the honorable offices of judge of the superior court, and judge of the court of admiralty. Though other branches of this family, besides those mentioned, have sustained various publick offices, yet it is not known that a single instance has occurred in which the integrity of their conduct has been impeached, or their office taken from them.

† AMONG other donations, he gave to this town a valuable farm, lying in Lynnfield, the income of which was to be distributed among the poor of Charlestown, at the discretion of the Selectmen and Deacons. The poor have experienced the benefit of this judiciously bestowed donation for more than a century past.

He gave two other lots of land to the town, the income of one of which he appropriated for the support of school education; the other for the relief of the poor of the church; the latter to be distributed by the Deacons. He gave also handsome legacies to the then Ministers of Boston, Charlestown, Cambridge, Wajertown, Newton, Roxbury, and Dorchester, which evinced his attachment to that order of men.

In the female line, Mr. RUSSELL descended from the Honourable THOMAS GREAVES, † who, at the age of twenty-four years, arrived at Salem, with Governour Endicot, in 1629; and the same year removed to this place, which, with the consent of the Governour, he named CHARLESTOWN. He was the principal character in the company of its first settlers; and under his direction, was erected, on or near the spot where we are

NOW

† The Honourable THOMAS GREAVES, son of JOHN GREAVES, was born in Ratcliffe, England, June 6, 1605. In March, 1629, the Massachusetts Company met in London, and deputed him to go to New-England, in their service, as a person skilful in mines, fortifications, &c. After his removal to Charlestown, as above related, he laid out the town in two acre lots, reserving one for himself, which has remained in the family, and been the spot on which some of them have resided, to this day. He was appointed one of Governour Endicot's Council, and for his bravery at sea, in capturing a Dutch privateer, under great disadvantages, was appointed to the command of a ship of war, by the Protector, Oliver Cromwell.

His son THOMAS, born in this town, 1638, was educated at Harvard College, and settled in this town as a Physician. Among other publick offices which he sustained, he was a Representative of the town, and a Judge of the County Court. He died May 30, 1697, aged fifty-nine. His son THOMAS, born September 28, 1683, received a liberal education, and succeeded his father in the practice of physick in this town. He was a man highly respected as a physician and a gentleman, was a Representative of the town, in the General Court, Judge of the County, and afterwards of the Superior Court. He died June 19, 1747, aged sixty-three. His daughter KATHARINE, born April 2, 1717, married April 13, 1738, to the Honourable JAMES RUSSELL, was the affectionate and beloved mother of the Honourable THOMAS RUSSELL, deceased. She died at Lincoln, Massachusetts, September 17, 1778, aged 61.

“A LIFE of undissembled piety towards God, and the exercise of the most amiable, social, and domestick virtues, greatly endeared her to her friends, and rendered her loss severe indeed to her near connexions, in whose memories she still lives.”

now assembled, the first house for the publick worship of God, in this part of New-England. The ancestors of Mr. RUSSELL, both in the male and female line, in each successive generation, during the period of 150 years, have been uniformly, and without exception, honoured with a large share of the publick confidence and esteem, and have sustained, with ability, integrity, and acceptance, various offices of honour and trust, in the town, county and colony in which they resided.

THE same generous and benevolent spirit which animated their progenitor, Mr. RICHARD RUSSELL; and the same integrity of character, seem, in a remarkable manner, to have been possessed by the successive generations of this family. This must be ascribed, by the blessing of God, in a great degree, to the force of good education and example; and is a proof, from experiment, of the truth of Solomon's aphorism, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." And when we consider the express declarations of scripture, that *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come*—that integrity and uprightness shall preserve us—that *there is that scattereth, and yet increaseth*—that *they who honour God, he will honour*—it cannot be considered as saying too much, if we add, that the virtues which have distinguished Mr. RUSSELL's ancestors, at the same time that they have been honorary to their family character—useful,
 encouraging

encouraging and exemplary to others—have, by the smiles of Providence, and the secret blessing of God, contributed, not a little, to that great share of prosperity, both in honour and wealth, which appears to have attended his progenitors from the beginning.

MR. RUSSELL sustained the profession§ and the honours, and inherited the virtues, of his worthy ancestors, whom it was ever his ambition to imitate in every thing commendable. His disposition was mild, affectionate, and amiable; his manners easy; his whole deportment graceful and dignified. He was naturally, and from habit, the gentleman. Though he abounded in wealth, was clothed with honour, and was frequently, not to say generally, surrounded with some of the most respectable characters in his own, and from foreign countries, circumstances which too commonly minister to pride, and induce a haughty, distant and contemptuous behaviour, yet he possessed a singular degree of affability, easiness of access, and engaging condescension, which constitute the essence of true politeness, and which ingratiated the confidence and esteem of all who were connected with him, either in business or friendship. Of the truth of what I have now said, his possessing an immense fortune *unenvied*, and the universal sorrow manifested at his death, are conclusive proofs. These circumstances are strikingly evincive of the goodness of his heart, as well as of the usefulness of his life.

As

§ MR. RUSSELL was the fifth generation in the mercantile line.

As a *Son*, his behaviour was such as to gratify and comfort, in a high degree, his fond parents. As a *Brother*, he was all that a brother or sister could wish. He was formed, by nature and education, to relish all the endearments of domestick life. He was the tender, excellent *Husband* of three successive wives, and the affectionate and exemplary *Parent* of seven children, four of whom survive him.

He possessed a grateful heart towards those who had obliged him. In early life, when commencing the business of his profession, he was several times in need of, and received from some gentlemen, that friendly assistance, which he has since so liberally afforded to others. In several remarkable instances, he has had the opportunity, in a manner most satisfactory to his own feelings, generously, and in kind, to repay his obligations.

HOSPITALITY to strangers was a striking feature in his character. He knew the heart of a stranger; and many have been welcomed to his house and his table; and multitudes of others relieved and comforted, in their necessities, by his liberality. By the numberless instances of his marked attention and politeness to strangers, who have visited our metropolis, he contributed his full proportion to its high character for hospitality.

THE various publick offices which he sustained, he filled with integrity and respectability. And such was the general esteem for his character, that a number of

the commercial and philanthropick societies in Boston took pleasure in placing him at their head.*

As a *Merchant*, he was, in the acknowledgement of all, among the first, if not the first, in the United States ; whether we consider the extent of his connexions in trade ; his commercial knowledge ; the honour, integrity, accuracy and dispatch with which his negociations were conducted, or the incalculable advantage which resulted from the various branches of his mercantile business, to mariners, to labourers, and especially to mechanicks of almost every occupation. His death is a great loss to the commercial world, almost all parts of which were benefitted, either directly or indirectly, by his business.

To his own country, which was dear to him, and the interests of which he promoted with all his influence, his loss will be more particularly perceived : But no where will it be felt so sensibly as in this town. Here he first breathed the vital air, received his education, and spent many years of the vigour of his life. Here lived and died a long list of his venerable ancestors, and on yonder hill they lie entombed, with many others,

* MR. RUSSELL, at the time of his death, was President of the Humane and Agricultural Societies—of the Societies for propagating the Gospel among the Indians, and for the Aid of Immigrants from foreign countries—of the Boston Chamber of Commerce—of the Corporations of Charles-River and Malden Bridges—and of the Branch of the United States' Bank, established in Boston. Of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, of the Marine and Charitable Fire Societies, he was a liberal and worthy member.

others, whose publick and private characters were ornaments to the times in which they lived, and whose patriotick and benevolent exertions we recollect with feelings of grateful veneration. These circumstances naturally attached him to this town, of which he expected shortly to have become an inhabitant. Here he had intended to have spent the evening of his life; and how much was expected from his removal hither, I need not inform you. We anticipated the time, as if it were to constitute a joyful æra in our prosperity and happiness. But our hopes from *him* are no more. Oh may they be revived in the *children* he has left behind!—We cannot calculate the extent of our loss. The employment his business would have given to all classes of citizens; his influence and example, always on the side of order, morality, and religion; his ability and disposition to promote, in various ways, the prosperity and ornament of the town; and especially his charity and beneficence to our numerous widows, to the fatherless and the poor;—the hope of all these blessings, and none of them are small, has been cut off at a stroke, by his death. Besides, we know that, in imitation of the example of his ancestors, he intended many good things for the benefit of this town, to relieve the miseries of the unfortunate, the wants of the poor, and to aid the cause of literature and the church.

MR. RUSSELL was truly a father to the poor. He
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was abundantly blessed with the *means*, and, what is not always true of men of great wealth, he had with them the *disposition* to do good, to be extensively useful. His liberal heart was very often devising liberal things. The sums which he distributed for the relief, comfort and assistance of the indigent and unfortunate, and which he gave to publick uses, amounted annually to what most of us, perhaps, should consider as an ample fortune. The history of his charities, and of his donations for the advancement of religion, learning, humanity, and the useful arts, and for other publick purposes, would fill a volume. And were such a history faithfully written ; were the numerous instances recorded, in which he has satisfied the desires of the poor, caused the widow's heart to sing for joy, and comforted the stranger and the unfortunate, by ministering to their necessities, it would form the best, the most affecting and impressive eulogium on his character.

IN the death of Mr. RUSSELL, our holy religion and its publick teachers have lost a most valuable and valued friend. He was trained up from his youth to reverence religion and its holy and useful institutions. He was a friend and benefactor to the clergy. Many of their indigent widows, for ages to come, will, no doubt, be comforted with the streams which will be annually flowing from the liberal donation he made to the fund established for their relief. How many tearful blessings will be poured on his memory by this class of sufferers !

IN this age of infidelity and dissipation, when it has become almost fashionable among certain classes of people to speak disrespectfully of, and even to despise, the Christian Religion ; and considering the natural depravity of the heart, and the frailty of human nature ; and also the temptations always attendant on honour and wealth ; considering all these circumstances, it would not have been unnatural, or uncharitable, to have felt a solicitude for the religious character of our deceased friend. But, (and with heart-felt satisfaction I say it), he was not ashamed of Christ, nor of his cross. Under circumstances which afforded evidence of his sincere attachment to the Christian Religion, he made an open profession of it, and joined himself to the society of the publick disciples of Jesus Christ. How amiable, exemplary, and influential is religion, when the subject of it is clothed with honours, surrounded with affluence, and blessed with the esteem and confidence of his fellow-citizens ! What a weight of influence in the scale of humanity, of virtue, and religion, has been lost in the death of our lamented friend ! We will, however, pray, and we will hope, that it is not lost ; and that it will revive again, and flourish, in all its extent and vigour, in his children. With such an example before them, so loved in life, so honoured in death, how can they do otherwise than studiously endeavour to follow his steps ?

On the whole, the death of few men would have been
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been more sensibly and universally felt and regretted than that of Mr. RUSSELL. I have paid this tribute, not to his *wealth*, but to his *worth*. The memory of the good and the useful shall be blessed; that of our friend is embalmed in the bosoms of thousands.

OUR duty, in respect to this solemn event of divine Providence, lies in a short compass. It becomes us, as we are respectively affected by it, (and we all are more or less,) to consider it as the work of a wise and righteous God, designed to effect important purposes, which we cannot foresee; and as such we should, in the true spirit of resignation, acquiesce in, and improve it. Important and useful lessons may be learned from it. Nothing, perhaps, could more strikingly and convincingly have taught us the vanity of all earthly riches and enjoyments than this event. The language of this Providence to us, if I may be allowed to give it utterance— [oh may it reach our hearts]—is this, *Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth that God is the Lord which exerciseth loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, for riches will not profit in the day of wrath. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth. Naked came all from the earth—naked shall all return thither again.*

THE character we have imperfectly sketched—(abler pens will do it more justice)—is worthy of imitation. So far as the christian, civil and social virtues shone in him, let us not only admire them in *him*, but exemplify them in *our own* practice. To the rich, in an especial manner, he was a pattern of beneficence and charity. And how much does it now become those of this class, to exert themselves to supply those numerous streams of charity, which have been dried up, in consequence of his death ?

FINALLY. When we see the glory of this world fading, and its fairest and firmest hopes transitory, it should make us think much of an unfading and eternal inheritance in the heavenly state. “ Thither ascends, as to its native home, all the goodness that departs from earth : and the more of our friends that enter before us into glory, the more secondary motives have we to excite our desires *to depart and to be with Christ*”, with them, and with the general assembly and church of the first born, and to dwell with this innumerable and blessed company, in the city of the living God, the New Jerusalem, forever and ever.

A M E N.
