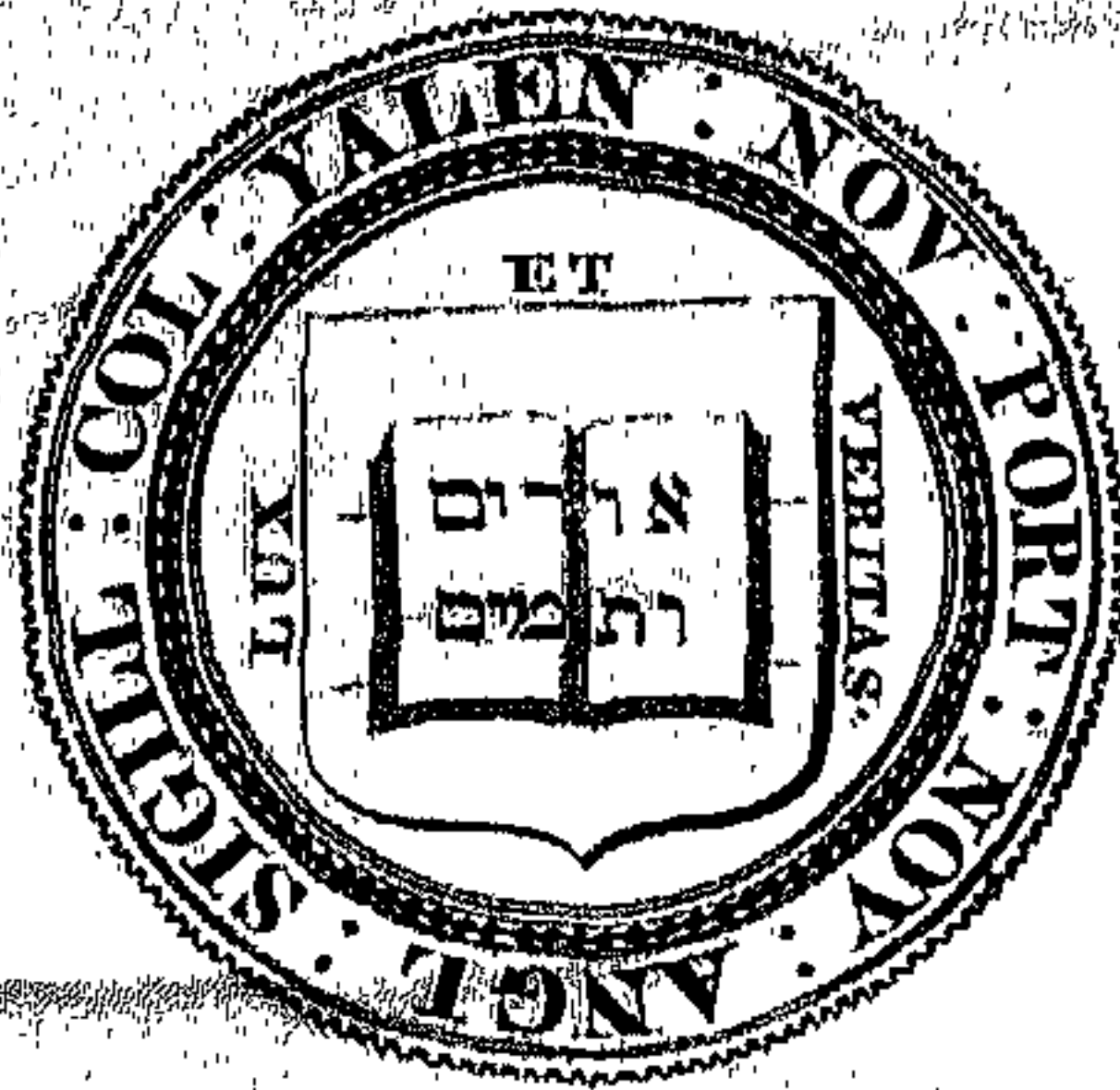


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1871

THE
BELLE OF ZION.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE PURITAN, OR LAY-ESSAYIST."

LIGHT, LOVE, LIBERTY.

BOSTON:
STEREOTYPED BY GEO. A. & J. CURTIS.

FOR SALE BY WHIPPLE AND DAMRELL, AND
OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

1840.

INTRODUCTION.

TO THE YOUNG CHRISTIANS OF BOSTON AND
NEW ENGLAND.

HAVING, as he believes, been moved to issue this publication by a desire to add another tribute to the "Truth as it is in Jesus," and aware that he now addresses many more who love this truth, than he would have done before the late outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the author confidently hopes his suggestions may receive due attention from some who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

Those who have recently entered the "Lord's vineyard" may not all be aware of the mighty barriers that prevent the "glorious Gospel" from becoming "the power of God to salvation" to many of their countrymen, and may not therefore be ready to come "to the help of the Lord against the mighty" abominations of our land and world. Therefore, this introductory address is designed to "stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance"—remembrance of the sins and sufferings of the whole human family, as well as of the young convert's liability to leave his first love, and to forget that it is his duty, not only to keep under his own body, but to sustain, with vigor, every cause that is

“lovely and of good report” in the sight of God; whether it be so in the sight of men or not. I ask your attention to some thoughts relative to

TEMPERANCE AND SLAVERY.

WHILE walking about a large city, observing its manners and customs, on one occasion, your friend imagined he saw some things that seemed to excite universal indignation.

Around the wharves were several large wagons filled with grain, which men were constantly unloading in the water—shoveling good and wholesome corn and rye into the dock. Everybody seemed to exclaim against it; but those therein employed affirmed that they lived in a land of liberty, and could not be dissuaded by either threats or arguments or persuasion. They said, “We are obeying the word of God in casting our bread on the waters, that we may receive it again after many days.”

In several of the most public streets there were persons employed with mops, removing the contents of hogsheads of molasses into the streets, and on the sidewalks before the shops. This seemed to produce a great uproar; for everybody’s feet soon became covered with molasses and dirt; and the mats, floors, and carpets in the houses and stores were covered therewith, so that even the ladies’ slippers soon obtained soles equal in thickness to those of a fisherman’s boots.

Provoked beyond measure, he obtained summons to arrest the authors of this nuisance.

He found the Police Court thronged, not only with persons who had come there with a similar object; but with large numbers of poor persons, whose complaints were, that a cloven-footed fellow had been into their dwellings and stolen their corn, rye, and meal.

Some had lost a bushel, some half a bushel, and others a peck, of corn or rye or meal. Some had lost their molasses, as well as their meal, and complained that their children were starving for their accustomed mush and molasses.

Their testimony was, that this fellow conveyed it away to certain large, black, stinking buildings, where there were many large vats, and much large machinery; and where fires were kept constantly burning on every day of the week, not excepting Sunday. From thence those wagons were supplied with the staff of life, and the mop-men received their cane-juice, with which to annoy the inhabitants of the city.

Worse than this—vastly, infinitely worse. This staff of life, this food of the starving poor, was taken from them and exchanged for the staff of death—the devil's all-conquering sword—and many poor families were made to experience the direful effects of its irresistible influence.

To be plain.—Vast quantities of grain and molasses are more than wasted—more than thrown into the ocean—more than strewn over the streets of that city; for they are converted into disease and death—disease of the body and of the soul, and death of all that is moral and desirable; but no law must be made to prevent

it, that "*interferes with the pursuits*" of the destroyer.

I have frequently thought that the man who produced from the ground, by his labor, wholesome food, is a much more useful citizen than he who competes with his neighbor in trade; for the latter is generally doing what would be done as well without his assistance; while the former really administers to human subsistence, if his food is permitted to remain food—if his corn, rye, and molasses are kept from the distillery.

But when the distiller takes possession of the fruit of the farmer's toil, and converts it into a poison, with which to ruin the farmer and his family, the bright side of agricultural usefulness has become dark. And O how great is that darkness!

How wide the difference between the effects of bread and alcohol, human beings cannot calculate. The nutriment, so necessary to human existence, is transformed into Beelzebub's most potent ally; and is thus made to scatter the innumerable curses of his kingdom through the land—the water is converted to liquid fire; the food to pestilence—"pestilence that walketh" and runneth "in darkness," and is the destruction that wasteth at noonday.

And shall no law be made to prevent it! Let the governor of Massachusetts once experience the effects which would result to himself from constantly passing through streets everywhere besmeared with molasses, by those whose innocent business may be to catch flies, and you will

soon find there is one pursuit of his fellow-citizens that he will desire to prevent. But molasses, converted to alcohol, is profusely cast over the streets of our cities, and is made the bait with which the grand adversary of man ensnares him. It does attract and corrupt our fellow-citizens. Like flies, they swarm around it. It does ensnare them effectually—their feet are in the mire, and they cannot extricate themselves. The drunkard is joined to idols, and will be till they are destroyed. He sips at the distillery, he sips at its streams, till he has no power to extricate himself. Every back door and back room where his god is worshipped attracts him—his smell is wonderful—the “striped” creature has enchained him; and you and I and every man are called upon to exert ourselves for his deliverance.

Do you say the nuisance does not annoy you? then, surely, you have not fulfilled the royal law, “thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself;” or you would be annoyed when your neighbors are ruined, and the poor woman’s bread is taken from her mouth by her husband, who has become the slave of the still.

No law to prevent this horrid business! Then for what shall there be laws? A business that murders by wholesale permitted, while the lone thief is arrested by the civil power!—A business that *originates* thousands of disorders, for the removal of any *one* of which the law is made and enforced, left in full operation!

How fruitless the efforts to destroy the corrupt fruit by lopping off the small twigs! How

much more to the purpose to "lay the axe at the root" and effectually destroy the source of so much corruption. Prevention is more effectual than cure. A business that is "evil and only evil continually," licensed by law—rioters, thieves, murderers, manufactured legally, while the same law stands ready to punish and destroy the manufactured article!

It is true, there is a higher source of evil than alcohol—a power behind the throne of Satan; and that power is the evil propensities of our race. Could we destroy these propensities, I admit our work would be done, and every manufactory of intoxicating drinks destroyed—the demand for them would cease, and consequently the sale and manufacture.

But to do this, we must neither exhibit "the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright;" nor permit those places to remain where ourselves and our fellow-men are led into temptation, till fatally bitten with the serpent, and stung to death with the poisonous adder. For if we do, depend upon it, "the charmer" will not permit all our fellow-men to turn from these places and pass away, before "they go down to death and their steps take hold on hell."

To some men, these infernal agents of Satan are absolutely resistless, and to all they seem either attractive or repulsive. What if the poor man is voluntary in spending at these places the money he had saved to procure food and clothing for his family? so is every other man who is "grievously oppressed of the devil;" but

is the devil therefore blameless? They sin together, and they will eventually suffer together, unless repentance and reformation prevent.

The distiller, the vender, and the consumer of strong drink, are all fitting themselves to be bound in one bundle to be burned. The night of darkness on this subject has passed—the great sun of Temperance has effectually removed from this region, every dark cloud that hung over this trio, and permitted them to sin ignorantly.

Let them remember, then, the fearful position sustained by those who “sin wilfully after having received a knowledge of the truth” that the common use of intoxicating drinks, and consequently the sale, is “evil and only evil continually.”

I observed, not long since, in the city of Boston, a truck with ten barrels on it, marked “Pure Boston Rum;” and was disposed to follow it in my imagination to the places of its consumption. Having done so, its name was immediately changed in my mind to—*Pure Spirit of the Devil—Pure Essence of Evil—Pure, unadulterated source of Sin.*

My imagination gathered in the centre of this great city, the consumers of this *pure* article and their relatives, and I assure you the place they occupied formed the counterpart of the valley of Hinnom.

There—was the silent, heart-broken, care-worn, amiable, once beautiful wife—the ruined and ragged children—the demoniac—the mobocrat—the assassin—the seducer—the sabbath-breaker

—the tyrant—the bawd—the thief—the adulterer. In one word, it was an assemblage, a regiment, most of whom were posting their way rapidly onward towards perdition. They had in their midst some of the excellent of the earth, doing all in their power to stay the devastation around them—suffering and praying and hastening to the grave, like the Captain of their salvation, becoming perfect through suffering, and deriving much consolation from “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself.”

These are the persons who are qualified to estimate rightly, ten barrels of “Pure Boston Rum;” and I will warrant you that to many of them Satan himself, though he is their grand adversary and they hate him with perfect hatred, is not less tolerable than his own alcoholic agent.

“O, the cruel distiller!” cry thousands of desolate wives—“the abominable vender of my children’s bread converted into the fell destroyer of their father’s soul and mother’s body! O eternity! eternity! how will thy unerring disclosures reveal to those who now ‘glory in their shame’ thousands and thousands of lost beings, whom the distiller and the vender of intoxicating drinks have led down to the gates of hell!”

Perhaps some of you may have heard or imagined, that many years ago there was a violent feud existing on our north-eastern frontier, and that, at a certain time, the entire population of a

all village were taken prisoners, carried to Africa, and there sold as slaves! I suppose there were about twenty families in the whole, or one hundred men, women, and children.

The minister of that community was among the number, and was taken while returning from a visit to a sick woman of his parish. The selectmen of the town were taken while consulting together respecting certain town affairs—many of the children with their teacher were at school—several farmers were threshing out their grain—women were spinning, weaving, and attending to their household affairs. A young man from a neighboring town had just arrived, with the expectation of being immediately united in marriage to a beautiful, intelligent, and pious young woman of that unfortunate village.

These persons were crowded into a small vessel, scantily provided with food and drink, and transported to Algiers, in Africa. There they were soon afterwards put up at auction and sold to the highest bidder—husbands to one slave-dealer and wives to another—children to an inhabitant of a distant region and parents to the residents of another distant and widely separated portion of the country.

While they remained together, on board the vessel, they were comparatively happy; for, amid all their privations and sufferings, they enjoyed each other's society; but now their sufferings were intense and indescribable, so that their wailings would have melted the hearts of any except slave-dealers.

One wife and mother died soon after the separation from her husband and children. Several of the children, being sorely afflicted with grief, lost their appetite for food, and consequently their strength; when they were beaten the more, because they did not accomplish the tasks assigned them as promptly as others of their age.

And happy was it for the moral, intelligent, and affectionate mothers among them, that they were not permitted to see their beloved daughters under all the circumstances of their direful captivity.

The indignities, obscenities, and cruelties which they were obliged to suffer themselves, without the knowledge or sympathy of husband, child, or any earthly friend, occupied their attention, and soon terminated the earthly existence of some of them; although they were not permitted to know that their daughters had fallen unwilling victims to the brutal lusts of those inhuman monsters—monsters whose children soon learned to imitate their tyranny, and to gratify their own abominable lusts with less restraint than their fathers had done.

It often happened, therefore, that a daughter of their father was held as a chattel and used as a thing, by him; while by these sons she was abused as a wife is not abused, lacerated as no beast ever was, and her and their progeny often, early, and forever removed, far from her own wretched abode, and consigned to beings whose tender mercies were no less cruel.

In process of time, the posterity of these stolen

Americans became very numerous, and much tinged with the swarthiness of those barbarian countries, the blood of whose inhabitants had become *amalgamated* with that of their slaves.

Meanwhile some of the professed servants of the Most High God, awaking from their long slumbers, began to consider the import of that glorious Gospel they were commanded to preach "to every creature," and to think of the distant heathen.

With the Bible in their hands they crossed the Atlantic, and at length were instrumental in awakening the attention of a portion of the inhabitants of that nation by whom their countrymen were held in bondage; so that the sinfulness of slavery began to trouble them greatly, and they could not forbear to "preach deliverance to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that were bound."

And now the heralds of salvation who were among them, began to raise their voices against these their consistent converts—to assure them that they had nothing to do with slavery—that the slaves were too ignorant and corrupt to be immediately emancipated—that they were the rightful property of their present masters, who were not worthy of the epithets they received from their countrymen.

This emboldened the slave-holders to commit acts of the greatest daring, and they did it with impunity.

One of the missionaries or heralds of salvation, who had ventured to dissent from the others, and to cry aloud through the land, sparing

neither the guilty oppressor nor his guilty defender, was often assailed by an infuriated mob, and at length driven out of the country, accused of all sorts of crimes, the principal of which was that he was a foreigner.

Nevertheless, the true friends of man increased continually, notwithstanding all the Algerine power that was exerted for their overthrow. The stripes and the blood of freedom's advocates became the most prolific seed of their holy cause, and daily added to their number such as should save themselves and their country from impending ruin.

The details of the slave's wrongs became better and better understood, and more and more astounding; till not merely a few trembled for their country, believing in that just God who "ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will;" but tardily and unwillingly, at last the non-slave-holding community became aroused as one man; and then slavery fell before them, leaving all astonished, as much at the forbearance of God, as at their own apathy and hardness of heart.

"How can it be possible that we did such things ourselves, and suffered our countrymen to do such things, with the Bible in our hands?" said they. "Surely! surely! we judged ourselves unworthy of everlasting life as individuals, and unworthy of existence as a nation.

"O that philanthropic Thompson! we stopped our ears and ran upon him, while he was pleading with us to do ourselves no harm; but to save ourselves and our nation from the dreadful

curse of slavery, that dread scourge of man. O that unyielding Lovejoy—that dear martyr of Liberty! what desperate children of the devil we made ourselves, by taking his life, or by neglecting to make his murderers feel the intolerable poignancy of universal indignation!

“How could we have been so silent, when so many thousand Archy Moores were struggling, with such almost superhuman energy, for the inalienable rights of man? How could we have been so unmoved when so many ‘temples of the living God’ were defiled in every possible manner by our fellow-citizens—when so many souls for whom Christ died, were effectually excluded from the light of the Gospel, even in a land exalted to heaven by its Bibles, its freedom, and its God?

“Where was the voice of our fathers’ and brothers’ blood, that we heard it not—‘My sons, scorn to be slaves’—slaves to sin, servants of the devil, oppressors of your own offspring?

“O how many stones, and clubs, and muskets, and firebrands, and violent words, and exciting *religious* declarations, may be produced in our land, to testify against a nation recreant to liberty and religion! O how justly was it said of us, ‘Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not;’ but it has lingered—has slumbered, till God has awakened us to our danger, and, as we hope, has granted us repentance and obedience unto life; and the consequent salvation of our country. His mercy endureth forever, and we will praise him evermore.”

I trust you all perceive the particulars in which my narration is erroneous.

Those people were not stolen from America, but from Africa. They were not transported to Africa and sold as slaves *there*; but to America—Christian America—free America—enlightened America—boasting America; instead of heathen Africa—ignorant Africa—Mahomedan Algiers.

Can you believe it? Can you believe that a nation whose entire population once thrilled with horror at the intelligence that a few of their inhabitants were made slaves in Algiers, has been so unmoved by its own acts—thousands of them—acts that throw Algerine or barbarian slavery far into the shade?

I have called your attention to the subjects of Temperance and Anti-Slavery, in the foregoing manner, because it seemed to me that some of you might not be aware of the important place they should sustain in your hearts. Your own improvement and reflections will supply whatever want of room, or any other want has prevented me from supplying.

In the first chapter of this publication, I shall aim to exhibit some of the characteristics of a genuine Christian and intelligent philanthropist; so that you may understand somewhat of the character and object of "The Belle of Zion," without being advised beforehand of the particulars of her exemplary, efficient, and successful pilgrimage.

Those of you who have read only this introductory article, thus far, may conclude that Temperance and Slavery will be the most prominent subjects advocated by this publication; but such a conclusion will prove to be erroneous.

The author designs to reason upon Righteousness in its varied particulars and due proportions, including the above-named subjects, of course; but, should he effect the object he has in view, he will assist his readers in making a proper discrimination between the form and the power of godliness, and will excite the young convert, especially, to let his "light so shine before men," that they may perceive its brightness and thereby be led to glorify God.

If you who are now rejoicing in the love of Jesus, instead of leaving your first love, should continue therein, while your light "shines brighter and brighter unto the perfect day;" and if I should herein suggest some considerations tending to induce some of you, so to demean yourselves, that this light and love may be manifested under all the circumstances in which you may hereafter be placed, I shall feel, and you will feel, that my labor has not been in vain.

Sure I am, that only those of you who so live that you will be able to say, when death approaches, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," will be instrumental in turning *many* to righteousness, and be prepared to "shine forth as the stars in the kingdom of our heavenly Father."

The consideration, however, which has prevented me from giving up this undertaking, is,

that I shall soon be done with this world forever; for "it is appointed unto men once to die," (and but once,) "and after this the judgment." And I cannot but hope that God will enable me to speak a word in season to some one, by whom he will be glorified and sinners converted.

It cannot be too strongly impressed on your minds, that the joy of God's salvation is most experienced, ordinarily, by those who so teach transgressors God's ways that the same "free Spirit," by whom *they* are upheld, thereby convicts the others "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come," and seals them "unto the day of redemption."

Your own experience has doubtless concurred with the word of God, in this particular; for, has it not been when your own heart was most filled with love to God and man—when you were in full possession of this *joy*, that God opened the hearts of some of your acquaintance to hear your affectionate appeals, and so to hear that they now live, and will live evermore?

Perhaps, however, I shall close this article, not inappropriately, with the following interrogation:—Is there not sufficient *matter of fact* in the preceding narration, to justify the conclusion that all who see things as they are, and yet neglect to sustain the Temperance and Anti-Slavery causes, are constantly transgressing the ROYAL LAW?

THE AUTHOR.

THE
BELLE OF ZION.

CHAPTER I.

THE INQUIRER, CONVERT, AND PHILANTHROPIST; OR BOSTON IN 1840.

“THE chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever;” but who that walks about the city of Boston, marking well the pursuits of its inhabitants, even in this season of refreshing from his presence, will believe that this is the end at which they are mainly aiming?

The exceptions to the declaration, “All seek their own, and not the things that are Jesus Christ’s,” are still very few, even in the good city of Boston, at a time when the influences of the Holy Spirit are most manifest.

And yet we doubt whether there is any city in the world where, according to the

number of its inhabitants, there is more evangelical or true religion. Its past history proves it to be, with all its darkness, one of the lights, not only of this nation, but of the world. It is a city that has been set on a hill by the puritanism of its founders, and cannot be hid from any corner of the earth. The sun of Liberty that arose here has cheered the earth with its beams. Tyrants have trembled at the moral power of Boston. Those who "sat in darkness and in the region and shadow of death," have seen the Great Light that the instrumentality of a few of the inhabitants of this city has extended to the remote corners of the earth. "The cold-water army," that has been raised up even in the midst of liquid fires,—in the midst of the vastly more numerous army of Satan and his alcoholic allies, has, as we believe, inflicted the death-wound of this subtle and untiring foe of God and man. The "alarm of distillers and their allies," of slaveholders and their defenders, has been effectually sounded in their strong-holds. In fact, almost every moral and religious enterprise that has been

recently devised and executed, seems to have commenced in Boston and its vicinity.

But, after all, "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be" who have found it, and are walking therein. There is a little leaven here; but the lump is yet unleavened. The salt of the earth and the light of the world saves and lightens, but it does not revive and renew the great mass of our population.

'The signs of the times,' however, seem to indicate that it will not always be so; but that a wonder-working God will put it into the hearts of his children to glorify and enjoy him more than they have ever done, constantly proclaiming to all around, by their looks, their words, and their acts, "wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

And what *are* the inhabitants of this city mainly seeking? Their own happiness. They make a grand mistake, because they seek it from riches, honor, power, learning and pleasure.

Some have recently found it in a way of

which they had not previously thought of seeking it. While seeking goodly pearls, they have, through the influences of the Holy Spirit, found the "pearl of great price," and for joy thereof have forsaken all that they had to secure it. They are happy, truly happy. It cannot be doubted. They have begun to "glorify and enjoy" God, and are receiving an hundred fold more happiness from this than it is possible for any one to receive from any other source. The desideratum of all they have received, and may retain forever.

They long to persuade everybody to embrace the blessed Savior, and thus find the unspeakable treasure that is hid in the field of the Gospel. Why then do not those who are in such hot pursuit of happiness, "stop and think before they farther go" in the broad way to present and future misery?

When an invention supposed to be of great utility to mankind is discovered, it soon becomes known, and its benefits secured almost universally. Why then, since the word of God and the experience of man both assure us that "our being's end and

aim" is to be attained only in the love and service of God, why do not all mankind repent of their sins and give God their hearts immediately? Why do they continue "hewing out to themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water," when the water of life—freely offered to all who will accept it—will quench all their inordinate thirst, and "be within them a well of water springing up into everlasting life?"

Without doubt, Christians have too generally left their first love, too generally put their light under a bushel, and are therefore incapable of exciting those deep and tender emotions which many in this city and elsewhere are now experiencing, in consequence of having perceived the effects of the love of God shed abroad in the hearts of their acquaintance.

It is the Christian's deep feeling, joyous heart, animated countenance, and tender solicitude for the welfare of others, by which the Holy Spirit often makes the word of God as "the fire and the hammer that breaketh the flinty" heart "in pieces." Therefore, every cold-hearted or lukewarm

Christian should constantly pray, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit; then will I teach transgressors thy ways, and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

In the month of April, 1840, a young lady, accompanied by her friend, who was also a true friend of all mankind, called at a house in this city to visit a family with whom both of them were acquainted, when they found only its male head at home, and he was diligently reading the Bible.

This young lady, though well-informed, had but recently obtained that good hope "which is as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast." She, therefore, was well pleased to find her friend so occupied. He was a middle-aged man, and familiar with the Scriptures; but hitherto "the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches had choked the word, and he had remained unfruitful" and unconverted.

After manifesting the pleasure of their first interview in a natural and customary manner, they engaged in earnest conversa-

tion, which we suppose was nearly as follows. The gentleman who accompanied the convert, as we shall at present call the young lady, remained silent for some time. We shall denominate him the philanthropist, and the other gentleman the inquirer.

“I am pleased,” said the convert, “to see you, as I do many other persons in these ‘days of good tidings,’ reading the Bible so earnestly; for I now regard it very differently from what I have heretofore. I have just been thinking of the words, ‘The name of that city was, The Lord is there.’ Do you know where this passage may be found?”

“I do not,” answered the inquirer. “I have just commenced searching the Scriptures in earnest, and find my thoughts and feelings better expressed by the words, ‘The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not.’ Almost every house I now enter seems to me like ‘the house of God and the gate of heaven;’ for it contains some

one, either an old Christian or a young convert, who is rejoicing in the love of Jesus."

"I hope then," replied the convert, "you will give all diligence to make your calling and election sure; for there is a peace and a joy in believing that is inexpressible. I never knew what it was to be happy till within a few weeks, and now I long to persuade all around me to taste and see how good the Lord is. It is said of some of the cities visited by the apostles, 'there was great joy in that city;' and so it seems to be here. There is the joy of hundreds of new-born souls, the joy of many hundreds of older Christians, and the joy of 'the angels who stand in the presence of God.' And O how great must be the joy of the angels over us at the present time; for if the conversion of one sinner produces joy among them, surely our city is now a spectacle of no common interest."

"I remember," returned the inquirer, "that when peace with Great Britain was declared, the houses were illuminated, the bells rang, and everybody was rejoicing; but I never read that *angels* have rejoiced

on any other occasion than the birth of the Savior, and the new birth of those for whom he died. Therefore I think it must be a very great event for one to be born again. But it seems to me there are still many thousands in this city whose indifference must be far from producing joy among holy beings; and many others also, who, like myself, are oppressed with a load of unforgiven sins."

"*I can even rejoice in your sorrow,*" replied the convert, "because I hope it will work out for you the peaceable fruits of righteousness, and work repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of. O my dear friend, why do you delay to give God your heart another moment? Jesus has died for you, and he is able, he is willing, to receive you—doubt no more; for he has said, '*Whosoever will may take of the waters of life freely;*' and angels and all other holy beings stand ready to rejoice over you the moment you repent. 'The angel of the covenant' has come down and troubled the waters—the influences of the Spirit are most manifest, not only here, but

throughout our whole land. O do not grieve that blessed Spirit by which mankind 'are sealed unto the day of redemption.'"

"I know he is able, and suppose he is willing. I also think *I* am willing to go to him, but I am not able," said the inquirer.

"Willing, but not able!" exclaimed the convert. "That is just what I used to think; but now I see that such an idea could not have existed in my mind a moment, if it had not been produced by my unbelief. Why, just consider; God calls upon you to come, 'the Spirit and the bride also say, come,' and even 'whosoever will may come;' but you do not believe him when you say, I will, but cannot. The fact is, you *can*, but *will not*, or rather cannot so long as you are unwilling. It is our ability to do what God commands that constitutes our criminality, if we refuse to obey. The moment you can in truth say, I cannot obey God, that moment you may also say, It is not my duty to obey him; or rather that he has not commanded that service."

"Does not the Bible say that 'they that are in the flesh cannot please God?'" asked the inquirer.

‘Yes,’ answered the convert; “but if I should say to you, *You cannot* serve me in another place, so long as you are here, it would not follow that you could not put yourself in a condition to serve me---that you could not repent, believe, and be no longer in the flesh.”

“I have been waiting as at the pool a long time,” said the inquirer; “and have seen many others stepping down before me, being made whole of whatsoever disease they had, and rejoicing in God’s salvation with joy unspeakable, which has only made me the more sad. I almost fear that there is no mercy for me. Do tell me how to give my heart to God.”

“O ’tis the easiest thing in the world, I assure you. I don’t see how you can help loving him who died for you, if you have ever seen him as he is.”

“That is the difficulty I suppose,” said the inquirer; “Jesus does not manifest himself to me, as he does not unto the world, and as he has to you I conclude. Do pray for me!”

“I will, most readily; but I fear you are

trusting to man and therefore neglecting to look unto God. O do not forget that the only thing that prevents you from rejoicing in the truth is because you do not love it—the only thing that prevents you from going unto Christ is because you do not desire to go in the manner required. Your pride of heart probably prevents you from washing as at the pool of Siloam, because you think your Abana and Parphar are much superior. ‘Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven,’ said Jesus. Little children, you know, submit themselves to their parents, and confide implicitly and unreservedly in those on whom they feel their entire dependence. We must have no will of our own that will prevent us from submitting to the righteousness of God.”

“Then I must surrender my own will and be no longer anxious, must I?” asked the inquirer.

“You must have no will that is counter to God’s will; but ‘he will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth’—will have all men to believe in

‘the only name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved’—will have all men, everywhere, to repent; ‘because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.’”

“O the day of judgment!” exclaimed the inquirer, “righteous judgment; and to be judged too by him who died on the cross for my salvation! It is too much to think of. How can I escape it?”

“The thunders of Sinai,” answered the convert, “the curses of a broken law—of the law that says ‘the soul that sinneth it shall die,’ *cursed is everyone that confirmeth not all the things that are written in the book of the law to do them,*’ are your great source of disquiet, I see. You do not seem to apprehend that there is a ‘city of refuge,’ to which you can flee and be safe—‘that the law is a schoolmaster to bring’ you to Christ—that the blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse from all sin those who look unto him for salvation.”

“But *I* have sinned against great light and great love,” returned the inquirer, “and that for many years. *You* have not done so; but have heard God’s voice in the days of your youth, and not hardened your heart by refusing so often and so long as *I* have.”

“Do not say so, my friend. Only think how many years *I* have resisted the strivings of the Spirit. I wonder at, I adore the mercy of God that has delivered me from ‘the horrible pit and the miry clay,’ ‘and put a new song in my mouth, even praise to our God.’ Surely if he would save *me* after *I* had so long neglected the faithful admonitions of so many faithful friends, he will have mercy on *you*.”

“*You* do not know,” replied the inquirer, “how many times *I* have heard the voice of God saying unto me, ‘Choose ye this day whom ye will serve.’ *You* do not know how often *I* resolved, even before *I* was as old as *you* are, that when *I* had a more convenient season *I* would become religious and give my heart to God. O if *I* had not put off this important subject so many times there would be more reason to hope in my

case. They tell me I shall despair before I obtain hope, and this makes me hope there is mercy for me, for I am not far from despair."

"This may be one cause of your protracted darkness, my dear friend," said the convert. "You thought it would be easier to give your heart unto God when you became older and had seen enough of the pleasures and vanities of the world; and thousands in this city and elsewhere are constantly acting under this same delusion, becoming more and more hardened in sin, presuming that their lives will be spared, their day of grace lengthened, and they more disposed to improve it at some future than at the present time. 'Because sentence against an evil work is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of the sons of men' seem to be '*fully set in them*' to put off the day of repentance, and to continue '*to do evil*,' imagining it will be very easy to repent in more advanced years. Thus they grieve the Holy Spirit, by whose influence so many are now becoming new creatures and rejoicing with joy unspeak-

able and full of glory. My dear friend, let me beg of you to make an immediate surrender of your heart unto God, and not remain in a situation in which you are so liable to embrace some strong delusion, and to believe some lie, under the influence of which you will never repent, but die in your sins and be lost forever. ‘When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man he walketh through dry places seeking rest, and finding none. Then saith he to himself, I will return to my place from whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then taketh he seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first.’”

“That is an awful passage to me, I assure you,” said the inquirer, “for I feel much more indisposed to all frivolity and immorality than I used to be, and have reason, therefore, to think that my house is in that empty state that will tempt the unclean spirit, who walketh about as a ‘roaring lion seeking whom he may devour,’ to

return before Jesus has become enthroned there; and then how deplorable will be my last state—my final end!”

“You know,” replied the convert, “that the oil was once miraculously increased, and then stayed when there was no longer an empty vessel. So the work of the Holy Spirit here will cease when there is no longer another soul that is emptied of all self-confidence and self-righteousness, and ready to be filled with the oil of grace. Hence you will understand what is meant by the words, ‘If a man love me he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.’ I do assure you, my dear friend,

‘Tongue can never express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love.’

Do see to it that your house is prepared to receive the Lord of glory—that it is emptied of all those things that engross your affections—that you are ready to sell all that you have and to take up your cross and follow the Savior—that you love him supremely who died for you.

“How can I do it?” asked the inquirer. “I have been trying a great while, and seem to be as far from the kingdom of heaven as ever. What shall I do that I may love God more than all things else, and be ready to lay down my life for him, who laid down his life for me, his hardened enemy?”

“What a singular question!” replied the convert. “O how much hardness of heart it would seem to manifest. What would you think of your child if he should ask you, ‘What shall I do, father, that I may love you?’ It seems strange to me that any one can help loving the blessed Savior. Why, who are the persons, and what are the objects that you do love? Are they not all the creatures and things that God has made and given you as a token of his regard?”

“I suppose they are.”

“Would you not then think it strange,” asked the convert, “if those persons, whom you love most fondly, and whom you delight to please, should be totally destitute of love for you, while highly valuing every other thing they do possess—the whole being the fruit of your bounty?”

“I certainly should; and yet I am conscious that this is precisely the way I am doing to the Author of all the objects of my strongest affections.”

“And you seriously inquire,” returned the convert, “‘What shall I do that I may love God?’ do you?”

“I am ashamed of myself and surprised at myself, I confess,” replied the inquirer, “but my heart is ‘desperately wicked,’ I assure you. My wife would be astonished at me if I should ask her what I should do that I may love her; and yet, when I ought to love Jesus more than her, I am asking, ‘What shall I do that I may love him?’ O that I could say with Peter, ‘Lord, thou knowest all things—thou knowest that I love thee.’”

“The primitive Christians could say, ‘We love him because he first loved us.’ Why can you not say the same?” asked the convert.

“I cannot tell,” replied the inquirer. “I suppose I have hardened my heart and rendered myself incapable of loving him. ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God,

not subject to his law, neither indeed can be,' you know."

"Yes, I know it full well from my own experience. I also know that God has 'no pleasure at all in the death of him that dieth, but rather that he would turn and live;' that Jesus wept over the inhabitants of Jerusalem because he would have gathered them as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings; and that their house was left unto them desolate, because he would have saved them, but they would not comply with his terms and be gathered to his fold. I therefore plainly perceive, not only that God can be just in saving all who accept the costly provision he has made for their salvation; but just also in casting off forever all who will not 'behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.'"

"Yes, he will be just, I know he will," replied the inquirer, "just even in my condemnation; for he has called and I have refused, he has stretched out the hand of mercy to me day after day, week after week, and year after year, and I have not regarded. I would none of his counsels,

I despised all his reproofs ; and now I know that if I again refuse to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, ‘ Prepare ye the way of the Lord,’ there will be no mercy for me ; for I shall have ‘ sinned wilfully after having received the knowledge of the truth,’ if I have not already done so. Do pray for me.”

“ Do give your heart unto God immediately, and pray for yourself, trusting in his promises and obeying all his commands as fast as you learn them ; always remembering that no duty can be performed before the first duty of giving your heart unto God. Do what you will, before you have complied with the command, ‘ My son, give me thy heart,’ your offering cannot be accepted by that God who looketh on the heart ; for ‘ without faith it is impossible to please him ’—‘ without holiness no man shall see the Lord.’ O if you knew how merciful he is—how good—how kind—how ready to ‘ forgive to the uttermost all that come unto him ’ by the dear Son of his love, you certainly would not put off till to-morrow the work you should do this moment. Let

me entreat you then to repent now—to retire to your closet and there remain till your heart says,

‘Here, Lord, I give myself away,
’Tis all that I can do.’

‘None but Jesus can do helpless sinner good;’ and he never breaks the bruised reed or quenches the smoking flax; but is constantly crying, ‘Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come, buy wine and buy milk without money and without price.’ ‘Hear, and your souls shall live.’ ”

“I like your advice,” replied the inquirer, “and will try to follow it, as soon as I have learned something more about faith; for as I read that ‘whatsoever is not of faith is sin,’ and know that if I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me, I suppose that is the reason of my protracted darkness. However, I have learned that ‘vain is the help of man’—every human staff has departed, and I now find that I have long been acting as if *man*, instead of God, had said, ‘Look unto me and be ye saved.’ Can you or your friend explain

faith to me, and how I may obtain that without which it is impossible for me to do anything acceptable in the sight of God?"

"Our friend will answer you," said the convert.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," replied the philanthropist. "It is obtained by hearing, though it 'is the gift of God.' It is opposed to doubting, so that while some 'entered not in because of unbelief,' many, like Abraham, the father of the faithful, saw Christ's day hundreds of years before it arrived, and rejoiced in its glorious provisions. By faith, Abraham received the *substance* of Christ's atoning sacrifice—by faith he beheld the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Hence he so assuredly replied to his son's moving interrogation, 'My son, God shall provide himself with a lamb.' And all the righteous who have lived, from Abel to the present time, have 'obtained a good report through faith.'

"The external acts of Cain and Abel might have appeared to men equally righte-

ous; but God, who 'seeth not as man seeth,' had respect to Abel's offering only, because it was offered in faith. Abel, doubtless, understood and believed the promise, 'The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head,' and therefore his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. Enoch pleased God by the same faith; and Noah was thereby led to prepare an ark for the saving of his house; while the multitude had no faith, and therefore made no preparation for an event in which they did not believe. Moses, too, had an acceptable as well as efficient faith, when, long before Christ's incarnation, he esteemed 'the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt,' 'choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.'

"Faith, then, is no ordinary and vague impression that certain events have transpired and will transpire; but it is like a glass by which all who possess it *now* see things afar off, are 'fully persuaded of them, and embrace them;' so that they confess by their actions 'that they are strangers and pilgrims on earth.'

“Accordingly, those who have possessed this faith have fully believed the truths of Revelation, and have looked for the fulfilment of the prophecies, understanding them much better than others, so as to be found ‘looking for the appearing’ of Christ, and ready to depart in peace as soon as their eyes had seen the salvation of which by faith they had before had a view.

“God seems to have so constituted the world, that the righteous believe all the fundamental truths of revelation, while the wicked doubt them, and in general, continue doubting more and more, till they at length embrace some strong delusion, ‘trample under their feet the Son of God,’ and become so sceptical that the word of God can no longer have the transforming influence on them which it does on those who have not thus rendered it of none effect by their unbelief.”

“I have some idea of what faith is,” said the inquirer, “and plainly perceive that many who have been influenced by it, have acted just as if a revelation had been made directly from God to them—they have not

had a doubt remaining to weaken the force of divine truth, and prevent their hearts from embracing 'a crucified Savior.' This state of mind and heart is what I need; but how to attain it is the question. It 'cometh by hearing,' I know, but I have heard all the truths of the Gospel times without number, and am still without faith."

"Do you fully believe all the truths you have heard?" asked the philanthropist. "Do you believe that you are condemned already, and 'the wrath of God abideth on you because you have not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God?'"

"I suppose I do not, though I sometimes think I have no doubt about it. I seem to hear a voice constantly saying unto me, 'Behold the Lamb of God,' 'Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world;' but I have all my life-time been surrounded by those who seem to deny the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood; and they have filled my mind with such ideas about the atonement, 'the central gallows,'* &c., that I suppose I cannot rightly apprehend it."

* A Unitarian clergyman's words.

“The Holy Spirit,” said the philanthropist, “is now testifying against those denominations, the burden of whose efforts is not to persuade men to ‘Behold the Lamb of God;’ for in them his influence, his regenerating influence, is seldom or never felt in this season of *‘refreshing from the presence of the Lord.’*”

“O that I could behold him! that I could so hear as to obtain faith of the right kind!” exclaimed the inquirer.

“There is none other name given under heaven among men whereby you can be saved,” said the philanthropist. “Look, therefore, to him immediately; and though the poison of the serpent has corrupted your whole system, one look at Christ on the cross shall heal you for time and for eternity. Let me second the advice of your friend to retire to your closet, with your Bible, and believe and look and live forever.”

“I never was here before when I saw so much that was encouraging,” continued the philanthropist, as he left the inquirer and accompanied the young lady home. “Those who stand aloof from the work of the Holy

Spirit are talking about the dullness of the times; but I hope that *many* of them are destined to be effectually taught that the times have seldom been so good, because 'the Lord was in this place and they knew it not.' There are many persons here to whom the present season of awakening has been a jubilee that they will never forget; and you, I trust, are among them. I have been much pleased with your faithfulness to your friend, and hope you will never leave your first love; but continue faithful to all around you, retaining your present tenderness, keeping near to God, and making his holy word your constant study and delight at all times. Be careful to try all your principles and practices by that infallible standard, receiving the good seed into good ground, and continuing to treasure it up as easily and to use it as readily and affectionately as you have done to-day, remembering that to him that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance, and that all who are created new creatures in Christ Jesus are thus created, not that they should live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again."

“I hope I shall be faithful, and continue to possess my present earnest desire to know and to do my whole duty. The Holy Spirit, I trust, has wrought in me ‘that carefulness, that clearing of myself, that indignation, that fear, that vehement desire and that zeal’ which will ensure a continuance in this my first love if I put my trust in God. Do you think there is any necessity of my losing the happy state of mind I now possess? I cannot think there is; for if there were, we should not be reproved for losing our first love.”

“I do not. On the contrary, the way of the just is represented ‘as the shining light that shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.’ It is the stony-ground hearers who can endure only for a while, because there is no deepness of earth. I do hope and expect that the recent converts to righteousness will prove the devoted friends of every benevolent enterprise, and ‘so let their light shine before men’ that their good works may be most manifest, and their present joy unabated and continual.”

“How can we forsake him who has done

so much for us?" exclaimed the convert. "I am sure I now desire to make him my life, my end, my all; and hope this desire will continue to be my uppermost while life lasts; for who and what else is there that is so deserving of our thoughts?"

"We read of some who are offended when tribulation cometh because of the word; and we find that even a Peter was led to deny his Lord at such a time; but I hope you will not, like Peter, trust in your own strength, when you say, 'Though all men should deny thee yet will not I;' for if you do, the crowing of a cock may cause you to weep bitterly, because you have practically denied him who died for you."

"How can I do it!"

"'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,' and none can fully know it but God," replied the philanthropist; "therefore the only safe course for any one, is to trust in God and go forward in duty; never yielding to, but always resisting the devil in all his forms on his first approaches. Never forget that 'you cannot

serve God and mammon ;' for multitudes of professing Christians seem to have forgotten it, and to have become effectually ensnared with Satan's golden chains ; so that their ears are stopped against the Macedonian cries of a world lying in wickedness. Not only the worldling and the indifferent need your aid, but the intemperate, the oppressed, the immoral, and all who are not now rejoicing, as you are, in the love of Jesus."

"I know it," replied the convert, "and my heart is constantly prompting me to labor and pray for the promotion of every good cause, though it was but a few weeks since the love of money and the love of pleasure were almost or quite the only springs of action with me. It does seem to me that 'old things have passed away, and all things are become new.' I would not return to such a stupid, wicked state of constant rebellion against God for the universe."

"Your strong and ardent love to the blessed Savior is a great security to you," said the philanthropist, "for 'if a man

love me he *will* keep my commands,' said Jesus; 'but what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch,' said the same blessed Jesus. Let no indulgence in sin of any kind dissipate your present charming, winning tenderness; for the slightest deviation from the right way may lead to further neglect of duty; bring darkness into your mind; grieve the Spirit, and give Satan an advantage over you that you may never fully recover."

"Will you inform me how I may be in constant preparation to meet the assaults of the wicked one?" asked the convert.

"I can give you no better advice than to retain your present childlike, teachable, tender, loving, fervent spirit. And you can do this only by looking to and trusting in Jesus—by prayer and meditation, by the instantaneous resistance of Satan, and immediate performance of every duty, however unpleasant it may at first appear."

"This is all pleasant to me now," returned the convert. "It is my meat and my drink to ascertain the will of God and to do it. I do find 'Christ's yoke is easy

and his burden light;' but am afraid I shall make some mistake, I am so ignorant, or be biased by some wrong feelings or prejudices, and so led into sin."

"Your fears are also another security to you; but there is so much conformity to the world, and deformity of principle and practice among professed Christians, that you must be very careful to love them all properly, while you refuse to imitate their example in many things. It is a great thing to live constantly 'as seeing' the invisible God—as by an eye of faith on the Son of God. A young woman of Mr. Newton's acquaintance once wrote to him as follows:—

"'I find the Lord to be a jealous God, who will not accept of a divided heart; and indeed, if I know anything of myself, it is the whole desire of my soul to give up all and every thing, myself, my soul, my body, my health, my strength, my friends, my all, as a willing sacrifice into his hand. I bless my God for such a disposition, and often find the sweets of it; and I always find that the more watchful I walk, the more comfortable I am.'"

“That has been my experience so far,” said the convert. “I can never tell any one how much I love the dear Redeemer. He is indeed ‘the one altogether lovely.’”

“Again, after a month had passed,” continued the philanthropist, “she said, ‘I have found such power lately, as I never had before. I used to be as ready to yield to temptation as the devil was to tempt; but now (all the glory be to him that gives me this power) I find that word to be faithful and true, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” When temptation besets me, instead of reasoning with the enemy till I lose all the Lord has given me, I flee to Christ and tell him how it is with me, and cry mightily to him till he makes me more than conqueror.’”

“That is encouraging, I am sure,” rejoined the convert.

“If you would be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might, you must remain weak in yourself; and aim never to neglect a single duty, living in the constant exercise of faith, hope, and charity, or love; but always remembering that ‘the greatest of these is charity.’”

“While your heart is constantly cheered with good news and bright examples all around you—while angels are constantly swelling their notes of joy over repenting sinners, it will not be an easy matter for you to relapse; but unless you go forward toward the mark for the prize of your high calling, it may be hereafter said of you, as it was once said of some, ‘When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you which be the first principles of the oracles of God.’”

“I know I have a great work to do,” said the convert, “but the yoke is easy, the cross is light *now*, I assure you.”

“May it so continue evermore,” returned the philanthropist; “but just think of your change of situation if you were to be stolen from the delightful society and scenes around you, and conveyed to a land of cruel and hopeless bondage to end your days in slavery.”

“O it would be very disagreeable; but it seems to me that nothing could separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, my blessed Savior. Without this

love, such a condition would be insupportable; but now I can think of no situation where I should not be happy, though it were in a lion's den, with Daniel; or in a fiery furnace, with Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; or while being stoned to death, with Stephen. In fact, I do believe the word of God is true when it says, 'All things shall work together for good to those who love God.' I do love to hear the Savior's voice, 'Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.'"

"Then," replied the philanthropist, "you cannot forget the millions of your own countrymen who are destitute, not only of the light of liberty, but of the light of 'the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.' If it is not *man* but Jesus who has made *you* free, you are *free indeed*; while, being slaves, American slaves, *they* are not in a condition to be approached by that 'Gospel which is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth.' Nor are they the only persons who need to have their chains broken, so that they may come under the sound

of the same transforming influence by which you have been made a new creature. The intemperate man needs emancipation, so that the word of God may become as a 'fire and a hammer' to him, that he also may become 'the Lord's freeman;' for while he remains a slave to strong drink, his ear will be turned away from hearing law effectually."

"I hope," replied the convert, "I shall never be deaf to the cries of any species of natural, moral or spiritual distress; but have my eyes, ears and heart all open to every cause that demands my feeble aid."

"There is nothing," said the philanthropist, "that I feel more inclined to warn you against, at the present time, than the sinful conformity of professors of religion. I suppose there are some among them who were once as dead to the world as you now are; and as tender-hearted and alive to all the interests of Christ's kingdom; though they now seem to have 'found out a way to serve both God and mammon'—to follow the fashion of this world and the fashion of heaven. It is very sickening to see them

aspiring to be foremost in almost every worldly folly—in dress, furniture, equipage, assemblies, and everything that pertains to fashionable life, while, notwithstanding, they sometimes put themselves foremost in the church also, having a form of godliness but denying all the power thereof.”

“Is it possible that their souls have once been filled with the love of Jesus?” asked the convert.

“I think it is; though I greatly fear that some of them are deceived, and will be lost forever. We must take heed that we do not cherish wrong feelings even towards those who seem, sometimes, to be ‘as lords over God’s heritage,’ while apparently destitute of every christian grace, and the firm friends of ‘the prince of this world.’ We must make all our approaches towards them in love, even though pride blinds *their* eyes to everything that is truly lovely. Your present winning sweetness, joyous heart, unaffected and fearless purity and simplicity, may make them ashamed of themselves, if anything will. Decision—necessary christian decision, is not asperity; but may con-

sist with the greatest sweetness of temper that a soul in its earliest love ever manifests.

“The moment you begin to grovel in the dust, living as if you have on earth a ‘continuing city,’ you will forsake the high interests of that ‘city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God,’ and bring darkness, doubts and fears into your soul, that nothing less than bitter repentance and precious blood can effectually remove.”

“Jesus will keep me,” replied the convert, “if I trust in him alone; I know he will. And

‘Why should I cleave to things below,
And let my God, my Savior, go?’”

“It is the ‘little foxes,’” said the philanthropist, “that eat the vines and destroy the precious fruit. The thoughtless, inconsiderate sins of the moment may prepare the way for great dereliction, and consequent darkness. Many a man in feeble health has thoughtlessly exposed himself to an atmosphere, for a few minutes only, by which the delights of returning health were forever banished from his physical frame.

I know from experience that I have been often influenced, by the words and works of those whom I thought were true Christians, to believe and to do many things of which I have afterwards repented. O! it does pain my soul to see those who ought to be 'doing a great work'—who have been 'made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the powers of the world to come,' all alive to the vanities of the world, and dead to the immortal interests of their fellow-creatures around them. Indeed they *have* come down—come down very low; and have become the jest even of those whom they descended to meet in the plains of pleasure."

"Save me and deliver me, O my God!" exclaimed the convert. "Let me not 'crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.' Rather let me die now than to live to wound the precious Savior."

"'Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing?' said Hazael; but he soon afterward proved himself a dog who could do it," replied the philanthropist.

"You almost make me tremble with fear," returned the convert.

“I want you should always feel the need of ‘the whole armor of God,’” said the philanthropist, “and then keep a constant watch; but after all to look constantly ‘unto Jesus, who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself,’ lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the weakest saint till his confidence is somewhat withdrawn from Jesus, his strength and Redeemer.”

“I feel very grateful to you for your tender solicitude for my welfare,” said the convert. “My heart overflows with love to those who, while conscious of their own imperfections, labor to purify themselves and the whole community from all unrighteousness. I do not therefore see how any one can have a ‘hope that is as an anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast,’ unless every known sin is forsaken, and every known duty cheerfully performed; for I read ‘he that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin,’ and ‘every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.’”

“‘By this,’” said the philanthropist, “‘do

we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren; but we cannot know who the brethren are unless they do thus strive to purify themselves from sin. There is a great deal of sectarian or denominational love in the world, from which young converts are free. And it is very desirable that they should remain free, and continue to love only as they discover the spirit of Christ in each other, keeping near to God, and daily searching the Scriptures, that they may not, like those disciples who desired to call down fire from heaven to destroy their enemies, be ignorant of the character of their own spirit. Jesus loves those most who are most devoted to him, whether they are called Baptists, Congregationalists, Methodists, or by any other appellation. Let us ever aim to do likewise, and thus show to all around that we are evangelical in spirit as well as in sentiment."

Taking leave of the young lady at the house of her father, the gentleman then went on his way rejoicing, because he had spent the day in essays to do good.

CHAPTER II.

THE LIBERAL COLLEGIANS.

JAMES CLEARLIGHT, "the inquirer," and John his cousin, were classmates when they were at college. Their fathers were brethren, who had always lived near each other, in a populous village not more than one hundred miles from Boston. These cousins, therefore, were intimately acquainted some time before they learned A, B, C's together, at old Mrs. Churchill's school. They had, on one occasion, just returned home to spend the winter vacation, and were walking together to view the town and see their friends, when they met a young physician. Though several years older than themselves, he was their mutual friend and associate. After friendly salutations had been exchanged, John, looking at the physician with a significant expression on his countenance, said, "Well, Medicus, what's the news among you?"

“News,” answered he, “have you not heard? Strange news, truly; unaccountably strange, you will say. Louisa has become the principal theme of conversation in all circles. Not, however, on account of her wit and gayety, as she used to be—there is a wonderful change in her.”

“We heard of it in college,” replied James; “every letter we received was full of it.”

“Do tell us what was the cause of it, Medicus?” asked John. “Did she go to hear any of the enthusiasts preach?”

“No,” answered he; “she thinks the supernatural power of God has opened her eyes; turned her from darkness to light; caused her to become a new creature, and old things to pass away and all things to become new. You know she was very intimate with Clarinda Auburn, of Boston, who, having become serious, wrote her a very affectionate and pathetic letter, in which she exhorted her to leave vain amusements and seek ‘the one thing needful.’ This so much affected her, that she appeared very melancholy for several days,

and then suddenly became uncommonly cheerful, and appeared still more pleasant than she used to be; but she has entirely forsaken all our assemblies. Every one of her former acquaintance she has exhorted to forsake the ways of sin, and to turn unto God; and they all seem to be somewhat excited thereby, particularly her intimate friends Mary and Charlotte, who, it is thought, will at length become religious also.”

“Is it possible!” exclaimed John. “I hope they will not. I dare say *we*,” looking at James, “can drive away all their glooms. Louisa is the last person that I should have thought of becoming religious—she was so fond of pleasure and had so many admirers.”

“We were all surprised at it,” returned Medicus. “At first, we used various means to drive it away. We laughed at and ridiculed her—tried to persuade her she was deluded—reasoned against her—made parties, of which she had been particularly fond, and in which she used to shine, and begged her to join us; but all to no pur-

pose. Her reasoning was above ours. She says she knows in whom she has believed—that Jesus is precious to her soul—gave his life for her; and that she is determined to put her trust in him, and walk in the pleasant and peaceful paths of wisdom.

“Never did I witness such firmness in a female before, and never so remarkable a change. Her parents, though she was their idol before she became religious, were exceedingly vexed with her, and at first had liked to have disinherited her. But yet she wavered not; but said, “When father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.” Jesus has told us, “A man’s foes shall be of his own household.””

“Does she dress as she used to?” asked James.

“No,” answered Medicus. “She says she feels like a ‘new creature,’ and I am sure she appears so, as much in her dress as in everything else. She seems to regard the outward appearance very little, and yet her dress is remarkably neat, though entirely destitute of gaudy and superfluous

ornaments. You know she was much devoted to music and dancing, but now her time is spent in doing good. She goes about visiting the sick, the afflicted, and the poor; and you will often find her making a garment for some silent sufferer, whom she has sought and found among the destitute.

“All her haughtiness is gone. She says, ‘Every human being has an immortal soul, and I have no more. And if in any respect I am superior to any one, I have nothing of which I can be proud; especially when I remember how far short I fall of our great Exemplar. If God has committed talents to my care that he has not to others, it is my duty to employ them in doing good to my fellow-creatures. I used to feel that I was too good to associate with any except the “highest,” as I imagined myself and those whom I visited; but now I know that the highest characters that have existed, were low in the world’s estimation. Even Jesus my Savior had not where to lay his head.’

“She has entirely done with small-talk,

and seems to act as if she was sensible that an immortal mind should not participate in frivolous conversation. But she is always ready to converse freely upon *the subject*, as she calls it, that is, upon religion; and her conversation is always intelligent."

"You seem to speak altogether in her favor, Medicus," replied John. "I heard that you was active in striving to turn her away from 'the faith,' as the fanatics call it."

"So I was at first," replied he; "but when I found she was not to be moved, and remembered the advice of Gamaliel on another occasion, I refrained from her and let her alone, 'lest haply I should be found fighting against God.'"

"The first time I saw her after her conversion, I confess I was struck with her appearance and conversation. There was a heavenly cheerfulness on her countenance.—She said to me, 'Medicus, I sometimes used to think I enjoyed myself in company with you and others, but now I see that I knew nothing about true enjoyment. My pleasures were all of a sensual

kind—I never could reflect upon them without feeling the reproaches of conscience, or remembering something to mar my happiness. You cannot conceive how much greater my happiness now is, in the service of God and my fellow-creatures. I can enjoy the superior pleasure of doing good, and afterwards reflect upon it with satisfaction. I find the word of God is true, when it says, “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.” O could you taste that peace of mind which passeth understanding, which flows from love to God, how insignificant your present pleasures would appear to you. I think it is my duty to tell you, my dear friend, that I am fully convinced that the ball-room, card-table, and other trifling pleasures, as well as the social and frivolous chit-chat, in which I used to take an active part with you and others, were sinful in the sight of that God who commands us to love him with all our hearts, and who has said, “For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment.” Surely, all our

pleasures were then sinful, and all our words "idle;" for we had no *good* object in view. It is true, we called our pleasures innocent, and our words useful; but that did not make them so. You are in constant pursuit of happiness, my dear friend, but be assured you never will find it until you give your heart unto God. I entreat you, therefore—repent of your sins and turn unto God.'

"This she spake from the fulness of her heart, and in the most affectionate manner; but nevertheless, I was exceedingly vexed with her conversation, and could not help saying to her, 'Louisa, I think it is highly necessary that some attention should be given to religion; but you are too much swallowed up with it. I am willing you should enjoy your sentiments; but do not like to be troubled with your "enthusiastic notions.'" Scripture says, "Hast thou faith, have it to thyself before God." 'T would do you no hurt to associate with your acquaintance as you used to—you need not be as gay as you have been, but I think you ought not to forsake the innocent par-

ties of your old acquaintance. We must not expect perfection in this life, for it is not attainable.'

"She perceived that I was somewhat angry, and affectionately replied, 'Medicus, how can you be offended with me for desiring to see you permanently happy? I was once far more thoughtless than you are; but never knew what happiness was until I had found that "pearl of great price," which was before hid to me, in the field of the Gospel, and "for joy thereof" sold all my imaginary pearls—was willing to surrender, and did instantly surrender, as I hope, myself, my friends, and all, for its sake; and then I received it. I long to see you and all my friends enjoying this same "unspeakable gift."

"'If one of your associates should find an inexhaustible treasure, you would not be angry with him, because he made it known to you, and desired you to share it with him. Why, then, are you displeased with me, because, having, as I hope and believe, found the "true riches," I am anxious to persuade *you* also to seek, find, and

enjoy the same? But while I remember what I used to think and say about religion myself, I cannot be surprised at you. I was blind to my own true interest. O my dear friend, my own sinful example has injured you. I beg you, therefore, to turn to the Lord, and taste and see that he is good.' ”

“So much love did she manifest, that my conscience reproached me, and I could not but confess to her that I was too hasty. And yet, when I afterwards heard people talk about and against her, I joined them; till, as I said before, I was afraid lest haply I should be found fighting against God. I now believe she is gone from us forever.”

“Don't be discouraged, Medicus,” replied John. “There comes George Liberalis; I dare say, he or I, or both of us together, will be able to call her back. Has she joined the church yet?”

“No, she has not,” answered he; “but you might as well attempt to *create* a mountain or pull down a comet.”

George now came up with them, and John replied, “Well, we will make an

effort at least. Come, George," continued he, "let us go to Louisa's and try to persuade her to join the party at Mrs. Bloomly's this evening. You know she used to delight in going there—everything was so 'splendid and superb,' to use her own words."

"I was just going there for that purpose," answered George, "and shall be pleased to have your company. Come, let us waste no time, for I believe we shall have a task. Medicus, go with us, will you?"

"Not I," answered he; "and I advise *you* to beware; for there is a day of judgment, in which idle words are to be accounted for."

"Why, Medicus!" exclaimed George; "what has got into you all? What has become of your skeptical notions? I thought you believed the day of judgment took place at the destruction of Jerusalem?"

"I have a different opinion now," answered he. "I believe Louisa has something that most of us do not possess; and as I read that Noah was moved by faith to prepare an ark for the saving of himself

and his house, and that by doing so he 'condemned the world,' *I* feel condemned by the recent course of Louisa, although there are still so many more with me than with her."

"I am glad," returned George, "that you have become a believer in the Gospel; but I hope you will not carry matters so far as some do. 'Liberal Christianity' has saved many a man from becoming an infidel, whom orthodoxy had driven from the *rational* pleasures of society. Here is our friend James—he has become as silent and sober as a priest, since he came home. I almost begin to fear Louisa's influence myself, I assure you."

"Let us go!" exclaimed John. "We shall gain nothing by this nonsense. Medicus will soon become *himself* again, and so will Louisa, I believe."

James, John, and George then went on their way, to the residence of Louisa; but the account of their success must be reserved for the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THE LIBERAL COLLEGIANS.

LOUISA TRUELOVE, after her conversion, felt it her duty to employ all her time in some useful way. When George, James, and John entered, she was employed in making a garment for a sick woman in her neighborhood. Her mother and a brother sat disengaged in the room with her. As soon as they entered, her looks and actions seemed to give them a hearty welcome; and although John's natural levity was somewhat restrained by her presence, each felt at home in her company.

They were surprised to find her so changed in her appearance. Her proud and flirty movements were gone. Modesty and humility, openness and candor, affection and intelligence, rested on her countenance, and made her to the careful observer truly beautiful and lovely. Greetings were interchanged, and after mutual inqui-

ries respecting themselves and their friends, John said, "I learn there is to be a splendid party this evening at Mrs. Bloomly's. I suppose you will be there, Louisa?"

"Me! O no," answered she.

"Why, what's the matter now, Louisa?" exclaimed John, endeavoring to appear much surprised. "Are you sick? I'm sure you never looked better."

"No, John, I am sick of nothing but sin."

"You sick of sin, Louisa?" returned he. "I never thought you had any to be sick of. I am sure you never was known to lie, cheat, bear false witness, or commit any wickedness whatever."

"So I used to think of myself, John," replied she. "I wish it were so in reality. Thanks to that Great and Good Being who has been pleased to open my eyes and show me my true character before it was too late to repent. It would be a small thing if I had only cheated man; but, alas! I have cheated my Maker."

"Cheated your Maker!" exclaimed John. "How? In what respect?"

"In many respects. I have defrauded

him of the talents he gave me to employ in his service. I have wasted his time. I have encouraged many, (and you among them,) by my example, to walk in the ways of sin and wickedness. Instead of living only to his glory, I have hitherto lived without him in the world. I have ridiculed religion—called it bigotry—superstition—enthusiasm. I have, by my reproachful speeches, often offended those little ones who believe in Christ, and of whom the Savior himself has said, ‘It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.’ O that I could undo all my evil deeds—innocent I used to call them—and make all the damage good! I am surprised that I was so thoughtless—so inconsiderate—so desperately wicked.”

“It appears to me you magnify your foibles too much, Louisa,” said George, breaking his silence. “It is true that all of us do wrong. Perfection is not to be expected in this life. Our Savior knows that we are

‘compassed with infirmities,’ and if not guilty of any gross wickedness, I believe he will pardon and forgive us. I used to think you was too gay; but ‘one extreme follows another.’ I think you are now too strict in your notions. I hope you have not become one of those ‘strait-laced Calvinists.’ Solomon says, ‘Be not overmuch righteous, neither be thou overmuch wicked; for why wilt thou destroy thyself?’”

“How is it possible you can talk in this manner, George!” exclaimed Louisa, much surprised. “I should never imagine you had been studying divinity these two years. Absolute perfection is not to be attained, it is true; for all have sinned; but Jesus is to be our standard; for we are commanded to be ‘perfect, even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect.’ As to *infirmities*, as you call them, if I understand the Bible, they are *sins*.”

“God does not require the performance of anything that he has not given us the ability to execute. If, therefore, we break one of the least of his commands, we break his holy law, and are condemned by it as

transgressors. How then is it possible for any one to be too strict, or too attentive to our Savior's commands?"

"Come, George," interrupted John; "we have had theology enough for the present; let us have something more interesting. Louisa," continued he, "pray don't be so superstitious; we shall have a fine time at Mrs. Bloomly's, if you will be our company. The celebrated beauty, Caroline Auburn, your friend Clarinda's cousin, will be with us. I heard you say, about a year since, that you would walk a mile to see her. I have heard it questioned whether you or she were the handsomest. Come, I will introduce you to her, if you will favor us with your company."

"I was foolish in looking so much at the outward appearance," replied Louisa. "I have since learned that 'God looketh on the heart.' Do not urge me any longer, then, John, for I have encouraged sinful pleasure long enough, and am determined, if the Lord will grant me strength, to do so no more."

"But, Louisa," returned John, "if you

do not go, I shall not enjoy the evening at all."

"Nor I," added George. "You used to be the very soul and spirit of our parties. I know they will be dull and spiritless without you."

"Well, my dear friends," returned Louisa, "I am sure I shall not enjoy the evening if I do go. 'Whether it be right,' or even pleasant, 'to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.' I am surprised that I ever took pleasure in such trifling objects. What would you think, if, on entering General Bloomly's, you should find there a company of gentlemen playing at top as little children do?"

"Why," answered George, "I should think they deserved to be classed with children."

"So," added Louisa, "I look upon the trifling amusements in which I used to engage with you and others; but now I have no fellowship with those who delight in such things."

"That may be, Louisa," replied George, "but I think civility and good-breeding

require you to comply with Mrs. Bloomly's request this evening."

"I believe," said John, "she has made this party mostly on your and Miss Auburn's account. She knew you had often expressed a wish to become acquainted with Caroline; and now, if you do not go, she will never forgive you."

"You need not join in the trifling amusements, as you call them," added George, "only let us be animated by your presence. I'll persuade the girls not to dance."

"George!" exclaimed Louisa, "I am surprised that you urge me so strongly, after I have told you that I should not enjoy the evening at all. For my own part, I greatly wonder that *you*, who are expecting to preach in a short time, can feel so much interested in such trifles."

"I don't feel so much interested as you think I do," replied he. "I am only trying to convince you that you have imbibed some wrong notions. We read that Jesus and his disciples were present at a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and if it had been wrong to go to such places he would not

have encouraged it by his own example.”

“Exercise your reason a little, George,” said Louisa. “Can you suppose that our Savior ever engaged in dancing, trifling conversation, or any other thing that was inconsistent with his heavenly origin? He was there, it is true, but we know not how long, or for what purpose, save to show forth his glory and his divine character, by changing water into wine. Those who ‘tarry long at the wine’ might as well plead his example in extenuation of their midnight revels.

“Jesus was never known to be inconsistent with himself. He would not, therefore, make it the duty of men to ‘live only to the glory of God,’ and at the same time, by joining in their unhallowed pleasures, encourage them to live only to themselves. Neither would he have said, ‘For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give an account thereof in the day of judgment,’ and then, by engaging in such conversation as chiefly prevails at our fashionable parties, countenance their ‘idle words.’

“George,” continued she, “I fear you know nothing about religion as you ought to know, before you attempt to preach the Gospel, or as you must know before you are prepared for the kingdom of heaven. Vainly do we attempt to grasp the kingdom of heaven with the right hand, while with the left we have a strong hold on the world. Jesus has declared, ‘Ye cannot serve God and mammon;’ for ‘no man can serve two masters.’ Do therefore, I entreat you, give your whole heart unto God, before you attempt to preach his Gospel unto men. If you attempt to preach the Gospel without knowing what the Gospel is, and without a sincere desire to obey it, in all things, you will be in danger of ruining yourself and those who hear you. It seems shocking to me that a young man should enter the ministry without a heart to love and serve God, merely because it is an honorable and easy way to support himself.”

“You are too severe upon me, Louisa,” replied George. “Everybody allows that Dr. Mereform is a good man, and I heard

him affirm, a short time since, that any one was qualified to preach who had received a regular education, provided he is not immoral. I know several preachers—good preachers too—who engaged in that profession because it would afford them the best living.”

“I am tired of your gloomy subject, George,” interrupted John. “How strange it is that any one can love it so well as Louisa does. She used to hate religious conversation. Come, if she will be so stubborn, let us leave her pondering over her thoughts and Bible. To-morrow she will wish she had gone to Mrs. Bloomly’s entertainment.”

“Stop a few moments,” exclaimed Louisa. “Happiness is the constant pursuit of us all. You hope to find it at Mrs. Bloomly’s, while Mary and myself intend to be employed, with our hands in assisting our fellow-creatures, and with our voices, in unison with the angels above, in singing praises to our Maker.”

“Mary and you!” exclaimed John. “I can assure you Mary will be with us. She is not so superstitious as you are.”

“You may call me what you please,” said Louisa; “but I would that you, and all whom you will meet this evening, were such as I am, excepting sin and persecution. However, before you go, I will make one proposal—*you* shall give me your reasons for expecting to find happiness at Mrs. Bloomly’s, and *I* for expecting to find it here. George shall be the judge, if he will promise to be candid.”

“Agreed, Louisa,” replied John. “We shall have you at last. I knew your disposition too well to suppose you would not listen to reason.”

“Don’t be too confident, John,” said George. “‘Let not him that putteth on the armor boast as he that taketh it off.’ If I am to be judge in this matter, though I so greatly desire Louisa’s company, I must decide only according to evidence. Let us hear your reasons *first*, John.”

“There is a great deal said about happiness,” answered John; “but in my opinion, notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, it consists chiefly in the gratification of the senses. At General

Bloomly's, I expect to gratify mine in a high degree. The house is elegantly furnished—the table will be spread in the finest style—there will be a large company of accomplished young ladies, of the first families in town, and I shall enjoy the pleasure of dancing and conversing with them. Everything will be in the finest order. The family are all pleasant and agreeable, and make it a point never to dissent from those with whom they converse. I have no doubt there will be an abundance of excellent fruit and wine to gratify the taste, and superior singing and other music to delight the ear. All these things must make one much more happy than Louisa, or any one, can be here, or at any other place in town."

"You have omitted one circumstance," observed George, "which, I conclude, will afford you more happiness than any other, I mean the company of Charlotte. However," he continued, "let us hear your reasons now, Louisa."

"I believe," said Louisa, "fully and firmly, that God is, and that he is the

source of happiness—‘the rewarder of those who diligently seek him.’ I believe, also, that happiness consists in obeying the commands of its *Author*, which obedience will often prompt us to deny ourselves of *momentary* pleasure.

“Persuaded, therefore, that all power is in his hands *who* holds my breath, and can take it from me at any moment—who can make me perfectly happy or completely miserable, I should be foolish indeed, if, knowingly and willingly, I should transgress any of his holy commands. He has been pleased to reveal his will unto us. *This will is, that we should walk in the way he has commanded and be happy forever.* Our Savior has promised that if we love him and keep his commands, his Father will love us, and they both will come unto, and make their abode with us.

“Now, you will readily admit that when the Father and Son make their abode with any one, that individual must be happy. I know that *that passage is true from several circumstances.* FIRST, it is reasonable that God should know what will make his

creatures happy, and point it out to them. SECOND, these are the words of that God who cannot lie. THIRD, I know it from my own experience. For though I am so sinful in his sight, I cannot believe that anything less than the abode of the immaterial Father and Son in my heart, would afford me that peace of mind which passeth all understanding, which I have often felt of late, and which I now feel.

“Being fully convinced, then, by good evidence, and better experience, that true happiness can flow only from obedience to the commands of God, and that these commands were given us with a design to promote our best interests, I choose rather to continue laboring for the good of my poor neighbors, and, with Mary, to read his holy word and unite in praising his great and glorious name, than to be present at the most splendid party that was ever known on earth.

“While we study the Scriptures, we seem to hold sweet communion with patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and above all, with Jesus and with God. When we have finished

the delightful and useful employments of the evening, with minds stayed on God, we can lie down to rest, feeling no concern whether we wake in time or in eternity.

“Not so with you, at least it never was so with me, when devoted to pleasure as you now are. The thoughts of death were then terrible—solitude had no charms for me—reflection I could not bear; and the Bible was the dullest book I looked into. And now, George, I leave you to decide between us.”

“O Louisa,” said George, “you are so different from everybody else, and from what you used to be, that there is no getting along with you. I must say that, on the whole, you have happiness on your side; but almost every one else would find the employments in which you so much delight, quite uninteresting.

“John will probably be as happy as you are for a short time, unless his conscience should trouble him; but his happiness will be of a different kind. If his temperament were such that he could derive pleasure from the same sources that you do, he

would have no occasion to fly from one pursuit to another; but would have that 'contented mind' which 'is a continual feast.' The duties of religion, it must be confessed, are sometimes *necessary*, and I would 'give all the world' that I could *delight* in them as much as you appear to."

"Only repent of your sins," observed Louisa, "and give your whole heart unto God, and, be assured, he will fill you with joy and peace in believing."

"Come, George," said John, "we have talked in this gloomy strain long enough—let us be going. Good night, Louisa," continued he as he left the room; "we shall not enjoy the evening at all without you."

"Indeed we shall not," added George. "Good night."

James responded, rather reluctantly, "No;" and they then silently wended their way towards General Bloomly's, greatly disturbed by conscience, so that they were anxious to be in a throng, where its voice would be silenced.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EXCITED VILLAGE.

THE change in Louisa had produced a general excitement in her native town. Even those who had never thought seriously of God, or of eternity, seemed for a time roused to action. Some violently opposed her—others remained silent, and several appeared deeply thoughtful. A few, with angels above, rejoiced on account of it. Some really thought she was deluded; for they had not observed her attentively, but had suffered their minds to be biased by others.

The consciences of *all* were more or less active, and, unwilling to humble themselves in the sight of God, many sheltered under false systems of religion.

Some maintained that all would be saved. Others, whose natural dispositions were more amiable, felt secure on the ground of their own goodness. A few rested under the idea that they could not change their

own hearts. "If we are to be Christians," said they, "we shall be, therefore we will not trouble ourselves about it."

In this state of excitement, it was thought necessary that something should be done to dissipate the effect which this uncommon event had produced. It was necessary, because there were convictions lodged in the breasts of many, which, under their present state of mind, greatly disquieted them. They were very willing, therefore, to make an effort to remove those convictions, not considering the dangerous consequences of quenching the Spirit.

Parties for pleasure had, consequently, become very common, and those who wished to get away from themselves and their God as much as possible, were glad to accept every invitation to them.

Some, however, could not rest satisfied, so long as Louisa remained inflexible. They were ready to make every exertion to persuade her to join them; for they well knew that religion loses much of its efficiency when the light of its professors is obscured by conformity to the world. Many

had hoped that a combination of powerful inducements would prevail, and influence Louisa to become one of the party at Gen. Bloomly's; but in this they were disappointed.

The company there was large, embracing all the fashionable young people in town. After George and the cousins had entered one of the rooms and politely noticed the company, which consisted mostly of young ladies with whom they were intimately acquainted; on perceiving Mary in one corner of the room, John approached her and said:—

“I am glad to find *you* here, Mary. I knew you would not be so superstitious as to absent yourself from the entertainments of this evening. You are not so foolish as Louisa; she will have a dull, solitary time there at home. She comforts herself with the illusory hope of your company; but I thought she'd find herself mistaken.”

“O John!” exclaimed Mary, who for some time had been premeditating a departure, “I have been over-persuaded. I know I shall not enjoy myself *here*—everything

appears so different from the feelings and desires of my heart. But Louisa, if she is alone, will receive more happiness, more real happiness, from communion with her Maker, than will be enjoyed here by every individual."

"O Mary," replied John, "I hope you are not becoming an enthusiast too. I think it is very foolish for young ladies of your rank to make so much ado about religion as Louisa does."

"You may think so now, John," returned Mary, "but as sure as the Bible is true, the day is coming in which you will have a different opinion. I believe the holiest Christian on earth, when he arrives at heaven, will be surprised that he was not more engaged in the service of his Maker on earth."

"That may be, Mary," answered John, "but while we are on earth and surrounded by worldly cares, we must mingle with society and conform to their customs. If we do not, we shall have no society; at least, none that is worth having. You never hear of people of the first rank be-

coming fanatics—they are generally low or weak-minded characters.”

“Was St. Paul a weak-minded fanatic?” asked Mary. “I find by reading the Bible, that he was far more actively engaged in the service of his Maker, than any one within the compass of my acquaintance now is. He determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

“St. Paul,” answered John, “lived in very different times from the present, and among a very different race of people. The world was then ignorant of the true God, and given to idolatry; but now Christianity has become the prevailing religion; in this country at least.”

“Well,” said Mary, “if Christianity has become the prevailing religion, how is it that the precept that commands us to act with a view to the glory of God in all things, is so little observed? Whether ye eat, drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”

“It appears to me that you are too attentive to the ‘literal reading,’ and not enough to the ‘obvious meaning’ of the Scriptures,”

answered John. "But, Mary, I did not come here to talk religion. Let us be merry this evening, and to-morrow I will wait on you to Dr. Smoothly's, and if he does not remove your scruples, I will not again attempt to do it."

"As to being merry, I cannot," replied Mary. "I feel that I ought not to have come here this evening. I partly promised to go to Louisa's, and long to be with her. She is a sweet girl—so modest—so intelligent—so industrious—so kind and humble, that it seems to me every one who is acquainted with her, must love her, and be convinced that a great change has been produced in her heart. She used to feel above me; but *now* it is not so. She knows my feelings and desires; for she has felt the same; and instead of talking and reasoning against me, as the other girls do, exhorts me to turn away from unprofitable and vain pursuits, to such as will afford real satisfaction. I must not remain," continued she, and departed, attended by John.

"Girls," said George to all the company in the room, "do tell us what it is that

makes Louisa and Mary so stubborn—I never saw anything equal it. The more we try to get them out of this way, the faster they seem to hold to it. I must confess, however, they seem much more modest and unassuming than they used to be. A wonderful cheerfulness seems to rest upon their countenances, especially upon Louisa's. I am sure I do not know what to make of it."

"I believe they are rather beside themselves," said Sarah.

"I have myself thought," said Ellen, "that Louisa must be a little deranged, to act so differently from what she used to do, and so entirely contrary to the wishes of her friends."

"It is said," observed Leonora, "that Medicus is somewhat serious now, and I suppose this is the cause of his absence this evening. He was the most active of any of us in opposing Louisa at first."

"I was surprised," said George. "A little while ago I was conversing with him, and thought he seemed to speak altogether in her favor."

"You never saw any one so violent as

he was at the commencement of her seriousness," observed Elizabeth; "he made me think of St. Paul before his conversion."

John, having returned, replied, "I believe they 'have worked up their minds' to this pitch, only to repent of it at some future time. I have heard of such things before. We must invent some new and interesting amusements, and use every measure in our power to stop the spread of this fanaticism."

"Do not talk so, John," said Charlotte, feelingly; "I believe it is something more than fanaticism. At least, it is fanaticism that is full of love; for Louisa seems to regard her own wants but little, and the temporal and eternal wants of her neighbors much. I sometimes almost envy her the happiness she must feel in the consciousness of doing so much good."

"You are becoming religious too, I see, Charlotte," said John sneeringly, his countenance indicating that he felt special interest in her. "O how foolish for young ladies of your rank and intellect. It will do well enough for the lower classes of people, for they never expect to rise very high in the world."

“You are quite mistaken, John, if you think so,” replied Charlotte. “I cannot deny what my own eyes have seen and ears have heard of the change in Louisa; but I have no thought of becoming religious at present. I think it will be time enough when I become old. Youth is the season for gayety, and I intend to improve it. They are dancing; let us go and join them.”

“I am pleased to find you are so wise, Charlotte,” returned John. “The famous beauty is in the other room; let us go and see her.”

“O I can’t bear her, she is so affected and haughty,” said Caroline. “I used to think she was much handsomer than Louisa; but it seems as if pride goeth before the destruction of beauty, as well as before another destruction; while the beauty of the humble is increased. Louisa is much the handsomest *now*, I think. Miss Auburn has received so much flattering attention that she seems to fancy herself superior to everybody else, and that spoils her.”

“Stop a minute, girls,” exclaimed John; “I have made an agreement with Louisa

and Mary that we will all meet at Mary's, some evening next week, and conduct our party precisely as Louisa shall direct."

"Good," said Ellen; "we shall conquer them at last."

"Don't be too confident!" exclaimed Charlotte. "If the work is begun by the Holy Spirit, it will stand; for the author and finisher is almighty, as Louisa says."

"Be not so faithless, Charlotte," said John. "I have saved *you* from becoming an enthusiast, you know; and I have no doubt that I shall save Mary; at least, if you do not justify and sustain the course she has taken; for you are her most intimate friend."

"O John! John! Your power over me I acknowledge; but I can tell you one thing. I have resolved that I will attend to the subject of religion in good earnest at some future, more convenient season. I believe I should have been with Louisa and Mary, in heart and soul, now, if I had not desired to please you much more than to obey the voice of conscience."

"I commend your determination," said

George Liberalis; "but I hope you will follow the dictates of 'Rational Religion,' which permits and approves social pleasures and rational enjoyment."

"Come, come, let us be done with this," said John; "they are having a fine time in the other room. I shall claim you, Charlotte, for a partner (in the dance, if not in another sphere," added he, aside.)

Religion, and Louisa, and Mary, soon ceased to be subjects of conversation for that evening. Nor was there any intercourse between the guests of Mrs. Bloomly's party that could in truth be called *rational*, although a minister of 'Rational Religion' was among them. Nothing seemed to be said or done with a view to the glory of God, or the immortal interests of man; and if so, the whole was *irrational* and sinful in the sight of that God who has made it the duty of all his creatures, in whatsoever they do, to do all to his glory.

CHAPTER V.

THE FARMER'S SERMON.

LOUISA'S kind heart was somewhat saddened, it must be confessed, by the reflection that so many whom she loved were employed so differently from what her own desire or duty permitted her to be; but the thoughts of Mary's absence were still more sad. Her solicitude for the best interests of this awakened friend cannot be described; but may be imagined by those who have felt the like emotions.

She feared that Mary, unable to withstand her unconscious and persevering adversaries, would have her serious impressions dissipated by the dissipating scenes of Mrs. Bloomly's party. And yet, as Mary had engaged to spend that evening with her, and had not notified her of any hindrance or other engagement, she had no doubt that she would be with her shortly. As it was

past the time for her to be there, however, she began to fear; and having remembered the prevailing prayer of those who were gathered together praying for Peter, when Rhoda ran in and told them that the subject of their prayers "stood before the gate;" she had just risen from her knees, when Mary and John entered. Medicus came soon afterwards, and John returned to the party as soon as he had made an engagement for another, of which Louisa was to be the conductor.

"I have been much interested in reading the manuscript sermon of a young friend of mine," said Medicus. "It is the production of an 'unlearned and ignorant' young man, who was brought up under Unitarian preaching—is the first sermon, and almost the first essay, he ever attempted to write; and his religious sentiments were wholly obtained from the Bible, which was almost his only theological instructor. I will read it while you are working for the slave's benefit, if agreeable to you."

"If it is on the 'great change,' I should like to hear it," said Louisa.

“I should like to hear something that will make me more decided and more happy,” said Mary. “I wish I could feel as Louisa does.”

“It is on the new birth, from the words of Christ, ‘Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’”

“Then let us hear it, if you please, Medicus,” returned Louisa; and Medicus immediately read

THE FARMER'S SERMON.

John iii. 3.—“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

This declaration naturally turns the mind to Adam—to the words of God, “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”—words addressed to him soon after the worlds and man himself were made by the Son of God. And who is the author of this declaration? Competent authority, and every man who duly honors it, answer, “Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever.”

But why does the mind advert to Adam? Because the new birth is to be produced in his dead offspring—the perpetual memorials of God's verity. Adam did not cease to

breathe on the day of his transgression; but Adam's soul did cease to live spiritually—cease to rejoice in the presence and at the voice of his Maker, on the day of his disobedience. Fear then supplanted love—darkness light; and he hid himself.

Conscience now accuses him—he knows that he is naked, and God knows that the breaking of his command has opened his eyes, clouded his countenance, and caused him to quail at the reproof of conscience.

It is this same consciousness of guilt that has removed from many of our brows the smile of holy cheerfulness, and from our hearts that joy which is the offspring of innocence and love. Thus do we show that we are dead also. And thus the whole world of mankind evince their want of spiritual life.

Before Adam had sinned, he rejoiced in the presence of his Maker. Had you never sinned, you would now rejoice in him. I design not to charge you with Adam's sins, as you see, but with your own; for I presume that no man who knows good from evil, will pretend that he has no sins. But lest any one of you should think that your transgressions are light and few, I will present to your view the two commands on which “hang all the law and the prophets”—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,” &c. Consider

how far you fall short of obeying these commands, and you will find your sins many and aggravated. You will find yourselves, in many instances, entirely destitute of that which you now imagine you possess in a great degree. Remember that when you really love any being, you are induced to do something to please or benefit that being. If you love with *all* the heart, there will be nothing that you possess, whether property, talents, strength or life, that you will not willingly devote to his service.

God requires your whole heart, and in doing it, he requires nothing more than is reasonable—nothing more than his due; which you know ought to be given him. Instead of supremely loving the things that are made, how much more worthy of such love is the Maker of all things? If you loved your neighbor as yourself, would you not be as anxious to see him happy as to be so yourself? This anxiety would move you to minister to his comfort as you do to your own. In view of these commands, then, you certainly must feel exceedingly guilty in God's sight; but if you remain as Adam was, after his transgression—dead unto holiness,—you do not love God either much or little.

Love to God supposes a knowledge of his character. This is clearly perceived by the things that are made, in connection

with his written word. From these we learn that he knows all things of himself; but we nothing of ourselves. Therefore, when we say that we love him, and yet remain partial to his commands, imagining that we keep some of them and transgress others, we have but little knowledge of his or our own characters; for if fully convinced that we knew nothing and God all things, we should strive to keep each and every one of his commands, saying, *Whatsoever he has commanded that will we do; because it is just, and because it is our duty, our interest and delight.*

Let us then pursue the following inquiries.
 What is it to be born again?
 What is the benefit of the new birth?
 What is its necessity?

To be born again is to have the affections so changed, that from loving ourselves supremely, and being guided by the fashions and pursuits of this world, God becomes the supreme object of our love, and therefore his *Word becomes the guide and standard* of all our actions. That which produces this new birth, is the same Word or truth of God, forced upon our consciences by the Holy Spirit, and reaching our hearts. "Faith cometh by hearing."

But, my impenitent friends, although the

Scriptures contain the words of eternal life, —although the Bible contains words capable of making you all “new creatures in Christ Jesus,” yet unless you rightly attend to them, you must not expect that God will thereby change your hearts.

Attend, attend, then;—this is God’s command, this is my entreaty. Break off all your thoughts from other things, and place them on the Word of life, and then you will see where you are, and where you ought to be—you will then find what you must do to inherit everlasting life; and reflecting upon your past conduct, you will see how reasonable it is that you should love the Author of all wisdom and good with all your hearts; and how shockingly ungrateful you are when you do it not.

Look back upon your past conduct and consider your ways, with the Bible in your hands, and you will plainly see that you have been blind to your true interest, disobedient to your Maker, ungrateful to your best Friend, and now are walking rapidly onward in the broad way to destruction, without power to deliver yourselves, and in constant danger of sinking into remediless wo, justly condemned.

You have only to see and to feel your true state, to induce you to cry mightily unto God to save, and be merciful to you a sinner. As soon as you utter this with

your whole minds and souls, you are born again, and will begin to act from a new motive, supremely desiring to know and to do the will of God, however you may differ from the fashions of the world.

What has already been advanced, might seem sufficient to show *what is meant* by the words "born again;" but as this is a point of vast importance, we will dwell on it a little longer.

Our Savior dwelt much upon the new birth, expressing it in various words besides those we are considering. His first preaching, as well as that of John the Baptist, who came to prepare the way of the Lord, commenced with, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." These words were addressed to those who, by a revelation, had received a knowledge of God's will and their own duty, and had not done it; therefore there was no reason to suppose they would properly attend to the things that Jesus was about to make known unto them, before they had sincerely repented of their past wickedness and become "born again."

No more, my friends, will you receive the glad tidings of great joy which have been proclaimed by God's beloved Son; and still sound in your ears through his holy word, until you sincerely repent of all

known sin, whether of omission or commission. They would not, they could not, receive the glad tidings of great joy, as such, while they were continually doing that which God had commanded them not to do. Neither will you rejoice in the truth, so long as you are habitually doing that which your own consciences tell you is wrong.

Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven. A little child, you know, loves his parents supremely, looks unto them for protection, and when properly treated, generally delights to know and to do the will of his parents. Even so, you and I, and all mankind, must feel and act towards our heavenly Father, in order to enter the kingdom of heaven.

God must be loved supremely, and then you will feel your entire dependence upon him for all things, and be conscious that you know nothing of yourselves. Then you will delight to seek, and to do, each and every one of his commands, and become new creatures. Old things will have passed away, and all things become new. Then will you be "in Christ Jesus," believe unto salvation, because you are "born again."

But before this is your case, you must not think yourselves in a justified or safe

state; for "he that is not for me is against me," said Jesus. Therefore, however amiable you may appear among men; however constantly you may enter the house of God; or strictly observe any or all of the ordinances and institutions of the Gospel, you will not, you cannot, act for God at any time, but always against him; because the motives by which you are actuated are selfish and entirely corrupt. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God," let them do what they will, while they so remain.

I do not think there is an individual among you all, who is not convinced that he has sinned against God in one point, at least. Let such remember that "he who offends in one point is guilty of all." If then you have broken the law of God in one point, you have incurred its penalty, and are under its curse. Therefore, "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

But some of you are ready to say within yourselves, If I am guilty of all, then I may be justly charged with murder, theft, adultery, the thoughts of which I abhor; therefore I cannot believe this declaration. To you I would say, that, in the sight of God, a man is guilty of all those crimes which he has a heart or a disposition to

commit, even if he never actually commits them. The man who would take your life if he had a good opportunity, is probably as guilty of the crime of murder, in God's sight, as though he had murdered you. And he who would steal from you, if he could do it without any prospect of detection, is guilty of theft; and "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

See the duellist;—he breaks God's law—love your neighbor—love your enemies—resist not evil—bless them that curse you—whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, offer the other also—thou shalt do no murder—in all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them,—in order to fulfil or sustain what he calls "the laws of honor."

And whatsoever the custom of society or "the prince of this world" demands, men will seek honor one of another by executing; even though it be to put the poisoned alcoholic cup to the mouth of a neighbor; or to defraud him of his property, his liberty, and his life.

"All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world;" for which reason its pursuits cannot be loved by him who loves God;—"For

if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Therefore those who are not "born again" do not abstain from external immorality because it is sinful in God's sight; but because it is not honorable among men, and they do not therefore suppose their self-interest can be promoted by doing it. Not so with "the ransomed of the Lord;" for wherever they are, and by whatsoever name they are denominated, God's will, and not their own natural inclination, or that of others, is the standard by which they are guided; for where it is not, there, there is no evidence of a renewed soul.

Are any among *you*, then, who trust that you are the Lord's people, while his Word is not the guide and standard of your conduct, you have much reason to fear that you trust to a broken staff.

But the reason why a man is guilty of all when he offends in only one point, will more fully appear when we consider what is the disposition of heart which he manifests while he offends in only one point.

No man has evidence that he loves God supremely, while in the act of committing a known sin, however small. And for lack of this love there is a lack of all that is necessary to *salvation*. Is it not evident that when a man commits what he calls a small sin, his trust is not in God, and,

therefore, if he falls in the way of strong temptations to commit great sins, he will be likely to commit them?

It appears then, that all that prevents one man from sinning so notoriously as another, is not that his heart by nature is better, but because, either he does not fall in the way of as great temptations, or is strengthened by his heavenly Father to withstand and overcome them.

The former, where men are not strongly tempted to sin, may be that restraining grace "which hath appeared unto all men." The latter, where men are strengthened by their heavenly Father to overcome temptation, may be saving grace; for the persons who are thus strengthened are born again—are those who put their trust in God—they are his children.

Cast your eye abroad into the world, and see if you can find an individual, however notoriously wicked, whom you would not resemble, if you were born and educated, in every particular, as he was. If you can, tell us then, what has made you to differ from him, or what good thing have you which you did not receive? If you do differ, essentially, if the motive by which you are actuated is more pure than his, I know what you will say. It is, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

Take heed then, my friends, that you do

not think that heaven and happiness are *justly due to you* for your sober deportment, your strict observance of the Sabbath, and the money you have given to the poor; while you are *influenced by motives similar* to those of the most abandoned persons, in all that you do, and would commit the same crimes that they do, if it were not for the *restraining* grace of God.

Do not say in your hearts, This, or that man, on account of his great wickedness, will surely perish, while for the good deeds that I have done, I shall be saved; but remember that "except you repent you will all likewise perish."

To make this subject still more plain, call to mind the parable of the "prodigal son," and remember that those who remain impenitent very much resemble him, when, after receiving his portion of his father's inheritance, he went into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living. You have wandered far from God—you have *daily received a portion of his bounty*, and there is not one among you who has lived a day, since you knew good from evil, without sinning against God.

Now if you have lived a year, and sinned every day of it without repenting, you have hundreds of sins; at least, charged against you. But if you have lived ten, fifteen, twenty, or perhaps many more years, how

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numerous are they, and how aggravated, even if you have sinned only once a day. But when every imagination of the thoughts of your heart have been evil, and only evil, continually, because they have come forth from a corrupt heart, they equal the stars of heaven, or the sands on the sea-shore. Consider then, my friends, that every one of these has been committed against him whom you ought to love with all your hearts, and you will plainly see why you should be converted and become as a little child—why you must be “born again” if you would enter the kingdom of heaven.

If a dutiful son is tempted, for only once in a long time, to do wrong, and to displease his father, how much sorrow of heart it afterwards occasions him; or if one who is “born of God” is overcome of temptation, in an unguarded moment, how he abhors himself soon afterwards on that account. Like Peter, when the cock-crowing reminds him of his disobedience, he weeps bitterly. But you, who are so stupid and thoughtless that you can transgress God's commands once, twice, and a thousand times, without feeling that sorrow on account of it, that ought to cause you to cry from your hearts, “God, be merciful to me a sinner,” how great must be your anguish when you consider your ways, and become fully convicted of your shocking ingratitude and despe-

rate wickedness to the Author of all your comforts. Surely, *then*, you will unreservedly submit to him, crying from your hearts, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

"There is not a just man that doeth good and sinneth not;" neither is there a just man that repenteth not of his sins; but you, who have not become new creatures, sin constantly and unceasingly, without ever repenting that you have offended a holy God.

Open your eyes, therefore, that you may see your true situation, and your ears that you may understand that you are always acting against God, and be induced to give your whole heart unto him; for many and highly aggravated as are your transgressions, whenever you will humble yourselves "as a little child" in God's sight, he will put his Spirit within you, and make you to know, what before you cannot fully understand, that "except a man be born again he cannot enter" the realms of bliss or dwell in the regions of glory.

In attempting to show what is meant by being born again, we have suggested both the use and necessity of the new birth; but much still remains to be said on both these points. And after we have said all that we can say, much will remain.

The use of a new birth, the benefit or the

good that will result from it, is, like the joys of the righteous in heaven, so great that no mortal heart can conceive it. Love to God, as we have seen, is produced by it; on account of which, God and his beloved Son make their abode with men. "If a man love me he will keep my commands, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." A firm trust in the Almighty is thereby produced; so that the mind, being stayed, not on man, but on God, remains in perfect peace—a full and deep conviction that "all things," however dark they may appear to some, will "work together for good to those who love God," and will prove to be but "light afflictions," working out for them "a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory." Much of the fear of death is destroyed,—the fear of temporal wants is banished. That ardent desire to become like some other human being is removed from the heart; for the true child of God strives to become more and more like the greatest, wisest and best of Beings.

Ask a poor, new-born soul to exchange situations with you, who may be clothed in purple and fare sumptuously every day, and yet know not God. Were you a king, crowned with worldly honors, he would reply to you,

"Your heaps of glittering dust be yours,
And my Redeemer mine."

As the heavens are high above the earth, so much higher is the joy of those who are born of God than that of those who know him not. "There is not a man that hath forsaken houses or lands, wife or children, for my sake and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive, the things that God has prepared for them that love him."

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, having hearts to love God, and putting their trust in him, passed, fearlessly and unhurt, through the midst of the flames of the furnace, while the flames thereof slew those wicked men who cast them into the furnace.

Daniel, trusting in God, remained unhurt in the den of lions, while those who had no hearts to love him were torn to pieces by the lions, as soon as they came to the bottom of the den. To him, this dwelling-place of lions became a *delightful habitation*, because the glory of the Lord appeared round about him; but to them, it was a most dismal and horrid place.

How great was the joy of the apostles of our Lord, even when they were imprisoned and beaten with stripes, or stoned to death.

Remember Peter and Stephen and Paul.

Were they not raised above the world, by being "born again?" O could you know what peace and joy they felt in the Lord, even while bound hand and foot, in prison, or called before magistrates and treated with all manner of reproach and shame, you would be constrained to say, Surely God is with them and for them who put their whole trust in him.

My friends—the God of Daniel, of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego; of Peter, and Stephen, and Paul, is unchangeable—is still the God of all who put their trust in him—of all who repent of their sins, become born again, and delight to do his will. If, then, you desire any good thing, "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and it shall be added unto you." Remember that without this nothing that is really good can be obtained.

The *necessity* of this new birth has already been more than hinted at. And as "without holiness no man can see the Lord," so without being born of God no man can dwell in his presence, or be truly happy, in this or any other world.

There is nothing in or about any one who knows good from evil, that prevents the *necessity* of being born of the Spirit. It is "the one thing needful" to every man and woman. If any, like the young man in the

Gospel, think they have kept all the commands from *their youth up*, they may be assured that this one thing is still needful to make them willing to devote themselves entirely to the service of God—willing to take up their cross and follow the Savior.

And should any think that their dispositions are so amiable; their conduct so regular; their kindness to the sick and distressed so frequent; their alms-deeds so numerous, that surely happiness and heaven must be their reward for all these things; they too may rest assured that one thing is still needful to them. Indeed, no one of you whose chief concern is to obtain worldly treasure, honor, power or pleasure, should doubt that a heart to love God supremely is absolutely necessary to your present, future, and eternal happiness; “for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” *He that is not for God is against him; he that gathereth not with him scattereth abroad, and is, therefore, in the “broad way to destruction.”*

Why will you continue to act against the Almighty? Can you expect to prevail against him? You must be aware that your souls, as well as bodies, are entirely in the power of your Maker. How then can you expect to be protected, preserved and supported by one in whom you are not willing to trust?

You are in the constant pursuit of happiness; but what reasonable hope can you have that you shall ever obtain it while you do not walk in the paths of peace? Have you power to lay plans and to execute them, without any prospect of disappointment, and without looking to God for direction? Does not experience teach you daily, that while you seek happiness from earthly objects, you are going farther and farther from it? How often your calculations are disappointed. How generally your expected pleasure flies. How frequently the thoughts of sickness and death disturb your minds.

To prevent all these things, how important, how absolutely necessary, is it, that your minds should be placed upon God; for both reason and Revelation teach us, that, whatsoever may be their situation, God will "keep those in perfect peace whose minds are stayed on him."

You all believe in the immortality of the soul, and I presume are convinced that the most certain way to obtain present and future happiness is to gain the favor or the love of God, by doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with him; but some, and perhaps many of you, think you can attain present happiness, and hope for future, also, without loving and serving God on earth. My friends—such thoughts

and such hopes are utterly vain. If they were not, however, why should you wish to avoid serving your *Maker*?

Are you a parent, you think it is perfectly just that your child should submit to you and obey you; because, of himself, the child knows not what will either benefit or injure him. Why then do you not submit to and obey your heavenly Father? for of yourself you know no more what is for your *true interest*, than your infant child does.

Better, far better, would it be for that man who does not consider his ways, repent of his sins, and turn to the Lord, being born of the Spirit, if he had never been born into the world; for with a heart unreconciled to God, with a mind that is carnal, and at enmity against him—that is not subject to his holy laws and dispensations, “neither indeed can be,” what happiness can any *one enjoy on earth*? and instead of happiness in a future world, it is as certain as the word of God is true, that, so remaining, he will “receive indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish,” and will “be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.”

Surely, my friends, if anything is necessary; if food and drink, raiment and habitation are necessary, to be born of the

Spirit is much more so; for without this we cannot really enjoy even this life; much less that future life, where our portion must be with the devil and his angels.

You have now seen what is meant by the words "born again," and from what has been said, I think you cannot doubt that its benefits are vast and unspeakable, and that its *necessity* is absolute. Perhaps some are ready to ask, "What must I do to be 'born again?'"

You must repent immediately. Call to mind your past conduct, consider how wonderful is the love of God now displayed in your behalf, and how wonderful it has ever been. How ungrateful you have been to him! Why have you lived so many years, and continually received good things from the hand of the Lord, without ever showing your gratitude by loving him and keeping his commands? Why do you daily and hourly do that which you know he has commanded you not to do, without feeling the least godly sorrow that you have sinned against him, and without praying unto him to pardon you? Why have you so often heard his holy commands and kind invitations without regarding them? Do you despise the Almighty? Can you hide yourselves from his presence? Can you flee where death will not

and cannot find you? Can you avoid the sound of the trump of God that will awake the dead to judgment? Can you become deaf to that voice which will say unto you, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?"

Surely you must be fully aware that you cannot prevail by resisting the Maker of all things. Why then have you lived so many years without hearkening to the commands and kind invitations of your Maker? Tell us, O tell us, my friends, what there is in God that you so much despise? What is there in heaven that you wish to avoid? Is it for the numerous good things that you constantly receive? Is it for the bodily health he has given you; or is it for his unspeakable love in sending his beloved Son to suffer and die for you? Is it because he invites you to his arms? Many good works has God done unto you; for which of these do you manifest so much hatred to him? What can you answer to all these questions? Must it not be, I have chosen darkness rather than light, because my deeds are evil?

How can you, therefore, even *hope* to avoid condemnation while remaining in your present state? Remember that you are "condemned already," and numbered with the haters of God; for "whosoever believeth not is condemned already, be-

cause he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.”

My dear hearers—those who speak to you in obedience to God’s command, concerning the things of his kingdom, are instruments through whom he speaks to you himself. Every time, therefore, that you neglect to hear and obey the word of God, you say unto your Maker, “Depart from me, for I desire not a knowledge of thy ways.” “Go thy way for this time, and when I have a more convenient season I will call for thee.”

Your first call was your most convenient season; but that is past. The present is probably the most convenient you will ever again have. It may be the *only* season. Forget not that rich man who said to his soul, “Eat, drink, and take thine ease; thou hast much goods laid up for many years;” but remember that “every one that layeth up treasure on earth and is not rich towards God,” is, like that fool, in danger of losing his soul this night.*

* At the time this Sermon was written, the author was a member of a Unitarian Society, a minor, and rather more of a merchant or trader than a farmer. I believe it was written between the calls of customers.

CHAPTER VI.

LETTER TO A UNITARIAN CLERGYMAN.

As soon as Medicus had finished reading this sermon, Louisa, addressing Mary, said, “O Mary, I hope you are satisfied that to be born again is ‘the one thing needful,’ for us all. Are you not, my dear girl?”

“Yes, I am,” she answered; “and have been for a long time; but I fear I have grieved the Holy Spirit in permitting my friends to prevail on me to do as I have done. Our minister has advised me to associate with my friends, to be cheerful and happy, and not entertain such *illiberal* notions of God and my fellow-creatures; but I now believe that when I went into my chamber to dress for the party, I ought to have gone to surrender my heart to God. O Louisa! *you* are happy, *you* are cheerful all the time, because you are so decided all the time. Your friends cannot move you, because you are always looking to Jesus

for direction. Therefore your peace seems to be like 'a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea.' I should not have gone to Mrs. Bloomly's if they had not assured me that Rév. Mr. Orthodox would be there."

"My dear Mary," replied Louisa, "be no longer grieved about this matter; for the mercy of God endureth forever. Only surrender your whole heart unto *him now*, and you will soon hear the blessed Savior say, 'My peace I give unto you.'"

"I know it, dear Louisa; but *you* never resisted the strivings of the Spirit so much as I have. I once had a friend who often reasoned and prayed with, warned and exhorted me, but I always pled inability; and thus grieved the Spirit, and grieved that friend, who at length perceived that his labors were all in vain."

"Do you know the author of that sermon, Mary?" asked Medicus.

"I do not," she replied. "Is it anybody that I know?"

"He is a tradesman and farmer," answered Medicus.

“You surprise me!” exclaimed Mary. “Then it must be the friend to whom I alluded. Have you anything more of his writing?”

“Yes, I have several other manuscripts of his composition. Here is a letter addressed to his former minister. Would you like to hear it read?”

“O yes,” she replied; “but I used to be very indifferent when he wrote and talked and read the same sentiments to me. What can make the difference in my feelings?”

“The Holy Spirit has come,” said Louisa, “and convinced you of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come, and I hope he has sealed you unto the day of redemption; but if we would have the evidence of our adoption, we must not parley with sin; but always resist the devil, and he will then flee, leaving us to go on our way rejoicing. Let us hear the letter, Medicus, if you please.”

“I must soon go to attend a patient; but I believe I shall have time to read it first.” He then read the following—

LETTER TO A UNITARIAN CLERGYMAN.

REVEREND SIR,

Having read your discourse on 1 Tim. 3: 16, I agree with you that we are not to understand by "mystery" "a doctrine which is unintelligible and incomprehensible after it is revealed." But still, I believe that godliness, or "the scheme of redemption," is now, and has ever been, a great mystery to all unbelievers—to all who are not "born of God"—to all who have not repented of all their sins and "become new creatures"—to all natural men; "for the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned:"—to all the world, save those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity; to whom it is given "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God;" while it is not given to unbelievers—"because they, seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not."

Now I verily believe there are many in these days, and in this land, who, "seeing, see not." That is—they see the letter, but do not perceive the spirit of divine truth. The mighty power of God, as displayed in the conversion of sinners, they may see with their natural eyes; but they do not see it

with the eyes of the mind. They read and they hear the word of God; but they understand it not, because their minds and hearts are not wholly given to its Author. Being destitute of true love to God, they hear his words without desiring, above all things, to know their true meaning. Therefore they are as though they heard not. They are like a man who, while deeply engaged in thought upon some subject, has his eyes fixed upon an object, and yet takes no notice of that object.

Men must desire to know the "truth as it is in Jesus," before they will become of that number to whom "it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God." Yea, they must most anxiously desire to know it. They must be ready to sacrifice anything, and everything, for the sake of knowing and obeying the truth.

I do not pretend to believe that it is given to all the followers of the Lamb to understand all the mysteries of the kingdom of God; for I know that many things are "too wonderful" for man's comprehension. I know also that there are weak Christians as well as strong. But this I would say on the authority of scripture, "Christ manifests himself to all his sincere followers, as he does not unto the world." Therefore some of the most important truths of the Gospel are mysteries, even to some of the

most wise and learned men of the world; while the same truths are understood by unlearned and ignorant Christians.

“The mysteries that we speak
Are scandal in the Jews’ esteem,
And folly to the Greek.”

But while I believe that some of the most important truths of the Gospel are mysteries to all men of the world, or to all whose affections are chiefly placed upon earthly objects; I do not pretend to say or think that every truth is equally plain to all whom God has “chosen out of the world.” Those who have passed from death unto life, know what is meant by being “born again;” while this subject appears more or less mysterious to all who have not. With Nicodemus, the latter cry out, “How can these things be?”

Perhaps, however, the way in which “God was manifest in the flesh,” is more or less mysterious to real Christians. And yet I do not think there is an individual, to whom Jesus has manifested himself as he does not to the world, who does not feel that by honoring the Son he honoreth God, and that by honoring not the Son, some honor not the Father. There was a time when the apostles themselves did not understand how Christ could be in the Father—a time when he had many things to say unto them, which they could not then bear—and when he

promised them that they (the things they could not then bear) should be made known to them. "At that day," said he, "ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost. On that day, I think, they understood that God, being a spirit, an immaterial, immortal, the Supreme Being, could and did dwell in a human form—could and did dwell in them, and yet, at the same time, fill all heaven with light, and life, and glory.

Then also was fulfilled the promise of our Savior, "If a man love me he will keep my commands, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." Now no one who believes the Scriptures will doubt that those who were filled with the Holy Ghost loved God; and therefore they will readily admit that the Father and Son (we) both made their abode with them, at the same time that the Holy Ghost dwelt in them. Therefore it may justly be said that the mighty God, bearing three names, dwelt in them in all his fullness, as manifested to mortals.

Now, although I cannot fully understand in what manner God can dwell in a human form; yet I do believe that he has done so—do believe this mystery. And this, not only because the word of God expressly

declares that "God was manifest in the flesh;" but because, through the instrumentality of that flesh, works were done which no man could do except God be with him. Not only do I believe this, because works were done which no man could do except God were with him, but because none but God ever did or could do such things as were performed by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Created beings cannot create. Man cannot create, neither can he annihilate, a single particle of matter. But Jesus, while he was on earth, with a few loaves and fishes, produced at one time food sufficient to satisfy five thousand hungry persons, while there remained a large quantity of fragments.

When I look into the word of God, and behold the Savior himself gradually unfolding his true character to his disciples, till they were forced to exclaim, "Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb; now we are sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee;"—when I hear this same Jesus declaring, "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth," and then hear the first martyr of the cross, (while "filled with the Holy Ghost," and seeing the heavens opened, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God,) praying unto him, under a full and deep conviction of his almighty power, and saying, "Lord

Jesus, receive my spirit;" what am I, that I should resist such a host of evidence? What am I, that I should not adopt the language of Thomas, and not only call him "Lord, but God?"

I cannot possibly conceive of any power that can be greater than "all power." But some who would not disbelieve our Savior's own words, tell us that this was delegated to him. And if by this they mean that the Almighty was pleased to manifest himself to mortals, in a human form, I agree with them. But I do not suppose that those who so speak do so understand. What then do they mean? If "all power" was delegated to our Lord Jesus Christ, that same power which was exercised in this delegation must also be included; otherwise he could not have said, "all power is given."

Let us then compare our Savior with him who made all things, and we shall clearly see that they are equal. God had power to delegate "all power" to a human being. That being, after this delegation, must of course possess the same power with God. He is then able to delegate the same power to another, which he himself has received. If we limit our Savior's power in the least, we make it less than "all." If we do not limit, we must believe him to be the independent, self-existing God.

Do not misunderstand me, Sir; I would not confound the material body of our Savior with the immaterial God. God is a spirit, and I frankly confess that I do not understand the manner of a spirit's existence—it is another mystery. My own soul cannot comprehend itself, much less the Almighty: and yet I am aware that were it not for this soul, I could not communicate my present, or any of my thoughts. Nay, were it not for this soul, I could not think, I could not act in view of motive; but must become as the beasts who have no souls, or as the dust on which I tread.

I do not understand the power of magnetism, and yet I was told a few days since, by a man who held a magnet in his hand, that that magnet possessed the property of being communicated to pieces of steel, enough to fill the whole solar system with magnets, without impairing the properties of that one in the least. Even so, I believe that God can communicate himself to every human form in creation, in such a manner as to direct all their thoughts and actions, without lessening his power in the smallest degree. When God directs all the thoughts and actions of any man, I conceive that that man's thoughts and actions will all be holy. So it was with the apostles while they were under the influence of the Holy Ghost. *Then*, it was not they who

thought, spake, and acted; but the "Spirit of their Father who dwelt in them." Now, as all the Savior's thoughts, words, and actions were perfectly holy—as the Father who was in him always did the works, I would ask, What was there seen or done of him, save that body in which the Father performed the works, that God himself did not perform?

Permit me to say, Sir, that I do believe there is one only living and true God, the Creator of all things—that this God manifests himself to mortals in three distinct ways, besides the works of creation. That voice which said, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" as well as that which said, "this is my beloved Son, hear him," was the voice of God, manifested through the medium of a cloud, and called the voice of the Father. That voice which said, "Lazarus, come forth," "maid, arise," "daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee;" and will say to some at the day of judgment, "Come, ye blessed," and to others, "Depart, ye cursed," was and will be the voice of the same God through the medium of a form, human or divine, called the Son of God—through the medium of that body, natural or spiritual, in which the Father performed the works. That form of a dove—those cloven tongues like as of fire which are spoken of in the

scriptures; as well as the Holy Ghost with which the disciples "were all filled" on the day of Pentecost, and which moved them to "speak with other tongues," and to do "signs and wonders in the name of the holy child Jesus," were the manifestations of the same God, in a manner distinct from the Father or the Son.

However, Sir, if Christ manifests himself to all who love him, as he does, not unto the world, then every one of his true followers, by whatsoever name they are called, will receive one or more rays of the true Sun of Righteousness; while not a single one, in the brightness of its true glory, will fall upon those who love him not. Therefore it would be vain for any mortal to attempt to exhibit our Lord Jesus Christ, in his true character, to any other, to whom he does not manifest himself, "as he does not to the world."

I will not dwell longer on this point. But though I remember that I am young, ignorant, and sinful, and that I am speaking to you, Sir, yet, knowing that the "great day" is at hand, I cannot forbear to mention that I was one of your constant and attentive hearers, until, by constantly searching the Scriptures, I thought you did not, in obedience to the commission of Christ to his disciples, "teach all things whatsoever he has commanded." I must

(for I think I ought, for this once) speak plain. I thought you did not appear to feel the power, though you had the form of godliness—that you did not set forth the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the joys of the righteous; the punishment of the wicked; the necessity of that change of heart without which a man cannot see the kingdom of God—in that light which the word of God sets them forth.

I admit that the subject of your discourse was often good; but there are good words which are no part of the Gospel—there are many things that are good in one place, and not good in another. Many of Seneca's morals are good, as morals; but would not be good as Gospel, from the pulpit. I have sometimes thought, that some of the discourses which I have heard in your meeting-house, are like a structure showing a fine front, but which is founded on the sand. In the mild sunshine of a probationary state, it may stand; but when the rain of death shall descend; the floods of judgment come; the winds of a righteous retribution blow; they will beat upon it, and "great will be the fall thereof."

This is your opinion, you may say. I acknowledge it; but I should not allow myself to communicate it, did I not think it is founded on the word of God.

I hope, Sir, that when you recollect that

many of my kindred according to the flesh are of your congregation—that I ought to love them as myself, and desire nothing more ardently than to promote their highest interest, you will excuse the freedom with which I have written. For if they, or any of my fellow-creatures, are in danger of becoming “castaways” in consequence of not hearing the whole Gospel as it is, and if I really think that this is the case, you cannot wonder that I should greatly desire that they may hear the Gospel, and the whole Gospel.

Reflect a moment, Sir. Ask yourself the following question:—How should I feel, if I saw that my family, while afflicted with a very dangerous disease, which required the utmost care of the most skilful physician, were entrusted to the care of one who greatly mistook their disease, and treated it altogether as a very light one? Would you not strive to convince him of his mistake? Being pained for your family, would you not take down “Modern Practice” or some other book, and show him the symptoms, and the magnitude of their disease, entreating him to apply a suitable remedy?

Judge then, Sir, what must be the feelings of one who sees the never-dying souls of his relatives, diseased with that most fatal of all diseases, sin, and yet under the care of a physician who sees not their dangerous situation. Do not think, Sir, that I

am one of those who "trust in themselves that they are righteous and despise others;" for I know "that in me, that is in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." And if I ever do that which is right in the sight of God, it is solely by his grace that I do it. If I know my own heart, I wish that the Gospel of Christ may prevail everywhere; "for it is the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth." And though I should never be included in the kingdom of God, I think I wish that it may be set up in every heart, till this wilderness shall rejoice, and this desert, now putting forth, shall bud and blossom as the rose.

And now, Rev. Sir, remembering not only that "for every idle word that men shall speak," (whether by paper and ink, or from the pulpit,) "they shall give an account thereof;" but that you and I must soon stand, with all the nations of the earth, before the judgment-seat of Christ, where I must receive for this thing which I now do in the flesh, (whether I do it from a good motive, or bad,)—I am about to seal these remarks, hoping that you will receive, as I think I have penned them, in love.

Yours with due respect,

November 2, 18—.

S—.

NOTE.—Had the farmer penned the foregoing letter and sermon fourteen years later, perhaps he would have expressed his thoughts somewhat differently in several particulars.

“Was this letter ever forwarded to Dr. Liberalis?” asked Louisa, as soon as Medicus had finished reading.

“No,” he answered; “but the farmer, as I will call our friend, informed me that he had often felt as if he was wrong in thus neglecting to do his duty to the minister of his youth. He was afraid of wounding the feelings of the minister and his people, I suppose.”

“The fear of man bringeth a snare,” replied Louisa. “He ought not thus to have conferred with flesh and blood; for God might have blessed his communication to the salvation of that minister and of many of his people.”

“I dare say he was afraid of assuming too much,” said Mary. “The Doctor’s mild temperament is highly estimated by him, I know; and some persons called orthodox think he is a Christian.”

“That may be, Mary,” said Louisa; “but if a physician of a mild temperament were constantly administering a medicine to your diseased friend that you had every reason to believe was increasing the disease,

and preventing the application of an effectual remedy, would you delay the communication of your apprehensions to him merely because of the reputation he sustained among his employers?"

"Perhaps he distrusted his own opinion somewhat, at that time," replied Mary. "It seems, from the date, that it was written some years since."

"I should not think he did from its tenor," replied Louisa. "And in so long a time, some of those friends and relatives for whom he was concerned, have doubtless terminated their probation under that physician's malpractice. Do tell him, Medicus—do advise him to forward the letter immediately. Perhaps it would be advisable to forward it through the press, for if he does not take the warning it affords, there may be some young minister to whom God may bless it. The honest communications of a farmer are sometimes regarded more than the more learned productions of scientific men. I hope he will publish it immediately."

"I will advise him to if you think best,

Louisa," said Medicus; "but I must leave you. Good night."

"I have some letters of the farmer, as Medicus calls him," said Mary; "I want to show them to you, Louisa, now he has gone. I wonder that I did not pay more attention to them, when I first received them."

"Read them," said Louisa; "I want to finish this to-night."

"No, I rather not. I will work while you read them," returned Mary.

Louisa then read the letters; but I have not received Mary's consent to publish them, and therefore must not, at present.

"Why did you not show me those letters before, Mary?" asked Louisa.

"I thought it best not to show them to any one, even to you," answered Mary.

"What do you think of my guilt now? These letters are but a small part of the influence which God has employed to turn me to himself, and I have resisted it all; but if he now forgives and pardons me, I shall have cause to remember his long-suffering towards me forever."

"Did you know that your friend once

addressed a long letter to me, in relation to yourself, exhorting me to remember that I was your most intimate friend, and to exert my influence over you in persuading you to embrace religion? Oh! he loved you very much!”

“No, I did not,” answered Mary. “Do let me see it. I feel that I was not worthy of his regard, and used to tell him that he was not so deceitful as I was; but that only made him think I was guileless. At length I suppose he began to think I spoke the truth. Where is that letter?”

“I will show it you at some time, and should like to see the letter of yours to which he alludes in his last one to you. Let us retire now, and have a little season of prayer and thanksgiving; for I cannot but hope that angels are rejoicing over you, my dear Mary, as a penitent sinner.”

“I am glad you proposed it, Louisa. I need your prayers very much. I am greatly blessed in having such a friend as you are.”

“But, Mary, my dear, you must not look to me, or trust to my prayers; but to God,

and to him who died for you; while you pray for yourself, and 'work out your salvation with fear and trembling.' Love, believe, obey—and the evidence of your acceptance in the beloved Savior will brighten immediately. Let us go."

"Stop a minute, Louisa; I thought I heard the gate open; perhaps your sister Ellen is coming."

"It cannot be her," replied Louisa, "unless the party is broken up earlier than usual."

Ellen then entered, and Louisa continued,—“Why, Ellen, you keep good hours to-night. I did not expect you so soon. Who came home with you?”

“George,” she replied. “All hands seemed to be so dull, that we thought we would take George’s advice, and not continue our dancing so late as we used to.”

“Why! what made them dull?” asked Mary.

“I do not know,” replied Ellen; “but they all thought it was because you and Louisa were not there. They all said you were very foolish, and some called you

superstitious; and others seemed to be confident that this excitement would soon subside, and then both of you would do just as you used to. George told them of a young lady of his acquaintance who became serious, and even joined the church; but after a short time was as fond of dress and parties as she had ever been, only she was more guarded in her speech, more frequently at meeting, and less constant at fashionable parties. And he said that was doing just right; and I thought so too; and so they all thought. We concluded, however, that we had continued our assemblies too late heretofore, and had sometimes been too frolicsome and thoughtless; and therefore the proper way was to reform, and to abolish them."

"Dear sister," said Louisa, "Mary and I were just retiring when we heard you coming. 'One thing is needful,' *you know*, and I hope cousin Mary has chosen it. Good night, sister."

"Good night, Ellen," said Mary, as she was retiring with Louisa.

CHAPTER VII.

CONVERSATION, MEDITATION, AND REFLECTION.

WE will not pretend to narrate the delightful intercourse of Louisa and Mary, after they had retired to commune with each other, and with their Maker. Suffice it to say, that before morning Mary's darkness and doubts were removed by sincere repentance and prevailing prayer; so that both she and Louisa fully understood the indescribable emotions of Paul and Silas when they "prayed and sang praises" at midnight, and their neighbors heard them.

The following day was the happiest that Mary had ever been conscious of spending anywhere; and Louisa, keeping her mind constantly stayed on God, constantly looking unto Jesus, remained in perfect peace, praying without ceasing and rejoicing evermore. Therefore she was always prepared to resist the devil in his first approaches; and in fact to assail him in his strong-holds

by doing good as she had opportunity; whether it was in “converting sinners from the error of their ways and hiding a multitude of sins;” in working with her hands for the support of those who preach “deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;” or in improving her own mind and heart.

The party at Mrs. Bloomly’s might have been pleasant to one or two of the gentlemen and ladies who were its most attractive beaux or belles. But even Miss Auburn, the centre of attraction, was not so much worshipped by the company as she had been at Boston; nor was the company so fashionably attired as that to which she had been accustomed. She thought some of them vulgar, because they did not crouch to her; while *they* felt unpleasantly, because some of their neighbors were so entirely devoted to her, and, as they thought, not even civil to themselves.

In fact, aristocratical feelings—the opposite of Christian—pervaded the whole company, from the highest to the lowest, and marred the enjoyment, even of those who

looked down with supercilious contempt on almost all the rest; for the meek only can inherit or enjoy the earth.

Conscience, too, was now a prominent disturber of the peace of many of them; for the late events had made him raise his voice louder than he had formerly done. No one asked, "Where is Louisa?" it is true; for almost all of them thought of her, as being engaged in something useful to herself and her fellow-creatures, and as happy and cheerful in such circumstances as would not afford *them* the least satisfaction; for their hearts and their treasures were all on the earth.

Frequent inquiries were made for Mary, however, by those who had not seen her there; and when John announced his agreement, all, excepting the more discerning, testified their satisfaction. Those who had been repeatedly foiled in their attempts to lead her into temptation, had begun to perceive the hopelessness of their efforts, and to fear that they were fighting against him who had begun a good work in her, which he would perfect to the day of judgment. Still,

some of them believed they could convince her there was a time for every purpose under heaven, even for dancing and other amusements from which Louisa had withdrawn.

On the evening appointed for the assembly in which Louisa was again to appear as the reigning belle—presiding over and directing all its entertainments—a very large company had assembled. James Clearlight, who, since his repeated interviews with Louisa, had been very silent, sober, and apparently indifferent to the various entertainments that were set on foot almost every evening during the college vacation, was there, and *Medicus and Mary* also; for they were all satisfied, that if the promise made to Louisa was adhered to, the association would be one of no ordinary character.

As is usual, those who arrived first were soon engaged in conversation about the last great party, and those whom they met there.

“How were you pleased with the entertainment the other evening?” said Sarah to Ellen.

“Very much,” answered she; “only I thought William was very rude and impolite. He showed me such marked neglect that I could not bear him.”

“He appeared much devoted to Miss A.,” said Sarah. “I suppose he is after her money. She is a proud creature, but vastly his superior. I mistake if she has much to say to him.”

“She,” said Leonora, “appeared anxious to secure the attentions of the old governor’s son, but he will never like her airs.”

“I thought she danced handsomely,” said Ellen, “and was very handsomely dressed.”

“I never heard such music before!” exclaimed John. “It was horrid!”

“I thought it was decent,” said Ruth.

“I wish I had stayed at home,” said Elizabeth.

“I thought you appeared to enjoy yourself very much,” replied Ruth. “George appeared very attentive to you.”

“I hate him,” said she. “I would not have danced with him, but thought it wouldn’t do to refuse.”

“I wonder where Louisa is,” said Ellen.

“I think she is in one of the other rooms,” replied John. “I thought I heard her voice.”

“I did not expect she would come,” said Ellen.

“If John had not promised her that we would do nothing unpleasant to her feelings, and given her the privilege of determining the manner in which the evening should be spent, she would not have consented,” said Elizabeth.

The door now opened, and George, Louisa, and several others entered. Salutations having been exchanged, George, addressing Louisa, said,—

“I believe you, Louisa, are to prescribe to us the manner in which we shall spend the evening.”

“I shall not *prescribe*,” she replied. “I think we should always consider, before we engage in anything, whether it will accord with the end of our being, and yield us the *anticipated effects*. I will first propound a question, a very simple one, the answer to which I presume we all know; though perhaps some of us have not sufficiently

considered its meaning. It is this: 'What is the chief end of man?'"

Smiles ensued; and George answered,—
 "We shall not attempt to dispute with our Catechism, Louisa. 'Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.'"

"If we should spend this evening, then, in any way that will not coincide with the end of our being, we should do wrong; should we not?" said Louisa.

"I think we should," answered George; "but it is necessary that the mind should have some relaxation from religious duties."

"You speak of religious duties as if they were exceedingly wearisome," said Louisa; "but I find it as I read, 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.' Never did I receive so much pleasure from any source as I have when conscious of activity in the service of God. It is a want of love that makes the duties of religion wearisome. We all know that we delight to think of those friends, whom we best love—delight to ascertain their desires, and equally to gratify them. Now if we love God supremely, we shall delight to

ascertain and perform *his* will; not only because we love him, but because we shall feel that our own and our fellow-creatures' happiness is thereby promoted in the highest possible degree. 'If a man love me he will keep my commands,' said the Savior. His obedience is the effect, not the cause, of God's love to him, or his love to God; and the same cause, under the same circumstances, will always produce the same effect, you know. We see then that true love to God will afford real happiness, while it disposes us to seek and serve him heartily. But here is an article on the subject, from the pen of an acquaintance of some of our company," continued she, holding a paper in her hand. "I think it will be interesting, as well as profitable, to us all. Will you read it, George?"

"I will, with pleasure, Louisa," answered he, "if you will permit me to criticise it."

George then read the following, which was written many years since by the author of the foregoing letter and sermon.

SUMMER-EVENING MEDITATIONS.

Fatigued with the labors of the day, I left home last evening, walked away from the noise and bustle of the town, entered a green pasture, and sat down on a rock near a beautiful collection of "still water," highly pleased with the scenery around me.

The fair and full moon first caught my special attention; then the countless stars that spangled the clear blue firmament. In vain did I look from moon to star, and from one star to another, seeking disorder and darkness among the heavenly bodies. All was bright and transcendently glorious. All spake as with one voice. That voice was praise to their Maker.

I then turned my eyes to the earth, looking around far and near. The moon had gilded every visible object—the field-lilies, "more glorious than Solomon in all his glory," gently waved together in the gentler breeze. Before me was the sublime ocean, extending far and wide, and glittering like finely polished silver. On my

right hand was a capacious valley, in which numberless *fire-flies* were constantly emitting and concealing their light. Several hills were beyond, and several stately oaks on their tops. On my left hand, at a little distance, was a small grove of oak trees, moving simultaneously in the breeze. The still water behind me seemed ready to break forth in praise—the little fish leaped from its depths.

I listened—the ocean roared forth its praises in unison with the rustling of the trees and the still, small, harmonious voice of the wind—the frogs in the vale spoke out, and the voice of the turtle was heard.

Almost astonished at my own apathy, I could not but feel the force of the Psalmist's declaration, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handy works"—the valleys are bright and filled with praise—the little hills rejoice on every side, and "all the trees of the field clap their hands." The waters leap for joy, and everything in heaven above, in the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth, is full of the praises of God.

I turned my eyes again to the starry heavens; and perceiving nothing against, but much in favor of the supposition that all the countless "worlds on worlds," that seemed suspended over my head, were filled with beings whose mouths were full of the praises of God, I concluded it was so.

Feeling myself as a worm—a vile worm—as the only insect in the creation of the Most High, that did not unite with angels round his throne in ascribing glory to God and the Lamb forever and ever, I surveyed the scene again and again.

Obedience was inscribed on every visible object, from the smallest spire of grass to the largest tree, or from the minutest particle of dust beneath my feet to the mightiest world over my head. The fields had heard the command, "Bring forth food for man and grass for the beasts, man's servants;"—the forests listened to the voice of their Maker and put forth their strength in the production of materials for habitations, and fuel, and furniture, for man's convenience and comfort—the hills were perpetually sending forth from their base their

clear, cool waters—delightful to the thirsty soul.

I turned my thoughts upon myself and my species, and was, ere I was aware, listening to words called forth by my mental emotions, “Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?” O why are all heaven and earth united in pouring their blessings on the rebellious children of men?

In the midst of this train of reflections, I walked homeward. As I drew near the village, the first house that caught my special attention was one from which I heard the sound of music and dancing; and from the character of some of the persons whom I knew, and of the amusement, was led to the conclusion that God was not in all their thoughts. I stopped to reflect, and my heart cried out, “A blot upon this magnificent universe!” A blot which, had it been in my power, I would have wiped away in an instant. But as I could not, I walked onward, and presently found myself in Main Street.

My steps were slow and thoughtful, for

I quickly perceived that I was passing away from the scenes that had conspired to elevate my thoughts and make me feel my immortality.

In a few minutes I was near the centre of the town, and sat down, observing, listening, reflecting. Some boys were playing near me; but playing soon became changed to quarrelling. A trifling circumstance had raised a dispute which was likely to end in fighting. Ladies and gentlemen, who were enjoying the cool and refreshing air of the evening, were constantly passing me; and while their bodies were in motion, their minds were not vacant.

Two gentlemen stood near me, speaking of an acquaintance of mine. One of them said to the other; "He is doing well."

"Doing well," said I; "I am very glad to hear it. He was a very clever young man. But what is he doing?"

"Making money very fast," was his answer.

"Making money?" returned I; "do you call that doing well? You remember Mr. Thrift—he accumulated a large property,

but never appeared to enjoy it. He was constantly and anxiously striving for more, till by death he was removed from this world, and left his property to a very dissipated son. *That property is now doing a vast deal of evil in the world. Nor is this a rare instance of the prodigality of the son of a parsimonious father.*"

"That is true," replied he; "but if to be diligent in business—successfully striving to obtain money for the support of one's family, is not doing well, tell us, if you can, what it is to do well."

"No man," I answered, with much confidence and warmth of feeling, "*does well, whose heart does not unite with surrounding nature in praising his Maker. He may accumulate property and do well; but if he loves God supremely, that love will move him to consecrate his wealth to God's service; and no man who is destitute of this love does well, whether he make money or lose money.*"

"You speak of loving God supremely," he answered; "*but I know not what you mean. I believe that every honest man*

who is upright in his dealings, and diligent in his business, will be as happy at last as your rigid, "go-to-meeting sort of folks."

"So do I," was my reply. "But to be honest in the sight of men and in the sight of God are two things. You mean the former, I the latter. To be honest in God's sight is to have our conduct influenced by a pure motive; but to be honest according to the common acceptation of the term, is simply not to defraud a white human being. However, I have not yet answered your question, and as I feel desirous to convince you that no man can *do well*, unless he does that which God has made it his duty to do; and as I am well persuaded that you will strive to do so, as soon as you are *fully* convinced of it, I should be pleased to pursue this inquiry, if you will remain with me a short time.

"Whenever we are truly happy ourselves," I continued, "we desire the happiness of our fellow-creatures. As then the meditations and reflections of this beautiful evening have made me uncommonly happy, I believe it is my sincere desire to convince

you of the fact, and its cause, that you also may be thus happy. Look around you—there are boys at play—young men are constantly passing—some in pursuit of the young ladies of their acquaintance, some of the young ladies of their love, and others in company with them I suppose. Others, having finished their daily business, are resorting to a grog-shop or bar-room. Some are on their way to a religious meeting, and others to a meeting for pleasure; while men of business are passing together in conversation upon the means of gaining money.

“Now you are aware that they are all in pursuit of one object—happiness. The means they use to attain it are exceedingly diverse, and often diametrically opposite, it is true; but this diversity seems to arise from a difference in opinion respecting the means of obtaining the object. Let us examine our pursuits then, and, if possible, ascertain whether they will really conduct us to the desired happiness.

“We are moved to action by our desires and passions; but do we know whether

the gratification of these desires and passions will eventually produce happiness or misery? You are chewing tobacco, and *now* feel that it affords you some gratification; but you do not know how it is affecting your bodily health. Your constitution may be such that it will at length produce some painful and fatal disease. Thus your *present* pleasure *may be* purchased at the expense of much *future* enjoyment.

“Let us then come to the point, and inquire whether there is any certain way to real happiness. You are somewhat acquainted with the world, and your own observations may coincide with mine, and dispose you to draw the conclusion, that although there is no such thing as uninterrupted and perfect happiness in the world, there is an approach to it.”

“I don’t know about that!” exclaimed the gentleman. “What produces this approach to happiness?”

“Submission to the will of God,” I answered. “By submission, however, I do not mean insensibility or inactivity; for I believe that every one who submits to the

will of God is sensible of his goodness and active in his service. Your little boy knows no more what will advance his temporal interests, than he did on the day of his birth; but your experience enables *you* so to instruct him, that he will avoid many evils by obeying your commands. You not only feel that it is *your child's duty* and interest to obey; but that so young a child has *no right, and ought to have no inclination, to disobey you*. You *know* that love for your own offspring moves you to command and teach him, but he, when the gratification of his inclination is thwarted by your commands, may not see the propriety or benefit of obeying you.

“Now ‘men are but children of a larger growth,’ you know. You and I are far more dependent on *God* for a knowledge of what will promote our true interests, than *your little son* is upon you.”

“I am aware of that,” he replied.

“You admit the fact,” returned I; “but perhaps you do not *feel* your entire dependence; if you did, submission to *God's* will would be the consequence. For you will

perceive, at once, that no man can feel *entirely* dependent on God for all things, and at the same time neglect to walk in the way which the Being on whom he is thus dependent has commanded. The language of disobedience is, I am *not* entirely dependent. I step aside from the command of God, because I feel that I shall thereby be profited.

“Call to mind your thoughts and feelings when, a year or two since, God was pleased to remove from you a beloved and blooming daughter. How different would have been your emotions on that occasion, had you felt that it was God who had done it—that he had done it for the good of his creatures.”

“I know it,” he replied. “Death never appeared to me like the ‘king of terrors’ before, and it has seemed very terrible ever since; though I then almost desired to be buried in the same grave with my dear daughter.”

“Submission to the will of God, my dear Sir,” replied I, “would deliver you from that fear of death which makes you ‘all

your life-time subject to bondage;’ for death under such *circumstances* would be the ‘gate of endless joy’ to your soul. Then, too, your affections would not, as they now are, be bound to earthly objects. You would feel that all your relatives, friends, and possessions, were given you by God to improve in his service, for the good of yourself and others, till he is pleased to remove them from you, for the greater good of all who love him; for ‘all things work together for good to those who love God.’ ”

“Oh, Sir,” asked the gentleman, “is it certain that submission to the will of God will remove the fear of death and make it seem to us like ‘the gate of endless joy?’ I have often thought I should be willing to do anything that would keep out of my mind the thoughts of dying; but if happiness could be associated with the thoughts of death, I think it would not seem so terrible.”

“It is certain, Sir,” replied I, “that

‘Death cannot make our souls afraid.

If God be with us there;

We *may* pass through death's darkest shade,
And never yield to fear.'

"Depend upon it, my dear Sir," I continued, taking the gentleman's hand to take leave of him, "depend upon it, the grand business of life, as well as the chief source of happiness, is to seek out the pleasant ways, and to walk in all the peaceful paths of true wisdom."

I then returned home, in a far more desirable state of mind than it is possible for worldly honor and earthly treasure unitedly to produce. And I have now taken my pen to try to convince my neighbors that substantial happiness may be derived from such a contemplation of the works and ways of God, as will produce SUBMISSION TO HIS HOLY WILL, OR CHEERFUL ACTIVITY IN HIS SERVICE.

A FARMER.

"What have you to say of this article, George?" asked Louisa, as soon as he had finished reading it.

"I have two objections to it," he answered. "FIRST, I suspect it is a fiction; SECOND, I do not believe that a company of young

persons met together to enjoy themselves is 'a blot upon this magnificent universe.' Had the farmer said this of a bar, instead of a ball-room company, I should agree with him perfectly; but I do not believe there is any more sin in dancing than in walking and running."

"Suppose it *is* fiction," said Louisa, "what difference does it make to you? The points intended to be illustrated by it seem to be, *that all the works of God praise him except man; and that love and obedience to God will produce the happiness we all so much desire.* Your objection may lie with equal force against some of the parables of our Savior, perhaps. It is of no consequence to me whether the priest, Levite, and good Samaritan really acted the part they are represented to have acted towards a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, or towards some other man. *The question is—what truth did Jesus intend to illustrate by the narration?*

"What truth did Christ design to teach in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus? I cannot perceive that a knowledge of the

time and place of the earthly existence of these men, at all affects the truth our Savior intended to teach and to impress on the minds of all who then heard or now read the parable. The representation in the article you have read seems to me to be in perfect accordance with what we know of ourselves and our world, and I see no reason to doubt that everything actually transpired as is there related; but if it were wholly imaginative, the truth intended to be impressed on our minds would not be less apparent, if the narration accords with what we know of human nature."

"I don't know but you are right, Louisa," replied George; "but I think you will find it difficult to prove that dancing is more sinful than walking."

"I believe," replied Louisa, "that walking is sinful, and eating, and drinking, and sleeping, and everything else, when the heart is not right in God's sight—when our motive is not to glorify God and do good to mankind."

"We glorify God and do good to man-

kind when we take exercise that will promote health; and dancing will do this, I believe," said George.

"But suppose that with an increase of health we receive increased power and *disposition* to do evil," said Louisa, "how is God glorified and man benefited by that exercise?"

"It would seem that the reverse would then take place; but I believe dancing is a very *innocent employment*, and would dance myself if I were not expecting to preach so soon."

"He that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin," said Louisa. "This is the rule. Now would that good Samaritan have done right, to have spent at a dance the same time and money that he did to relieve his half-dead *neighbor*, and left the dying man, as did the priest and the Levite, to the mercy of the thieves?"

"Oh no!" replied George; "but after he had relieved him he might."

"Not if his time and money could be again employed in a similar manner," said Louisa; "for then he would not have done

therewith the good which he still might do. And as long as many thousands of our neighbors are half dead among thieves, as long as we ourselves are 'in the bonds of iniquity;' there is no time given us by God for dancing, or any other employment that squanders the time and money we his stewards possess. He justly demands the whole heart, and when that is withheld all is sinful. But you and I, George, are engrossing the attention of the whole company."

"George," said one of the ladies, "I think you are mistaken about the article you have read being a fiction; for I believe the gentleman with whom that conversation was held was my father, and the daughter he lost my younger sister. I was related to and acquainted with the farmer, and received a letter from him on that occasion, which I now have, and should like to hear you read it, if Louisa and the company consent."

They all consented, and George read the following—

LETTER TO A MOURNER.

MY DEAR COUSIN,

Since I heard of the death of your only and beloved sister, and of your very great affliction in consequence, you have been on my mind so much that I cannot longer neglect to obey its monitions, and have therefore taken this pen and paper to communicate to you some of my thoughts.

In this hour of sorrow I greatly desire to impart to you my own full and deep conviction of the truth of the scripture that declares, "*All things shall work together for good to those who love God;*" for even if I do not love God myself, I rejoice that nothing can essentially harm those who do love him. It is true that no affliction *for the present* seemeth to you joyous, but grievous; nevertheless it is undoubtedly designed to work out the peaceable fruits of righteousness to all who are exercised thereby. When, therefore, this effect is produced, it becomes a means of good to those who do not love him.'

We may be assured, then, that "afflictions come not by chance, neither do troubles spring forth from the ground," but are ordained and administered by him who "does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; but for their profit, that

they may be partakers of his holiness," and consequently of his happiness.

I can easily conceive that everything around you wears a gloomy aspect at the present time; but the poignancy of your past anguish no one but yourself and those who have been similarly circumstanced *can* conceive. And yet there is balm in Gilead, and Christ the Physician is ever ready to impart it to all who trust in him. He is the friend that sticketh closer than a brother or *a sister*, to all who love him. He is the omnipotent Friend who says to you, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me"—who has so loved you as to give his own life a ransom for you. And while he "ever liveth to make effectual intercession" for all who love him, he is ever ready to say, "Peace, be still," to all the elements and enemies that disturb us, and to produce a great calm in our souls.

Can you not then adopt the language of Job, my dear cousin, and say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be his name?" Why should you not, since the same love that moved him to give, has also moved him to take away your dear sister? "Every good and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning." Ask yourself

then, For what did I love my departed sister? Was it not because she was lovely in herself, and because she loved me so much—because we took so much sweet counsel together, and so often walked to the house of God in company—because she so often manifested her love for me by seeking to please me?

But who gave you this invaluable treasure? Who has given you all the invaluable ones that yet remain—your dear parents, and other relatives and friends, and comforts? Who so loved you as to give his only-begotten Son to die for you? Do you love *him* “because he first loved” you; and fully evinced this love, even in the bestowment and removal of that dear departed one whose loss you now mourn? Then surely you will feel that the Judge of all the earth—the mighty God and everlasting Father—the source of all good; is the proper object of your supreme affection.

One grand cause of all inordinate grief is derived from a wrong estimate of earthly friends and sublunary things. Instead of regarding ourselves as “strangers and pilgrims on earth,” passing through to enlighten and improve it, receiving God’s blessings only as lent treasures; we practically make it our “continuing city,” fasten our hold on its mutable objects, and neglect to seek a city that hath permanent foundations,

whose builder and maker is God. When, therefore, God is pleased to remove the objects of our affections, we “sorrow as those who have no hope,”—as those who do not believe that not even a sparrow falleth to the ground without God’s notice; and not as if we believed that the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

When God calls for his lent treasures, that we have enjoyed so long without interruption or cessation, we call them our own, and are not prepared to surrender them cheerfully, even though we admit his right to do it, and his manifested love to us, even in that call. Now if your neighbor had loaned you something you prized very highly, and had permitted you to enjoy it for years, you would be constantly in readiness to part with that object, feeling grateful to him in proportion to the value of the object and the time you had retained it. Hence the removal of our friends, and other blessings, ought to remind us of our long-continued and incessant obligations to God, and lead us to ask, Have I not loved this creature more than my Creator; and has not God taken away his own, because it had become my idol—because I was injuring myself and dishonoring him by breaking the command, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me?”

If it is right, my dear cousin, that we

should love earthly beings in proportion to their value and the evidence we have of *their regard for ourselves*, must it not be wrong not to love the Giver of all more than them; and therefore wrong not to be resigned and *submissive to all the dispensations of his providence*; remembering that “whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth?”

“Death is the gate of endless joy,” said Dr. Watts; and it would ever be so regarded by all who go in thereat, and all who are called to bid *adieu to those friends whom God calls to walk through the valley of its shadow*, if a right estimate and regard for the Creator and the creature were *universal*. With Stephen, we should then see the heavens opened and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and lift up our heads on the bed of death, rejoicing that our redemption draweth nigh. Nor should we so much regret the departure of those with whom we are in alliance; for that selfishness we now so *generally exercise* would be removed, and we should rejoice in *their* redemption as we should in our own.

How is it now in a temporal removal? When our friends are called to leave us for a distant region, if we have reason to conclude that their own happiness is greatly advanced thereby, we think it is selfishness

that would continue them in our immediate presence and intercourse; and, therefore, true love will check the first impulses of selfishness, and rejoice even in the absence of the loved ones, because their happiness is thereby increased. Their joy is our joy. And when the events of God's providence remove our friends from us, and leave but little evidence that their happiness is increased, a submissive spirit would then acquiesce in his wise and holy dispensations, striving to become conformed to his will, and to profit by them all, remembering that the time will come when we shall no longer "see through a glass, darkly," and "that it is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment." The day of judgment is the great day for which we should all strive to be prepared, and for which the recent event should tend to prepare you, my dear cousin—for the time of all who survive their lost friends is short, even when life is most protracted. It is short—therefore those who weep should be as though they wept not, as well as those who rejoice as though they rejoiced not. Do try to repose full confidence in the blessed Savior, and to cast all your care upon him who died for you; for like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth those who fear him. Give him therefore your whole heart, and he will fill the void which

the death of your dear sister has there made. Let nothing hinder you, and you will soon hear his voice saying unto you, "*my peace* I give unto you," and experience that great calm which he only can produce in your troubled soul. My best respects to your parents and all my friends.

From your friend S—.

A conference on religious subjects, in which many of the company took some part, followed the reading of this letter. Some vindicated the truth, and others advocated some erroneous opinion; but the evening was probably spent in a profitable, though an entirely different manner from any one that had previously been spent, by so large a company, in that village.

An intelligent young stranger, having been invited to attend the party, and understanding its peculiar character, was present, and soon attracted much attention. Louisa found him a valuable assistant in her untiring efforts to do good, and he was charmed with her most decided and unassuming piety.

A stranger in a country village, if he be of a prepossessing appearance and good

address, often exerts much more influence on its inhabitants than a native individual of superior intellectual, moral, or religious attainments; for he is heard without prejudice. This young gentleman, coming among them at such a time, with that purity of heart and sweetness of temper which is the legitimate fruit of true religion, and having his strong mind well stored with biblical knowledge, produced a great effect on the company assembled.

Almost all the company seemed to desire that this stranger would close this conference party with prayer. Having done so, he asked the pleasure (and pleasure it was) of attending Louisa to her residence. His name we will call Newtonius; but must leave the events of many succeeding weeks and years, and notice, in the next chapter, some of the consequences of resisting the strivings of the Holy Spirit, and the tendency of erroneous sentiments.

CHAPTER VIII.

A COLLOQUY IN A PRISON.

GREAT changes generally take place in a *New-England village* in thirty or forty years. Many youthful hopes are crushed—many parental anticipations blasted; and many graves opened; but sin—the grand destroyer—unbelief of fundamental truth, is often the pillar and ground of that destruction. “Sin kills beyond the tomb.”

Medicus continued many years a successful practitioner in the village where he early established himself; but most of his associates had died, or been scattered abroad, before he became a *decided Christian*, and the distinguished philanthropist of our first chapter.

Louisa had become a wife, and the mother of several sons and daughters, among whom was “the convert,” whose course we have before marked as being among the subjects

of the revival of 1840. She had returned to her native village, with her husband, on a visit, when, hearing that John Clearlight had committed a crime and was imprisoned, she solicited Newtonius to go and see him, in company with Medicus, whose surgical aid had been called for.

As soon as they had entered the prison and observed the prisoner, Medicus exclaimed,—

“Ah! my old friend John, I am very sorry to see you here under such circumstances!”

“O Medicus! Medicus!” returned John; “I am a ruined man, I am a lost man; but I am very glad to see you, even here.”

“Do you know the prisoner, Sir?” asked the jailer, addressing Medicus.

“I do,” he replied; “but I must dress his wound, and then I will inform you what I know about him.”

The wound having been dressed, Medicus remarked as follows:—

“I was brought up in this town and neighborhood with your prisoner. When he was at college, an event occurred here

that produced much excitement for a time. —The belle, that is, the most celebrated young lady of the village, was converted, and afterwards so exerted her influence that many others were awakened; but your prisoner remained through the whole excitement a violent opposer of Louisa, the converted belle, and her associates.

“I also opposed her, at first, but at length my opposition ceased, and I was convicted of my sins; but being in love with a young lady who could not bear to see me serious, for her sake I neglected the one thing needful, and was soon afterwards married to her. She was fond of high life and pleasure, and my income was yearly expended without doing good to any one. We were blessed with children, but we taught them to seek the things of which we ourselves were fond. They grew up ‘lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;’ and I know not what the end of some of them will be, even in this life, much less in the future.

“As to myself, every time I met the devoted Louisa my heart reproached me;

but it is within a few years, that the Lord has, as I hope, been pleased to open my eyes, and place my supreme affections on himself.

“John was soon married to a young lady named Charlotte who had been one of Louisa’s intimate friends, and who at the time of her conversion, like myself, became somewhat serious, but whose impressions were destroyed by the efforts of John and her other acquaintance. He grew more and more dissipated—she, more and more hardened. Their love was of short duration, for it was not founded upon estimation of each other’s virtues. Many were their quarrels, till at length a separation took place. Charlotte became an abandoned woman—John the ruiner of many others.

“His large property enabled him, for a time, to run into every excess that could be thought of. He had many companions, for those who had expended their own property in dissipation, were very ready to encourage him in every vicious pursuit and pleasure, that they might thereby gratify their corrupt desires at his expense.

“He was in love with a worthless woman, who also had another lover among his associates. In one of their midnight revels, John and the other lover quarrelled, and murder was committed. John’s violent temper knew no bounds until his associate was breathless. For this crime he has been committed to your care.”

“O, unhappy man!” exclaimed the jailer. “You have spoken frequently, Sir, of the wife of your friend; I should be pleased to know more about her.”

“I will most cheerfully inform you,” replied Medicus. “Her history proves the promise of our Savior, ‘They who seek me early shall find me.’ Every possible effort was made by me and her other acquaintance, to turn off her mind from religion, but all to no purpose. Her heart was fixed—she was obedient to the commands of God, and she felt the power and the joy of religion in her soul. And while many of her opposers were, by their example and conversation, drawing their fellow-creatures into sin and its attendant evils, she was as a light on a candlestick, or as

the rising sun. Her time was all employed, and employed in doing good to herself or her fellow-creatures. She became acquainted with my friend, Newtonius, who, possessing a kindred spirit, was charmed with her virtues, and soon married to her. They were blessed with posterity, and, possessing hearts to 'bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,' they not only watched them at home, but were careful that they should not become corrupted abroad. Several of them have become the most pious, intelligent, and active young clergymen in these parts of our country.

“As to the temporal prospects of Louisa and her husband, they might have been rich; but their hearts were not placed on mammon, and they delighted in doing good with whatsoever God was pleased to entrust them. Nor have their efforts been fruitless. Multitudes have, through their instrumentality, been converted from the error of their ways unto God, and thousands, since their happy union, have been relieved from temporal wants by their care, kindness, and benevolence.”

“My friend, you give me praise which I do not feel worthy to receive,” interrupted Newtonius. “My wife, I will admit, has ever been a most devoted Christian; but if you knew how often I have transgressed the holy commands of God, in heart; your opinion of me would be changed.”

“Ah, my dear Sir,” replied Medicus, “actions speak louder than words. Hundreds, whom your zeal for God and love for men have brought to the knowledge of the truth, delight in you as the instrument of their conversion.”

“But remember, my friend, I am only an instrument. The thirsty man does not praise the vessel from which his thirst is satisfied, but the individual who gives him drink. All honor, and power, and dominion belongs unto God, and I delight in ascribing it to his holy name.”

George Liberalis, having become settled in the vicinity of the jail, had heard of the prisoner's situation, and now entered the prison to see him. Meeting Newtonius unexpectedly, he exclaimed,—

“O, how do you do, Sir! I knew Medicus

was here, but did not expect to see you. I hear of you, or some of your family, wherever I go; I cannot conceive what there is in your 'rigid notions' that mankind are so fond of in these days. When I was young, I was able to please my hearers, and keep my congregation together; but since I have been growing old, they have been continually forsaking me, and joining Calvinistic Societies. I don't know but they will dismiss me and call a minister of your denomination. I understand it is quite the reverse with you—that your Society has been continually increasing since the time of your ordination—that your children have all become ornaments to society, and devoted Christians. Do inform me how it is that you have been so successful in training up your children? I was exceedingly strict with mine, and constantly teaching them the precepts of the Gospel, but there is not one of my sons who is fit to be a minister; and my daughters, also, seem as fond of gayety and pleasure as any of our acquaintance."

"As soon as our children became capable of receiving ideas," replied Newtonius, "my

wife and self began to teach them to remember their Creator and to flee from every evil way. As they grew on, they began to perceive *the happy effects which religion had produced in their parents.* We did not teach them the precepts of the Gospel and then leave them to take their effect; for we knew that children are strongly inclined to imitate others, especially their parents. Nor did we leave them when we had taught by precept and example, but prayed for them, and used every measure in our power to keep them from evil company."

"It is plain to perceive, Sir," said Medicus, "that it was true love to God that made the efforts of Louisa and her husband successful. You know that the duties of religion were always burdensome to you, and did never afford you real satisfaction. Your children saw that it was so. The service of God was therefore presented to them as a burdensome duty; while, on the contrary, it was presented to the children of our friend as *the only source of real and permanent happiness.* You, too, were pleased with the company of those who love

sinful pleasure, and were sometimes at balls and other assemblies for pleasure, and your children could not but perceive how much more desirous you were to have them accomplished, and noticed by people of rank, than to have them devoted Christians.

“On the contrary, Louisa and her husband have never manifested the least love for parties of pleasure, or particular respect for those who engage therein. But they have ever manifested a particular respect for those who show, by their conduct, that their affections are not placed on vain and trifling objects. Still, though they had a particular love for the followers of Christ, they ever manifested a tender regard for the welfare of all mankind. It was not a sectarian spirit, but a spirit of love, that influenced their conduct.”

“I entertain too high a respect for Newtonius and his family, to say anything against *them*,” replied Liberalis; “but there are many of his sentiments who make a great stir about religion, whose conduct speaks volumes against them.”

“That is very true; but you and I are not answerable for the conduct of others, unless we have countenanced or influenced it. ‘Every one of us must give an account of *himself* to God.’ As it was in the beginning of the Gospel dispensation, so it is now—There are some Judas Iscariots and Simon Maguses in all ages of the world—some chaff mingled in with the wheat. They are to remain together till the harvest, which is the end of the world; and then God ‘will gather the wheat into his garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.’”

The prisoner here exclaimed with energy, “Oh, Sir, I cannot believe that horrid doctrine of everlasting punishment. I believe in the salvation of all men.”

“Perhaps, Sir,” remarked Newtonius, “it is horrid to you, because you feel that you are a subject for it. And you believe in universal salvation, because it is the only doctrine by which you can even hope to avoid the wrath to come. Remember, however, that your belief will not change the truth. Truth will stand and will pre-

vail, though it should destroy all your unfounded opinions, as well as your own soul. I fear there is a most fearful doom awaits you, if you die in your present state. 'Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,' and you will not even pretend to possess holiness of heart."

"Oh, Sir, you will not pretend to say there is no mercy for me," replied John.

"No, I will not say so; for it may be otherwise. One thing, however, the word of God authorizes me to say. That is, unless you sincerely repent of all your aggravated sins, and become born again, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven; but will away into everlasting punishment."

"Ah, Sir," returned John, "that is what I heard long ago from your dear Louisa. She was then comparatively free from sin; but now I fear I have sinned against the Holy Ghost, and shall never have forgiveness 'neither in this world, nor in the world to come,' if there is any."

"I cannot say that you have not sinned against the Holy Ghost," replied Newnham, "for you have sinned against so many

light, that I greatly fear you have. My heart is pained for you. Oh that you had remembered your Creator in the days of your youth—that you had repented of all your sins and put your trust in God; for then you would have been preserved from the numberless sins of which you have been guilty, and might have been an ornament to society, instead of a scourge and a pest, spreading destruction and misery over the face of the earth.”

“Oh, Sir,” replied John, “my minister, a ‘liberal-minded’ man, recommended virtue to me, but seldom said anything respecting the punishment of the wicked. His preaching was so *liberal* that I believed him to be a Universalist at heart. Oh that he had warned me as with a voice of thunder! Oh, Louisa! Louisa! Why did I not listen to thy faithful warnings and kind entreaties? I have ruined myself, I have ruined my wife; oh! what multitudes I have ruined. Why did I not suffer my wife to become as Louisa? for she once bid fair to do so. Can it be possible that I may yet be saved by repentance?”

“That you may be saved by the Savior of sinners is possible,” replied Newtonius, “on condition of repentance; but you must remember that you have become exceedingly hardened, and consequently your repentance must be the more difficult and deep. If you have not sinned against the Holy Ghost and become incapable of repentance, there is hope for you. Do not imagine, however, that your repentance will any more save you from future punishment, than it will save you from the earthly penalty of that crime which is the cause of your present confinement. Repentance can save no man; though it may prepare his heart to receive Christ, who only can save any son or daughter of Adam. Look therefore to him; for there is ‘none other name given under heaven among men whereby we can be saved.’”

“How can I look to him who knew no sin,” asked John—“I, who am so deeply stained with crime? Will it not be presumption in me to look to a being whose counsels, commands and laws I have been continually despising?”

“It would be presumption in you to look unto him in any other way than as a humble and truly penitent sinner; but since he is pleased to call upon all mankind, saying, ‘Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth,’ the most guilty may be assured, that ‘whosoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out.’”

“Does not that passage which you repeated, teach the doctrine of Universal Salvation? I have often heard it quoted by Universalists.”

“No. It teaches that all men may be saved by looking unto God, and at the same time implies that no one can be saved without looking unto him.”

“What then can you understand by the words that follow—‘Unto me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear?’”

“St. Paul,” answered Newtonius, “has told us what is meant by them. ‘For it is written,’ says he, ‘unto me every knee shall bow and every tongue shall swear.’ He then adds, ‘So then every one of us must give an account of himself to God.’ By which we are plainly taught that there

will be a time when every man shall be judged according to the deeds done in the body—when every one shall confess to God, whether his deeds have been good or evil.”

“Must I then make known all my crimes unto the Most High God?” asked John. “Surely they will condemn me, even if I now repent and reform; for I have but a little time to do good, and therefore my good deeds can never equal my evil deeds.”

“That is true,” replied Newtonius; “but if we are judged solely by that law which condemns all who offend in one point only, the whole world will become condemned as well as guilty before God. But Jesus has ‘magnified the law and made it honorable,’ by giving his life a ransom for men, that ‘whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’”

“I must then, not only repent of my sins, but believe in Jesus, in order to be saved, must I?” asked John. “Do tell me what is meant by believing in him?”*

“To believe in Jesus,” answered New-

* See Chapter I., page 41.

tonius, "you must love him understandingly, and believe in him as the sin-offering and rewarder of all who look unto him:—believe this, not merely as you believe that Alexander existed and was the rewarder of his brave soldiers; but feelingly, and fully, and firmly; so that whatsoever he has said, whatsoever he has promised, you do not doubt. When your belief is thus strong, your conduct will correspond with it. Then, when God declares that 'every one of us must give an account of himself to God,' you will believe it; when he says, 'The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, you will feel that you deserve it. When Jesus says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out,' you will so believe it that you will obediently listen to his kind invitation, 'Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.' When he says, 'He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him,' you will feel that it is just as it should be. And when he says, 'There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus,' your heart will

swell with love and gratitude to him who gave his life a ransom for you; and you will desire nothing so ardently as to do and suffer his whole will concerning you. Then you will be in Christ Jesus,—the evil things in which you have so long delighted will pass away, and all your views and feelings will become new. Then you will be in a state to do good among men, because you will be influenced by pure and holy motives.”

“And is this all that you require of your proselytes, Sir?” interrupted George Liberalis. “Are these the evidences of the new birth that is so much talked about? I have supposed that the sect to which you belong required their proselytes to be ‘willing to be damned’—to believe that all men are as totally depraved as they can be—to believe that there are infants in hell—that Calvinists were unconditionally elected ‘before the foundation of the world,’ and will be saved whether they sin much or little—that the Son is the Father and the Father the Son.”

“O, Sir,” replied Newtonius, “there are

eccentric individuals in every sect. You have probably received your opinion from several of these, who differed from each other as much as from yourself, and were as little approved by the majority as by yourself. When therefore we take the sayings and doings of such persons, and circulate them in the community as the sentiments of the sect with which they are connected, we are guilty of bearing false witness against our neighbors. But I must take leave of you, Sir.

“Mr. Clearlight,” continued he, addressing John, “while there is life there is hope. If you will but repent *now* and believe in Jesus; although your sins are as red as crimson, they shall all be effaced by his precious blood. ‘And whosoever *will*, may take of the waters of life freely.’ Remember this, let me beg of you. Adieu.”

Medicus and Newtonius then left the prison and returned home; but we will give a more particular account of Newtonius—of the “rise and progress of religion in the soul” of Louisa’s helpmate, in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

RISE AND PROGRESS OF RELIGION.

NEWTONIUS' mind was effectually called to the subject of religion at an early age. A narrative of the happy death of a young lady, accompanied with the narrator's just reflections and timely exhortation to youth, and seconded by an inquiring friend, made the first permanent impression on his mind. In accordance with the exhortation to young people, just referred to, he commenced the daily reading of the Bible, and immediately began to be more dutiful to his parents, striving to be obedient to them, in the Lord, at all times. He also immediately became more diligent in his studies, and made uncommon progress in learning. He now began to rise early and retire for a short season, to think of his past neglect of duty, to consider his ways, pray for the pardon of his sins, and for strength to perform his whole duty.

He did not however abandon every species of youthful amusement immediately. But even while occasionally engaged therein, he soon perceived that there was a change in his feelings. He felt more disposed to acts of kindness among his companions, and less given to frivolity.

On one occasion, when he and his companions were engaged in angling, a gentleman requested a favor that most of them refused to grant. Its performance required more than one person, and he immediately observed, that if some one would accompany him, he would comply with the request; and one of the boys consented. I mention this, because he informed me that he received more satisfaction from this circumstance, than from any other during that holiday. Soon, however, his inclination for this sport lessened, and it was abandoned, while his love for the Bible and religion increased continually.

Most of his leisure time was spent in searching the Scriptures; but he seldom or never failed to spend some time every day in meditation and prayer. His desire now

was to become a minister of the Gospel; but the wishes of his friends were against it. It was, however, determined that he should receive a college education, and leave the choice of a profession until he became older.

Like other boys, he had attained a love for money; but unlike many of them, he had saved what was given him and traded with it, until the amount became considerable. He soon perceived, however, that his heart was too strongly fixed upon it. His trading pursuits drew away his mind from God and from his studies. He resolved therefore to give them all up until his mind became permanently fixed upon divine things.

It soon became evident to the few Christians who were acquainted with him, that God was preparing him for his service. His parents were anxious to turn off his attention from the Bible, and to persuade him to mingle with his young acquaintance, that they might dissipate his too great seriousness; but he grew more and more decided in his character, although not favored with much religious society.

When once he had learned his duty from the Bible, he did not hesitate to perform it immediately. Still, sin troubled him more than anything beside. He felt that the least deviation from the path of duty was a great sin in the sight of a God of spotless purity.

When he became fitted for college it was resolved, contrary to his own desire, to send him to one where, if he received any bias on the subject of religion, it should be in favor of what is called "liberal Christianity." Here new trials awaited him; for he had begun to bear some fruit, and it was necessary that God should purge him that he should bear more fruit. Though he was habitually cheerful, yet nothing like levity appeared in his words or actions.

It is true he once said to me, "I must correct you, my respected friend, for however I might appear to others, my conflicts with a corrupt heart were many and great; so that I often cried out, 'Oh, wretched (boy) that I am, who shall deliver from the body of this death?' I think I must have appeared gloomy when under the influence

of these conflicts; for it appears to me it could not be otherwise. Nor do I think you are correct in observing that there was nothing like levity in my appearance or conversation; for I can assure you, the waywardness of my youthful days was one of my besetting sins."

Doubtless many things appeared different to him, from what they did to those whose standard of duty is nothing less than the two commands on which hang all the law and the prophets. He often felt that he had sinned, when others were unable to detect the smallest blemish in his conduct; and this feeling was well founded. Those who "compare themselves among themselves" are not aware that in the light of divine revelation, and under the influence of the Holy Spirit, many sins may be detected, where none are seen without."

But to return. Newtonius found but a very few congenial minds in college. Religion was but little attended to there. He was often solicited to join his classmates in what appeared to him frivolous amusements; but in vain. His pleasures were

more elevated and enduring. He could truly adopt the language of Nehemiah, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" to join you. He was preparing himself to stand upon the walls of Zion, and determined to improve his time and talents for no other purpose.

Sensible of the value of exercise in promoting health, strengthening the body, and invigorating the mind, he devoted some part of each day to some useful employment in the open air, was careful to abstain from all unnecessary food and sleep, and to waste as little time as circumstances would permit. And although much of his time was devoted to the study of the Bible and other religious books, he soon outstripped nearly all his class in their regular studies. "Whether ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God," seemed to be constantly in his mind, as the main spring of his actions.

At length the time for his graduating drew near, and his parents assented to his preparing for the ministry. He left college, after having received its honors, and won

the esteem of many of the faculty, and of his fellow-students, without having given any of them a just occasion to reproach him.

His situation was now more agreeable, though perhaps his light might not seem so brilliant, as when the surrounding darkness was greater. He now found himself associated with some who knew how to appreciate a Christian character. Here the same decision marked his conduct—the same pressing forward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, distinguished him from most of the other students.

The Bible was the standard by which he was guided, and not the example of professed Christians. He was therefore sometimes called singular when he deviated from those Christian friends who in his view were too much conformed to the world.

His habits of early rising, meditation, prayer, exercise, temperance in eating and drinking, were now confirmed, and of course continued.

When his studies were finished, he re-

ceived a call to settle over a small and divided Society, part of whom were at first much opposed to him. But the more they saw and heard, the more they respected him; though they could not bear the plain and discriminating doctrines of the Bible.

He could not temporize in matters of infinite importance. Nor could he be induced to keep back anything that would tend to advance their highest interests, from fear of disturbing the feelings of his parishioners. Nor would he suffer himself to be swayed by presents or flattery from talking plainly and fearlessly with all.

He manifested no partiality for wealth, or wit, or learning merely; but the most pious were most esteemed by him. Neither was he attracted by elegance and fashion to the houses of the opulent; nor repelled from the dwellings of the poor by the meanness of their exterior. He was truly impartial in all his concerns with his people, and fully determined to know nothing among them but Jesus Christ and his Gospel.

Aware that he was immortal, and had

the charge of immortal souls, his constant aim was to live and act accordingly. No man could say in truth, he preaches for money, or honor; for he early convinced those with whom he associated, that his chief desire was to see them virtuous and happy on earth, that they might dwell forever in heaven.

At length the Holy Spirit made the power of his example, the weight of his arguments, and the warmth of his feelings, irresistible. Some of those who at first were opposed to him, were now awakened through his instrumentality, repented of their sins, and became devoted followers of Christ. A revival followed.

His whole soul was now animated and enraptured. It greatly rejoiced his heart to see so many of his thoughtless, inconsiderate hearers inquiring what they should do to be saved. And it was no less agreeable to be able to direct them to the object of his supreme love—Jesus, “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

His church and congregation now increased rapidly. Unity and love prevailed

among them. Every opposing mouth was shut, and the Lord was pleased to open many opposing hearts, and to fill them with joy and peace in believing.

Soon after this he became acquainted with Louisa Truelove. The more they saw of each other's devotedness to God, the more closely were they united in heart, until, believing that two such kindred spirits should become one, they were united in marriage.

Newtonius now appeared in a new sphere; but it was one calculated to make the light of his holy life more conspicuous. His love for God and man continually increased, as did his intellectual powers. His children were trained up in the way they should go, and now they are old do not depart from it.

He often felt himself among the chief of sinners, *notwithstanding*. And it is not strange that he should feel thus; for Saint Paul, notwithstanding his entire devotedness to the cause of Christ, groaned under the burden of sin. Indeed, the true Christian often does. He does not see the hearts of others, but continually feels the depravity

of his own. I have no idea of representing him as faultless in the sight of God, though he might seem so in the sight of men.

One day I fell into the company of an old gentleman, who soon inquired if I knew anything of Newtonius. When I informed him that I was well acquainted with him, he replied, with much warmth of feeling,—

“I love that dear man. He was an instrument of more good to me than I shall ever be able to estimate in this life. I was walking home one day with a heavy burden in my hand, and very much fatigued, when he overtook me, and in a very cheerful and pleasant manner said to me,—

“‘My dear Sir, you appear much fatigued. Let me take your basket; I am going the same way with you.’

“I replied, ‘I do not wish to trouble you, Sir; you are not accustomed to such business, I should think.’

“‘O,’ said he, ‘it will be no trouble, but a pleasure to me to relieve you. I have always accustomed myself to laborious exercise, that I might be the better qualified to do good.’

“‘You speak,’ replied I, ‘as if your whole business consisted in assisting your fellow-creatures.’

“‘That,’ answered he, ‘ought to be my whole business while I remain in this world; for it was the end for which our Lord Jesus Christ left the bosom of his Father, came into the world, suffered and died.’

“‘Then you really believe there is another world beside this?’ replied I.

“‘Believe it!’ exclaimed he, somewhat surprised and grieved; ‘is it possible that you are so near that world and yet doubt its existence!’

“‘I do not really doubt it,’ said I, ‘but somehow or other I don’t feel so confident of its existence as you appear to.’

“‘I fear,’ replied he, ‘that you have too much neglected your Bible, if you have any.’

“‘I used to have one,’ said I; ‘but there were many things in it that appeared so incredible, that I gave it away for a book written by one Paine. Since I read that book, I have not valued the Bible much.’

“‘Fatal exchange!’ replied he, ‘and you will sooner or later be sensible of it. O, Sir,

were I situated as you are, I would lose no time in obtaining a Bible, and preparing for the eternal world.'

“‘As I am? how am I situated differently from other people?’ exclaimed I.

“‘It is to be feared,’ replied he, ‘that there are many similarly situated with yourself; but you know not how much peace and comfort you lose by remaining as you are.’

“‘What do you know about my affairs?’ I asked, for I could not comprehend him.

“‘I know nothing about your temporal affairs, Sir; but from the manner in which you speak of the Bible and the eternal world, I am persuaded you have no treasure laid up in heaven.’

“I was somewhat agitated by this remark, and glanced at him an angry look; but he continued mildly,—

“‘The Savior has said, “If a man love me he will keep my commands.” Now one of the Savior’s commands is, “Search the Scriptures;” and another, “Men ought always to pray and not to faint.” You have acknowledged that you have ex-

changed your Bible for a worthless book, and the manner in which you speak of that best of books, convinces me that you do not “pray without ceasing.”

“‘Let me entreat you,’ continued he, taking a small book from his pocket, ‘to take this Bible and examine it attentively, comparing your own with the character which is required of a Christian, repenting of all sin, and praying for a heart to understand, as well as a disposition to practise, your whole duty.’

“By this time I had reached my dwelling, and after receiving my basket from the hand of Newtonius, he gave me an affectionate look, and very expressively bade me farewell. His cheerful appearance and unassuming kindness convinced me he was far more happy than myself, and I resolved to study the Bible he had given me attentively.

“It was not long before the Bible convinced me that I was a sinner—a great sinner—and I began to be astonished that I had lived so many years ‘without God in the world.’ I was for some time in great distress on account of sin, and often tried to pray for

pardon, but found no comfort for a long time. It seemed to me that all my efforts only increased my distress. I did not communicate my thoughts and feelings to any one, until my friends perceiving it, requested me to send for the Rev. Mr. Smoothly, who was the nearest minister. I accordingly complied. But never shall I forget how I felt while he was talking with me. He endeavored to convince me that I was not so great a sinner as I thought myself; but I knew that I did not feel half the burden of my aggravated and long-continued sins. He tried to persuade me that I had worked up my mind to feel as I was not in reality; but as there was then an impression on my mind, which I am well persuaded was just, that the Holy Spirit was striving with me, my heart revolted at the suggestion. In the evening I went by myself, as I had frequently done, but my feelings were more intense than I had ever before known them. It appeared to me I could not long sustain them. I knelt down in much agony, but could only utter, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' The parable of the

unjust judge came to my mind, and I resolved to continue crying until I found some relief. Thanks to that merciful Being who enabled me to fulfil my resolution. I verily believe that he did then send his Spirit into my soul, to make effectual intercessions for me with groanings which cannot be uttered. I was then indescribably happy, and thought I could fully comprehend our Savior's meaning, when he compared religion to a treasure hid in a field. From that time to this, excepting when I have so ungratefully forsaken God, I have enjoyed peace unspeakable.

“Do give him my best respects, Sir, when you see him again,” continued he, addressing me as I was leaving him; “for I never expect to see him again in this world.”

I shall close this chapter with the following question:—If Noah condemned the whole antediluvian world, by preparing an ark for the saving of his house, does not every devoted Christian condemn, by his or her practice, every one who is not thus devoted to God?

CHAPTER X.

THE FARMER'S FOURTH-OF-JULY DISCOURSE.

I SHALL close this volume with the farmer's last discourse, having already given you his first. It is intended for a day that should remind every freeman, who ascribes his present liberty to God's goodness, that unless he advocates the cause of his oppressed countrymen, as he has opportunity, he can have no just estimate of that goodness, or his own liberty.

Perhaps I ought to apologize to my readers for so often noticing the old farmer's productions in this volume. If so, I have only to remark that he is my nearest neighbor—that I love him as I do myself—wish to make him do all the good he can while he lives, and to place him in a position where, after he has left the world, it may be said of him, “He, being dead, yet speaketh.”

DISCOURSE.

God is constantly carrying forward the works that were "finished from the foundation of the world," by human instrumentality. He is, in effect, constantly saying to mankind, "Who will go for us, and whom shall we send?" But how few there are who seem, by their practice, to reply, "Here am I, send me." How few are there whose heart's desire is to know and to do their whole duty. How few regard themselves as "strangers and pilgrims on earth"—as God's servants, sent into the world to employ all the varied talents he has entrusted to their charge in his service. How few inquire with respect to every benevolent enterprise, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and manifest that they are ready to hear and obey his voice in all things. How few "confer not with flesh and blood" in this matter! How many seek a knowledge of God's will and their own duty from the fashion of the world that passeth away; rather than from the word of God that abideth forever.

Why is it so? Most manifestly it is because the heart is not right in God's sight. And this may be the case even with those who think they ought to do many things contrary to the spirit and principles of the Gospel.

St. Paul verily thought *he* ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, before he heard his voice, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" but *then* he was no longer "disobedient to the heavenly vision;" but his heart, in unison with his voice, was ready to make the inquiry, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Where then was the apostle's fault? Was he following the dictates of enlightened *reason*, while breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the Christians of Jerusalem and Damascus? Doubtless he then *thought* he was. Was he under the guidance of the same Scriptures that caused the holy Simeon to wait for and rejoice in the consolation of Israel? No doubt he also thought he was. But how did he afterwards think? How do you now think? You *know* he was wrong; and he afterwards tells us he was the "chief of sinners because he persecuted the church"—because he did what he verily thought at the time he ought to do.

Where then was his fault? In his heart. "A deceived heart had turned him aside," so that he was walking in "the way that seemeth right unto a man," while it is the way of death. His strong opposition of heart to the "truth as it is in Jesus" produced his strong delusion and violent acts;

though, as he thought, it was *zeal for God* that made him exceedingly mad against the Christians. He did not then, as afterwards, candidly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" but permitted those around him to ignite the materials which his carnal or natural heart, like that of every other wicked man and woman, spontaneously engendered.

Still he was unlike many who oppose what they know to be right at the time of their opposition, and therefore he "obtained mercy, because he did it ignorantly and in unbelief." There is a sin unto death—there is such a thing as "blaspheming against the Holy Ghost," as sinning against so much light that the sinner places himself beyond the reach of mercy—manifesting that his heart has become so hardened, that there is no hope of his recovery; and every man who sins wilfully after having received a knowledge of the truth, has reason to fear its consequences—has reason to fear that for him there remaineth no mercy, "no more sacrifice for sin; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation that shall devour the adversaries." I shall therefore affirm that—

Errors respecting truth and duty, that exist in a land of Bibles, generally originate in the heart: and that—

The only sure evidence of a right state

of heart is, that we anxiously inquire for the path of duty and walk therein.

I shall then offer some considerations with a design to aid those who inquire—How may we know our duty in relation to moral and religious enterprises—particularly to the Anti-Slavery cause?

Duty is the offspring of truth; and all truth is of God. I have said that mistakes respecting them both *generally* originate in the heart; but it is not *always* so; especially in those truths and duties that are not fundamental. Many a man now *knows* that certain kinds of food and drink are injurious to him in their common use; though he once honestly used them because he thought he knew they were beneficial. He now sees that the light that was in him was darkness on that subject.

GOD IS LOVE. HE THAT DWELLETH IN GOD DWELLETH IN LOVE. These are among the fundamental truths. And since "the invisible things of God are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," since all mankind have light enough to teach them to glorify God, and enjoy him forever, they are without excuse if they do not thus glorify him. They cannot plead ignorance successfully; for as "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth forth his handy work," the sun, moon and every star will testify that

they are willingly and needlessly ignorant of the great attributes of the infinitely perfect Jehovah.

No man, woman or child, then, who is capable of hearing and understanding the voice of nature, can be excused for remaining without supreme love to the supreme source of all good. Now let this love abide in the heart; and the constant inquiry will be, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" What truths hast thou taught?—what duties commanded?

By nature, men as with one consent do wrong, and justify or excuse their unbelief and neglect of duty, when both are perfectly inexcusable. "If ye were blind," said Christ, "ye should have no sin." If we were commanded to do an impossibility, we should have no sin for the neglect of doing it; but when God speaks, those who would not make him a liar must believe him. When he commands, he is speaking to those whose ability he very well knows, for he has imparted it, and, therefore, has made them accountable for their disobedience. He requires *not* the improvement of ten talents of that man to whom he has imparted only two. Those who "sin without law shall perish without law;" but those who sin under the law shall be "judged by the law." To those who have the Gospel he says, "The word that I have

spoken unto you, that shall judge you in the last day." But as the consciences of all those who *do not* have the Gospel either accuse or excuse them, they also are to be "judged in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained."

We see then that every mouth that is opened to present an excuse for want of love to God, is stopped; and "the whole world is guilty before God."

There are different degrees of guilt, we admit; but all are guilty who are without love to God.

Tyre and Sidon may be condemned by Sodom and Gomorrah, because their inhabitants sinned against so much greater light; and we may be condemned in the day of judgment, even by the inhabitants of Capernaum, because we sin against greater light than they had; but still, both we and they shall be "in the same condemnation," if we remain destitute of supreme love to the Highest.

One would suppose that this principle of love would lead all, who really possess it, to the same conclusions, and prevent them from making any very important mistakes respecting the truths and duties of the Gospel; but if it be so, the number of those who really love God must be much smaller than is generally supposed. There are some scriptures that seem to teach, very

plainly, that this is the natural consequence. "If a man love me he *will* keep my commands." "Whosoever shall do the will of God shall know of my doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

And yet there have been men in the world, and probably now are, who seem to us to have been under the influence of true love to God, while they have erred, not to say sinned, most egregiously, in some point of truth or duty, or both. Of this number are those who have trafficked in or consumed intoxicating drinks; and those also who have held, or justified others in holding, their fellow-men as slaves.

We are accustomed to say, "the sin of ignorance is to be winked at;" and we feel justified in this declaration by that word that declares, "The times of this ignorance, God indeed winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." We shall find, however, that much of what we denominate the sin of ignorance, originates in the opposition of heart that excludes the light, and would perpetuate the ignorance by which the transgression is palliated. "He that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprovèd."

If such a man, therefore, call good evil, and evil good, because he has a heart that prompts him to keep in the dark, and will

not permit him to inquire, What is truth? What wilt thou have me to believe? "What wilt thou have me to do?" his sins seem to be nearly as great as if he had not neglected to use his available means for removing his ignorance. The man who is intoxicated may *not* be fully aware of what he is doing while under the influence of strong drink; but his crimes are not therefore no crimes. He knew he was wrong in putting himself in a condition in which he would be disposed to commit crimes, and is therefore inexcusable. So the man who does wrong, because he would not listen to the voice of instruction—because he was either indifferent, or opposed to the examination of the matter, may not be excused for his ignorance. In fact, his ignorance may constitute "the strong delusion" which God has permitted him to embrace; because he would not "receive the truth in the love of it," when it was first presented for his acceptance.

It is very evident, then, that a wrong state of heart will originate many errors respecting truth and duty, which are perfectly inexcusable. Therefore, the only sure evidence of a right state of heart is found in a disposition to inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" with entire readiness to hear, and obey the answer.

And this implies a disposition to *seek* for truth and duty with all readiness of mind—a disposition to deviate from any body and every body if God commands—to say to those around, “Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.” “All that the Lord hath commanded, that will we do.” “As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

The multitude may fall down and worship some ponderous idol; but the *faithful* servants of the Most High God will not. No—never. “Their record is in heaven, and their witness on high;” and Jesus, the Captain of their salvation, leads them onward in the way of truth and duty, whatever man may say and the gates of hell may oppose. “They are strangers and pilgrims on earth,” who know that they “have here no continuing city;” and therefore they are not conformed to the world; but transformed by the renewing of their minds. They do not quail at Satan’s rage and become his non-resistants, as do many others; for their whole business is to resist him at every step, whether the multitude go with them or against them. Having used all the means in their power to ascertain the truth, they willingly obey as fast as they learn it. There is not a single duty which they knowingly and habitually neglect. They have respect unto *all* the commandments of God.

It would seem to follow then that they are, as were the first Christians, "of one heart and one soul" in relation to every fundamental truth and duty. Time-servers cannot be among them, it would appear; for they are the servants of God, making the two great commands, on which all the law and the prophets hang, their rule and motive of action, aiming to do unto all mankind as they would that all-mankind should do to them in similar circumstances.

Why should they not then be agreed in relation to the great moral enterprises of the day? They are all the lights of the world and the salt of the earth—their whole duty is their whole business or "chief end" of life; and that is to enlighten and save the world. They are not of the world, even as Christ is not of the world; but are chosen out of it to oppose and overcome everything that exalteth itself against God—against truth and righteousness—against "LIGHT, AND LOVE, AND LIBERTY." They ought therefore to be but one flock, and to prove by their example the words of the Good Shepherd, "My sheep hear my voice, I know *them*, and they follow me: a stranger will they not follow; for they know not the voice of strangers."

If it be not so, what is the reason? Is their grand object of pursuit different? No—they are that little flock to whom it is

God's good pleasure to give the kingdom. They have but one Captain, and their whole associated efforts should be to proclaim the Gospel to every creature. No one of them can therefore be excused from his or her part in this "good fight of faith;" but every one is required to be faithful to the Author and Finisher of their faith—faithful now, and faithful until death. Do they not all love their neighbors as themselves? "If a man love not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?"

Where, but in a want of love to God, and man, can we find a reason for division among Christians respecting truth and duty? Where, but in a want of the same love, can we find the true cause of indifference or opposition to any benevolent enterprise? Will those whose business is to preach the Gospel to every creature, oppose those who are laboring to demolish the impassable walls that render a portion of those creatures inaccessible, as some oppose those who are seeking the abolition of Slavery and Intemperance?

For one, I cannot resist the conclusion that my heart is not right in God's sight when I neglect to exert my influence, in some way, to remove from the world those mighty barriers to the universal prevalence of the Gospel which is "the power of God

to salvation to every one that believeth." Nor can I gather substantial evidence that the heart of any other man or woman is right, so long as he or she is indifferent, or opposed to the efforts of those who seem to me to be acting in the spirit of the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Therefore, the only sure evidence of a right state of heart, most manifestly is, that we possess a disposition to inquire for the path of duty and are found walking therein—so letting our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father who is in heaven.

It is true, there is now a great diversity of sentiment among those who were formerly united respecting truth and duty; and so there is between the wheat and tares of the same field. There are many ways in which those who are destitute of love to God and man are manifested to be so; and all who oppose any good work, have reason to fear that they are of this number, whether they are in the church or out of it; for the grand adversary is their ally.

We are now prepared more fully to consider the inquiry, How may we know our duty in relation to moral and religious enterprises—particularly to the Anti-Slavery cause?

And while we pursue this inquiry, let us take heed that our hearts do not lead us astray; for we have seen that a man's heart not only deviseth his way, but may bias his understanding, so as to prevent his receiving the truth in the love of it.

Christians seem to be more generally agreed respecting the disuse of intoxicating drinks than they do respecting the cause of the oppressed—the Anti-Slavery cause; and therefore the few professing Christians who still countenance their use, thus render their piety more doubtful than it would be, if the times of ignorance on this subject had not passed. As yet, however, the *multitude* of professing Christians have not come “to the help of the Lord against” Slavery; though it is most evidently one of the mightiest abominations that ever prevailed among men.

The neighbor whom I am to love as myself, has fallen among thieves—he is wounded, not merely in his body, but in his immortal spirit—he is more than half dead as to the essential characteristics of a human being. And the thieves, instead of leaving him to the mercy of the priest, Levite, and Samaritan, are continuing to hold him there, and putting all his progeny in the same condition from generation to generation. I may not have passed that way, and seen thousands and millions of

such neighbors in this condition; but I know they are there; and if my heart is right I remember them as if I were among them.

I may be of another nation, and these suffering beings may be among the reputed and perhaps real enemies of my country—then my situation is like that of the good Samaritan, and my duty is the same.

My Abolition beast is large and strong enough to bear away all these *half-dead* neighbors. Is my heart large enough to move me to risk the danger and sustain the difficulties of placing them in a situation where they will revive and know what it is to be changed from chattels to human beings, so that they may hear the blessed Gospel and realize its transforming influence; thus becoming seraphs who will surround the throne of God and “praise him day and night forever and ever?” Does my heart now say, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do” in this matter? Or do I permit public opinion—“the voice of the brotherhood,” to stifle this inquiry?

Do I say that all men are born free and equal, and in the same breath say that some men are rightfully continued slaves?

Do I laud a Washington and a Lafayette for fighting the battles of Liberty with carnal weapons; and stand aloof from those who fight with “the sword of the

Spirit" for the emancipation of those who are much farther removed from the inalienable rights of man, than were our progenitors?

Does the voice of our fathers' blood cry to us from the ground, "My sons, scorn to be slaves;" and another voice follow it, My sons, *scorn* to advocate the cause of the oppressed?

Does the word of God affirm that "God has made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth," and that every man shall give an account of himself to God; while it *justifies* those who hold the life, liberty, and conscience of their fellow-men in their own power?

In a word, Am I not recreant to Liberty and Religion when I see "a violent perversion of justice in a province"—know that "judgment is turned away backward," and that the Higher than the highest regardeth it—if I remain silent, or participate in the wrong doing? I may, in person or by proxy, go far hence to the heathen to obey the last command of my Redeemer, "Preach the Gospel to every creature," but if I neglect to "preach the deliverance of captives" at my own door—if I neglect my poor, half-dead and wounded neighbor—I may be a priest or a Levite, but I am not a good Samaritan—I am not a consistent Christian; and have reason to doubt whether I

have ever honestly and *heartily* inquired, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

Could the three millions of slaves plead for themselves, as the three millions of our revolutionary ancestors could and did plead for themselves, the inmates of "every log-house beyond the mountains," and every mansion in our land, would have been roused to action in their behalf; especially if their complexions were white. But they are dumb from necessity, and cannot plead for themselves; and this is an *additional* reason why those who love the cause of truth should plead for them. They are not white, and their skin does not espouse their righteous cause, and therefore the white, the pure in heart, should manifest their purity by succoring those whose weakness, infirmities and chains render them incapable of helping themselves.

Would you stand by and see an innocent child shamefully abused when you had power to afford relief, and think yourself excused because he could not, or did not, scream—because he received that abuse like the Savior of the world, who, as a lamb, opened not his mouth? Then surely you have not rightly asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

If there be anything, anywhere, that is contrary to sound doctrine and correct practice—anything that is in direct opposition

to that religion that is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy;" surely it is the principles and practices of American Slavery.

Where then is the man that dwelleth in God, and dwelleth in love, while *in his heart* he can give place to this abomination, even for an hour or a minute?

Our duty, then, in relation to this enterprise against Slavery, is so plain that even the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein if his heart is right in God's sight. We shall "cry aloud and spare not" those whose direct or indirect influence sustains this abomination in our land, if *indeed* we are not destitute of that love which alone can render our acts acceptable in the sight of God. And we shall continue to cry aloud and spare not till we have shown the American people their multiplied transgressions, and the house of oppressors their numberless—their abominable sins.

We may learn our duty, then, in relation to the moral and religious enterprises of the day, from their accordance or discordance with the principles and spirit of the Gospel. And as the Anti-Slavery cause is most evidently designed and calculated to prepare the way of the Lord—the way of the heralds of salvation; while its pursuits are in

perfect accordance with the spirit of the great command, and the golden rule of duty, it must commend itself to all whose hearts do not turn them aside from "things that are lovely and of good report."

It will be said by some who think they wish to know and do their whole duty—There is so much difficulty about this Slavery question, that we cannot make up our minds respecting it. We know not what we ought to do. What is the reason? Examine. Almost every one is surrounded by influences that bias his or her mind, which nothing but a love of that which is right can counteract, so that the heart may be in a fit state to determine the proper object of pursuit—to determine the way of truth and duty.

One man, who is accustomed to bow with reverence to the opinions of a Wayland, hears him exclaiming at one time, "O, if an American citizen ever exults in the contemplation of all that is sublime in human enterprise, it is when, bringing to mind the men who first conceived the idea of this nation's independence, he beholds them estimating the power of the oppressor, the resources of her citizens, deciding in their collected might that this nation should be free, and through the long years of trial that ensue, never blenching from their purpose, but freely redeeming the pledge they

had given to consecrate to it 'their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.'" At another time he may hear him say, "I would not own a slave for all the gold 'that sinews bought and sold have earned.' My blood has curdled as I have heard of the atrocious wrongs committed in the very District itself, under the eyes of calm, uncommitted persons, who have related them to me. I have never seen them myself, for I have never been in Washington. I have felt 'a stain like a wound' when foreigners have taunted me with the fact that the seat of government of this free people is the great slave-market for the country." And again, when speaking of Abolition Societies, he says, "They have for the present, at least, rendered any open and calm discussion on the subject in the slave-holding states, utterly impossible. They have riveted indefinitely the bonds of the slave in those very states in which they were, a few years since, falling off; and everywhere throughout the South they have rendered the servitude of the enslaved vastly more rigorous than it ever was before. While, therefore, I would speak with respect of the motives of those of my fellow-citizens who are enlisted in Abolition Societies, (the political intermeddlers, both small and great, always excepted) I must come to the conclusion that their efforts must be unwisely directed,

or else they would have led to a more salutary result."

This disciple of Wayland's desire to succor the oppressed is thus checked by his last declaration and conclusion; though the former statements had kindled his sympathetic feelings, and moved him to action. He will not pursue a course that, according to President Wayland, renders the condition of the oppressed still more deplorable.

It is true, the same distinguished author may make him doubt that such is *in fact* the result of Abolition movements; for in relation to the missionary enterprise he says: "We see, then, nothing in the signs of the times which forebodes a failure; but everything which promises that our undertaking will prosper. But, secondly, suppose the cause did seem declining, we should see no reason to relax our exertions, for Jesus Christ has said, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature.' Appearances, whether prosperous or adverse, alter not the obligation to obey a positive command of Almighty God."

A little examination will satisfy us that even if the "servitude of the enslaved is vastly more rigorous than it was before the Abolition movements commenced," (which I do not admit,) there is no more reason to conclude, from this circumstance, that the efforts of Abolitionists are "unwisely direct-

ed," than there is that Moses and Aaron were wrong, when, in obedience to the command of God, they went in unto Pharaoh and delivered God's message, "Let my people go."

In consequence of this message *they* were accused, by the oppressors, of causing the bondmen to "rest from their burdens," which burdens were therefore greatly increased, to prevent them from being idle, and from regarding the "vain words" (as they called them) of Moses and Aaron; insomuch that even the oppressed themselves accused these servants of God of causing Pharaoh and his servants to afflict them more severely—of "putting a sword into their hands to slay the children of Israel." The complaints of these officers of the oppressed Israelites were really against God; for Moses and Aaron were only God's medium of communication to the people.

How unwise and hasty, then, is the conclusion of President Wayland, that the result of Abolition movements is evidence that they are wrong! How strange that such a man should make such a conclusion, with so much knowledge of the ways of God and the ways of man! He seems to have forgotten that those who are indisposed to say in the sincerity of their hearts, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" very generally act under some strong delusion; and

like Joseph's brethren, mean evil when God means to effect good by that same evil, thus making the wrath of man to praise him.

The more the Israelites were afflicted, the more they multiplied and grew, and were the better prepared for a journey through the wilderness; the more desirous to enter on that journey; and doubtless, the more ready to bow their heads and worship God when they were delivered out of the hands of the Egyptians. The oppressors of *our* land, and those who justify them, may also act under a judicial blindness, and break the yokes and the chains they are attempting to rivet more firmly, with the very hammer with which they think they are fastening those chains and rivets. "Evil men and seducers wax worse and worse," till repentance or retribution overtake them.

Without doubt a large portion of the community are indisposed or unable to compare one class of statements with another, so as to come to a satisfactory conclusion respecting some of the moral and religious enterprises of the day—particularly of the Anti-Slavery enterprise; but this apathy or inability will generally be found to arise from a want of true and impartial love to God and man; if not from a much more culpable source.

The goddess of slavery has many wor-

shippers, and not a few, like Demetrius and his associates, obtain their wealth by making her silver shrines—for this reason their mouths are filled with arguments, the fallacy of which multitudes around them do not perceive, because they are seeking their own private ends, and not the welfare of their fellow-men, or the things that belong to our Lord Jesus Christ.

Besides, the natural prejudice against the negro, that pervades our land, steels the heart against his wrongs, so that he is practically regarded as a chattel, or something worse, even by many of the most debased northern men, whose interests are in no way immediately affected by the continuance of slavery.

Who has not seen some half-drunken, half-white, select a colored man, who was vastly his superior, and abuse him, while the latter scarcely opened his mouth? Now why is this? Because public sentiment has been such that the immoral and abandoned have learned that negroes will make but little resistance themselves, and will receive but little sympathy from those who are not colored. Hence, it is like espousing the cause of enemies to advocate the negro's inalienable rights. But we *must* love even our enemies to be Christians.

“I want to kill some d——d niger,” said a man who was led by the “striped pig”

the other day. Then, suiting the action to the word, with an open knife he made a push at a colored man. "What does the d——d niger say?" exclaimed another man whose BLACK heart thus rose against the works of God, and would shut a mouth merely because its skin was dark.

O Africa! Africa! how are thy sable sons, for whom Christ died, esteemed as "broken pitchers that *can* hold" all the oppressive filth of this nation, but cannot retain the very birthright which is pronounced their own by the national declaration, "All men are born free and equal!"

AMERICAN CHRISTIANS—This anniversary is an eloquent day for the slave; but its voice is against the American people. Its declarations and its consequent deeds cry aloud and spare not the tyrant and his advocates, the world over. Ere long its trumpet-tones shall burst asunder the chains of the bondman, cast all his cords from us, and make him as free as he was born.

It is a day that shall engrave on the minds of generations to come the words of our fathers, who "solemnly swore that they would live free or die," and the groans of as many millions who now die in bondage, by the hands of their children. It is a day that shall proclaim liberty throughout our land to all the inhabitants thereof—a day

whose records American slave-holders, it seems to me, must desire to expunge from the annals of time.

And shall its voice go down to posterity and up to the bar of God against you? Will you longer condemn yourselves in the thing that you allow? Will you still refuse to remember those who are in bonds as bound with them? Will you still neglect to plead for the dumb? Can any one of you, who has read or who might have read "AMERICAN SLAVERY AS IT IS: TESTIMONY OF A THOUSAND WITNESSES," be silent, and be a patriot, a philanthropist, and a Christian at the same time? Surely! surely! you have not so learned Christ—You have not, in the honesty of your hearts, asked, and constantly asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" if you still do nothing to abolish the mightiest of mighty abominations.

Do you not all know that you have a Master—that you can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything without him? Do you feel that all you now possess, and may rightfully possess, justly belongs, and is cheerfully rendered, not to an ally of Satan, but to the Most High God? Then you will constantly inquire, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" not only in relation to slavery, but to every other abomination that prevails in our land and world; remembering that you are bought with the

price of the Redeemer's blood, that you should no longer live unto yourselves, but unto him who died for you and rose again.

By nature "all seek their own, and not the things that belong to our Lord Jesus Christ." Does this apply to those who have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus? They were thus supremely selfish, "even as others;" but are they now so? Are you? Instead of seeking their own exclusively, is not the distinguishing difference between Christians and others, that they "look not every man on his own estate" exclusively—that they love God, whom they have not seen, more than mammon, and strive to advance the interests of their fellow-men whom they know to be "destitute, afflicted, tormented, having no certain dwelling-place?"

I have specially dwelt on the Anti-Slavery enterprise, in this discourse, because there is a most astonishing apathy among professed Christians in relation to the oppression of one, and the destitution of another portion our countrymen; while the heathen of foreign lands are receiving from them much attention. Is there no reason to fear that some of *you* are "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel?"

Millions of those to whom you are commissioned are walled around so that they cannot be easily approached with the "glo-

rious Gospel;" but to *every creature* it is sent—to "every creature" you are commanded to carry it. Is it not a matter of the first importance then that you should employ the "weapons of your warfare" against the power by which these walls are sustained—by which you are arrested on your errand "to every creature?" In fact, those who make and prop these walls, who forbid your approaches to the beings whom they claim, are also a part of those *creatures*, and their practice evinces that you and I have not done our duty to them.

When a railroad is in progress, and nearly completed, except a portion that requires the levelling of hills, the blasting of rocks, and the building of bridges, do the workmen forsake that portion of the route, and expect that when all the rest of the road is finished, that will connect itself with the other, without human instrumentality? No. That is the very part of the route that deserves and receives most of their attention; for they well know that the rest of the road is useless, till all the obstacles to its completion that lie *there* are removed.

Do you not know, then, that God has declared that "every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill made low, the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain;" and that he has sent

you before his face thus to prepare his way before him? Do you say this work is rapidly progressing through the world? so much the more reason is there then that the sin of Slavery should be removed from your own door. Why! is it not already becoming a mighty barrier to the progress of your foreign missionary success? Will foreign heathen tyrants "crown the Redeemer Lord of all," at the suggestions of Americans, who have usurped his crown and become lords of their fellow-men, so that they can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire anything, but which must belong to their master?

Let us then ever remember some of the words of Wayland. "Appearances, whether prosperous or adverse, alter not the obligation to obey a positive command of Almighty God;" for we have no right to disregard the divine injunction, "Thou shalt *in any wise* rebuke thy brother and not suffer sin upon him."

The time is at hand when Christ will say to some who have despised and neglected the oppressed, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison,

and ye visited me not." Then, looking benignantlly upon many who are now American slaves, (for he is no respecter of persons, or color, unless he have respect to those who in their life-time, like Lazarus, lay at the rich man's gate full of sores)—he will say, "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto *one of the least* of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me."

ONE OF THE LEAST—O, how many times then, by how many beings, has Christ, in the persons of his oppressed brethren, been not only seen to be in distress, but actually been made naked and sick, and conducted to perpetual imprisonment by them.

FELLOW CHRISTIANS—Is it possible then for any one whose heart now says, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" not to show by his practice, that for Liberty's sake he cannot rest, and for Christianity's sake he will not hold his peace, till the just claims of the former are universally acknowledged and sustained by the latter throughout the land of Washington?

NOTE.—In the quotations from Scripture herein made, I have generally trusted to memory, and may therefore have made some slight alterations.

Part of the article entitled "SUMMER-EVENING MEDITATIONS" has been heretofore published in a newspaper.