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# Complete Works

OF

## Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D.

EDITED BY

REV. PROF. J. WM. FLINN, D. D.

NEW EDITION

WITH BRIEF NOTES AND PREFACES

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH IN LAST VOLUME.

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## EDITORIAL NOTE.

Dr. Smyth's Complete Works comprised in these volumes are published under written instructions left by him. The cost of publication is paid by a fund which he provided.

The Editor's work has been confined mainly to proof reading and to occasional recensions of the printed text. The works are re-issued not for the general book-market, but for donation to public libraries.

J. WM. FLINN.

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After the death of the Rev. Prof. J. Wm. Flinn, D. D., the work of editing these volumes was carried on by his daughter, Jean Adger Flinn, a granddaughter of the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D.



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THE  
TEACHINGS OF THE DEAD.

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By  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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COLUMBIA, S. C.  
Steam Power Press of E. H. Britton.  
1857.

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## THE TEACHINGS OF THE DEAD.

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*Obituary of Mrs. ELIZA LELAND, consort of Rev. A. W. LELAND, D. D., Professor of Theology in the Seminary at Columbia, S. C., and epitaphs from the burial place.*  
Charleston: Steam Press of Walker, Evans & Co., No. 3, Broad street. 1857. Printed but not published.

*Circular letter of the bereaved consort, in reply to letters of condolence, on occasion of the death of Mrs. LELAND.*  
Printed but not published.

*In Memoriam, obituary notices of Mrs. SARAH E. ADGER.*

The clay that is moistened sends back no sound. Yes, Death is silent to the ear, but it ever speaketh to the heart. HERVEY GILES.

The good and the true,  
Never die—never die;  
Though gone they are here  
Ever nigh—ever nigh.

There is a voice from the tomb sweeter than song; there is a remembrance of the dead, to which we turn even from the charms of the Living. These we would not exchange for the song of pleasure or the bursts of revelry.

Thou art not lost,—thy spirit giveth  
Immortal peace, and high it liveth!  
Thou art not mute—with angels blending,  
Thy voice to me is still descending.

Thou art not absent,—sweetly smiling,  
I see thee yet, my griefs beguiling,  
Soft o'er my slumbers art thou beaming,  
The sunny spirit of my dreaming.

Thine eyelids seem not yet concealing,  
In death, their orbs of matchless feeling;  
Their living charms my heart still numbers,  
Ah! sure they do but veil thy slumbers.

As kind thou art; for still thou'rt meeting  
The breast which gives the tender greeting!  
And shall I deem thee altered?—Never!  
Thou'rt with me waking—dreaming—ever!

### THE SPEAKING DEAD.

BY H. W. LONGFELLOW.

When the hours of day are numbered,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul that slumbered,  
To a holy, calm delight;

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
And, like phantoms, grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
Dance upon the parlor wall;

Then the forms of the departed  
 Enter at the open door;  
 The beloved, the true hearted  
 Come to visit me once more.

He, the young and strong, who cherished  
 Noble longings for the strife,  
 By the roadside fell and perished,  
 Weary with the march of life!

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
 Who the cross of suffering bore,  
 Folded their pale hands so meekly,  
 Spake with us on earth no more!

And with them the being beauteous,  
 Who unto my youth was given,  
 More than all things else to love me,  
 And is now a saint in heaven.

With a slow and noiseless footstep,  
 Comes the messenger divine,  
 Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
 Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me,  
 With those deep and tender eyes,  
 Like the stars so still and saint like,  
 Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
 Is the spirit's voiceless prayer;  
 Soft rebukes in blessings ended,  
 Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely,  
 All my fears are laid aside,  
 If I but remember only  
 Such as these have lived and died.

CHRISTIANITY is distinguished from all other forms of religion in all that is essential both to the well being of the life that now is and of that also which is to come. But in nothing, perhaps, is this contrast more striking than the aspect in which it regards sorrow, bereavement and death. These constitute the mystery of life, and the mastery of all human wisdom and philosophy; hovering over humanity in fearful darkness; terrifying us by the loud and incessant crashes of their thunder; and ever and anon bursting in storms of devastating fury. And as all other religions have stood aghast, mute and motionless before such appalling phenomena, Christianity demonstrates its inspiration and divinity by at once resolving the mystery, and imparting peace and consolation to the troubled spirit.

The earth, as Christianity teaches us, is now enveloped in a murky atmosphere of cloud and sunshine with its every varying lights and shadows, as emblematic of the blighting curse

of sin of which all sorrow is the shadow and all death the penalty. The present dispensation and government of the world is, therefore, Christianity teaches us, temporary and not final, partial and not complete, preparatory and not perfect, probationary and not retributive. It is purely a disciplinary dispensation, where everything is made to work together so as to form, develop and mature character, whether evil or good, in view of a state, and life, and world, everlasting. The race of man is not now in its pristine and perfect condition. The earth is not what it first was. The relations between God and man are not those of a father infinitely wise and benevolent rejoicing over His children in whom He sees everything good. Men are now fallen, sinful, guilty, imperfect and helpless creatures; and God is now revealed, as having in Christ, devised a scheme of infinite mercy, whereby He is reconciling sinners unto Himself, reinstating them in holiness, and fitting and preparing them for full and final happiness in His heavenly kingdom.

All events are therefore subordinated to this gracious purpose, and to be interpreted by this light. And is it not a blessed light? Does it not at once dissipate all darkness, bring order out of confusion, impart joy to sorrow, hope to despair, life in death, and brighten every cloud of grief with a tinge of heavenly wisdom and unspeakable tenderness. Sickness and sorrow now become handmaids to virtue; tutors and governors training and educating immortal minds for the maturity of perfect men in Christ Jesus. Death is not an end. It is only a transition, a stage in our journey, a step on the onward march to immortality, a halt in the pilgrimage through the desert on our way to the heavenly Canaan, a passage over the Jordan, or a transformation out of this earth-worm, chrysalis condition, to the seraph-winged beauty of a spiritual and angelic nature

All other religions have considered death as an end, a cessation of existence, an awful catastrophe, the annihilation of the body, and the vanishing of the soul into thin air—to roam in dreary sadness through the gloomy shades and by the turbid waters of some unknown region of the dead.

Moschus sung thus mournfully:

"Ah, Mallows in the garden die,  
 Parsley, and blooming Dill,  
 Yet waken'd by the vernal sky  
 Again their course fulfill.

While we, the wise, the strong, the brave,  
 Have no fresh spring in store;  
 But silent in the hollow grave  
 Sleep on for evermore."

Homer is not less plaintive:

"Men fade like leaves" that drop away  
 Beneath the parent shade,  
 Others again succeed, but they  
 Are in oblivion laid.

So spake the sire of Grecian song;—  
 Through each succeeding age  
 The words are caught and borne along  
 By poet, saint, and sage.

"Better" said Achilles,

"be slaves on earth  
 Of some poor hind than king of all the dead."

So doth man's sinful nature deem  
 With ill-forboding gloom,  
 And strays as in a dreadful dream  
 In realms beyond the tomb.

For want, disgrace, and servitude  
 Seem nothing in that hour,  
 When Death's huge pinions o'er us brood,  
 We feel his chilling power.

Christianity alone has brought man's immortality to light, revealed and illustrated it, and endeared it to us by bright and beautiful descriptions of it. Christianity alone, has demonstrated that death is a portion, not the end of life; a change, not the destruction of the earthly house of this tabernacle; a development, not a decay of strength and beauty; or to employ its own peculiar and exquisitely attractive representation, a sleep from which the weary and troubled spirit shall awake refreshed and invigorated, rejoicing in the clear dawning of a celestial day.

All other religions also consecrated pride, passion, stoical indifference, insensibility to grief and pain, and forgetfulness of the dead. It was only thus they could, in any measure, escape from the power of these evils, and blunt the point of their severity. And hence, while ordinarily, they carefully concealed and ignored their existence, we find that on occasions of social festivity, they were wont to introduce them in their ugliest form of representation, in order that by the combined



hilarity and excitement of the company, they might triumph over their awful power, and make them subservient to their greater excess of riot.

"Religion showed her head from realms above  
Threatening mankind with visage horrible."

'Twas thus that clad in storms of yore  
She spread her awful mein,  
And in dread lightnings ope'd the door  
Of the eternal scene.  
Sad shades and shapes were there revealed  
In dismal vision clear,  
While conscious Guilt the pencil held,  
And dark, portending Fear.

But Abram saw his children throng  
Like stars in heaven at night,  
Those stars they heard the angelic song,  
And from their orbs of light  
Came Bethlehem's star, which with us dwells;  
Since when they never roam,  
But seem to walk, like sentinels,  
Around our earthly home.

Christianity, therefore, consecrates sorrow, and leads us to the house of mourning. It quickens and refines our sensibilities, that we may be the more susceptible to their hallowed influences. It opens up to them the deepest recesses of the heart, and every principle in our nature. It eliminates from these scenes of trial and these pangs of nature, an elevating, refining, purifying alembic, with which to restore health to the soul and comfort to the disconsolate. It crowns with the diadem of valour—patience in tribulation, and fortitude in adversity. It exalts as the greatest hero the greatest sufferer, who is made perfect through manifold afflictions, and who in hopeful confidence presses on to the kingdom of God. Instead of hopelessly drawing from these sufferings and sorrows provocations to abandoned self-indulgence in present pleasures, Christianity regards them as incentives to self-denial, humility, activity in well-doing, and a hearty consecration of the life that now is, to a fitting preparation for the great hereafter.

Other religions buried their dead out of sight that they might soon pass out of mind; covered them with the pall of silence, and left them in eternal darkness.

Catullus, to give point to one of his ditties, thus sentimentalizes on a brother's death:

"Horatius, now unceasing sore distress  
From the Aonian maids withdraws my mind,  
For how can it the muses' theme express,  
Which toss'd by its own woes no rest can find?



For lately has my brother cross'd the strand  
 Where Lethe flows by his dear pallid feet;  
 He on the Retian shore in Trojan land  
 Lies buried, and mine eyes no more shall meet.

No more to speak to thee! no more to hear!  
 No more to see thee! from my bosom torn  
 My brother! unto me than life more dear!  
 Still will I ever love thee, ever mourn."

Even the atheistic Lucretius is haunted by the same fear of death, and painfully portrays the efforts of mankind to escape from it.

Then Avarice and Ambition, passions blind,  
 "Which beyond bounds of right urge on mankind,  
 Associates and ministers of crime,  
 To labour nights and days upward to climb.  
 These rankling wounds that tend on mortal breath  
 Are but occasion'd by the dread of Death:  
 For shame, contempt, and poverty severe  
 Apart from sweet and stable life appear,  
 "Dwelling beside Death's portals. Hence men fear,  
 And far, far off to flee them with false dread  
 They strive, as from the dwellings of the dead;—  
 Inflame, sedition, civil wars, and heap  
 Wealth upon wealth, slaughter on slaughter, steep  
 Their hands in citizens' and in kinsmen's blood.  
 And find no safety but in solitude."

Thus each man from himself attempts to flee,  
 But bears within him that same enemy  
 From which he would escape, then frets the more,  
 Nor doth of his disease the cause explore;  
 Which did he well discern, he soon would cast  
 All other things aside, and to the last  
 The nature of man's being strive to know:  
 For 'tis not one short hour for weal or woe  
 That is at stake,—but all eternity,  
 All after death—the life that is to be.

Christianity on the other hand, cherishes the dead. She keeps them alive in undying memories. She communes with them spirit with spirit. She consecrates their graves, adorns and beautifies the place of their repose, and plants it with flowers and trees of heaven. This is to her a place of frequent resort. She loves to wander there, to read the past, to bring up the dead, to converse with them, and though dead, to hear them speak in the still small but thrilling voice of sainted purity. Here in her earliest times, she was sure to be found when hunted by the bloodhounds of persecution, and how often did the Christian mourner water with her blood as well as tears, the grave of departed piety. And when driven from the face of the earth by relentless and inexorable inhumanity, Christianity took refuge within its bosom, and there amid the labyrinthine passages of catacombs, buried her dead, and amid

their corpses slumbering peacefully in the surrounding niches of those subterranean walls, worshipped their common Saviour, sung praises to Christ as God, and made the caverned vaults resound with the songs of glory to Him who had abolished the reign of death, disarmed it of its sting, and the grave of its victory, and united the living and the dead who die in the Lord, in inseparable, blissful union.

And so it is now, and every where, and always. Satisfying every natural instinct and affection of the heart, Christianity recognizes and sanctifies our yearning for our departed friends. How beautiful is the memory of the dead, as seen in her mellowing light! What a holy and chastening influence does it exert upon the human heart! Is there one who has not some loved friend gone to heaven, with whom he delights to live again in memory? Does he not love to sit down in the hushed and tranquil hour of silent meditation, and bring before him the face and the form so familiar and cherished—to look into the eye which mirrored not more clearly his own face, than the soul which he loves, and to listen to the tones that were once melody in his ear?

In a recent visit to a family burying ground, now with its deserted Church abandoned to decay, a writer beautifully illustrates this spiritual communion with the dead, by which Christianity hallows and endears the place of their last repose.

There, in that quiet churchyard, dear reader, we first heard the burial service—then new to us—alas! how familiar now.

We can recall that warm and sunny October day. A cold, still figure lay in our home; weights were upon the closed eyes to keep down the lids; and the white, rigid hands, lay as they had been placed, on the still bosom. Tears had wetted the pillow—warm lips had strove with kisses, to melt the gathering ice of death, and a voice, made sharp with anguish, had gone up to Heaven pleadingly.

But all in vain!

We could not comprehend why, on this day, we were dressed in a black slip and black sleeve-knots; and as our childish feet wound through the open gate into the graveyard, we sometimes stooped from the guiding hand to pick up the tufts of scarlet and yellow leaves, which made this place of graves strangely

gay. The coffin was set down beside an open grave, while the procession trailed through the long grass, and circled slowly around. The burial service for the dead was read, and then they laid the coffin upon ropes and gently lowered it. There was a harsh grating against the hard earth, then a shovel-full of loose soil was thrown upon the coffin. We recall, even now, the fearful, shivering, tightened clasp of a cold hand that drew us up to the grave's brink, as those cold clods fell upon the loved bosom. But neither the anguish of the form at our side, nor the clinging clasp of the cold hand could win one answering sigh from the shrouded form.

They filled up the grave, and placed green sods upon the mound they raised, and when all was gone, we went away and left the coffin deep in the quiet earth, where the bleak winds could not reach its inmate. The next day we were chasing the runaway bees, or playing with toys in our babyhouse, or wondering why a pale, sad face, was all the time weeping.

October went by, and the trees put on their russet; long spires of pallid grass waved to and fro heavily; the wind awoke with a shiver, and marked its course with sobs and wailings; the brooks grew bluer, and chillier, and then the bare trees were wreathed in white; and the mound of earth, lost beneath the deep snow of winter, was forgotten by all but the stricken family. One mourner kept a path well trodden, and though we could not then comprehend why her face bent tearfully over that grave—we learned in after years (ah how bitterly) what it meant. We have comprehended, since then, what it is to have a coffin and a heap of earth between oneself and the author of one's being. Oh! it is a sorrowful thing to make the grave the only door to a meeting with one in whose bosom we have nestled.

Many an hour, in blissful childhood, we passed in that quiet graveyard with only one companion. Many a lesson was taught us beside that green mound—lessons of a bright spot, with flowers all fadeless, and sainted ones, and white winged throngs we were then told of. One who watched over the "widow and the fatherless," in their helplessness—counted all their tears and lightened all their burdens.

Long years have wheeled their weary round,  
 Since dark and deep they laid  
 Thy coffined form, and heaped the earth,  
 And bowed their heads and prayed.

Yet, Father, I have felt thy care,  
 In danger o'er me thrown;  
 And when cold hearts were gathering near,  
 I have not been alone.

Thou seem'st to clasp me in thine arms,  
 And hold me to thy breast;  
 When by the thronging cares of earth  
 I'm wearied and oppressed.

I seem to close my aching lids,  
 And sleep upon thy arm,  
 Which used to seem enough to me,  
 To shelter from all harm.

Yes, let us, as we may well do, talk pleasantly of the pious dead, as of those who no longer suffer and are tried. With them the fear and the longing, the hope, the terror, and the pain, are passed. The fruition of life has to them begun. How unkind, how selfish, how unnatural, were it, when we inter their bodies to cease the utterance of their names—the tender-hearted dead, who so struggled in the parting from us—and more for our sakes than their own—why should we speak of them with awe, and remember them only with sighing! Very dear were they when hand clasped hand, and heart responded to heart, and why are they less dear, because grown perfect in loveliness and in loving kindness? By the hearth side, then, and by the grave side, in solitude and amid the multitude, let us speak cheerfully and lovingly of the dead.”

Our beloved have departed,  
 While we tarry broken-hearted,  
 In the dreary empty house;  
 They have ended life's brief story,  
 They have reached the home of glory  
 Over death victorious.

Hush that sobbing, weep more lightly,  
 On we travel, daily, nightly,  
 To the rest that they have found.  
 Are we not upon the river,  
 Sailing fast to meet forever,  
 On more holy, happy ground?

Whilst with bitter tears we're mourning,  
 Thought to buried loves returning,  
 Time is hasting us along,  
 Downward to the grave's dark dwelling,  
 Upward to the fountain welling  
 With eternal life and song!

See ye not the breezes hieing?  
 Clouds along in hurry flying?  
 But *we* haste more swiftly on—

Ever changing our position,  
 Ever tossed in strange transition—  
 Here to-day, to-morrow gone!

Every hour that passes o'er us  
 Speaks of comfort yet before us,  
 Of our journey's rapid rate;  
 And like passing vesper bells,  
 The clock of time its chiming tells,  
 At eternity's broad gate.

On we haste, to home invited,  
 There with friends to be united  
 In a surer bond than here;  
 Meeting soon, and met forever!  
 Glorious hope! forsake us never,  
 For thy glimmering light is dear.

Ah! the way is shining clearer  
 As we journey ever nearer  
 To the everlasting home.  
 Friends who there await our landing,  
 Comrades round the throne now standing  
 We salute you, and we come.

The dead are still with us. There is a communion more real and more satisfying than that of mere bodily, physical and social presence. We are, by original constitution, more mental, moral, emotional, and spiritual beings, than we are sensitive, sensual, and physical. And were we now what we were intended to be, that is, sinless beings—the body with its appetites and wants would be subordinated and kept under, and occupy but a small place in our estimation and regard. The subjugation of our affections and souls to the craving power and tyranny of the bodily appetites and desires is that vanity to which the creature is now, by reason of sin, reduced, and in consequence of which the whole creation groans and travails in pain together, so that even the children of God groan within themselves, being burdened. Christianity hears the despairing cry, “oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death,” and brings deliverance. Grace elevates and ennobles man's nature just in that proportion in which it reigns and rules within us. It purifies the moral atmosphere, dissipates the rank vapours of sensuality, and imparts to the faculties of memory, association, and imagination, power of abstraction, an ideal life, and a capacity to roam the future, bring near things distant, and clothe with reality things invisible and spiritual.

Oft when we pine afar from those we love  
 More close we knit the spirit's sympathies.  
 By mutual prayer, distance itself doth prove



A greater nearness. With such stronger ties  
 Spirit with spirit talks, that when our eyes  
 Beheld each other, *something sinks within,*  
*Mocked by the touch of earth's realities.*

This wondrous capacity of the soul to hold communion with far distant friends is sometimes so vivid, as to give a realizing sense of their presence and power over us. The experience alluded to is very graphically described by a recent and very pictorial tourist in Europe.

"Thus o'er the sea, as slumbers turned to dreaming,—  
 That so mocks real life with vivid seeming,—  
 On spectral journeys, e'en in rest advancing,  
 I saw in prospect hills and rivers glancing:

When, lo! a hand I feel my steps arresting,  
 And hear a strange, dumb, ghostly voice, requesting  
 My quick return, the track unfinished leaving;  
 Whereat my soul, as in a swoon, sank grieving.

Wide through the world's eclipse again outreaching,  
 That vision of the night repeats its teaching;  
 With sense of baffled will vague sorrow feeding,  
 My waking wit to understand exceeding.

Would earth or sky disclose for me a meaning?  
 Are angel-forms of mortal towards me leaning?  
 What summons thus subdued me to obeying  
 A shadow in my moving or my staying?

Ah, shadow cast from life remote, retreating?  
 Ah, cry from kindred heart more slowly beating!  
 O God! so distantly could I be learning  
 For sight of me its fond and frequent yearning?

Was spirit's ear, so fine, from spirit hearing  
 The whisper of a soft and tender fearing,  
 Lest never more should come, in earth's beholding,  
 What lay so deep within the bosom's folding?

Where'er I went, went still the dream pursuing,—  
 My daily thoughts the nightly show reviewing;  
 While naught I knew, howe'er I strove at knowing,  
 But only as it urged my feet were going.

Mystic conductor humbly not refusing,  
 Homeward I blindly sped, no moment losing;  
 For solemn tiding at my door confessing  
 To what I owed affection's farewell blessing.

We are therefore made capable of a communion far deeper than that of bodily presence, or even of memory. It is a spiritual communion. It is that fellowship of which all that is material, all of the eye, and lips, and hands, all that constitutes our daily and most endearing social intercourse, are but the symbols. These are only interpretations of an interior intercourse, the sensible proofs of an insensible affection, pledges of its reality, means through which the spirit communes with spirit. They are therefore necessarily imperfect

and unsatisfying. They are found, after all, to be barriers and interruptions to that closer and more endearing sympathy which their very intervention renders impossible. And hence it is, that they leave behind them an unappeased, quenchless longing for a nearer, dearer, and more perfect fellowship. The brightest hopes are darkened by their realization. Expectations the most enlarged are crushed by the felt poverty even of the richest luxuriance of earthly good, and feelings the most intense, which a letter read in absence will kindle into flame, often die away into slumbering ashes upon the hearth stone of our homes. How much more soul-stirring is our communion with some gifted author, when we read his works, than when we see him face to face? And when we peruse the letter of a friend long dead, how powerfully beyond all personal presence, do they stir up the fountain of our deepest emotions.

And thus by some celestial art  
With friends that are apart,  
Associate feelings will awake,  
Or thoughts responsive break:  
As if some spirit of the skies  
Convey'd their sympathies!

Moves there 'mid minds some unseen power,  
Like bee from flower to flower?  
With intermingling of their kinds—  
From each to each it winds,  
The seed, or dust, or honey brings  
On loaded thigh or wings.

Thus also it is that in the perusal of the Bible, in prayer, in worship, in the ordinances of the Lord's house, and especially in the Lord's Supper, the soul enjoys such near and living and delightful communion with that adorable and ever blessed Saviour, whom having never seen, it nevertheless loves, and in whom though now it sees Him not, it rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. And so also is it found, that in the upper chamber where brethren are gathered together with one accord for prayer, and praise, and mutual exhortation, that heart blends with heart, and all are melted together as unto one living, loving soul.

Prayer! mighty accent—language winged—supreme—  
Which in a single sigh blends all of love,  
Which makes a thousand loved ones, scattered far,  
Seen by the heart, and present before God;  
Making among them, by fair virtues boon,  
The viewless interchange of heaven's best gifts,  
One general speech, which swells unto the sky,  
And rises higher to be better heard.

Incense unquenchable, which doth perfume  
 Him who receives and him who lights the flame,  
 For thus doth soothing hope her powers employ,  
 Sweet visions of long severed hearts to frame,  
 Though absence may impair or death destroy,  
 Their constant presence draws us still the same.

Such also is our permitted communion with the dead. Though dead, they yet live. They yet speak to us. They are near and round about us. We see them not. We hear them not. We feel them not, though even this one sometimes seems to do in sweet visions of the night. But we think of them. We conceive their well known forms. We remember all their love, all their natural features and manner and character. We believe them to exist and to be still identical, still personal. We believe that they also retain, though purified and enlarged, these same powers and affections. They abide with them imperishably and forever. They must therefore be exercised towards us as ours are towards them, and thus produce mutual and real communion of souls and hearts, of memory, love, and hope. Wherever they are, and whatever may be their condition, we know of the pious dead that they are happy and holy, that they are with Christ in paradise, that they remember us, and pray for us from beneath the throne.

The dead. The dead are with us:  
 And they throng around our way,  
 And the greenness of their memory  
 In our hearts can ne'er decay.  
 When round the hearth we gather,  
 We know that they are there;  
 And with them our spirits worship  
 In the holy place of prayer.

Around our couch at midnight,  
 Their forms flit slowly by,  
 And in olden tones they speak to us,  
 Ere they fade into the sky.  
 At twilight, when the dew falls,  
 They walk with us and sing,  
 And their voice is like the murmuring  
 Of swallows on the wing.

And when in social circle  
 We join the merry band,  
 Or in the hour of sorrow,  
 Sit silent hand in hand,  
 They come and sit beside us,  
 And gaze into our eyes;  
 And we listen to their voices then,  
 With a calm and mute surprise.

The departed—the departed,  
 They crowd around me now,  
 And a sweet and cheerful light of peace  
 They shed upon my brow.



I know they have not left me,  
 Tho' no more I see their forms;  
 And their presence 'mid the strife of life,  
 Is like sunshine seen in storms.

The beautiful, the beautiful,  
 All silently they stand,  
 Within the chambers of my soul,  
 A fair and shadowy band;  
 And from out those chambers now and then  
 This cheerful voice is given,  
 "Oh! faint not, while ye walk below  
 Ye dwell with us in heaven.

No earthly sorrows blight us,  
 No chill misfortunes pain;  
 Then weep not, tho' with you no more—  
 In form we walk again.  
 Ye feel that we are with you—  
 When ye wander by the streams,  
 And ye see our faces as of old,  
 In the pleasant light of dreams.

And when in twilight musings  
 Ye think of us as dead—  
 And o'er our grassy resting place  
 The sweet spring flowers ye spread.  
 Remember, for the soul that *lives*  
 There can no ending be—  
 Remember that the soul once born,  
 Lives thro' eternity."

The dead, therefore, still speak to us. They soothe and comfort us with a present, a living, and a loving communion, and with the hope of a perfect personal union in that better world where we shall see eye to eye, and know even as we are now known. They draw our hearts after them. They are not gone where we never expect, or wish, to go, but to a better country than this, a country which is ours also—to which we have an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, reserved for us—and to which we have even now secured to us an indisputable title.

We remember when a boy, seeing a much elder brother jump from the wharf into the boat which conveyed him to the vessel that bore him to this foreign land. He was the first link severed from a large family, and the event was sadly impressive. How anxiously did we watch the receding sail until it was finally lost in the blue horizon. How often afterwards when walking along the seashore did we feel consoled by the thought that the same Atlantic ocean which spread itself out in magnificent beauty before us, rolled its waves to this further shore, where he might be also treading—that the sun which was sinking beneath the western horizon, would in the morning

rise upon the eastern—and that the same moon and stars which kindled glory in the evening sky, attracted the upward gaze of the distant wanderer. When we met around the family altar, how refreshing was it to mention his name, to remember him in prayer, and to feel that around the mercy seat however separated in body, we could mingle our spirits and our petitions. And as one brother after another were attracted to this land of promise, how were the affections of those behind centred here! How home-like did America become! And how gradually were all remaining ties of home and kindred loosened, until they were willingly, though sadly, severed, in the hope of a reunion here. And thus is it when friend after friend departs to the celestial land. They are not lost, but gone before. They are not dead, they only sleep bodily in our dust, while their spirits have returned to God. They are now with Him. They are where we wish soon to be, and where alone we can be fully and abidingly happy. They are gone to prepare a place for us, that where they are, we may also be. And we cannot but feel more and more weaned from earth as we think of them, and commune with them, and as we become more and more desirous to depart and be with Christ and them, which is far better.

Were earth our home, our rest, our end, these severings of heart-strings, these separations of commingled souls by the blank wall of death through which we cannot see, and over which we cannot pass, how dreadful would they be! But if this world is but our place of probation, discipline, and preparation for our true homes and rest, oh how needful are these bereavements to sever our affections from the things of earth, around which, like parasitic plants, they so luxuriantly entwine, and thus open up to us that heavenly radiance they had so much obscured. How sweetly does Fanny Forrester depict these earth loving ties of every human heart.

O do not let me die! the earth is bright,  
And I am earthly, so I love it well;  
Tho' heaven is holier, all replete with light,  
Yet I am frail, and with frail things would dwell.

I cannot die! the flowers of earthly love  
Shed their rich fragrance on a kindred heart;  
There may be purer, brighter flowers above.  
Yet with these ones 'twould be too hard to part.

I dream of heaven, and well I love those dreams.  
 They scatter sunlight on my varying way;  
 But 'mid the clouds of earth are priceless gleams,  
 Of brightness, and on earth O let me stay.

It is not that my lot is void of gloom,  
 That sadness never circles round my heart;  
 Nor that I fear the darkness of the tomb,  
 That I would never from the earth depart.

'Tis that I love the world, its cares, its sorrows,  
 Its bounding hopes, its feelings fresh and warm,  
 Each cloud it wears, and every light it borrows,  
 Loves, wishes, fears, the sunshine and the storm.

I love them all; but closer still the loving  
 Twine with my being's cords and make my life;  
 And while within this sunlight I am moving,  
 I well can bide the storms of worldly strife.

Then do not let me die! for earth is bright,  
 And I am earthly, so I love it well—  
 Heaven is a land of holiness and light,  
 But I am frail, and with the frail would dwell.

And as no one has learned by more touching sorrows and  
 bereavements their heavenly power to wean the renewed soul  
 from earth, and assimilate and uplift its desires to heaven, so  
 no one has more beautifully and feelingly portrayed it than  
 this same writer.

Yes, let me die! Am I of spirit-birth,  
 And shall I linger here where spirits fell,  
 Loving the stain they cast on all of earth?  
 O make me pure, with pure ones e'er to dwell.

'Tis sweet to die! The flowers of earthly love,  
 (Frail, frail spring blossoms) early droop and die;  
 But all their fragrance is exhaled above,  
 Upon our spirits evermore to lie.

Life is a dream, a bright but fleeting dream  
 I can but love; but then my soul awakes,  
 And from the mist of earthliness a gleam  
 Of heavenly light, of truth immortal breaks.

I shrink not from the shadows sorrow flings  
 Across my pathway; nor from cares that rise  
 In every foot-print; for each shadow brings  
 Sunshine and rainbow as it glooms and flies.

But heaven is dearer. There I have my treasure;  
 There angels fold in love their snowy wings;  
 Their sainted lips chant in celestial measure,  
 And spirit fingers stray o'er heav'n-wrought strings.

There loving eyes are to the portals straying;  
 There arms extend a wanderer to fold;  
 There waits a dearer, holier One, arraying  
 His *own* in spotless robes and crowns of gold.

Then let me die. My spirit longs for heaven.  
 In that pure bosom evermore to rest;  
 But if to labor longer here be given,  
 "Father, thy will be done!" and I am blest.

Were this communion with the dead more constantly and believingly maintained, would it not have much influence in learning us to live better and happier and holier lives. Selfishness, self-will, and many painful infirmities of disposition and peculiarities of character interfere, to a very unhappy extent, with social enjoyment and happy fellowship even in families and kindred. In the daily intercourse of life, these occasion many a harsh jar and dissonance of feeling, and mars the harmony of the best consorted spirits. They lead us sadly to undervalue the sweet charities of love, and kindness, and self-denial and forbearance. They lead us to dwell upon the rough and ugly, or at least unlovely features in each other's character, and to think less of those which may be lovely and attractive. Alas for us, we are blind and ignorant as to what the real happiness of earth is, until it is forever taken from us. This is one chief reason why in absence our affections are so much deepened. We cease to think so exclusively or frequently of what is imperfect and unlovely. All that is good and true and beautiful, comes before us as they do to the poet's and the painter's eye, enshrine the ideal picture on which we so fondly gaze, and make us wonder that in communion with such a character, we should not enjoy perfect union of heart and sympathy. But it is only, as has been said, when those whom we love pass away, that, realizing a great loss, we learn how vital was that relation, how inestimable the privilege which is withdrawn forever. How quick, then, is our regret for every harsh word which we have spoken to the departed, or for any momentary alienation which we have indulged! This, however, should not reduce us to a morbid sensitiveness, or an unavailing sorrow, seeing that it is blended with so many pleasant memories; but it should teach us our duty to the living. It should make our affections more diligent and dutiful. It should check our hasty words, and assuage our passions. It should cause us day and night, to meet in kindness and part in peace. Our social ties are golden links of uncertain tenure, and, one by one, they drop away. Let us cherish a more constant love for those who make up our family circle, for "not long may we stay." The allotments of duty, perhaps, will soon distribute us into different spheres of action;

our lines, which now fall together in a pleasant place, will be wide apart as the zones, or death will cast his shadow upon these familiar faces, and interrupt our long communion. Let us, indeed, preserve this temper with all men—those who meet us in the street, in the mart, in the most casual or selfish concerns of life. We cannot remain together a great while, at the longest. Let us meet, then, with kindness, that when we part, no pang may remain. Let not a single day bear witness to the neglect or violation of any duty which we owe to our fellows. Let nothing be done which shall lie hard in the heart when it is excited to tender and solemn recollections. Let only good-will beam from faces that so soon shall be changed. Let only pleasant and fragrant feelings spring up in those hearts over whose common grave nature will soon plant her tributary flowers.

With what patience and thankfulness also, do the dead teach us to enjoy the blessings which are still continued to us, and to bear with thankful resignation the trials and discomforts which are mingled with our lot. Imperfect in ourselves, we nevertheless, with monstrous inconsistency, expect perfection in others and while unhappy and discontented within ourselves, we are easily worried and fretted by trifling inconveniences around us. We take but little account of our multiplied mercies, in our undue regard to incidental evils. It is only when some loved one is taken from our family circle, that we realize how, in comparison with the loss of that child, or wife, or husband, or parent, all the inconveniences and trials of life are as nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity. We could now cheerfully endure a thousand ills greater than any we have borne, if only borne in fellowship with the departed one. But in him as by one devastating wave, everything has been swept away, and the earth has become a dreary waste. What was before great, has become of little value. What we most coveted, ceases to attract. And the trifles which annoyed us, have sunk into insignificance. Let us then lay this to heart. Let us learn and ponder upon the needful lesson. Let us turn our thoughts to the friends still spared to us. Let us duly estimate their priceless value. Let us practically feel the evanescent, temporary, and incidental nature of all our possible trials.



And remembering how soon God can desolate our hearts and our homes, by one single visitation of His bereaving providence, let us prize one another as our chiefest earthly treasure, and find in each other's society, hallowed by pure and undefiled religion, the only antidote to all our earthly cares, the compensation for all our trials.

AH! GRIEVE NOT SO.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain."—1 Tim. 6, 6.

"Nicht so traurig, nicht so sehr."

Ah! grieve not so, nor so lament  
My soul! nor troubled sigh,  
Because some joys to others sent  
Thy Father may deny;  
Take all as love that seems severe—  
There is no want if God is near.

There is no right thou canst demand,  
No title thou canst claim;  
For all are strangers in the land  
Who bear the human name:  
Earth and its treasures are the Lord's,  
And He the lot of each accords.

How thankless art thou, child of man!  
For favors that abound;  
Thy God has given thee eyes to scan  
The glory all around;  
Yet seldom for this priceless sight,  
Hast thou been heard to praise aright.

Number thy limbs, thy members tell,  
And ask thy thankless soul,  
If another thou wouldst sell  
Even the smallest of the whole.  
There is not one from which thy heart  
Would willingly submit to part.

Now, go and search the depths of mind,  
Explore its wondrous power,  
New proofs of benefits to find,  
That meet thee every hour;  
More than the sand upon the shore,  
And ever rising more and more.

He knows, who lives on Zion's hill,  
What we in truth require;  
Knows too how many blessings still  
This flesh and blood desire;  
And could He safely all bestow,  
He would not let thee sorrowing go.

Thou wert not born that earth should be  
A portion fondly sought;  
Look up to heaven and smiling see  
Thy shining golden lot!  
Honours and joys, which thou shalt share,  
Unending and unenvied there!

Then journey on to life and bliss,  
God will protect to heaven;  
And every good that meets thee is  
A blessing wisely given.  
If losses come so let it be—  
The God of heaven remains with thee.

That these lessons may have all their impressiveness, let us remember that the dead constitute a multitude, in comparison with whom, all the living are as nothing. There are alive upon the earth some one thousand millions of human beings. How many, then, have lived and died during the six thousand years that have elapsed since man first became an inhabitant of earth. Their number is legion. It is past finding out. Could they return to this world, it would not be able to contain them. Could they encompass it round about, they would darken all the sky. And we shall see them, one and all, on the great final day of the gathering together in one, of the quick and the dead, before the throne of final judgment. At death we enter among them in one or other of their present habitations, where they await in longing hope, or fearful apprehension, the consummation of all things. And even now, they soar round about us, though we see them not, as a great cloud of witnesses, if not, also to some extent, perhaps, as ministering spirits. With what a pressure of the powers of the world to come, ought, then, their testimony to be heard. How much more ought it to impress us than any utterances of the living, beguiled as they are by sin and satan, and unwise and evil ways?

And with what unanimity does the whole multitude of the dead, testify by the brevity of their lives and the necessity of their death, that life is vanity except as spent in preparation for eternity; that death is certain and near; that health is but the sap of the tree, which the winter's blast will soon drive again to earth; that beauty is only the blossom of the flower, which even in blooming fades; that fame is but the fragrant perfume which exhales and disappears as soon as it is given—and that all the lusts of the flesh, and the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, are less than nothing and vanity, sunbeams sparkling upon the waters of death! With what overpowering emphasis, also, do the dead, one and all, exclaim, "Prepare, O man, to meet thy God. Live not for self, or for sin, or ease, or wealth, or pleasure, or for anything seen and temporal, for what shall it profit you to gain all these and lose your undying soul."

In thy heart there is a chamber,—  
None but God and thou hath seen it—  
Darkened by the sombre shadows  
From the folds of thought that screen it.

On its walls are many pictures  
Painted by the hand of time,  
Sketches of those mystic regions  
In the Infinite sublime.

There are portraits of the faces  
That have passed away from earth,  
Glimpses of those sunny places  
Sacred to thy childhood mirth.

Of the homestead, old and mossy,  
Close beside the meadow green,  
Where the brooks like threads of silver,  
Wound their graceful curve between.

And, it is a haunted chamber,  
There the ghosts at midnight stray,  
Silent as the stars that wander  
Down the white-pav'd Milky Way.

You behold the light forms trembling  
In their pure robes like a bride,  
And they look so like the living  
You forget that they have died.

You forget the marble features  
Of the friend you laid to rest,  
You forget the pale hands folded  
On a pulseless, soulless breast.

But you see him slowly walking  
'Mid the glow life's sunset weaves,  
When his lips dropp'd farewell blessings  
As the trees their autumn leaves.

Thus comes he long since departed,  
Reaching out his hands to thine,  
And his lips unto thee murmur  
In a tone which seems divine.

In this chamber stands a mirror,  
Memory's lamp hangs overhead,  
Throwing down a soften'd radiance  
On those pictures of the dead.

In its clear depths we distinguish  
What we were, and what we are,  
There our inner life reflected,  
Shows us hideous or fair.

Oh! 'tis in this secret chamber  
That we learn a solemn truth,  
As in links of spirit union,  
Age is join'd again with youth.

It is true that this testimony of the dead is given in mute silence. They speak to us but not in words. They utter their voice, but it is in a silence far more powerful than any language—in a way which is equally understood by every speech and language, and by every human heart. How silent, and yet with what mute eloquence speaks the vacant chair of the



departed; the banquet hall now empty, cold, and damp, the silent woods, the mouldering ruin, the deserted house, the starry night with its eternal solitude! Who has ever felt such deep and soul-absorbing emotion, such soul-stirring and multitudinous thoughts, as when he has stood in the chamber where the good man breathes his last; when every eye is intent upon the slumberer sinking calmly into the untroubled sleep of death, when every breath is hushed, and an unearthly awe rests upon every spirit? But how much deeper still is the awe profound, when the mourners enter the room where that sleeper, whom the peal of a thousand cannons could not now disturb, lies still and motionless; and when they gather round the opened grave, and hear the clay rattling upon the coffin lid of the loved form so lately by their side.

Oh let that silent noise with which the dead so touchingly speaks to us, impress our hearts. Let us give it earnest heed. Let us open to it the ear of our inmost soul. Let us ponder and weigh it well. They tell us that with them all of life is now finished, and that, with death, is finished the all of every man's probation for eternity. Death closes the account and ends the harvest. Were it otherwise, would not He who loved the world with such an infinite love, have revealed it to us? He *has* revealed to us the future of the earth, the future of heaven and hell, and had there been any other probationary scene than this present life, would God not have made it known; would He not have allowed the angelic messengers, or some spirit among the just made perfect, to impart the consolatory truth? Life, then, and this life *only*,

Since—  
 ——— is the time to serve the Lord,  
 The time to insure the great reward;

In the cold grave to which we haste,  
 There are no acts of pardon past;  
 But darkness, death, and long despair  
 Reign in eternal silence there.

On him who dies in his sins, unpardoned, the wrath of God abideth forever, while they who die in the Lord, are blessed from henceforth and forever.

Thus do the dead yet speak to us. They tell us that as they were born, and lived, and died, individually, and not in compa-

nies or corporations, or churches, but each one alone and by himself, so did they all stand severally before the judgment seat of Christ, and there receive, according to their course in this world, whether good or evil. The dead also proclaim to us with united voice, the immutability of the divine law—God's impartial and unpitying justice, and the unerring certainty of retribution. Not one of all these myriads has escaped death, the penalty of God's violated law, except two, who were miraculously taken up to heaven, to prove to us that death is neither natural, nor necessary, nor final, to man. They teach us, therefore, that not one of all the generations yet unborn, shall be delivered from death. Not one of those now alive can pass by death into eternity. Just as certain as our birth and life, is also, our death. And as we live alone, individually, each one responsible for himself, his life, his character, his principles, opinions, and conduct, and for all these, as it regards man, and God, and Christ, the Savior, and the Holy Spirit—so must we one by one, die alone, and be judged alone, and be either damned or saved alone.

The dead also teach us the all-important truth that death is no certain criterion of real piety. It ought to be such. It is naturally such. If ever a man is candid and sincere, he is so when all the motives of concealment, and all the influences of a worldly nature, must to a great extent cease to operate. This is generally the case. Death is the great teacher, and also the great revealer of secrets. And when death is met in a calmness, in full possession of reason, with a perfect knowledge of its near and inevitable approach, it will generally bring out the real character and disposition and principles. But it will not change a man's real character and fixed principles. These may be atheistic, infidel, pharasaic pride, self-righteous confidence, ignorance of the gospel, and reliance, therefore, on some refuge of lies, whose insecurity may only be discovered at death. Or a man may exhibit confidence in death from a reliance on the prayers of others, or baptism, or attendance at church, or what is called respect for religion, or a more outward, formal, and worldly profession of religion. Or the character exhibited in death may be, as it often is, open, abandoned, hardened impiety, blasphemy and indifference. Death,

in order to be felt as terrible, must be fully realized in its nature, and consequences, and dread alternatives. There is nothing in death itself, or in the mere pain of ordinary dying to terrify or alarm. The great majority of men probably meet death in a state of physical insensibility and mental weakness or aberration. Many die just as the beasts that perish. Many die as the fool dieth, utterly thoughtless of the future. And many meet death while wholly at ease and quiet, and without any bands in their death. God gives many, also up to damnable delusion, that they may believe a lie, so as to repose upon it as upon a bed of ease, even in death. God leaves men to die in all variety of forms, both of faith, feeling, and hope, in order that the living may not trust to a dying hour, or to dying experience, or to any dying expressions. In themselves, these are nothing, and worth nothing. At the very best, they only tell us what the man is, and thinks, and believes. But as often as otherwise, all such dying calmness and confidence are hollow and insincere, assumed and not real, the offspring of fear and alarm, or the desperate attempt of the cowardly and terrified spirit to keep up its courage, and to brave it out. Death is terrible not because it is painful. Sin is the sting of death, and it is only in proportion as this sin is realized, that the thought of death is alarming. The law which denounces and inflicts death as the penalty of its violation, is that which gives strength and vigour to this sting of death which is sin. It is this consciousness of guilt which inflames the conscience, kindles up fear, and terror, and a certain looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, since these all depend upon the clearness of our knowledge of the holiness and spirituality and breadth and immutability of God's law.

Of this law and of all sin involving guilt and punishment, all men have some knowledge, and therefore some fear; and although a man may drown that fear of death in wickedness, and pervert his conscience by false philosophy, and keep down a sense of guilt and a dread of death by pride, and conceal and try in every way to escape from it, and succeed too often in thus searing conscience as with a hot iron, and dying in utter stupidity—yet very often, in the worst and most ignorant of

men, as for instance, in Pharoah, in Nebuchadnezzar, in Belshazzar, in the sailors of Jonah's vessel, God awakens the sleeping conscience, and lets loose the dogs of hell, the worm that never dies, enkindles the fire that is never quenched, to torment them before the time, in order to demonstrate in the body in this life, and in this world, the nature and the beginning of that misery that shall hereafter be the portion of all who die in their sins. Of this, from time to time, God gives public and awful examples, as in the case of Voltaire, of Spira, of Paine, and of multitudes in private life, who are driven away in their wickedness, and with terrible apprehensions of their certain perdition. The experience and the testimony of one such sinner, dying in his reason, and with the full knowledge of all his previous atheism or infidelity, or unbelief in hell and damnation, is an irresistible proof of the reality of such fears and forebodings in the human soul, and of their certain premonition of the terrible hereafter. They are otherwise utterly inexplicable, while the fact that in the majority of cases they may not be felt, can easily be accounted for on the principles already explained.

And we are here led to remark that just as it is with the teachings of the dead in their dying hour, so is it with their teachings after death. We have seen what death should teach to all, and that the dead should speak to all. But even as the ears of the dead are often closed, so that they cannot hear, and therefore cannot feel aught, even so is it with the living. The ears of multitudes are closed, so that they will not hear, and their eyes shut, so that they cannot see, and their hearts hardened, so that they cannot feel. To them the dead forgotten lie :

Their memory and their sense are gone,  
Alike unknowing and unknown.  
Their hatred and their love are lost,  
Their envy buried in the dust;  
They have no share in all that's done  
Beneath the circuit of the sun.

But while this condition is common among men, it is abnormal—even unnatural. And while it is proverbial, that “dead men tell no tales,” yet if our relation to them has been one of crime, they haunt and terrify with their continual and unappeasable cry. Being dead they speak, and though not audible to others, their still small cry is louder than a peal of thunder

to the terrified and self-tortured spirit. Better face ten thousand living foes than one dead victim of our crime.

This power of the dead to influence and terrify the prosperous living, is powerfully depicted by Shakespeare in many characters, and among others, in that of Claudius, king of Denmark. But perhaps no one has ever more truthfully portrayed the power of the dead over the guilty living than Hood, in his Eugene Aram.

And long since then of bloody men,  
Whose deeds tradition saves;  
Of lonely folk cut off unseen,  
And hid in sudden graves;  
Of horrid stabs in groves forlorn,  
And murders done in caves.  
And how the spirits of injured men  
Shriek upward from the sod—  
And how the ghostly hand will point  
To show the burial clod;  
And unknown facts of guilty acts,  
Are seen in dreams from God.  
He told how murderers walked the earth  
Beneath the curse of Cain—  
With crimson clouds before their eyes,  
And flames about their brain;  
For blood that left upon their souls  
Its everlasting stain.  
Nothing but lifeless flesh and bone,  
That could not do me ill;  
And yet I feared him all the more,  
For lying there so still;  
There was a manhood in his look,  
That murder could not kill.  
And lo! the universal air  
Seemed lit with ghostly flame—  
Ten thousand thousand dreadful eyes  
Were looking down in blame;  
I took the dead Man by his hand,  
And called upon his name.  
Oh God! it made me quake to see  
Such sense within the slain!  
But when I touched the ghostly clay  
The blood gushed out amain.  
For every clot a burning spot  
Was scorching in my brain.  
My head was like an ardent coal,  
My heart was solid ice;  
My wretched, wretched soul, I knew  
Was at the devil's price;  
A dozen times I groan'd; the dead  
Had never groaned but twice.  
And now from forth the frowning sky,  
From the heaven's topmost height,  
I heard a voice—the awful voice  
Of the blood-avenging sprite;  
"Thou guilty man! take up thy dead,  
And hide it from my sight!"



So wills the fierce avenging sprite,  
 Till blood for blood atones!  
 Ay though he's buried in a cave,  
 And trodden down with stones,  
 And years have rotted off his flesh—  
 The world shall see his bones.

Of this terrific power of the dead to taunt and torment the living, the Bible gives many illustrations, both in its preceptive and historical books. Take one scene.

Behold, the price of courtly dance,  
 The fruit of forbidden glance,  
 The head of Christ's great harbinger!  
 The voice which did repentance call,  
 From sylvans rude to palace hall;  
 Hush'd is that voice and tongue, and ne'er again shall stir.

Nay, is that tongue forever stilled?  
 Nay, it anew his ears hath fill'd,  
 That they can nothing hear no more;  
 Abroad the Baptist's shadow stalks,  
 In secret to his spirit talks  
 Of that incestuous crime more sternly than before.

He saw, and startled back, I trow,  
 When on that glittering festive scene  
 Death's silent image looked forth now  
 From that same majesty of brow,  
 Reproving, gray, serene.

We have seen what death is to thoughtless and unbelieving men, and how, while its teachings are too generally unheard and unheeded, in other cases they are heard in wailings of despair, and yells of premonitory damnation. Nor does death cease to be death, and therefore dreadful, to the Christian. To him also, death is the king of terrors—the last enemy that shall be destroyed—through fear of whom he is more or less in bondage all his life. To him as well as to others, and indeed in an eminent and peculiar degree, there is everything to make death fearful. He has a deep consciousness of sin, a clear knowledge of the law, and therefore a realizing conviction of guilt, of death as the penalty, of a coming judgment, and of an everlasting perdition. To meet death calmly, quietly, hopefully, or exultingly, with such a faith, and in the full possession of his reason, is only to be conceived of as possible on the supposition of a perfect self-deluding hope, or a certain inward, spiritual experience of the power of a divine Redeemer. True Christians are therefore living and dying witnesses for the truth and certainty, and sufficiency of Christian faith, hope, peace, and joy, not only to outride all the storms of life, but

to hold us fast, and secure for us a glorious entrance into the haven of eternal felicity, amid the thunderings and lightnings and tempestuous hurricane of death itself.

How important, then, how inestimably valuable is the teachings of the dead, especially of those who die in the Lord. They are signs and seals of the covenant of promise. They are epistles in which the sure mercies of God are seen and read of all men. They are like the setting of the sun in glory and in beauty, gilding the whole horizon of life with an unearthly splendour, and giving the promise of a coming morn more bright and beautiful. They are links between the spirit land and ours, already shining with its radiance, speaking with its tones of melodious sweetness, and imparting to us some earnest and foretaste of its seraphic joys. By their lives they taught us how to live, and by their death they teach us how to die. They were lovely in life, and beautiful! very beautiful in death! In them death appeared transformed from a spirit of darkness into an angel of light, from an executioner into a messenger, from an enemy into a friend, from a curse into a blessing, and from a terror into a triumph.

And these pious dead are still ours—still with us—and still speak to us. The blessed dead! how free from all sin and selfishness and stain of corruption, is the love we now cherish towards them. The earthly is all buried with that which in them was earthly, and the spiritual and unearthly in us now rises towards them as spirits of the just made perfect in heaven. There they shine, fixed immutably in purity and peace, and joy. They are ours forever—beyond all need of our sympathy, all sorrow for their sufferings, and all anxiety for their final salvation. They now await our coming in mansions of rest prepared for our common indwelling. We shall find them waiting for us in the garments of beauty, and with everlasting joy upon their heads.

How glorious and exalted are they! How reverently do we take their names into our sin-polluted lips! How do our hearts burn within us when we remember all the words they spake to us, the counsels they left behind, and the lessons they still enforce.

The immortal dead! how unchanging, how purified and enlarged is their love for us! With what ineffable tenderness do they look down upon us! With what unspeakable concern do they await the end of our course, and the last faithful and victorious conquest over sin and satan. And in view of the coldness of all, the formality of many, the worldliness of the most spiritual and the backsliding of the most devoted, how do they invoke us to walk humbly, to watch unto prayer, and to give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Hark! a voice, it cries from heav'n,  
Happy in the Lord who die;  
Happy they to whom 'tis given,  
From a world of grief to fly!  
They indeed are truly blest;  
From their labours then they rest.

All their toils and conflicts over,  
Lo! they dwell with Christ above;  
O! what glories they discover  
In the Saviour whom they love!  
Now they see Him face to face,  
Him who saved them by His grace.

'Tis enough, enough for ever,  
'Tis His people's bright reward;  
They are blest indeed who never  
Shall be absent from their Lord!  
O! that we may die like those  
Who in Jesus then repose!

In such experience our church is rich. We have had a long line of faithful confessors who have gone up with a shout, and are now entered into their rest. We are well represented among the elders round about the throne, the servants of God, who serve Him day and night in His temple, and the innumerable multitude who worship before Him, and sing the new song of Moses and the Lamb. We have had a few apostles—alas for it—but we have had *many* martyrs. We may enroll upon our list of members *some* who have gone back, but more, many more that have followed the Lamb whither soever He led them, until they were translated by Him to His celestial fold. And while some have left our earthly abode, who, dying, gave no sign, no sure pledge and token of their safety, many have there been, whose dying, like their living, was sweet, and whose memory is yet fragrant with the odour of sanctity.

Among these not a few have left us within the last few years and to their happy number God has added two during the past year, to whom for our argument sake, and the benefit of the



living, and the glory of God displayed in their lives and deaths, some allusion is due. One of these was a mother in Israel in one of our churches—who united with its first worshippers, watched with interest every step in its progress, celebrated its dedication, became by public profession a member of it February, 1812—has ever since, for almost forty-five years, continued an humble, holy, consistent, and zealous disciple, ever ready to co-operate in any good work, and never more happy than when the ways of her beloved Zion prospered, and when its children, and children's children were seen entering into covenant with their fathers' God, making His church their home, and His service their delight. To her, as to many, the very walls and stones and surrounding trees and cemetery, were dear and sacred. And for years past, when growing deafness prevented her from uniting in the service, she was still as desirous as ever to be present among us, to commune with us in spirit, and in the silent meditations of her heart, often visible in the movements of her lips and the upward glancing of her eye—worship Him who seeth in secret, in spirit and in truth.

Of Mrs. Adger we may truly say, that no one ever knew her who did not love her, and feel attracted by her gentle, loving, and generous nature. With this she combined in rare union, firmness, wisdom, and good understanding, by which she was enabled, with divine assistance and blessing, to attach and yet to govern, to melt and at the same time mould the character of her nine children, eight of whom lived to mature age; one of whom is a herald of the cross, another of whom was "the beloved elder," another of whom occupies his place, of whom all have been long fellow-members with her in the church, and were around her bed-side, day and night during the four weeks of her gradual sinking into the sleep of death, and to every one of whom she is now a presence and a power, an atmosphere of love, a magnetic centre of irresistible attraction, and a fountain of sweet memories and blissful hopes.

Though it was not our privilege to be with her and them, in these weeks of wasting weariness to her decaying body, but of peace and quietness and assurance to her calm and heavenly spirit, we were permitted to receive with others, her dying

farewell, and to rejoice in spirit with her and those around her, that through the loving kindness of her God and Saviour, death was to her gain, and the grave a blessed rest, where she awaits in hope the glory of God, that her last end was peace, and that she finished her course with joy.

She has left behind her the companion of fifty years to whom by her combination of attractive powers, meekness, sweet compliance, and tender persuasion, she has been indeed a help meet for him, to whom from behind the curtain of death she still stretches out the hand of love saying, yet a little while and where I am you shall also be. Be thou also faithful unto death and thou shalt receive with me a crown of life.

"Never couldst thou bear to grieve us—  
Dearest mother, why to-day?  
Wherefore wilt thou thus forsake us,  
Why, oh! why refuse to stay?"  
"Were it but our Father's will,  
Gladly had I tarried still."

"Mother, see the bursting anguish  
Of thy dear ones, loved so well;  
See our eyes with grief o'erflowing—  
Grief which words refuse to tell!"  
"Children, bid me not remain:  
Let me with my Lord remain!"

"Ah! and art thou really going  
To that dark and distant shore?  
All *our* cares, our joys, our sorrows,  
All forgotten, shared no more!"  
"Children, think not, say not so—  
To the land of *love* I go."

"From the circle of affection,  
Mother, must thou next depart?  
Ah! how many a link is broken  
Once uniting heart to heart!"  
"Closer draw that gentle chain  
Round the lov'd who yet remain."

"Canst thou then so gladly leave us?  
Is our grief unheeded now?  
For thine eye is brightly beaming,  
Calm and cloudless is thy brow."  
"Yes! for faith, and hope, and love,  
Draw me to my Lord above."

"Yet even there, in bliss undying,  
When thou numberest thine own,  
Mother, shall not *we* be wanting—  
We who here in bondage groan?"  
"Come, beloved! quickly come,  
Join me in our heavenly home!"

To the name of Mrs. Adger has been added that of another mother in Israel, Mrs. Leland, consort of Rev. A. W. Leland,

D. D., who has recently passed from among us at a well advanced, though not an old age.

"The latter part of her life was passed in Columbia, in the quiet discharge of her appropriate duties. She walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, as blamelessly as one may walk who is subject to the infirmities of human nature, and has not yet arrived at the perfection of the heavenly state. Her life was a practical exposition of the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel; one of those living arguments for the reality of the Christian Religion which no Skepticism has ever met, and in the presence of which the confidence of Infidelity itself is shaken. The holiness of the Gospel—a holiness which no earthly system of Philosophy, and no human education ever produced—was the pervading state of her soul, and the *fruits* of holiness hung in golden clusters about her character, and illustrated it in the eyes of all beholders. To her, the name of Jesus was the symbol of all that is lovely, and all that is glorious. Her love of Christ was not a mere sentiment; it was a passion. His name was as ointment poured forth, which perfumed and enriched the smallest offices of life. Seldom did she pen a letter or a note in which there was not "*aliquid Christi*," a sweet savour of Christ, which hallowed her counsels, and imparted the spirit of His Religion, and the dignity of His name to the minutest details of domestic life. She has gone to behold Him "whom having not seen she loved;" to "look upon that head which was crowned with thorns, and that face which was spit upon for her."

"Another conspicuous feature of her character was, a faith in the special providence of God, and in the promises of the everlasting Covenant, which no vicissitudes of life, no shocks of affliction, and no tempest of cares could shake. It rendered her calm when others were perplexed, and peaceful, when others were disturbed. And hence she was enabled to maintain a tranquil equanimity amid all the changes of her earthly circumstances. She seemed to lean, with the most perfect repose, upon that "righteous, omnipotent Hand," which had upheld and guided her through all her pilgrimage. Thus, though subject to often infirmities and sickness of body, she

became a stay for others; a pillar of support, and a minister of consolation to her family and friends. She has received the end of her faith, and now enjoys the rest which remaineth for the people of God; but, alas, the pillar of support has crumbled to dust, the staff of strength is broken, the ministering angel is gone; and naught of her remains but the precious legacy of her example; the fadeless memory of her love; and the mute and touching memorials of a departed wife and mother.

“But the element of character which chiefly distinguished her, was her unselfish and untiring devotion to interests and comforts of others, especially her family and friends, and as a consequent, a most fervent spirit of intercessory prayer. In serving others, she seemed to forget herself. It mattered little that she was sick, if others were well; if her rest was broken, that theirs might be enjoyed; the midnight hour was frequently passed while she toiled for their comfort; and how often did she prevent the dawning light, that the stranger, who had lodged within her gates, or the friend, who had slept under her roof, might be refreshed for early travel, and receive her parting words of kindness and affection. The poor and friendless student for the ministry was ever welcome to her hospitable board and fireside, and received from her the sympathy of a mother and a friend. The needy and the destitute found her door open to them, and her hand of charity extended for their relief. Her domestics were treated rather as children, than as servants; as is attested by the fact that she contracted her last illness from exposure and fatigue, undergone while nursing one of them in sickness. But who may describe the watchful assiduity, the exhaustive patience, and the tender and yearning affection with which she ever ministered to the temporal and spiritual wants of her beloved husband and children. “In all their affliction, she was afflicted,” and all their joys were enhanced by the fact that she shared them. It was such a love as this which formed the source of appeal from which a covenant-keeping God has drawn, in order to illustrate His own unchanging affection for His people. “Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?”

"Before closing this long letter," says her bereaved husband, "I feel it my duty to record my solemn testimony, as to some facts and traits of character, which distinguished my beloved wife, and which are fully known to myself alone. I do not make these statements to her praise, from any vain-glorious reference to her connection with me; for alas, that connection, however endearing and ennobling, has ceased forever. "*Hinc illae lachrymae.*" But these graces of the Spirit should be known *below* to the praise of God's glorious grace, as they will be proclaimed *above* for the same purpose.

"I mention first, an utter forgetfulness of self, and an unremitting zeal for the good of others. In more than forty years I have never seen an indication of any regard to self-interest or self-indulgence. She lived for others, and found her happiness in their enjoyment. Another remarkable trait was a most generous liberality towards all around her, united with a rigid economy towards herself. All her resources were lavishly bestowed to aid and comfort all within her reach, while it was difficult to persuade her to supply her own necessities. Habitually she withheld the price of her own comforts, to bestow it upon the needy. Untiring laboriousness in duty was another striking characteristic. In the domestic offices of her large family, her diligence and efficiency were almost unexampled. And yet at the close of every busy day, she devoted her hours often until midnight, to reading, writing and devotion. In these seasons of quiet and solitude, as one instance of her devotional reading, she read all the volumes of Scott's Commentary thrice through in course, and had begun the fourth perusal, when she was called away to nobler employments. She composed four volumes of a closely written Diary or Journal, for the guidance of her children after her decease; and for several years she wrote more than four hundred letters of affectionate counsel each year, to her absent children. Of her heavenly intercourse and communion at a throne of grace, the record is on high. Most of these works were done in the hours of night. Her devoted love to her children was marked by one leading feature. Their spiritual interests, the safety of their souls, so engrossed her solicitude, that she hardly regarded anything else. As to her Christian character, her



spirituality and heavenly mindedness, I am utterly unable to express my honest convictions. I will only say that a spotless *Purity* of heart and motive, *Kindness* in feeling and action, *Benevolence* in its most exalted exercise, pervaded and governed her whole soul. But while her experience of the sanctifying power of Divine grace was so remarkable, she was no less distinguished for a low estimation of her own attainments, and a profound humility which prostrated her continually at the footstool of mercy, as the chief of sinners. A thought of any other position or claim never seemed to have entered her mind.

"Equally distinguished was my blessed wife for her kindness and charity to the poor and the afflicted. To her truly belonged the title which the Roman Pontiff arrogantly assumed, *servus servorum*. For the relief and comfort of servants, not only in her own family, but in others, much of her daily attention, care and toil, was sacredly devoted. And the sad event was in unison with her constant habit, when her mortal sickness was caused by a night exposure, during extreme cold weather, in attendance upon the sick couch of a servant woman; and this, with the distinctly expressed apprehension that the effect might be fatal.

I must add one more particular. Whatever money she received, she never thought of using a shilling for her own comfort, till all the benevolent subscriptions were paid, and all the claims upon her private charity were fully met. I often thought she carried this too far, but I now see that she was wisely making an investment, which she now enjoys. A few days before her decease, she received her last payment of money, and before the sun went down half of the amount was given away."

In concluding his circular letter Dr. Leland records the following remarkable dream which Mrs. L. had about fifteen years ago, making a very deep impression at the time, and preserved in most vivid recollection to the last. While she did not believe in any supernatural influence in the case, she had an invincible persuasion that the solemn and scriptural directions and encouragements which seemed to be addressed to her by a messenger from the world of spirits, demanded her



most special regard. And it is certain, that those imaginary communications did exert a mighty influence upon her subsequent conduct.

It should be stated, that at the time of this dream, she was surrounded by nine sons and daughters, in childhood and early youth, whose moral perils and exposure to evil examples filled her anxious, loving heart with intense solicitude and apprehensions.

She dreamed that she was wandering on the seashore, where the retiring tide had left a wide expanse of the beach only partially covered with water. At some distance from the sand on which she stood, she seemed to see a land turtle, surrounded by a group of her young, making her way to the dry land. The animal appeared distressed in guarding her little ones, which were continually straying from her, and running into danger. Sometimes she would have to cross a rivulet so deep that she could only secure her charge by taking them upon her back, and bearing them through, though she sometimes sunk out of sight with her burden. At length, however, after long toiling and most anxious struggles, she seemed to reach the safe, dry sand, with all her little charge. At this moment the dreamer seemed to behold at her side her own sainted mother, who had been in Heaven for ten years, and to hear from her lips such words as these; words never to be forgotten, and never remembered without profound emotion. "My child, you see there a mother, and a fit emblem of yourself. You have marked the care and toil, the ceaseless watchfulness and distressed anxiety of that poor animal, to preserve her helpless brood; and after all her fears and terrors in guarding and guiding them, you have witnessed the success which has crowned her strivings to conduct them to a place of safety. Regard this, my daughter, as indicating your own difficulties, responsibilities and obligations. To your charge are committed the precious immortal interests of all your thoughtless, perishing children. Under God, their salvation depends greatly upon yourself. O, make it your one great business, to watch over their precious souls. Pray without ceasing, and labour without intermission, for their conversion. Imitate the example of this poor turtle, and you may hope, like her, to rejoice in the consummation of your

hopes, in seeing your children safe at the Saviour's feet." Such was this memorable dream. And its effects were equally memorable. Previously, my dear wife had exhibited more than ordinary devotedness to maternal duties; but afterwards, she cherished a severe conviction that "she had *one thing to do*," and that was to devote her undivided energies, her time, her efforts, her whole soul, to the spiritual good of those who called her mother. She felt as if a message had come to her from the spiritual world, and the consequent obligation pressed upon her continually. And nobly and gloriously did she obey the mandate. I never witnessed, and never expected to witness such devotedness, such entire consecration. This object governed her conduct by day, and was the inspiring motive of her habitual midnight studies and labours. She desired to live only that she might bless her household. She sought no repose, no cessation in the strenuous exertion of all her powers, in the work assigned to her. Nor was she left without precious tokens of divine favour. She had the unutterable joy to see blessed fruits of her prayers and tears. Successively her beloved children gave hopeful evidence of vital piety, and were received into the communion of the church. At length, her wrestling at a throne of grace, for her youngest son, seemed to have prevailed. And when the tidings reached her from a distant State, that he had hopefully become a subject of grace, she evinced a rapture of joy wholly unusual to her, and instantly wrote, in one of the last letters she ever penned, *my work is done*; feeling evidently that she had nothing to do but to die.

"Her body was taken to the town of Mount Pleasant, where she had passed her early days. The funeral service was attended by the friends of her youth; and her remains, accompanied by her family and some of her friends, were borne to the burial ground, about seven miles from the town, called "Cook's Field." There, according to her own wish, beside the graves of her beloved parents; remote from the bustle of life; in the silent forest; and amid the tears of her kindred, her precious dust was committed to its final resting place. Fit spot for the last sleep of the saint, whose life had been gentleness, and whose end was peace! No rude foot will tread upon

her grave; the morning and the evening dew will fall upon it; and the sweet voices of nature, in this still retreat, will hymn her gentle requiem. Many bodies of Christ's dear people there rest in death—a goodly company. The sacred spot has been further signalized and hallowed, by receiving the dust of this noble and excellent mother in Israel; and not the least among those who shall there rise at the sound of the archangel's trump, and the call of the descending Saviour, will stand the glorified form of our departed friend.

It was truly affecting to see her venerable partner, who, like Abraham, bearing the body of his illustrious wife to the field of Machpelah, had come with *his* dead, to this quiet spot, to discharge for her the last mournful offices of affection. The light of his dwelling has been extinguished; the prop of his age has been withdrawn; and the noble heart that had beat with ineffable love for him and his children is still; but may He, who has promised that He will be with His people when they “pass through the waters,” and “walk through the fire,” and that “even to hoar hairs,” He “will carry them,” graciously comfort and sustain him under this sore and heavy trial.”

How precious is the sacred spot  
 In yonder burial ground,  
 Where my endeared, departed wife,  
 A last repose hath found!

Full twenty summer suns have shone,  
 Since heart and hand she gave,  
 And kindly pledged her love to me,  
 Till parted by the grave.

Alas! these years have sped away;  
 That happy time is flown!  
 But, year by year, her plighted love  
 Has sweetly bloomed and grown.

In prosperous times, when all was fair,  
 And comfort reigned the while,  
 Each blessing high in value rose,  
 Augmented by her smile.

Affliction's stormy winds might blow;  
 And dire distress portend;  
 But what were they—since she was mine,  
 My loving wife—my friend?

A mother, pious, prudent, kind,  
 In her my children had;  
 Who made their cares and griefs her own,  
 And in their joys was glad.

Her presence was our light and joy,  
 The blessing of our store;  
 But ah! that source of joy is gone,  
 That light can shine no more!

We mourn our loss, and well we may ;  
 Our home is blighted now !  
 Our dearest, kindest friend away !  
 But, Lord, to Thee we bow.  
 With tender, aching hearts we bore  
 Our precious dead away ;  
 And left her with her kindred dust,  
 In hope of endless day.  
 Pass on, ye wintry tempests, pass ;  
 Why linger with your gloom ?  
 Go, let the early spring flowers rise  
 To deck her couch with bloom.  
 Blow soft ; ye gentle breezes, oh !  
 Blow softly cross her grave :  
 Ye dews of evening, kindly fall,  
 As her lone bed ye lave.  
 Angelic guardians, watch with care,  
 Her peaceful, hallowed tomb,  
 Until that glorious morning dawn,  
 When Christ, the Judge, shall come.  
 Dear wife, thine absence we deplore ;  
 Our hearts with grief are riven ;  
 We weep ; and yet we should not weep,  
 Since thou art blest in heaven.  
 We loved thee with affection true,  
 That never knew decline ;  
 In weal or woe, in ease or pain,  
 Our warmest love was thine.  
 But oh ! we never prized thee more  
 Than since thy parting breath  
 Announced our loss, and made us feel  
 The majesty of death.  
 Oh ! may we tread the heavenly path,  
 Which thou hast trod before,  
 And meet thee, in yon world of love,  
 Where we shall part no more !

These, and other beloved mothers and sisters in the Lord, have recently been taken from the church and their families on earth. But they have left behind them their example, their life, their character, their works and their death, that we may walk in their steps and be stimulated to holy zeal and heavenly ardour. And we cannot but thank and praise the Lord—not that they were taken from us, but that they were taken at a time when the moral power of their example in life and in death, was so needful. In them we have an illustration of the reality, the power, the benign and holy influence of the Gospel, which all will admit, and none can question—a life and character and death for which *only the Gospel can account*. In them we see the legitimate effect of the Gospel so far as it is truly received and sincerely obeyed in purifying, elevating and perfecting the character. The failure of one, or of a few, or

of any number of professors to maintain a practice in all things according to their profession, and in conformity to the immaculate purity and probity required by the Gospel, is therefore no valid argument against the Gospel or the church since it is in direct contrariety to the principles of both. Membership in the church is constituted by a *profession* of the Gospel. That profession is all of which either minister or elders can judge, since it is evident that a clear possession of real piety is a fact which God alone can certainly discern. The inconsistencies and unchristian conduct of members of the church, is only evidence, therefore, so far as it goes, of the insincerity of their profession, or the gross inconsistency of their lives. It is no argument against either the church or the Gospel. But on the other hand, every professor of religion, whose life and conversation and conduct are in spirit, in purpose and in constant effort, conformed to the Gospel they profess, is a demonstration of its truth and of its infinite and paramount importance; and for this simple reason, that while to act contrary to the Gospel, is easy, natural, and agreeable to the pride and selfishness and sensuality of the heart, to live in conformity to the Gospel, is an opposition to them all, a denial of self, a humiliation of pride, a crucifixion of the flesh, a mortification of lust, and, in many things, an abandonment of pleasure and of profit.

Mrs. Adger and Mrs. Leland, therefore, being dead, yet speak. All those among us, who, like them, have lived and died in the Lord, and all those still living, and of the sincerity of whose profession you have no doubt, speak to us. They speak, O, sinner, to you, and they tell you that the Gospel is a divine reality, that it is life and power, and Salvation to them that truly believe and obey it, and that it is condemnation and death, and everlasting destruction to them that believe and obey it not, whether they are professors or not.

They speak also to those who are professors of religion, and they tell us that a mere profession will not save us, because it will neither justify nor sanctify us. They tell us that a profession made from worldly, selfish, or ambitious motives, and used as a cloak for covetousness, and hoarding avarice, and penurious giving, or for vice, dishonesty, or any other course



of sin, is an aggravation of guilt, and will entail a deeper damnation. They tell us that such is the abounding worldliness, and covetousness, and ambitious desire for wealth and prominence, even among professors of religion, that hardly can any professor enter the Kingdom of God, scarcely can even a righteous man be saved, and that it becometh even the oldest disciple, and the most honoured elder or deacon, yea, and the most faithful minister, to fear lest after all they may be cast away, and to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. And let him that hath ears to hear heed what is thus spoken to him by the dead with whom he is soon to stand in judgment.

#### REJOICE.

Rejoice, all ye believers,  
 And let your lights appear ;  
 The evening is advancing,  
 And darker night is near.  
 The Bridegroom is arising,  
 And soon he draweth nigh.  
 Up ! pray, and watch, and wrestle—  
 At midnight comes the cry !

See that your lamps are burning,  
 Replenish them with oil,  
 And wait for your salvation,  
 The end of earthly toil.  
 The watchers on the mountain  
 Proclaim the Bridegroom near ;  
 Go, meet Him as He cometh,  
 With Hallelujahs clear !

Ye wise and holy virgins,  
 Now raise your voices higher,  
 Till in songs of jubilee  
 They meet the angel-choir.  
 The marriage feast is waiting,  
 The gates wide open stand ;  
 Up ! up ! ye heirs of glory—  
 The Bridegroom is at hand !

Ye saints, who here in patience  
 Your cross and suff'rings bore,  
 Shall live and reign for ever,  
 When sorrow is no more.  
 Around the throne of glory,  
 The Lamb ye shall behold,  
 In triumph cast before Him  
 Your diadems of gold !

Palms of victory are there ;  
 There, radiant garments are ;  
 There stands the peaceful harvest,  
 Beyond the reach of war.  
 There, after stormy winter,  
 The flowers of earth arise,  
 And from the grave's long slumber  
 Shall meet again our eyes !

Before dismissing our readers, there is one point on which these beloved mothers in Israel, though dead, yet emphatically



and very encouragingly speak to us, and that is the intimate and divinely appointed connection between maternal piety, consistency and gentle loving conduct towards her husband and her children, and the conversion of her children, and the conversion and spiritual advancement of her husband.

Of this principle, the ministry, both living and dead, and the membership in the church in all ages, churches and countries, are standing proofs. Mothers, not only pious, but prudent, not only holy, but happy, not merely gracious, but gentle, not less firm than faithful,—mothers in whose heart is the law of love, drawing with the cords of a man the most reluctant hearts, and on whose lips is the law of kindness and persuasion, and in whose conscience is the law of heaven's purity, and in whose hands is the rod of correction, and the staff of authority—such women have ever been the nursing mothers of the church from the days of Hannah and Louis to the present time, and must continue to be the hope of the church, and of the State for all time to come.

“There was once,” says Rev Dr. P. H. Fowler, “an obscure and pious woman living in the south of England. History is silent respecting her ancestry, her place of birth, and her education. She had an only son whom she made it her great business to train in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. In the seventh year of his age, his mother died, and a few years later the lad went to sea, and engaged at length as a sailor in the African slave-trade. He was soon an adept in vice, and though among the youngest of the crew, he was the most proficient in guilt. But his mother's instructions sent their echoes to him, and though at first he sought to deafen himself to them, they grew louder and louder, until listening to them at last, he became a fervent Christian, a successful preacher, the author of books which the church will never let die, and a writer of hymns the use of which is co-extensive with our tongue

“This wayward son whom his mother, though dead, addressed and reclaimed, was the means of the conversion of Claudius Buchanan, so distinguished for his labors in the East Indies; and the ‘Star in the East,’ a book published by Mr. Buchanan, first called the attention of our Judson to the missionary work, and sent him an apostle to Burmah.

"The sailor, turned preacher, was also the means of delivering the Rev Thomas Scott from the mazes of ruinous error, and introducing him to the way, the truth, and the life. Mr. Scott prepared the Commentary known by his name, and which still continues its mission of converting and sanctifying power.

"The influence of this same minister and author, in connection with that of Doddridge, was principally instrumental in making Wilberforce the Christian he was. To Wilberforce's 'Practical View of Christianity,' the conversion of Legh Richmond may be ascribed, and Legh Richmond wrote 'The Dairyman's Daughter,' and other tracts, which have contributed to the salvation of thousands of souls.

"Such are some of the results of that voice from the dead which spoke to John Newton; and what a small portion of the whole sum has yet been revealed!"

A young man of Virginia, in the joyous flush of youth, and all the vigor and promise of life's morning, was as in a moment laid low, and a minister, who only knew that the young man had been sceptically inclined, was sent for. The minister entered the chamber apprehending a mournful scene of unpreparedness for the solemn change; but to his surprise and joy, he saw the countenance of the dying man lighted up with that celestial radiance which naught but a well-founded hope in Christ can impart to the last trying scene. He drew near, and tenderly inquired whether or not he felt ready and willing to depart, if such should be the Divine Will.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed the dying man; "for me to die is gain; I long to depart and be with Christ." The minister inquired how long this blessed hope had been his, and to what instrumentality he referred this happy change in his views and character.

"It was only a few days before I was taken sick that I was brought to submit entirely to Christ," said the young man; "and I owe it all, under God *to my sainted mother's prayers*, and her godly life. While in college, I imbibed, from corrupt associates, their sceptical views, learned to doubt the authenticity of the Bible, and stumbled at many of the doctrines of revealed religion, because I could not, with an unrenewed nature and a heart at enmity with God, comprehend them. But

while thus setting at naught God's holy word, and the message of his servants, there was one thing I could not get over, and that was, my mother's holy life, a constant, living, breathing epitome of the religion she professed, which to my inmost soul whispered a refutation of all my scepticism. One thing was ever ringing in my ears and setting at naught all my arguments against Christianity—the memory of my mother's prayers for her prodigal son. I tried again and again to put them from me, but they would be heard; and at last, unable to continue the conflict longer, I was brought in humble penitence to the feet of Jesus, and there found peace and joy in believing in Him."

Christian mother, are your prayers the best refutation of your son's scepticism? Is your life a living, breathing epitome of the gospel you profess? The weal or woe, for time and for eternity, of those you love, may hang upon you. Your faithfulness may elevate them to heaven, place a crown of glory upon their heads, and a tuneful harp in their hands, with which to swell Emmanuel's praise to all eternity; or your inconsistency and heartlessness may send them down to the blackness of dark despair, "where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

Oh, let mothers hear and heed the teachings of the dead, and then may they hope when surrounded by their weeping children as they gather into her dying chamber to comfort and soothe their latter hours, saying unto them

What mean ye by this wailing,  
To break my bleeding heart?  
And if the love that binds us  
Could alter or depart!  
Our sweet and holy union  
Knows neither time nor place,  
The love that God has planted  
Is lasting as His grace.

Ye clasp these hands at parting,  
As if no hope could be;  
While still we stand forever  
In blessed unity!  
Ye gaze as on a vision  
Ye never could recall,  
While still each thought is with you,  
And Jesus with us all!

Ye say, "We hear, that yonder,  
Thou goest, and we stay!  
And yet Christ's mystic body  
Is one eternally.

Ye speak of different journeys,  
A long and sad adieu!  
While still one way I travel,  
And have one end with you.

Why should ye now be weeping  
These agonizing tears?  
Behold our gracious Leader,  
And cast away your fears.  
We tread *one* path to glory,  
Are guided by *one* hand,  
And led in faith and patience  
Unto *one* Fatherland!

Then let this hour of parting  
No bitter grief record,  
But be an hour of union  
More blessed with our Lord!  
With Him to guide and save us,  
No changes that await,  
No earthly separations  
Can leave us desolate!

Let us all listen to the teachings of the dead, and then shall  
the dead be still ours and we theirs, and heaven our common  
and eternal home.

Meet again! yes, we shall meet again,  
Though now we part in pain.  
His people all  
Together Christ shall call.  
Hallelujah!

Soon the days of absence shall be o'er,  
And thou shalt weep no more;  
Our meeting day  
Shall wipe all tears away.  
Hallelujah!

Now I go with gladness to our home,  
With gladness thou shalt come;  
There I will wait  
To meet thee at Heaven's gate.  
Hallelujah!

Dearest! what delight again to share  
Our sweet communion there!  
To walk among  
The holy ransomed throng.  
Hallelujah!

Here, in many a grief, our hearts were one,  
But there in joys alone;  
Joy fading never,  
Increasing, deepening, ever.  
Hallelujah!

Not to mortal sight can it be given  
To know the bliss of Heaven;  
But thou shalt be  
Soon there, and sing with me.  
Hallelujah!

Meet again! yes, we shall meet again,  
Though now we part in pain!  
Together all  
His people Christ shall call.  
Hallelujah!

## HEAVENLY RECOLLECTIONS.

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"Can friendship, with the thousand joys,  
Our hearts so fondly cherish,  
Be only born to pass away,  
When our clay forms shall perish?"

There is but one communion of saints, and that can never be dissevered; for as neither life nor death can separate from Christ, so His children are forever united in Him. There is an intimate fellowship between those "starlike ones who bend in bliss before the sapphire throne forevermore," and the redeemed below who are hastening to join them. All that was spiritual in our intercourse with our departed friends survives the shock of death, and as the influence of spirit upon spirit is not dependent upon a bodily medium, that intercourse may yet subsist unseen, and on their part may be exerted with even greater facility. It cannot detract from their enjoyment of God's presence to watch over us, for that presence pervades all space. They are not separated from Him while on their missions of love, and where He is, and in His service, there is heaven. It is not irrational to believe ourselves day and night guarded by the sainted dead—to feel that in hours of heavy affliction, of mournful doubt, of sad perplexity, they minister to our wants, and secretly and silently "charm away pain from the sick soul and the world-weary brain."

The strong yearnings of the heart to be loved and remembered by its lost ones is no small proof that such companionship may exist.

Is it objected that if the saints have knowledge of earthly affairs, they must be grieved oftentimes by the waywardness and guilt of their friends, and thus their happiness be marred. I answer that we are not to regulate their present feelings by our earthly standard. Their natures are now wholly renewed in the image of the Divine; *their* wills swallowed up in *God's*; they see as He sees. All traces of this twilight, elementary stage of being have passed away, and they can now view our transgressions without pain, even as God beholds the sin and misery of earth with no disturbance of His eternal tranquility.



He is infinitely pure, holy and happy in Himself. They are so in Him, and thus their peace cannot be broken.

"But," says one, "if they know and love us, must not the spirits of departed friends be distressed by the sight of trials into which we are plunged, and their bliss be thereby impaired?" No, their sympathy is hallowed from such feelings, and is one with that of the Saviour.

Once "Jesus wept," and we are assured that *now He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities*, but this tender interest does not lessen one bright beam of the radiant sweetness and glory that crown His brow. His felicity is unmingled. Thus may our loved ones contemplate our sufferings. They have passed through the same, they know what was the meaning and the eternal issue of those afflictions which, to their earthly vision, were inscrutable, and seeing perhaps that ours shall work out for us a "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," they cheerfully acquiesce therein, and with holy fondness hover around us, perchance imbibing our spirits with some gentle breathings of their own calm hope and confidence.

A dying Christian mother once said to her daughter, who stood overwhelmed with grief beside her bed, "I never want my children to think of me as gone. You cannot take a step within our dwelling, you cannot look upon the flowers your mother loved so well, without thinking of her. Then think too that I may be near you. Perhaps God will permit me to return as a guardian spirit and watch over your welfare." That precious mother passed away to her everlasting reward, and as her child, on the sad day that separated them by the inexorable grave, took a last lingering anguished gaze at the dear face whose smile had been all the world to her, the heavenly peace that stamped each fair lineament, and rested on the noble brow, reminded her of the words of the departed, and a hope sprung up that the separation might not be total; that though her coming years must be darkened by the sorest want a human heart can know—of a mother's felt and present love, a mother's living sympathy—yet still that mother might be near, still guard with holiest care her sorrowing child.

The hope grew and flourished until it became belief, nourished in its lonely beauty with a tenacity born of deep sorrow.



## "THE MEMORY OF THE JUST IS BLESSED."

Proverbs: 10th, 7th.

The Departed! the Departed! the Beautiful! the Blest!  
 (O'er-past the pang of parting) how peacefully they rest;—  
 Where pain, and disappointment, and care can never come,—  
 Where the "wicked cease from troubling," and the weary are at home!

The Departed! the Departed! how we missed their voice and step!  
 And in the stifling silence, o'er each hoarded relic wept!  
 How we sought to trace their semblance in the light clouds floating by,  
 And watched the falling embers for their forms, with dreamy eye.

The Departed! the Departed! how in lonely hours we yearn  
 For communion with the vanished who will never more return!  
 How these blessed words console us which unchastened hearts contemn,  
 "Though they came not back unto us, we shall go ere long to them."

The Departed! the Departed! they bid us not despond;  
 There's a place of blissful meeting this changeful life beyond,  
 Where friends no more shall sever, nor lips with sorrow swell,—  
 Where our lips shall utter, never, that bitter word "farewell."

The Departed! the Departed! they have laid their burdens down;  
 They have fought the fearful conflict and won the victor's crown;  
 And they bid us view our trials as but joys in solemn guise,  
 And sorrows, silver stepping-stones to bridge us to the skies.

The Departed! the Departed! they are near this holy night!  
 Though our weak, imperfect vision, shuts the glory from our sight!  
 But we *know* the time is coming, when, from earth's defilements free,  
 We shall know as we are known, and, as we were seen, shall see.

The Departed! the Departed! if like them, we seek to win  
 The rest apostles, martyrs, and saints have entered in,  
 We must tread, with patient prayerfulness, the paths their footsteps trod,  
 Till Faith is lost in vision, and Hope finds joy in God. C. H.

East Hampton, L. I., Saturday Evening, October 31, 1857.

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The good—they drop around us, one by one,  
 Like stars when morning breaks; though lost to sight,  
 Around us are they still in heaven's own light,  
 Building their mansions in the purer zone,  
 Of the invisible; when round are thrown  
 Shadows of sorrow, still serenely bright,  
 To faith they gleam; and blest be sorrow's night,  
 That brings th' o'erarching heav'ns in silence down  
 A mantle set with orbs unearthly fair!  
 Alas! to us they are not, though they dwell,  
 Divinely dwell in memory; while life's sun,  
 Declining, bids us for the night prepare,  
 That we, with urns of light and our task done,  
 May stand with them in lot unchangeable.

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## THE BELIEVER IN HEAVEN TO A FRIEND ON EARTH.

I shine in the light of God,  
 His likeness stamps my brow;  
 Thro' the valley of death my feet have trod,  
 And I reign in glory now.  
 No breaking heart is here;  
 No keen and thrilling pain;  
 No wasted cheek, where the frequent tear  
 Hath rolled and left its stain.

I have found the joy of heaven ;  
 I am one of the angel band ;  
 To my head a crown is given,  
 And a harp is in my hand.  
 I have learned the song they sing  
 Whom Jesus hath made free ;  
 And the glorious walls on high still ring  
 With my new-born melody.  
  
 No sin, no grief, no pain ;  
 Safe in my happy home ;  
 My fears all fled—my doubts all slain ;  
 My hour of triumph come.  
 Friend of my mortal years !  
 The trusted and the tried !  
 Thou art walking still in the valley of tears,  
 But I am at thy side.  
  
 Do I forget? Oh, no !  
 For memory's golden chain  
 Shall bind my heart to the heart below,  
 Till they meet and touch again.  
 Each link is strong and bright,  
 And love's electric flame  
 Flows freely down, like a river of light,  
 To the world from which I came.  
  
 Do you mourn when another star  
 Shines out from the glittering sky?  
 Do you weep when the noise of war  
 And the rage of conflict die?  
 Then why should your tears roll down,  
 And your heart with grief be riven,  
*For another gem in the Saviour's crown,*  
*And another soul in heaven?*

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### JACOB'S LADDER.

BY REV. WM. ALEXANDER, OXFORD, ENG.

Ah! many a time we look on starlight nights  
 Up to the sky as Jacob did of old,  
 Look longing up to the eternal lights,  
 To spell their lines of gold.  
  
 But never more, as to the Hebrew boy,  
 Each on his way the angels walk abroad ;  
 And never more we hear, with awful joy,  
 The awful voice of God.  
  
 Yet, to pure eyes the ladder still is set,  
 And angel visitants still come and go,  
 Many bright messengers are moving yet  
 From the dark world below.  
  
 Thoughts that are red-cross'd Faith's outspreading wings—  
 Prayers of the Church are keeping time and tryst  
 Heart-wishes, making bee-like murmurings,  
 Their flower, the eucharist.  
  
 Spirits elect, thro' suffering render'd meet  
 For those high mansions; from the nursery door,  
 Bright babes that climb up with their clay-cold feet  
 Unto the golden door.  
  
 These are the messengers, forever wending  
 From earth to heaven, that faith alone may scan,  
 These are the angels of God, ascending  
 Upon the Son of Man.

## THE VOICES OF THE DEAD.

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THE Churchyard,—'tis the nearest spot  
Which lies adjoining to the spot  
That now surrounds my earthly home,—  
The nearest spot wherein I tread;  
One step whene'er I leave this room,  
And I am 'mid the voiceless dead.  
If duty hence or pleasure call,  
Whene'er I leave my rural hall,  
In going or returning still,  
In doing good or doing ill,  
I tread the silent graves along.  
That I in all might daily learn to die,  
When I return, when forth I wend,  
At the beginning, and the end,  
I am the dead among.  
And now my thoughts with them would dwell,  
Approaching, unapproachable.

The Churchyard,—'tis the spot of ground  
Which lies the two great worlds between,  
The living and the dead;  
The living by the graves are seen,  
The dead in funeral fetters wound,  
Their bodies in the winding-sheet,  
Their souls among the spirits led.  
'Tis here the dead and living meet.  
It is an awful spot,—to stand  
With either world on either hand.  
What countless paths do hither end,  
Full of heart-breaking histories,  
With all the sorrows that attend  
The Sunderings of a thousand ties?  
The sorrows that survived the dead,  
Soon in the grave beside him laid;—  
And sorrows of his dying bed,  
Here wrapt alike in death's calm shade.

What countless paths do hence begin  
To pass the eternal place within?  
What spirits here, beyond the veil,  
The disembodied soul have met?  
O what are thoughts which are with thee,  
Who hast escaped from the net,  
Which round thy path the fowler set,  
Who hast broke forth,—for ever free?

It is an awful thing to stand  
With either world on either hand,  
Upon the intermediate ground  
Which doth the sense and spirit bound.  
Woe worth the man who doth not fear  
When spirits of the dead are near.  
How wild their awful destinies!  
As stars that gleam among the trees,  
'Tween leaves that tremble ere they fall,  
When the Autumnal wind shall call;  
And oft at intervals disclose  
The interminable dread repose  
With watch-towers gleaming in their height  
With something of unearthly light,  
Veiling the terrors they express,  
Unspeakable in tenderness,  
Drawing our thoughts with them to tread  
The dwelling-places of the dead!

We send our thoughts with them to dwell,  
But still the wall impassable  
Bars us around with sensual bond,  
In vain we dive for that beyond;  
Yet traverse o'er and o'er the bound,  
Walking on the unseen profound.  
Like flies, which fain would break away  
Into the expanse of open day,  
They know not why, are travelling still  
On the glass fence invisible:  
So dwell our thoughts with the unseen,  
Yet cannot pass the bourn between.

My spirit doth within me sink,  
When thus I stand upon the brink,  
And labour with them to converse  
Hid in the boundless universe;  
O 'tis a fearful thing to be  
Within your silent company!  
This outer world doth seem to fail,  
    And stoutest heart turns pale;  
Your very stillness seems to din,  
And wake a deeper noise within.  
Ye spirits that around us sleep  
    In stillness deep,  
With nothing to be done again,  
Beyond the sight and thoughts of men,  
    Who o'er your memories weep,  
What are the thoughts which you attend  
    Where all things end?  
Come all around me with your spell  
To mortal unattainable,  
O'er my becalmed senses creep,  
And with yourselves my spirits steep.

Yes, 'tis an awful thing to die,  
And yet unconquer'd in that agony,  
Stronger than death, survives the spirit's love;  
And may we then indeed believe you nigh,  
    Ye whom we loved, and wept so long?

No thoughts with power so grave and strong  
The fountain depths of all our being move,  
As ye who hidden are from view  
    In summer light,  
    When all is bright,  
    The thoughts of you  
Come o'er us like a loaded cloud;  
    In midnight deep,  
    When all things sleep,  
Your awful presence speaks aloud.  
Come, teach us, for ye sure can tell,  
    What it is to be with God,

Safe from the avenging rod,  
In the path by spirits trod:  
For with you I soon must dwell.  
Spirits of the dead,  
Be gently o'er me hither led,  
Ye bodiless society!  
Or if ye cannot come to me,  
Yet I in thought to you will come;  
For with you I soon must be,  
Must dwell with you, when life is done,  
Far longer than I see the sun.  
And I now would learn your lore,  
Less I then the loss deplore,  
In the gloom,  
And the silence of the tomb,  
Where I nothing more can do,  
But all now left undone shall then for ever rue.  
Ye holy dead, now come around,  
In season more profound;  
And through the barriers of our sense  
Shed round your calming influence;  
In silence come and solitude,  
With thoughts which o'er the mourner brood.  
Ye sounds depart  
That fill the heart  
With noise of this tumultuous sphere;  
Ye holy dead, in peace draw near!  
Now let the listening earth be still,  
With grove and hill;  
Let sea and land  
In silence stand;  
Let ocean now his silence keep,  
With all his thousand rivers deep;  
Which in their mountain-dwellings leap  
From steep to steep.  
Be silent, ye loud-footed streams,  
For holy silence best beseems.  
Let pensive calm, and sober rest,



Their twilight curtain o'er us weave;  
Let sacred Eve,  
And Contemplation be our guest.

Be hush'd, thou pole,  
And stars that round in order roll:  
Let the soul  
Herself be still'd,  
With thoughts which idle bosom fill'd;  
Let tongue and sign  
Unspeakable be lost in awe divine!  
Ye shadows fleeting o'er the grass,  
And the steps of things that pass  
To the grave,  
In some calm and hallow'd cave  
Your dread influence o'er us wave.  
Come around me ye that dwell,  
Unapproachable,  
By the gates of Heaven or Hell;  
Unto me your wisdom tell!  
All around, in calm profound,  
I hear your voices from the ground;  
Now lend me your unearthly ear,  
That your deep wisdom I may hear.

Ye deathless spirits which have gone,  
Gone haply to be yet more nigh,  
All strangely and unspeakably,  
Than when we saw you standing by;  
Lo, where I now am left alone,  
And would around your presence own,  
Come to me.

If capable of change of place,  
Bring ye near with awful face  
Your dread society!  
Lend me your Heaven-illumin'd sight,  
That I with that may see aright  
What ye do prize,  
Seeing all things with your eyes,

With your eyes all things surveying,  
And with you for ever praying.

Ye departed, stand ye nigh,  
Let your presence make me wise  
In the things ye now descry!  
For haply ere the morning's rise,  
Or before the evening's light,  
One with you may I be found,  
And never more behold the round  
Of day and night.

Endless sleepers, teach me then,  
For I trow the way ye go,  
None can traverse back again.  
Yea, 'tis a fearful thing to think,  
Fearful beyond all we know,  
That before the rising sun  
O'er night's sable brow shall sink,  
Or before the night hath run  
Through her course with star-light shod,  
I may be with God.

Endless wakers, teach me now,  
For I know,  
Whether it be soon or late  
Death to me his warrant shew,  
I ere long must pass the gate  
Which doth bound this mortal state.  
Ye that are where all must meet,  
After this their winding-sheet,  
Whate'er ye be, if rightly we  
Substances or shadows call  
Those that people your dark hall,  
Stay awhile,  
Till I learn your lesson stern;  
That nothing may again my heart beguile.  
Ye that evermore  
Behold the true substantial Sun,  
Where His short earthly race like yours is o'er:

What is it that ye desire?  
What is it we wish undone?  
Or for ever now require,  
Where impassable remains  
Custody of viewless chains,  
And eternity for ever reigns?

Can ye your secret not impart  
In the dread silence of the heart?  
What is this  
Which we may miss,  
And the loss for ever mourn;—  
Where penitence is fruitless and forlorn?

Buried friends, your voice I hear,  
As the voice of midnight clear,  
If midnight's self could find a tongue,  
This would be her voice's sound,  
All about it comes around,  
One dread accent to prolong,  
"No repentance in the grave,  
And beyond no power to save;"  
With one voice, both low and high,  
Now they cry,  
And multitudinous sounds reply.

And is this all  
Ye wisdom call?  
This I deem I know full well,  
And we need no further spell,  
From your dark bed  
This to tell.

But there is an accent dread  
In the voices of the dead,  
When this lesson they proclaim,  
Though the living speak the same.  
Now I hear  
Your accents clear,  
Speaking wisdom more divine,  
With me wheresoe'er I go.

I must hasten to the shrine,  
For the bell  
Tells the knell  
Of the number'd hours that flow,  
While it summons me to prayer,  
And I trust ye will be there.

Lo, beneath the Altar nigh,  
Now I hear your voices cry,  
Lord, how long  
Shall Thy chariot-wheels delay,  
And the coming of that Day?  
Lord, how long  
Shall Thy Church in exile mourn,  
Thy saints be with contention torn,  
While Antichrist uprears his horn?

O midnight, with thy dim serene,  
Art thou the image of the scene,  
Wherein the dead await the Judge's call,—  
Peopling the dim and silent height,  
In watches numberless and bright,  
With darkness for their pall:—  
The midnight when the voice is heard,  
The Bridegroom comes;  
And Angel callings the deep heart have stirr'd  
Amid the silent tombs?

Midnight, thou hast found a tongue,—  
Thy darkness and thy solitude  
Do on the secret spirit brood,  
When thou in dreams dost take the soul among  
Scenes that have been buried long.  
Thy voice,—it doth not silence break,  
But is as awful spirits speak,  
Louder than the voice of men,  
Though no sound is with us then;—  
Speaking with no sound  
In the heart's abyss profound,  
In that place that is more deep  
Than all but thoughts which are with sleep.

Midnight, could I see thy face,  
Like the dark ærial space,  
When the stars do gleam in the eternal place.  
And on all life there is a spell,  
And a pause,  
Silent, dread, unspeakable,  
Suspending nature's laws,  
Who her dark curtain o'er us draws.  
Thou seem'st to visit us from that dark cave,  
Where they, whose fleshly robes are in the grave,  
In silence and in stillness wait,  
In intermediate state,  
The Judgment gleaming in the eastern gate.

Thought wanders forth afar,  
Yet cannot pass the viewless bar,  
And of that place can nothing guess,  
But something like an awful sleep,  
A something deep,  
And shadowlike, yet shadowless  
Like day, 'neath some still fountain seen,  
With a white moon and cloudy sheen,  
Unreal, yet like all we see,  
In shadowlike immensity  
Yet, doubtless, ye more real are than we,  
Partaking naught of shadow or of gloom;  
To be with Christ, and be at home,  
While here as in a dream we roam.

Then strife is o'er, and work is done,  
And Contemplation comes alone,  
Wrapt in a twilight veil with dew besprent,  
Through that deep door which death hath rent;  
She comes to sit her by your side,  
And in old memory's ruin'd cell abide,  
Recalling all the work that's o'er,  
Recounting all her store,  
That can be lessened and increased no more.

O fearful things do walk the night,  
I feign would hide me from their sight;



The wind seems howling low beneath the trees,  
Then silent sinks the breeze,  
And nought I hear but sounds like distant seas.  
I would with terror deep mine eyelids close,  
From shades of other days in death's dark vale,  
That comes with many a tale,  
And break on stillness of that dread repose.

O night, O stars, O blue profound,  
Which hedge my fancy round,  
When solemn awe  
Doth around her mantle draw,  
With a blue unearthly dress,  
As in dreams,  
Visiting with starlike gleams  
Of everlastingness;  
When I would think of that dread cell,  
Peopled with the invisible!

But awful night is terrible,  
And seems to speak the gates of Hell,  
Where ghosts of my past sins may dwell.  
Lord, in the rock with Thee let me abide,  
Nay, in Thyself, the Rock, my spirit hide,  
No phantom of past guilt that soul shall stir  
Which finds in Thee her sepulchre.

## THE CITY OF MARTYRS.

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### I. 1.

Is this the Holy Church on earth,  
Which nothing earthly taints;  
Jerusalem of heavenly birth;  
The City of the Saints;  
Wisdom's true house, and seven-fold pillar'd halls,  
Whose streets are by good Angels trod,  
Her boundaries th' eternal walls,  
Her gates that lead alone unto the throne of God?  
E'en so proclaims th' unnumber'd tongue  
A thousand years along.

### 2.

O mystery of mysteries!  
O Salem worthy of a Saviour's tears!  
For what are these idolatries,  
Nursed in thy hidden courts and open skies?  
Is this the City of the light where this black hall appears?  
That he who runs may read on thee  
Something of fearful mystery.

### 3.

Then art thou that dread Power on seven hills,  
Where deep imbedded, 'neath ancestral halls,  
The air some monster dead with foul contagion fills?  
Where evil spirits haunt the walls,  
And the old Serpent finds a home,  
And hides him in the relics dark of old imperial Rome?  
There coil'd beneath that ancient Capitol  
Doth he again his deadly length unroll,  
The woman's Seed in his embrace to fold,  
A deeper empire still in souls of men to hold?  
E'en so proclaims th' unnumber'd tongue  
The flowing years along.

## 4.

O mystery of mysteries!  
For where hath e'er Devotion drunk so deep  
Of penitential sighs?  
Where with so grave a tone hath true Love learn'd to weep?  
Can Antichrist thus oft to prayer and vigil call,  
And with the depths of holiness the sinner's heart appal?

## 5.

Yet what are things we hear of thee,  
The things we hear and see?  
That she who made the kingdom known,—  
A thousand idol shrines hath overthrown,—  
Now teems herself with dark idolatry  
A thousand Martyrs' bones within her bosom lie;  
But her own hands are stain'd with blood  
Of Christian brotherhood?  
She who the faith hath guarded well  
As in a holy Citadel,  
Worships her God enshrined in local space,  
As in a carnal resting-place.

## 6.

O name most holy, yet most sinful, styled,  
Most glorious and yet most defiled!  
Most haughty, yet most lowly still,—  
O mystery unspeakable!

## 7.

Wonderful sight for good or ill!  
Whose very name men's deepest hearts doth thrill  
For love or hate;  
She seems the judgment of our God to wait.  
O keep me, Christ, to gaze upon this mystery,  
And yet unharm'd pass by:—  
Where Thou hast set to do Thy secret will,  
Bidding me in Thine own appointed state  
Await Thy sentence, and be still.

## 8.

I will not speak of thee with scorn,  
Lest I Christ's very Bride, the Ancient-born,  
Yea, His own awful Spirit, have reviled.  
I will not cease o'er thee to mourn,  
Lest I with Christ's own foe at last be reconciled.

## II. 1.

O lead me to thy Martyrs' tomb, O gently lead,  
Thou City of the Dead;  
I would forget thee what thou art  
To learn of thee as thou hast been:  
Let that high vision not depart.  
O gently lead me to thy haunts unseen;  
Let me through all thy secret caverns wind;  
Leave sounds of earth and ruder thoughts behind,  
Lest they disturb the mystery  
Which lingers o'er the cells wherein their ashes lie.

## 2.

Peace to the shrines wherein they sleep!  
Walk softly, gently by,  
Lest thou should'st break the memories deep  
Wherein they buried lie;  
Each word doth mar some holy spell,  
Or crumble hallow'd dust from off their silent cell.

## 3.

O quiet stillness, yet how deep,  
How imperturb'd and dead the gloom!  
Is this in arms of Christ to sleep?—  
To thee we yearn, O Rome, O Rome,  
As exiles to their home,  
Wilt thou not here be reconciled?  
Erring thyself receive thine erring child,—  
Each own herself by sin and hate defiled,  
And o'er each other weep,  
Lock'd once again in one embrace  
In this thy Martyrs' resting-place.

## 4.

Stay, stay awhile, for see afar  
Twilight let in, like nightly star,  
Opens the shades,—in calm profound  
Keeping her watch on holy ground.  
Piled in their beds they sleep around;  
Cells of the dead, which on each side  
Amid their scant memorials hide;  
As haste and terror could entomb  
In the deep-cavern'd catacomb;  
Where the rough mortar in the gloom  
Holds some mute emblem, which might plead  
Their hope in dying, or their need.

## 5.

The Martyr's Heaven-beseeching mood,  
And hands in praying attitude;  
Letters uncouth, or symbols rude,  
In outline dimly character'd;  
The Cross, the palm, the fish, the bird,—  
The bird which flies and finds release  
Bearing the olive branch of peace;—  
The hart, where cooling waters flow,  
With antler'd forehead bending low;—  
The courser speeding to the goal  
As to eternity the soul;  
They seem Faith's watchers at the grave,  
Their hallow'd resting-place to save;  
Whose voices in the bosom heard  
A thousand echoes there have stirr'd.

## 6.

What is this vase with stains imbued?  
It is the Holy Martyr's blood;  
This is the sponge that drunk the gore,  
This is the urn that keeps the store:  
O blest memorials lying by,  
And he whose dust doth with them lie!  
But who is he? and what his name?



What deeds shall him in Judgment claim?  
What were his pains? and what his life  
Which had prepared him for the strife?

## 7.

What signals these of love bereft,  
By artless haste in silence left?  
And still their rudely carved farewell  
Speaks of the things tongue cannot tell;  
While at their graves her watch doth keep  
Silence unutterably deep;  
Symbols which at Death's portals dwell  
Speak words that are unspeakable;—  
Bring to the heart things hid from view,  
The language of the world where all is true.

## 8.

A little onward;—on each side  
The dormitory ranges wide  
In storied mansions, where to view  
The subterranean avenue  
Opes branching shades, and still anew  
The pale light breaks in to illumine  
Some rude memorial in the gloom,  
And draws the footsteps to a tomb.

## 9.

Far onward yet, where Twilight dim  
Seems her faint-glimmering lamp to trim.  
Now finish'd more the marble stone  
Hath ta'en the impress, and makes known  
Their story or their faith sublime;  
Memorials wrought in breathing time,  
When lingering love to them hath turn'd,  
As Persecution feebler burn'd;—  
With more of art, of nature less,  
More beauty, less impressiveness.

## 10.

Now spreads the deep sepulchral glade  
To shrines retired in cavern'd shade;

Walls, which some pictured tale inwreath,  
With living inspiration breathe.  
The Shepherd on his shoulders brings  
His long-lost sheep: or Jonah springs  
From Resurrection's ocean womb,  
Cast new-born from his watery tomb.  
Here Noah from his house of wood,  
Upon the watery solitude,  
Puts forth his hand to welcome home  
The dove that shall no longer roam,  
With olive rudely manifest,  
Her welcome to the ark of rest.  
Here Christ by the sepulchral cave,  
With voice omnipotent to save.  
Here 'mid the lions Daniel prays;  
Here Princes in the unharmed blaze.

## 11.

Like echoes from their tombs around  
Such living lessons seem to bound;  
Reverberating, on they pass,  
Responsive borne from grave to grave,  
And die afar upon the wave  
Of some Baptismal fountain deep,  
Where on yon distant shrine dark waters sleep.

## 12.

Still on and onward, without end,  
Like the dim moonlight, ways extend;  
Shrines, cells, and tombs together press,  
A subterranean wilderness,  
Branching on all sides without bound,  
City of Churches underground;  
The empire of the silent dead,  
Christ's ancient Kingdom's quiet bed.  
O resting-places of the good,  
How peopled is your solitude!  
How deep, intense, and calm the prayer  
From shrines and altars hidden there!  
How solemn is the requiem said

Within this City of the Dead!  
Where every shrine is but a tomb,  
Each altar speaks of martyrdom.

## 13.

Darkness itself doth with them dwell  
By silence made more terrible:  
As when Night lets her curtain fall,  
The stars in the aerial hall  
Come forth to sight, and stand around  
Ineffable, august, profound.  
In calm wild watches, stern and still,  
The Dead around the twilight fill.

## 14.

Far in the fear-inspiring gloom  
They hide their awful face in Expectation's womb,  
Yet find a voice, and seem to say,  
Out of the deep to Thee I call,  
The deep sepulchral hall;  
As they who watch for dawning day,  
We wait Thy coming in, Thou Everlasting ray.

## III. 1.

Here where Death holds his silent court,  
Did youthful Jerome erst resort,  
Through Sunday evenings musing long,  
A living guest the dead among;  
For Sabbath thoughts O suited well!  
Here feelings drunk unspeakable,  
Which through his after life diffuse  
Philosophy of sabler hues;  
By stern and pensive sadness bred,  
The wisdom which is with the dead.  
O Saints and Martyrs ever blest,  
This is the Sabbath of your rest,  
Where shall we learn such wisdom high  
As in your silent company?

## 2.

And scenes like these were sure the home  
Of the true bard of Martyrdom,  
Such,—the last conflicts of the good,  
Whose deaths have peopled this abode,—  
Touch'd his deep heart, and fill'd his tongue,  
When "grave and great" Prudentius sung.

## 3.

Here, from the terrors of the grave,  
The new-born Church with power to save  
Issued, as from a shrouding cave:  
Like that famed Antioch's martyr-maid,  
As by the Painter's art displayed,—  
Meek Margaret in calmness treading  
Upon the dragon 'neath her spreading  
His scaly length in death extended,  
His hell-eyes on her fiercely bended.  
She in the gloom of lurid night  
Treads like an Angel of the light.

## 4.

By his own arms subdued, the foe  
Doth now his martyr-fires forego;  
But with the Martyr's soul imbued  
Religion drunk her sterner mood,  
And rising in immortal mould  
The Cross did for her anchor hold,  
Peopling with Saints the courts of Heaven,  
To whom that virgin soul was given  
Which learns a daily death to die,  
That so their prayers from earth might readier reach the sky.

## 5.

Thence Rome at her Apostle's tomb,  
And grave of Martyrs, did assume  
Her attitude and form divine,  
Girding herself with discipline.  
Here her deep fountains would I sound,  
Her ancient fountains under ground.

While all around corruption clings  
Here would I turn to clearer springs,—  
That lake with all its thousand rills,  
Which unpolluted there distils  
Amid the mist-enshrouded hills,  
Where calmly on them seems to press  
Something of everlastingness.

## 6.

In Time's dark hidden womb,  
'That seems itself to mantle from our sight,  
Silence and the sepulchral damp  
The Church's cradle hides, the Mother of all light.  
And in the darkness of the Martyr's tomb,  
I too would light my lamp  
To guide me onward to the Day of doom.

## 7.

Nothing of earth around doth stir,  
Stillness and subterranean shade  
Her saints doth sepulchre.  
In darkness are her pillars laid,  
And her eternal walls are there,  
Founded in the obscure of night;  
As mists on clouded mountain height  
Cradle some mighty river's birth,  
'Mid the foundations of the earth.

## 8.

Silence and gloom, and night profound,  
In you a spirit breathes around!  
It is to know the dead are near,  
And Christ before Whom they appear.  
Therefore the dark doth our dimm'd sense astound  
Deep underground.

## 9.

When dreariness itself doth seem most drear,  
When darkest is the thunder-cloud,

Then unseen worlds do seem most near,  
And in the tempest's shroud  
Suddenly break upon the eye and ear,  
'Mid blackest mountains echoing loud.

## 10.

Clouds and thick darkness are His dwelling place,  
And night His tabernacle;  
As Moses when he saw His face,  
Where everlasting shades around Him dwell;  
Blackness around and night profound  
His mantle skirts had bound.

## 11.

From the thick sable of the tomb,  
Wrapt in impenetrable gloom,  
Unutterably silent doom,  
The Everlasting day is born,  
As night precedes the morn.

## 12.

Darkness is stable 'neath His feet,  
His goings are a cloud,  
In dead of night the soul her God must meet,  
And in the grave which night and silence shroud.  
His footsteps in dark waters are,  
Ten thousand fathoms deep,  
Where Ocean's fountains sleep,  
Nor Sun nor Moon nor Stars are gleaming there.

## 13.

Lord, in this night be Thou my guide,  
Lead Thou me on through these dark shadowy lands;  
Through wilderness of tombs on every side  
I wander in the dark, and stretch forth feeble hands.  
O let me hold Thee, be my guiding Star,  
Hold Thou my hand, while step by step afar  
I seek Thy light; until these shadows flee  
Let me but feel Thee near, and follow Thee.



## NOTE.

Part III, 1. Allusion is here made to the following account in St. Jerome, in his Commentary on Ezekiel, lib. xii. cap. xl.

"When I was at Rome as a boy, while pursuing my studies there, I was wont on the Lord's day, with others of the same age and turn of mind, to frequent the sepulchres of the Apostles and Martyrs; and oftentimes to enter into the crypts which are dug into the deep places of the earth; and have the bodies of the dead buried along the walls on either side as you enter: and all things are so enveloped in gloom that the prophetic expression seems in a manner fulfilled there, 'let them go down alive into hell.' Rarely does the light admitted from above alleviate the horror of the darkness, and even that such as that you might suppose it was rather an opening that let in the light than a window. We approached step by step, and surrounded with the darkness of night, so as to remind one of the line in Virgil,

Horror on every side, e'en silence awes the mind.

"I mention this that the thoughtful reader may understand what my opinion is of the explanation of the Temple of God in Ezekiel; of whom it is written, that 'darkness was under His feet,' and again, 'He maketh darkness His secret place.' Hence Moses also entered into the cloud and thick darkness, that he might be able to contemplate the mysteries of the Lord, which the people placed afar off, and remaining below could not perceive. And again, after the forty days the people, on account of the blindness which was upon their eyes, could not behold the face of Moses, because his countenance was glorified, or as it is in the Hebrew, horned. Such is the case with me when I read the description of the mystical Temple, which the Jews, judging by the letter, think was to be built for the Advent of their Christ, whom we prove to be Antichrist. But this we refer to the Church of Christ and perceive it daily to be builded up in His Saints. Whensoever the eye of the heart is opened, I seem to perceive something, and to have hold of the Bridegroom, and cry out in delight, 'I have found Him whom my soul sought for, I will hold Him, and I will not let Him go;' then again the Divine Word deserts me, and the Bridegroom escapes from my hands, and my eyes are closed in darkness, so that I am constrained to say, 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God; how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out.' And as it is written in another place, 'Thy judgments are like the great deep.' And again, 'Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice.' And like that cry of Elisha who with the eyes of his heart followed his Master when carried away from Him, and exclaimed, 'My Father, my Father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof!'"

## THE MUSIC OF THE CITY OF GOD.

---

WHEN listening still at midnight deep  
Thought doth her vigil keep,  
Lo, suddenly, in some old holy town  
The sacred chime is sounding;  
As modulating sweet its tuneful changes  
The solemn minstrelsy runs down,  
What memories old are all the soul surrounding!  
What echoing thoughts responsive beat!  
Prolonging now its cadence sweet,  
On chains of sadness wild it ranges;  
And still, at each descending fall,  
Awakes through memory's pictured hall  
Her long-forgotten treasures;  
Visions most sad, most musical,  
Old shapes that haunt the hallow'd wall,  
And worlds that live in holy measures.

They steal around us, calm and deep,—  
Awakening from their sleep,  
Where waters of oblivion creep,—  
Meek saintly forms that walk'd the cloister dim,  
And heard of old the vesper hymn,  
Come round us, and the deep-wrapt vision fill.  
Ring on, ring on, ye solemn chimes,  
And let me wander still,  
Still wander in the blissful dream of happy olden times.

Hail, hallow'd visions on my way attending,  
With dews of morn again, and singing voices blending,  
Where yearly in that vernal hour  
The sacred City is in shades reclining,  
With gilded turrets in the sunrise shining:—  
From sainted Magdalene's ærial tower  
Sounds far aloof that ancient chaunt are singing,  
And round the heart again those solemn memories bringing.

What wonder if that matin hymn  
Sounds like the song of Seraphim;  
The present all unreal seems, from Heaven  
Such power is to the past and awful future given.  
Things long gone by come floating back again,  
With all their cloud-borne airy train;  
From those bright clouds an Angel seems to lean,  
And thence to speak of the unseen,  
Of better things that once have been,  
Better than all that doth remain;  
As if to bring protection round,  
On that fair town with holy turrets crown'd,  
Their bright assemblage far disclosing,  
In morning's mantle green all freshly now reposing.  
Harp of the heart, sweet posey,  
In secret spirit lying,  
Something within, whate'er thou art,  
Which hopes and memories bringest nigh,  
And in our inmost being hast a part;—  
Still to some unseen hand, or gales of Heaven replying.  
Whether by tuneful sounds afar that seem to grieve,  
On some Autumnal quiet eve,  
Or touch'd by some electric chain within  
Your magic chords awaken and begin;  
But not with them to end,  
Till with wild harmonies our being blend.  
Well might they fable those Aonian daughters;  
As if some Heaven-sent vision from above  
Descended all unseen, and stirr'd your healing waters.  
Hail, sounds which the deep spirit move,  
Until the present seems at naught  
In the realities of sterner thought;  
Around us come the dead and dying,  
And all the silent heart with pensive scenes is sighing.  
Ye distant strains that fill the thoughtless street,  
Upon a summer evening, sad and sweet,  
Where some wild songstress chaunts her descant lone,  
Or wilder music wakes the tuneful bell,

While loitering groups are gathering, or pass on,  
How little do ye know with what a gale it falls  
    Upon some Solitary cell,  
    And all the past recalls;

While dearest friends that now are gone  
    Do seem to live again,  
Hid in deep worlds that are your sad strain;  
    Then all within in sadness swells,  
    And Memory there unseen her story tells;  
Till he who seem'd an unblench'd eye to bear  
    On the sad tokens of life's waning year,  
    And all things passing by,—  
    His heart is heaving with a sigh,  
    His eye-lid hath a tear.

Lo, all around your vision now is stealing,  
Where'er we turn their dim-veiled forms revealing;  
    With thoughts of those once loved and near,  
    Whose early years with ours were blended,  
    Whose memories have, with all things dear,  
    Deep in the heart descended;—  
A mother's love which o'er our Childhood bended,  
And all our youthful steps attended;  
    Or brother lost, whose early hours,  
    Whose thoughts and hopes and fears were ours;  
    While we saw all things with his eyes,  
    Knit in still growing sympathies;—  
    Now they are gone, but we remain,  
    Our love for them is mix'd with pain;  
    Our wonted haunts know them no more;  
    But they are on the unseen shore,  
And draw us after them, as with a silent chain;  
    Thus all we loved make wings, and leave us to deplore.

They make them wings and fly away,  
And fairer still they seem as we behold them flying,  
    Like that bright bird that, glancing on the stream,  
    His fairest plumes in parting doth display:

Or when on woodland hills the Autumnal gleam  
Is calmly lying;  
And while in golden stillness it reposes,  
The Autumnal gale is sighing,  
And 'tween the withering boughs some ancient tower discloses:  
While on ourselves we feel that, year by year,  
The Autumnal hand is stealing,  
And through the alter'd brow, turn'd pale and sere,  
The Autumn of our age its aspect stern revealing.  
When evening shades their solemn gloom are flinging  
O'er valleys once so bright and fair,  
And stilly seen upon the silent air  
Some bird his homeward way to woodland heights is winging.  
Through cloistral glades what shadows round us steal  
Of them that are with God?  
We on the path they trod  
Live in their thoughts and with them feel,  
And learn the blest communion  
Of Saints that are in wisdom one;  
Our heart-pulse is to theirs replying,  
In books which all their souls reveal,  
And all the breath we breathe is 'mid the dead and dying.  
While peace and calm to them belong  
Our life unquiet is, and fades;  
Shadows we are and wandering amid shades,  
As they who walked the realms below,  
With that famed Florentine,  
Substances amid spirits seen,  
Known only by the sabler shade they throw;\*  
Thus 'mid the dead, where'er we go,  
Our life is known by sure companionship of woe.  
And fast as we ourselves thus fade,  
So our desires are from us stealing;  
What once seem'd beck'ning in the shade,  
And still before a beauteous form revealing,

\*Dante's Purgatorio, Cant. iii.

Now left behind its worthlessness we rue;  
But something else we now pursue;  
Which fairer still each day now comes to view;  
But that soon passes, and is gone,  
And we are left alone.  
What yesterday had seem'd so fair  
Seems now not worth pursuing;  
With changing life our longings still we change,  
Through all the weary range,  
And what is done and past we are undoing:  
The things of Heaven alone are still the same,  
And as we nearer draw more eager love they claim.

Father of spirits, far from Thee we roam,  
Thou art the Unchangeable, the spirit's home,  
And in all things but those that come from Thee,  
The never-resting spirit finds a tomb.  
Thine aspirations, e'en while here we flee,  
Are drinking of the hidden springs,  
That still flow on, and are for ever flowing,  
That love alone which no repentance brings,  
But to the last is growing;  
While, all that's earthly to the grave is going;  
But they o'er grave of earthly things are happier thoughts  
bestowing.

Spirits departed, ye are still,  
And thoughts of you our lonely hours will fill,—  
As gales wake from the harp a language not their own,  
Or airs Autumnal raise a momentary moan;—  
Till all the soul to thoughts of you is sighing,  
And every chord that slept in sadness stern replying.  
Where are ye now in regions blest,  
And shores of lands unknown,  
In silence and at rest,  
While still your shadows by our eyes are passing,  
And all the lost again in sable colours glassing?  
O let me with you converse keep  
On the Autumnal eve,  
Or in the quiet midnight deep:



There is a solemn sweetness when we grieve,  
And holier wisdom on our hearts ye leave;  
Better than all the talk of living men,  
Which in their frustrate longings still again  
The weary round of earthly things pursue!

For ye full well the value know

Of all things here below;

And while our contemplations dwell with you,  
We learn to look with your unscaled eyes

On all things here we prize.

O Thou great God unsearchable,  
Still something with us doth abide of Thee,  
E'en of Thy life and immortality;

Whate'er desires the panting bosom swell,  
It is that blind and dark for Thee we seek.

And e'en though lost in sin

There something is within

Which of a better birthright seems to speak,  
While naught but phantoms vain upon it gleam.

Still thoughts of Thee within us breed,

As in a feverish dream,

As in a dream all powerless, blind, and weak.

O unto Thee our spirits lead,

For all things here deceive,

Allure us but to leave,

And leave with empty hands and aching heart to grieve.

O lead us unto Thee, the hidden well,

Who art alone immutable

With Thee alone there hidden are on high

The joys that satisfy:

And they who drink of joys Thy hand supplies,

They shall be satisfied;

For here below, whate'er awhile may please,

Nothing there is that satisfies;

The immortal spirit still can find no ease,

Unsatisfied, unsatisfied,

For nothing can abide.

Of vanity, of vanity each age to age is crying,  
 And each anew the self-same strain replying,  
 And all repeats the strain before us flying.  
 To this sad thought their notes return,  
 And at the touching theme their dying spirits burn.  
 And all their notes of sweetness  
 Are singing of fleetness,—  
 Are of our fleetness sighing,  
 And singing of our dying.  
 And every gale that passes  
 Is turned to a sigh,  
 And every wave but glasses  
 The lesson, we must die;  
 And waves and gales together sing  
 Of this our daily perishing.

What is this flood of sweetest sound,  
 That bathed me all around,  
 Till with new being I abound?  
 O sweet as evening, beautiful and calm;  
 As blue skies seen 'tween the dark-waving palm;  
 As fragrant scents around me breathing balm;  
 As thoughts that speak of God and Heaven,  
 Where strife and war afar are driven!  
 O sweetest tide,  
 Which speaks the good beyond the clouds of time,  
 Who walk in your angelic chime;  
 While all their souls at length in you abide.  
 O tide of sweet and solemn sounds flow on,  
 Till discord finds no place, and all is union!

As they who fabled† shapes of poet's dream,  
 Deep hid in sylvan halls,  
 Dryads and Naiads, such as loved to tend,  
 And with the being blend

†Hæc loca capripedes Satyros Nymphasque tenere  
 Finitimi fingunt; et Faunos esse loquuntur,  
 Quorum noctivago strepitu, ludoque jocanti  
 Adfirmant volgo taciturna silentia rumpi,  
 Chordarumque sonus fieri, dulcisque querelas.  
 Tibia quas fundit, digitis pulsata canentum.

LUCRET. IV. 556.

Of woods or flowing stream,  
And answer'd to their calls.  
Where shepherd oft, at solemn eve returning,  
Heard sounds melodious, and a solemn theme,  
Perchance afar some glancing form discerning;  
While woods and valleys listen'd to the song,  
And Evening seem'd to linger sweet and long,  
Caught by the enchanting sound.

When sober Reason look'd upon the scene,  
All was but empty air,  
And nothing to be found;  
Some yearning of the immortal spirit came between,  
And dress'd up sounds and sights so fair,  
To body forth her longings of the unseen.  
So all the things which here on earth have been,  
Unreal shadows of the eye and ear,  
Stripp'd of their soft enchantment disappear  
And there is nothing there.  
But in the woods they seem afar,  
Holding sweet converse with the Evening star;  
The heart is listening still,  
And echoes of the past the deepest spirit fill.

The music now hath ceased and gone,  
Faint and more faint the visions come,  
And leave us to the weary world alone;  
Whene'er amid the earth we roam,  
There something is in music's tone,  
That to the exile seems to bring  
The thoughts of his lost Paradise,  
Like words and things, from distant home.  
Unconsciously they touch a spring  
Which in the secret spirit lies,  
As wandering from their parent skies.

What worlds with you are come and flown!  
Musical sounds, say, what are ye?  
Whence do ye come? what can ye be,  
That ye should thus our inmost being move,

Speaking with such strange language all your own?  
Are ye wild spirits, wandering from above,

That unto you such power is given?

Or are ye gales which here have strayed from Heaven,

Come from the place where all the past is stor'd,

Waiting the awful coming of the Lord?

And therefore when o'er us your spirit steals

It all the past reveals,

Finds access to the secret place of fears,

And lifts the shadows of long buried years,

For human tongue too deep, and human tears.

But not alone within the tuneful wall,

And music-loving cells:—

All far aloof from spiral summit tall,

Eddying around in circuits musical,

The aerial sweetness floats and swells

Down to the woodland dells.

And wise I deem the Church of olden times

That hallowed your sweet bells, which from their towers

Flung out such spirit-moving powers,

In flood of their melodious chimes.

Well might she consecrate those fountain wells,

Such strength of sympathy within them dwells,

And keeps from us profane and vile.

While now, alas! pour'd forth from sacred pile,

State-strifes, home-jealousies, take up the hallow'd strain,

And blended with the airs from hell upon the heart remain.

Ye golden streams from purer worlds o'er-flowing,

Musical sounds, in you a language lies,

Which speaks of God's eternal harmonies,

In secret Providence around us going.

Ye speak as by a hidden spell

That union strange, unspeakable,

Of the eternal City in the skies.

Therefore in Salem's earthly courts were found,

Cymbal, lute, trumpet, harp, and vocal sound,

And steps with music shod.

With harps Angelic, songs, and hallow'd lips,  
Heaven is reveal'd in dread Apocalypse,  
Wherein the blessed spirits dwell with God.

Whate'er ye be, ye speak so much of Heaven,  
That at your sound the evil spirit flies.  
As erst we read in holy histories,  
He from the stern remorseful King was driven,  
When David touched the soothing minstrelsies:  
The fiend then heard, and caught the preludes deep  
Of sounds and thoughts harmonious, which begin  
In Jesse's son,—signals precursive given  
Of that sweet music which his Psalteries keep,  
Cleansing and liberating souls from sin,  
And do the everlasting refuge win.  
Thus through our sensual avenues ye pour  
Treasures of wisdom, Truth's mysterious store,  
All bathed and blended with melodious air,  
Into the unwilling soul; to harbour there,  
Breeding serener thoughts, in you to soar  
Above the reach of groveling earthly care.

Therefore ye find meet place in hallow'd shrine;  
Blending sweet grace with austere discipline;  
Since that dear time when erst the shepherd throng  
Upon that hallowed even,  
Heard strains which to Angelic hosts belong,  
As if a door were open'd into Heaven,  
And pour'd a gleam of light and song,  
Of glory, joy, and love eternal realms among.  
Such are the melodies of new-born peace,  
Which then began, and will not cease,  
Till men to Angels shall respond, and all to praise be given.

Flow on, flow on to Heaven from whence ye rise,  
Ye blessed harmonies,  
And waft us on your breast unto your parent skies;  
Attune to Heaven our laggard feet,  
Attune our spirits here below  
To order and obedience meet,

Such as there is in that blest seat  
From whence ye flow.

Obedience—it is love,  
And where love is is harmony,  
Therefore the stars that range above  
Throughout the infinite in order roving,  
As through the shoreless space they fly,  
We deem to thread their maze to music high,  
In some melodious measure moving;  
And all we know of Angels blest  
Is that they love and they obey,  
And sing always,  
Ever singing, ever loving,  
In the mansion of their rest,  
Around the throne where God is manifest.  
And what we music call below  
Is something thence that doth o'erflow,  
Like a golden stream of light  
From the infinite;  
Here in matter dull unfolding  
And our earth-sick hearts upholding;  
And therefore like electric chain  
It hath a power in souls to reign,  
And rivet with a sadness sweet,  
Like voices come to exiles lone from their abiding seat.

Hence it hath power to give us wings,—  
Wings and a tongue of pure desire,  
Harmonious wings, like plumes of fire,  
Whereon the exiled spirit sings,  
In her sunrise soaring higher;  
Happy, happy, happy singing,  
Highest heights of ether winging,  
All her birth-right round her bringing;  
Happy heights where she may go,  
And look down on all below,  
Only voice that can express  
Her o'erflowing thankfulness.



Flow on, flow on, ye hallow'd solemn measures,  
Mysterious language of Angelic peace,  
Still singing of high pleasures,  
And long the lonely soul your dying accent treasures.  
Flow on, flow on, and never cease,  
Till all is peace and love on earth,  
And man be turned to virtues strong;  
And mindful of your awful song  
Foregoes his low-bred cares and mirth,  
In thoughts that unto you belong.  
Flow on, flow on, ye tones of sweetness,  
Till all the discords of our clime  
Be swallow'd in your march sublime,  
Whereon the eternal Bride advances;  
Wherein the sorrows of our fleetness,  
Widow'd hopes, and evil chances,  
Are lost in the eternal chime.

Lift the Ambrosian hymn sublime,  
Or deep Gregorian chaunt of plaintive underchime;  
For solemn, deep, and awful-tones  
Must be the sounds that speak of God,  
Of Heaven and Hell, of Christ in Judgment throned,  
And of the path the Saints have trod.  
Sounds worthy of the words the Psalmist sung,  
And which in Christ have found a tongue,  
And all His Saints among;  
The words on which the Martyrs' prayers ascended,  
Like cars of steeds, when Angels bended  
To take them to their rest.

Flow on, flow on, ye tones of sadness  
Until the heart hath wept her stains away,  
She waketh now from all the madness  
Which o'er her spirit hath had sway,  
And seeks a place to weep.  
But there are sounds more grave and deep,  
Which conscience shall awaken from her sleep;  
She looks around,

Roused from the spell which long hath bound,  
And hears the Judgment-wheels in thunder falling,  
While nearer as they draw, like lightning now,  
The Judge's eye the heart appalling,  
Brings memory forth upon the brow.

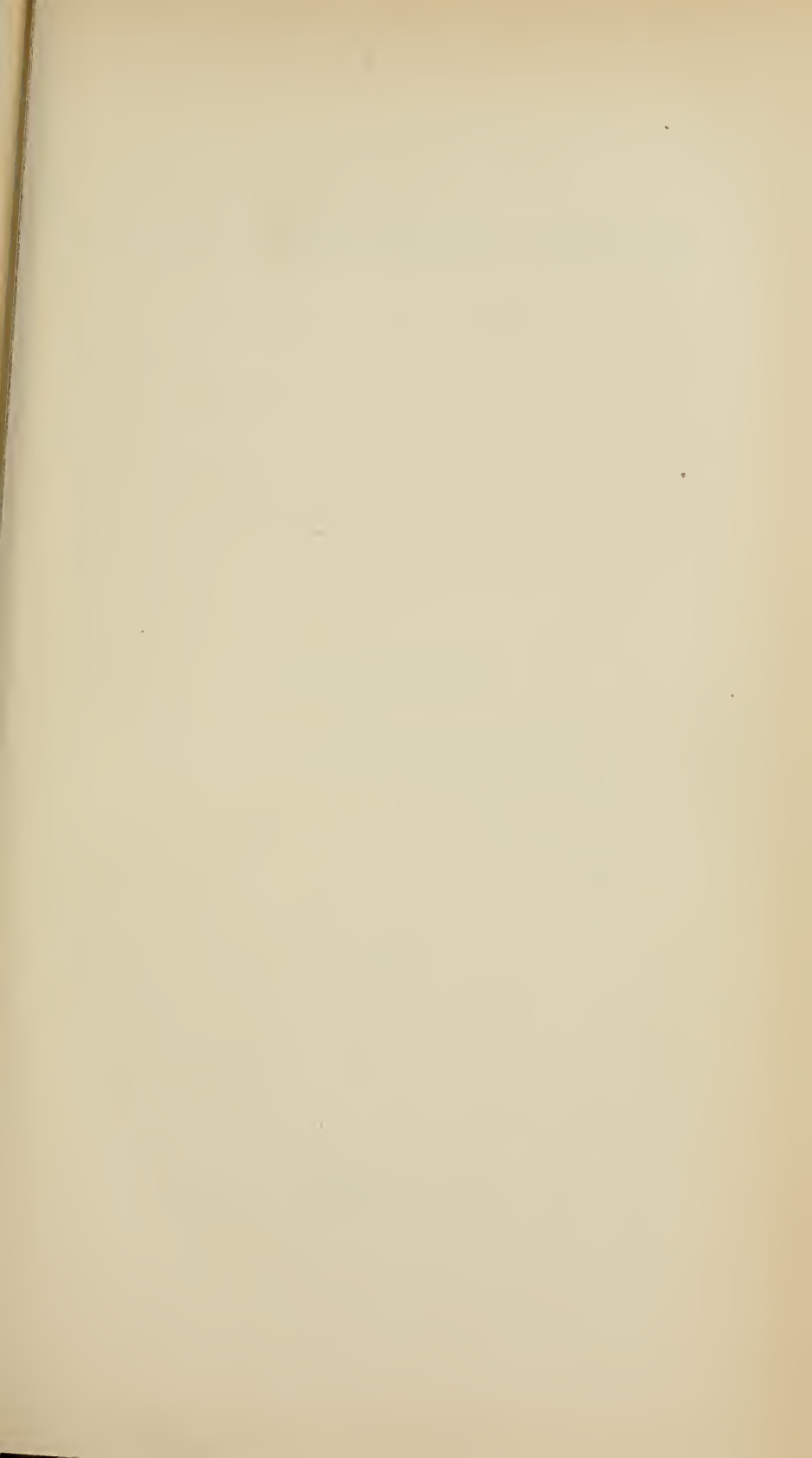
Ring out, ye tones, so sad and long,  
With that deep solemn undersong,  
That wakes stern grief and penitential fear.  
Flow on, flow on, ye tears and sighs;  
Such are the strains most meet  
For them who in their exile, long and drear,  
Sit by the waves of Babylon's proud seat,  
While Penitence there e'en her alter'd brow descries,  
Where flood of light upon her steals,  
And all the unclean heart reveals;  
O wake your accents sad, and solemn closes,  
Until the soul to Angel songs may rise,  
And in their quiet haven it reposes.

Immortal harmonies! thence Satan stole  
Sweet sounds to bathe therein the captive soul,  
Framing bad thoughts to imitate your strains,  
And bind his prisoner in melodious chains;  
So to forget his miseries within,  
And deeper and more deep to plunge in sin.  
For such the sweetness of your gentle spell,  
That e'en the influences that come from hell,  
In your disguise seem fair, and cheat the sight,  
Robed in the many colours of your light.  
Stop up all avenues, and close my ears,  
O Spirit pure, redouble all my fears!  
Thus takes the soul her hue for the eternal years.

Strains which belong to City of the skies,  
Ye are such notes as Plato deem'd  
Might calm and cleanse the soul, and render meet  
To be the seat of virtuous harmonies,  
In that famed City as he fondly dream'd.  
Strains fitly framed to measured tone Divine,

That mould to high celestial discipline,  
And tune fit tempers to their cadence sweet.  
Such as 'neath trees of life at Wisdom's feet  
Sit at the living well, which from above  
Flows in a golden shower of endless love.

Thus Ambrose with the hallow'd song  
Built up the citadel,  
Where Truth her sacred treasures guarded well.  
Strange are the walls to you belong,  
Melodious songs that sing and swell;  
Angelic hands to build your spiritual towers,  
In men's own hearts are laid your powers,  
And your foundations deep and strong.





# LIFE A TALE THAT IS TOLD

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A DISCOURSE  
BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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## LIFE A TALE THAT IS TOLD.

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Psalm 90: 9.

A tale is composed of incidents that are altogether fictitious and imaginary. They are not drawn from history, providence or God's word. They are created by the writer and made to conform to his principles and purposes, to the pleasure of the reader and the profit and vanity of the author. And is not human conduct generally founded upon, and regulated by false principles, to which all the events and opportunities of life are conformed, and by which they are discolored and misinterpreted, and made to promote our own personal interests, purposes and pursuits. And these principles are our own. They are contrary to God's word, to our enlightened conscience, to universal experience, to our own repeated conclusions in those calm and solemn moments when unsophisticated reason gives forth its cool and clear decisions. And yet while we see and approve the better, we still persistently follow the worse.

One of these false and delusive principles is that there is no observing and sin-punishing God, who is everywhere present, sees and records every thing, and from whom even the secret thoughts and motives of our hearts are not hidden. Men live as atheists in a godless world, and like fools say in their heart there is no God.

Another of these false principles by which men are always and everywhere deluded, is that the pleasures of sin warrant and repay the hazard of its commission. These pleasures are quickly converted into pains, both physical and mental, from which relief is sought in the repetition of carnal indulgence until reiterated gratification becomes a habit and the seared conscience loses its sensibilities, and remains in ordinary circumstances dormant until, like a strong man awoke from sleep, it puts on the fury of immitigable despair.

Another delusive principle, to which men submit the willing direction of their lives, is that the things of this world form a suitable portion for man—forgetting that man, as an immortal spirit, comes naked into this world, and must certainly go

naked out of it, and there is an essential difference between spirit and matter, which becomes a great and unpassable gulf of separation when body and soul are torn asunder by death.

That the relations in which we stand to eternity may, with safety, be left out of sight, and that the end of life is the proper time for being reconciled to God, are further illustrations of the fictitious, false and soul-destroying principles which lead men to "spend as a tale" the solemn season of life, whose one great business is to seek and serve God and be prepared to meet Him in judgment and enjoy Him in eternity.

The analogy is not less striking and instructive when we consider that a tale when once told is soon forgotten. It is not founded in facts. It cannot become history or constitute knowledge. It is therefore soon washed out of the memory and cast away unprofitable and useless, like salt which, however stimulating and piquant in its purity and power, becomes, when it has lost its savor, only fit for the dunghill. Thus is it with life as it is too generally and, in its largest measure, universally spent. Its incidents, however interesting and exciting at the time, are not remembered. No record is preserved of one in thousands of them. They are forgotten as a dream dies at the opening day. We have an impression that we have done with them. We are anxious to escape from the feelings of sadness or soberness awakened by them. And engrossed in the present, and anxious or eager for the future, the past course of daily life, made up as it was of innumerable events, is as a tale that is told. A tale, if ingeniously fabricated and well told, is, during its progress and development, very entrancing. It binds as with a spell. We yield ourselves to its magic witchery, and live in the intoxication of its unreal life. And so, alas, are we now, all of us, swallowed up in the excitement of the pomp and pageantry of war, and in all the scenes of its thrilling and pathetic interest; daily passing before us, as its evolving panorama opens up before us. But already much of it has passed away and is as a tale that was told, or as a dream of the night, and soon to all of us, and to our children after us, whatever may be its ultimate results, it will *all* have become with all its departed, and now living actors, as a tale that is told.

But another striking analogy between human life and a tale that is told is the *apparent* brevity and *seeming* abruptness of its unanticipated close, in proportion to the interest awakened by its multiplied and rapid vicissitudes. Thus life, with its daily recurrence of engrossing cares and eventful changes, is soon ended, often very soon, and always, even when longest, apparently transient and brought to an unexpected termination in the midst of a busy throng of present and prospective schemes. In comparison with that aged tree which has weathered the storms of a thousand years, or of that crumbling pile of ruined walls and arches hoary with the moss of centuries or hundreds of centuries, or of the everlasting hills which have chronicled the birth of ages and cycles of ages,—how ephemeral, how evanescent, how less than nothing and vanity, is the average duration of human life. And when we remember that it is not all of life to live nor all of death to die, and contrast this present probationary and preparatory state with the endless ages of eternity, it seems, in each individual case, to be no more than the little rippling rill trickling from the mountain side, soon to be lost in the stream which, like a whole generation of men, empties itself into that mighty river, which is sweeping forward the myriads of earth's population into the boundless ocean of eternity. And when we consider the work given us to do in life, the one great business here below, a soul to save, a God to glorify, a generation to serve according to the will of God, a harvest to prepare for the ingathering after death, oh! how short and yet how solemn and momentous is that little span in which nevertheless, as in a seed, is wrapt the destiny of eternal years.

Such a tale life has been to our fathers, friends and children who have gone before us. Such a tale is told by the poet to every reader of this monitory article.

Once! is a magic spell,  
To wake a train of thought;  
To bid the past survive again,  
The present be forgot.

Once! speaks of other days,  
Of hopes and fears gone by;  
It tells of pleasure's banished rays,  
And proves their vanity.

Once! tells us time hath flown,  
And much with it hath fled;  
Once! speaks of all the loved or known,  
The absent, changed, or dead.

Once! whispers we were blest,  
But turns that bliss to pain;  
Recalls the friends we once possessed,  
The hopes we nursed in vain.

Once! bids us to be wise,  
And earthly hopes subdue;  
Since all that here can charm our eyes,  
Once charmed, and cheated too.

A year once new, and heralded by the merry shout of happy children, has grown old, and with its pleasures and hopes and sorrows has passed beyond recall. The children have become older with the old year. The boy has become a man, the child a youth, the girl a maiden, the maiden a wife, and the wife a mother, and another generation of flowering children have hailed the welcome season of gifts and holidays. Thus will this year also grow old, and a new year be born and grow old, and years pass on, and other children weave garlands for other parents on succeeding new years, and will be "merry as a marriage bell," while the swelling joy of infant hearts rings out "a happy new year, a happy new year."

Years pass on and the husband is gone, and the wife is gone; father, mother, children, kindred are gone. All have passed away. New years are thus like mile-stones on our way, or like chapters in the tale of our life. We notice and count them, but pass by, and turn over with eager impatience to reach the next, as if anxious to reach the end where we shall stop, our journey's end, the winding up of our tale, the year that will never grow old, eternity, divided from this present time only by death.

Three score and ten mile-stones mark out the allotted journey of life. But how few pass by them all, and complete the rounded tale of life. The children who at the first mile-stone cried out in exuberant felicity "a happy new year," where are they? Ah, how *many* voices never hail the second, and *how few* the last. How many tales are broken off in the midst when the plot is woven with the most exciting events. How many suns set while it is yet day. Alas! there is many a break in the band, many a vacant place in hearts and homes. The

brother is gone, and the sister is left to go on alone, and chill on her heart fall the words of joy. The husband has gone down to the grave in the strength of manhood, and the new-made wife is a widow. Or the father presses to his heart the infant who has no mother. The friend who was as our own soul, whose love to us was wonderful, passing the love of woman, comforts us no more. We mourn over

Hopes that were angels in their birth,  
But perished young, like things of earth.

Ere half our mile-stones are past, or our tale told, we shrink from, or utter coldly, the once so pleasant words of gratulation. Oh! how many changes, how many blanks, how many empty chairs and solitary chambers!

From life's shining circle,  
The gems drop away.

Is life then as false as it is fleeting? Oh no. Be happy, is the voice of God. Be joyful, says our Lord and Saviour. If grief is in all your joy, there may be joy in all your grief, joy through tears stealing, and hope springing phoenix like from the ashes of our dead.

Chance and change are busy ever,  
Friends depart and ages move,  
But the SAVIOUR changeth never,  
He is light and life and love.

"God is good, His mercy brighteneth  
All the way in which we move;  
Bliss He sends, and woe He lighteneth;  
God is light, and God is love."

Say, then, dear reader,

"I would not have a wish,  
But what's conformed to Thine,  
For all Thy purposes are rich  
In grace and truth divine."

With the old Patriarch, we may say "me ye have bereaved; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me." But the Spirit of Christ in our hearts says, "even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

Fellow-traveller, "lift up thine eyes and look *from* the place where thou *art*," and look toward the place of which Christ has told us, which He has gone to prepare for us. Lift up your heads, for behold, your redemption draweth nigh.



"Come, brothers, let us onward;  
Night comes without delay,  
And in this howling desert  
It is not good to stay.  
Take courage, and be strong,  
We are hastening on to heaven;  
Strength for warfare will be given,  
And glory won ere long.

"The pilgrim's path of trial  
We do not fear to view;  
We know His voice who calls us,  
We know Him to be true.  
Then let who will condemn,  
But, strong in His almighty grace,  
Come every one with steadfast face  
On to Jerusalem.

"Oh, brothers, soon is ended  
The journey we've begun;  
Endure a little longer,  
The race will soon be run.  
And in the land of rest—  
In yonder bright eternal home,  
Where all the Father's loved ones come,  
We shall be safe and blest.

"Then boldly let us venture;  
This, this is worth the cost,  
Though dangers we encounter,  
Though everything is lost.  
Oh, world, how vain they call!  
We follow Him who went before,  
We follow, to the eternal shore,  
Jesus, our all in all."

T. S.





Counsel and Comfort for Afflicted  
Believers.

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A SERIES OF ARTICLES  
BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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Published in  
The New Orleans and Southern Presbyterian.



## COUNSEL AND COMFORT FOR AFFLICTED BELIEVERS.

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### NO. I.—AFFLICTIONS THE PORTION OF EVERY BELIEVER.

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble.” “There is or needs be that we should be afflicted.” *We ourselves* are under the curse that came upon us in consequence of the fall of Adam, who was our representative and head; “for by one man sin entered into the world and death”—that is, all the evils that can afflict our bodies, our minds, and our souls, here and hereafter, “by sin, and so death,” in all these forms of evil, “passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” *The earth*, too, in its laws, its atmosphere, and its barrenness, and its thousand sources of death, is “cursed for man’s sake, so that in sorrow we eat of it all the days of our life;” and still further, “we know that *the whole creation* groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” *The universal* cry is, “Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death!” “Many are the afflictions of the *righteous*,” though the Lord delivereth them out of them all,” for we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting, for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. For we are saved by hope. The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.” *None* ever have been so good, or so wise, or so great, as to be above the reach of trouble. *Jesus Christ* our Lord, an example of sinless and perfect humanity, was “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and made perfect through suffering.” From this there is no exemption; “there is no discharge in this warfare.” In one way or another, either in mind, body or estate, *ALL* are afflicted. So that even the most apparently prosperous have their inward calamities, and their heart knoweth its own bitterness, even though a stranger intermedleth not therewith.” And these inward trials are often the most severe, for “any man can bear his outward infirmities, but a wounded spirit who can bear.”



Of all men, they are least to be envied who enjoy health and wealth; who have abundance of this world's goods, and thus receive their portion in this life, and yet how many, like the Psalmist, have indulged in hard and unbelieving thoughts, saying:

"But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. For there are no bands in their death: but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men. Therefore pride compasseth them about as a chain; violence covereth them *as* a garment. Their eyes stand out with fatness: they have more than heart could wish. For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning."

But oh, like the Psalmist, may God enable us from experience to say,

"If I say, I will speak thus: behold, I should offend *against* the generation of Thy children. When I thought to know this, it *was* too painful for me. Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *then* understood I their end. Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they *brought* into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors. As a dream when *one* awaketh; *so*, O Lord, when Thou awakest, Thou shalt despise their image. Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins. So foolish *was* I, and ignorant; I was *as* a beast before Thee. Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."

T. S.

## NO. II.—THE TRUE SOURCE OF COMFORT.

"Many say who will show us any good."

All, however, seek it where it is not to be found—in health, in wealth, in friends, in the world, in something here below. But the universal experience of man is that "all is vanity and vexation of spirit." "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eyes hath not seen. The lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it. But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of

understanding? The depth saith, *It is not in me*; and the sea saith, *It is not with me*. DESTRUCTION and DEATH say, *We have heard the fame thereof with our ears.*" Oh yes! in the death of the Son of God; in the destruction of "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world;" in the shedding of His blood;—there is remission of sins, there is peace for the troubled, joy for the distressed, hope for the disconsolate, comfort for the mourning, and everlasting life and joy for those who journey in sadness and yet in faith through this vale of tears. In His death there is life; in His life there is righteousness; in His resurrection there is hope; in His exaltation there is assurance; in His intercession there is the pledge of repentance, pardon, remission of sins, present support and everlasting rest; in His cross there is the destruction of sin, death, Satan and hell, and the perfect deliverance from fear, guilt, dejection, deformity, and woe. Oh yes! we are complete in Christ. He is made unto us of God wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and *complete* redemption." To all who come unto Him He gives rest"—rest from sin, rest from a troubled conscience, rest from anxious solicitude about the future, and rest from all vain desires after earthly good. He unveils to them celestial blessedness; points them to an inheritance beyond the grave, reserved in heaven for them that love Him; sets their affections on things above; imparts to them peace and quietness and assurance; teaches them "in whatsoever state they are therewith to be content;" "makes every thing to work together for their good," and comforts them with the assurance that their present "light afflictions shall work "out for them an exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Personal religion is therefore the sovereign remedy for every woe. "Blessed are they that mourn," if in the day of trouble they seek the true Comforter—that refuge which has never failed to prove "a very present help in time of trouble."

T. S.

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### NO. III.—AFFLICTIONS DESIGNED TO BRING US TO CHRIST.

"Afflictions, when received in a proper spirit, tend to bring us to Christ. Christ has unspeakable and everlasting bless-

ings to bestow,—such as the world can neither give nor take away; such as are sufficient to pour that oil of gladness into our souls, which will swim above the waves of an earthly tribulation. But are we not most unhappily indolent and inattentive to these blessings, in the gay hours of an uninterrupted prosperity? It is very observable, that scarce any made application to our divine Redeemer in the days of His abode with us, but the children of affliction. The same spirit of supineness still possesses mankind. We undervalue, we disregard the Lord Jesus, and the unspeakable privileges of His gospel, while all proceeds smoothly, and nothing occurs to discompose the tenor of our tranquility. But when misfortunes harass our circumstances, or sorrows oppress our minds, then we are willing, we are glad, we are earnest, to find rest in Christ.”

Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

“Afflictions,” says Baxter, “are God’s most effectual means to keep us from losing our way to our heavenly rest. Without this hedge of thorns on the right hand and on the left, we should scarcely keep in the way to heaven. If there be but one gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it! When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth sickness, or other affliction, reduce us! Every Christian, as well as Luther, may call affliction one of his best school-masters, and with David may say, ‘Before I was afflicted, I went astray; but now have I kept Thy word.’ Many thousand recovered sinners may cry, ‘O healthful sickness! O comfortable sorrows! O gainful losses! O enriching poverty! O blessed day that ever I was afflicted!’ Not only the green pastures and still waters, but the rod and staff, they comfort us. Though the Word and Spirit do the main work, yet sufferings so unbolts the door of the heart, that the Word hath easier entrance.”

Afflictions therefore are a means of grace and salvation, and are evidence of love; for “whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every child whom He receiveth.”

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,  
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.

To endeavor, therefore, to know the divine will in your affliction, is the first duty, and to obey it the second, so that the essential spirit and life of a Christian is comprhended in the prayer, "Thy will be done." Afflicted Christian! God has taught you what is His will by sending your trials upon you. Let it then be your present aim by prayer to Him to submit to it with patience, resignation, hope and joy.

If any hard affliction hath surprised thee, "cast one eye upon the hand that sent it; and the other upon the sin that brought it; if thou thankfully receive the message, He that sent it will discharge the messenger."

It is a piece of that corruption which runneth through human nature, that we naturally prize truth more than goodness, knowledge more than holiness. We think it a gallant thing to be fluttering up to heaven, with our wings of knowledge and speculation: whereas, the highest mystery of a divine life here, and of perfect happiness hereafter, consisteth in nothing but mere obedience to the Divine Will. Happiness is nothing but that inward, sweet delight, that will arise from the harmonious agreement between our wills and God's will.

Whene'er affliction o'er thee sheds  
Its influence malign,  
Then, sufferer, be the prophet's prayer  
And prompt obedience thine.  
'Tis but at Marah's fount, ordained,  
Thy faith in God to prove,  
And prayer and resignation shall  
Its bitterness remove.

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#### N<sup>O</sup>. IV.—A STRING OF PEARLS FOR THE AFFLICTED BELIEVER.

*"Bind Them About Thy Neck."*—Cast thyself upon God, for His power is equal to His love, and He knows better than thyself, or we can, what is proper and expedient for thee. In due time He will cause thy pains to cease, and will take His thorn from thy flesh. Either He will drive from thee the spirit of infirmity that afflicts thee, or else He will make His strength perfect in thy weakness. He will indue thee with so much patience, arm thee with such consistency, and fill thee with such extraordinary joy and consolation, that every one

shall visibly perceive that God Himself is thy helper, and that His strength sustains thee. O, how sweet and pleasant is God's assistance to a Christian soul! It brings with it such vast and precarious delights; it causeth such undeniable testimonials of our adoption to shine forth; it gives us such a transporting earnest of our celestial inheritance, such a ravishing foretaste of paradise, that St. Paul prefers it not only to all the riches, pleasures and honors of the world, but also to his being caught up to the third heavens, where he heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.

Even a nurse, whose child's imperfect peace  
Can hardly lead his foot from place to place,  
Leaves her fond kissing, sets him down to go,  
Nor does uphold him for a step or two;  
But when she finds that he begins to fall,  
She holds him up, and kisses him withal—  
So God from man *sometimes withdraws His hand*  
*Awhile, to teach his infant faith to stand;*  
But when He sees his feeble strength begin  
To fail, He gently takes him up again.

“His path is in the great waters, and His footsteps are not known; His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out.” But it certainly befits erring and guilty creatures to be submissive when they cannot comprehend. We know not what is best for us: we know only that adversity may humble us, and that prosperity may elate and undo us. We know that when God wraps Himself in the terrors of His darkness, the morning of joy may be rising, and that when the sky is filled with the stars of hope, the abyss of destruction may open under our feet. But whether we know or know not, it is most unreasonable to complain of that unequal distribution of suffering, the end of which we cannot comprehend, while it is certain that the measure which ourselves endure, be it small or great, is a just infliction.

Some there are who seem exempted  
From the doom incurred by all;  
Are they not more solely tempted?  
Are they not the first to fall?  
As a mother's firm denial  
Checks her infant's wayward mood,  
*Wisdom lurks in every trial—*  
*Grief was sent thee for thy good.*  
In the scenes of former pleasure,  
Present anguish has thou felt?  
O'er thy fond heart's dearest treasure,  
As a mourner hast thou knelt?



In the hour of deep affliction,  
 Let no impious thought intrude—  
 Meekly bow with this conviction,  
*Grief was sent thee for thy good.*

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

“To reveal to the mourner such discoveries of the supreme Being as the Christian religion affords, is to reveal to him a Father and a Friend; is to let in a ray of the most cheering light upon the darkness of the human estate. He who before was a destitute orphan, wandering in the inhospitable desert, has now gained a shelter from the bitter and inclement blast. He now knows to whom to pray, and in whom to trust; where to unbosom his sorrows, and from what hand to look for relief.”

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NO. V.—BRACELETS OF PEARLS FOR AFFLICTED BELIEVERS.  
 “BIND THEM ABOUT THINE ARMS.”

“Happy, thrice happy, he who relies on the promises and disclosures of the Bible; who believes, as the loved fall one after one from his side, that they have returned to their native country; who feels that each treasure of knowledge he attains, he carries with him through illimitable being; who sees in virtue the essence and the elements of the world he is to inherit. He comforts his weariness amid the storms of time, by seeing, far across the melancholy seas, the heaven he will reach at last; he deems that every struggle has its assured reward, and every sorrow has its balm; he knows, however forsaken or bereaved below, that he never can be alone, and never deserted; that above him is the protection of eternal power, and the mercy of eternal love! Ah, well said the dreamer of philosophy, ‘How much He knew of the human heart, who first called God our Father!’

Tho’ rising grief distress my soul,  
 And tears on tears successive roll,  
 And silent memory weep alone  
 O’er hours of peace and gladness flown;  
 Ah, why by passing clouds oppress,  
 Should vexing thoughts distract my breast;



Turn, turn to Him in every pain,  
Whom never suppliant sought in vain;  
My strength in joy's exstasic day,  
My hope when joy has passed away.

Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is."

In my judgment, says Hannah More, one of the best proofs that sorrow has had its right effect, is, that it has not incapacitated for business; *your* business being duties. Under the pressure of heavy affliction it is soothing to the heart to sink down into the enjoyment of a kind of sad indulgence, and to make itself believe that this is as right as it is gratifying; especially while it mixes some pious thoughts with this unprofitable tranquility. But who can say, even after the severest loss, I have no duties, no cares in life remaining. Much less can a tender mother say it, who has still so many looking to her advice, and, what is almost more, to her example. It is not the smallest part of the good that you may do them, to let them see what effect great trials have upon your mind, and that Christianity enables you to bear up against such a stroke. It is an excellent sign that, after the cares and labors of the day, you can return to your pious exercises and meditations with undiminished attention. This will be a good criterion by which to judge of your state.

Father, I bless thy gentle hand;  
How kind was thy chastizing rod,  
That forced my conscience to a stand,  
And brought my wand'ring soul to God!  
Foolish and vain, I went astray;  
Ere I had felt thy scourges, Lord,  
I left my guide and lost my way;  
But now I love and keep thy word.  
'Tis good for me to wear the yoke,  
For pride is apt to rise and swell;  
'Tis good to bear my Father's stroke,  
That I might learn His statutes well.

"Say not, there is no sorrow like your sorrow. You have lost, perhaps, one child; but Aaron lost two, and Job all; and lost them by an immediate, instantaneous stroke of God. The children of some pious parents have died victims to public justice. Others have lived to sin so grievously, that their broken-hearted parents were ready to wish they had died from the womb. A third class have experienced such protracted and intolerable sufferings on a sick bed, that even a fond

mother has wished and prayed for the closing moment. O think of these things, and acknowledge that your lot has been comparatively merciful."

"The faith of believers overcomes the world by spreading over it the bright shadowing of 'better things to come.' No darkness or sorrowing moves them out of their course of duty or stays them in it; like the moon, when she suffers an eclipse, they continue on, losing no motion and no order, till they regain the presence and glory of which they are deprived. As shaken trees root deeper, as the blast that beats down the flame causes it to rise higher, so they, when brought low by adversity, mount upwards, or bind themselves closer to the rock they are resting on."

"Good may come out of affliction. You should be far more desirous of obtaining that good, than of getting rid of the evil under which you suffer. It is not necessary that your sorrow cease. It is necessary that it be sanctified. God has brought you unto the house of mourning, that 'by the sadness of the countenance the heart may be made better.' See to it, that you here gather some of the ripe clusters, the peaceable 'fruit of righteousness.' Nothing but dreadful unbelief and wickedness can hinder the affliction from being one of God's choice and rich blessings." "The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of His correction; for whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

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

"As the snowdrop comes amid snow and sleet, appearing as the herald of the rose, so Religion comes amid the blight of affliction, to remind us of a perpetual summer, where the bright sun never retires behind a wintry cloud."

O Saviour! whose mercy, severe in its kindness,  
Has chasten'd my wand'rings and guided my way,  
Ador'd be the pow'r which illumin'd my blindness,  
And wean'd me from phantoms that smil'd to betray.

Enchanted with all that was dazzling and fair,  
 I follow'd the rainbow,—I caught at the toy;  
 And still in displeasure Thy goodness was there,  
 Disappointing the hope and defeating the joy.

The blossom blushed bright, but a worm was below;  
 The moonlight shone fair, there was blight in the beam;  
 Sweet whisper'd the breeze, but it whisper'd of woe;  
 And bitterness flow'd in the soft-flowing stream.

So, cur'd of my folly, yet cur'd but in part,  
 I turn'd to the refuge Thy pity display'd;  
 And still did this eager and credulous heart  
 Weave visions of promise that bloom'd but to fade.

I thought that the course of the pilgrim to heaven  
 Would be bright as the summer, and glad as the morn;  
 Thou show'dst me the path,—it was dark and uneven,  
 All rugged with rock, and all tangled with thorn.

I dream'd of celestial rewards and renown,  
 I grasp'd at the triumph which blesses the brave,—  
 I ask'd for the palm-branch, the robe and the crown,  
 I ask'd—and Thou show'dst me a cross and a grave.

Subdu'd and instructed, at length, to Thy will,  
 My hopes and my longings I fain would resign;  
 Oh give me the heart that can wait and be still,  
 Nor know of a wish or a pleasure but Thine!

#### NO. VI.—COUNSELS TO AFFLICTED BELIEVERS.

Thus, reader, have I strung together some pearls which may prove to be of great price if you treasure them up in thy heart, and dwell upon them in thy hours of darkness.

But that you may be able to apply these consolations to good purpose under affliction; there are some counsels to be set before you, and which shall be done in the words of good old Cotton Mather. In so many scriptures you shall therefore have so many counsels; they will be both best received, and best remembered, if they come unto you with a "Thus saith the Lord."

The *first* counsel proper for you is intimated in Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Esteem spiritual blessings the most desirable blessings. A sufferer should be a Solomon; under affliction be of his temper, who, in 2 Chron. i. 11, counted "wisdom," preferable to "riches, and honour, and long life." Consider an "acquaintance with God" that thing by which "good will come unto you;" and then you will not count afflic-

tion from God the thing which is against you. On one side, be sure to judge thus: "If I lose in temporals, and gain in spirituals, I am an abundant gainer." Be sure to judge on the other side thus: "If I lose in spirituals, and gain in temporals, it certainly fares very ill with me." Let sin be the only thing of which you will absolutely say, "it is against me." But of every thing which makes you more conformed to Jesus Christ say, "this is for me:" O say, "this is all my salvation, and all my desire."

The *second* counsel pertaining to you, is expressed in James v. 13. "Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray." A time of affliction should be a time of supplication. It was the precept of a good God, in Psalm i. 15. "Call upon me in the day of trouble;" and it was the purpose of a good man, in Psalm lxxxvi. 7. "Lord, in the day of my trouble, I will call upon Thee." Has any remarkable affliction befallen thee? I would seriously ask, "Was not the spirit of prayer abated in thee before the affliction came?" Let me then a little alter the words of Deborah, and say, "Awake, awake, O soul! awake, awake and utter a prayer." The title of the cii. Psalm shews the duty of all afflicted men; there should be, "a prayer made by the afflicted when he is overwhelmed, and he should pour out his complaint before the Lord." It was a very wise proposal of Eliphaz, in Job v. 6-8. "Affliction comes not forth of the dust; nor doth trouble spring out of the ground." It may be thou hast lost a desirable piece of dust; it may be one of thy delights is put into the ground. O look up; look above chance; look beyond all second causes; it is added, "I would seek unto God;" the most advisable thing in the world! We are in affliction prone to make sad complaints to our fellow worms; unto them we say, "O my dear infant! or O my lost estate!" But Job found cause to say, in chap. xxi. 4. "Is my complaint to man? If it were so, why should not my spirit be troubled?" Then let us not continue saying, "Have pity on me, O ye my friends;" but instead thereof let us be saying, "The Lord be merciful unto me, a sinner." Does not thy affliction put thee upon more prayer than thou didst use before? It is a sad sign that the bitter cup arrives to thee mixed with the displeasure of God. An affliction will neither

come in mercy, nor go in mercy, if much prayer do not accompany it. In affliction pray much; as soon as ever any affliction befalls us, the first thing we should do, should be to fall down on our knees, to cry mightily to the Lord that His grace may be sufficient for us. And still, as long as God's hand is upon us, our hands should be lifted in prayers unto God. We should pray that our affliction should be moderated, sanctified, and removed. The pious Hannah of old found prayer to be a great relief. Let this be your good character, your good carriage; "Lord in trouble have they visited Thee, and poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them."

The *third* counsel which you are to follow, is declared in Job xxxiv. 31. "Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will not offend any more." Repentance for sin should be the effect of affliction on men. The end of every affliction in sum is the same as the end of every mercy; we may say of it, as in Rom. ii. 4. "O man, it leads thee to repentance." God spoke by His ten judgments to Egypt, as well as by His ten commandments to Israel; every affliction cries this in our ears, "O repent: reform; return to Him that smites thee." We read of a gracious person, who upon having a child taken away by death, said in 1 Kings xvii. 18. "My sins are brought unto remembrance." This is that for which perhaps all thy sickness, all thy reproach, all thy poverty, and all thy bereavements are sent upon thee. God would have thee remember some sin with grief and shame, and "wherein thou hast done iniquity, to do it no more." It was a black brand set upon a bad man, in 2 Chron. xxviii. 22. "In the time of his distress, did he trespass yet more against the Lord." Shall God prune thee, and cut thee, and no good fruit be found upon thee after all? Shall God prick thee, and lance thee, and all thy bad blood be still running in thy veins? Then indeed these things are against thee. Jeroboam's withered hand was against him, because it rectified not his wicked heart. There hardly ever was a more lamentable sight in this world, than a thief on a cross continuing to dishonour the Lord Jesus Christ. Art thou afflicted? Then take the course which the church proposed in Lam. iii. 40.



“Let us search and try our ways.” O now first petition thy God; “Lord show me wherefore Thou contendest with me?” And then examine thyself wherein thou hast transgressed. Endeavour to find out what controversy there may be between God and thee; let thy impartial conscience, the preacher in thy bosom, inform thee whether thou hast not overvalued, or undervalued the things of which thou art deprived; whether thou hast not injuriously procured unto some other person an affliction like that which thou thyself now smartest under; or whether no circumstance of thy affliction, as the time of it, the place of it, do loudly proclaim God’s displeasure in it. Inquire thus, and immediately comply with what the Lord shall require. Let thy dead friends cause thee to repent of thy dead works; thou mournest over a lost child, or a lost name; O be concerned about a lost soul that is lodging in thee. Ask thyself what has thy past behaviour been? And ask, what thy future deportment should be? Bewail now, and amend all thy miscarriages in the sight of God. We are very ready to fall out with creatures when any thing happens amiss unto us. But O spend all thy passion, and all thy indignation here—look upon thy sins, and curse them as the authors of all thy sorrows. O look upon sin, and say, have I found thee, O mine enemy? Man, loathe now, and leave every sin. It was that sin that killed thy child; it was that sin that burnt thy house; that sunk thy ship; that robbed thee of thy delights; never after this be at peace with that mischievous, detestable monster, sin.

The *fourth* counsel, big with which every affliction saith unto us, as Eliud unto Eglon, “I have a message to thee from God,” we have specified in Job xiii. 15. “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.” A holy resolution for God is to be maintained under every affliction from God. Afflictions will not be against us if we resolve under them to be still for Him from whom they come. To lay aside no devotions for all afflictions; to serve a smiting God, as well as a smiling God; to seek a God that is frowning on us, as well as a God that is owning us; this will argue “an Israelite indeed.” We should after all our afflictions be still able to make that appeal to the Lord, in Psalm xliv. 17, 18. “All this is come upon us, yet



have we not forgotten Thee, O Lord." Resolve never to renounce the truths of God; resolve never to desert the ways of God, whatever your afflictions are; still "with full purpose of heart, cleave unto the Lord." In resolutions for God, be like an iron pillar, and a brazen wall that cannot be prevailed against. Resolve to be holy, though the wrath of man would molest you for it. Suppose a wicked world should abuse you, and oppress you, yet say with Joshua, "I and my house will serve the Lord." Resolve to be holy, though the hand of God should distress you in it. When you feel the discouragements of the narrow way, still say with Paul, "none of these things move me."

Suppose God should inflict the stroke of displeasure on your outward man, still say, though my life should be continually worn away with pining sickness, yet to me "to live shall be Christ." Still say, though my name should be cast out as evil, and though I be made the song of the drunkard, yet will I labour all I can to honour the name of God. Still say, "though I am reduced, and among the poor in this world, yet will I study to be rich in good works." And still say, "though I cannot have my children like olive plants about my table, yet will I endeavour to be myself a dutiful child of God, and as a fruitful olive tree in the courts of the Lord."

Once more; suppose God withdraws the light of His countenance from your inward man; still say, "the Lord shall be my God even when He forsaketh me." Still say, I will "fear the Lord and obey His voice, though I walk in darkness and have no light."

Happy is the afflicted man, who is thus a resolved man. The followers of these counsels may boldly and safely lay claim to all the comforts, and strong consolations which have this day been set before the "heirs of promise." T. S.

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#### NO. VII.—OUR DUTY UNDER AFFLICTION.

*By Rev. John Newton.*

What shall I say? Topics of consolation are at hand in abundance; they are familiar to your mind; and were I to fill the sheet with them, I could suggest nothing but what you

already know. Then are they consolatory indeed, when the Lord Himself is pleased to apply them to the heart. This He has promised, and therefore we are encouraged to expect it. This is my prayer for you. I sincerely sympathize with you: I cannot comfort you; but He can, and I trust He will. How impertinent would it be to advise you to forget or to suspend the feelings which such a stroke must excite! Who can help feeling? Nor is sensibility in itself sinful. Christian resignation is very different from that stoical stubbornness, which is most easily practised by those unamiable characters whose regards centre wholly in self; nor could we, in a proper manner, exercise submission to the will of God under our trials, if we did not feel them. He who knows our frame is pleased to allow, that afflictions for the present are not joyous but grievous. But to them that fear Him He is at hand, to support their spirits, to moderate their grief, and in the issue to sanctify it; so that they shall come out of the furnace refined, more humble, and more spiritual. There is, however, a part assigned us; we are to pray for the help in need; and we are not wilfully to give way to the impression of overwhelming sorrow. We are to endeavor to turn our thoughts to such considerations as are suited to alleviate it; our deserts as sinners, the many mercies we are still indulged with, the still greater afflictions which many of our fellow-creatures endure, and, above all, the sufferings of Jesus, that man of sorrows, who made Himself intimately acquainted with grief for our sakes.

When the will of the Lord is manifested to us by the event, we are to look to Him for grace and strength, and be still to know that He is God; that He has a right to dispose of us and ours as He pleases, and that in the exercise of this right He is most certainly good and wise. We often complain of losses; but the expression is rather improper. Strictly speaking, we can lose nothing, because we have no real property in any thing. Our earthly comforts are lent us; and when recalled, we ought to return and resign them, with thankfulness, to Him who has let them remain so long in our hands. But, as I said above, I do not mean to enlarge in this strain: I hope the Lord, the only Comforter, will bring such thoughts with

warmth and efficacy upon your mind. Your wound, while fresh, is painful, but faith, prayer, and time, will, I trust, gradually render it tolerable. There is something fascinating in grief: painful as it is, we are prone to indulge it, and to brood over the thoughts and circumstances which are suited (like fuel to fire) to heighten and prolong it. When the Lord afflicts, it is His design that we should grieve: but in this, as in all other things, there is a certain moderation which becomes a Christian, and which only grace can teach; and grace teaches us not by books or by hearsay, but by experimental lessons: all beyond this should be avoided and guarded against as sinful and hurtful. Grief, when indulged and excessive, preys upon the spirits, injures health, indisposes us for duty, and causes us to shed tears, which deserve more tears. This is a weeping world. Sin has filled it with thorns and briers, with crosses and calamities. It is a great hospital, resounding with groans in every quarter. It is as a field of battle, where many are falling around us continually; and it is more wonderful that we escape so well, than that we are sometimes wounded. We must have some share; it is the unavoidable lot of our nature and state; it is likewise needful, in point of discipline. The Lord will certainly chasten those whom He loves, though others may seem to pass for a time with impunity. That is a sweet, instructive, and important passage—"And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children; My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them which are exercised thereby." It is so plain that it needs no comment; so full, that a comment would but weaken it. May the Lord inscribe it upon your heart, and upon mine!

T. S.

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#### NO. VIII.—THE FRIEND IN NEED AND THE FRIEND INDEED.

Reader! art thou a Christian? "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" If not, the curse of God resteth upon thee; and unless thou makest haste to Christ for salvation, thou art lost

for ever. If thou hast done this, and art resting on His atoning blood for salvation, all things on earth and in heaven, in time and eternity, are thine. Thou mayest at present be exercised "with great and sore trials," but "the Lord thinketh on thee." Abundant provision is made in His character, His promises, and His Son for thy comfort; He has commanded his ministers to administer His support; while He reveals Himself as *THE CONSOLATION OF ISRAEL*."

Oh! how happy is that man who can say of Jesus, "This is *my* beloved, and this is *my* Friend!" He is richer than he who might call the earth his own. Seek, reader, His friendship, and then in every hour of trial He will support and deliver thee, and finally bring thee to His heavenly habitation.

These cordians have been provided for thy comfort in the day of trouble; thankfully "take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Drink deeply of it thyself, and then invite thy Christian neighbour to rejoice in the infinite provisions God has made for the happiness of those who believe.

"Friends, methinks, are like all other wares in these days: of cheap ones there are plenty, but they are good for little when you have them, and the genuine article is very difficult to meet with. If I can lead you to a true friend, good reader, I shall do you real service. But first we must be agreed what we mean by the words, or we shall be looking for different things under the same name. By a true friend, I do not mean a man who always says the thing he thinks will please us best; that is a flatterer: he should be shunned like a traitor. I do not mean what the world calls a merry fellow; for the world does not mean by this a merry-hearted man, who sees the bright side of every thing, and praises God in all; but only a man who can laugh much, talk gaily, and be a companion in our pleasures. Such a one will not do; he may waste a precious hour, but he is not a true friend. To come, then, to my true friend. First, he must love me well; no sugared words on the one hand, no long wise warnings on the other, will draw my heart to him, if I do not feel sure he loves me. Secondly, he must show his love in many little acts of kindness; many a kind word dropped when most I wanted it; many

a watchful care to remove difficulties I had not seen myself, out of my way, so that whenever his name is mentioned it may recall those thousand little acts of love which only the heart of a friend can prompt. Thirdly, he must be near at hand, or the remembrance of his love will only sadden me. Fourthly, he must be wiser than I am; for I shall often want to ask his counsel; and unless I am sure of his wisdom I cannot trust him. Fifthly, though it be not at all needful for could be raised, I should suppose that my true friend had rich and powerful, it would be a great relief. I could take my wants to him then without scruple. With his help at hand I should almost feel as if I were powerful and rich myself. Sixthly, if I wish to think of the highest pitch to which love could be raised, I should suppose that my true friend had suffered something for me; that his love had not been cheap love, but had cost him much, which he willingly gave up for me. Reader, would my true friend come up to the wishes of your heart; if so, let us not despair of finding him. Solomon, the wisest of men, says, "There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," Prov. xviii. 24. Yes, the Lord Jesus is this Friend; He loves us; all His words burn with love. Are we weary?—He says, "I will give you rest." Are we thirsty?—He says, "Come ye to the waters." Are we troubled?—He says, "Neither be ye of doubtful mind." Do we tremble?—He says, "Fear not." Again, His love shows itself in acts of kindness. Words were not enough for us; we were poor sinners, deserving the punishment of hell: we had good cause to be anxious and to tremble; but He Himself took the sin as His own, and bore the punishment. Here was an act of love. Well may He say, "Fear not." Nor is He wanting in those nameless little acts of love which endear a friend. Every joy we have, He provided it for us; every danger we have escaped,—unknown to us, His hand has moved it out of our way. He is never removed from us—the only friend that can never be an absent friend. He is wiser than we; and, what is more, He is willing to give wisdom liberally, and not to upbraid our folly. He is rich and powerful. With other friends we blush to urge our suit too often; but with Him each favor given is only a plea for asking for more. He



wishes us in Him to feel rich and powerful, that we "can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth" us. To come to our last point, His love is no cheap love; He has suffered fearfully for us; He gave up His heavenly home for us, that He might dwell, that He might die, in this world of sorrow. Has He not proved Himself in every way a true Friend?

I can imagine the feelings with which some will have read these lines. The description of a true friend would come home to them, would awaken a longing for such a friend to help them through this rough world; but when I told them of Jesus, there would be a sense of disappointment, a feeling that this was not a real help and comfort. They did not deny that all I had written was true; but, somehow, if the earthly friend had been there they would have felt the comfort of it, and now it seemed but thin air—they were none the better for it. Why, reader, is this difference? It is because you see the earthly friend; you taste his benefits, you have proof that he is present. But you cannot see Jesus; you see no hand stretched out to help; you hear no voice to guide and comfort—not with your bodily eyes and ears; but there is something that can see Him; faith can see Him—faith can hear Him. This is no idle fancy, for many of His children have proved it; they have found in Jesus a Friend, more real, and more true than any earthly friend. Dear reader, I entreat you, do not rise from reading this paper with the dull sense of disappointment, but with the prayer of the apostle, "Lord, increase my faith." The prayer, if sincere, shall be answered. You, too, shall find Jesus a Friend; you shall join the happy number of whom it is said, "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious."

T. S.

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#### CHRIST THE BELIEVER'S STRENGTH.

The apostle says, in Phil. 4: 13. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

And similarly, in Cor. 3: 4, 5. "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is of God."



Let us consider the *Spirit* expressed in these words:

Reflective wisdom,—a comparing of all responsibilities and resources: in order to satisfy his mind as to results, and he found that he had enough in Christ for all that was before him.

Profound humility,—the Christian sees in himself only weakness, ignorance, emptiness of a spiritual kind: and looks for all his supplies to another, thereby acknowledging himself to be as nothing.

Peaceful resignation to whatever trials may await, for the believer is assured that as his day is, so shall his strength be;—all his provision for suffering is already in Christ.

Cheerful readiness for all duties, however numerous or arduous; for Christ will give strength for whatever He commands to be done,—so that the believer needs not bustle or fret.

Triumphant dependence,—strength in weakness, is also in these words indicated;—that a Christian is triumphant in proportion to his reliance on his divine strength.

Let us now consider the *source* of this blessed spirit. It arises from *Union to Christ*; Union, through Faith in the testimony of Christ;—and Union, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, putting forth His power.

In virtue of this all the resources of Christ become the believer's resources.

The justifying righteousness of Christ makes the believer acceptable before God continually, to present his wants.

The intercession of Christ makes the believer acceptable before God continually, to present his wants.

The intercession of Christ obtains the hearing and the answering of his prayers for help.

The sympathy of Christ secures the co-operation of Him who is mighty to help.

The Providence of Christ is for the believer, and never can be against him.

The character of Christ, especially His love, faithfulness and wisdom, constitute an unfailing refuge in difficulty.

The presence of Christ secures protection and deliverance, wherever the believer may be; wherever he is, Christ is.

The secret communion of Christ by His word, with the soul, constitutes the completing of the victory. Thus the Christian can render himself as a living sacrifice unto God, can mortify the flesh, overcome the world, wrestle with principalities and powers of darkness, bear up under the burdensome presence of sin in his soul. Devolve all burdens on the Lord, with confidence, suffer affliction joyfully, persevere in His work amidst all disappointments patiently, and die peacefully, it may be triumphantly.

Let us now contemplate the blessing implied in the possession of this spirit:

It imparts peace.

It gives strength.

It promotes the spirit of prayer.

John 15: 7. "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

It stimulates the duty.

2 Cor. 5: 14, 15. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and *that* He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again."

It relieves the mind from solicitude and anxiety about the future.

It enables us to bear any trial because it is ordered and overruled by Christ.

It constitutes the secret of true happiness in life, of peace in death, and of comfort in anticipation of the judgment.

This experience is a mystery known only by true believers.

Phil. 4: 12. "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: everywhere and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

It found therefore a test of character and a standard of attainable perfection.

Gal. 2: 20. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

John 15: 4-6. "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned."

T. S.

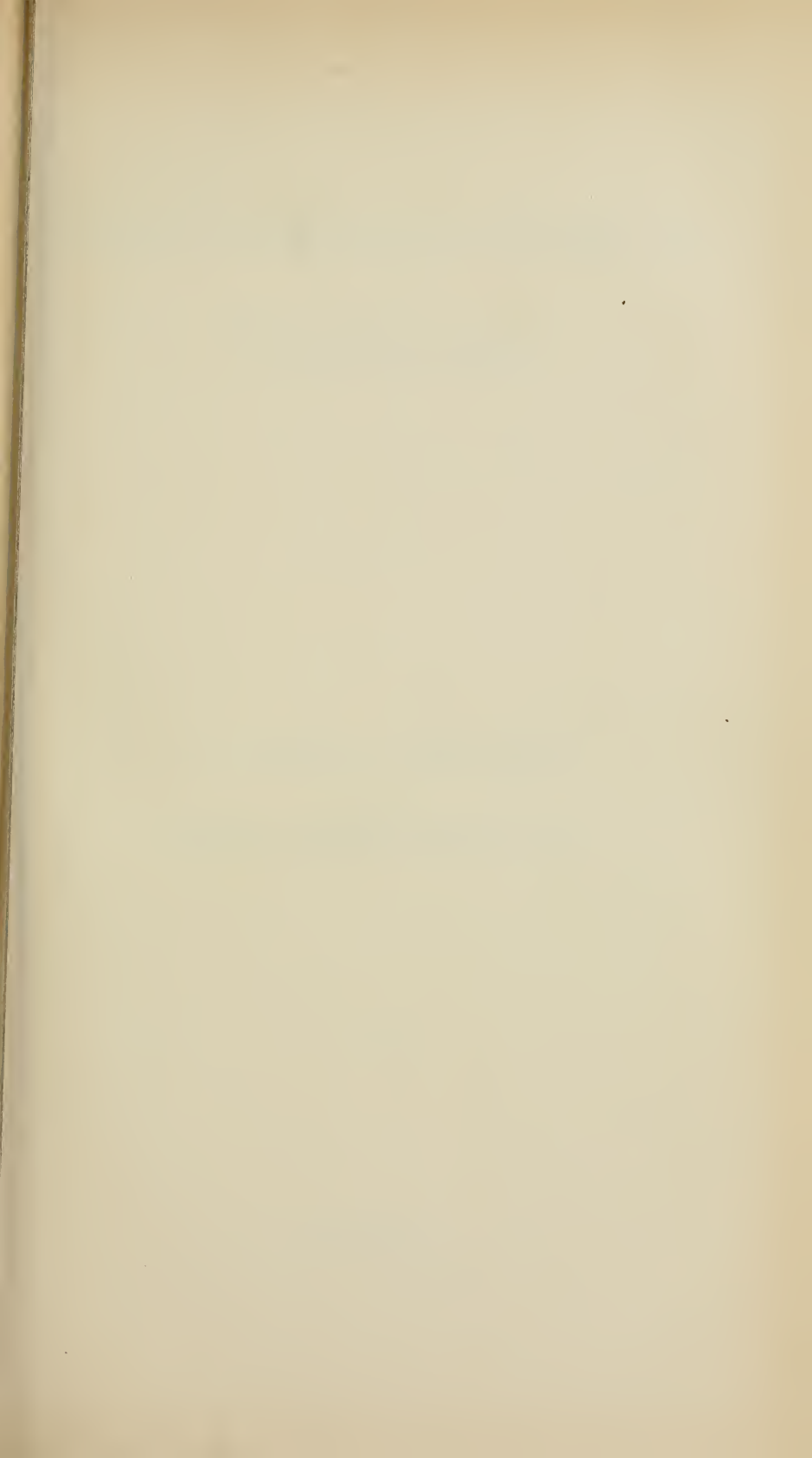
#### IX.—THE SECURITY OF THE CHRISTIAN.

*Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord helped me.* Psalm cxviii. 13. *Preserved in Christ Jesus, and called.* Jude 1.

Jesus was in the council, undertook our cause, struck hands in the covenant as our surety, wrought out a righteousness for us; suffered our curse on the tree to redeem us, ever lives, and ever loves, and ever pleads our cause, while He represents our persons before the everlastingly gracious and infinitely just and righteous Jehovah, his Father and our Father, now well pleased with us, because accepted and preserved in the beloved. Are these things so? And has the Lord, the Spirit, the glorifier of Jesus, enlightened our understandings to see these things, enabled us to believe, and assured our hearts of our own happy share and interest in them! O my soul, stop, reflect, dwell on such wonderful power, marvellous favor, distinguishing love, and appropriated mercy. Now let all mine enemies exert their utmost power, I will not be afraid. Afflictions, pains, temptations, may await me, waves and storms may go over my head, Satan may sift me as wheat, the waters of death may prove bitter to my taste, yet I will not be discouraged; He that died for me will take care of me; He that pardoned by aggravated offences will heal my infirmities; He that knew the power of temptation, will support and deliver me out of all. This I believe; Lord, help my unbelief!

The wisdom, the power, the love, the promise, the covenant, and the oath of Jehovah, stand all engaged for the preservation of a poor, unworthy believer in Jesus. Alleluia! In Christ will I trust, and not be afraid.

T. S.





# God Comforts to Make Us Comforters.

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A SERIES OF ARTICLES  
BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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Published in  
The Central Presbyterian.





## GOD COMFORTS TO MAKE US COMFORTERS.

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### No. I.

"Who comforteth as in all tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Corinthians i: 4.

The qualifications of St. Paul for his high office as a minister of Christ, were not more remarkable than the ways by which he was prepared for eminent usefulness in the church of God. He was, unquestionably, a man of great natural endowments, of strong intellect, of great mental power, and, at the same time, endured with firm, noble, and generous feeling. He was a man also whose character obtained for him high influence among his countrymen; and was delegated to exercise powers which would have been committed to few, perhaps, besides himself. When he became converted, he was called henceforth to devote his life, and all his powers, to Him who had dealt by him with such wondrous mercy. All his natural endowments, and all the qualifications which he had gotten by careful mental, and moral discipline, were now to be devoted to that Lord, whom lately he had persecuted. But there was one way in particular by which God was preparing to make him useful in his church, and that was, *by suffering*. We are told of all the apostles, and of Paul in common with them, that they were "delivered unto death;" that they were "made a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men;" but he who was to stand forth pre-eminent among them for his labors and his services, his usefulness and his success, was appointed to go deeper than any of them into the suffering and the bitterness of human life. "Strifes and imprisonment" were familiar to him; he was "often in shipwrecks," and other perils; he was well acquainted with "weariness, and painfulness, and watchings, with reproaches and persecutions." At Philippi, he was "shamefully entreated;" at Ephesus, he "fought with the beasts;" at Iconium, at Antioch, at Lystra, he suffered "affliction and persecution." But there were heavier trials than these, which he was called to endure. There were divisions among the people, over

whom God had set him in charge, so that he almost doubted whether he had not labored amongst them in vain. And when there were men, like the members of the church at Ephesus, who were growing in faith, and adorning it by a holy practice, and Paul with gladness stayed among them; then the parting was a new source of sorrow,—another portion of the burden which he was bound to bear. And how weighty was this burden, and how sore was this trial, we may learn from his own expressions when, at Miletus, he sent for the elders of the Ephesian church to bid them farewell. So sorrowful was that parting, it well nigh broke his heart. There are other parts of his condition, especially that which regards his mysterious trial—the “thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan to buffet him,” whereon we might dwell. But enough has been said to prove that St. Paul was a man of great suffering; and his suffering is so prominently mentioned in his history, that we cannot but connect it with the preparation for his eminent usefulness in the church of God.

But we must specially mark that St. Paul is *our pattern* in the *use* which he made of his afflictions. He used them rightly; that is to say, he took them at God's hand for the purpose intended, as explained by the very record of our text. Herein St. Paul may well stand as a pattern for all Christians. Sorrow is no strange thing to them. It is God's school for spiritual discipline. It is God's way of bringing His people to heaven, and preparing them for “the glory that is to be revealed.” The condition of the godly is oftentimes a condition of special outward trial. In the Old Testament, indeed, we read of those who served God, and enjoyed great temporal prosperity. And this was, in a great degree, the promise of the Old Testament. But under the new dispensation, God promises us that, which experience proves to be a better thing, He promises sanctified affliction. He promises trial and trouble, adversity and sorrow of heart, all working for good and gracious ends, in bringing us into a more perfect acquiescence with the divine will, and into a greater preparedness for His heavenly kingdom. And it is marvellous to see how in this manner, the work of divine grace is sometimes first begun in the heart. There may have been seasons of utter disre-

gard, of carelessness and neglect, when the world was adding link after link to the claims of its bondage; when, though messages were sent in abundance, none seemed to reach the heart, but it seemed as if it were always hard, as if there were to be no tokens of spiritual life. In vain were the faithful words of God's ministers; the counsels of Christian friends; the prayers and the tears of pious parents; in vain seemed all the means of grace; until, in a season of special mercy, God, as it were, used yet one more effort, sent yet one more message, and strove yet once more by His Spirit, with the obdurate sinner. Conscience was at last awakened; the hard soil of the heart, which had been lying fallow from year to year, was broken up; the seed was sown, and there might be perceived, "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

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## No. II.

"Who comforteth us in all tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."—2 Corinthians i: 4.

Such, brethren, is not infrequently the result of sanctified affliction. As long as men are prospering in the world, as long as they seem to succeed in all that they set their hands to do, it is very difficult to make them feel lowly-minded. But when disappointment comes, and worldly failure, and a long period of unsuccesses, then the man learns the good, though bitter lesson—his own weakness. Then, for the first time it may be, he begins to be truly humble. He may have been utterly careless of all spiritual influences; I do not say altogether regardless of external religion; I do not say altogether indifferent about prescribed ordinances—but there was no life joined with the form, no life lightening and blessing the service. But when sorrow came then, for the first time, he was taught the reality of religion. He was not in earnest before—the spiritual world was never brought within his view; but when God had taken away the hope and expectation from earthly concerns, a new sphere opens to him; and there is a reality in his thoughts of it, and an earnestness in his pursuit of it. And thus is there wrought in him that great principle

of faith—"the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." A man may speak of it fluently, and with accuracy, before he has been greatly tried by trouble; but it is not until he has proved the truth of God by his own experience, that he is able to bear testimony to the faithfulness of God, or to attain the fulness of that grace—the grace of faith, which shone forth so conspicuously in some of God's saints. The season of affliction is also the time when the spiritual life especially makes itself manifest in the out-goings of prayer. I do not mean that cold, formal prayer which passes the lips, but with which the heart has nought to do; I mean the communion of the soul with God,—the drawing near of the spirit towards Him the fountain of all blessing. When a man is in sorrow, and feels his heart heavy within him; when he looks about in the world, and then into his own heart, and finds no stay, no refuge there, God's throne of grace is then his refuge, God's mercy-seat the object to which he looks for consolation. All his deadness and mere form of prayer, is ended, and he can say—with David—"Lord, hear my cry; let Thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication." Thus, too, it is that a man first awakened from a worldly and carnal course, to the truth, the reality and the importance of religion, by the sorrows which God sends and sanctifies, makes his after progress. For you will find that they who have stood forth as the great lights of the church in the age in which their lot was cast,—they who have left their names to be honored and loved by the church as long as it remains upon the earth; they, in short who "pressed forward towards the prize of their high calling," and are now among the multitudes around the throne of God and of the Lamb—are those who "came out of great tribulation." It is God's appointed ordinance; and though there are exceptions, yet, for the most part, it is by sanctified sorrow, that God prepares His people for "His eternal kingdom and glory." And blessed indeed it is, to mark, how, by sanctified affliction, the Christian's heart becomes gradually detached from this world, and more earnestly set upon those things which are above. His outward circumstances may be very poor, and he may hardly know how, from day to day, to "provide things honest in the sight of all men:" but he has



“treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves cannot break through nor steal.” He may have to bear mourning, pain, and sickness; the body may be wasted, broken, shattered; he may have to endure sharp suffering; and medical aid may bring him no relief, no promise of recovery: but he looks the more earnestly to “that city, where no inhabitant shall ever say, I am sick.” It may be the will of God to take from him earthly friends, so that he finds himself forsaken and desolate; one by one the graves have opened for them, and the circle in which was once his delight, is broken up, and he is left a solitary man. And where shall he find comfort? Who shall bind up the wounds of such a stricken heart? Oh, it is He, and only He, who bade the widow not weep, though her son was dead, He of whom we may say, that He is still “a friend that loveth at all times, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” And so we may say in general of a Christian’s condition, though his plans may be defeated, and his cherished hopes should be laid low in the dust, there is something to be learned from all his disappointments: God is teaching him to build upon that everlasting foundation, where, “though the rains may descend, and the floods may come, and the winds may blow, the house shall not fall, because it is founded upon a rock.”

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No. III.

“Who comforteth us in all tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.”—2 Corinthians i: 4.

But the main point to which I would direct your attention is this—that the text speaks, not merely of the comfort which we ourselves receive in tribulation, but *the means whereby God qualifies us for the comforting of others*. Let us never forget, that we are bound together by a very close brotherhood. “No man liveth unto himself.” “We are members one of another.” If we belong to the Lord Jesus as the head, we belong to one another as members. In proportion as we realize the one union, we must realize the other. Whatever be our condition, though our circumstances be ever so widely different, we, nevertheless, lie very near the one to the other.



However we may be separated by our prosperity, from those who are lying in the depths of adversity; however we may have been preserved by God's grace, from many debasing sins of open notoriety, into which others have fallen—they are brethren still; and we may not look upon them as separate from us by any thing essential to their condition or to ours. But if, in respect of natural condition, and the obligations of human life, we recognize the similarity between man and man, it is mainly to be brought out by the relation in which we stand to Christ. If we are brethren by our creation, much more are we brethren by our redemption. Perhaps very few persons would be likely to controvert the truth of this close relationship which subsists between this vast household; and yet it is somewhat difficult to keep it in mind when we are resolutely occupied in getting or enjoying; when, as is the case with many of you, a large portion of life is occupied in important and engrossing pursuits; important as far as the interests of this world are concerned; engrossing, as far as their natural effects are concerned. Perhaps, when some tale of sorrow is brought before us, we may be disposed to give heed to it, and afford relief; but we are not inclined to go out of our way to see it; we are not inclined to make common cause with the sorrowful; to go to them "as being in the flesh," subjected to the same condition, and as being redeemed by the same precious blood, and therefore bound together by a likeness in our spiritual condition. But if it please God to send sorrow to us; if it please Him to remove from us some, at least, of those circumstances whereby we have been separated from the condition of all around us, the barrier to Christian sympathy is put out of the way, and we learn to look at those who are nearly related to ourselves, whose close kindred we might have been betrayed into forgetting.

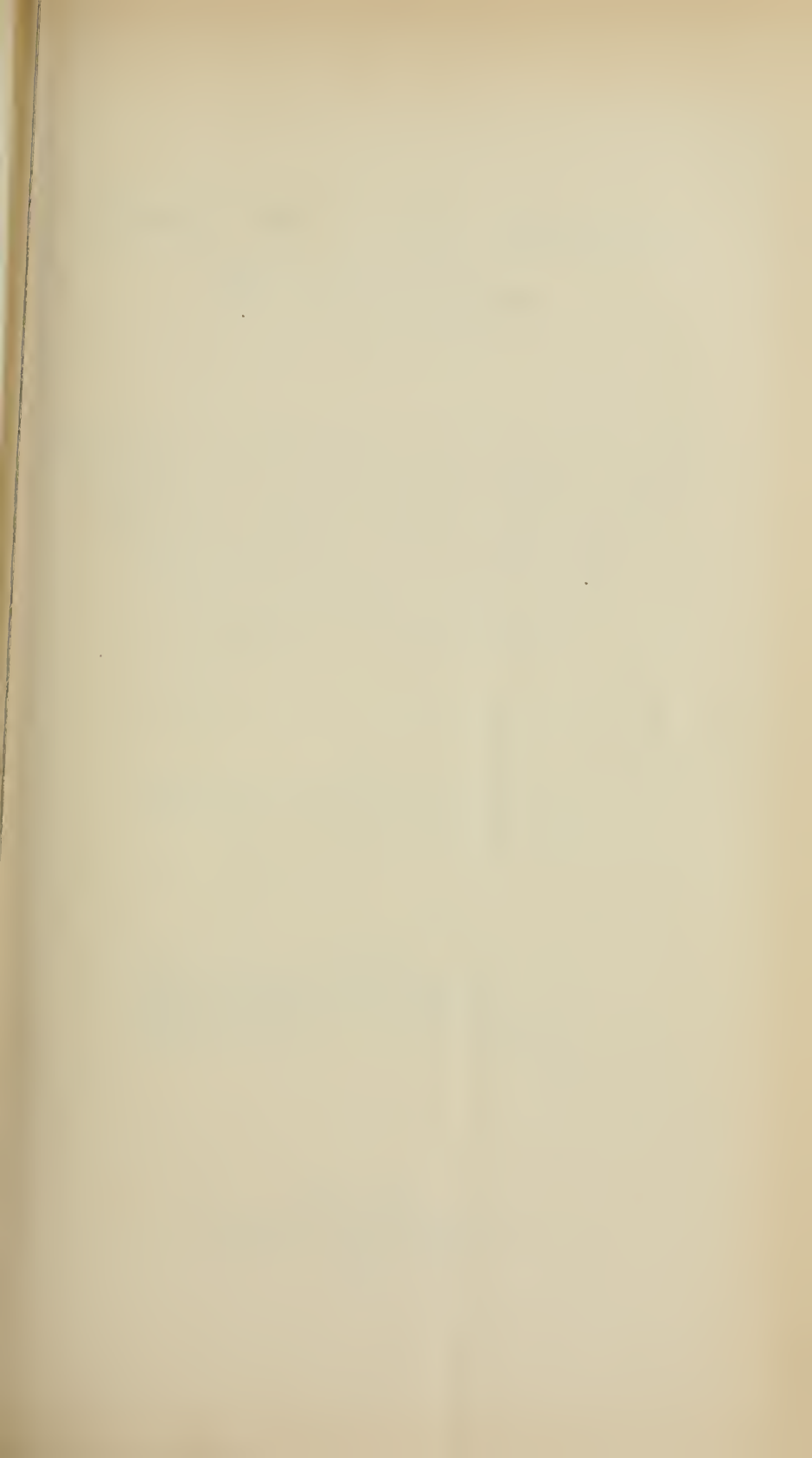
It is a blessed effect, then, of sorrow which God appoints for ourselves, that it makes us take note of sorrows which others are enduring. And if it make us look to Christ's poor with a more tender regard, with a deep and more brotherly affection than hitherto; it is, at the same time, a sign that we are growing in acquaintance and in communion with Him, who, as to His human state, as to His state on earth, was a

poor man, and who has committed to His church for ever the care of the poor; nay, who has told us, that poverty shall be a continual dispensation therein, as if to give opportunity for the exercise of patience on the one hand, and for kindness and charity on the other hand. Perhaps we may all of us be conscious, that in a season of prosperity, when our hearts have been glad within us, when our way has been smooth, and our sky has been cloudless, we have not been very ready to sympathize with the distresses of those, whom God has brought down into affliction. We may listen to their tale, but not willingly; we may have gone to visit them, but not as a duty which we were glad to perform. There might have been—may, if we confess the truth, all of us must say, there has been—a degree of impatience in listening to the tales of the distressed, so long as we ourselves realized little distress in our own circumstances. But when sorrow has laid its cold hand upon the heart which was high in hope; when God has stricken us, and brought us down into the depths of adversity; when we are sad and lonely; when the desire of our eyes is taken away with a stroke: then it seems as if the forgotten brotherhood was brought out into all its strength and plainness; we had rather go now to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting; we had rather go into communion with those who are in grief, than with those who are in great gladness; we sympathize with a closeness of sympathy with others, such as, for a time at least, was interrupted. So it is that God teaches us a lesson of great usefulness in His church. It is the very lesson which was taught to St. Paul with such effect so long ago. And, indeed, if we in any measure follow the example of our Lord and Master; if we are in any way to be like unto Jesus, we must learn this lesson of sympathy. It is not enough that we bestow benefit; it is not enough that we contribute of our substance; it is not enough that we contrive kind and charitable plans for the relief of the distressed. Our Master did not bestow blessings in a cold and distant way; He sorrowed with the mourning, He entered into the griefs and the necessities and the infirmities of those whom He was ready to relieve. And so He would have us not only “rejoice with them that

rejoice," but also "weep with them that weep." And, in truth, this sympathy of which I speak, and of which our Lord sets us an example, is the common language of human nature; is the great secret whereby we may unlock all human hearts.

But, the effect of sorrow upon a really Christian person, is especially manifested in *the ministering of spiritual consolation*. He who, in his own troubled times, has found God his refuge and his support; he has found the promises of the Lord to be a stay and a staff in his own seasons of deep distress, is one who is "able to comfort those who are in trouble, by the comfort wherewith he himself was comforted of God." He remembers what light shone in upon his dark condition, and he learns to speak to them with all the eloquence and persuasiveness of deep feeling concerning Him, who is the day-spring from on high."

Now, dear brethren—in conclusion, I know that there are those among you, whom God has visited from time to time, with sore distress and suffering; and at the same time, to whom God has ministered the consolations of His blessed word. I exhort you, most earnestly, that you learn a lesson thereby,—that you sympathize with the sorrowful; that you minister to them as to outward and temporal assistance, and that you especially do what you may, by kind counsel and earnest words, and by your own consistent example, in leading them to Him, who is the source of all consolation for the stricken and broken-hearted. Remember, that the Scripture tells us, "love is the fulfilling of the law." All gifts, all suffering, all self-denial are in vain, without love. It is this grace which gives its color and its love to every other. It is only if we have love to our Lord, and love to our fellow-creatures for His sake, that it is an offering which He accepts, because it springs from the principle which His own grace has engrafted. Let us remember, then, that when faith worketh in us patience, and experience and hope, that we apply the affliction which God sends us, not merely to our personal use, but to the increase of our service in the church of God; to benefit others through our means; to make us useful to them:—thus *telling* upon our social, as well as upon our individual state.





# Infants Die to Live: Solace for Bereaved Parents.

Including the Historical Development of the  
Doctrine of Infant Salvation, Proof of the  
Doctrine, the Age of Irresponsible Child-  
hood, With Selections of Facts and  
Examples in Prose and Poetry.

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

The dead,  
The only beautiful, who change no more;  
The only blest; the dwellers on the shore  
Of Spring fulfilled. The dead!—whom call we so?  
They that breathe purer air, that feel, that know,  
Things wrapt from us.

HEMANS.

NEW YORK:

ROBERT CARTER, 58 CANAL STREET, AND  
PITTSBURG, 56 MARKET STREET.

1848.



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ENTERED, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1846,

BY ROBERT CARTER,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States  
for the Southern District of New York.

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## PREFACE.

---

Oh, what is life? 'Tis like the bow  
That glistens in the sky;  
We love to see its colours glow—  
But while we look they die.  
Life fails as soon; to-day 'tis here,  
To-morrow it may disappear.

The following work is a very needful one, and will, I hope, prove acceptable and comforting. It is the first, and only American work, exclusively devoted to the consideration of the subject of infant salvation, and the comfort of bereaved parents. I have endeavoured to make it as comprehensive, and, at the same time, as much adapted to popular use, as possible. Besides, therefore, the argument contained in the first chapters, I have added a very full selection from various authors, both in prose and poetry; so that the time, the taste, the circumstances, and the feelings of all classes of readers may be accommodated. The work thus contains a treasury of all the literary gems pertaining to this subject which have been dug up by the force of sanctified genius out of the minds of intellect, or secured from the fathomless depths of the ocean of thought. This collection is rich in such precious gems, gathered from all lands; but will be found especially brilliant in the sparkling lustre of its American productions. Of such a cabinet we may well be proud, and with such comforters we may well be solaced in every hour of grief.

The collection in poetry, while it is select, is complete, as far as the author could find resources or references; and as far as merit and proper Christian sentiment warranted their insertion; and is the result of many years' inquiry and research. And it will serve, I think, to prove that religion is the best inspirer of the muse, and brings out from the lyre of poetry its softest, sweetest notes. Indeed, in many cases, it has made poets where the fire of genius had slumbered under the ashes of a timid modesty, or the oppressive weight of worldly avocations.

I have been particular in exhibiting the connexion between the doctrine of infant salvation and the doctrines of Calvinism,

as taught in the XXXIX articles of the Episcopal Church—(as these are interpreted by all its Evangelical members)—and in the Shorter Catechism, and other doctrinal standards of the Westminster Assembly, as these are held or approved of by the Presbyterian, Congregationalist, Baptist, and Reformed Dutch churches. In doing so, however, my object has not been to sectarianize the work, or represent the charitable views it inculcates as *peculiar* to these bodies, but to show to the world, and to our Christian brethren of *other* denominations, that in holding Calvinistic doctrines, we do not hold *their views* of what these doctrines teach, nor those awful consequences which, in *their conception* of them, these doctrines imply. I hope, therefore, that this exhibition of the *real* nature and tendency of Calvinism will serve to put down misrepresentations; to remove prejudices; and to draw nearer together, in the bonds of charity and good-will, all who love the Lord Jesus Christ—"BOTH THEIRS AND OURS"—and who trust in the word of God *only*, in the grace of Christ *only*, and in the sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost *only*. The Trinity of the one immutable Godhead, as the source of salvation, of grace, and of power—the author, finisher, and imparter of eternal life—this is the grand platform on which all true Christians can meet, sympathize, hope, rejoice, and triumph. May we all "stand fast" in this faith, and "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of" a more open, more visible, and more consolidating "peace."

Not with mistrusting heart, or anxious brow,  
 My little book, I send thee forth again—  
 So thou the suffrage of the good obtain,  
 I seek not what the worldling can bestow,  
 Of perishable praise—enough to know  
 That at the lonely couch of grief or pain,  
 Thy simple page one passing smile may gain,  
 Or kindle in the breast devotion's glow.  
 Yet, shouldst thou find a place in blissful bower,  
 'Midst happy hearts, unthinking of their doom,  
 In the fond trust of that delusive hour,  
 O whisper to them of the coming gloom,  
 And tell them of the faith whose mighty power  
 Can light the dreary precincts of the tomb.

THE AUTHOR.

Charleston, Dec. 1845.

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# INFANTS DIE TO LIVE: SOLACE FOR BEREAVED PARENTS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### SALUTATION AND SYMPATHY.

Bid gentle patience smile on pain  
Till dying hope revive again;  
Hope wipes the tear from sorrow's eye,  
And faith points upward to the sky.

STEELE.

MY DEAR READER,

This work is addressed to you as a bereaved Parent. God has given you a child whom you dearly loved, and God has taken that child away. He has "stricken the desire of your eyes," and "wounded you sore." Like Rachel you weep for your departed child, and "refuse to be comforted because it is not."

Your grief, my dear friend, is natural, for your affliction is great. Your heart is left lonely and desolate. Its strings are broken. That joy which had swallowed up all remembrance of the hours of solicitude and pain, is now turned into melancholy sadness. That current of affection and gladness which had flowed out upon the object of your regard is turned back upon the soul—its channels are dried up, and its fountain gone. The grief of a bereaved parent can only be known by those who have endured it. Of this it may be truly said, "the heart knoweth its own bitterness and a stranger intermeddleth not with it." There are susceptibilities in man which are only developed by an entrance upon the relation of parent. The individual who has never become a Father or a Mother, has never felt the most powerful of human emotions. He is a stranger to that joy which seems to fill the heart to overflowing; and to that outgoing of the soul which identifies the parent with his child, absorbs all selfish regards, and inspires a willingness to endure all things for the sake of his beloved offspring.

Who then can truly sympathize with parents in their joys or sorrows, but he who has been himself a parent? An old



writer has quaintly remarked,—as illustrative of the adaptation of Christ, by the endurance of human misery, for His present office of Mediator between God and man,—that were his limb broken he should desire to have it set by a physician who had himself experienced a similar calamity. Sure it is that the wounded heart of a bereaved parent can only be bound up by one whose own heart has been in like manner torn, and who can sincerely weep with him who weeps over the grave of his buried offspring.

Young mother! what can feeble friendship say,  
To soothe the anguish of this mournful day?  
They, they alone, whose hearts like thine have bled,  
Know how the living sorrow for the dead;  
Each tutored voice, that seeks such grief to cheer,  
Strikes cold upon the weeping parent's ear;  
I've felt it all,—alas! too well I know  
How vain all earthly power to hush thy woe!  
God cheer thee, childless mother! 't is not given  
For man to ward the blow that falls from heaven.

I've felt it all—as thou art feeling now;  
Like thee, with stricken heart and aching brow,  
I've sat and watched by dying beauty's bed,  
And burning tears of hopeless anguish shed;  
I've gazed upon the sweet, but pallid face,  
And vainly tried some comfort there to trace;  
I've listened to the short and struggling breath;  
I've seen the cherub eye grow dim in death;  
Like thee, I've veiled my head in speechless gloom,  
And laid my first-born in the silent tomb.

It is on this account I would venture to intrude my thoughts upon your present solitude, and whisper words of consolation to that ear which can never more hear the infant voice now silent in death. Like you, my friend, I have been called to witness the unexpected departure of my children. Two of them I committed to the same grave, where they sleep the sleep of death. They were growing up together like two young flowers, which had intertwined their tendrils, and mingled their sweet fragrance, but which were suddenly withered by the same rude blast. Like them, these children were lovely in their lives, and in death they were not divided. The same storm overwhelmed them both. They lie, as it were, arm in arm, and side by side, in the same deep and narrow bed of earth, until they awake in the morning of the resurrection. Nor do they lie alone, their narrow bed has been uncovered to receive another sleeper, the victim of a similar malady,

whose sun of brightest promise went down while my heart was still rejoicing in the beauty of its day-spring.

It was when tossed upon the sea of trouble in which these sudden visitations involved me, I was led to the full investigation of the question of salvation of infants. That examination more than confirmed my hopes. It strengthened them into A COMFORTABLE ASSURANCE THAT IN THE DEATH OF INFANTS, IT IS WELL WITH THEM, AND WELL WITH THEIR PARENTS—that God's purposes are merciful to both—and that while He glorifies Himself in the exaltation of the children to heaven, He would also secure by such afflictions the sanctification and the salvation of their parents, so that the tide of death, whose receding waves withdrew the desire of your eyes for ever from your sight, has only borne them back again upon "the eternal sea which washes the throne of God."

Of one thing be very sure: God does nothing without a reason. That reason may have respect to you—it may have respect to your child, and not unlikely to both. He sees effects in their causes. Your case may have been this: you may have been in danger of loving the world too much, and He removed the cause in time. Its case may have been this: it may have been in danger from the growth of a corrupt nature, and He took it in the bud of being that it might grow without imperfection, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Think of your child then not as dead but as living, not as a flower that is withered, but as one that is transplanted, and, tended by a divine hand, is blooming in richer fragrance in the paradise of God.

"'With patient mind thy course of duty run,  
God nothing does, nor suffers to be done,  
But thou wouldst do thyself, if thou couldst see  
The end of all He does as well as He.'"

## CHAPTER II.

### THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF INFANT SALVATION.

I stood beside a death-bed scene, a mother bent and wept,  
But deep within her breaking heart, a deathless faith she kept :  
She gazed upon her little one, so beautiful and still,  
And humbly tried to yield him up unto her Maker's will :  
She bent and kissed his pallid brow, she joined her hands in prayer,  
And then I knew the Christian's hope had surely entered there.

WHEN I was led to the investigation of this subject, nothing surprised me more than the difficulty with which I could then\* find anything adapted to my inquiries. With very ample resources, I could discover but little in the form of direct discussion, on this most interesting subject. It is certainly strange, that while works of consolation and advice had been prepared for almost every other class of mourners in Zion, bereaved parents were left to comfort themselves by those general considerations only, which leave their peculiar sorrows unalleviated.

With very diligent search I have procured an Essay on this subject by the Rev. DANIEL GILLARD, published in London in 1787 ; a similar Essay, entitled Grounds of Hope for the Salvation of all dying in Infancy, by the Rev. WILLIAM HARRIS, LL. D., published in London in 1821 ; An Essay on the Salvation of all dying in Infancy, by the Rev. DAVID RUSSELL of Dundee, published in Edinburgh in 1823 ; † a little volume addressed to Bereaved Parents, by JOHN THORNTON, published in London in 1831 ; a Sermon, by the late Dr. HENRY ; and two others, on the death of their children, by Dr. DODDRIDGE, and Dr. COTTON MATHER. Besides these, I found only some scattered hints in various volumes.‡

From an examination of all these, I matured that opinion I have embodied in the following chapters, the substance of which was delivered in discourses to my people. Their earnest

\*Since then many things in prose and poetry have been written.

†This is a most full and satisfactory work, and fully answers every objection.

‡The only treatise on this subject then known to the author, besides one by Mosheim, a Lutheran, is by Dr. Williams. I believe the same who advocated the cause of Modern Calvinism, and answered Whitby.

wishes induced me to prepare them for the press. Some work of the kind is imperatively demanded. Almost all parents are called to endure the loss of children, and to feel the need of such a comforter. Within a few months I have committed to the grave thirteen children, from within the bounds of my official ministration. Now there is no work to which such parents can have access, for of all those enumerated above, I may say, they are printed in England; they are rare, and therefore inaccessible. Besides, even when parents may have a general persuasion of the safety of departed infants, yet, when such a belief is not founded on a firm and clearly established *conviction* of its truth, it will give way before the flood of sorrow, and fail to support in the hour of need. Just as men sport with death till called themselves to grapple with its terrors, so may men think lightly of the trial of a bereaved parent, until they stand by the bedside of their own dying child. But then will they earnestly look for any light which may irradiate their darkness, calm their fears, and assuage their grief. A writer in an English magazine, speaking of the death of very young children, thus beautifully remarks:—"The soul of the cherub child, that dies on its mother's breast, wings its way to heaven, unconscious of the joys it might share here, as well as of the many, many miseries of which it might be partaker. This can hardly be called *death*. It is but the calm, soft ebbing of the gentle tide of life, to flow no more in the troubled ocean of existence: it is but the removal of a fair creature—'too pure for earthly stay'—to make one of that bright band of cherubim which encompasses in glory and in joy the throne of the living God."

But glorious as the change might be to the little one, it is hard for the mother to part thus early with her fair-haired innocent—to break off all the delightful ties of prattling tenderness that had bound her even in a few months, to that gentle form forever—

'Tis hard to lay her darling  
Deep in the cold, damp earth—  
His empty crib to see,  
His silent nursery,  
Once gladsome with his mirth.

To meet again in slumber  
 His small mouth's rosy kiss ;  
 Then wakened with a start  
 By her own throbbing heart,  
 His twining arms to miss !

To feel (half conscious why)  
 A dull, heart-sinking weight,  
 Till mem'ry on her soul  
 Flashes the painful whole,  
 That she is desolate !

And then to lie and weep,  
 And think the live-long night  
 (Feeding her own distress  
 With accurate greediness)  
 Of every past delight ;—

Of all his winning ways,  
 His pretty playful smiles,  
 His joy, his ecstasy,  
 His tricks, his mimicry,  
 And all his little wiles !

O ! these are recollections  
 Round mothers' hearts that cling—  
 That mingle with the tears  
 And smiles of after years,  
 With oft awakening !

That this little volume therefore may be rendered as satisfactory as possible, it will be proper to give some historical account of the views entertained at different periods of the church on the subject of the salvation of infants. This will show the necessity for its present and thorough investigation ; and at the same time expose the groundlessness with which a belief in the future loss or damnation of infants has been charged upon Calvinists, and upon Presbyterians, as a doctrine peculiar to them, or involved in their system of belief.

Among the Jews, the hope of salvation seems to have been confined to themselves, and to their children who had received circumcision. "They imagined that the law of Moses made the very infants of the Gentiles be treated as sinners and hateful to God, because they were uncircumcised, and descended from uncircumcised parents. They of course imagined that all their own children were saved, and that all those of the Gentiles perished. It is partly on this account that the apostle, after mentioning the universal reign of death from Adam to Moses, distinctly adds, that it came upon infants, as well as upon adults, without distinction of Jew and Gentile ; and then shows that infants, whether they descend from Gentiles or Jews, are treated as sinners, not by virtue of the law of



Moses, but in consequence of the sin of Adam, the common father of the human race."

A corresponding faith was early developed in the Christian Church. Erroneous views of baptism, as in itself communicative of regeneration, led to the belief of its absolute necessity in order to salvation. Of course, those who failed to enjoy the benefits of this ordinance were believed to be excluded from all participation in the benefits of that gospel, with which it was so essentially connected. And hence it was supposed that the children of Christian parents who were not baptized, as well as all others in the same unfortunate condition, were cast, with unbelievers, into hell for ever; or, at least, excluded from the divine presence, and the blessedness of heaven.

This opinion prevailed *generally* in the Church until after the Reformation. It was the opinion of Augustine, of Gregory, Ariminiensis, Driedd, Luther, Melancthon, Tilmanus, Heshusius, "who have all fallen into the worst of St. Austin's opinion, and sentence poor infants to the flames of hell for original sin, if they die before baptism."\* "The Catholic faith," says Augustine, "resting on divine authority, believes the first place to be the kingdom of heaven, WHENCE THE UNBAPTIZED ARE EXCLUDED; and the second Hell, where every apostle and alien from the faith of Christ will experience eternal punishments. A third place we are wholly ignorant of, nor shall we find it in the Scriptures."†

The decree of the Council of Trent, by which it is determined that "whosoever shall affirm that baptism is indifferent, that is, not NECESSARY TO SALVATION, let him be accursed," is still binding on the Roman Catholic Church: and their catechism also teaches that children, "be their parents Christians or infidels, UNLESS REGENERATED BY THE GRACE OF BAPTISM, ARE BORN TO ETERNAL MISERY AND EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION."‡ "Nothing," says the Council of Trent, "can be apparently more necessary, than that the faithful should be taught, that the law of baptism was ordained by the Lord for all men; so that *unless they be regenerated by God, through the grace*

\*See Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. 9, p. 129.

†August. Hypostgnost. Contra Pelag. lib. V. tom. iii. Col. 1405. C. Basil, 1569.

‡See Cramp's Hist. of Council of Trent, p. 129, and the works quoted.



of baptism, they are begotten by their parents, be they believers, or unbelievers, *to everlasting misery and perdition.*"§ "No other means of salvation," adds the Catechism, "*is supplied to infants, except baptism be administered to them.*"\*\* "There is a third place for infants," says Bellarmine, "who *die without baptism.* This Limbus Puerorum is for the eternal punishment of loss only:" that is, "the loss of the presence of God."†† "Since, then," adds this defender of the Papacy, "infants are without reason, so that they cannot imitate the sins of their fathers, and are nevertheless punished with the most severe of all punishments, that is to say, *death temporal and eternal*; it necessarily follows that they have some other sin, for which they are justly punished: and this is what we call *original sin.* It cannot, therefore, be doubted that infants (for whom it is shown from the word of Christ and apostolical tradition that *Baptism is necessary,*) have sin, which they bring with them from their mother's womb."‡‡

This belief passed down to the Reformed Churches, and was at first very generally held. The Church of England placed the unbaptized on the same footing with the suicide and the excommunicated, and denied to them the office of burial.§§ And this still continues to be the doctrine of the church, and of all high-church prelatists who agree on this subject with the Romanists. "Without baptism," say the Oxford Tracts, "none can enter the kingdom of heaven."\*† "And so momentous is this dogma in their judgment, that one leading object," says Mr. Bridges, himself an Episcopalian, "of their great movement confessedly was to bring it more fully before the church."‡†

§Concil. Trid. Sess. VII. can. v. p. 51. Romæ, 1564.

\*\*Catechismus ad Parochos, pp. 189, 191. Lugduni, 1579.

††Bellarm. de Purgat. l. II. chap. vi. tom. ii. p. 410. A. Colonizæ, 1628.

‡‡Bellarm. de Amiss. Gratiæ et Statu Peccati, lib. IV. c. 7, tom. iv. p. 61. G. 62. B.

§§See Burns' Eccles. Law, vol. i. p. 266, and Wheatley on the Book of Prayer, p. 477.

\*†Vol. i. p. 260. See also Dr. Pusey's work on Baptism, *passim*, Bethel on Baptismal Regeneration, pp. 7, 8, 9, &c.

‡†See his Sacramental Instruction, p. 46, 47, where he quotes a host of authorities, including Perceval, Keble, Dr. Pusey, Sewell, Bishop Mant, &c. It would even appear that some evangelical Episcopalian of our present day are unwilling to say anything about the future condition of *unbaptized* children who die in infancy. See the Churchman's Monthly Rev. May, 1843, p. 372. This doctrine of the *absolute* necessity of baptism to salvation was established in the Western church by papal authority, and was

The question of the future condition of infants became thus involved with that of baptism, and was not considered upon its own merits. Ecclesiastics, who were secluded from all personal interest in domestic life, were of course insensible to the happiness connected with the enjoyment of children, or to the distress consequent upon their loss. The fate of children awakened, therefore, but a relative interest, as it affected other truths considered of more importance.

The horror naturally associated with this fearful doctrine was nevertheless, as we have shown, very early felt, and at different times manifested. Various theories were adopted to throw over it a veil of charity, and to render it more tolerable to the wounded spirit of mourning parents. In the time of Augustine, Vincentius, Victor and some others believed that infants dying without baptism might, notwithstanding, be saved.\* This opinion was favoured by some of the School Divines, in reference to cases where baptism could not be had, inasmuch as it was the will of the parents that it should be enjoyed.† Bernard, Biel, Cajetan, and some others, adopted this charitable supposition.‡ And so also did Peter Martyr, Wickliffe, the Hussites, and the Lollards, who adopted, preached, and suffered for, ALL those doctrines which are *now* denominated Calvinistic. But this opinion has been considered as involving unconquerable difficulties. Jeremy Taylor says, "What will be the condition of unbaptized infants, so dying, I do not profess to know or teach, because God hath kept it as a secret."§ Baxter, with all his charity, and perhaps too liberal views of Christian doctrine, could only go so far on this subject as to say, "I think that no man can *prove* that all unbaptized infants are damned or denied heaven. Nay, I think I can prove a promise to the contrary." Beyond "penitent believers and their seed," he says, "what God may do for others unknown to us, we have nothing to do with, but His Covenant hath made no other promise that I can find."\*\* Similar were

retained in the English church after the reformation, until the year 1604, when it was declared to be necessary "where it may be had." See Hallow on the Order of Baptism, &c., and Ogelby on Lay Baptism, p. 159, 160, &c.

\*See Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. ix. p. 90.

†See list of in Hooker's Works, vol. ii. p. 219.

‡Jer. Taylor's Works, vol. ix. p. 91 and 93.

§Jeremy Taylor's Works, p. 92. \*\*See Works, vol. v. p. 326 and 323.

the sentiments of Bishop Hopkins: "Not only infants baptized," says he, "but infants of *believing* parents, though they should *unavoidably* die before baptism, are in the same safe and blessed condition." This, however, is the extent to which he could indulge his hopes.††

To this charitable view of the matter, which Calvinists, and Calvinistic Churches generally adopted, the Pelagians could not fully assent.‡‡ They excluded infants when unbaptized from the kingdom of heaven, but promised to them an eternal and a natural beatitude. This opinion was embraced by Ambrosius Catharinus, Albertus Pighius, and Hieronymus Savanarola, Gregory Nazianzen, Athanasius, Ambrose, Pope Innocent III., and others.§§ Hence arose the present doctrine of the Romish Church, which teaches that there is a *limbus patrum*, or place on the borders of hell, for those who had believed in Christ before His advent; and a *limbus infantum*, for children who die unbaptized.

When the mists, however, which had gathered round the ordinance of baptism were gradually dispersed, this subject was examined on more impartial grounds. The natural feelings of the heart were permitted to declare their interest in the decision of the question. The hope expressed by Wickliffe in reference to unbaptized children was eagerly embraced by his followers, who were all Calvinists, and who all regarded baptism in its truly simple and scriptural character. Zuinglius was perhaps the first who proclaimed hope for the salvation of ALL INFANTS, WHETHER CHRISTIAN OR HEATHEN, who died in their infancy, and before they became chargeable with the guilt of actual transgression. He maintained, that in consequence of the atonement of Christ offered for all, "original sin does not even damn the children of the heathen." For this conclusion concerning children generally, Zuinglius quotes Romans v.; though he admits that we have but little light upon the subject. He rejects the idea that baptism washes away original sin and condemnation. The blessing, he says, is not tied to signs and symbols; baptism *recognizes* and *attests* the

††See Works, vol. ii. p. 429.

‡‡See the Articles of the Synod of Dort, with Scott's Notes. Works of Scott, vol. viii. p. 576.

§§See Jer. Taylor, vol. ix. p. 90.

privilege rather than *confers* it. "What scriptural authority," he asks, "is there for ascribing such an effect to baptism?" "The words of Mark xvi. 16," says he, "relate to those only to whom the gospel was sent. They that hear the gospel and believe it were blessed; they who hear it, and believe it not, are accursed. But this is no prejudice to election, for both they who come to Christ are drawn to Him by the Father, which is election: and they who come to the Father are chosen by Him; but so that they may at length come to Him by Christ. The (infant) children of Christians are the children of God by virtue of the covenant. Concerning the children of heathens, we decide nothing: though I confess that I incline to the sentiment which considers the death of Christ as available to the salvation of all who are free from actual sin."\* For this doctrine Bossuet charges Zuinglius with being a Pelagian, and pronounces this a "strange decision."† This opinion of Zuinglius excited considerable controversy.‡ Eckard says, "*perhaps* Zuinglius pronounced too liberally when he included the children of the heathen." The same doctrine was, however, maintained by Cornelius Wigger, and by John Iac-Schultens, who embraced in the decree of predestination to eternal life those who die in infancy, whether born of Gentile or Infidel parents. This was the declared sentiment of Arminius,§ Trilandius, Walders, Heidanus, Curcelleus, Maresius.\*\* Maresius says, "The question is, whether the decree of Election and Reprobation affects infants. There is not the smallest ground from Scripture to think it does. Let parents then be comforted for departed children. These words of Christ, ("of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,") why are they so general, but that they seem to include the children not only of believers but of unbelievers also.††

The Remonstrants believed that such infants as were not entitled to heaven by their relation to the covenanted mercies of God, would be consigned only to the punishment of loss,

\*See Epist. fo. 17, 18. Zuingl. Op. 1. 382, and Scott's Contin. of Milner, vol. iii. p. 143, 144, 146.

†See Hist. Var., vol. i. p. 66.

‡See an account of in De Moor's Comment, vol. ii. p. 104, &c.

§See ditto.

\*\*See ditto, p. 105.

††See ditto.

their bodies not being raised, and their souls not being annihilated, yet being eternally separated from the beatific vision of God.††

Many, however, regarded the decision of this question as presumptuous. They left the whole matter in the hands of God, determining nothing one way or another, but quieting themselves with the belief, that as far as God's purpose of salvation extended it would be secured; and that infants, as far as included in it, would be assuredly ransomed. Infants were, however, universally regarded as involved in all the guilt of original sin, and as requiring for their salvation the exercise of the same mercy, and the bestowment of the same grace, as adults. They were described by some as, "*damnabilibus et forte quibus dum etiam damnandis.*"|| But even when infants were included by any in the decree of Reprobation, their punishment was believed to consist, not in the positive infliction of misery, but only in the deprivation of heavenly rewards.§§

Calvin clearly recognized the fact that all infants are involved in the guilt of Adam's sin, and therefore *liable* to the misery in which it has involved our race. But at the same time he encourages the belief that they are redeemed from these evils by Christ, are capable of regeneration, and are, when taken away in infancy, "redeemed by the blood of the Lamb." He argues against those who, like the Anabaptists, asserted that regeneration cannot take place in early infancy. For says he, "if they must be left among the children of Adam, they are left in death, for in Adam we can only die. On the contrary, Christ commands them to be brought to Him. Why? because He is life. To give them life therefore He makes them partakers of Himself, while these men, by driving them away from Him, adjudged them to death.\*† He then goes on to prove, by incontestible arguments, that infants both have been, and can be, regenerated by God. And in his Commentary on the words of our Saviour, "Of such, &c.," without any limitation of his meaning, he unequivocally declares, that "God

††See ditto, p. 104.

||"Liable to damnation and perhaps even actually damned."

§§See Stapfer, vol. iv. p. 518. On the ground of their condemnation, see Buddeus Theol. Dogm. p. 591.

\*†See Institutes, B. IV. ch. XVI.



adopts infants and washes them in the blood of His Son," and that "they are regarded by Christ as among His flock." "In this passage," he says elsewhere, "Christ is not speaking of the general guilt in which all the descendants of Adam are involved, but only threatening the despisers of the gospel who proudly and obstinately reject the grace that is offered them; and this has nothing to do with infants. I likewise oppose a contrary argument: all those whom Christ blesses are exempted from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God; and as it is known that infants were blessed by Him, it follows that they are exempted from death."\*

Certain it is, that Calvinists were foremost in overthrowing the dogma that baptism was essentially connected with salvation, and in establishing the truth, that want of it does not militate against their future safety.† It is well known that the former opinion is still extensively held by those who are opposed to Calvinistic sentiments. On this subject Scott in answer to Bp. Tomline, remarks, "a *few* presumptuous, extravagant Calvinists have spoken shocking things of the damnation of infants: but to consign the innumerable multitudes of those all over the world, and in every age, who die before they commit actual sin, and die unbaptized, to eternal damnation, is far more shocking. Even *such* Calvinists may suppose *some* of these children to be elect and saved: but the sentiment that none dying when infants, except such as have been baptized are saved, excludes them all."‡ "The most unfeeling supra-lapsarian never ventured on so dire an opinion as to consign *all* the unbaptized infants, in every age and nation, to eternal misery."§ This is the language of a Calvinist addressed to that large body of his own church who oppose Calvinism, and take occasion to impeach its charity. Some Calvinists, it is true, have in former times avoided the decision of this question, leaving dying infants in the hands of a mer-

\*Institutes, book iv. chap. 16, sec. 31, vol. ii. p. 460. See also pp. 461, 456, 436, 435.

†See Cartwright's reply to Hooker on this subject, in Hanbury's Hooker, vol. ii. p. 221. See also, Bp. Hopkins' Works, vol. ii. p. 429; Davenant on Col., vol. ii. p. 448; Heywood's Works, vol. iv. p. 447; Pictet's Theology, p. 399.

‡See Works, vol. vii. p. 502.

§See Works, vol. x. p. 407.



ciful God. But, "why," asks the same writer, "might not these Calvinists have as favourable a hope of all infants dying before actual sin as Anti-Calvinists can have?"\*\* What doctrine of the most rigid Calvinism is there, with which such a hope can possibly militate? Is it the doctrine of God's sovereignty, whereby is attributed to Him all power and right of dominion over His creatures, to dispose of them, and to extend or withhold favour, as seemeth to Him good—but why may it not please God, in the exercise of this sovereignty, to extend His favour to all dying infants? Is it the doctrine of election, whereby God, out of His mere love, for the praise of His glorious grace, to be manifested in due time, hath, in Christ, chosen some men to eternal life and the means thereof—but why may not dying infants be among those chosen ones? Is it the doctrine of the divine decrees, whereby, for His own glory, God hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass, especially concerning angels and men—but why may not the salvation of all dying infants have been thus decreed? Is it the doctrine of God's free and rich grace, whereby the holiness, obedience, and righteousness of Christ are imputed to us for justification; and inherent grace is wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God, in regeneration;—but why may not this grace be imparted to all dying infants? If God gives us hope for such in His blessed Word, then is it not manifest that their salvation, instead of being thrown upon the contingency of human will; or being made dependent upon human effort; or connected with the moral character or personal agency of infants themselves; or left at hazard, through the indifference or neglect, of men;—is based by these doctrines upon the unchangeable purpose, and the all-sufficient grace of God; and is therefore rendered GLORIOUSLY CERTAIN to the bereaved and mourning spirit of the disconsolate parent? If, however, rejecting these doctrines (which Calvinists love because they, in charity to those who differ from them, believe to be doctrines of the Bible) we make election to rest on the foreknowledge of good works;—or moral character to depend on moral conduct;—and salvation to be limited, in its flow, to the channel of Christian ordinances;—then what hope can be entertained

\*\*Do. vol. viii. p. 573.

for those who have been taken away while as yet they could not discern good from evil;—while without any moral character, and thus wholly unfit for enjoyment or reward;—and while, as “nameless things,” they have never passed through the “purifying entrance” to the kingdom of heaven? We answer—none that is reasonable or satisfactory.

But on the ground of Calvinism this hope is all that can be desired, and arises most naturally from its principles. “In perfect consistency,” says Dr. Harris, in his Essay on this subject, “with their theological creed, have some Calvinists entertained opinion advocated in the preceding pages; while others, expressing a hope of its truth *to the full extent*, have discovered the wished-for *evidence*, in favour of the children of pious persons only; but none of any consideration are known to have maintained, or even allowed, that the inference in question (i. e. the damnation of *any* infants) is an evident and necessary deduction from Calvinistic doctrines. In direct opposition to what must, therefore, be considered an unfounded aspersion, it would require but little labour to prove, that the great peculiarities of this system, supply the MOST TENABLE AND SATISFACTORY GROUNDS OF HOPE FOR THE SALVATION OF ALL WHO DEPART THIS LIFE ANTECEDENT TO PERSONAL TRANSGRESSION.”

I would here quote the language of one of our oldest and most thoroughly Calvinistic Divines, the celebrated William Perkins, a Puritan: “Infants have no works whereby they may be judged, seeing they do neither good nor evil, as the Scripture speaketh of Jacob and Esau, Rom. ix. 11. Therefore all shall not be judged according to works. Ans. These phrases of Scripture, *as a man sows, so shall he reap: every one shall receive according to his works, &c.*, are not to be extended to all, but must be restrained to such as have works, and knowledge to discern betwixt good and evil, which, infants have not. For besides that they are destitute of works, they also want the use of reason; and therefore they shall not be judged by the book of conscience, but by the book of life. For to say as *Hugo de S. Vict.* doth upon the Romanes, *quaest.* 59, that they shall be condemned for the sins which their parents committed in their conception and nativity, as though they them-

selves had actually committed them, is contrary to that, *Ezek.* xviii. 20, The son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father.

"Again, some may say, if children do not apprehend Christ's benefits by their parent's faith; how then is Christ's righteousness made theirs and they saved? Ans. By the inward working of the Holy Ghost, who is the principal applier of all graces, whereas faith is but the instrument. As for the places of Scripture that mention justification and salvation by faith, they are to be restrained to men of years: whereas infants dying in their infancy, and therefore wanting actual faith, which none can have without actual knowledge of God's will and word, are no doubt saved by some other special working of God's Holy Spirit, not known to us." "Infants," he adds, "already elected, albeit they, in the womb of their mother before they were born, or presently after, depart this life, they, I say, being after a secret and unspeakable manner, by God's spirit engrafted into Christ, obtain eternal life." 1 Cor. xii. 13. Luke i. 35, 41, 64, and Jer. i. 5.\*

And equally strong speaks the great Coryphaeus of Calvinism, who carried out its principles to their extremest limits, I mean the celebrated Toplady. In his vindication of the Church of England from Arminianism, he had asserted his belief in the salvation of all infants dying in infancy. This opinion his opponents interpreted as involving the doctrine of general redemption. "As if," says Toplady, "all died in infancy." "I testify my firm belief, that the souls of all departed infants are with God in glory: that, in the decree of predestination to life, God hath included all whom He intended to take away in infancy; and that the decree of reprobation hath nothing to do with them."†

"In the mean while (says he) I should be obliged if he would, with the help of Mr. Wesley's irradiation, show me what becomes of departed infants, upon the Arminian plan of conditional salvation, and election of good works foreseen."

Dr. Gill, who resembled Toplady in carrying out the principles of Calvinism to their extremest limit, also resembled him in holding this comfortable view of the doctrine of elec-

\*Works, Fol. vol. iii. p. 386. Vol. ii. p. 127, and vol. i. p. 77.

†Ditto, vol. i. p. 207.

tion. In his *Complete Body of Practical and Doctrinal Divinity*, he makes the following remark on the case of infants dying in infancy: "Now such a number as they are, can never be thought to be brought into being in vain, God is and will be glorified in them; now though their election is a secret to us, and unrevealed, it may be reasonably supposed, yea in a judgment of charity it may rather be concluded, that they are all chosen, than that none are. But the election of them cannot be owing to their faith, holiness, obedience, good works, and perseverance, or to the foresight of these things, which do not appear in them."

I may *refer* also to the sentiments of Tyndale, the Translator of the New Testament into English;‡ of Pictet the learned Professor of Geneva;§ to the touching letter of Whitefield on the death of his infant son;\* of Watts to a lady bereaved of several infant children; and of the pious Rutherford to a lady on the loss of a daughter;†† of Addington,‡‡ and of Robert Hall;§§ of Howe,\*† and of Cotton Mather,‡† and of Buchanan,§\* and these are all Calvinists.

It may be well, however, to add a few more quotations from Calvinistic writers. Dr. Williams, in his "Defence of Modern Calvinism" against the attacks and misrepresentations of Bishop Tomline, at p. 75, says: "That they [infants] are capable of regeneration indeed, is admitted, as well as of remission, justification, holiness of nature, and heavenly blessedness; and we reflect with pleasure, that the Holy Scriptures afford many encouraging intimations relative to the salvation of dying infants—whether baptized or not. Though *they* have no hope, *we* have hope concerning them." The same view is also presented in that noble defence of Calvinistic doctrine, the Lime Street Lectures, where it is said, "an elect infant is as capable of being effectually called, or renewed by grace, of

‡See Works, vol. ii. p. 516.

§See his Theol. B. xi. Chap. iv. pp. 494, 495, and p. 444, 445.

\*\*See Life of, by Philip.

††See Letters, Part 2, Letter iii.

‡‡Work on Baptism, p. 62-64, 67, 76.

§§Works, vol. i. p. 88, 89.

\*†Works of John Howe, vol. iv. p. 4, 5, and vol. vii. p. 544, 5.

‡†See quoted afterwards.

§\*Rev. James Buchanan of Edinburgh, in his Office and Work of the Holy Spirit, Part 1. ch. viii. on the Regeneration of Infants.

being freely justified, and for ever glorified, as a grown person.”|| Again, at another place, the subject is more fully discussed—“As for infants, we take it for granted, in the present argument, that they are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; that that which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that they are, by reason of the disobedience of the first man, sinners, and so unworthy of, and unmeet for, the heavenly glory, and must be excluded from it, unless washed in the blood of Jesus and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. To suppose them all, or indeed any of them, to perish IS TO BE CRUELLY WISE ABOVE WHAT IS WRITTEN: and to imagine they are so holy, as to need no cleansing, or that any thing defiled can enter into heaven, is directly flying in the face of Scripture: so that, though we are not told positively what is their portion; yet WE MAY SAFELY DETERMINE THAT THEY ARE MADE MEET, IF IN HEAVEN, FOR THAT INHERITANCE WHICH IS INCORRUPTIBLE AND UNDEFILED.”

I will only add to those authorities the following remarkable quotation from the National Covenant adopted in Scotland in the year 1581, again in 1590, 1638, 1639, 1640, 1650 and 1651. “But,” says this venerable document, in detailing the enormous errors of the Roman Antichrist, “in special we detest and refuse his cruel judgment against infants departing without the Sacrament, and his absolute necessity of baptism,” &c.\*

The Rev. Thomas Scott, the author of the Commentary, and another of the boldest defenders of the Calvinistic doctrines, says, “I do not propose it as an article of faith; for it is not expressly revealed (though it appears to be favoured in scripture) that as infants, without actual transgression, are involved in the ruin of our race by the first Adam, so infants, as such, dying before actual transgression, before they are capable of knowing right from wrong, are, without personal repentance and faith, but not without regeneration, made partakers of the salvation of the second Adam. I do not say, ‘It is so;’ but, ‘probably it may be so.’ And, when we consider what a large proportion of the human race, in every age and nation, die in infancy, it appears to me a cheering thought.”

||P. 279, 280, Eng. ed.

\*See Irving's Confessions, p. 135.



Thus, also, speaks Newton: "I hope you are both well reconciled to the death of your child. Indeed, I cannot be sorry for the death of *infants*. How many storms do they escape! Nor can I doubt, in my private judgment, that they are included in the election of grace. Perhaps those who die in infancy are the exceeding great multitudes of all people, nations, and languages mentioned (Rev. vii. 9.) in distinction from the visible body of professing believers, who were marked in their foreheads, and openly known to be the Lord's."

But these quotations it is unnecessary to multiply. In the Presbyterian churches, including the Congregational, which embrace the doctrinal portions of the Westminster Confession of Faith, there is, it is true, no *canonical* determination on this subject. This Confession says: "Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the spirit."† It teaches, therefore, THE CERTAINTY OF THE SALVATION OF ALL INFANTS, WHO ARE ELECT. It also teaches that baptism is not necessarily connected with grace and salvation, and that exclusion from it does not exclude from regeneration.‡ It teaches further that infants, though incapable of exhibiting their faith, may be regenerated.§ It leaves every one therefore from an examination of the Scriptures to decide how far the electing love of God extends. At this time it is, I suppose, universally believed by Presbyterians, and those who hold to the doctrine of election, that all dying infants are included among the elect, are made heirs of grace, and become members of the kingdom of heaven. I, at least, am not acquainted with any who hold an opposite sentiment. Possibly, when the doctrine is extended to the infants of Heathen parents, some might not be prepared *fully* to concur in it; but that there is ground from Scripture to believe that even *they* are included in the promises of Divine mercy, and are, as Mr. Toplady confidently says, "all undoubtedly saved," is, I have no doubt, an opinion to which Presbyterians will, *generally*, subscribe.

†Ch. 10, sec. 3.

‡Ch. 28, sec. 5.

§See note 3, and see Larachi Op. Tom. ii. p. 47. Dick's Theol. vol. iv. p. 75, and Calvin's Instit. 13, 4.



The assertion, however, is still frequently and most slanderously published, that Calvinists believe that children, dying in infancy, are damned; that this is the doctrine of our confession of faith; and that Calvin expressly taught that there are infants in hell only a span long. Nothing, however, can be more untrue. As to the opinion of Calvinists, we have shown that it is now universally in favour of the hope that all children dying in infancy are saved through the merits of Christ's death, applied by the Holy Ghost. Calvin, also, as has been shown, was among the very first of the reformers to overthrow the unchristian and most horrible doctrine of the Romish and High-church divines, that no unbaptized infant can be saved; to maintain the possibility of their regeneration by the Spirit without baptism; and to encourage the hope of their general salvation. And as to the passage in the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is supposed to teach the damnation of infants, it is contained in ch. x. sec. 3, and is as follows:

"Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth. So also are all other elect persons, who are incapable of being outwardly called by the Ministry of the Word."

The subject of this chapter is "effectual calling," by which, it is believed, that "all those whom God hath predestinated unto life He is pleased, in His appointed time, effectually to call out of that state of sin and death in which they are, by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ," &c. (See Sect. I.)—The Confession proceeds in Sect. 2d, to say: "This effectual call is of God's free and special grace alone, not from any thing at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it."

But if this is so, says the objector, then does not this doctrine apparently exclude infants from any participation in this salvation, since they clearly are not capable of obeying this call, and of embracing this offered grace. The Confession, however, proceeds to obviate this objection by showing that, as this calling in itself considered, and the power and the dis-

position to answer this call, and embrace the grace conveyed in it, is a different thing from that answer and embrace—there is no more difficulty in bestowing this quickening and renewing influence of the Holy Spirit upon infants than upon adults. Infants as well as adults may be thus effectually called and regenerated, though adults only are in a state fitting them to act upon this call by the exercise of their renewed powers and sanctified will. Regenerated infants are equally, with adults, endued with a renewed and holy disposition, which will develop itself, when the subject is capable, in holy acts. Our Confession, therefore, wisely, charitably, and scripturally concludes, that this grace is co-extensive with God's electing love and mercy, and is bestowed upon the objects of that love, whether they are removed from this world in a state of infancy, or of maturity. It overthrows the doctrine of Romanists, High Church Episcopalians, and others, who teach that this grace of salvation, by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, is tied down and limited—*first*, by what they most vainly and arrogantly call the only true Church, to wit, the Romanist or Episcopal Churches, and *secondly* by the ordinances of baptism as administered in these churches; and what the passage does decide, is, as Calvinists now universally agree in believing, THAT THERE IS EVERY REASONABLE GROUND TO HOPE THAT ALL INFANTS DYING IN INFANCY ARE INCLUDED IN THE DECREE OF ELECTION AND ARE MADE PARTAKERS OF EVERLASTING LIFE.\* This, then, is the view of Calvinists; and while it favours the most unbounded charity and hope, it rests that hope, not upon anything in the infant itself, nor upon anything done for it by any church, but upon the sure purpose of a merciful God, and the comfortable promises and declarations of His word.

AMONG ALL EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS THIS OPINION IS NOW RECEIVED. We have given the names of Evangelical Episcopalians. Gillard, whose treatise I have mentioned, was, I presume, both a Baptist and a Calvinist. Dr. Gill's sentiments have been alluded to, and they are quoted with approbation in the Baptist Confession of Faith. The Rev. Robert

\*Thus Dr. Cumming, of the Scotch Church in London, has lately published a Discourse to prove that ALL CHILDREN DYING IN INFANCY, OR BEFORE THE YEARS OF RESPONSIBILITY, ARE, WITHOUT ONE EXCEPTION OR LIMITATION AS TO THE CHARACTER OR THE CONDUCT OF THE PARENTS, SAVED.

Robinson, who has written the History of Baptism, thus expresses himself: "Various opinions concerning the future state of infants have been adopted. The most probable opinion seems to be, that they are *all* saved through the merit of the Mediator, with an everlasting salvation. This hath nothing in it contrary to the perfections of God, or to any declarations of the holy scriptures; and it is highly agreeable to all those passages, which affirm, *where sin hath abounded, grace hath much more abounded*. On these principles, the death of Christ saves more than the fall of Adam lost."

Wesley does not appear to have determined this question at all. The salvation of all dying in infancy is, however, the prevalent belief among his followers. The Rev. Richard Watson, who is deservedly regarded as the ablest writer, and as a standard authority among the Methodists, very powerfully advocates this opinion.†

This is also the established belief of the Lutheran Church,‡ as it is of the Quaker denomination.§

But whence, we ask, arose this community of opinion? It originated, as has been shown, among the Calvinists. The battle for liberty and charity of opinion against the dogmas of the Papacy was fought by them. Even when light had not irradiated the subject, and it was still shrouded in the darkness of prejudice, many Calvinists, rather than yield to the gloom of the generally entertained opinion that all unbaptized infants perish, groped about for any possible theory that might relieve them of their distress. Some, as I have shown, threw a veil of impenetrable darkness over the whole subject, and regarded an entrance upon its examination as presumption.\*\* Others were induced to believe that the souls of all such children would be annihilated.†† Others, that their souls remained in a state of insensibility either to good or evil.‡‡ All advocated the *possibility* of their salvation—the *practicability* of their

†See his Institutes, vol. ii. p. 228, and vol. iii. p. 72.

‡See Schmucker's Theology, 128, and p. 220. Storrs & Flatt's Theology, sec. 68, p. 394. Mosheim wrote a treatise, which we have not seen, on this subject.

§See Barclay's Apology.

\*\*See De Moor's Stapfer, Doddridge, (sec. 168,) Baxter.

††This was Dr. Watts' laboured hypothesis.

‡‡Dr. Ridgley advocated this opinion.

regeneration—and all denied the absolute necessity of baptism to either. And can any one deny that the present clear and settled views on this subject have been introduced by Calvinists? Let him only remember that every one of the works and discourses on the subject to which I have alluded, were written by Calvinists; that almost all the selections I have been enabled to collect are from writers holding the same views; and that much even of the finest of our Poetical Selections, are from authors whose muse was guided by Calvinistic views. Our work, in fact, may be regarded as a noble testimony to the truly CHARITABLE nature of those much abused, because misunderstood, doctrines which most Evangelical churches agree in adopting. And surely it may be expected, that these facts will give joy and consolation to those Christians whose ideas of Calvinism have been such as to lead them to cherish the prejudices that are so commonly and so ignorantly entertained, and enable them to cultivate more kind and liberal feelings towards Calvinistic churches.

And that the reader may still more clearly perceive how much bereaved parents are indebted to Calvinism for the present comfortable and established hopes for dying infants, let me call his attention to the conflicting opinions which once prevailed on this much controverted subject, as they are given by Baxter:

“Some think that all infants (baptized or not) are saved from hell, and positive punishment, but are not brought to heaven, as being not capable of such joys.

“Some think that all infants (dying such) are saved as others are, by actual felicity in heaven, though in a lower degree. Both these sorts suppose that Christ’s death saveth all that reject it not, and that infants reject it not.

“Some think that all unbaptized infants do suffer the ‘*pœnam damni*,’ and are shut out of heaven and happiness, but not sensibly punished or cast into hell. For this Jansenius hath wrote a treatise; and many other Papists think so.

“Some think that all the children of sincere believers dying in infancy are saved, (that is, glorified,) whether baptized or not; and no others.



"Some think that God hath not at all revealed what He will do with any infants.

"Some think that all the adopted and bought children of true Christians, as well as the natural, are saved (if baptized, say some; or if not, say others.)

"Some think that elect infants are saved, and no other.

"Some think that all that the pastor dedicateth to God are saved.

"Some think that this is to be limited to all that have right to baptism 'coram Deo;' which some think the Church's reception giveth them.

"And some think it is to be limited to those that have right 'coram ecclesia,' or are rightfully baptized."

To use the words of Dr. Russell, in his valuable Essay on this subject, "Though the great question is, 'What saith the scriptures?' and not, What saith this or the other reformer? yet, as names are sometimes used as the means of reproaching the innocent, and misleading the unwary, and the uninformed, it may be proper to state, that there is nothing in the great peculiarities of the system commonly called Calvinism which is in the least incompatible with the salvation of infants. On the contrary, that system, as now held by its enlightened advocates, furnishes the most tenable and satisfactory grounds for the pleasing persuasion, that all who die without personal transgression, are written in the Lamb's book of life. Accordingly, very many of its most *decided friends* have avowed their conviction of this, in relation to all dying in infancy. And even some of the very highest, if not even hyper-Calvinists, have expressed themselves favourably in regard to it.—This, for instance, has been done by Dr. Gill, who says, 'that many unguarded expressions have been dropped, concerning the punishment of such, which are not at all to the credit of truth. §§ Mr. Toplady, to whom we have already referred, has given an explanation of our Lord's admonition in Matth. xviii. 10, which (supposing it to be just) affords a direct proof of the sentiment in question. 'Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto

§§Body of Divinity, vol. ii. p. 543.

you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.' He understands by their angels, 'the souls of such children as die in their infancy,' who upon their bodies being previously 'dislodged by death, do always behold the face of God, who is in heaven.'\* It were well, if all of the opponents of Calvinism would take the advice given by Bishop Horsley to his enemies, 'Take special care before you aim your shafts at Calvinism that you know what it is.' Not a few who profess to hold that system, are but little acquainted with it, and confound certain illegitimate inferences drawn from it, with hostility to the system itself, while Anti-Calvinists continue to charge the friends of Calvinism with holding those inferences in the face of repeated denials. This is very unfair. I refer here, in particular, to the doctrine of sovereign reprobation, and to what is connected with it. It is a fact, too, that *some* who wish to be considered the *only* friends of Calvinism, hold sentiments which were by no means held by Calvin, and not seldom represent sentiments as Arminian, which were actually held by him. In a word, let candour be exercised, and never let those be blamed as inimical to a particular system, who may be unwilling to admit some unjust and exceptionable inferences, which have been rashly drawn from it, because they appear to them injurious excrescences, that deform and weaken its strength."

It is no little thing, when a fresh soul  
And a fresh heart, with their unmeasured scope  
For good, not gravitating earthward yet,  
But circling in diviner periods,  
Are sent into the world,—no little thing,  
When this unbounded possibility  
Into the outer silence is withdrawn.  
Ah, in this world, where every guiding thread  
Ends suddenly in the one sure centre, death,  
The visionary hand of Might-have-been  
Alone can fill Desire's cup to the brim!

The spirit's sight grows clearer; this was meant  
When Jesus touched the blind man's lids with clay.  
Life is the jailer, Death the angel sent  
To draw the unwilling bolts and set us free.

'T is the work  
Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,  
To bring the heart back from an infant gone!  
Hope must give o'er, and busy fancy blot

\*Historic proof of the Calvinism of the Church of England. Introd, p. 78.



Its images from all the silent rooms,  
And every sight and sound familiar to her  
Undo its sweetest link; and so, at last,  
The fountain that, once loosed, must flow forever,  
Will hide and waste in silence. When the smile  
Steals to her pallid lip again, and spring  
Wakens its buds above thee, we will come,  
And, standing by thy music-haunted grave,  
Look on each other cheerfully, and say,  
*A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,  
And by this gate of flowers she passed away!*

WILLIS.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE NECESSITY FOR DISCUSSING THE DOCTRINE OF THE SALVATION OF INFANTS.

O Lord, the message from Thy throne has come!  
We hear Thy voice, and give her back to Thee;  
With tears we lay our darling in the tomb;  
In faith her spirit at Thy feet we see.

DEATH is one of the profoundest mysteries of Nature. With all the light which science has thrown around it; with all the increased knowledge we have acquired of its phenomena; life, in its origin, in its nature, and in its cessation, remains as incomprehensible as ever. We stand amazed at the entrance into our world of a new, living, and active being—the miniature of man—breathing the same air, and exercising the same functions, incapable of instruction, and yet displaying the most perfect knowledge, wholly unable to help himself, and yet exhibiting the most inimitable skill. How then are we filled with horror, when that same being, even in its beauty, “a thing all health and glee,” is prostrated by some invisible power, upturns its glazed eye, and with the quivering of its soft lip and the convulsion of its little limbs, sinks into the waxen form of death.

Were an inhabitant of some other world, where immortality was the duration of existence, and perpetual bloom the appearance of the outward form, by any chance to visit this; probably he would first be attracted by the glory of that same God he had ever worshipped, written, as it is, in such lines of magnificence and beauty upon the heavens above, and upon the firmament around. The same wisdom, goodness and power, in which he had ever rejoiced, would shine forth resplendently from every star, and from every mountain, lake and valley. The same chorus sung by those above, ascribing glory, honour, majesty and praise unto God Most High, would echo from the earth beneath, and swell the anthem of the skies. He would still feel in his own breast the spirit of piety—the spirit of joy, and peace, and devotion;—and he would still feel that he moved amid the wonders of *His* creating hand who fills the universe with his praise.

But what would be the emotions of this stranger, when he turned his gaze towards the inhabitants of this fair creation? When he saw sickness or pain—bed-ridden decrepitude, or helpless old age,—when he heard groans and lamentations, the voice of misery and care, or the loud wail of bereavement—in every household? When he beheld the moving form of strength, and beauty, and intelligence, withered by the blast of death, become pale, motionless, and ghastly—how great would be his unutterable terror! Surely he would at once conclude that they were a race of bold and hardened sinners, against whom the fierceness of the anger of the Almighty was poured out.

But when he observed yet longer—when he saw man in the innocence of his first young dawn, with rosy lip and cherub eye, his countenance radiant with smiles, and his heart filled with love, as yet unconscious of his relation to his God, and incapable of wilfully offending Him,—when he saw this young voyager not yet well launched upon the ocean of life—wrecked upon its very coast, cast among its roughest breakers, shattered by its fiercest storms, and borne into eternity by most disastrous calamity;—when he saw the cradle, instead of being a place of rest, converted into a little hospital, and its babe, instead of a gentle sleeper laughing through its sweet dreams of yet untasted happiness, a sufferer torn and agonized by writhing and convulsive torture, with the cup of life dashed from its lips ere it had well tasted of its hopes or its blessings—would he not exclaim, “My God, and can it be! Is not this thine own creation? Are not these thine own offspring? If, then, parents are wicked, and deserve thy wrath, yet surely these ‘innocents’ might be spared their sufferings. What fiend of darkness has gained possession of this earth, and fixed here his empire of horrid cruelty? ‘Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep. They are unsearchable, and past finding out.’”

Truly, these feelings would not be strange in such a visitant, at such a sight. They would be our own, were we not familiarized to such scenes of woe. For, while reason might teach us that it was well for those who had outlived the activities and the joys of life to leave it—that they were happy who, ere that period of imbecility arrived, had retired from its com-

ing ills;—yet never could we learn from reason alone that it was right, or that it was well for those who had passed through the painful entrance of life, and had not yet awakened to the realization of its joys, to be driven through its still more painful exit. No! Death is the profoundest mystery of Nature, and the sufferings and death of infants the profoundest mystery of Death.

Nay, my reader, have you not yourself felt, in some hour of sad bereavement, the unsearchable mystery of this dispensation of Providence? I address myself now to those who, like myself, are the parents of children who *were*, but *are not*. When in the very fulness of life, while buoyant with playful mirth, and drinking in the promise of a happy future, and while forming to you the objects of so many tender solitudes and fond hopes, you saw your beloved child bowed down by the presence of some sudden disease;—when unable to tell its woes you saw its playfulness forsake it; its smiles, one by one, depart; the happy expression of its sweet countenance give place to one of painfulness; its strength gradually fail; its voice become too weak to utter even the lisping name of its loved nurse or parent;—when you watched beside the little sufferer, incredulous that it could die, as it sunk rapidly into insensibility, until at last the glazed eye, the unmoving chest, the pulseless arm, and the inexpressible solemnity of Death startled you into the awful truth that it was gone;—oh! in that hour of intensest agony, did there not seem to fall upon a world, ere while fair and bright, one wide covering of gloom? Did there not appear, amid the busiest haunts of men, to be the silence of desolation? Did not life cease to have any charms, fortune any attractions, and earth itself any possible endurance?

“Upon the pallid face of the dead infant, there are awfully mysterious hieroglyphics, which reason cannot decipher, at the depth of which nature staggers and grows faint. Christianity alone reads them. She pours from the fountain of truth, living light into each dark symbol, and illuminates it with the rays of the past, and the lights of the future, showing death once victorious by sin, but now for ever vanquished by Christ.” Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who,

by the gospel, has brought to us that light by which I feel that I can confidently sustain the answer I would give to the interrogatory of such a perplexed inquirer. CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY NOT IN ANGER, BUT IN MERCY, AND NOT FOR OUR PUNISHMENT MERELY, BUT MUCH MORE FOR OUR GOOD. Death is to them a kindness, to us a blessing. They are removed from this world in mercy to them and in goodness to us. These are the two points to which I shall now call the attention of my reader.

Pray unto God, my friend, that these considerations may prove comfortable and beneficial to your disconsolate heart.

I cannot make him dead!  
His fair sunshiny head  
Is ever bounding round my study chair;  
Yet when my eyes, now dim  
With tears, I turn to him,  
The vision vanishes—he is not there!

I walk my parlour floor,  
And through the open door,  
I hear a footfall on the chamber stair;  
I'm stepping toward the hall,  
To give the boy a call,  
And then bethinks me that—he is not there!

I tread the crowded street,  
A satchel'd lad I meet,  
With the same beaming eyes and coloured hair;  
And, as he's running by,  
Follow him with my eye,  
Scarcely believing that—he is not there!

I know his face is hid  
Under the coffin lid;  
Closed are his eyes; cold his forehead fair;  
My hand that marble felt;  
O'er it in prayer I knelt;  
Yet my heart whispers that—he is not there!

I cannot *make* him dead!  
When passing by his bed,  
So long watched over with parental care,  
My spirit and my eye  
Seek it inquiringly,  
Before the thought comes that—he is not there!

When at the cool, grey break  
Of day, from sleep I wake,  
With my first breathing of the morning air,  
My soul goes up with joy,  
To Him who gave my boy;  
Then comes the sad thought that—he is not there!

When at the day's calm close,  
Before we seek repose,  
I'm with his mother, offering up our prayer,  
Whate'er I may be *saying*,  
I am, in spirit, praying  
For our boy's spirit, though—he is not there!

Not there?—Where, then, is he?  
 The form I used to see  
 Was but the *raiment* that he used to wear.  
 The grave, that now doth press  
 Upon that cast-off dress,  
 Is but his wardrobe locked;—*he is not there!*  
 He lives!—In all the past  
 He lives; nor, to the last,  
 Of seeing him again will I despair;  
 In dreams I see him now,  
 And on his angel brow,  
 I see it written, “Thou shalt see me *there!*”  
 Yes, we all live to God!  
 FATHER, Thy chastening rod  
 So help us, thine afflicted ones, to bear,  
 That in the spirit land,  
 Meeting at Thy right hand,  
 ’Twill be our heaven to find that—*he is there!*

## MIDNIGHT.

Far off the clocks are striking,  
 ’Tis midnight’s deepest shade;  
 The lamp but feebly glimmers.—  
 Thy little bed is made.  
 Around the house go mourning  
 The winds so drearily;  
 Within we sit in silence,  
 And listen, as for thee.  
 Dreaming that we shall hear thee  
 Knock softly at the door,  
 Aweary with thy wandering,  
 Glad to return once more.  
 Poor fools! thus to dissemble!  
 The fond hope will not stay;  
 We make and feel too surely  
 Thy home is far away.

FROM THE GERMAN OF EICHENDORFF.

’T was a tiny, rosewood thing,  
 Ebon bound, and glittering  
 With its stars of silver white,  
 Silver tablet, blank and bright,  
 Downy pillowed, satin lined,  
 That I, loitering, chanced to find  
 ’Mid the dust, and scent and gloom  
 Of the undertaker’s room,  
 Waiting, empty—ah! for whom?  
 Ah! what love-watched cradle bed  
 Keeps to-night the nestling head,  
 Or on what soft, pillowed breast  
 Is the cherub form at rest,  
 That ere long, with darkened eye,  
 Sleeping to no lullaby,  
 Whitely robed, and still, and cold,  
 Pale flowers slipping from its hold,  
 Shall this dainty couch enfold?  
 Ah! what bitter tears shall stain  
 All this satin sheet like rain,  
 And what towering hopes be hid  
 ’Neath this tiny coffin lid,  
 Scarcely large enough to bear  
 Little words that must be there.



## CHAPTER IV.

### CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY IN MERCY TO THEM.

When the Archangel's trump shall blow,  
And souls to bodies join;  
Millions will wish their lives below  
Had been as short as thine.

IT WILL be our object in this chapter to show that the dispensation of Providence by which children are removed in infancy is ordered in mercy to them.

It is so, considered as it affects them temporally. Their early dismissal from all the pains and perils of this mortal life, is a manifestation of tenderness: it shows a willingness to save from all unnecessary trial, and an unwillingness needlessly to afflict.

Life, at its very best estate, is vanity. In its full splendour of gaiety it is "vexation of spirit." When ambition has scaled the very loftiest height of its proudest aspiration, it feels its loneliness and misery more keenly than ever.

Ah! little deemest thou, my child,  
The way of life is dark and wild!  
Its sunshine by a light whose play,  
Serves but to dazzle and betray;  
Weary and long—its end the tomb,  
Whose darkness spreads her wings of gloom,  
That resting-place of things which live,  
The goal of all that earth can give.

So universal is this estimate of the present fashion of this sin-ruined world, that even heathen philosophy pronounced the early dead the favourites of the gods.

Lady, we have much cause to thank ourselves  
Touching our daughter bless'd; for 'mong the gods  
Commercing she in truth resides.\*

The Christian dead, then, under the smiles of Heaven are early delivered from this vain unsatisfying portion. Tell it not at Rome, or Athens, lest the philosophers of Paganism should rejoice over the weakness of Christianity.

The great proportion of those who do live to mature years, become entirely estranged from God, and live without Him, and without hope for the world to come. But by their early

\*Euripid. Iphig. l. 1894.

removal from the temptations arising from the world, the flesh and the Devil, infants are forever preserved from such open apostasy. Should they, on the other hand, be supposed to live and become holy and devoted Christians, then it is to be remembered that in this world "the righteous shall have tribulation, for through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of God, they must suffer, and then enter into glory;" and that from an entrance upon this path of sorrow, this narrow road, this way of the cross, such infants are forever delivered.

The apprehension of coming evils, which, like ghosts, haunt our paths and mock our joys, is a most fruitful source of misery to man; but from all such anticipations of distress, whether real or imaginary, the early dead have been most effectually protected. The coldness of those who should have been our warmest friends; the averted countenance of those who had once smiled upon us in perfect love; and the estranged affections of the heart in which our soul had found its home;—these, oh these, are some of the bitterest of earth's many disappointments. The infant dead!—they pass from love, to love;—from the bosom of their earthly, to that of their Heavenly Parent;—from that love which is the only bliss of time, to that which is the rapture of heaven. And finally, death is the great tormentor of mankind, through fear of whom men are all their lives subject to bondage, and by whose grim shadow a fearfulness is made to surprise them in their most gladsome hours. But death has for these, no sting. The grave for these, is encompassed by no shadows. Eternity frowns upon these with no foretokenings of ill.

Parents—art thou then full of tears,  
 Because thy child is free  
 From the earthly strifes, and human fears  
 Oppressive even to thee?  
 No! with the quiet dead,  
 Baby, thy rest shall be;  
 Oh! many a weary wight,  
 Weary of life and light,  
 Would fain lie down with thee.

Considering, then, the present condition of human life—the character too generally acquired by those who are actors on its stage; the peculiarly trying lot of all who will not be "of the world," but will "live above it:" that self-tormenting power of apprehending future calamity which reason gives us; the

many bitter trials of the heart which every one who trusts in man so continually experiences; and the awful darkness which, thick as Erebus, sin has gathered round the dread hour of human dissolution;—and can we not say, that the arrangement of Providence, by which one half the human family is cut off from the possible experience of these mortal ills, is a dispensation of mercy. This is our conclusion from the contemplation of human life, not in its worst, but in its best aspect, not when tried with more than usual adversity, but in its ordinary state of mingled good and evil. We have only supposed them to meet that current which all must breast, and pointed to those shocks which all must encounter. How much stronger, then, would our inference be, were we to make the supposition in regard to each individual child, that it was taken away from the evil to come, and plucked as a brand out of that fire of evil where it might have been salted with the fire of guilt, and eventually have perished.

“O God, spare my child!” were the words of an affectionate and almost idolizing mother, as she bent over the side of her dying child. The little sufferer, unconscious of its situation, was in a burning fever. The sands of life were fast running out, and the darting pain seemed well nigh to rend the spirit from the body. The piteous moan pierced the heart of the fond mother, and drove her, as the last resort, to the throne of grace, where she poured out her soul in prayer that her darling would be spared.

Nor was the cry unheeded. She heard a voice, saying, “Child of earth! since thou art unwilling to trust thine offspring’s destiny in the hands of thy heavenly Father, thy prayer is answered. His fate is in thy hands. Whether he live or die, is for thee to decide.”

A momentary thrill of joy rushed through the mother’s heart, at these words; but it was *only* momentary. She felt the reproof. “Alas!” she exclaimed, “how shall I decide the fate of my child? Should he recover, perhaps he will prove a bitter curse to me hereafter, and he may bring down my grey hairs to the grave. But how can I see him die, when it is in my power to save his life? O, that I had left his fate with Him who gave him to me!” Filled with remorse for her

unwise and undutiful conduct, she again betook herself to prayer, beseeching her heavenly Father to remove from her so fearful a responsibility.

Again her prayer was heard and answered. O, rash child! why didst thou repine at thy lot? Couldst thou look into futurity, and behold thy child in the years of manhood? Or couldst thine eyes pierce the vale of eternity, and behold the scenes that await him there? Why, then, didst thou not, like a confiding child, submit to the will of thy Father, knowing that He will do only that which is for thy good? Thou hast prayed to be delivered from this responsibility; thy prayer is answered. Go, and learn from this never to repine at the allotments of Providence.

The child died; and as the mother took her last look, and then resigned him to the grave, she meekly adopted the language of one who had drank deep of the bitter cup of affliction,—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”

And now let us consider this dispensation as it affects infants eternally, and we shall find as indubitable evidence that it is grounded in mercy to them.

Revelation is the only source of our knowledge of eternity. The ignorance and helplessness of human reason, and of all merely human research, we have already exposed. To scan the ways of God, to fathom the depths of His judgments, or understand the mystery of His moral government—these are wholly impotent. They are no better than the magicians of Pharaoh, or the astrologers of Belshazzar, humbled and confounded before the stupendous mysteries of heaven. It is then “to the law and to the testimony” we must look for our guidance in this high path of investigation. And here must we call to mind the nature of that revelation, as intended not to make known the whole compass of God’s divine proceedings, but only so much of His ways as are necessary for man, in his present temporary state. It is a lamp hung up midway between earth and heaven, to *guide from* the darkness of the one, *to* the glory of the other;—it is not that heaven itself, in all the fulness of its splendours, or the extent of its administrations, brought down to the comprehension of man.

To whom then does this revelation directly and specially address itself? The answer will be found by considering its precepts, its duties, its ordinances, its threatenings, and its announcements of future retribution. Its precepts address themselves to those who can understand;—its duties are enjoined upon those who can obey;—its ordinances are adapted to those who have knowledge to discern and improve them;—its threatenings strike terror into hearts capable of despising them;—and its future judgment is a day of destiny to all the workers of iniquity, to all the rejectors of mercy. It is then at once apparent, that the immediate and direct bearing of the annunciations of revelation is upon adults, and not upon infants. The Bible was written *for* adults, and the Gospel proclaimed *to* adults, though the blessings they announce are designed for all. The character, condition, and prospects of adults, and not of infants, form, therefore, the burden of revelation. Their condition, considered as living and dying, while merely infants, is not its subject matter. Infants are necessarily referred to, but only incidentally, as connected with the great business of this heavenly message. If then there is no distinct declaration in the Bible militating *against* the salvation of infants, when dying as such, that salvation we may regard as certain, since infants can never violate a precept, neglect a duty, despise an ordinance, provoke a threatening, or incur a judgment of this holy book.

Inasmuch, then, as Revelation addresses itself distinctly and immediately to those who are capable of understanding and obeying it;—it is all important to inquire how far children, *as such*, are similar in their circumstances and relations, to those of mature years. They are similar, in their relation to Adam as the great representative of the human family, for “in Adam all die,” and death has come upon all men, even upon those who have not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, because all have sinned.” They are similar, inasmuch as they are like full grown men, mortal. “It is appointed unto them” as well as unto all others “once to die.” There is one event to the aged and to the young, to the child of a span long, and the man a hundred years old:—“they must lie down alike in the grave and the worms cover them.” They are similar



to men also, in that depravity of nature, which results from the withdrawal of those chartered benefits forfeited by Adam, as the representative of the human family; for "they are born in sin," and are "children of wrath," the "natural heart being enmity to God." They are also similar to men in their helplessness; in their entire inability to change their own nature, alter their own wills, or transform their own hearts into the image and likeness of God. They are similar to adults in their ignorance of the true God, of Jesus Christ whom He sent, of the way of salvation, and of eternal life; for "the natural heart understandeth not the things of God, neither can it do so, for they are spiritually discerned." They are similar, in their capacity for progressive improvement, being destined to an interminable being, with powers which are illimitable in their exercise. And they are similar, in their susceptibilities of happiness, these being always measured by the degree of their development.

Such are the important points of similarity between infants and those in mature life. How far then will this similarity involve infants in the awful responsibility and fearful hazards connected with such a condition of guilt, sinfulness and degradation? That it would have been *equitable* in God, apart from the consideration of the plan of salvation, to include infants in the consequences of the fall, and to involve them in the common ruin of their entire species, we cannot, for a moment, doubt; because we see, in fact, that they *are* so involved and made to experience the bitterness of its sad results, as far as this involves temporal suffering and death. But, in such a case, we may imagine that none would have died in mere infancy, but that all would have been permitted to grow up to a period of perfect moral agency, and to act out their own character of vile depravity; and that all men would have been put under an equal lot, been allowed an equal opportunity of receiving or rejecting the gospel, and had their fate determined under a perfectly equal administration.

The Adamic constitution cannot, however, in fact or argument, be disconnected from the Messianic constitution. The federal relation of the first Adam, cannot be severed from the federal relation of the second Adam. The one was introduc-



tory to the other;—the one was supplementary to the other. The one was never designed to exist without the other, nor the evils consequent upon the one to be endured, without the more abounding blessings of the other. When God, from eternity, arranged the plan, by which Adam, under the most favourable circumstances, should represent his race, He devised also the plan by which the second Adam should take the place of fallen humanity, and represent it before eternal justice. “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.”

The question then to be determined is, not what would have become of infants, had they been left to meet all the consequences of their natural condition;—not whether, being equally guilty and depraved and helpless, with full grown sinners, they were not equally deserving of eternal separation from God; nor whether such an infliction of the sentence pronounced on all, would have been righteous; but it is whether now, under another constitution, even that of a mediator, the second Adam, who has entered into the guilty position and sustained the curse resting on the first, and upon all his posterity; whether now, since redemption from that primal curse, and cleansing from that original depravity, and entire deliverance from that native unworthiness, have been procured through the Almighty Saviour; whether now, children are or not interested in these blessings, and partakers of them?

Now, just so far as scripture is *silent* upon this point, we may feel assured that it is so from the fact, that infants, dying such, come not under its proclamation of DUTY, and therefore are not referred to in those overtures of mercy, which are to be received or rejected, by *voluntary agents* to whom alone they are addressed. We may be perfectly satisfied, since God has exercised infinite mercy in providing salvation from the guilt and misery of the fall; and since He has been pleased to remove one-half of the entire human race at a time when they

could not possibly enjoy through their personal agency, any benefit from such merciful provision; that having all died in Adam, these shall all, in Christ, be made alive; and that having by one man's disobedience been all constituted sinners, they shall through one man's obedience be all made righteous. And when in connexion with this we state, what is universally admitted, that so far as scripture does cast its light upon the subject, it is the light of encouragement and hope, the conclusion amounts, we think, to a moral certainty. For, on what other principle can we have any conceivable explanation of that dispensation of Providence, by which one entire half of all earth's inhabitants are swept from this state of condemnation and of hope, before they can open their mind to the comprehension either of their fall in Adam, or their recovery in Christ? Are they not at once removed, before they become personally guilty, that they may with certainty enjoy the blessings of salvation? Would not God have permitted ALL to reach a period of maturity, and thus, in their own person, receive or reject His mercy, and be pronounced worthy or unworthy of an inheritance among the saints in light?

And what does scripture intimate on this subject? We have said that infants, like full grown men, are mortal, and that death comes upon them, inasmuch as they have sinned in Adam. Now, the Bible declares, that they shall be partakers of that resurrection which is the fruit of Christ's death, and through which death itself shall be abolished, and the grave despoiled of its victims. We have said that infants stand equally related to Adam and his consequent fall guilt, and ruin, with those who are adult. But in the gospel we are taught, that great as was that fall, greater is this redemption; that extensive as were the ravages of the one, much more multiplied are the blessings of the other; and that great reason as we have to mourn over the one, infinitely greater may all have, to rejoice in the other. For as in Adam all died, so in Christ might all have been made alive. "Not as the offence, so also is the free gift, for the judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification." This free gift is offered for the reception, and is, in its own nature and sufficiency, adequate to the justification, of

all men. And since, it is by their unbelief and rejection of this gift, that the wrath of God will come, unimpeded, upon guilty and ungrateful men, infants being incapable of rejecting it, are not, we may hope, "condemned with the world."

Christ took upon Him our nature, to sanctify and to save it, and passed through the several periods of it, even unto death, which is the symbol and effect of old age; and, therefore, it is certain he did sanctify all the periods of it: and why should He be an infant, but that infants should receive the crown of their age, the purification of their stained nature, the sanctification of their person, and the saving of their souls, by their Infant Lord and Elder Brother?

If the heathen, who are "without the knowledge of the law, shall be judged without the law," or on principles different from those applied to such as "enjoy the law;" surely infants, who die previous to their possible knowledge of the gospel, shall not have its application to them measured by the rules of personal accountability? Having never "sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," they will not be saved after the similitude of those of Adam's full grown posterity, who have thus sinned. All objections to this conclusion arising from the incapacity of infants for salvation, are entirely presumptuous, since Christ has assured us that "of such," even infants in the arms, "is the kingdom of heaven." Now, as God is no respecter of persons, and as all children are His moral offspring, and all are equally guilty; and equally incapable, by any possibility, of securing deliverance from sin; we must conclude that all children, dying in infancy, are saved with an everlasting salvation through the abounding grace of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

"It appears," says Dr. Russell, "that the original constitution and that which is now established through Christ, are thus far co-extensive, that the direct penal effects of the sin of Adam, *separately considered*, are so far removed, that none shall be finally condemned, merely for his one offence, or *without having personally transgressed*, and thereby, *actually concurred in that sin*, by their approval and imitation of it. This is confirmed by the consideration that, when speaking of the condemnation even of such as are "without law," the apostle limits

this doom to such as actually have sinned. He refers to such as have sinned against light, sufficient to render them "without excuse;" and who, of course, are actual transgressors. Rom. i. 19-32; and in ii. 12. This declaration, respecting the ground of the condemnation, of such as were without law, ought to be considered in connexion with the reasoning in chap. vi., which must be consistent with it in all its parts. And as the ground of condemnation now in question, cannot apply to infants, the reasoning respecting it, so far from militating against the salvation of such, serves to establish it, because it supposes the abuse of at least a measure of light, and the imitation of the sin of Adam by actual transgression. If such, as is evident, be the declared ground of the condemnation of adults, and if not a word is said of any ground on which children dying in infancy shall be finally condemned, does it not follow, that all of them are saved? This conclusion is completely confirmed by its full accordance with the principle, that, as the resurrection of the body is the result of the advent and administration of Christ, it is of course connected, as we have seen, in the case of deceased infants, with deliverance from the *whole* result of the original curse.

"It is obviously taught by the apostle, that the glory of the work of Christ is more illustriously displayed in overcoming the accumulated effects of the many personal offences of actual transgressors, than in simply overcoming those of the single offence of Adam, and this accounts for his passing from the latter display of glory to the former. He takes for granted, the redemption of those who had "not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," when reasoning on the transcendent grandeur of the plan of mercy, as embracing the remission of "the many offences" of actual transgressors. On the full glory of the plan, as thus most impressively exhibited, he delighted to dwell, and what he says of the circumstances of infants, is introduced chiefly for the sake of illustrating this higher manifestation of "the exceeding riches" of divine grace. In arguing for the greater, he takes for granted, the less. He cannot but be considered as teaching us, that the scheme of redemption shields from the penal consequences of Adam's sin, separately viewed, or where they are not connected with



actual sin and final impenitence, seeing he maintains that its object extends, not to this only, but much farther.

“When he reasons, that if the forfeiture was incurred by one offence, we have *much more* reason to expect that the blessings of redemption will be communicated on the principle of representation, or through the work of Christ as a public head, and that those blessings shall far exceed the damage sustained by the fall of the first Adam, his reasoning proceeds on the principle that God delighteth in mercy, and is slow to anger, and reluctant to execute judgment. It also supposes that justice, in the infliction of punishment, is limited to desert, while grace, when not obstructed in its exercise by the claims of offended righteousness, can be imparted in the most unlimited abundance, according to the good pleasure of the divine will. It seems, then, necessarily to follow, that, under the present dispensation, no exclusion occurs, where nothing additional to the sin of Adam has taken place, since all obstructions in the way of the honourable exercise of mercy, and grace, have been completely removed, by the infinitely precious sacrifice of Christ. This conclusion is but the natural result of the foregoing premises, and it, of course, involves the salvation of all who have not been guilty of actual transgression.

“It may here be farther remarked, that the concern of infants, in the sin of Adam, is of a relative nature, and, therefore, cannot be divided among them, so as that one may have this share of it, and another that; as in the case, when a number have shared in the doing of a thing for the whole of relative blame must attach to every individual of the parties concerned in it. Now it will be granted, that the guilt of this sin was expiated by Christ: for, otherwise, Adam could never have been saved, and not a *single infant* could have been delivered from its effects on his posterity; so that, according to this principle, the universal perdition of infants must be maintained; a thing which, none will admit as possible.”

It is true, infants are by nature as depraved as those of riper years, though not as actually guilty; but it is also true, that the spirit of God can as easily and as effectually wash and sanctify and justify them; and since He does assuredly prepare many

infants for the kingdom of Heaven, He can as easily prepare all.

"Respecting the time when God may be pleased to change their hearts by His Spirit," says Dr. Russell, "whether before or at the time of their dissolution, it does not seem to be of great importance to inquire. He who imparted His moral likeness to Adam, immediately at his creation, and gave His Holy Spirit to John, while in his mother's womb, ought not to be limited. If the first Adam had continued obedient, would not his children have been born in a state of holiness, or with a principle predisposing to holy exercise, as soon as the faculties of the mind were so developed as to fit for moral agency? And if so, why may not the Spirit of God so influence the heart of a child, as to produce a similar predisposition there? If, as we have seen, the germ of sin be in infants from the beginning, though not developed in actual transgressions, why may not the germ of holiness be implanted by the Divine Spirit on earth, though its developments in the case of infants can be witnessed only in heaven? The most eminent of our older evangelical writers distinguish between the principle and the exercise of grace, and maintain that the form may exist in children while as yet incapable of the latter.\* We cannot say what may be the *mode* of the Divine operations, in regard to such, and no practical benefit could we derive from the knowledge of it. The Almighty can doubtless instantaneously raise from infantile weakness and ignorance, to the perfection of heavenly light and holy purity. This will afford a display of the Divine power, which will be deeply impressive. Christians who have long known the truth upon earth, though through a glass darkly, understand something of the celestial glory, before they enter on it, but what must be the feelings of infants, on being suddenly translated to the full radiance of the heavenly inheritance, and what the feelings of others on witnessing this striking display of Almighty power?

"What prevents the full renovation of Christians on earth, but the weakness and unsettledness of their faith in the gospel, and will not the full blaze of its lustre at once assimilate the whole soul to itself? 'The germ of life and of glory,' which

\*Owen on the Spirit, vol. ii. 253, 413.



was here implanted in the infant mind, will burst forth instantaneously into a full and vigorous life, and the heart will be impressed with the beauty and grandeur of the character of God, and capacitated for the services and the bliss of the celestial sanctuary.

“And when we remember, how God taught the children of Jerusalem, to offer up their artless hosannas in the temple, how their praises were accepted of the Saviour, and how they seem to have relieved and gladdened the mind of the Man of sorrows, as He thought of the obstinate unbelief, and impending fate of that city over which He mournfully wept, we cannot but recommend them to God, in the confidence that His power and His goodness are always the same. Knowing, as we do, that our Lord was much attached to children when He was on earth, and seeing such immense numbers of them cut off by death; are not we warranted to say that He is now by His providence, repeating from heaven what He said when in our world, ‘Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God.’

“The expression, ‘Of such is the kingdom of God,’ means, then, that ‘of such it is in a great measure made up,’ because they will form a very great proportion of the redeemed family of Heaven. The Saviour appears to have had the universal salvation of all of them who die in infancy in His view. His reasoning is not, ‘of persons resembling such in temper and disposition is the kingdom made up, for this, as has already been hinted, would not warrant the conclusion drawn, namely, that children ought not to be hindered from being brought to Him, in order to be blessed, for on the same principle He might have said, ‘Suffer doves and lambs to be brought unto me to be blessed, for of persons resembling such is the kingdom of God made up.’ Now, this would prove too much; consequently it proves nothing. His words, then, must respect children literally; and His blessing such ensures their salvation. It is to no purpose to deny this conclusion by saying, that though our Lord wept over Jerusalem, yet, Jerusalem fell, for there is a wide and an essential difference between a lamentation over the obstinacy of active rebels, and a benediction poured upon infants, between a warning of impending danger, and an assur-

ance, that 'of such is the kingdom of Heaven.' Nor can the words be construed to respect only the particular children then brought to Him, or any particular class of children exclusively, for the expression, 'of such,' is comprehensive of all who never get beyond the condition of infancy."

It is also true that infants are as helplessly impotent to good as are adults; but they are not more so, and spiritual good cometh not by human might, nor human power, but by the spirit of God. True, they are equally, with grown persons, ignorant of God and holiness; but they are also as susceptible of heavenly guidance: and after all, the difference between the most perfect, and the lowest, attainments in human knowledge, and those which are acquired in heaven, is insignificantly small. It is true, also, that infants are as capable of progressive improvement, and as susceptible of happiness, as those of the most giant powers; and a brief schooling under the teachings of the upper sanctuary, will, therefore, put them far in advance of the most exalted earthly genius.

When, in addition to what has been now advanced, we remember the peculiar interest which God has ever manifested in infants;—when we remember how He has distinctly called them His "innocents," His "poor innocents," and has thus, it would appear, declared that, under His present dispensation, they are held no longer, *as such*, (that is, when their period of probation closes in infancy,) accountable for their guilt in Adam;—when we remember, in the manifestation which God made of Himself in the flesh, how marvellously He was drawn out in His affectionate regard to infants, and how emphatically He declared them to be a great component part of the kingdom of heaven;—when we remember, that it is out of their mouths, God is to perfect His praise; that their hosannas will be sweetest in the loud song of heavenly praise; and their angels be nearest to the bright vision of the face of unveiled Deity;—and when, in the actual demonstration of the purposes of God, we find Him carrying home to His bosom, while in this state of happy innocence, one-half of His human family;—are we not, beyond all controversy, assured that the infant dead are ransomed from all the pains and perils of this mortal strife, that they may be at once admitted to that kingdom "pre-

pared" for them, and for all the elect family of heaven, "from the foundation of the world."

Calm on the bosom of thy God,  
Young spirits! rest thee now!  
Even while with us thy footsteps trod,  
His seal was on thy brow.

In the eighth Psalm we have an express scriptural proof of the salvation of infants, and an unequivocal intimation that amid the multitudes that grace the triumphs of the Son of God, infants will not be wanting—"O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger." Now the apostle Paul, in reasoning upon this very Psalm in his epistle to the Hebrews, quotes it as descriptive of Christ in the days of His final triumph. It is in the second chapter. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man."—The sacred penman states that the Psalm refers to that period when Christ shall reign from sea to sea—all rebellious elements being laid prostrate, and creation clothed afresh with holiness, and beauty, and bliss. Amid the anthem-peal of praise that rises up to Him from the redeemed earth, the psalmist hears the songs of infants as no weak tone in the rich diapason, as ascriptions to the Lamb "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings." Yes, the beautiful truth stands forth in all its lustre, deep and consolatory, that the sweetest hymns which shall be heard in the millennial era, will be infant hymns; that amid the songs that rise before the throne, will be melodies that are warbled by infant orphans' tongues, and

that gush forth from full infant hearts. The unspeakably precious truth comes home from this to every parent, that, if a saint of God, he shall join in the songs of heaven with his departed infants, who have already caught the key-note.

In the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse we have an outline of the proceedings of the judgment day, which bears somewhat on this topic: "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books (the plural number) were opened." There are two books symbolically referred to in Scripture: the book in which are the names and deeds of the unbelieving, and the book in which are the names and deeds of the children of God. Now after these two books were opened, we read—"And another book was opened, which is the book of life." We connect this with the eleventh of Revelation—"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and unto the saints and them that fear thy name, *small and great*." At the production of these three books, infants are present, and therefore we may presume that the two books contain the deeds of the evil, and the deeds of the good; but that the third book, which is "the Lamb's book of life," is that in which the names of the lambs of the flock are written, and which I believe is the memorial and record of those who barely lived before they died, who scarcely breathed the air of time before they were transferred to breathe the sweeter and the balmier atmosphere of eternity.

We cannot conceive what other record that can be which is the Lamb's Book of Life. On its tablets the names of our infants now in glory are inscribed. Theirs is a peculiar case, and theirs, therefore, a specific but glorious record. Each name is illuminated with everlasting splendour, while each possessor is bathed in that flood which is "fulness of joy for evermore."

On no other ground, we may also observe, than on that of the universal safety of deceased infants, can we account for the vast multitudes declared to be ultimately saved. The various expressions used in Scripture respecting the final salvation of men, unquestionably imply that a very great number

will be eternally saved. "After this I beheld, and lo, A GREAT MULTITUDE, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." "A GREAT MULTITUDE which no man can number" is the characteristic of the finally saved; showing that it is not a minority, but a majority that shall ultimately be admitted to glory. Christ, in numbers, as in glory, shall have the pre-eminence. In the nineteenth of Revelation, again, we read, "And I heard as it were the voice of a *great multitude*, and as the voice of many waters:" another expression denoting the vast number of the saved. Again: Christ is to "bring *many* sons unto glory." And again: "Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of *many*." And again: "As by one man's disobedience *many* were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall *many* be made righteous."

This is a sweet and majestic thought. The great multitude will not be lost. The prospect dilates the heart of philanthropy, and comes home to us clothed with the attributes and glories of God. They wrong our faith who call it narrow. They wrong its fountain also. The myriads shall mount to glory. Minorities only will sink to hell, and this is not because there is not room or welcome in heaven.

There are other passages which expressly assert the safety of dead infants. There is one passage descriptive of David's feelings on the loss of his infant, which, with its context, we quote. "And the Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick. David, therefore, besought God for the child, and David fasted, and went in and lay all night upon the earth. And the elders of his house arose, and went to him, to raise him up from the earth, but he would not, neither did he eat bread with them. And it came to pass on the seventh day that the child died. And the servants of David feared to tell him that the child was dead, for they said, Behold, while the child was yet alive, we spake unto him, and he would not hearken unto our voice, how will he then vex himself, if we tell him that the child is dead. But when David



saw that his servants whispered, David perceived that the child was dead: therefore David said unto his servants, Is the child dead? And they said, He is dead. Then David arose from the earth, and washed and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped: then he came to his own house, and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child while it was alive, but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I SHALL GO TO HIM, BUT HE SHALL NOT RETURN TO ME."—2 *Sam.* xii. 15-23.

If ever there was a case where the infant might be expected to suffer hereafter for the father's sin, it was that of David in this passage. Yet David's conviction of his own sin, expressed so poignantly in the fifty-first Psalm, and anxiety about his own spiritual safety, did not cloud his assurance of the safety of this babe. He hoped to meet him in that purer and better land whither he had gone before him.

It has been objected that the number of the saved is represented in scripture always as small, in comparison with the number of the lost. For instance: "Many are called, but few are chosen," and, therefore, that so great a proportion of the human race should be eventually saved is extremely improbable. The text referred to is applicable exclusively to adults, and by no possible stretch of language to infants. Infants cannot be "called," because they are incapable of listening or yielding obedience to a call, and therefore of rejecting it. Adults only are capable of this. They alone are the "called," and of them, it is true, the few are chosen. It is a truth as painful to the heart as it is palpable to the eye, that of adults the great majority live far from God, "strangers to the covenant of promise." If we quote London, for instance, the metropolis of the world, we find that perhaps 600,000, or probably nearer a million, out of its two millions, never enter a place of worship, how few are there, whose hearts are really



savingly touched, whose souls are truly renewed, who have felt the Gospel not merely in its letter, but in its power.—not only as a word, but as the wisdom and power of God! This we do not deny; but we are not to forget, that, whilst scripture represents the number of adults that now reject the Gospel as still many, the same scripture represents the sum total of the saved by the Gospel, at the winding up of its solemn dispensation, as very numerous. Its language is that of “a multitude no man can number.” It was promised, that Abraham’s seed (that is, Christians,) should be “like the stars of heaven for multitude;”—that they should be upon the earth as the dew-drops of the morning; that they should be like the sands upon the sea-shore. And, therefore, while it seems true that a majority of adults are lost in the present day, and under the present dispensation, it is still not true (and this is a delightful fact) that the majority of the human race as a whole will be ultimately lost. If half the human race die in infancy, and if infants are universally saved, then the glorious result evolves, amid feelings of joy and holy gratitude to every heart, that the great majority of the human race shall be saved; and that instead of a small number only eventually reaching glory, “a great multitude, whom no man can number,” shall stand before the throne with palms in their hands, kings and conquerors and priests, through Him that loved them and washed them in His blood, and redeemed them out of every kindred and people and tongue.

We purposely abstain from even mentioning many other objections. A fertile fancy and a repugnance to a truth may invent innumerable objections. Abuses, also, may be appended to it, but for these it is not answerable. Use is God’s destiny of things; abuse is the perversion of man. Heaven’s best blessings have been perverted. Evil men can turn any mercy into means of evil. It is one of the effects of sin, that man has in every instance the secret of that awful chemistry which can transmute a blessing into a bane, and distil deadly poison from precious truths. The tarantula spider extracts poison from the most delicious blossoms. So man can extract poison from the fruits of the tree of life, and death from the very leaves which are for the healing of the nations of the earth.

But, to object to a doctrine because it may be abused, or to reject it because it may be perverted, is just to imitate the man who would cut down a beautiful fruit-tree, because caterpillars find food from its leaves, and spiders weave their webs amid its branches. We must test conclusions by "the law and the testimony," and not by the fancied abuses to which they may be open.

How consoling are the views which this subject presents to those parents who are bereaved of their children! Theirs is privilege as well as pain. Of the destiny of their little ones who have preceded them we have no manner of doubt. It has not been thus with all Christian parents: Job saw his sons and his daughters in the meridian of age laid prostrate before him. Aaron beheld his two sons struck down by the bolt of heaven, in the midst of their rebellion against God. How small in comparison can be the trial to the Christian parent, to behold an infant die, because he knows that that infant has been redeemed not only from original sin, but preserved, in addition, through the rich mercy of God, from seventy years of weary pilgrimage. It has gained the crown without the turmoil—reached the goal without running the course; its harvest has been heaped upon its seed-time; it has reaped without sowing. Its is a distinguishing privilege, and surely no Christian parent would wish an infant back again to earth. Could you say, let me ask of every parent that has lost an infant—could you say to your infant, if it were to come back, Weep no more, my child? Could you dry all the tears from its eye, so that it should mourn no more? What could you promise it? Seventy years of sore pilgrimage at the very best, in a world where men must become almost martyrs to get their daily bread: where all is hollow, deceptive, unreal, and where every moment as it speeds tells us that the great ocean-stream of eternity is rushing onwards, and carrying millions unprepared to the judgment-seat of God. Better is the child in its Father's home. We do not wish to recall it. The tears of nature are wiped away by the hand of grace. We do not sorrow because our infants are removed. We rejoice. "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be His name, and blessed are the dead that die in Him, for they rest

from their labours." They go from a life of martyrdom to a life of millennial blessedness; and if an infant tongue in heaven could be audible on earth, that infant's tongue would say—Weep not for me; "if ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I am gone unto my Father."

A mother of New York came to the Rev. Mr. Guinness, as an anxious inquirer after the way of life. He asked her what made the first impression upon her mind, when she related the following affecting story:

Her little girl of only five years was dying. The mother was weeping with the little one folded to her heart. She looked upward, and fixing her gaze right on that dear mother's eye, said with the lisping simplicity of her little heart, "*Mamma, don't cry for me. Ise going to heaven.*" And then the little darling, pausing for a moment, and refixing her eye upon the dear face, said, "*Mamma, will you go wis mc there?*" O, what an appeal! What mother's heart would it *not* touch?

Well, rest thee, bright one; we may not deplore thee;  
Death hath no terrors for such as thou.  
From ills to come, from anguished years—ah! freely  
We yield thee to thy God who calleth now.

We would not that bright brow were marked with furrows,  
Which Time's dread finger sure had graven there;  
We would not that pure lip had writhed with sorrows,  
Which all earth's tenants soon or late must share.

Ay, rest thee! yet thy mother's heart is bleeding,  
To think that form so chill and pulseless now;  
That rich dark eye its purple lid is veiling,  
And the bright curls are still upon thy brow.

Oft has she gazed on thee in thy proud beauty,  
Buoyant and gladsome in thy childish glee,  
But ne'er before that face was deemed so lovely,  
As in its death-sleep it hath seemed to be.

And yet rest on:—the balmy winds are breathing  
A fragrant requiem o'er thy peaceful bed,  
And summer flowers, thy humble tombstone wreathing,  
Their hallowed incense o'er thy slumbers shed.

From the far heaven the angel-stars are beaming  
In holy beauty on thy lowly rest,  
And clustering ivy-leaves are richly streaming  
With graceful tendrils o'er the sleeper's breast.

Sleep on—sleep on! Ah, it were vain deploring,  
For thou art gone where dwelleth nought of woe;  
In that bright realm thy pure young soul is soaring,  
All scenes of sorrow fading far below.

Then fare thee well;—no more thy mother's bosom  
Shall lull those blue-veined eyelids to their sleep;  
*Dust unto dust!*—we may not slight the summons—  
We give thee back to earth—but we **MUST** WEEP.

Straight and still the baby lies,  
No more smiling in his eyes,  
Neither tears nor wailing cries.

Smiles and tears alike are done:  
He has need of neither one—  
Only I must weep alone.

Tiny fingers, all too slight,  
Hold within their grasping tight,  
Waxen berries scarce more white.

Nights and days of weary pain,  
I have held them close—in vain;  
Now I never shall again.

Crossed upon a silent breast,  
By no suffering distressed,  
Here they lie in marble rest.

They shall ne'er unfolded be,  
Never more in agony  
Cling so pleadingly to me.

*Never!* O, the hopeless sound  
To my heart, so closely wound  
All his little being round!

I forget the shining crown,  
Glad exchange for cross laid down,  
Now his baby brows upon.

Yearning sore, I only know  
I am very full of woe—  
And I want my baby so!

Selfish heart, that thou shouldst prove  
So unworthy of the love  
Which thine idol doth remove!

Blinded eyes, that cannot see,  
Past the present misery,  
Joy and comfort full and free!

O! my Father, loving Lord!  
I am ashamed at my own word;  
Strength and patience me afford.

I will yield me to Thy will;  
Now Thy purposes fulfil;  
Only help me to be still.

Though my mother-heart shall ache,  
I believe that, for Thy sake,  
It shall not entirely break.

And I know I yet shall own,  
For my seeds of sorrow sown,  
Sheaves of joy around Thy throne!

## CHAPTER V.

### CHILDREN ARE TAKEN AWAY IN INFANCY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE LIVING.

The cup of life just to her lips she prest,  
Found the taste bitter, and declined the rest:  
Averse, then turning from the face of day,  
She softly sighed her infant soul away.

*Epitaph on an Infant.*

"But for myself I bless God I have observed and felt so much mercy in this angry dispensation of God, that I am almost transported; I am sure highly pleased with thinking how infinitely sweet His *mercies* are, when His *judgments* are so gracious."—*Jeremy Taylor on the loss of two children.*

ATTENTION has been called to several passages of Scripture, and to the subject of infant salvation, which they bring to view. In considering them, I have endeavoured to give full force to that mystery which naturally surrounds this subject, and to that grief which the death of infants awakens in the hearts of those who are called to witness it, and to endure the bitterness of consequent separation. But with the light of revelation we have adventured into the depth of this mournful subject, and there found, I trust, inscribed upon it words of peace and comfort—nay, even joy. Instead of mystery, there is around it bright evidence of wisdom and goodness: instead of cruelty, there is found mercy; and thus, instead of withdrawing our affections from Him who is the arbiter of our destiny, and of the destiny of our children, it draws them towards Him with still stronger power. The removal of infants while in a state of infancy is in mercy to them. In mercy, if it is considered as affecting them temporally; in delivering them from all the evils of this evil world, and that before they are capable of apprehending future suffering, or lamenting over the loss of future and anticipated good. And in mercy considering it as it affects them eternally;—in at once redeeming them from our sad inheritance of guilt and depravity;—freeing them from the curse of the fall;—rescuing them from the power of sin and Satan;—admitting them to the privileges of the sons of God, and introducing them to the glorious liberty, and the blissful occupations, of the bright world on high.



One-half the human race are thus early cut off from the future struggles of this toilsome life, through the mercy of our God, having an abundant entrance administered unto them through the imputed merits of the Saviour's righteousness, and in virtue of His atonement, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, being washed, sanctified, justified, and completely redeemed. Having clean escaped the corruptions that are in this world through lust, they are made partakers of the divine nature, admitted to the divine presence, exalted to be ministering spirits, kings and priests unto God. Happy spirits! who have passed through this vale of tears, ere the fountain of tears had been unsealed;—who have journeyed through this valley of the shadow of death, while the gleam of the morning's sunshine irradiated it with joyful hope; who encountered the last enemy of sinful man while disarmed of his sting, and disrobed of his terrors;—and whose whole eternity of happiness will have been unbroken by the sorrows, the pains, and the remorseful agonies which fall in such showers of misery, upon those who linger through life's sad vicissitudes.

“Happy, thrice happy were they thus to die,  
 Rather than grow into such men and women,  
 —Such fiends incarnate as that felon-sire,  
 Who dug its grave before his child was born;  
 Such miserable wretches as that mother,  
 Whose tender mercies were so deadly cruel!  
 I saw their infant's spirit rise to heaven,  
 Caught from its birth up to the throne of God;  
 There, thousands and ten thousands, I beheld,  
 Of innocents like this, that died untimely,  
 By violence of their unnatural kin,  
 Or by the mercy of that gracious Power,  
 Who gave them being, taking what He gave  
 Ere they could sin or suffer like their parents.  
 I saw them in white raiment crown'd with flowers,  
 On the fair banks of that resplendent river,  
 Whose streams make glad the city of our God;  
 —Water of life, as clear as crystal swelling  
 Forth from the throne itself, and visiting  
 Fields of a Paradise that ne'er was lost;  
 I mark'd those rescued infants, in their schools,  
 By spirits of just men made perfect, taught  
 The glorious lessons of Almighty Love,  
 Which brought them thither in the readiest path  
 From the world's wilderness of dire temptations  
 Securing thus their everlasting weal.

Yea, in the rapture of that hour, though songs  
 Of cherubim to golden lyres and trumpets,  
 And the redeem'd upon the sea of glass,  
 With voices like the sound of many waters,



Came on mine ear, whose secret cells were open'd  
 To entertain celestial harmonies,  
 —The small, sweet accents of those little children,  
 Pouring out all the gladness of their souls  
 In love, joy, gratitude, and praises to Him,  
 —Him, who had lov'd and wash'd them in His blood :  
 These were to me the most transporting strains,  
 Amidst the hallelujah's of all Heaven—  
 Though lost awhile in that amazing chorus  
 Around the throne,—at happy intervals,  
 The shrill hosannas of the infant choir,  
 Singing in that eternal temple, brought  
 Tears to mine eye, whilst seraphs had been glad  
 To weep, could they have felt the sympathy  
 That melted all my soul, when I beheld  
 How condescending Deity thus design'd,  
 Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings here,  
 To perfect His high praises;—the harp of heaven  
 Had lack'd its least but not its meanest string,  
 Had children not been taught to play upon it,  
 And sing, from feelings all their own, what men  
 Nor angels can conceive of creatures, born  
 Under the curse, yet from the curse redeem'd,  
 And placed at once beyond the power to fall,  
 —Safety which men nor angels ever knew,  
 Till ranks of these, and all of those had fallen."\*

Why, then, it may be asked, do such infants live at all, seeing they are thus destined to press onwards to eternity? They live, that they may become actually existent beings. They live, that they may become mortal;—that they may be united to the human family; that they may be enrolled among the citizens of earth, that thus they may become heirs to all the privileges, and entitled to all the blessings provided for the race of men. By their relation to the first Adam, they are related to the second Adam. By their incorporation with Adam, in the covenant of works, they are held equally capable of all the benefits of the covenant of grace. Their first birth thus prepares them for their second birth. Their entrance upon earth is the commencement of their bright pathway to the skies. And being thus introduced within the pale of humanity, they are called to the endurance of suffering, in order that by inheriting the curse of mortality they may thus be placed under its remedy: in order that these present light afflictions may work out for them exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and that through their suffering, their survivors may be benefited and improved.

\*See Montgomery's *Pelican Island*, canto vii., where he describes a heathen parent sacrificing her child.

This brings me to the brief consideration of my second position, that the early removal of infants is not only in mercy to them, but also in goodness to us. After the satisfactory establishment of the first position, there will be little room for questioning the truth and certainty of the second, for if this dispensation of Providence is of unquestionable mercy, considered as affecting infants in their temporal and eternal prospects, how can we but conclude that it is also kind in its bearing upon ourselves. Can our interests be different from, or opposed to, those of our children? Can *they* be happy, and we miserable on *their* account? Can their welfare be certainly and immeasurably promoted, and their parents left any reasonable ground for lamentation or regret? No! their interests are ours;—their happiness ours;—and their advancement ours. “If love (says Baxter) teaches us to mourn with them that mourn, and to rejoice with them that rejoice, can it be an act of rational love to mourn for them that are possessed of the highest everlasting joys?” Oh, no! like Legh Richmond, we may press the lifeless remains of our departed child to our bosom, and in the agony of grief burst into tears, but like him let us, as we struggle with nature’s anguish, exclaim, “My child is a saint in glory.”

We wish our children to be happy. Having been instrumental to their birth, we are solicitous for their welfare. Bearing our image, reflecting our every quality, and living in our life, we feel their comfort is one and identical with our own. And are our children happy here; happy while called to struggle with so many infantile diseases, dangers and accidents? Even if comparatively happy in this age, when their ignorance is their bliss, and their very helplessness the source of their enjoyment;—will they be always so? In the very region of storms, can they escape their ravages?—surrounded by misery, can they remain unharmed by its malignant influence?—breathing the atmosphere of pollution, can they be saved from its corruption?—and exposed to the shipwreck of their present character and the loss of their future and everlasting hopes, where is there security for their preservation or deliverance? “There is a death worse than the death of the body,—the death of affection, of reputation, of conscience, of

the soul. Parental hopes may be crushed by the misconduct of children, more than by the closing of the grave's portals. They may live only to treasure up wrath against the day of wrath, and bring down the grey hairs of pious parents with sorrow to the grave."

To-day we cut the fragrant sod,  
 With trembling hands, asunder,  
 And lay this well beloved of God,  
 Our dear dead baby, under.  
 Oh, hearts that ache, and ache afresh!  
 Oh, tears too blindly raining!  
 Our hearts are weak, yet, being flesh,  
 Too strong for our restraining!

Sleep, darling, sleep! Cold rains shall steep  
 Thy little turf-made dwelling;  
*Thou wilt not know—so far below—*  
 What winds or storms are swelling;  
 And birds shall sing, in the warm spring,  
 And flowers bloom about thee:  
 Thou wilt not heed them, love, but oh,  
 The loneliness without thee!

Father, we *will* be comforted!  
 Thou wast the gracious giver:  
 We yield her up—not dead, not dead—  
 To dwell with Thee forever!  
 Take Thou our child! *Ours for a day,*  
 Thine, while the ages blossom!  
 This little shining head we lay  
 In the Redeemer's bosom!

The snare is before them, the pang and the sorrow,  
 The breath of the Syren, the voice of the rod,  
 The crime of to-day, the despair of to-morrow,  
 And all that can sever the soul from its God.

See that son of many prayers; he was consecrated to God in infancy. How anxiously do those Christian parents watch every indication of sobriety. How ardently do they hope it may result in his salvation. What despondency and sinking of heart do they experience, as they behold him grow up in impenitence. He is about to leave his father's house; his mother gives him a Bible, and begs him to read it. But as he passes beyond the reach of parental restraint, he casts off fear, restrains prayer, takes his seat with the scorner, and, with the drunkard's unmeaning laugh, scoffs at the Bible and the Bible's God. Behold him now the grief of parents, the shame of friends; an outcast from society. Were it not for the hope that at some future period he might be overtaken by divine grace, and peradventure might repent, would it not be the spontaneous language of those afflicted parents, "Would God,

my son, that you had never been born; would that you had died in infancy, ere such a measure of guilt and wrath had been treasured up against you!" And now let *him* be laid upon his dying bed, let all hope of his repentance be taken away; and see him pass into eternity with all his sins upon his head, and what consolation can cheer the midnight gloom of such bereavement? Be assured that there is a measure of grief in that affliction, compared with which all else is nothing. When David's infant child was dead, he arose, washed, anointed himself, and took refreshment: but when Absalom died, deep in sin and rebellion, his heart broke, and burst out in an irrepressible flood of grief,—“O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom, would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!”—But are our children gone? Have we committed them to an early grave? Do they sleep the sleep of death? If so, are they not happy? Have I not proved that they are happy—happy to the full extent of their capacities—happy with the perfect bliss of heaven?

Mourn not, then, for the dead,  
The happy dead who die in infancy—  
Calm is their slumber in the church-yard bed,  
Called early from life's struggles to their rest,  
Ere yet to their unconscious lip was prest  
The mingled cup of frail humanity.  
Oh do not mourn for them, their lot is blest.

No more confined to grov'ling scenes of night,  
No more sad tenants pent in mortal clay;  
Now should we rather hail their glorious flight,  
And trace their journey to the realms of joy.

We are not only desirous to see our children happy, but to have that happiness made sure to them. This is the great struggle of earthly ambition,—the fond desire of parents. It is their uncertainty, their instability which most painfully characterizes the joys of life. “The fashion of this world passeth away.” That which is of, or connected with, the earth, cannot endure. Like its own changing seasons, its own uncertain sky, its own ever-varying phenomena, it abideth not. And the foresight of such coming changes, preparation for them, and the erection of some safe retreat, where we and ours may take refuge, and where our children may escape the rough adversities of life—this is the highest wisdom of man. But the happiness of departed infants, is it not secure and certain?

Does it not rest on foundations, immovable by wind or flood? The anchor of their hope, is it not within the veil? The foundation of their joys, does it not rise in the paradise of God? The tenure of their bliss, is it not guaranteed by the promise and the oath of Him who cannot lie,—who will not deny Himself, and who is the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever? It is. And let then even reason itself teach us to submit, and to rejoice in hope.

The Rev. J. S. Meissner, Moravian missionary in Labrador, observes, "We have known what it is to mourn over the loss of beloved children, having accompanied two to their resting-place during our service in this distant land. I was once standing by the grave of my departed children, under a brilliant sun and cloudless sky, when suddenly a light shadow passed over the green turf. Looking up for the cause, I beheld a snow-white gull winging her lofty flight through the air. The thought immediately struck me—Thus it is with the dear objects of my mournful remembrance. Here indeed lies the shadow, but above is the living principle. Nor was the reflection without comfort to my wounded spirit, since of such is the kingdom of heaven."

But again, if we have made some tolerable provision for the security of the future happiness of our children, our next desire is to see them in such a situation as will give the promise of its performance. So long as they remain within the years of immaturity, while they are unfixed in their destiny, or unsettled in their earthly relations, however ample may be the provision for their comfort, there is still connected with them the deepest solicitude. And if ever there is a time when a parent should be willing to say, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace," it is when he beholds his children, one after another, choosing the path of uprightness and piety, and all settled down, each in his own homestead, and all together walking in peaceful and affectionate harmony. But over the most peaceful establishment of sublunary and domestic bliss, how many fitful clouds portentiously roll on the thunder; and with what ruthless ferocity have we seen death enter the limits of such a happy community, and convert it into one wide waste of deserted ruin. But the infant dead!



is their happiness not permanent, and unchangeable, incorruptible, undefiled, and such as cannot fade away? The infant dead!—are they not settled for eternity, made immortally blessed, and far, far, and for ever, removed from all the sources of sorrow and of change? Instead, therefore, of indulging in those vain regrets, which suit those only who never look above earth's bounded scene, and centre all their treasures here, let us cherish feelings of resignation, thankfulness and hope.

Let me not mourn, that thou wilt be  
 A tenant of the sky.—  
 Escaped from life's tumultuous sea,  
 And frail mortality.  
 When storms arise, and tempests blow,  
 No adverse gale thy bark shall know.

Let me rejoice, to think that thou  
 Hast early joined the blest;  
 Before thy youthful heart could know,  
 Aught to disturb its rest,—  
 Before earth's chilling storms had given,  
 A blight to fruit prepared for heaven.

One of the bitterest pangs too, which a parent can experience when about to die, is the thought that he leaves his children in an evil and dangerous world, uncertain what will be their conduct and destiny. While with the utmost confidence he can leave all the temporal allotments of his fatherless children with God, he cannot but feel some sorrow and foreboding at heart, in view of the uncertainty which overhangs their future prospects as moral beings, who are to act, choose, and decide for themselves. That uncertainty he escapes, who, before his own departure, sees his children securely established in their best home and refuge. Once he might have mourned, and said of him who he had hoped would have been his solace and joy, "How is the strong staff broken, the beautiful rod!"—But now as he thinks of the uncertain conflict to which he would have been exposed, with the temptations and dangers of a wicked world, he is grateful that the blessed Jesus holds the keys of life and death, and that, like the skilful gardener, whose experienced eye detects the approaching storm, and who knows when to hide the lily in its narrow bed, *He* knows when to make His little ones secure from the storm and tempest.



Our children are gone—never to return! But it is also true that all solicitude is gone;—and while we look down the coming future, and see it as dark with storms as the troubled past, and as full of fiery trial as the present, we feel no consciousness of alarm for those who are now safely housed in their home in the skies. To grieve us even for our profit is not the *sole* reason why they are consigned to an early grave. This is the passage by which even they must be brought into the presence of God, and this is the time when He pleases to call for them. How animating the thought, that those powers which were but beginning to unfold themselves, are now expanding, and employed amid the glories of the heavenly paradise. Whether they were spared for a season, and multiplied attractions and endearments, or were cut off from the womb, and had the allotment which Job so passionately wished had been his, the same end has been answered. Their short-lived existence on earth, may appear as a kind of blank, but God does nothing in vain. Their life below, short as it was, has served to introduce them into the eternal state, as well as the life of the hoary headed patriarch. At the same time, their death by its effects will impress a character on the eternity of surviving witnesses, relatives, and friends. Let bereaved parents then say, “It is well with the child. It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth good in His sight.” He who wept at the grave of Lazarus, hath hallowed the tears of affection, but He forbids us to sorrow, as if there were no hope.

There is something pleasing in this fact: that every infant that you lose is a link that binds you to the grave, on the one hand, and a link also that binds you to eternity on the other. A portion of yourself has taken possession of the tomb, to remind you that you must lie down there. A soul that was related to yourself has taken possession of eternity, to remind you that you must enter there. Our bodies are, through our infants, in communion with the dust; and our spirits, through theirs, with the everlasting throne. We are so disposed to strike our roots into this fading and fainting earth, that it becomes mercy on the part of God to send those chastisements, which loosen our affections from a world doomed to flame. Each infant that we lose is a tie (holy and happy truth!) less

to bind us to this world, and a tie more to bind our hearts to that better world where our infants have preceded us. It is thus God gradually loosens the tree before it falls. Death thus loses half its pain before it overtakes us. Happy truth, if we realize it! Happy lesson, if we feel it! Good and gracious is that Father, who thus preaches to His people from the infant's bier, when they will not learn the lesson which they need from His ambassadors in the pulpit.

A shepherd long had sought in vain  
To call a wandering sheep:  
He strove to make its pathway plain  
Through dangers thick and deep.

But yet the wanderer stood aloof,  
And still refused to come;  
Nor would she ever hear reproof,  
Or turn to seek her home.

At last the gentle shepherd took  
Her little lamb from view!  
The mother gazed with anguished look—  
She turned—and followed too!

Some years ago I was called to attend the funeral of a child *five* years of age. She had sickened and died suddenly. The father I knew not, except that he was an infidel. This child had attended my Sabbath school, and she had left behind some interesting conversation with several members of the church. This, after the child had died, was communicated to the bereaved mother for her consolation. At the funeral the mother appeared more deeply interested in the subject of her own salvation than that of the loss of her child. The next Sabbath this family were at my meeting and requested prayers that their affliction might be sanctified. They continued to attend meeting, Sabbath after Sabbath, and on the fifth Sabbath, the father became hopefully pious. Soon after this his wife became pious, and then a sister, and then a young lady residing in the family; and the father, mother, sister, and young lady, all, on the same Sabbath, made a public confession of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. That father is now a pillar in the Church. This great change in that family was produced instrumentally by the *death of that child!*

Who will say this dear child lived and died in vain? Will not many an aged Christian have fewer gems to brighten their

crowns of rejoicing, than will this babe in Christ? "That life is *long* which answers life's great end."

During a short visit, says one, to the sea-shore of our State, some two years since, with a party of friends, it was proposed one bright afternoon that we should make up a party and go down the harbor on a fishing excursion. We accordingly started, and after sailing about three miles, a young lady of the company declined going farther, and requested us to land her on one of the small islands in the harbor, where she proposed to stay until our return. My little boy, then about four years old, preferred remaining with her. Accordingly, we left them, and proceeded some six miles farther. We remained out much longer than we intended, and as night approached a thick fog set in from sea, entirely enshrouding us. Without compass, and not knowing the right direction to steer, we groped our way along for some hours, until finally we distinguished the breaking of the surf on one of the islands, but were at a loss to know which one of them. I stood up in the stern of the boat, where I had been steering, and shouted with all my strength. I listened a moment, and heard through the thick fog and above the breaking of the surf, the sweet voice of my boy calling, "Come this way, father!—steer straight for me—I'm here waiting for you." We steered by that sound, and soon my little boy leaped into my arms with joy, saying, "I knew you would hear me, father!" and nestled to sleep on my bosom. The child and the maiden are both sleeping now. They died in two short weeks after the period I refer to, with hardly an interval of time between their deaths. Now tossed on the rough sea of life, without compass or guide, enveloped in the fog, and surrounded by rocks, I seem to hear the sound of that cherub voice calling from the bright shore, "Come this way, father!—steer straight for me!" When oppressed with sadness, I take my way to our quiet cemetery; still, as I stand by one little mound, the same musical voice echoes from thence—"Come this way, father!—I'm waiting for thee!"

We are too ready, notwithstanding all the admonitions we receive, to associate the hope of prolonged existence with the period of life and the quantum of health: and thus are thousands kept in a trance-like indifference to the urgent calls

of death and eternity. And surely if aught beside the dread reality of that hour of doom, and that after judgment of which it is the prelude, can break this delusive, this soul-destroying spell, it is when we behold death lay the grasp of his icy fingers upon some moving form of youth and beauty, and in the very fulness of exuberant and ruddy health, consign it to the tomb. Here surely, Oh man! you cannot but be taught, that youth, or strength, or health, are no barriers to the approach of death, and that in this warfare there is no retreat and no victory. In this contest all are equal, all alike mortal, and all alike destined to death, and to that "judgment which is after death!" The highest, as well as the lowest, the richest, as well as the poorest, must bow to the stroke of bereavement, of affliction, and of death. How forcibly was this truth taught in the case of the Princess Charlotte:

A throne on earth awaited thee,  
A nation long'd to see thy face:  
Heir to a glorious ancestry,  
And father of a mightier race.

Vain hope!—that throne thou must not fill;  
Thee shall that nation ne'er behold;  
Thine ancient house is heirless still;  
Thy line will never be unroll'd.

Yet while we mourn thy flight from earth,  
Thine was a destiny sublime:  
Caught up to Paradise in birth—  
Snatch'd by Eternity from Time.

The mother knew her offspring dead:  
Oh! was it grief, or was it love  
That broke her heart? The spirit fled  
To seek her nameless child above.

Led by his natal star, she trod,  
His path to Heav'n; the meeting there,  
And how they stood before their God,  
The day of judgment shall declare.

Again, how constantly do we find ourselves associating the guilt and the danger of sin with open and gross enormities, to the entire forgetfulness of the truth, that after all sin lies in the heart—that this is its fountain—and that from its enmity to God, and aversion to holiness, proceed all other transgressions. Oh, what a rebuke does God give to this delusion of Satan by which thousands are ensnared in the net of perdition, when He brings death, the effect of sin, and the demonstration of His infinite hatred of sin, even upon infants! For if they,

who have not sinned personally, are made to suffer the curse of a violated law, how shall those escape who, to all the guilt or original corruption, have added all the blackness of their own voluntary iniquity, and their own perverse rejection of mercy?

How willingly, too, do men deceive their hearts and sustain themselves in a course of sin, by interpreting that goodness and long-sufferance of God by which He would "lead them to repentance," into an indifference to the conduct of His creatures. Approach, deluded mortals, to that infant bed! There lies an innocent and helpless nursling in the convulsive throes of death. Unavailing to its relief are a mother's prayers, or a physician's help. Bold infidelity, say wherefore is it so? Is God so over-willing to repent Him of His threatenings, as you say He is? Is God so willing to pass by unatoned transgression as you aver He is? Wherefore, then, does He thus inflict even on this helpless babe the awful curse pronounced on man thousands of years ago? Miserable men! who remember not that God "treasures up wrath against the day of wrath, and His righteous revelation against every son of man who doeth evil; and that the wicked shall be turned into hell with all who forget God."

To unbelieving and unconverted parents, therefore, the death of their infants speaks in solemn and impressive tones. Surely such parents "are summoned by their best feelings to the cross. Though they are guilty of violating God's law, and yet more of refusing God's gospel, their infants, if lost during the period of infancy, are not suffering the consequences of their parents' guilt; they rest from their tears, they are snatched from the contagion of their company. Here is mercy to their souls as well as mercy to their bodies. Their infants are in perennial peace; but if the parents die unsaved, unsanctified, untransformed, unrenewed, a yawning chasm must separate them from their infants for ever and ever. Theirs will be the joy, but yours, unconverted parent, must be the sadness; theirs the blessing, but yours for ever the conscious and consuming curse. No interchange of love shall ever cross the gulf that severs you. The stroke that severs you in time severs you in eternity also."



Such then are the lessons taught by this dispensation of providence, by which God would admonish, and instruct us, and by which, these afflictions, light compared with what they might be, and with what we deserve, and light contrasted with the whole duration of our being, may work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. And when we duly consider the necessity and importance of these truths and their bearing upon our present and everlasting interest;—and to their consideration add the delightful assurance that it is well with our departed infants, can we not confidently and triumphantly say that they are thus early removed in mercy to them, and in kindness to us? Is not the bitterness of their death thus removed, and its sting extracted? Can we not with Job say, “the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord?” Can we not with Aaron exclaim, “It is the Lord, let Him do as seemeth to Him good?” Can we not with David rejoicingly declare, “They cannot come to us, but we can go to them?” Yes, we can go to them. They are not lost, but gone before. There in that world of light, and love, and joy, they await our coming. There do they beckon us to ascend. There do they stand ready to welcome us. There may we meet them, when a few more suns or seasons shall have cast their departing shadows upon our silent grave. Then shall our joy be full and our sorrows ended, and all tears wiped from our eyes.

Oh! when a mother meets on high,  
The child she lost in infancy;  
Hath she not then for pains and fears,  
The day of woe, the watchful night,  
For all her sorrows, all her tears,  
An over payment of delight?

Death separates, but it can never disunite those who are bound together in Christ Jesus. To them, death in this power of an endless separation, is abolished. It is no more death, but a sweet departure, a journey from Earth to Heaven. Our children are still ours. We are still their parents. We are yet one family—one in memory—one in hope—one in spiritual communion. Our children are yet with us, and dwell with us in our sweetest, fondest recollections. We, too, are yet with them, in the bright anticipations of our reunion with them,



in the glories of the upper sanctuary. We mingle together indeed no more in sorrow and in pain,

But we shall join love's buried ones again  
In endless bands, and in eternal peace.

Blessed and glorious hope, and blessed and glorious gospel by which it is inspired! I have gloried in thee, but never as I do now. I have found thee precious, but never as precious as now. I have hoped in thy word, and stayed myself on thy promises, and exulted in thy immortal hopes, but never aught as now. When I stood a fond parent, surrounded by my little ones, growing up in their sweet loveliness around me, my future delight, my future helpmates and companions, I rejoiced in the sunshine which this heavenly gospel threw around me. But when I stood bereft of these loved ones—when I saw them cold in the speechlessness of death—when I put them both together in their clayey bed, there to sleep the sleep that knows no waking—when my heart shuddered to think that there they would lie exposed to winter's storms and the summer's torrid heat—then did thy cheerful promise, span as with a bow of hope my dreary darkness, sustain my sinking heart, and enable me, even with death, and its horrid desolations before me, triumphantly to exclaim, "Oh death where is thy sting, oh grave where is thy victory! thanks be to God who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!" And here let me commend, especially to bereaved parents, this "balm for wounded spirits." Clasp it, sorrowing mourner, to your bosom. Receive it into your inmost heart. Treasure it as your pearl of greatest price. Seek it as your first and greatest object of pursuit. Buy it at whatever cost. Sell it—no, not for worlds. Heaven is not only *our* home, *our* rest, *our* heaven. It is now the home of our children. It is our common inheritance. Let it then be the prize of our high calling. Towards it let us press. To it let us continually ascend. For it let us diligently prepare, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle is taken down, we may have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.

It may be, as Cotton Maher observes, your affliction is the loss of children. Well, have you not read such a message sent to a godly man, as that in 1 Sam. ii. 33. "The son of

thine whom I shall not cut off, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart." It is possible that, if thy child had lived, it might have made thee father of a fool or, (that I may speak to the sex that is most unable to bear this trial) the mother of a shame. It is a very ordinary thing for one living child to occasion more trouble than ten dead ones. However, your spiritual interests may be exceedingly injured by the temporal delights which you desire; you may rue what you wish, because it may be an idol, which will render your souls like the "barren heath in the wilderness before the Lord." It was the very direful calamity of the ancient Israelites, in Psalm cvi. 15. "The Lord gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls." A lean soul, a wretched soul, a soul pining away in its iniquities, is oftentimes the effect of those fine things which we dote upon. It is a blasted soul that sets up a creature in the room, on the throne of the great God, that gives unto a creature those affections and cares which are due unto the great God alone. Such idolatry the soul is too frequently by prosperity seduced into. We are told, in Prov. i. 32. "The prosperity of fools destroys them;" many a fool is thus destroyed. O fearful case! A full table and a lean soul! A high title and a lean soul! A numerous posterity and a soul even like the kine in Pharaoh's dream! Madness is in our hearts if we tremble not at this; soul calamities are sore calamities.

Let not then the death of your children cause any inconsolable grief. The loss of children did I say—nay, let me recall so harsh a word. The children we count lost, are not so. The death of our children is not the loss of our children. They are not lost, but given back; they are not lost, but sent before.

This is the calamity which many of you at some time or other have experienced; the death of children is a thing in which the children of Jacob seldom escape a resemblance of their father. Many carry themselves under the trial as if a death of virtue, yea, as if a death of reason had befallen them; but recollect yourselves, O dejected Christians, and be not like them that mourn without hope this day. Let bereaved parents be still believing parents; the voice of the great God that formed all things is unto them, as in

Jer. xiii. 16. "Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears, for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord." Let the thoughts which have been set before us compose and settle our minds under this affliction. Let us not say, this thing is against us; but let us say, "the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It is indeed very true, that this affliction is none the most easy to be borne; the heart of a parent will have peculiar passions working in it, at such a time as this, though there be greater sorrows than those with which we follow a child unto the grave; I bless God it is a more bitter thing to say, my sin is mighty; or to say, my soul is guilty, than it is to say, my child is dead; that moan, "I have pierced my Saviour," is more heart-wounding, than to mourn as one mourneth for a first-born. Yet few outward, earthly anguishes are equal unto these. The dying of a child is like the tearing of a limb from us. But O remember, that if ever we had any grace in our souls, we have ere this willingly plucked out a right eye, and cut off a right hand, for the sake of God. Why should we not then, at the call of God, readily part with a limb, and leave him room to say, "Now I know that thou feared me, because thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." It was from God that we received those dear pledges, our children, and it is to God that we return them. We cannot quarrel with our God, if He say unto us, Give them up; you have had them long enough! We knew what they were when first we took them into our arms. We knew that they were postherds, that they were mortals, that the worms which sometimes kill them, or at least will eat them, are but their name-sakes; and that a dead child is a sight no more surprising than a broken pitcher or a blasted flower.

And then, adds Mather, we did not, we do not know, what they might be, in case they were continued among the living on the earth. We cannot tell whether our sons would prove as plants grown up in their youth, and our daughters as corner stones polished after the similitude of a palace; or, whether our sons might not, like Isaac's son, do those things that would be "a grief of mind unto us," and our daughters, like Jephtha's daughter, be of them that trouble us. Christians, let us be

content that our wise and good God should choose our portion for us; He will appoint us none but a goodly heritage. Our temptation is no more than what is common to men, yea, and to good men. The greatest part of those human spirits, that are now beholding the face of God in glory, are such as dwelt in the children of pious people, departed in their infancy. And what have we to say, why we should not undergo it as well as them. Was the infant whose decease we deplore, one that was very pretty, one that had pretty features, pretty speeches, pretty actions? Well, at the resurrection of the just we shall see it again; the Lord Jesus will deal with our dead children as the prophets Elijah and Elisha did by those whom they raised of old; He will bring them to us, recovered from the pale jaws of death; and how amiable, how beautiful, how comely they will then be, no tongue is able to express, or heart to conceive! Though their beauty consume in the grave, yet it shall be restored, it shall be increased, when they shall put off their bed-clothes in the morning of the day of God.

Again: was the infant now lamented, very suddenly snatched away, and perhaps awfully too! not merely by a convulsion, but by scalding, by burning, by drowning, by shooting, by stabbing, or by some unusual harm? Truly it is often so, that the quicker the death the better. It is more desirable for our children to feel but a few minutes of pain, than it is for them to lie groaning in those exquisite agonies which would cause us even ourselves to wish that the Lord would take them out of their misery. As for any more grievous and signal circumstance attending our dying children, our best course will be to have it said of us, "They ceased; saying, The will of the Lord be done!" As the love or wrath of God is not certainly declared in, so our grief before Him should not be too much augmented by, such things as these. And it is a favour, if so much as one of our children be left alive unto us. Let not the sense of one trouble swallow up the sense of a thousand mercies. The mother from whom a violent death has taken one of her two children, may immediately embrace the other and say, "Blessed be God who has left me this."

But once more; is the deceased infant an only child? Are we now ready to sigh—All is gone! Nay, thou hast but a poor

all, if this were all. I hope thy only child is not thy only joy. If thou hast ever experienced the new birth, the sense of thy soul is, one Jesus is worth ten children; yea, one Christ is worth ten worlds. What though all thy candles are put out! The sun, the sun of righteousness is arising to thy soul for ever. An undone man art thou indeed! thou hast thy little glass of water spilt or spoilt, while thou hast a fountain, a living fountain running by thy door! The blessed God calls thee, my child; and that is infinitely better than a name of sons and of daughters.

Finally, says Mather, have we any doubts about the eternal salvation of the children which we have buried out of our sight? Indeed AS TO GROWN CHILDREN, there is often too sad cause of suspicion or solicitude; and yet here, the sovereign disposals of God must be submitted to. Besides, though it may be we could not see such plain marks and signs of grace in our adult children as we could have wished for, nevertheless they *might have the root of the matter in them*. There are many serious, gracious, well-inclined young people, who conceal from every body the evidences of their repentance, and the instances of their devotion. You cannot tell what the Lord did for the souls of your poor children before He took them out of the world. Perhaps they sought, they found mercy at the last. The child of a good parent is not to be despaired of, though turned off the gallows.

But as to young children, the fear of God will take away all matter of scruple in the owners of them. Parents, can you not sincerely say, that you have chosen God in Christ for the best portion, as of yourselves, so of your children? Answer this: if your children had been spared unto you, would it not have been your care to have them brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? Would you not have used all prayers and pains to have them engaged unto the service of the living God, and unto a just aversion to all the vile idols and vain courses of the world? Then be of good cheer: your children are in a better place, a better state, than you yourselves are yet arrived unto. The faithful God hath promised, I will be their God, as well as thy God. O say, This is all my desire, though the Lord suffer not my house to grow. Those dear



children are gone from your kind arms, into the kinder arms of Jesus, and this is by far the best of all to have children this day in heaven. Truly this is an honour which neither you nor I are worthy of. But so it is: the King of kings hath sent for our children to confer a kingdom on them. They are gone from a dark vale of sin and shame; they are gone into the land of light, and life, and love; there they are with the spirits of just men made perfect; there they serve the Lord day and night in his temple, having all tears wiped from their eyes; and from thence methinks I hear them crying aloud unto us, "As well as you love us we would not be with you again: weep not for us, but for yourselves, and count not yourselves at home till you come to be, as we are, for ever with the Lord."

I have done. The fit epitaph of a dead infant (that, that alone is enough to be the solace of a sad parent), is, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."\*

To you who are still the parents of living children, or who may be such, let me say, Take heed and beware of regarding as your own, what is entrusted to you *by* the Lord, and *for* the Lord. Look upon your children as immortals—as passing, you know not how rapidly—to the world beyond. While provident of their present wants and temporal comforts, make their heavenly welfare your chief concern. Let your language be that of the poet.

Dear cherished babes, if you should have  
 To travel far alone,  
 And weep by turns at many a grave  
 Before you reach your own;  
 May He who bade you weep, be nigh  
 To wipe away your tears,  
 And point you to a world on high,  
 Beyond these mournful years.  
 Yet if it be His holy will,  
 I pray, that hand in hand,  
 We all may travel many a hill  
 Of this the pilgrim land.  
 With Zion's shining gate in view  
 Through every danger rise,  
 And form a family anew,  
 Unbroken in the skies.

Our beauteous child we laid amidst the silence of the dead.  
 We heaped the earth and spread the turf above the cherub head;  
 We turned again to sunny life, to other ties as dear,  
 And the world has thought us comforted, when we have dried the tear.

\*Right Thoughts in Sad Hours.



O we have one, and only one, secure in sacred trust,  
It is the lone and lovely one that's sleeping in the dust;  
We fold it in our arms again, we see it by our side,  
In the helplessness of innocence which sin has never tried.

All earthly trust, all mortal years, however light they fly,  
But darken on the glowing cheek, and dim the eagle eye;  
But there, our bright, unwithering flower—our spirit's hoarded store—  
We keep through every chance and change, the same for evermore.

One more example of peculiar interest will be given in the words of the gentleman whose experience it narrates. Visiting a friend, the writer says:

That evening, sweet in memory to me, we became firm friends. "She loved me because when she asked papa, he said he did." She sat with me a little while, and I told her an old fairy story which most strangely came to my remembrance, and then, after she, her papa and myself had had a frolic, she went to bed.

The next day we all went out for a drive, and a delightful one we had. Little Bessie was as bright and beautiful as the day, but there was sometimes a strange thoughtfulness of expression upon her face which troubled me as being beyond her years. As I was talking with her father, I said something jeering about Him who led the only pure life upon the earth. Richard said not a word in reply, but motioned to me to look at little Bessie. She was gazing into my face with a look of mingled horror and surprise, an expression such as I never saw before or since, and which I shall never forget. She gazed so for a moment. No one spoke. Never had anything before been able to make me feel that religion was above my scoffing remarks; but as I glanced at that little face so earnestly endeavoring to read mine, and saw the little maid burst into uncontrollable tears, I felt a certain shame that in the presence of one so pure I should have spoken what perhaps she had never heard before. Then she looked at me in a sort of pitying way and said: "I thought you loved my Jesus! Oh how could you say that of Him?" During the rest of the drive she lay upon her father's bosom in perfect silence, and no one spoke.

The next day I was alone in my room, thinking of all that had occurred, and a strange and unaccountable feeling of seriousness was creeping over me, a sort of longing to be like *her*, when suddenly the little maid was at my side. I started

as I saw her and met that tender gaze of love and pity which she bent upon me. Her little hand was laid upon my arm, and for a moment both were silent. Then the silence was broken by the words, "Won't you love my Jesus?" and she was gone. *I could not* ridicule that lovely spirit, and yet some demon within me tempted my soul to do so. The next morning, and the next, and the next, the little maid came in the same way, said the same words, and disappeared. I never answered her, and at no other time did she allude to the subject; but she never failed to come at that morning hour. One morning I said to her, almost unconsciously, as she uttered her never failing invitation, "Tell me how, Bessie." She looked at me a moment and the next was seated on my knee; and the words that flowed! Those simple childish words in which she told the story of Christ's love! Never, never shall I forget them. My eyes were far from dry when she went away, and there was less of sorrow on her face than usual. And morning after morning she came and seemed never too weary of telling the sweet tale.

But one morning she did not come. I waited a long time, but in vain. No little feet came pattering along the hall. No little hand was clasped in mine. No words of instruction were lisped in my ear! Presently there came a hurried knock at my door. It was opened without waiting for permission, and her father was with me. "Norman!" said he, "she has just waked from a long and heavy sleep, and is fearfully ill. Will you come? Tell me if you know what it is." I went. There lay the little one, with eyes closed, and in a sort of stupor. I knew at a glance. It was scarlet fever! How I told those two aching hearts I know not, but they were wonderfully calm in their anguish. The doctor soon confirmed my statement; but there was so painfully little to be done for the dear sufferer that those two days almost passed by in silence as we three watched over the precious form.

We knew from the first that she was no longer of the earth, and it was indeed a heavy burden for us to bear to think that she would no longer be the light of our hearts. I say, *we*, for though I was perhaps mistaken, the little one had so taken possession of my heart, that it seemed to me that she could not

be dearer to those who had the first earthly claim upon her affections.

At the end of the second day her life seemed partially to return; and she opened her large beautiful eyes, and smiling a little said, "Dear mamma! Dear papa;" and then looking around, "Dear Uncle Norman! Won't you love my Jesus? Mamma loves Him! Papa loves Him! and I am going to Him and want to tell Him that *you* love Him. *Won't* you love Him?"

"Bessie! little Bessie!" said I, "tell Him my heart and life are His forever more, and may my soul some day be as pure and undefiled as hers who bears the message to Him!"

"Mamma! Papa! O my Jesus! I am so happy now! Now I have all I want! Now I come, come, come! Even so, come Lord Jesus!" And the little spirit, so pure, so holy, returned whence it came! God's little messenger had fulfilled her mission to the earth, had turned a soul to righteousness, and was called home.

And now let me present the case of a reclaimed backslider, as narrated by the Rev. Richard Kriell:

Having received ordination I found some new services demanded of me. The first was to baptize a little girl who was supposed to be near death. I refused, but afterwards applied to the tutor for advice. "Go, sir," said the doctor, "and may the Divine blessing accompany you." On entering the house, we found the father walking up and down the room, wringing his hands, weeping, and saying, "Oh, she will die; God is punishing me for my sins." Then, looking at us, "Are you come to baptize her?" "Yes, sir, sit down; compose your mind, and let us talk together." The mother was sitting with the child on her lap, intently looking on it, but she never said a word. I began to encourage the father with the hope that God would hear our prayers and spare his child, and then gave him good advice how he was to train her for God. "Especially," said I, "let her hear your voice in prayer." "Stop," said he, "stop, sir; you do not know who I am." "No, sir," said I, "but I should be happy to learn." "We were both," answered he, "members of a church at Ryde. I led the singing, and conducted the prayer meetings and was a great

professor. My wife would never have consented to have me, if she had not thought me a religious man. Our grocery business was not large, still we could live comfortably. But a fair prospect offered here; we took this house and business, and this was our snare. When we first came, we always closed our shop on Saturday night, not to open it again till Monday. But our neighbors did much business on the Sunday; and if a ship came into harbor, and wanted supplies, perhaps they got more on Sunday than on any day of the week. This was a great temptation to us to do the same; we tried it. First we opened the shop so as to have business over in time to go to chapel; next it encroached so that we could only go out in the evening; and then our conscience became so callous that we left off altogether; and now, sir, God is going to take our child to punish us." "Well," I said, "learn wisdom by the stroke; repent and do thy first works. Begin from this day; call in your young men, and have family prayer." "I cannot." "Cannot!" I exclaimed. "Why?" "Oh," said he, "they know how I used to live." "Well, if you were not ashamed to serve the devil in their presence, don't be ashamed to tell them you have changed masters. Tell them honestly the whole story, and let them see your sincerity by the change of your deportment." We then went to prayer and I baptized Sophronia and took leave. A few days after I called at the shop to inquire for the master. The servant said, "He's up stairs." "Call your master," said I. The girl went to the nursery to call him, and while she was absent, I looked around and saw some Bibles and hymn books on a table. On her return I said, "What are all these books placed here for?" "Oh," said she, "they are books which master uses for family prayers." So he had begun.

In a visit which my family paid to the Isle of Wight in 1836 they went into a shop, and a young person serving in the shop said to my son, "Your father baptized me." "Indeed," said he; "when and where?" "At Gosport, when he was a student. Please tell your father that father became an honorable member of the Church of Christ, and my mother died happy in the Lord. But before they died, they had the pleasure of seeing me also on the Lord's side."

## CHAPTER VI.

### STORIES AND LETTERS THAT ILLUSTRATE THE VIEWS SET FORTH IN THE PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

And blest are they, although the heart new riv'n  
By the keen stroke of suffering, unrelieved,  
Turns to its wonted stay, and is bereaved,—  
Yes blest are they below, to whom 'tis given,  
The dearest pledge which they from Heaven received,  
Fresh in baptismal drops to yield to Heaven,  
Ere soil'd by thoughts of crime, or sin deceived,  
Or knowing evil. Thus to be forgiv'n,  
And die, this is the best we know on earth :  
It is not death to toil in failing breath  
And go away ; but in this world beneath  
To wander on from sin to sin, in dearth  
Of all true peace, still travelling from our birth.  
Further from God and Heav'n—this, this is death.

ONE evening, I had just sat down to read, when some person knocked at the door, and Mr. — entered to inform me his baby, to all appearance, was near death. Immediately I went down stairs, and soon perceived the interesting little object could not exist many hours. At such a time, how affecting was the scene ! Parents, servants, and friends waiting to see the change. Their thoughts seemed called away from every thing earthly. The parents were wrapt up in the thought, "We shall see our child no more." I marked the sovereignty of God. He does according to His will, independently and irresistibly, without giving an account of His matters any further than He pleases. He does nothing without the best reasons, whether those reasons be disclosed to His creatures or not. All His pleasure, all His determinations are perfectly wise and good, founded on the best of all reasons, and directed to the best purposes. It was very affecting to see the approach of death in one so young. Her struggles were soon over. I watched until I fancied I saw the soul depart, but it was a spirit. 'Twas not flesh. It escaped from the body, and was in a moment translated and introduced to a world of spirits. How amazing the change ! how incomprehensible ! It was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour. It was a wonderful change, if we only contemplate its introduction to angels. At the moment that soul entered their presence, its faculties were enlarged, its knowl-



edge increased, its mind expanded to a wonderful degree. It lives in ever-blooming youth, highly-favoured, exalted and happy, destined to survive and triumph when this universe will be destroyed. It will exist for ever and ever. That little being which, while in this world, was incapable of employing itself, is now, in its character, complete. It is possessed of attributes divine: all these are angelic and heavenly. Its employments are numerous, and all becoming its station. The world could not furnish materials for the composition of such an angelic character. It is perfectly free from fault, impurity, and defect. It has escaped all the troubles of life, and will never meet with any thing that will prove an alloy. Its pleasures are unfading, and every tear is wiped away. But how astonishing that this little being should be introduced into the presence of God! that Being, whose power can, in a moment, crush the proudest monarch, and who possesses an essential glory to which our imaginations cannot extend, and a sublimity of character which is elevated above the utmost stretch of thought. But when He took upon Himself our nature, and lived in our world, He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." She dwells in His presence, is near His throne, and sits at His feet. Increasing praises dwell upon her lips; boundless perfection constitutes her felicity. Her holiness is for ever perfected. Her affections are made to flow in ever-during channels towards the source of infinite perfection. Her knowledge is expanded beyond the highest conception. The sources of it are ever widening, ever increasing. The light of heaven irradiates her, and its splendours delight her soul. Her vision is unclouded, and penetrates the deep things of God. A short time ago, she was a sufferer here; now, she is a rejoicing spirit. She has attained to fuller powers than she could have done in this world, had she been possessed of the greatest wisdom and the talents of the most accomplished individual that ever sojourned here. She possesses unbounded freedom, and delights in executing the Divine will. See her amongst the glorious throng, now bending in holy adoration before the Majesty of heaven, and now a commissioned messenger to far distant worlds.



My thoughts were lost in the boundless track, and earth seemed too polluted to mingle again in its low pursuits.

No; if I could, I would not call her down.

Through glass of faith I plainly see  
That she is happier far than me.  
Her golden harp she tunes so sweet,  
While sitting at her Saviour's feet,  
That I should like to go and hear,  
I sometimes think, and shed a tear,—  
No tear of sorrow, but of joy,—  
The hymns that now my child employ.  
Angels do sit and listen round,  
I make no doubt, to catch the sound,  
And every voice in chorus raise,  
To sound the great Redeemer's praise.

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A child sat in the door of a cottage at the close of a summer Sabbath. The twilight was fading, and as the shades of evening darkened, one after another of the stars stood in the sky, and looked down on the child in his thoughtful mood. He was looking up at the stars and counting them as they came, till they were too many to be counted, and his eyes wandered all over the heavens, watching the bright worlds above. They seemed just like "holes in the floor of heaven to let the glory through," but he knew better. Yet he loved to look up there, and was so absorbed, that his mother called to him and said:

"My son, what are you thinking of?"

He started as if suddenly aroused from sleep, and answered:

"I was thinking—"

"Yes," said his mother, "I know you were thinking, but what were you thinking about?"

"O," said he, and his little eyes sparkled with the thought, "*I want to be an angel.*"

"And why, my son, would you be an angel?"

"Heaven is up there, is it not, mother? and there the angels live and love God, and are happy; I do wish I was good and God would take me there, and let me wait on Him forever."

The mother called him to her knee, and he leaned on her bosom and wept. She wept too, and smoothed the soft hair of his head as he stood there, and kissed his forehead, and then told him that if he would give his heart to God, now while he was young, the Saviour would forgive all his sins and take

him to heaven when he died, and he would then be with God forever.

His young heart was comforted. He knelt at his mother's side and said :

“Jesus, Saviour, Son of God,  
Wash me in Thy precious blood ;  
I Thy little lamb would be—  
Help me, Lord, to look to thee.”

The mother took the young child to his chamber, and soon he was asleep, dreaming perhaps of angels and heaven. A few months afterwards sickness was on him, and the light of that cottage, the joy of that mother's heart, went out. He breathed his last in her arms, and as he took her parting kiss, he whispered in her ear :

“I am going to be an angel.”

This is a very simple story, and it is just the way I have felt a thousand times. I have looked at the heavens, and given up to the child's thought that there are the blest ; I have wished that I might be one of their company ; done with sin ; and a bright career of holiness and glory begun, to be ended never.

And it looks so lovely there where God is, and the sunshine of His smile beams with matchless radiance on every heart, and love reigns through the realms of glory, and each strives to see which shall do the most for each other's bliss, that my heart goes there as to a resting-place, where sorrow cannot enter, and joy flows perennially from every soul.

I feel at such times just like the child in the cottage door ; just like the man of old, who sighed for the wings of a dove that he might fly away.

Yet, were it not for sin, this would be as bright and fair a world as that. God would be here as when in the morning of its being He walked in the garden with His friend, and smiled on him with parental love. The angels would be here, our companions and guides. Earth would be heaven, paradise as it was when sin was not.

Then to be happy here, we must be holy. And the holier we are, the happier. And when we are released from sin, and by the merits and mercy of the Saviour, are introduced to the courts above, we shall be as the angels, holy, happy, rejoicing always with God.

LETTER FROM DR. WATTS TO MADAM SEWELL, UPON THE DEATH  
OF HER CHILDREN.

Have you lost two lovely children? Did you make them your idols? If you did, God has saved you from idolatry. If you did not, you have your God still, and a creature cannot be miserable who has a God. The little words "My God" have infinitely more sweetness than "my sons" or "my daughters." Were they very desirable blessings? Your God calls you to the nobler sacrifice. Can you give up these to Him at His call? So was Isaac, when Abraham was required to part with him at God's altar. Are you not a daughter of Abraham? Then imitate his faith, his self-denial, his obedience, and make your evidences of such a spiritual relation to him shine brighter on this solemn occasion. Has God taken them from your arms? And had you not given them to God before? Had you not devoted them to Him in baptism? Are you displeased that God calls for His own? Was not your heart sincere in the resignation of them to Him? Show then, madam, the sincerity of your heart in leaving them in the hand of God. Do you say, they are lost? Not out of God's sight, and God's world, though they are gone out of your sight and our world. "All live to God." You may hope the spreading covenant of grace has sheltered them from the second death. They live, though not with you.

Are you ready to complain, you have brought forth for the grave? It may be so, but not in vain. *Is. lxx. 25.* "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble (i. e. for sorrow without hope); for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." This has been a sweet text to many a mother, when their children are called away betimes. And the prophet *Jeremy, ch. xxxi. 15, 17,* has very comfortable words to allay the same sorrows. Did you please yourself in what comforts you might have derived from them in maturer years? But, madam, do you consider sufficiently, that God has taken them away from the evil to come, and hid them in the grave from the prevailing and mischievous temptations of a degenerate age? My brother's wife, in London, has buried seven or eight children, and among them,

all her sons. This thought has reconciled her to the providence of God, that the temptations of young men in this age are so exceedingly great, and she has seen so many of the young gentlemen of her acquaintance so shamefully degenerate, that she wipes her tears for the sons she has buried, and composes her soul to patience and thankfulness, with one only daughter remaining. Perhaps God has by this stroke prevented a thousand unknown sorrows. Are your sons dead? But are all your mercies dead too? Food, raiment, safety, peace, liberty of religion, access to the mercy seat, hope of heaven; all these are daily matters of thankfulness. Good madam, let not one sorrow bury them all. Show that you are a Christian, by making it to appear, that religion has supports in it which the world doth not know. What can a poor worldling do, but mourn over earthly blessings departed, and gone down with them comfortless to the grave? But methinks a Christian should lift up his head, as partaking of higher hopes. May the blessed Spirit be your comfort, madam. Endeavour to employ yourself in some business or employment of life continually, lest a solitary and inactive frame of mind tempt you to sit brooding over your sorrows, and nurse them to a dangerous size. Turn your thoughts often to the brighter scenes of heaven and the resurrection.

Forgive the freedom of a stranger, madam, who desires to be the humble and faithful servant of Christ and souls.

ISAAC WATTS.

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FROM DR. DODDRIDGE.

Could I wish that this young inhabitant of heaven should be degraded to earth again? Or would it thank me for that wish? Would it say, that it was the part of a wise parent, to call it down from a sphere of such exalted services and pleasures, to our low life here upon earth? Let me rather be thankful for the pleasing hope, that though God loves my child too well to permit it to return to me, He will ere long bring me to it. And then that endeared paternal affection, which would have been a cord to tie me to earth, and have added new pangs to my removal from it, will be as a golden chain to draw me

upwards, and add one farther charm and joy even to paradise itself. And oh, how great a joy! to view the change, and to compare that dear idea, so fondly laid up, so often reviewed, with the now glorious original, in the improvement of the upper world! To borrow the words of the sacred writer, in a very different sense: "*I said I was desolate and bereaved of children, and who hath brought up these? I was left alone, and these where have they been?*"\* Was this my desolation? this my sorrow? to part with thee for a few days, *That I might receive thee for ever,*† and find thee what thou art?" It is for no language, but that of heaven, to describe the sacred joy which such a meeting must occasion.

In the meantime, Christians, let us keep the lively expectation of it, and let what has befallen us draw our thoughts to heaven. Perhaps they will sometimes, before we are aware, sink to the grave, and dwell in the tombs that contain the poor remains of what was once so dear to us. But let them take flight from thence to more noble, more delightful scenes. And I will add, let the hope we have of the happiness of our children render God still dearer to our souls. We feel a very tender sense of the kindness which our friends expressed towards them, and think, indeed, very justly, that their affectionate care for them lays a lasting obligation upon us. What love then, and what service do we owe to thee, oh gracious Father, who hast, we hope, received them into thine house above, and art now entertaining them there with unknown delight, though our former methods of commerce with them be cut off! "Lord," should each of us say in such a case, "I would take what thou art doing to my child as done to myself, and as a specimen and earnest of what shall shortly be done." *It is therefore well.*

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#### THE REGENERATION OF INFANTS.

By James Buchanan, D. D.‡

Dr. Buchanan shows the doctrine of the Confession of Faith on the subject of regeneration, of its absolute necessity to all

\*Isa. xlix. 21.

†Philem. ver. 15.

‡Of the Free Church of Scotland, in his *Work on the Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. Part I., ch. viii. Edinburgh, 1842.



men, including infants; that it is not baptism, nor necessarily connected with it, although baptism is its sign seal, and when God pleases, its means; and that infants are capable of being regenerated. He then lays down the position that children, however young, even infants in their mothers' arms, are fit and capable subjects of divine grace, may be evinced by various considerations. Several of these considerations afford a presumption in favour of the expectation that some provision would be made in the scheme of grace on their behalf; while others of them afford a positive proof that such a provision exists, and is available for their benefit. \* \* \*

The positive proof on the subject will be found to afford ample evidence for affirming that in the actual scheme of grace, provision has been made for the case of infants, and that they are fit and capable subjects of the Gospel salvation.

That proof consists chiefly, (1) in express doctrinal statements on the subject; (2) in recorded instances of sanctified infancy; (3) in the analogy of the typical dispensation; and (4) in the ordinance of baptism, as applicable to infants in the Christian church. \* \* \*

On these grounds, I think it must be evident that infant children are fit and capable subjects of divine grace, and that they are included in the covenant of redemption. It may be difficult for us to understand in what way the Spirit of God operates on their minds, or through what medium they obtain a participation of the blessings of salvation, which are said to be "by faith." The regeneration of infants may be ascribed to a direct operation of the Spirit on their minds, and in this respect may be said to resemble what is supposed to be in every case the primary influence of the Spirit, under which the soul is passive, and by which, without the intervention of any instrumentality, he effects a permanent change, "predisposing it to receive, and love, and obey the truth."§ By this direct operation He may implant that principle of grace which is the germ of the new creature,—that incorruptible seed, which may lie long under the furrow, but will sooner or later spring up, and produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Our older divines were wont to distinguish between the principle

§Lectures by Dr. Payne of Exeter, 338, 357.



or habit of grace, and the exercise of grace; \*\* and to maintain that the principle might exist in children who were as yet incapable of the exercise, and that grace in such was real and saving. †† It may be generally connected, too, with the faith of the parent, in whom, during the period of non-age, the infant is federally included. ‡‡ But it is sufficient to say in the language of the Westminster Confession, that “they are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how He pleaseth,”—“for the wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.” And to him who objects to the regeneration of infants on the ground of its mysteriousness, may we not say, that the natural birth of a child is full of mystery: “I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them;”—and in the Preacher’s words, “as thou knowest not what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”

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A LETTER FROM A CHILD IN HEAVEN.

*By Dr. Pye.*

I cannot in a better manner express my thoughts than by quoting the following lines, which I wrote, a few days after the death of our two children, for the use of my then mourning wife and myself. You may call it a short letter from my dear girl to us, just after she ceased to breathe, and a little before her brother’s death.

“Your tender care and fond, though rational love of all your children, with your agonies of grief under the apprehension

\*\*Dr. Owen, ii. 283, 482, 492.

††Ibid. ii. 413.

‡‡Homilies on Baptism, by Rev. Edward Irving, 346, 349.

of parting with me and my dear brother, are the most convincing proofs of the reality and greatness of your sorrow, now that I am gone, and he is just upon the wing to follow me to the unknown world. But it was He who made us that called us away, and we cheerfully obeyed the summons: and I must now tell you, though you both already know it, that He expects from you, not only that you meekly and calmly submit to such a seemingly severe dispensation of His providence, but that you also rejoice with me in it, because it is the will and pleasure of our divine Father.

"I, young as I was, am now become an inhabitant of heaven, and already see the beauty and harmony of that little chain of events, which related to my short abode in your world, and even the manner of my leaving it: and when you see the things as they really are, and not as they may now appear, you will confess and adore the goodness, even in taking us so soon from your embraces.

"God, who has made all things for the manifestation of His adorable perfections, gave us our being from you; adore Him therefore for His goodness, in making use of you as instruments, in the course of events, to usher us into the world. Ask not why He so early removed us; we sufficiently answered the great end of our being, if, while living at the same time that we gave our pleasure, you were disposed to lead us, by your examples and precepts, into the paths of virtue and religion; and if now, by the loss of us, you become examples of patience and submission to the Divine will, which, next to doing the will of God, are virtues which bear the greatest name in our world.

"Let, therefore, all the little incidents in our past lives, the remembrance of which are too apt to renew your sorrow, be so many occasions of your joy: inasmuch as they may recall the pleasant ideas you once delighted in, and to let the dismaying and melancholy remembrance of our sickness and early death, be changed into cheering and bright ideas of what we now enjoy; and what you, I hope, will one day see us in possession of."

## LETTER OF DR. J. M. MASON.\*

Again in the furnace, my brother! Again lamenting under the chastenings of God! My heart bleeds with yours, I pour out my tears and supplications that this new and sore visiting may be blessed, and may afterwards yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. It shall be so. It is so, in some measure, already. Whatever brings us to the feet of our Redeemer, does us good. He is the physician, and He knows best how to make up the prescription, and how to administer it. He has taken away your boy, but not Himself, nor His loving kindnesses. He has shown you the rod, but not the evil it has avoided. He has made you to smart under the stroke, but it is, probably, a substitute for some blow unspeakably more awful, and perhaps nigh at hand when He smote you, but now turned aside forever. We must live by *faith*, my brother. Our comforts must not be our gods. Our souls have neither purity nor peace, nor establishment, nor victory, but in proportion as our fellowship is with the Lord our life, and our life-giving head. O, for that habitual nearness to Him which shall keep in constant and gracious dependence upon His word of truth, which He has promised never to take utterly from us. The further the creature removes from us, the more desirable and consoling is our walking with Him who, when we are overwhelmed, knows our path.

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TO A BEREAVED PARENT.*Erskine.*

I cannot, I dare not say, weep not. Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and surely He allows you to weep; surely there is a "needs be" that you feel a heaviness under such a trial. But O, let hope and joy mitigate your heaviness. I know not how this, or a former trial, shall work for your good, but it is enough that God knows. He that said, "All things shall work together for good to them that love God," excepts not from this promise the sorest trial. You devoted your son to God; you cannot doubt that He accepted the surrender. If

\*From the New York Observer.

he has been hid in the chamber of the grave from the evil of sin, and from the evil of suffering, let not your eye be evil, when God is good. What you chiefly wished for him, and prayed on his behalf, was spiritual and heavenly blessings. If the greatest thing you wished for is accomplished and in the manner Infinite Wisdom saw best, refuse not to be comforted; you know not what work and joy have been waiting for him in that world, where God's "servants shall serve him." Should you sorrow immoderately when you have such ground of hope that he, and his other parent are rejoicing in what you lament? I know that nature will feel; and I believe suppressing its emotions in such cases is not profitable, either to soul or body; but I trust, though you mourn, God will keep you from murmuring, and that you shall have to glory in your tribulation and infirmity, while the power of Christ is manifested thereby.

Unhappy one! thou callest in vain unto the dead to awake. The sleep of the body is dreamless and eternal. Cold and white as the marble is that face of beauty: as still that breast which heaves with deep affection. Turn to the heavenly Helper! Between God and thee was her love divided. O flee to Him in thy sorrow, and He will give thee consolation. He Himself hath drunk of every cup of bitterness: He will have sympathy with thee in thy anguish; He will heal thy broken heart.

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ROBERT HALL, ON THE DEATH OF HIS CHILD.

I am greatly obliged for your kind and consolatory letter replete with those topics whence alone true consolation can be deduced. The stroke has been very severely felt by us both, but certainly most by dear Mrs. Hall. She was dotingly fond of our lovely boy. For my own part, I was not at all aware my affection for him was so strong, until he was removed from us; my anguish was then great. It seemed to me as if I felt more on this occasion, than I should at the loss of either of my others. This feeling, I suspect, was delusive, and arises from our being incapable of estimating the strength of our attachment to any object until it is removed. I was disappointed in his being a boy; for recollecting my own extreme and por-

tentous wickedness, I fancied there was something in the constitution of boys peculiarly tending to vice, and adverse to their spiritual interests. I had also remarked that females seemed much more susceptible of religious impressions than men. On these accounts I trembled for his salvation, and did not feel that gratitude for the blessing vouchsafed me, which I ought. I suspect I greatly displeased God by my distrust of His goodness, and that He saw it meet to adopt this method of chastising me. May it be sanctified as a means of making me humble, heavenly, and submissive. It is a very solemn consideration, that a part of myself is in eternity, in the presence, I trust, of the Saviour. How awful will it be, should the branch be saved, and the stock perish!

Pray for me, my dear friend, that this may not be the case; but that I may be truly sanctified, and permitted to walk in the fear of the Lord, and in the consolations of the Holy Ghost.

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#### ANOTHER LETTER OF ROBERT HALL.

I sincerely sympathize with you in the loss of your child; but, my dear friend, do not suffer your spirits to sink. Remember the tenure on which all human enjoyments are held, the wisdom and sovereignty of their great Author, and the gracious promise afforded to true Christians, that "all things shall work together for good, to them that love Him."

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



fever. "Who knoweth what is good for a man all the days of this, his vain life, which he spends as a shadow?"

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#### FLAVEL ON THE DEATH OF INFANTS.

Mourner, whatever may be your grief for the death of your children, it might have been still greater for their life. Bitter experience once led a good man to say, "It is better to weep for ten children dead, than for one living." Remember the heart-piercing affliction of David, whose son sought his life. Your love for your children will hardly admit of the thought of such a thing as possible, in your own case. They appeared innocent and amiable; and you fondly believed, that through your care and prayers, they would have become the joy of your hearts. But may not Esau, when a child, have promised as much comfort to his parents as Jacob? Probably he had as many of their prayers and counsels. But as years advanced, he despised their admonitions, and filled their hearts with grief. As a promoter of family religion, who ever received such an encomium from the God of heaven as Abraham? How tenderly did the good man pray for Ishmael! "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Yet how little comfort did Ishmael afford.

Alas! in these days of degeneracy, parents much more frequently witness the vices of their children than their virtues. And even should your children prove amiable and promising, you might live to be the wretched witness of their sufferings. Some parents have felt unutterable agonies of this kind.

God may have taken the lamented objects of your affection from the evil to come. When extraordinary calamities are coming on the world, He frequently hides some of His feeble children in the grave. Surely, at such a portentous period, it is happier for such as are prepared, to be lodged in that peaceful mansion, than to be exposed to calamities and distresses here. Thus intimates the prophet Jeremiah, "Weep not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country." It was in a day when the faith and patience of the saints were peculiarly tried, that the voice from heaven said,



"Write, blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord, from henceforth."

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THOMAS CHALMERS, ON THE INFANT IN HEAVEN.

The following beautiful passage from the writings of Dr. Chalmers may comfort many a sorrowing mother, as she weeps over the grave of her infant babe.

This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question, that is often put by a distracted mother when the babe is taken away from her—when all the converse it ever had with the world, amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles, which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it reached perhaps the lisp of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with its power, and at length to be overcome by it. Oh! it little knew what an interest it had created in that home where it was so passing a visitant—nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintances it left behind it! On it, too, baptism was impressed as a seal: and, as a sign, it was never falsified. There was no positive unbelief in its bosom; no resistance yet put forth to the truth; no love at all for the darkness rather than the light; nor had it yet fallen into that great condemnation which will attach itself to all that perish because of unbelief, that their deeds are evil. It is interesting to know that God instituted circumcision for the infant children of those who profess Christianity. Should the child die in infancy, the use of baptism, as a sign, has never been thwarted by it; and may we not be permitted to indulge a hope so pleasing, as that the use of baptism as a seal remains in all its entirety; that He, who sanctioned the affixing of it to a babe, will fulfill upon it the whole expression of this ordinance. And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Forerunner, the love that He manifested to children on earth, how He suffered them to approach His person, and lavishing endearments and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told His disciples, that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of

the joy that was set before Him; tell us if Christianity does not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb? and should any parent who hears us, feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired, we cannot think that we venture too far, when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith, and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and there it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of Him who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers present, to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.

Oh! when a mother meets on high,  
The babe she lost in infancy;  
Hath she not then for pains and fears,  
The day of woe, the watchful night,  
For all her sorrow, all her tears,  
An over payment of delight?

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VIEWS OF A TROUBLED FATHER, IN A LETTER TO THE AUTHOR.

But, as if to show the nothingness of human applause—in the midst of our brightest and happiest hours, there comes one of those alarming and unexpected strokes of providence, to embitter even the short period allotted to us for enjoyment—the season of youth. It is only for a few years, when our first-born children begin to articulate the name of father, and to hang around us, with all that ardour of filial affection, and to wait for an approving smile, or a fond caress, that we experience the blessing without alloy, of having children. Bye and bye, they begin to love to wander; and the bustle of life—the studies of school—and the natural disposition for play—take off their attention from parents, and from home, and except during the few short moments of meals, our children are no more seen by us than entire strangers. Every succeeding year increases the distance, and anxieties like a wild deluge

burst upon us, so that we are frequently tempted to wish that responsibilities so heavy had not been laid upon us. Such have been my feelings for the last seven years, and I state them in order to comfort you under the late severe bereavements. These considerations may have some weight with *you*, but what can be said to relieve a mother's anguish? In her heart is inflicted a festering wound, which nothing earthly can heal. But, blessed be God, there is consolation to be drawn from a higher source. God is our refuge, and our strength; a very present help in the time of trouble, and He doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men. He gives, and when He takes away, He takes but what He gave; He can give the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. When our children are removed in infancy, *we* know, who have endured the storms of life, from how many they have been sheltered within the bosom of their Father and their God. If the dear Saviour, when on earth, took them up in His arms and blessed them, with what joy will they not be received into the land of pure delight, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

These must be part, and the greater part, of that innumerable throng who surround the throne; else heaven would not be peopled with inhabitants, for I really believe few of those who have long dwelt on earth, are fitted to enter there—few are chosen. Sin gains stronger and stronger dominion every year; and love for divine things, or real joy in believing, becomes less and less; and the troubles of life nearly drown the fire of celestial love that once glowed in the heart.

And so I find it to be in others, the older they grow—therefore, there are few that be saved unless as by fire. How merciful, and how kind is it, therefore, in early years, for the good Shepherd to snatch His young lambs from the jaws of the wolf, the temptations of a wicked world, and a growingly wicked heart; from the cold blasts of wintry adversity, to those blissful regions, where the sun shall no more go down, nor the moon withdraw herself; where *He*, who is on the throne, shall be their everlasting light, and their days of mourning shall be ended. Will you accept these few poor imperfect thoughts on this melancholy subject, as the best that

have suggested themselves to me? I know you and your wife avail yourselves of all that comfort which is derived from daily application at the throne of grace, and *there* alone can you expect to receive peace to your troubled minds; and *there* I leave you. My trials have been heavy and severe, but of a different kind, and I see no release from them in this world. To whichever side I turn, all looks black, and gloomy, and cheerless, and I feel yet as the dove who flew from the Ark, but could find no place that was not covered with the waters whose angry billows had swept away every thing lovely in creation, and left nothing for the eye to rest upon but chaos. Such is the present prospect. I could wish at the close of the year to dwell on more joyous scenes, but I cannot. May God of His infinite mercy sanctify to us the bereavements and changes of this eventful year, and prepare us for whatever is His will in the new one that is approaching. And though the fig-tree should not blossom, nor any fruit be found on the vine, and the flocks should be cut off from the stall, yet may we rejoice in the God of our salvation. Come and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; in the third day He shall raise us up, and we shall live in His sight.

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APPEAL TO PARENTS WHO ARE NOT PROFESSORS OF RELIGION.

Irreligious, but bereaved parents,—after all, what avails the safety of the departed to you? While hope for your own soul holds aloof so far—while the appeals of mercy are repeated in vain—while conscience tells so fully, and so truly, that the offer of salvation has ever been tendered in vain—what boots the rest? What is it to you that the hope of a glorious resurrection enters the dark and dank habitation of the little one? You meet again: but if there be a single feeling of horror above all others to our present conception, it is that of the ending of a natural and social law, at the judgment seat of God. It is that of a law of affection availing nothing. Your little one became the property of Jesus—not by virtue of any prayer of faith that *you* had uttered—not by a free-will offer-

ing that you had made—but by that blood of atonement you have thrust so often from you—by that distinguishing grace whose attractions were too faint for your eye.

Yet you have watched by the bed of the departing spirit of infancy; and you have caught the last sigh, as the soul winged its passage from earth. And even the loneliness of that sad moment seemed broken by an admonition—“FATHER!”—“MOTHER!”—“COME AWAY!” You heard—you thought—eternity neared—earth interposed—and you returned to its bosom again.

Impenitent, but bereaved parent!—When a future world, in some hour of reflection, flings its shadow over your path; and, despite of all your efforts, presses its realities upon your attention, *remember*—that no bond of parental love may abide hereafter, when the frown of an offended God settles the destiny of the lost, and the only relationship that exists, is that of the family of Christ.

If the tender mercies of the Saviour were too little engaging to win your admiration—if the worth of your own soul has not entered into your thoughts of the future—behold what an argument is furnished by an afflictive dispensation! You loved the departed. To that very affection a most solemn providence of God has appealed. It bids you gaze from earth to Heaven. It reminds you of the abode of glorified spirits. It admonishes you to inquire, “am I also ready?” It intimates most earnestly and clearly, that the only true consolation which ever succeeds the stroke of sorrow, must be connected with a reconciliation to God, and an humble hope in the Redeemer’s blood. Let these be yours, and your peace will be independent of the precarious tenure of human life. Faith shall scatter the darkness, and explain the mystery, so readily attendant on affliction. You shall look up from the tomb to the late object of your solicitude and care. You shall exclaim with a confidence sure and steadfast,—“though he shall not return to me”—“I SHALL GO TO HIM!”



## GOD IS NOT DEAD.

There lived in the east of Scotland a pious clergyman, who had presided for a number of years over a small but respectable congregation. In the midst of his active career of usefulness, he was suddenly removed by death, leaving behind him a wife and a number of helpless children.

The small stipend allowed him by his congregation, had been barely sufficient to meet the current expenses of his family; and at his death no visible means were left for their support. The death of her husband preyed deeply upon the heart of the poor afflicted widow, while the dark prospect which the future presented, filled her mind with the most gloomy apprehensions. By her lonely fireside she sat—the morning after her sad bereavement—lamenting her forlorn and destitute condition, when her little son, a boy of five years of age, entered the room. Seeing the deep distress of his mother, he stole softly to her side, and placing his little hand in hers, looked wistfully into her face, and said: “Mother, mother, is God dead?” Soft as the gentle whisper of an angel, did the simple accent of the dear boy fall upon the ear of the disconsolate, and almost heart-broken mother. A gleam of heavenly radiance lighted up, for a moment, her pale features. Then snatching up her little boy, and pressing him fondly to her bosom, she exclaimed: “No, no, my son, God is not dead; He lives, and has promised to be a father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow. His promises are sure and steadfast, and upon them I will firmly and implicitly rely.” Her tears were dried, and her murmurings forever hushed. The event proved that her confidence was not misplaced. The congregation over whom her husband had worthily presided, generously settled upon her a handsome annuity, by which she was enabled to support her family, not only comfortably, but even genteelly. The talents of her sons, as they advanced in years, soon brought them into notice, and finally procured them high and honourable stations in society.

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Your child, though dead, is still, bereaved parents, yours. “God has given me three sons,” writes the Rev. Oliver Heywood in his meditations, “all living, only the youngest lives



with God, in His immediate presence, having died in infancy under the covenant.”\*

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#### THE INFANT’S GRAVE.

The wife of the missionary, who came home last spring, brought with her from the foreign country where she had been long a sojourner, three noble boys. But they were not all her children. Her youngest was not with her. Did he sleep, then, under the stately mimosa, or the beautiful palm-tree—beneath the shadow of the church raised to the name of the Christian’s God in the land of Idols? There, perhaps, his swarthy nurse sits on his grave, and tells how the gentle white lady devoted her child to her Saviour in baptism, and found comfort when he died, and how she, poor heathen as she had been, had learnt submission from the Christian’s book; and how, having faith in Christ, lived in the calm hope of meeting again those her kind instructors, and that her foster-son. No! the missionary’s child is not buried there; he died on the voyage home; he was buried in the deep sea; so neither nurse nor mother may look upon his grave; but his little coffin was made as neatly as circumstances permitted, and the ceremony of his funeral was conducted with all that attention to order and propriety which it is the last comfort of our survivors to pay. All the children, and there were many on board, beside his own little brothers, went on deck, and stood round the corpse whilst the beautiful service was read; and it was solemnly and affectionately read, by the beloved friend and fellow-labourer, who had been a stranger with them in the strange land. It was sad to be obliged to take the last look at the dear child, even before “the first day of death was fled.” There was something inexpressibly melancholy in the plunge with which the lost treasure sunk down, deeper and deeper, to the depths which no line has sounded! and the waves rolled on, and the gallant ship hastened on her course, so that the eye of man might never again know the place of his rest. But “thou, Lord, art the hope of them that remain in the broad sea!” So thought his mother while she wept in silence; but she looked for the resur-

\*Works, Vol. i. p. 207.

rection of the body, when the sea shall give up her dead, and she was calm.

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## THE BEREAVED MOTHER.

I marked a mother at the tomb of her son. Her sable garment coincided with the deep gloom that hung heavily around her heart. Her declining head, her closed, clasped hands, her fixed position, her tear-bedewed cheek, bespoke the intensity of her thoughts, and the sorrow of her soul. The scene struck the strings of sympathy, and a correspondent tear, flowing from the impulse of a similar feeling, trickled down my cheek.—Fancy lent her creative power to my mind, and methought I heard and felt the grief-inspired soliloquy of the heart-broken mother, as she revolved in her depressed mind the following thoughts: “Ah! yes, my child, thou art numbered with the dead!—The curtain of my hopes has suddenly dropped, and the thick cloud of soul-rending despondency shuts the light of joy and tranquility from my mind. When feeble infancy was thine, with what rapture I watched the pleasurable smile playing on thy health-flushed cheeks: it was then my heart bounded with ecstasy, and antedated the joys of youth and the happiness of manhood. I thought thou wouldst have been the pillar of my old age; I thought thou wouldst have supported my tottering declining life, when the extinguished hand of time had quenched the fervour of vitality. But ah! these love-built hopes are gone for ever; they are buried in the humid earth with thee. No more I hear thy voice—no more I mark thy sprightly eye; thy voice is as silent as the grave, and thine eye fixed by the rigid power of death. Scarce more than eighteen months had rolled around thy head before the “grim monster” came and snatched thee from the world. Thou wert stricken as the tender sapling scathed by the lightning’s fiery bolt. O Death! thou art the destroyer of a mother’s bliss. But still, amid all my sorrow, I will say,

“Worms may banquet on that frame,  
And ruin feed on what was fair:  
Back to the skies from whence it came  
The *soul* recalled shall flourish there.”

With these words she ended; and taking her little daughter by the hand, she slowly retired.†

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A HEATHEN FATHER AND HIS CHILD.

Shagdur, a convert among the Moguls in Siberia, having lost his little son, addressed the following letter to Mr. Swan the Missionary:

MY DEAR SIR,—While you and I are, by the merciful providence of our Lord Jesus Christ, alive and in health, I desire to lay one little matter before you. It pleased God to give me a little son; and it has now pleased Him to remove the child from me. Every day I think that one member of my body has been taken to heaven; and this thought is like a sweet savour in my heart. And when I think of my dear child as one of the countless assembly who are singing the praises of Christ in heaven, my heart longs to go up and join them: but although the child, a part of myself, is separated from me, I hope, through my Saviour's power and mercy, one day to meet him in glory.

Now, sir, when my little William was born, the neighbours came in, bearing to him gifts; some gave one copeck (about one-tenth of a penny;) some two; in all, forty copecks. When the child died, I did not know what to do with this money; but, at length, a thought came to me, which gave joy to my heart; and about this I write these few lines.

Among the many letters which go to make up the words contained in the New Testament, printed for the instruction of the heathen nations, *Tonilgaksha*\* is often repeated. Now, although these forty copecks may not be sufficient for more than the dot over the letter i, in the word *Tonilgaksha*, I beg of you to accept of my little William's money for that purpose.—Dear Sir, do not refuse it. I have not given it to you, but I have given it to print a dot over a letter in the name of my Saviour; and may this be a little memorial of my infant, for the benefit of my dear friends who are without Christ. I remain your scholar,

†Influence of Mothers, p. 132.

\*i. e. Jesus Christ.

## SHAGDUR, THE SON OF KEMUAH.

Mr. Swan makes a good use of this affecting incident; he writes—

I hope the foregoing letter may meet the eye of many a bereaved parent to whom it may not have occurred to present to the Lord, in the form of an offering to His Cause, whatever belonged to some dear departed child; or whatever they had destined as that child's portion, had the Lord been pleased to continue it to their embraces. And, perhaps, the reading of this simple effusion of a heart but lately emerged from the degradation of a heathen state, and which has found a sweet solace under its bereavement in devoting the child's mite to the Lord, may induce some to go and do likewise. Some may be able far to surpass this offering; some parents may present, as having belonged to some dear departed infant, what may be enough to print, not merely the dots over a letter, but the whole of the Saviour's precious name in some Heathen language,—others, a whole verse—others, an entire book—others, an edition of the New Testament, or of the whole Bible.

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STORY FROM THE MISHNA OF THE RABBINS.

During the absence of Rabbi Meir from his house, his two sons died, both of them of uncommon beauty and enlightened by the law. His wife bore them to her chamber, laid them upon the bed, and spread a white covering over their bodies. When Rabbi Meir returned, his first inquiry was for his sons. His wife reached to him a goblet; he praised the Lord at the going out of the Sabbath, drank, and again asked, "Where are my sons, that they too may drink of the cup of blessing?"

"They will not be far off," she replied, and placed food before him that he might eat. He was in a gladsome and genial mood; and when he had said grace, after the meal, she thus addressed him: "Rabbi, with thy permission I would fain propose to thee one question."

"Ask it then, my love," replied he.

"A few days ago a person entrusted some jewels to my custody, and now he demands them; should I give them back to him?"

"This is a question," said Rabbi Meir, "which my wife should not have thought it necessary to ask. What! wouldst thou hesitate or be reluctant to restore to every one his own?"

"No," she replied, "but yet I thought it best not to restore them without acquainting thee therewith." She then led him to their chamber, and stepping to the bed, took the white covering from the dead bodies.

"Ah! my sons, my sons!" loudly lamented their father, "my sons! the light of my eyes, and the light of my understanding. I was your father—but ye were my teachers in the law."

The mother turned away and wept bitterly. At length, she took the husband by the hand and said, "Rabbi, didst thou not teach me that we must not be reluctant to restore that which was entrusted to our keeping? See, the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord!"

"Blessed be the name of the Lord!" echoed the holy man; "and blessed be His glorious name forever."

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A CHRISTIAN PARENT'S REFLECTIONS ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

The bills of mortality show that more than half the human race die in infancy and childhood. As God then gave us five children, and has now taken away three, we are not to think ourselves more hardly dealt with than others; especially as these dear little ones have doubtless entered upon a good exchange. There is much in the consideration, that so many immortal human beings are just shown to this world, and so quickly removed into another. They are as those plants which are gathered and housed the moment they are in season; while others, who arrive at maturer age, are as the fewer plants, which, being left for seed, remain longer out in wind and weather. What pains one's natural feelings most is, that we so much miss the delight that we have enjoyed in the lovely innocent ways of a thriving child. But even this is made up for the sure and certain prospect of what is far better. We do not regret the fall of the sweet and delightful blossoms of our plants and trees, though they soon drop off in such multitudes, because the fruit which succeeds is attended with more substantial enjoyment. Had we had no such child born to us



a year ago, it is true we should not have been in our present sorrow; but having attended it this day to its grave, we are temporarily in the same situation as if we had never possessed it. And yet we can count it gain to be able to reckon on one more child of our own in heaven. It therefore was neither "made for naught," nor brought into the world in vain; nor has the care we expended on it been thrown away. And now that such care has ceased, and our responsibility with it, we have the more leisure to attend to the one thing needful, and to direct to this great object, in a more undivided manner, the attention of our two surviving children.

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#### THE GRAVE OF MY CHILD.

The sweet month has again returned—the first of the summer months—which will ever be remembered by me as the season when my cherished one sickened and died. If not a father, reader, you may pass on, though I should delight to detain you near my little daughter's grave for a few moments. But if the pulse of parental love has ever had vitality in your bosom, I need not apologize. My feelings, my sympathies, my joys, and sorrows are yours. Two years have now elapsed since that day when death first entered my family. The whole scene rushes vividly before the mind, showing how deep and strong was the impression then made. The first attack of the insidious disease—the promise of recovery—then the relapse—the incessant anxieties—the unsleeping vigils—the anguish of the helpless sufferer—her sweet submission to the will of God—her triumph over death and the grave—in a word, the succession of emotions, that like wave after wave, swept across our bosoms, while life hung in fearful uncertainty, all these are engraven as with the point of a diamond on the table of the memory. Nor would we erase them. It is not a mere dream of the poet's imagination, that there is "luxury in grief." This idea is true to nature. Not, indeed, that the pain is not intense, when those chords of the heart are struck, which are the very seat of the most exquisite sensibility, but that pain is mellowed and hallowed by some mysterious influence, flowing from the inexhaustible fountain of infinite benevolence. The



heart lingers too much round these visible scenes. "She goeth to the grave to weep there." Oh, why did she not *look up*? Contemplations that are bounded only by the limits of the grave are less fitted to minister consolation to affliction, than nutriment to sorrow, even that "sorrow of the world that worketh death." If the soul, in the tumult of its grief, will but pause a moment, and listen, it will soon hear a voice saying, "I am the Resurrection and the Life. He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." This changes the entire scene. It is no more *sight*, but *faith*. What a world of wonders does faith unfold to the view! *Now*, we can see the ransomed spirit, not as it was oppressed with doubt and agonized with suffering, but spreading the unclogged wings of its Love, and expatiating with rapture amid scenes of heavenly beauty and songs of seraphic melody. Who would be so cruel as to call that spirit back again to be soiled with the dust of earth; to re-endure its sorrows; to be again endangered by its fascinations; flattered with its illusions; distracted with its cares, and deceived by its promises? Is it not better for the soul to find "its long sought rest," to be disrobed of its earthly mantle; to enter the pure and perfect society of the blessed; to dwell where Holiness holds its court; where angels tune their harps; where the redeemed swell the high anthem of praise to the exalted LAMB; where it will never be interrupted in that worship, which was the original privilege and the delicious employment of the soul, "created in the image of God?"

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TO PARENTS BEREAVED OF A CHILD.

*Extract From a Manuscript Letter of the Rev. Mr. Schuffler of Constantinople.*

On the subject of Infant Salvation, *I have no doubt*. I have had it in view to write something more thoroughgoing upon this subject than I have yet seen in print, but my multiplied engagements do not permit it. Suppose the dear Infants all in Heaven. What a glorious victory has been *already* achieved over the world of darkness! Already more souls saved than lost! What depth of meaning those passages of Scripture at

once assume which speak of infants, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father in heaven." "Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*,"—only "those who *believe not* shall be damned." And around the conception, birth, and infancy of Christ a new and glorious light shines, while the bodily sufferings in which infants also share, and which show them to belong to a sinful race, bring them under some unalterable moral laws, (John xii. 24,) which have immediate reference to life and salvation. However, to understand these subjects, I am satisfied it is necessary to have looked into the graves of darling children. The night of affliction reveals to our wondering view the starry firmament of divine love, and divine truths, and the promises given to mourning souls, can be felt and understood by mourners alone.

It seems to me, we need infant choirs in heaven, to make up full concert to the angelic symphony. Who will sing like unto them, of the manger, and the swaddling clothes, and of the Lord of all, drawing nourishment from the bosom of mortal mothers! True these are themes of infinite interest, and the delight and wonder of angels. But ah! they are too tender for the Archangel's powerful trump—too tender for the thundering notes of seraphim and cherubim. We must have infant choirs in heaven. When on some Sunday school anniversary the multitude of little children come together, and after hearing some words of tender and affectionate exhortation and advice, they strike up their artless hymn, all the assembly is moved to tears and the single-hearted little ones carry away from the Masters in Israel the palm of eloquence; and the thrill of their tender voices is felt vibrating in the hearts of those who heard them, when the most powerful speeches are long forgotten.

We must have Infant Choirs in Heaven! And is it no privilege to know one of *our* dear ones among them? What an interest does not a father or a mother feel in listening to the sweet voices of the children when they know their beloved child is among the happy songsters. And is it not incom-

parably more precious to know them among the songsters in Heaven! And oh! with what additional interest, with what quickened anticipations do I now look beyond the grave! I think of the moment when I shall fold my little ones to a father's bosom again and that *forever*, and tears of joy and gratitude flow down my cheeks involuntarily. Even now, while I am writing, the voices of two of *my children*, is it possible?—yes, of *my children* are singing praises unto Him who became a poor babe and a man of sorrows for them and for all men. O, let them sing then! I can only wish to join them soon!

And now, your dear James has gone to unite with them. And while you read this, and it may be weep, he raises his growing notes of praise and gratitude to the Saviour of all men and learns in one minute more of God, and of Christ, and Heaven, than you would ever have taught him in all your lives. Oh! leave them there—all of them, and let us but become daily more heavenly-minded, and more ready to join the

“Angels who stand round the throne,  
And view my Immanuel's face.”

And the—

“Saints who stand nearer than they!”

All those redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and called close around the steps of His Throne to sing the song,—not of creation and providence only, but of *redeeming love* and *sovereign grace*.

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#### THE CHRISTIAN PARENT IN BEREAVEMENT.

No sooner was its last struggle over, than the little corpse, with ashes put into its hand, was adorned again with clean linen, flowers, citrons, wreaths, &c., which, indeed, could only die and decay with it; and which afforded but a poor and momentary agreeableness to the eye; but how beautiful must that adorning be with which our heavenly Father clothes the soul in His own presence, in the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of His holy angels!

Our chief hindrance to entire resignation is, that we are so much addicted to things present and visible, while eternal

realities are as yet so foreign to us, and so little known. But could we take one glance at the condition of a spirit thus departed, we should never regret and lament, as we are apt to do, the decease of relatives and friends, but our grief would rather be on account of the dim-sightedness of weeping survivors.

Surely, when the door of paradise is opened to let in any of our departed friends, delicious breezes blow through upon us from that abode of blessedness. And we ought to avail ourselves of such refreshing influence; we ought to let it quicken us in following after those who have gone before us, rather than wish those friends back again to a world like this. Who could ever think of congratulating any that have been enjoying heavenly rest and security for ten, a hundred, or a thousand years together, upon their having to return back again to the perils and dangers of the present life. Why, then, should we regard it as an affliction that any one of our number has escaped from such perils, and is only entered into perfect peace and security? If a vacancy has been made in the family circle, let it also be remembered that another vacancy has been filled up in heaven. The nearer we in this world are approaching to the end of all things, the more welcome should be the thought of dying; because every departed Christian finds that the multitude of the blessed is increasingly outnumbering the militant remnant; and because the whole family of God are thus successively gathering in, that we may all be together for ever with the Lord.\*

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#### THE STAR IN THE EAST.

In one of those quiet, secluded valleys of the Alps, near the lake's wild margin, embossed by snow-crowned mountains, lies the little village of Geneva. In its midst stood the moss-covered cottage of Bolien. The departing radiance of a summer's sun played among the leaves of the flowers, and the mountains and tall trees were inverted in the pure waters, now stilled beneath the deep blue sky of heaven. The windows of Bolien's cottage were thrown open, the curtains drawn

\*From a Letter of Rev. J. A. Bengel, after the death of a child.

aside, and there watched the wife of the faithful pastor over her dying child. Now she parted the damp curls from his brow, and then pressed her lips on his little cold fingers, which she held in her hand. Fervently the silent prayer ascended, that the night of sorrow might pass, and the storm of agony be stilled in her bosom; then, as the babe turned restlessly in her lap, in a low tone she sung,

Sleep, baby, sleep.  
Once more upon my breast,  
Thine aching head shall rest,  
In quiet sleep.  
Sleep, baby, sleep.  
Sweetly thine eye is closing,  
Calmly thou'rt now reposing,  
In slumber deep.  
Sleep, angel baby, sleep:  
Not in thy cradle bed  
Shall rest thy little head,  
But with the quiet dead,  
In dreamless sleep.

As the mother looked on her boy, she saw that his little limbs were stiff with the icy chill of death. A smile was on the cherub face, and the long lashes were closed over the blue eyes. Sweet Babe! no wonder that thy mother's heart is broken when she looks on her only child,—dead! The kind-hearted villagers made a little grave among the trees,—and on the third day, when the morning sun shone upon the Alpine mountains, they took from the mother's bosom her little one, and laid it in the ground; and then they looked along the narrow and wild defile of the mountain for their Pastor, who had been some days absent.

At evening the wife of Bolien sat alone in her cottage. She looked upon the lake. A beautiful light was on its waters. She raised her head. It was the star in the east; and it came and stood over the place where the young child was. Upon her darkened soul it rose as the star of hope—the dawning of that light, which had been for a while withdrawn. "I shall rejoice in Him who was born King of the Jews,—for He hath gathered the sheep in His arms,—and He carries the lambs in His bosom," she exclaimed,—and her feelings were calmed,—her broken spirit found repose.

That night the villagers welcomed their beloved Pastor. No one dared tell him his only son rested beneath the sods of the



valley. As he passed from among them, into his own cottage, from which the little light was faintly gleaming, they uttered the heartfelt benediction, "Peace be within this dwelling." The embrace of the Pastor and his wife was close and affectionate, and then the eye of the father glanced on the cradle which stood in its accustomed place. "The baby sleeps," he said. "Blessed be God who has preserved you both!" The mother turned to wipe the tears from her eyes, as she replied, "Yes, the baby sleeps,—you cannot wake him."—The fearful truth did not enter the mind of Bolien, and he seated himself to partake of some simple refreshment which was set before him. "Your countenance is sad," he exclaimed, as he looked upon the face of his wife. "Methinks your heart should be full of joy. What shall we render to the Lord for all His goodness!" The struggle in the countenance of the afflicted mother was too agonizing to escape the notice of Bolien, and, as he took her hand in his, he exclaimed, "Tell me, I beseech you, what has happened. Christianity I know is not secure, even among the Alpine valleys. It may be that we are yet to cross the mountains of ice and snow, and seek shelter from those who persecute us for righteousness sake. Tell me, what has befallen us, that you weep thus?" The eye of the heart-stricken mother glanced towards the cradle of her babe, and there needed no comment. The Pastor fell on his knees, and uttered, "*Our child is dead!*"—then buried his face in his hands, and wept aloud.

An hour passed,—and the Pastor and his wife mingled their tears at the grave of their child. Sweetly did the star in the east shine on that little mound.—As Bolien uncovered his head, and gazed upwards, he exclaimed, "The Star of Bethlehem shall be our guide to that land which needeth no star to shine upon it! for the glory of God shall lighten it; and the Lamb is the light thereof!"

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We must enter into the designs of God, and try to receive the comforts that He bestows. We shall soon find him whom we seem to have lost; we approach him with rapid strides. Yet a little time and we shall shed no more tears. We shall die ourselves. Him whom we love lives, and will



never die. This is what we believe; if we believe it rightly, we shall feel in respect to our friends as Jesus Christ wished that His disciples should feel with regard to Him when He rose to heaven. "If you loved me," said He, "you would rejoice" in my glory. But we weep for ourselves. For a true friend of God, who has been faithful and humble, we can only rejoice at his happiness, and at the blessing that he has left upon those who belonged to him on earth. Let your grief then be soothed by the hand of Him who has afflicted you.—*Fenelon*.

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If we are sorrowing under a misfortune, of which this world affords no alleviation, the death of those most dear to us, let us humbly offer to our God the beloved whom we have lost. And what (after all) have we lost?—the remaining days of a being, whom we indeed loved, but whose happiness we do not consider in our regret; who, perhaps, was not happy here, but who certainly must be much happier with God; and whom we *shall meet again*, not in this dark and sorrowful scene, but in the bright regions of eternal day, and partaking in the inexpressible happiness of eternity.—*Fenelon*.

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Thus it is with God; His parental heart does not wish to grieve us; He must wound us to the very heart, that He may cure its malady. He must take from us what is most dear, lest we love it too much, lest we love it to the prejudice of our love for Him. We weep, we despair, we groan in our spirits, and we murmur against God; but He leaves us to our sorrow, and we are saved; our present grief saves us from an eternal sorrow. He has placed the friends whom He has taken from us in safety, to restore them to us in eternity. He has deprived us of them, that He may teach us to love them with a pure love, a love that we may enjoy in His presence forever; He confers a greater blessing than we were capable of desiring.—*Fenelon*.

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In another life we shall see and understand the wonders of His goodness, that have escaped us in this, and we shall rejoice at what has made us weep on earth. Alas, in our present

darkness, we cannot see either our true good or evil. If God were to gratify our desires, it would be our ruin. He saves us by breaking the ties that bind us to earth. We complain because God loves us better than we know how to love ourselves. We weep because He has taken those whom we love away from temptation and sin. We would possess all that delights and flatters our self-love, though it might lead us to forget that we are exiles in a strange land. God takes the poisonous cup from our hands, and we weep as a child weeps when its mother takes away the shining weapon with which it would pierce its own breast.—*Fenelon*.

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Have you lost, by death, an object in whom your heart was bound up; who was in the full enjoyment of life and its prosperity, and in whose society you hoped for many years of enjoyment? Oh! consider (ere you accuse Providence for the stroke) that this death (apparently so untimely) is, possibly, the greatest instance towards you, both of the mercy and love of God. The creature so dear to you, may have been taken from some sad reverse of fortune or from the commission of some great crime, which might have endangered his salvation. To secure this, therefore, God has removed him from temptation. The same loss is, perhaps, a call from God to yourself, and is intended to awaken you from that attachment which was binding you too fast to this world, and causing you to forget your Creator. Thus the stroke which, to secure his future happiness, takes him from the evil to come, detaches you from the world, and warns you to prepare for your own death, through that of one so dear to you. The pang of separation is, indeed, most bitter, yet our merciful Father does not needlessly afflict His creatures. He wounds, only to heal the diseases of our souls. Let us, then, in the hour of calamity, hold fast by this conviction, and say with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." His mercy can be my support here, and my abundant recompense hereafter.—*Fenelon*.

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How beautiful and affecting is the following language of a wise and good parent, respecting his dead children, used in prayer to God, by the late William Hay, Esq., surgeon, Leeds:

"I would offer my most hearty and solemn thanksgivings, for thy mercies shown to my dear children. Four of them thou werst pleased to call out of this dangerous and sinful world during the state of infancy. I surrendered them to thee in thy holy ordinance of baptism, and committed them to thy disposal. Thou didst remove them, ere the pollutions of this world had led their corrupt hearts astray, and I humbly hope thou didst receive them to thy glory. Concerning the other four whom thou hast called hence in adult age, thou hast graciously given me the most solid hopes. Though by nature children of wrath, even as others, thou wast pleased to awaken them to a sense of the odious nature of sin, and to grant them true repentance. They were early taught by thy grace to flee for refuge to the friend of sinners, and thou didst prolong their lives till they had given clear proofs of a sound conversion. Though prepared, as I hope, to glorify thee on earth, thou didst dispense with their services, and didst remove them hence in the beginning of their usefulness. But thy grace was with them. In their sickness, and at the approach of death, they were enabled to rejoice in thy salvation. The last of them I am this day to commit to the silent grave, but in sure and certain hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life. What shall I render to thee for all thy mercies! O that my future life might more abundantly show forth thy praise!" Attend, ye parents, to these sentiments of devotion. The only way to part with your children with resignation and hope, should they be removed from you by the stroke of death, is to dedicate them to the Lord of all, and to bring them up for His service and glory.

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Quintilian's letter upon the death of his two sons, one of whom was a youth highly accomplished, and of great promise, is beautiful and touching. But in it he boasts of his impatience, thinks it necessary to excuse himself for having survived the stroke, denies the doctrine of a Divine superintendence over the affairs of men, accuses the gods of spite and injustice, and says his tolerance, not his love of life, will revenge his son for the rest of his days. This was all that ethics could do to calm his mind. What will an infidel say to such a scene as

contrasted with the faith and patience of the saints? Will he say that their meek endurance is the fruit of advanced philosophy? Quintilian lived in an age enlightened by literature, but Rome was far behind Jerusalem in the sublimities of moral precept, because the true light had not radiated its horizon. And then see how Job acted, though in a ruder age, and surrounded by idolatry. Revelation cast a bright hue of heaven over all his sorrows.—*Dr. Lawson.*

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God is righteous in taking from us. He is merciful in sparing to us what He has not taken. If it had pleased God to cut off the half of our families, it would have been our duty to have given Him thanks that the other half was left. I bless God for the hope of seeing those whom I have lost with greater pleasure than ever, but I have still more reason to bless Him for the gift of His own Son to such unworthy creatures as I am, that through faith in Him I may have everlasting life.—*Dr. Lawson.*

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When God imposes a sacrifice upon us, or takes from us some object, He does not leave us to endure the stroke unsustained; but if through the veil of sorrow which He spreads over us, we look up to Him, we shall by the means of our mortal trials, reap everlasting joys. We are not to enquire of God why He appoints us such trials, when we behold others exempt from them. Can we say how long our hitherto more fortunate fellow-creatures may continue untried with the like calamities? It may be, that God sees we have most need of them: If we are faithful in what we understand, how limited soever our imperfect view may be of God's dealings with us, we shall find rest unto our souls, until it please God to dissolve our earthly tabernacle. We know, that then we shall have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Let us, therefore, follow continually that guiding star, which beams upon our darkened way. Let us, with a willing and steady mind, embrace the occasions which each day may offer us of advancing towards our heavenly country, where we shall find our everlasting home. This is our daily bread, our manna in the wilderness of life: with this

let us be content. If we presumptuously seek to look into futurity, our endeavours will be like the forbidden provision of the Israelites, not only superfluous, but noxious to ourselves.—*Fenelon*.

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#### THE TEACHING OF BAPTISM.

Let us now consider the feelings with which parents should retire from the baptismal service.

It is a solemn moment when they take the child away from the altar. They have given it to God; and they bear it away, as the mother of Moses did her own son, to bring it up for another, who, in this case, is God. They have, by their vows, promised that the will of God concerning their child shall be their will, so that the question of its life or death is left implicitly with him. Though their hearts will bleed if it should be taken away, yet, by the baptismal service, they have engaged to consider the child henceforth as entirely at God's disposal; and whenever they look upon it hereafter, the feeling which they are to have is expressed by these words, *Sent, not given*. If it dies, they will remember its baptism and their vows, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, will steal into their breaking hearts. If it lives, it is to be trained up for that God to whom it has been given.

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Very soon they who are separated will be reunited, and there will appear no trace of the separation. They, who are about to set upon a journey, ought not to feel themselves far distant from those who have gone to the same country a few days before. Life is like a torrent; the past is but a dream; the present, while we are thinking of it, escapes us, and is precipitated into the same abyss that has swallowed up the past; the future will not be of a different nature, it will pass as rapidly. A few moments, and a few more, and all will be ended; what has appeared long and tedious, will seem short when it is finished.—*Fenelon*.



These infant buds, therefore, that seem nipt on earth, are merely removed to heaven, there to unfold themselves in everlasting bloom. Nature leaves them pining upon earth, Grace takes them in her arms, wraps them in her warm bosom, and wafts them away to the better land.

"See, then, how soon the flowers of life decay,  
 How soon terrestrial pleasures fade away.  
 A star of comfort for a moment giv'n,  
 Just rose on earth, then set to rise in heav'n.  
 Redeem'd by God from sin, releas'd from pain,  
 Its life were punishment, its death is gain.  
 Though it be hard to bid thy heart divide,  
 To lay the gem of all thy love aside,  
 Faith tells thee, (and it tells thee not in vain,)  
 That thou shalt meet thine infant yet again.  
 While yet on earth thine ever-circling arms  
 Held it securest from surrounding harms;  
 Yet even there disease could aim the dart,  
 Chill the warm cheek, and stop the flutt'ring heart;  
 No ill can reach it now; it rests above,  
 Safe in the bosom of celestial love.  
 Its short, but yet tempestuous way, is o'er,  
 And tears shall trickle down its cheek no more.  
 Then far be grief; faith looks beyond the tomb,  
 And heav'n's bright portals sparkle through the gloom.  
 If bitter thoughts and tears in heav'n could be,  
 It is thine infant that should weep for thee."

Mrs. Wilson writes very sweetly: "It is only my child's mortal part that rests in silence; his spirit is with God in His temple above. He is one of the redeemed, who now throng the courts of heaven, and surround the throne of the Most High. Boundless perfection constitutes his felicity, unceasing praises dwell upon his lips, his holiness is for ever perfected, and his affections are made to flow in ever-during channels, toward the Source of infinite perfection, and through all those subordinate streams where it is distributed. The light of heaven encircles him, and its splendours delight his soul. His vision is unclouded, and penetrates into the deep things of God. I see him among the glorious throng, now bending in holy adoration of the majesty of heaven, now a commissioned messenger of mercy to other and far distant worlds. Perhaps he hovers now around our dwelling; perhaps he will stand at heaven's portals, and be the first to usher us into the presence chamber of the King. Shall I then continue to shed unavailing tears, and selfishly repine at the short, the momentary separation? He will never return to us, but we shall go to him. In regard to our beloved child, we can take up the triumphant



song, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' "

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THE HOPE OF A RESURRECTION.

*Lavel.*

Let those mourn without measure, who mourn without hope. The husbandman does not mourn, when he casts his seed into the ground. He expects to receive it again, and more. The same hope have we, respecting our friends who have died in faith. "I would not have you ignorant," says Paul, "concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not as others who have no hope; for if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so also them who sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." He seems to say, "Look not on the dead as lost. They are not annihilated. Indeed, they are not *dead*. They only sleep; and they sleep to awake again." You do not lament over your children or friends, while slumbering on their beds. Consider death as a longer sleep, from which they shall certainly awake. Even a heathen philosopher could say, that he enjoyed his friends, expecting to part with them; and parted with them, expecting to see them again. And shall a heathen excel a Christian in bearing affliction with cheerfulness?—If you have a well-grounded hope that your deceased friend was interested in Christ, ponder, I entreat you, the precious supports afforded by the doctrine of the Resurrection of the just.

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THE DEATH OF A CHILD NO CAUSE OF DESPONDENCY.

Dejected mourner, bereft, as you seem, of all joy, you have no cause for despondency. O that you realized what blessings God has to bestow on those who submissively wait on Him in their affliction! He has consolations far transcending the joy of children. So others have found. An eminently pious man, having lost an only son, retired for some hours to his closet, and then came forth with such a cheerful countenance, that all who saw him were filled with surprise. Being asked an explanation of this, he replied, that he had enjoyed, in his retirement, that which, if renewed, might well reconcile him to part

with a son every day. O how great the disproportion between the light of God's countenance, and the best, the sweetest of created enjoyments!

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We are forbidden to murmur, but we are not forbidden to *regret*; and whom we loved tenderly while living, we may still pursue with an affectionate remembrance, without having any occasion to charge ourselves with rebellion against the sovereignty that appointed a separation.—*Cowper*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### POETICAL SELECTIONS.

The Poet is the interpreter of the human heart—the expounder of its mysteries. An utterance is given to him, which is denied to others, even although their feelings may be akin to his own. Through him Truth speaks: and wild or wayward as may seem her revelations, yet it is the common sentiment, the universal emotion, she speaks; she gives the germ of a nobler principle, the incentive to a higher hope.

#### BY THE BEDSIDE OF A SICK CHILD.

David, therefore, besought God for the child.—2 *Sam.* xii. 16.

Now all is done that love, and care,  
And skilful kindness could suggest;  
And He who heard our anxious prayer,  
Will answer as His love thinks best:  
O, that both hopes and fears were still  
Waiting on His mysterious will.

And yet, both hopes and fears will crowd  
Around that bright and precious child;  
And both will speak their thoughts aloud,  
Till this distracted heart is wild:  
O might they all give place to one  
Heart filling prayer,—“God’s will be done.”

Sometimes a dream of what may be,  
Comes, like soft sunshine, o’er the heart;  
I hear his prattle at my knee,  
Feel his warm cheek near mine, and start  
To find it—ah! so cold and pale,  
That hope (and well-nigh faith) doth fail.

And then, again, the dream returns,—  
Childhood and youth are safely o’er;  
His eye with manhood’s ardour burns,  
Tears hover round his path no more:  
Hopes, with their buds and blossoms, all  
Burst, where his bounding footsteps fall.

He seems to speak—with anxious ear,  
My very heart waits breathless by;  
His lips are parted,—and I hear,  
My precious babe, thy restless cry;—  
E’en hope, affrighted, flees away,  
As if it had no heart to stay.

Come, then, my God, and take the place  
Of these distracting hopes and fears;  
’Stablish this trembling heart with grace,  
Dry with Thine hand these falling tears;  
And teach me to confide in Thee  
The treasure Thou couldst trust with me.

Happy if, rescued from the trait  
 Of being called on to decide,  
 Here with submissive soul, I wait,  
 By Thy decision to abide,—  
 Life, with its blessings and its pain,  
 Or death, with its, "to die is gain."

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## THE SICK CHILD'S DREAM OF HEAVEN.

"And bade me be glad to die."

*By Robert Nicoll, Scotland's Second Burns.*

"O mither, mither, my head was sair,  
 And my een wi' tears were weet,  
 But the pain has gone for evermair,  
 Sae mither dinna greet:  
 And I ha'e had sic a bonnie dream,  
 Since last asleep I fell,  
 O' a' that is holy an' gude to name,  
 That I have wauken'd my dream to tell.

I thought on the morn o' a simmer day,  
 That awa' through the clouds I flew,  
 While my silken hair did wavin' play  
 'Mang breezes steep'd in dew;  
 And the happy things o' life and light  
 Were around my gowden way,  
 As they stood in their parent Heaven's sight  
 In the hames o' nightless day.

An' songs o' love that nae tongue may tell,  
 Frae their hearts cam' flowin' free,  
 Till the starns stood still, while alang did swel'  
 The plaintive melodie:  
 And anc o' them sang wi' my mither's voice,  
 Till through my heart did gae  
 That chanted hymn o' my bairnhood choice,  
 Sae dowie, saft, an' wae.

Thae happy things o' the glorious sky  
 Did lead me far away,  
 Where the stream o' life rins never dry,  
 Where nathing kens decay;  
 And they laid me down in a mossy bed,  
 Wi' curtains o' spring leaves green,  
 And the name o' God they praying said,  
 And a light came o'er my een.

And I saw the earth that I had left,  
 And I saw my mither there;  
 And I saw her grieve that she was bereft  
 O' the bairn she thought sae fair;  
 And I saw her pine till her spirit fled—  
 Like a bird to its young one's nest—  
 To that land of love; and my head was laid  
 Again on my mither's breast.

And mither, ye took me by the hand,  
 As ye were wont to do;  
 And your loof, sae saft and white, I fand  
 Laid on my caller brow;  
 And my lips you kiss'd, and my curling hair  
 You round your fingers wreath'd;  
 And I kent that a happy mither's prayer  
 Was o'er me silent breath'd;

And we wander'd through that happy land,  
 That was gladly glorious a';  
 The dwellers there were an angel band,  
 And their voices o' love did fa'  
 On our ravish'd ears like the decin' tones  
 O' an anthem far away,  
 In a star-lit hour, when the woodland moans  
 That its green is turned to grey.

And, mither, amang the sorrowless there,  
 We met my brithers three,  
 And your bonnie May, my sister fair,  
 And a happy bairn was she;  
 And she led me awa' 'mang living flowers,  
 As on earth she aft has done;  
 And thegither we sat in the holy bowers,  
 Where the blessed rest aboon;—

And she tauld me I was in Paradise,  
 Where God in love doth dwell—  
 Where the weary rest, and the mourner's voice  
 Forgets its warld-wail;  
 And she tauld me they kent na dule nor care;  
 And bade me be glad to dee,  
 That yon sinless land and the dwellers there  
 Might be hame and kin to me.

Then sweetly a voice came on my ears,  
 And it sounded sae holily,  
 That my heart grew saft, and blabs o' tears  
 Sprung up in my sleepin' e'e;  
 And my inmost soul was sairly moved  
 Wi' its mair than mortal joy;—  
 'Twas the voice o' Him wha bairnies lov'd  
 That waken'd your dreamin' boy!"

### THE BEREAVED.

*By Robert Nicoll.*

They're a' gane thegither, Jeanie—  
 They're a' gane thegither:  
 Our bairns aneath the cauldrie yird  
 Are laid wi' ane anither.  
 Sax lads and lasses Death has ta'en  
 Frae father an' frae mither;  
 But O! we manna greet and mane—  
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—  
 They're a' on hie thegither.

Our eild will now be drearie, Jeanie—  
 Our eild will now be drearie:  
 Our young an' bonnie bairns ha'e gane,  
 An' left our hame fu' eerie.  
 'Neath Age's hand we now may grane—  
 In poorthith cauld may swither:  
 The things that toddled but an' ben  
 Are a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—  
 Are a' on hie thegither.

Now sorrow may come near us, Jeanie—  
 Now sorrow may come near us:  
 The buirdly childs are lyin' low  
 Wha wadna let it steer us.  
 The bonnie lasses are awa'  
 What came like sun-glints hither,

To fill wi' joy their father's ha'—  
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—  
 They're a' on hie thegither.

In the kirkyard they're sleepin', Jeanie—  
 In the kirkyard they're sleepin':  
 It may be grieves their happy souls  
 To see their parents weepin'.  
 They're on to bigg a hame for us,  
 Where flowers like them ne'er wither,  
 Among the starns in love an' bliss—  
 They're a' on hie thegither, Jeanie—  
 They're a' on hie thegither.

### ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT SON.

*A Parental Sketch by the Author.*

The midnight bell had toll'd—and earliest bird  
 Had loud proclaimed the break of coming day,  
 While yet the stars kept watch at gate of heaven,  
 And night winds sighed among the leafless trees.  
 But not to seek repose had now retired  
 The gathered inmates of that cherished home.  
 In silence, sad, they stand collected round  
 The couch, on which is laid a suffering babe.  
 The sun his yearly round had not yet closed,  
 Since first that babe was ushered to the light,  
 Most welcome gift from God's paternal hand.  
 In form most fair and perfect. In spirit  
 Warm, affectionate, and ever mild.  
 His capacious brow, and eye intelligent,  
 Gave noble promise of the mighty powers  
 Still latent, but fast bursting into life.  
 His parents loved him much. Their hearts had bled,  
 The darksome tomb within its bosom closed  
 The buried forms of other children dear.  
 They therefore clung to him as to the dead  
 Revived—the lost ones found—their light and life.  
 For joy o'er him they had forgotten  
 The bitter anguish of that dreadful hour,  
 When two fair buds of life lay crushed and torn.  
 Most sweet it was to see this opening flower  
 Expand its leaves and breathe its fragrance forth—  
 To hear his infant prattle—to behold  
 His looks of love, his first, light, gladsome steps,  
 And all the graces of blest infancy.  
 How have I clasped him to this doting heart,  
 In all the ecstasy of untold joy;  
 And felt, while round my neck his fond arms clung,  
 And his soft cheek press'd mine, that depth of bliss  
 Unutterable, which only parents know.  
 But he was not a destined heir of earth,  
 Nor long to tread its pilgrimage of woe.  
 An angel he—an elect child of grace—  
 An heir of bliss—a heaven-ward voyager.  
 His vacant throne for him was kept reserved,  
 And sister spirits longed to see him come.  
 A glorious crown of life, a sceptre bright,  
 And glittering robes, awaited him above.  
 God had now called His child, and forth had sent  
 The ministering host to guard him home.  
 And swift to loose his bonds of earthly mould,  
 To fierce disease had given him a prey.  
 For ten long days and nights the secret foe,  
 Invisible, his dread commission filled,



And baffled all the art of human skill ;  
 Till now at length in death's last struggles lay  
 The sinking form of that most blessed child.  
 No cry escaped his lips—no sigh his breast—  
 Nor sign of murmuring by him was given.  
 But calm he lay—as in God's arms outspread—  
 As into heaven he cast his blissful gaze,  
 And even then had taste of joys to come.  
 It was the theme of all—I picture not—  
 How unrepiningly he met his fate—  
 Amid despair, most tranquil and serene ;  
 With tearless eyes, while none around were dry,  
 Outworn with agony he now lay stretched  
 Upon his downy pillow, there to die.  
 Resigned by parents' arms, he bid farewell  
 To earthly scenes and all terrestrial joy.  
 His bright eye dimmed—his palsied limbs lay cold  
 And motionless. His heaving breast rose high—  
 Till with a dove-like wail he sunk to rest.

God speed thee in thy flight, my blessed boy !  
 Let angel bands conduct thee safe to heaven,  
 There with thy sisters dear to share its bliss !  
 Thou wert to me the dearest joy of earth,  
 And I would now rejoice with thee above,  
 And chide my selfish grief with thoughts of thee,  
 As now enroll'd among the cherub throng.  
 Farewell, my boy ! no more thy smile I'll see  
 Till thee I meet around the throne of God.  
 But never from his heart shall pass away  
 Thy dying form, and that last dying wail.

Charleston, Nov. 27th, 1841.

#### A MOTHER'S LAMENT.

*Montgomery.*

I loved thee, daughter of my heart ;  
 My child, I loved thee dearly ;  
 And though we only met to part,  
 —How sweetly ! how severely !—  
 Nor life nor death can sever  
 My soul from thine forever.

Thy days, my little one, were few ;  
 An angel's morning visit,  
 That came and vanish'd with the dew ;  
 'Twas here, 'tis gone, where is it ?  
 Yet did'st thou leave behind thee  
 A clue for love to find thee.

The eye, the lip, the cheek, the brow,  
 The hands stretch'd forth in gladness.  
 All life, joy, rapture, beauty now ;  
 Then dash'd with infant sadness ;  
 Till brightening by transition,  
 Return'd the fairy vision :—

Where are they now ?—those smiles, those tears,  
 Thy mother's darling treasure ?  
 She sees them still, and still she hears  
 Thy tones of pain or pleasure,  
 To her quick pulse revealing  
 Unutterable feeling.

Hush'd in a moment on her breast,  
 Life, at the well-spring drinking ;  
 Then cradled on her lap to rest  
 In rosy slumber sinking,  
 Thy dreams—no thought can guess them ;  
 And mine—no tongue express them.

For then this waking eye could see,  
 In many a vain vagary,  
 The things that never were to be,  
 Imaginations airy ;  
 Fond hopes that mothers cherish,  
 Like still-born babes to perish.

Mine perish'd on thy early bier ;  
 No,—changed to forms more glorious,  
 They flourish in a higher sphere,  
 O'er time and death victorious ;  
 Yet would these arms have chain'd thee,  
 And long from heaven detain'd thee.

Sarah ! my last, my youngest love,  
 The crown of every other !  
 Though thou art born in heaven above,  
 I am thine only mother,  
 Nor will affection let me  
 Believe thou canst forget me.

Then,—thou in heaven and I on earth,—  
 May this one hope delight us,  
 That thou wilt hail my second birth,  
 When death shall reunite us,  
 Where worlds no more can sever  
 Parent and child for ever.

### THE THREE SONS ; OR, FAITH TRIUMPHANT.

*By Rev. J. Moultrie, A. M.*

#### I.

I have a son, a little son,  
 A boy just five years old,  
 With eyes of thoughtful earnestness,  
 A mind of gentle mould.

They tell me that unusual grace  
 In all his ways appears,  
 That my child is grave, and wise of heart,  
 Beyond his childish years.

I cannot say how this may be,  
 I know his face is fair,  
 And yet his chiefest comeliness  
 Is his sweet and serious air.

I know his heart is kind and fond,  
 I know he loveth me,  
 But he loveth yet his mother more,  
 With grateful fervency.

But that which others most admire,  
 Is the thought that fills his mind,  
 The food for grave, inspiring speech,  
 He everywhere doth find.

Strange questions doth he ask of me,  
 When we together walk;  
 He scarcely thinks as children think,  
 Or talks as children talk.

Nor cares he much for childish sports,  
 Dotes not on bat or ball,  
 But looks on manhood's ways and works,  
 And aptly mimics all.

His little heart is busy still,  
 And oftentimes perplexed  
 With thoughts about this world of ours,  
 And thoughts about the next.

He kneels at his dear mother's knees,  
 She teaches him to pray,  
 And strange, and sweet, and solemn, then,  
 Are the words which he will say.

Oh, should my gentle child be spared,  
 To manhood's years, like me,  
 A holier and a wiser man  
 I trust that he will be.

And when I look into his eyes,  
 And on his thoughtful brow,  
 I dare not think what I should feel,  
 Were I to lose him now.

## II.

I have a son, a second son,  
 A simple child of three;  
 I'll not declare how bright and fair  
 His little features be.

I do not think his light blue eye  
 Is like his brother's keen,  
 Nor his brow so full of childish thought  
 As his hath ever been.

But his little heart's a fountain pure,  
 Of kind and tender feeling,  
 And his every look's a gleam of light,  
 Rich depths of love revealing.

When he walks with me, the country folk,  
 Who pass us in the street,  
 Will shout for joy, and bless my boy,  
 He looks so mild and sweet.

A playfellow is he to all,  
 And yet, with cheerful tone,  
 Will sing his little song of love,  
 When left to sport alone.

His presence is like sunshine, sent  
 To gladden home, the earth,  
 To comfort us in all our griefs,  
 And sweeten all our mirth.

Should he grow up to riper years,  
 God grant his heart may prove,  
 As sweet a home for heavenly grace,  
 As now for earthly love.

And if, beside his grave, the tears  
 Our aching eyes must dim,  
 God comfort us for all the love  
 Which we shall lose in him.

## III.

I have a son, a third sweet son,  
 His age I cannot tell,  
 For they reckon not by years and months,  
 Where he hath gone to dwell.

To us, for fourteen anxious months,  
 His infant smiles were given,  
 And then he bade farewell to earth,  
 And went to live in heaven.

I cannot tell what form is his,  
 What looks he weareth now,  
 Nor guess how bright a glory crowns  
 His shining seraph brow.

The thoughts that fill his sinless soul,  
 The bliss which he doth feel,  
 Are numbered with the secret things  
 Which God will not reveal.

But I know, for God hath told me this,  
 That he is now at rest,  
 Where other blessed infants are,  
 On their Saviour's loving breast.

Whate'er befalls his brethren twain,  
 His bliss can never cease;  
 Their lot may here be grief and fear,  
 But his is certain peace.

It may be that the tempter's wiles  
 Their souls from bliss may sever,  
 But, if our own poor faith fail not,  
*He* must be ours forever.

When we think on what our darling is,  
 And what we still must be;  
 When we muse on *that* world's perfect bliss,  
 And *this* world's misery;

When we groan beneath this load of sin,  
 And feel this grief and pain,  
 Oh, we'd rather lose our other two,  
 Than have him here again.

## THE DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

*Alaric A. Watts.*

"Fare thee well, thou first and fairest!  
 Fare thee well, thou best and dearest!"

BURNS.

My sweet one, my sweet one! the tears were in my eyes  
 When first I clasped thee to my heart, and heard thy feeble cries;—  
 For I thought of all that I had borne as I bent me down to kiss  
 Thy cherry lip and sunny brow, my first-born bud of bliss!

I turned to many a withered hope,—to years of grief and pain;—  
 And the cruel wrongs of a bitter world flashed o'er by boiling brain—  
 I thought of friends grown worse than cold, of persecuting foes,—  
 And I asked of Heaven, if ills like these must mar thy youth's repose!

I gazed upon thy quiet face—half blinded by my tears—  
 Till gleams of bliss, unfelt before, came brightening on my fears—  
 Sweet rays of hope that fairer shone 'mid the cloud of gloom that bound  
     them,  
 As stars dart down their loveliest light when midnight skies are round  
     them.

My sweet one, my sweet one! thy life's brief hour is o'er,  
 And a father's anxious fears for thee can fever me no more;  
 And for the hopes, the sunbright hopes—that blossomed at thy birth—  
 They too have fled, to prove how frail are cherished things on earth!

'Tis true that thou were young, my child, but though brief thy span below,  
 To me it was a little age of agony and woe;  
 For, from the first faint dawn of life thy cheek began to fade,  
 And my heart had scarce thy welcome breathed, ere my hopes were wrapt  
 in shade.

O the child, in its hours of health and bloom, that is dear as thou were  
 then,  
 Grows far more prized—more fondly loved—in sickness and in pain,  
 And thus 'twas thine to prove, dear babe, when every hope was lost,  
 Ten times more precious to my soul—for all that thou hadst cost!

Cradled in thy fair mother's arms, we watched thee day by day,  
 Pale, like the second bow of heaven, as gently waste away;  
 And, sick with dark foreboding fears, we dared not breathe aloud,  
 Sat hand in hand, in speechless grief, to wait death's coming cloud.

It came at length; o'er thy bright blue eye the film was gathering fast,—  
 And an awful shade passed o'er thy brow, the deepest and the last:—  
 In thicker gushes strove thy breath,—we raised thy drooping head,  
 A moment more—the final pang—and thou wert of the dead!

Thy gentle mother turned away to hide her face from me,  
 And murmured low of Heaven's behests, and bliss attained by thee;—  
 She would have chid me that I mourned a doom so blest as thine,  
 Had not her own deep grief burst forth in tears as wild as mine!

We laid thee down in sinless rest, and from thine infant brow  
 Culled one soft lock of radiant hair—our only solace now,—  
 Then placed around thy beauteous corse, flowers, not more fair and  
 sweet;  
 T'win rosebuds in thy little hands, and jasmine at thy feet.

Though other offspring still be ours, as fair perchance as thou,  
 With all the beauty of thy cheek—the sunshine of thy brow,  
 They never can replace the bud our early fondness nurst,  
 They may be lovely and beloved, but not like thee—the first!

The first! How many a memory bright that one sweet word can bring  
 Of hopes that blossomed, drooped, and died, in life's delightful spring;  
 Of fervid feelings passed away—those early seeds of bliss,  
 That germinate in hearts unsundered, by such a world as this!

My sweet one, my sweet one, my fairest, and my first!  
 When I think of what thou might'st have been, my heart is like to burst;  
 But gleams of gladness through the gloom their soothing radiance dart,  
 And my sighs are hush'd, my tears are dried, when I turn to what thou art!

Pure as the snow-flake ere it falls and takes the stain of earth,  
 With not a taint of mortal life, except thy mortal birth,—  
 God bade thee early taste the spring for which so many thirst;  
 And bliss—eternal bliss—is thine, my fairest, and my first!

#### HYMN AT THE BURIAL OF AN EMIGRANT'S CHILD.

*By Mrs. Hemans.*

Where the long reeds quiver,  
 Where the pines make moan,  
 By the forest river,  
 Sleeps our babe alone.  
 England's field-flowers may not deck our grave,  
 Cyprus shadows o'er him darkly wave.

Woods unknown receive him,  
 'Midst the mighty wild;  
 Yet with God we leave him,  
 Blessed, blessed child!  
 And our tears gush o'er his lonely dust,  
 Mournfully, yet still from hearts of trust.

Though his eye hath brightened  
 Oft our weary way,  
 And his clear laugh lightened  
 Half our heart's dismay;  
 Still in hope we give back what was given,  
 Yielding up the beautiful to heaven.

And to her who bore him,  
 Her who long must weep,  
 Yet shall heaven restore him  
 From his pale sweet sleep!  
 Those blue eyes of love and peace again  
 Through her soul will shine, undimmed by pain.

Where the long reeds quiver,  
 Where the pines make moan,  
 Leave me by the river,  
 Earth to earth alone!  
 God and Father! may our journeyings on,  
 Lead to where the blessed boy is gone.

From the exile's sorrow,  
 From the wanderer's dread  
 Of the night and morrow,  
 Early, brightly fled;  
 Thou hast called him to a sweeter home,  
 Than our lost one o'er the ocean's foam.

Now let thought behold him  
 With his angel look,  
 Where those arms enfold him,  
 Which benignly took  
 Israel's babes to their good Shepherd's breast  
 When His voice their tender meekness blest.

Turn thee now, fond mother!  
 From the dead, oh, turn!  
 Linger not, young brother,  
 Here to dream and mourn:  
 Only kneel once more around the sod,  
 Kneel and bow submissive hearts to God!

#### THE ANGEL AND THE CHILD.

An angel form with brow of light,  
 Watch'd o'er a sleeping infant's dream,  
 And gazed, as though his image bright  
 He there beheld as in a stream.

"Fair child, whose face is like to mine,  
 Oh come," he said, "and fly with me;  
 Come forth to happiness divine,  
 For earth is all unworthy thee.

"Here perfect bliss thou canst not know;  
 The soul amidst its pleasures sighs,  
 All sounds of joy are full of woe,  
 Enjoyments are but miseries.



"Fear stalks amidst the gorgeous shows :  
And tho' serene the day may rise,  
It lasts not brilliant to its close,  
And tempests sleep in calmest skies.

"Alas! shall sorrow, doubts and fears  
Deform a brow so pure as this!—  
And shall the bitterness of tears  
Dim those blue eyes that speak of bliss!

"No, no! along the realms of space,  
Far from all care, let us begone :  
Kind Providence shall give thee grace  
For those few years thou might'st live on.

"No mourning weeds, no sounds of wail  
Thy chainless spirit shall annoy ;  
Thy kindred shall thy absence hail,  
Even as thy coming gave them joy.

"No cloud on any brow shall rest,  
Nought speak of tombs or sadness there ;  
Of beings, like thee, pure and blest,  
The latest hour should be most fair."

The angel shook his snowy wings  
And thro' the fields of ether sped,  
Where heaven's eternal music rings—  
—— Mother—alas!—thy boy is dead!

#### GONE—BUT NOT LOST.

*By Mrs. Ellen Stone.*

Sweet bud of Earth's wilderness, rifled and torn!  
Fond eyes have wept o'er thee, fond hearts still will mourn ;  
The spoiler hath come, with his cold withering breath,  
And the loved and the cherished lies silent in death.

He felt not the burden and heat of the day!  
He hath pass'd from this earth, and its sorrows, away,  
With the dew of the morning yet fresh on his brow :—  
Sweet bud of Earth's wilderness, where art thou now?

And oh! do ye question, with tremulous breath,  
Why the joy of our household lies silent in death?  
Do ye mourn round the place of his perishing dust?  
Look onward and upward, with holier trust!

Who cometh to meet him, with light on her brow?  
What angel form greets him so tenderly now?  
'Tis the pure sainted mother, springs onward to bear  
The child of her love from this region of care!

She beareth him on to that realm of repose,  
Where no cloud ever gathers, no storm ever blows :  
For the Saviour calls home to the mansions above,  
This frail trembling floweret in mercy and love.

There shall he for ever, unchanged by decay,  
Beside the still waters and green pastures stray ;  
And there shall ye join him, with earth's ransom'd host—  
Look onward and upward! "he's gone—but not lost!"

## LINES ON THE DEATH OF AN ONLY DAUGHTER.

*By Mrs. A. L. Angier.*

"I cannot feel that she is dead!" With arms about me flung,  
 Like some bright jewel round my neck, but yesterday she hung.  
 I cannot feel that she is dead! And oft with throbbing ear  
 I list to catch her shout of mirth I loved so well to hear.

I cannot feel that she is dead! And at her cradle side  
 I bend to watch her gentle breath—my blessing and my pride!  
 I cannot feel that she is dead! This ringlet is as fair  
 As when upon her sunny brow it fell in beauty there.

I cannot feel that she is dead! Her shadow passes by,  
 In every form of grace that glides before my wakeful eye.  
 And when I sleep, a vision bright across my fancy steals:  
 The smile, the tone, the look of love, my early loss reveals.

Once more her fairy foot I hear tread lightly on the stair,  
 And I almost *answer to the call*, breathed from those lips of air.  
 The rose still blooms, she fondly nursed in spring's soft, vernal hours;  
 Alas! that *she* should soonest fade, the fairest of the flowers.

Yet, Mother, though thy child be dead, light through thy darkness streams,  
 As on the air a low voice falls, like music in our dreams.  
 To soothe thy sadness, quell thy grief, and check thy tears 'tis given,  
 While thus it whispers—"I have found a *better home* in heaven.

"And loved ones, as ye watched o'er me, and chased away my fears,  
 'Tis mine your spirit-guard to be through this dark vale of tears.  
 To shield from sorrow, save from ill, and fix your hopes above—  
 'Tis this shall be my task of joy, my ceaseless work of love;  
 Till in the realm of cloudless light, the pure, blest spirit-land,  
 Where no sad thought of parting comes, you join our seraph band."

## THE MOTHER'S SACRIFICE.

*"God loveth a cheerful giver."**Mrs. L. H. Sigourney.*

"What shall I render thee, Father Supreme,  
 For thy rich gifts, and this the best of all?"  
 Said the young mother, as she fondly watched  
 Her sleeping babe. There was an answering voice  
 That night in dreams:—

"Thou hast a tender flower  
 Upon thy breast—fed with the dews of love:  
 Send me that flower. Such flowers there are in heaven."  
 But there was silence. Yea, a hush so deep,  
 Breathless and terror-stricken, that the lip  
 Blanched in its trance.

"Thou hast a little harp,—  
 How sweetly would it swell the angel's hymn!  
 Yield me that harp."

There rose a shuddering sob,  
 As if the bosom by some hidden sword  
 Was cleft in twain.

Morn came—a blight had found  
 The crimson velvet of the unfolding bud,  
 The harp-strings rang a thrilling strain, and broke—  
 And that young mother lay upon the earth  
 In childless agony. Again the voice  
 That stirred her vision:

“He who asked of thee,  
 Loveth a cheerful giver.” So she raised  
 Her gushing eyes, and, ere the tear-drop dried  
 Upon its fringes, smiled—and that meek smile,  
 Like Abraham’s faith, was counted righteousness.

#### DEATH OF AN INFANT SON.

Farewell, my boy, my much lov’d boy!  
 Tears oft shall flow for thee;  
 And while this broken heart shall beat  
 Thou’lt ne’er forgotten be.

No laughing welcome greets me now,  
 As I approach the door;  
 Thy footsteps light are heard no more  
 Upon the parlour floor.

Thy merry voice, resounding full  
 Of mirthful song and glee,  
 Is silent now,—no more thou’lt smile  
 Upon thy father’s knee.

Thy little chair is empty now  
 At our once glad some hearth;  
 And all is sad and gloomy now,  
 Where all was joy and mirth.

But oh! he only sleeps; look there,—  
 How beautiful my boy!  
 His lips are red,—he slumbers, love,—  
 It is indeed my boy.

Come near,—his golden ringlets bind,  
 And softly, sweetly sing,  
 As thou wert wont to do, my love;  
 O strike the sweetest string.

And he will smile to thee, his mother,  
 When he awakes again,  
 And clasp thee in his little arms,  
 And make thee glad again.

And yet he sleepeth long, love,—  
 Fear cometh on me now:  
 Ah! feel that cheek,—’tis cold, ’tis cold,—  
 And colder still that brow!

“Thou said’st he slept,—O why deceive?”  
 Yes! he but sleepeth still,  
 But ’tis the sleep of death, my love,—  
 It is our Father’s will.

Oh! come with me, then, to His throne,  
 And rev’reently adore,  
 And kiss the Almighty hand that  
 Afflicteth us so sore.

And, oh! He’ll bless and comfort us,  
 He’ll not forsake us now,  
 When waters deep encompass us,  
 And Death hath bent his bow.

And tho’ by Babel’s streams we weep,  
 And think how glad we’ve been;  
 Altho’ our harps in silence hang  
 Upon the willows green;

O still our God will gracious be:  
 Forsake us will He never,  
 Till we in Zion dwell with  
 Our little one—for ever.

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THOUGHTS WHILE MAKING A GRAVE FOR A FIRST CHILD,  
 BORN DEAD.

*N. P. Willis.*

Room, gentle flowers! my child would pass to heaven!  
 Ye looked not for her yet with your soft eyes,  
 O, watchful ushers at Death's narrow door!  
 But lo! while you delay to let her forth,  
 Angels, beyond, stay for her! One long kiss  
 From lips all pale with agony, and tears,  
 Wrung after anguish had dried up with fire  
 The eyes that wept them, were the cup of life  
 Held as a welcome to her. Weep, O mother!  
 But not that from this cup of bitterness  
 A cherub of the sky has turned away.

One look upon her face ere she depart!  
 My daughter! it is soon to let thee go!  
 My daughter! with thy birth has gushed a spring  
 I knew not of; filling my heart with tears,  
 And turning with strange tenderness to thee!  
 A love—O, God, it seems so—which must flow  
 Far as thou fleest, and 'twixt Heaven and me,  
 Henceforward, be a sweet and yearning chain,  
 Drawing me after thee! And so farewell!  
 'Tis a harsh world in which affection knows  
 No place to treasure up its loved and lost  
 But the lone grave! Thou, who so late was sleeping  
 Warm in the close folds of a mother's heart,  
 Scarce from her breast a single pulse receiving,  
 But it was sent thee with some tender thought—  
 How can I leave thee *here*! Alas, for man!  
 The herb in its humility may fall,  
 And waste into the bright and genial air,  
 While we, by hands that ministered in life  
 Nothing but love to us, are thrust away.  
 The earth thrown in upon our just cold bosoms,  
 And the warm sunshine trodden out forever!

Yet have I chosen for thy grave, my child,  
 A bank where I have lain in summer hours,  
 And thought how little it would seem like death  
 To sleep amid such loveliness. The brook  
 Tripping with laughter down the rocky steps  
 That lead us to thy bed, would still trip on,  
 Breaking the dread hush of the mourners gone;  
 The birds are never silent that build here,  
 Trying to sing down the more vocal waters;  
 The slope is beautiful with moss and flowers;  
 And, far below, seen under arching leaves,  
 Glitters the warm sun on the village spire,  
 Pointing the living after thee. And this  
 Seems like a comfort, and, replacing now  
 The flowers that have made room for thee, I go  
 To whisper the same peace to her who lies  
 Robbed of her child, and lonely. 'Tis the work  
 Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,  
 To bring the heart back from an infant gone!  
 Hope must give o'er, and busy fancy blot  
 Its images from all the silent rooms,

And every sight and sound familiar to her  
 Undo its sweetest link; and so, at last,  
 The fountain that, once loosed, must flow forever,  
 Will hide and waste in silence. When the smile  
 Steals to her pallid lip again, and spring  
 Wakens its buds above thee, we will come,  
 And, standing by thy music-haunted grave,  
 Look on each other cheerfully, and say,  
*A child that we have loved is gone to heaven,  
 And by this gate of flowers she passed away!*

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### A PSALM OF DEATH.

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

*Henry W. Longfellow.*

"Dear, beauteous Death! the jewel of the just  
 Shining no where but in the dark,  
 What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,  
 Could we outlook that mark!"

There is a Reaper whose name is Death,  
 And with his sickle keen,  
 He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,  
 And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair," saith he:  
 "Have nought but the bearded grain  
 Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,  
 I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,  
 He kissed their drooping leaves;  
 It was for the Lord of Paradise  
 He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord hath need of the flowerets gay,"  
 The Reaper said, and smiled:  
 "Dear tokens of the earth are they,  
 Where he was once a child."

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,  
 Transplanted by my care,  
 And saints upon their garments white  
 These sacred blossoms wear."

And the mother gave, in tears and pain,  
 The flowers she most did love;  
 But she knew she would find them all again,  
 In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,  
 The Reaper came that day:  
 'Twas an angel visited the green earth,  
 And took the flowers away.

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### TO A DYING INFANT.

Sleep, little baby! sleep!  
 Not in thy cradle bed,  
 Not on thy mother's breast  
 Henceforth shall be thy rest,  
 But with the quiet dead.

Yes—with the quiet dead,  
 Baby, thy rest shall be.  
 Oh! many a weary heart,  
 Weary of life's dull part,  
 Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling!  
 Flee to thy grassy nest;  
 There the first flowers shall blow,  
 The first pure flakes of snow  
 Shall fall upon thy breast.

## ON A FAIR INFANT.

*Milton.*

A fairest flower, no sooner shown than blasted,  
 Soft, silken primrose, fading timelessly,  
 Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst outlasted  
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;  
 For he, being amorous on that lovely dye  
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss  
 But killed, alas! and then bewailed his fatal bliss.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,  
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,  
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,  
 Hid from the world in a low delved tomb  
 Could Heaven, for pity, thee so strictly doom?—  
 Oh, no! for something in thy face did shine  
 Above mortality, that showed thou wast divine.

Ah! wert thou of the golden-winged host,  
 Who, having clad thyself in human weed,  
 To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,  
 And after short abode fly back with speed,  
 As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed;  
 Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,  
 To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire.

But, oh! why didst thou not stay here below?  
 To bless us with thy heaven-loved innocence,  
 To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,  
 To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,  
 Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,  
 To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?  
 But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,  
 Her false-imagined loss cease to lament.  
 And wisely think to curb thy sorrows wild;  
 Think what a present thou to God has sent,  
 And render Him with patience what He lent;  
 This, if thou do, he will an offspring give,  
 That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

THE MOTHER'S SOLILOQUY ON THE DEATH OF AN  
INFANT SON.

*By the Rev. J. Lawson.*

Hushed be the murmuring thought!  
 Thy will be done.  
 O Arbiter of life and death, I bow  
 To thy command. I yield the precious gift



So late bestowed, and to the silent grave  
 Move sorrowing, yet submissive. O sweet babe!  
 I lay thee down to rest. The cold, cold earth,  
 A pillow for thy little head. Sleep on  
 Serene in death! No care shall trouble thee:  
 All undisturbed thou slumberest, far more still  
 Than when I lulled thee in my lap, and soothed  
 Thy little sorrows till they ceased.  
 Then felt thy mother peace; her heart was light  
 As the sweet sigh that 'scaped thy placid lips,  
 And joyous as the dimpled smile that played  
 Across thy countenance. O, I must weep  
 To think of thee, dear infant, on my knees  
 Untroubled sleeping. Bending o'er thy form,  
 I watched with eager hope to catch the laugh,  
 First waking from the sparkling eye, a beam  
 Lovely to me, as the blue light of heaven;  
 Dimmed in the agony of death, it beams no more!  
 O, yet once more I kiss thy marble lips,  
 Sweet babe! and press with mine thy whitened cheeks;  
 Farewell, a long farewell! Yet visit me  
 In dreams, my darling! Though the visioned joy  
 Wake bitter pangs; still be those in my thoughts,  
 And I will cherish the dear dream, and think  
 I still possess thee. Peace, my bursting heart!  
 O, I submit. Again I lay thee down,  
 Dear relic of a mother's hope. Thy spirit,  
 Now mingled with cherubic hosts, adores  
 The grace that ransomed it, and lodged thee safe  
 Above the stormy scene.

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#### ON THE DEATH OF AN INFANT.

With what unknown delight the mother smiled,  
 When this frail treasure in her arms she pressed!  
 Her prayer was heard—she clasped a living child:  
 But how the gift transcends the poor request!  
 A child was all she asked, with many a vow!  
 Mother—behold the child an angel now!

Now in her Father's house she finds a place,  
 Or, if to earth she takes a transient flight,  
 'Tis to fulfil the purpose of His grace:  
 To guide thy footsteps to the world of light;—  
 A ministering spirit sent to thee,  
 That where she is, there thou may'st also be.

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#### THE LOST DARLING.

She was my idol. Night and day to scan  
 The fine expansion of her form, and mark  
 The unfolding mind, like vernal rose-bud start  
 To sudden beauty, was my chief delight.  
 To find her fairy footsteps follow me,  
 Her hand upon my garments, or her lip  
 Long sealed to mine, and in the watch of night  
 The quiet breath of innocence to feel  
 Soft on my cheek, was such a full content  
 Of happiness, as none but mothers know.  
 Her voice was like some tiny harp, that yields  
 To the light fingered breeze; and as it held  
 Brief converse with her doll, or playful soothed

The moaning kitten, or with patient care  
 Conned o'er the alphabet—but most of all,  
 Its tender cadence in her evening prayer  
 Thrilled on the air like some ethereal tone  
 Heard in sweet dreams.

But now alone I sit,  
 Musing of her, and dew with mournful tears  
 Her little robes, that once with woman's pride  
 I wrought, as if there were a need to deck  
 What God hath made so beautiful. I start,  
 Half fancying from her empty crib there comes  
 A restless sound, and breathe the accustomed words,  
 "Hush! Hush thee, dearest." Then I bend and weep—  
 As though it were a sin to speak to one  
 Whose home is with the angels.

Gone to God!  
 And yet I wish I had not seen the pang  
 That wrung her features, nor the ghostly white  
 Settling around her lips, I would that Heaven  
 Had taken its own, like some transplanted flower,  
 Blooming in all its freshness.

Gone to God!  
 Be still, my heart! what could a mother's prayer,  
 In all the wildest ecstasy of hope,  
 Ask for its darling like the bliss of heaven?

#### DEATH OF AN INFANT.

Death found strange beauty on that polished brow,  
 And dashed it out.—

There was a tint of rose  
 On cheek and lip.—He touched the veins with ice,  
 And the rose faded.—

Forth from those blue eyes  
 There spake a wishful tenderness, a doubt  
 Whether to grieve or sleep, which innocence  
 Alone may wear. With ruthless haste he bound  
 The silken fringes of those curtaining lids  
 Forever.—

There had been a murmuring sound,  
 With which the babe would claim its mother's ear,  
 Charming her even to tears. The spoiler set  
 His seal of silence.—

But there beamed a smile  
 So fixed, so holy, from the cherub brow,  
 Death gazed—and left it there.  
*He dared not steal*  
*The signet-ring of heaven.*

#### LINES.

*By Mrs. Hemans.*

No bitter tears for thee be shed,  
 Blossom of being! seen and gone!  
 With flowers alone we strew thy bed,  
 O blest departed one!  
 Whose all of life, a rosy ray,  
 Blush'd into dawn, and pass'd away.

Yes! thou art fled, ere guilt had power  
 To stain thy cherub soul and form,  
 Closed is the soft ephemeral flower,  
 That never felt a storm!  
 The sun-beam's smile, the zephyr's breath,  
 All that it knew from birth to death.

Thou wert so like a form of light,  
 That Heaven benignly call'd thee hence  
 Ere yet the world could breathe one blight  
 O'er thy sweet innocence:  
 And thou, that brighter home to bless,  
 Art pass'd with all thy loveliness!

Oh, hadst thou still on earth remain'd,  
 Vision of beauty! fair, as brief!  
 How soon thy brightness had been stain'd  
 With passion or with grief!  
 Now not a sullying breath can rise  
 To dim thy glory in the skies.

We rear no marble o'er thy tomb,  
 No sculptured image there shall mourn.  
 Ah! fitter far the vernal bloom  
 Such dwelling to adorn.  
 Fragrance, and flowers, and dews, must be  
 The only emblems meet of thee.

Thy grave shall be a blessed shrine,  
 Adorn'd with nature's brightest wreath,  
 Each glowing season shall combine  
 Its incense there to breathe;  
 And oft upon the midnight air,  
 Shall viewless harps be murmuring there.

And oh! sometimes in visions blest,  
 Sweet spirit! visit our repose,  
 And bear from thine own world of rest,  
 Some balm for human woes!  
 What form more lovely could be given  
 Than thine, as messenger of Heaven?

#### ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

Life is a span, a fleeting hour;  
 How soon the vapor flies!  
 Man is a tender, transient flower,  
 That e'en in blooming dies.

Death spreads his with'ring wintry arms,  
 And beauty smiles no more:  
 Ah! where are now those rising charms  
 Which pleas'd our eyes before?

Hope looks beyond the bounds of time,  
 When what we now deplore  
 Shall rise in full immortal prime,  
 And bloom to fade no more.

Cease, then, fond nature, cease thy tears;  
 Thy Saviour dwells on high:  
 There everlasting spring appears,  
 There joys shall never die.

## THE DYING SON.

Nay, mother, fix not thus on me  
 That streaming eye,  
 And clasp not thus my freezing hand;  
 For I *must* die.

Deeply I've drunk the wormwood draught,  
 The grief, the pain;  
 Oh! ask me not one bitter drop  
 To taste again.

My father, on my weary head,  
 O lay thine hand;  
 And bless me while I yet can hear  
 Thy accents bland:

And smile, as thou were wont to do  
 In happy days,  
 When I looked to thy loving eye,  
 And sought its praise.

Loved parents, when my infant couch  
 Ye knelt beside,  
 And asked the gracious Lord to bless  
 Your hope, your pride:

To Him ye gave the opening bud,  
 The early bloom;  
 Then grieve not that the ripened fruit  
 He gathers home.

## THE INFANT'S HOME.

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF TWIN CHILDREN.

Where are ye now, sweet pair?  
 Vacant is now your place of cradled rest;  
 Ye slumber not upon a mother's breast,  
 Where is your home—oh! where?

How beautiful ye were,  
 With your meek, peaceful brows and laughing eyes,  
 All eloquent of life's first energies,  
 And joy's bright fount, yet clear.

How blithely ye awoke  
 With each new day; familiar forms were there  
 To meet your eager glance—kind voices near,  
 In gentle accents spoke.

Ye seemed then to be,  
 As some pale flower, that to the morning's light  
 Rears its frail stem, and spreads its petals bright  
 As if confidingly.

And when, at evening's close,  
 Those little hands, relaxing from the grasp,  
 That some dear object held, with loving clasp,  
 Ye sunk into repose.

Love made your slumbers seem  
 As the closed flowers, o'er which the silent star  
 Keepeth its ceaseless vigil from afar,  
 And sheds its unfelt beam.

I looked upon you then  
 With thoughts almost of sorrow in my gaze,  
 As on a passing joy, which other days  
 Would make not mine again.

I feared some change might sweep  
 Through the untroubled breast, and leave its stain;  
 Some unsuspected ill, some bitter pain,  
 Mar with sad dreams your sleep.

I know that change *has* past  
 O'er you, sweet, tender nurslings! but I know  
 Your spirits now will never taste of woe,—  
 That change will be the last.

Ye are before me now,  
 As ye were wont to be—no beauty gone,  
 That in those eyes, even when tearful, shone,  
 No charm from those pure brows.

Too calm, too deeply still,  
 Is that unchanging picture; yet a part  
 Of the sweet visions of the past,  
 Can make its own at will.

And thus ye are mine own,—  
 Mine own, to dwell upon with quiet love;  
 Thoughts the world cannot touch, nor time remove—  
 From me ye are not gone.

I ask not, where are laid  
 Those faded forms—whether below the sod  
 Which busy feet have with indifference trod,  
 Or 'neath some kindly shade.

Where, on earth's tranquil breast,  
 The peace of the Eternal One hath smiled,  
 E'en as a mother o'er her cradled child,  
 There is your place of rest.

He, who mankind shall wake,  
 Over His children's rest a watch doth keep,  
 And with a voice that breathes of love, the sleep  
 Of innocence will break.

Not in that simple tomb,  
 But in "our Father's house," where love shall be  
 Abiding, even in its own sanctuary,  
 There is the infant's home.

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#### TO A MOTHER ON THE DEATH OF HER INFANT.

Sure to the mansions of the blest,  
 Where infant innocence ascends,  
 Some angel brighter than the rest,  
 The spotless spirit's flight attends.

There at th' Almighty Father's hand,  
 Nearest the throne of living light,  
 The choirs of infant seraphs stand,  
 And dazzling shine where all are bright.

When thus the Lord of mortal breath  
 Decrees His bounty to resume,  
 And points the silent shaft of death,  
 Which speeds our infants to the tomb.

Oh! think the darlings of thy love,  
Divested of this earthly clod,  
Amid unnumber'd saints above,  
Bask in the bosom of their God.

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## THE GRAVE.

There is no monument to mark the spot;  
Two feet of grass are all that o'er it wave;  
The stranger passes, but he heeds it not;  
It is an infant's grave.

But there are two who know the spot full well,  
And visit it, full oft, at evening tide;  
For when the child entombed within it fell,  
Fell all their earthly pride.

The mother as she decks it round with flowers,  
Waters with tears the little new-grown sod;  
The father bends his knee, and sadly pours  
His vexed soul to God.

Grieve not, ye sad ones! does the spirit sleep?  
'Tis with the Lord, who took but what He gave,  
Angelic spirits nightly vigils keep  
O'er your infant's grave.

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## HASTE TO DEPART.

Haste to depart. The breeze of earth  
Is all too rude for thee;  
For thou wast destin'd from thy birth  
For realms more fair and free.  
Our warmest beams too coldly glow,  
Thy beauties to expand;  
Thy spirit lingers here below,  
As in a foreign land.

Haste to depart. The wandering dove,  
Benighted as it flies,  
Pants not to gain its bower of love,  
As thou to reach the skies.  
The hours of spring-tide come, but bring  
No spring-time to thy heart;  
Among the leaves sweet voices sing,  
Thou heed'st them not. Depart!

And yet to us thou art as dear  
As earthly thing can be;  
And we are fain to keep thee here,  
And share our hearts with thee;  
The thought, how brief thy sojourning  
In this low vale must prove,  
But makes us closer round thee cling,  
And wakes to deeper love!

Haste to depart. We would not dare  
To stay thy wing from heaven;  
And all thy love, and all thy care,  
To God alone be given.  
Though darkness veil our future hours,  
Nor thou be near to shine,  
The bitter loss can be but ours,  
The gain, immortal, thine.



Thy mossy grave our tears shall wet,  
 When thou art lowly laid,  
 But thy freed spirit shall forget  
 All of this earth's dim shade;  
 When crown'd and rob'd in spotless white,  
 Washed in the fount above;  
 The Fount of blessedness and light,  
 A great Redeemer's love!

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### DEATH.

*By Miss Pardoe.*

This is a world of care,  
 And many thorns upon its pathway lie;  
 Weep not, then, mothers, for your fond and fair,  
 Let the young die!

Joys are like summer flowers,  
 And soon the blossoms of their beauty fall,  
 Clouds bloom o'er both; brief are both the hours,  
 Death ends them all!

This is a world of strife,  
 Of feverish struggles, and satiety,  
 And blighted enterprise—what then is life?  
 Let the strong die!

All human love is vain,  
 And human might is but an empty sound;  
 Power of mind and body bringeth pain—  
 Death is its bound!

This is a world of woe,  
 Of heaviness, and anxiety:  
 Why cling we then to evils that we know?  
 Let the old die!

Wrestling with fell disease,  
 Vain lamentations o'er departed years;  
 Is not age rife with these?  
 Death dries all tears!

This is a world of pain:  
 There is a BETTER LAND beyond the sky;  
 A humble spirit may that portion gain—  
 Let the just die!

But let those shrink with dread,  
 Whose days have been of evil, lest they find,  
 When all their earthly hopes are withered,  
 Despair behind!

Let them implore for aid,  
 A fitter record of their years to give;  
 And lean on Him who mercifully bade  
 The sinner live!





# God's Way in the Wilderness.

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## GOD'S WAY IN THE WILDERNESS.

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Is. 43:19.

Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert.

This world and human life are well compared to a wilderness. Is the wilderness pathless and without a track or guide to direct the weary traveler? Such is life to him who ventures upon it without a guide, a compass and a chart.

The world's a wilderness, where unguarded men  
Walk up and down to find their weariness.

Is a wilderness uncultivated and barren and destitute of those productions which are necessary to the substance and comfort of man? Such is life.

Where solid pain succeeds our senseless joys,  
And short lived pleasures pass like floating dreams.

Is a wilderness filled with briars and thorns and weeds that impede our progress, tear our limbs and poison our very blood? Such, too, is life.

Ambition fires ambition; love of gain  
Strikes like a pestilence from breast to breast.  
Riot, fire, perfidy, blue vapours breathe;  
And inhumanity is caught from man,  
From smiling man.

In a wilderness must one expect to meet with hard and exhausting toil, to be exposed to much trial, self-denial and hard endurance, and even to the ravages of wild beasts and deadly reptiles, and after living obscure and unknown to die unpitied and unlamented? Even such is the sad picture of human life.

Where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,  
Three demons that divide its realms between them,  
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro  
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;  
Till, with the giddy circle, sick and tired,  
It pants for peace and drops into despair.

Nor is this all. Satan, the great adversary of human happiness, goeth about like a roaring lion seeking to destroy, and lurk, as he did of old amid the shades of life to dart upon the unwearied, to lure them to temptation, to set on fire their pas-



sions with the fire of his hellish darts and thus keep them without God and without hope in the world.

If, then, in a wilderness it is so essential not only to the comfort but even to the life of man to have a secure and beaten way, how much more essential is such a way to the pilgrim in life's moral wilderness. And if in such a blank and barren wilderness it is all-important to have a guide and provisions for the way and fountains of water to slake the feverish thirst, how much more needful are these in that moral wilderness, through which as way-worn travelers we press on towards our eternal destiny.

Thus in the daily paths of life  
 To shame us from the way  
 Of pure and happy innocence  
 And lead our steps astray,—  
 His net the wily tempter spreads  
 And with an angel's voice  
 Pours forth his witching melodies  
 And bids our hearts rejoice;  
 Instils his poison in our ears  
 And gently leads us on;  
 Till roused by sad, unwonted fears  
 We feel our peace is gone.

In such a road, thus filled with snares,  
 Oh! who can safely speed?  
 Who pass along life's dangerous way  
 Unstained in thought and deed.

And yet in this wilderness we are and through it we must wend our way. To all its dangers we are exposed. By all its temptations we are assailed. By all its sorrows and its trials we must be overwhelmed; and having passed through its valley, dark with the shadow of death, we must enter upon the dread alternatives of salvation or perdition.

How welcome, then, the proclamation of our text and how consolatory the reflections it awakens in the bosom. Let us contemplate it in some of its various applications:

I. Human life is a wilderness as it regards the course of divine providence. This is necessarily perplexed, obscure and seemingly mysterious because of our position, our incapacity to judge, and our indisposition to judge aright. It is but a small part of God's ways we can possibly discern. They encircle us in their illimitable infinity like the unbounded forest which stretches out interminably around the benighted traveler. Our views of divine providence must resemble therefore

those of the man who from his own dwelling should undertake to describe the entire surface and even the contents of the earth.

Creatures of a day we float upon the world's stormy sea like the waves of ocean driven forward by their successors and dashed and broken upon their forerunners, the countless wrecks that daily perish. No man therefore can safely or surely calculate what will be on tomorrow or what will be the issue of his labours.

But still men think not so;  
While sporting on youth's untiring wing  
We roam joyously o'er life's verdant fields  
And woo its opening spring.

But it is not long before we learn that all our illusive hopes must leave their shattered wrecks on disappointment's shore. Our destiny is not in our own hands. The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, nor victory to the bold. The wisdom of men is foolishness, and all their expectation vain, and by the daily and innumerable instances in which God destroys the fondest and fairest hopes, He admonishes and assures them that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. There is many a way that seemeth right to a man and yet the end thereof is death. And he only whose steps are ordered by the Lord finds a way opened for him in the wilderness and everything made to work together for his good.

Life is a wilderness, and the ways of God are not as man's ways, but are oftentimes in direct contrariety to them. But this wilderness is all plain and obvious to the view of Him who has called us to journey through it. He has prepared a way, drawn the chart, and planned all the proceedings of His people so that while in all their ways they acknowledge the Lord He directs their steps, fixes the bounds of their habitation, and orders their very steps.

There are circumstances in Providence not a few, in which the Lord's family have such mountains in their way, such obscurity and darkness, such difficulties to struggle with, that they do not know how they are to get over this obstacle or the other; and it seems as if they were set fast in their journey, could get no further, and must lie down in despair. No, says God, "I will even make a way in the wilderness;" "I will make

darkness light before them, and crooked things straight;" I will remove the difficulties, and if there be a mountain before them, I will say—"Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain," to make a way for "My people, My chosen." Fear not, beloved, if you belong to God; providence may be dark, things may be exceedingly trying in your experience, but He will "make a way," so that you shall be led on. God will "even make a way in the wilderness;" and "bread shall be given, and your water shall be sure," all through the wilderness journey, according to His promise.

I think I might here invite a very considerable number of my hearers to get up and preach for five minutes apiece. One would say, "Ah! there was a period in my history, in which I thought all was over, and I was an utterly ruined man, but God 'made a way in the wilderness;' and the difficulties disappeared without my attempting to touch them." And another would declare, "I was involved in an affliction which threatened my life; and during that, and owing to its exceeding weight upon me, business and family and every thing appeared going to ruin; but the Lord 'made a way in the wilderness,' relief was at hand, health returned, and 'enlargement and deliverance' (as old Mordecai called it) came in a way the least expected." Elijah could not tell by any reasoning power or any philosophy, however deep, how during the famine he should be sustained and supplied: "Oh!" says Jehovah, "I will 'make a way in the wilderness;' go down to Sarepta; that is the way for you to go." "And to whom there, Lord?" "Why, to a poor widow, and she shall sustain thee; and if the supplies fail, I will send thee into the wilderness, and thou shalt be fed even there." I might refer you to many other illustrations in the histories of the patriarchs; the history of David, and his way to his throne and kingdom; the history of the prophets, Isaiah and others, and the history of the apostles. There seemed, in multitudes of instances, no way for them to proceed in. Look at Paul and Silas, when they had got into the Phillippian jail for proclaiming God's truth; they have no friend at Court, no possibility of escape, no picklock keys. "I will make a way," says God; and He shook the foundations of the prison, and threw open the doors before them.

Of such illustrations the Bible is full and the daily life of christians is an exemplification. The just live and walk and are saved by faith. When father and mother are removed then the Lord takes them up and when all creature good is withdrawn the Lord proves Himself to be a very present help in every time of need. They are overwhelmed with difficulty. Clouds and darkness are round about them. Their future course is veiled in impenetrable obscurity. But a way is still kept open. Step by step they advance and find another step prepared for them and a way opened that they knew not of.

Look at that bereaved family. Their head, protector and provider is gone and they are left to all appearances helpless and hopeless. But that lone widow puts her trust in God. She lays hold of His promise that He will be a husband to the widow and a judge of the fatherless and she casts all her cares upon that gracious God who has thus assured her of His interest in her. She teaches her children to make the Lord the guide of their youth and the only source of hope and expectation. And thus day by day while pressing through the wilderness she leans upon the Lord and makes His word her stay. And, my brethren, how often have you observed the children of such a widowed mother, whose faith is great, but whose means are small, prosper and become useful and esteemed members of society, while the children who have grown up under the watch and care of an earthly father have proved worthless and unprofitable.

And so it is always and in every way, and as it regards all things that pertain to his people.

To all men and not less but all the more to the believer, life is a state of unrest and fearfulness, and vicissitude. It is a pilgrimage, a warfare, a sojourn. All around is in a state of flux and decay. The sand of the desert is for food, the bitter waters of Marah for drink, garments of sackcloth for raiment, and the shepherd's tent for habitation. The great and sore wilderness between Egypt and Canaan is the type of our earthly lot,—the toil and disquiet of this present state of being. But to the true Israelite there is a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night which give strength and confidence—the Spirit of adoption, the true Comforter, whose presence gives greatness



and assurance for ever. Through Him strengthening him the believer cannot be soon shaken in mind. He standeth fast and trusteth in the Lord. They know that nothing can separate them from the love of God. Their inheritance is far away. None can take it from them. This hope is a strong tower amid the troubles of the way into which the righteous run and are safe.

But man's present condition is as a wilderness considered in reference to the way of salvation. Man is not now in Paradise. He has been driven forth into the wilderness which his own sin has formed. Without him and around him the storm rages and the disordered and unbalanced elements rage. Beneath him thorns and briars spring up and cover what was the garden of the Lord. Within him he feels the disorder and the discord of all his moral powers. Behind him roll in thickening masses the dark clouds of his past misdoings and offences. Above him he perceives the gathering elements of portending wrath, while all before him is blackened by a certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation.

In this condition man turns towards every quarter enquiring who will show us any good or can man be just with God—a God who taketh vengeance. In the various systems of idolatry what melancholy proof have we of man's conscious guilt, and of his utter inability to find out God. Nay, even where the true light shines around them how blindly do men stray and wander like sheep every one in his own way but every one in a way contrary to God's appointed way to life and salvation. And why is this? Why but because the light that is in them is darkened—they lean to their own understanding, and go about to establish a righteousness of their own devising.

Now when the traveler plods his way through the pathless desert, or sails upon the trackless sea, how does he find and pursue his proper course? They look up from earth to ask their way from heaven; and find their only sure direction thence. And when we behold the sin, misery and confusion which every where prevail, the beauty of God's holiness and how men have defiled it, the awfulness of God's majesty and how men have defied it, and the exactness of that infinite justice which then, provoke to the uttermost wrath—we might well

weep over our lost estate and cry who shall bring salvation. Behold in God is our strength—in the Son of the living God is our hope. The same God who has given the lost traveler and the weary mariner a guide in the shining heavens above them, has given to us also the sun of righteousness by day and the star of Bethlehem by night so that the wayfaring man even though a fool need not err in pursuing the way of life. God has thus made a way in the wilderness. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon—it shall not be found there, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there.

Thus still amid this lonely main  
Beams one inspiring ray;  
There shines a star on Bethlehem's plain,  
And soon the dawning day  
Dawns on a newborn soul,  
And all its darkness and decay  
Is fresh and green again.

Blessed be God there is a way through this wilderness of guilt and sin and dark despair—a new and living way which Jesus has consecrated for us. Oh, yes, Christ is the way through whom whosoever will may return unto God and find mercy. It is through Christ—His merit, His imputed righteousness, His atoning blood, His essential Deity, His finished and perfect work—a sinner can find access to, and acceptance with, God. This is THE WAY, God's high-way—the sure, the firm, the finished, the straight and narrow, the only way that leadeth unto everlasting life. No man can come unto God but in this way besides which there is none other under heaven given among men whereby any child of mortality can possibly be saved. From eternity God devised this way. From the beginning of time the whole course of His providence, patriarchs and prophets and holy men of God have been preparing this way. And in the fulness of time our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ came forth in the likeness of sinful flesh to make this way of salvation, to run one stumbling-block out of the way, to remove the curse of sin, clear away all obstructions, conquer all enemies, scatter all darkness, and by His own merit, His own obedience, His own sacrifice, His own atonement, His own satisfaction, open up a way of access unto the Father so that God may be just.



Truly, brethren, this is none other than God's own way—for it is as high above man's ways as are the heavens above the earth—a path which the vulture's eye hath not seen, the great mystery of godliness into which even angels desire to look.

"I"—mark the language of my text—"I will even make a way." I ask, what angel, or what mind of man could have devised such a way to save sinners, as God has marked out in the person of His dear Son? Who would have thought of substitution? Who would have thought of any way for poor ruined sinners to return, that were driven out of Paradise through and under the fall, "cherubim with a flaming sword keeping the way of the tree of life," had not God Himself formed it? It is His own plan, His own appointment, His own gift; and even the preparation of the humanity of Christ is God's own work, for He says, "A body hast Thou prepared Me." Himself prepared the "way;" Himself drew the plan; Himself engaged in covenant settlement for the whole of the terms of salvation, all that should be requisite for the bringing of sinners to God. And therefore the positive language is set down—"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." God will not be disappointed; He has marked out the way, by which His ransomed "*shall* return," and no hindrance shall prevent one of them from finding His footstool, and then finding His seat.

This, my brethren, is the living way of the gospel, the glorious way by which God is glorified and man redeemed, the narrow way which will admit of no self-righteous burdens, the hidden way revealed only by God's Spirit to God's chosen ones, and the satisfying way in which God will be found making rivers on the desert, and opening up wells and fountains of salvation, the pure waters of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

"If ever (he observes) God discovered Himself as a 'fountain of living waters,' it was when, in the person of His own divine Son, He opened on this earth a 'fountain for sin and for uncleanness.' Providing, in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, an expiation for human guilt, and in the gift of His Holy

Spirit, which was one result of the Mediator's interference, a renewal of human nature, He fulfilled to the letter the prophetic promise, 'I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.' The earth was indeed a wilderness: and everything therein was dried up and parched, although there had passed over it—as truly there had—the breath of its Maker's indignation: but there came to it One, human in form, but divine in person: and, through what He performed, and what He endured, living streams gushed forth: and the thirsty might everywhere drink and be refreshed, the polluted everywhere wash and be clean. The justifying virtue of the work of the Redeemer, the sanctifying of that of the Spirit—these include everything of which, as sinful but immortal beings, we can have need: by the former we may have title to the kingdom of heaven, and by the latter be made meet for the glorious inheritance. That God 'hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him'—here truly is the sum and substance of the Gospel: and whosoever, conscious of his sinfulness, and intent on learning how he may be saved, hath had these words brought home to him in 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power,' oh, he can testify, that not to the traveler on the burning desert is the bubbling fountain more eloquent of life, than the Gospel, thus gathered into a sentence, to the wanderer who feels condemned by the law. Nevertheless, can it be said, that men in general are ready to close with the Gospel, to partake of it as the parched traveler of the spring found amid the sands? Alas, 'who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?' The invitation is going forth, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters:' but it has to be accompanied with the ancient remonstrance, 'Why do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?' Labour is thus thrown away: cisterns are 'hewn out.' Even where religion is not neglected, what pains are bestowed on the making some system less distasteful to pride, or more complacent to passion, than practical unadulterated christianity! what costly effort is given to the compounding the human with the Divine, our own

merit with that of Christ: or to the preparing ourselves for the reception of grace, as though it were not grace *by* which, as well as grace *for* which, we are prepared: grace which must fashion the vessel, as well as grace which must fill it. Truly the cistern is 'hewn out,' when the fountain is forsaken. Let Christ be unto you 'all in all,' 'made unto you of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,' and the fountain gives a river, which, like the rock struck in Horeb, never ceaseth to make glad the believer. But turn away, though by a single step, from Christ, and, oh, the toil, the dissatisfaction, of endeavouring to make—what? 'a broken cistern,' 'a cistern that can hold no water'—if creature comforts are such cisterns to those who seek happiness, creature systems must be to those who seek immortality.

"For what shall endure the severity of God's scrutiny, but that which is itself of God's appointing and providing? Subject, so to speak, one of your cisterns to His inspection, whether repentance as supposed to be necessarily efficacious to forgiveness, or good works considered as meritorious, or His own mercy as too great to take vengeance—and how He will look it through! how full of flaws will it become! how utterly incapable of holding anything but that wine of His wrath, of whose dregs you read in the Book of Psalms, dregs which, if we may use such expression, may prevent the wine's escape, filling up the fissures, but only that you may have always whereof you must drink, but never wherewith you may slake your thirst. But shall we wonder then that God denounces, in terms so reproachful and indignant, the leaving the fountain, and the hewing out the cistern? the substituting for the simple, unadulterated Gospel of Christ, any of those devices of reason, or creations of pride, to which some would have recourse for motive to duty, strength in trial, comfort in sorrow, hope in death? Shall we wonder that as if, where such a thing could be done, it were idle to expect that its enormity should be felt, he appeals, not to earth, but to heaven, for an audience? appeals, and in what terms? 'Be horribly afraid, ye heavens; be ye very desolate.' One is staggered by such expressions—the heavens called on to be 'very desolate,' as if they were likely to be unpeopled, or kept empty, through this hewing out of

broken cisterns. The broken cistern below is the unfilled mansion above. Oh, if ye would do your part towards the occupancy of heaven—if ye would be there yourselves, and so rather prevent vacancy, or leave not vacancy to be filled by such as were not 'children of the kingdom,' take heed that ye suffer not yourselves to be drawn aside from Christ: admit no system of theology of which Christ, Christ crucified, Christ glorified, is not the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. And let it warn you of the peril of missing heaven—not through idleness, not through indifference; this is not the case contemplated: the idle man is not in the quarry, 'hewing out the cistern,'—but through misapplied energy, through misdirected endeavour—let it warn you of the peril of this, that the heavens are called upon to be 'very desolate'—ay, 'very desolate;' interpret it how you will, whether as emptying themselves of their shining hosts to behold the most astounding and afflicting of spectacles, or as likely to remain unoccupied through so sad and fatal an apostasy—the heavens are called on to be 'very desolate,' when God's people are to be charged with having forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewn out to themselves cisterns that can hold no water."

There are many other beautiful and appropriate applications of this promise to which we might allude and particularly as illustrative of God's dealings with the soul in the commencement and progress of the work of personal religion in the soul. How like a wilderness to the anxious and inquiring soul is the way of salvation. How does it seem hedged up with thorns and so overgrown that there is no possibility of advancing. But God allures them and brings them into some quiet spot and there speaks comfortably to them, assures them of His love, and pardon, makes vital godliness plain to their view and thus makes plain their way before them. And when in their self-righteous spirit such individuals go about to find comfort in some methods of their own and thus wander from one thicket to another and from one slough to another until they are ready to give up in absolute despair, God says: "I will make a way for you;" and teaches them that just as they have received the Lord Jesus as guilty, miserable sinners, so are they to walk in Him. And so also when believers are one in thick darkness and over-



whelmed with anxiety lest they should utterly fall away and become apostate, God makes a way for them. The sun arises and shines upon their path, doctrines are revealed in clearness and applied with power and their feet are fixed upon the rock of God's unfailing mercy.

But we must close with a few practical remarks.

And in the first place the obscurity of the future, the veil which is cast upon time and eternity that lie before us, should teach us the folly and fatuity of sin. If we were naturally blind, and some benevolent being undertook to be our guide, and devoted himself to keep us in all our ways, what madness should we think it to pierce the hand that led us, and to refuse such needful offices of love! And what is sin but wilful separation from that heavenly Guide to whom the dark clouds before us are as clear as the mid-day sun? He sees every rock and every quisksand on which the vessel might chance to strike. He traces with unerring eye the path of life and path of death, by one or other of which we must infallibly proceed. Nay, He not only sees the future but shapes its contingencies, and controls its destinies. The future is but another name for His yet unaccomplished will. If then we trust in Him, and obey Him, with what flowers and blessings may He strew the road which we have yet to travel! If otherwise, with what wreck and ruin, even of our earthly happiness, with what bereavement of those we love, and inflictions of every curse we dread, may He cover the dreary path which lies before us!

But, secondly, if there is no way through this desert of sin and misery except through a personal interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, what is to become of you who are ignorant of such a good hope through grace?

Whither are you traveling? In what road? "Broad is the way that leadeth to destruction; and many there be, which go in thereat." O my hearer, you must permit me to be clear of your blood. If Jesus be not all in all to thee, if He be not the object of thine affection and of thy confidence too, thou art in the high road to destruction; just at the precipice, over which thou art likely to stumble into the gulf of despair, and sink from gulf to gulf in a bottomless pit, without a hope, without a remedy, without a hand to help. Sinner! there is no salvation

but in Christ Jesus. He is the only way of access to the Father, and the way of blessing, pardon and salvation.

One other remark by way of contrast. The Gospel now proclaims "rivers of pleasure," rivers of joy, rivers of life; but when thou hast crossed the threshold into eternity, when thou hast quitted the wilderness a stranger to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, thou mayest, like the rich man, call in vain for *one drop*, to cool thy parched tongue, tormented in the flame of everlasting wrath. I am clear of your blood. *Rivers* of joy, life and health, for all whom grace Divine brings to embrace a precious Christ; *not a drop* to cool the parched tongue, for those who live and die despisers, rejecters and neglecters of the Son of God.

Oh! that the Spirit of God may awaken attention, deep concern and hallowed conviction, in the hearts of all who listen; that it may be your happy portion and privilege, to know that you are treading in the "way" of God's preparing, to drink of the "rivers" of God's opening.

Does earth afford no shelter? And the sky  
So charged with storms thou knowest not where to fly—  
Turn to one refuge—yield not to despair,  
But pour out all thy soul before His throne in prayer—  
Before His throne who never yet did frown  
On humble suppliant from His mercy seat;  
Who, if with guilt thy heart is bowed down,  
In the right path will lead thine erring feet;  
He who refused not Mary's mournful plea  
Will shed bright rays of joy, and set thy spirit free.

Finally, brethren, when the last day of our life shall come to an end, and the night of the grave shall have overshadowed us, and living men shall have been left far behind and we shall be in the dark valley where all is strange, if God is our reconciled God and Father in Christ Jesus, He will be with us even then. He will guide our steps. His rod and His staff will comfort us so that we shall not fear. Then shall we not fear for aught that may happen. The power of hell shall not confound our souls.

Midst clouds and darkness gathering round  
Our eyes shall pierce beyond this stormy sky,  
And our freed spirit soaring, with a bound  
Shall reach yon heaven and feel its presence nigh.  
Dry thy sad tears, then, life will soon be o'er,  
And rest, pure rest, is there on yonder happy shore.



Oh, therefore, thou my Saviour God, let me cling unto Thee all my life long, and cleave unto thy statutes day after day. Then in death I shall not be parted from Thee, in hell I shall not be cast away from thy presence. But Thou wilt refresh my soul, Thou wilt keep me in safety, until Thou shalt appear in Thy glorious body and restore unto me my body after Thine own image.

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# GOD GLORIFIED

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And Christian Obedience Perfected  
in the Prostration and Suffer-  
ings of Believers.

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## GOD GLORIFIED.

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COL. 1:24.

Who now rejoice in any sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for His body's sake, which is the church.

The sufferings to which we and our loved ones are subjected in this world require—for their patient endurance and spiritual improvement,—all the encouragement and support afforded by the revelations made in the Gospel. Blessed be God! while, without them all would be gloom, and christians would “of all men be the most miserable,”—these consolatory and instructive disclosures are sufficient to enable us under them all to “stand fast and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

I. One consideration pressed upon us by the word of God and by the conviction of our own hearts is, that be our trials what they may, we do not suffer as much as we justly might. We may be enfeebled by bodily or mental debility;—we may be incapacitated for doing good to ourselves or others;—we may be compassed about with infirmity—we may be impoverished in estate or bereaved in our family,—but—be our endurance what it may—certain it is it might be greater, heavier, and more hopeless than it is. And were God to enter into strict and impartial judgment with us, and to deal with us as we deserve, “rendering to every man of us according to our deeds,” sure it is that we should deserve and receive unmitigated, and boundless woe.

Yes, my brethren, if the curse of a violated law falls upon him who in one single point comes short of absolute and perfect duty, and if “our own hearts condemn us” for innumerable offences against God,—against His law, against His Son, against His Spirit, against His Gospel, and against His whole requirements,—well may we say under any *possible* affliction, “if thou Lord shouldest mark iniquities, oh, Lord, who shall stand?” and well may we exclaim as we lie under the burden of our most overwhelming grief, “wherefore should a living man complain—a man for the punishment of his sins?”



II. A second consideration which may not only silence complaint and enable us to perceive "the goodness as well as the severity of God," but greatly strengthen and encourage us to bear them patiently is—that under the dispensation of God's gracious and merciful providence in Christ Jesus, all our trials are made to lead to many advantages. They constitute a test and measure of our faith, love and obedience to God and thus save us from self-delusion and hypocrisy. (1 Pet. 1:7; James 1:3.) They exercise, and thus increase and strengthen these and every other grace where they really exist and thus give us comfort and hope in their assured reality. (Rom. 5:3, 4.) They beat down, mortify and subdue, that rebellious, proud, and stubborn spirit which exalteth itself against God and which cannot otherwise be tamed into submission. They humble our hearts and stir them up to earnest and importunate supplication. (Job. 33, 16, 17, 18.) They manifest the great power and goodness of God in giving strength and endurance to our weakness and impatience (2 Cor. 12:9),—in making them all to "work together for good,"—and having thus accomplished their purpose, in delivering us from them.

As it regards the impenitent, the unbelieving and the backsliding—afflictions, when sanctified by God, have a *reclaiming* efficacy bringing back the lost sheep to the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. And as it regards the penitent and obedient, the returned and adopted children of God they have a *corrective* tendency and are administered by their HEAVENLY Father "for their profit that they may be made partakers of His holiness!"

When, therefore, we come to recount the blessings of God in this present stage of our being, and even now when under a due sense of our destiny and duty we ask:

For what shall I praise thee, my God and my King?  
 For what blessings the tribute of gratitude bring?  
 Shall I praise thee for pleasure, for health and for ease,  
 For the spring of delight, and the sunshine of peace?  
 Shall I praise thee for flowers that bloomed on my breast,  
 For joys in perspective, and pleasures possessed?  
 For the spirits that heightened my days of delight,  
 And the sunshine that sat on my pillows by night?  
 For this should I praise! but if only for this  
 I should leave half untold the donation of bliss;  
 I thank thee for sickness, for sorrow, for care,  
 For the thorns I have gathered, the anguish I bear.

For nights of anxiety, watchings and tears,  
 A present of pain, a perspective of fears,  
 I praise thee, I bless thee, my King and my God,  
 For the good and the evil thy hand hath bestowed.

The flowers were sweet, but their fragrance is flown;  
 They yielded no fruits, they are withered and gone;  
 The thorn it was poignant, but precious to me—  
 'Twas the message of mercy—it led me to thee.

III. But a third ground of encouragement to endure with patient resignation the trials of life is, that under them all many sources of consolation are opened up from which we may freely and constantly draw.

However bitter and trying in themselves such afflictions may be, they all spring from a father's love which is infinitely kind and which will not suffer us to be tried beyond what we need, and what He will enable us to bear.

And as our trials spring from love, so they conduce to the best interests and highest happiness of our souls. They "purify our souls" from the dross of corruption. They bring forth "the fruits of righteousness," and they "work out for us an exceeding and eternal weight of glory." If, therefore, all is good that leads to good and all is well that ends well, how should we rejoice "in tribulations," which are not worthy of "the glory that shall be shewed unto us." All our trials put into the balance are as nothing when outweighed by heavenly bliss. In number, in measure, and in continuance our troubles are few, light, and momentary when compared with "that which is in reserve." The one, however severe, are finite—the other infinite. The one can be fully estimated, the other "cannot be uttered." The one can be "endured to the end," the other while in the body would overwhelm and destroy us by their insupportable weight. These we deserve, and were they multiplied a thousand fold could in no degree "be worthy," or in any way merit heaven. Between the one and the other, in short, there is no other relation than that of a sinner justly suffering and a Saviour graciously bestowing.

IV. These considerations, then, might suffice to "let our patience have its perfect work." But there is a still higher and more blissful motive presented to us in "the Gospel of the grace of God," and that is that our afflictions are designed not only to reclaim, correct, and reprove, but to *perfect and*

*complete our redemption* and the measure of our future glory. "Christ suffered for us," not only that He might expiate and atone for sin, but that "He might leave us an example so that "in all our ways we might follow His steps." (1 Pet. 2:21.) We are by faith united to Him so as to become "joint heirs with Christ," "if so be," that is, *when* we jointly suffer with Him." And are called thus "jointly to suffer with Him" that we may be glorified together.\* (Rom. 8:17 and 2 Tim. 2:12.) As our Exemplar Christ "learned obedience by the things which He suffered." "He endured the cross and despised the shame," and thus as "the Captain" and "Leader" of our "salvation" was made perfect through suffering." (Heb. 2:10.)

"There is a needs be that in this world we should be afflicted." Sin must bring with it suffering, and while "the whole creation therefore groaneth and travaileth in pain," "we, too, who have the first fruits of the Spirit even we ourselves must groan within ourselves being burdened, waiting for the redemption of our body" from the curse, by the resurrection of the dead, and for our deliverance from the sorrows of the world by a removal out of it. "For we are saved by hope."

Christ, therefore, in order to become a complete, perfect and all-sufficient Saviour, "was tried and afflicted in all points as we are" and as we must be, that as our ever-living High Priest, Intercessor and Redeemer He might be "touched with a feeling of our infirmities." Our trials, therefore, Christ made His. He regards them as His—as born for Him,—as endured in imitation of Him—and as still exemplifying with His the curse and desert of sin and the glory, grace and bliss of salvation. For these ends christians are not freed from suffering here below. They are, on the contrary, "predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son" (Rom. 8:20), "and to fill up that which is behind of the sufferings of Christ in our bodies."

To christians, then, it is given not only to believe on Christ, but also to suffer for His sake. (Phil. 1:29.) Christians are the many members which compose the one body of Christ. (1. Cor. 12:12.) And as He "was made perfect through suffering" so is it "through suffering He brings His sons to

\*See Macknight on loco.

glory." As His sufferings are ours so are ours His; and as our shame and guilt became His so are His glory and righteousness made ours. "If, then, we be dead with Christ we shall also live with Him, and if we suffer with Him we shall also reign together with Him." (2 Tim. 2:11, 12.)

"God also hath highly exalted Christ because He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," and for the joy set before Him Christ endured this cross and despised the shame." And so it is with us. The way of the cross is the royal way to the crown and the bitterness of the cross—*though meriting and deserving nothing*—will, through the munificence of peace, measure the brightness and the glory of our crown.

How well, then, my hearers, may this union and communion with Christ and this sympathy of Christ in our sufferings, meet all the wants and difficulties of our case, and solve what—without the Gospel—is the most difficult problem in the universe, a suffering, afflicted, and enfeebled child and servant of God. Under weakness, debility, incapacity to active service in the cause of Christ,—under acute painful, protracted and mortal suffering, under poverty, and want and friendlessness, and bereavement,—in view of a life of uneasiness and wasting and a sure and certain dissolution;—let this communion with Christ in suffering here and in glory hereafter uphold and sustain us. Here we have a key to unlock these mysterious chastisements and an interpreter to explain and vindicate these dark passages in the history of God's saints. In suffering they are "learning obedience," they are being "made perfect through suffering"—and are filling up the residue of those afflictions of Christ's body which are still to be completed by His followers. In suffering we are doing His will; serving Him in the way most honorable to us and most glorifying to Him.

Let this comfort us when we see our plans defeated, our purposes destroyed, our usefulness crippled or at an end, our health and energy and means gone, our bed converted into a prison house of slow, protracted torture, or when we see our friends called to the endurance of these or similar trials.

To illustrate. You may have observed, or watched over a christian who appeared mature in piety, "ready to be offered,"



fully meet for the inheritance of the saints, but who has been long, very long detained under the grasp of cruel disease, lingering on a bed of pining sickness, racked with unremitting pain: or, if the malady has, on the contrary, been rapid, you have witnessed intense pangs, it may be, which seemed to pour "gall and wormwood" into the "very bitterness of death;" you have been led to ask mournfully at such a sight,—why is all this—why not a calmer dismissal of the prepared and expecting spirit? Why these pains prolonged, or accumulated, or sharpened, when a merciful Father, a compassionate Redeemer, is about to receive the departing and beloved sufferer to His own embrace? To these queries we must accept, and may with reason accept, the scriptural answer, which has been repeatedly addressed. He, beloved sufferer, though an adopted son, is still "learning obedience;" attaining that last and highest gradation of perfective endurance which worketh for him "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The grace by which he endures this final test "not charging God foolishly," but trusting in His wise and merciful design,—although it be God's own gift, and can afford no shadow of a plea for boasting,—shall be "counted worthy" of a rich and "full reward." By these pains and languishings is he brought into closest union, into closest conformity with Him that "endured the cross." The human exaltation of our Lord HIMSELF has been ascribed to that endurance as its cause. He "became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted HIM, and given Him a name which is above every name." Surely, then, by the various forms of bodily and mental sufferings, as probably as by any mode of faithfulness in active duties, may His followers be appointed to graduate for their stations in His "Father's house to "procure to themselves an excellent degree;" to be "counted worthy of double honour;" to have "an entrance ministered to them *richly* into the everlasting kingdom of their Lord and Saviour;" to be numbered with those who "came out of great tribulation, who are before the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His Temple."

Let it be impressed on our minds in reference to such, that those friends or brethren of Christ most strictly and precisely

“suffer with Him,” just so far as their sufferings have in them what is beyond or above the corrective character. But the more they suffer “with,” or like their Master, the more pre-eminently, doubtless, shall they “reign with Him.”

Now doomed to an obscure or suffering state,  
Is pleased with it, and, were he free to choose,  
Would make his fate his choice; whom peace the fruit  
Of virtue, and whom virtue fruit of faith,  
Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one  
Content indeed to sojourn while he must  
Below the skies, but having *there* his home.

Let God then appoint our lot and let us be contented in whatsoever it may be because it is His.\* If enfeebled and laid aside from much active duties do not yield to the thought that in your actual state, you are wholly incapable of contributing to the good of others. Not only may such degrees of resignation as you are enabled to evince be highly instructive, but it may be found at last though this would be no sound plea for carelessness of proficiency, or in the choice of means, that God has often chosen to accomplish most good by the weakest instruments, or by the stronger when in some way incomplete. Even a skilful artisan sometimes effects more with a worn or fractured tool, on account of some particular adaptation in it to his special purpose, than he might have done with a whole assortment of the brightest and the keenest. If you have long used endeavours, always imperfect, and sometimes most distressingly feeble, for the good of those around you, have you not been now and then reminded of words which you are quite conscious were spoken in weakness, or of some small gift bestowed amidst dejection, which yet appear to have been not without results? How can you be certain but that, after all, the seeds which shall “prosper” most, will be not those which you scattered with a strong arm and an elastic step, but which you dropped almost at random, when weary and “in heaviness?”

Do not, therefore, cast into the cup new ingredients of despondency, nor make it bitterly effervesce by your repinings. Do not omit duties, if at present indispensable, because they are burdensome nor abandon others permanently, because they can not at this season be performed. Pursue, however feebly,

\*Shepard, 289, 290.



what is fittest now to be pursued. The sick or wounded soldier can not make a rapid march or hold the front of battle. But he may, perhaps, be the sentinel even of today. He may occupy the trench or rampart; and if not even so—shall he therefore cast away his armour? Another sun, another conflict, may find him, re-endued with strength and ardour among the foremost bands. Meantime forget not, “they also serve who only stand and wait:” and that service, as performed in weakness and in loneliness, may be the hardest of all; the most decisive of their loyalty and faithful zeal.

A submissive and grateful endurance of those afflictions which are common to all (but of which believers may usually expect an ample share,) with a special reference to their Master’s will, must be now amongst the strongest proofs of their allegiance and their trust.

Thy servants militant below  
Have each, O Lord, their post;  
As thou appointest, who best doth know  
The soldiers of thine host:  
Some in the van thou call’st to *do*  
And the day’s heat to share;  
And in the rearward not a few  
Thou only bidd’st to *bear*.

A brighter crown, perchance, is theirs,  
To the mid battle sent;  
But he thy glory also shares  
Who waits beside the tent;  
More bravely done, in human eyes,  
The foremost post to take;  
My Saviour will not those despise  
That suffer for His sake.

More honored others, Lord, may be,  
But keep me near thy throne;  
Light in thy light content to see  
And never in mine own;  
To keep their goal and mine in view,  
Delighted to sit still,  
And evermore, if not to do,  
At least to bear thy will.

They need their Lord, thy special Grace,  
That fight in this world’s view;  
But in the sick room, face to face,  
Is Satan vanquished too:  
Both need the same protecting hand  
To keep them undefiled;  
And both shall in thy presence stand  
Thy martyr and thy child.

Brethren! such was the faith and patience of patriarchs, of prophets, of apostles and of martyrs, who “rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus.” “The

more sorely I am borne down by present evils," says Gregory, "the more surely do I anticipate future joys." And for the joy that was set before them have millions endured the cross and this much tribulation entered the kingdom of God." When called to follow Christ up this steep and thorny path let us not then think that we are led by some new path untried before, but, on the contrary, remember that,

The self-same promise as of yore  
Supports the self-same need;  
The faith for which the saints endured  
The dungeon or the stake,  
That very faith with hearts assured  
Upon our lips we take.

God grant that our faith may be in our hearts and not on our lips, that when our days of darkness and of trial come we may be partakers of the sufferings of Christ and be thus sustained with the hope of a participation in His glory. If we endure affliction with the same spirit of obedience and resignation to the will of God, by which Christ was animated during the whole course of His passion up to the moment of dissolution; and if our sufferings have the effect of mortifying and subduing sin as His meritoriously took away the curse and the penalty of sin;—then may we be assured that we suffer with Christ, that we have our trials, communion and fellowship with Him, endure that cross which He also endures and sanctifies, and fill up our measure of those sufferings which remain to be borne by His church and people; and then may we feel assured that just as certainly as we suffer and just to that extent in which we suffer, we shall be glorified with Him. Being here counted worthy to partake with Christ in His cross and suffering we shall hereafter be partakers in His kingdom and glory. Everlasting joy shall be upon our heads and sorrow and mourning shall flee away.



# HEAVEN.

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REV. 21:25.

Νῦν γὰρ οὐκ ἐστὶ ἐρηι.

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## HEAVEN.

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REV. 21:25.

There shall be no night there.

The frequent contemplation of that future state of being of which we are pre-monished and which in duration and importance immeasurably transcends the present—is evidently the duty of every man. The bare possibility that he may arrive at old age and to its helpless imbecility, is found to be a motive sufficiently powerful to call forth in man the industrious calculations and the untiring exertions for securing those comforts he may then require. The youth commences his toilsome ascent upon the rough hill of science in the distant hope that though now his way be difficult and his prospects obscured a time will come when he shall gain some quiet resting place and securely and tranquilly gaze back upon the path he trod. The man of genius urges on his way amidst the accumulating pressure of the ills of life and with the most exhausting and uncheered efforts, while all around are busied with their present necessities, builds for himself a dwelling place in that unentered region of fame where he hopes to be immortalized. The existence of a principle in man by which he makes the present subservient as a period of preparation to the attainment of a future good might in this way be illustrated from the conduct of man in every period and condition of society. It is the wise implantation of our heavenly parent and while it fits us for a rational enjoyment of the present life it is in its ultimate design given to induce us to make preparation for the life to come. There is, perhaps, more than a mere superficial or poetic truth in that analogical resemblance which is found in our present condition to that transformation which many insects and all animals in some degree undergo in their passage from one state of being to another.

These precious souls with which we are endowed may be but lodged in these clay vestures as is the insect in its little covering. One difference it is important should be felt by us. While the insect may in this period of formation be passive in



its advancing change, man is gifted with an activity, a freedom and an intelligence which constitute within him a moral responsibility and he is called upon with all diligence to exert himself in the great business of his coming change. All the days of his appointed time must be in waiting till his change come. But, oh, how especially necessary is this, now that an epidemic of depravity has spread its despoiling ravages over our world, and infected with its pollution every individual of our race.

This tabernacle in which we dwell is defiled with the leprosy of sin, and communicates its deadly uncleanness to the soul. Both are now hastening to a consummation when, if the cleansing efficacy of the blood of Jesus, be not obtained to their purification, the hour of their separation shall be the commencement of an existence of hopeless misery. To every rational mind the yielding of a paramount consideration to the vast concerns of eternity, must therefore appear wise and prudent.

To the christian such a swallowing up of the present in the future, such a constant journeying into the unseen realities of eternity, that from the height of their everlasting hills he may take a view of the shadowy littleness of the things which are seen and temporal—such a balancing of the present with the future, that every feeling, desire and effort may go to the working out, by the direction of heavenly grace, that salvation which will capacitate him for an entrance upon those new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness—such to the christian is his highest ambition.

And this very frequency of contemplation of those glories that are reserved in heaven and of those bright characters that form its indwellers and of that God who is its Sun, that Lamb who is the light thereof—is in the order of means one of the most powerful and efficient causes of that sanctification of heart by which the inhabitants of earth are assimilated to the pure and spotless inhabitants of heaven. The soul which is thus taught by the Spirit of God to soar upwards, soon gains an eagle strength of vision by which it can gaze without being dazzled into darkness, upon this canopy of glory, and an eagle's strength by which it can overcome the gross resistance of earth, and sustain itself in its high element of purity. It is therefore a most blessed privilege of that christian that he can

ever press forward towards the prize of his high calling—that he can ever look to this hope which is thus set before him—and that when within him there is darkness and anxiety and grief he can look upward to that temple not made with hands, where there is sounding forth the unceasing anthems of glory, and where he himself soon hopes to become a worshipper.

It is for this purpose that the representations of heaven are so numerous and so varied in the pages of Revelation. It may be compared to a panorama where there is exhibited to the view in every light most likely to attract and gratify it this celestial Paradise. In our text we are supposed to direct our view from the midst of darkness and are informed in illustration of the prospect stretched out before us—that there is no night there. There are some very striking and correct ideas conveyed to our minds under this similitude.

Ignorance and unbelief are exposed to us in Scripture under the symbol of night. While here, we are in darkness. We see through a glass darkly. We know only in part. God moves before us in a mysterious way. His dealings towards us are conducted behind the veil of His invisibility. There are evidences of His power and of His goodness within us, and about us, which convince us that though darkness is round about Him, yet the Lord liveth and reigneth. Our bodily eyes see Him not, but as the wind bloweth where it listeth and we can not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth so does God rule amongst the inhabitants of earth. We are placed in the midst of that wide infinity of His moral government and we gaze upon it as we do upon the wide immensity of His works in the heavens above us, with the imperfect comprehension of a few of its twinkling exhibitions. And ever as we move among these surrounding wonders we walk by faith and not by sight. The Lord goes before us in His providence and in His grace in a pillar of fire to lead us during the night of our far distant wanderings, but blessed be His holy name, each christian heart can say, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand," when we shall no longer guide our steps by the struggling moonlight and the uncertain stars, but when we shall walk in the light of the unsetting Sun of Righteousness. For there shall be no night in heaven.

Night is the time of dreams, when the imprisoned thoughts steal past the slumbering sentinels of the senses and take stolen glimpses at the world without. And what are all the visionary expectations of sublunary happiness? What the gay visions of youth? What the unrelinquished fancies of manhood? What the unsatisfied yearnings of every beating heart? What are they but dreams formed from the gathered sparkles which beam upon the surface of an ocean dark and boisterous? And our knowledge of the past, our judgment of the present, our understanding of the future, our views of immortality, our apprehension of the nature and the character of God, of Christ and of the Holy Spirit and our comprehension of this narrow neck of space and time on which, as it lies between two immensities we now find ourselves,—what are they but the dim vision of the night? These dreams shall vanish—the visions shall roll off—these dim uncertainties shall burst from their obscurity—these gazings through the open vistas of heaven into the far off world of glory shall have every cloud of intervention removed, and we shall wake up as does a man from an unquiet and feverish sleep, from a troublesome and sorrowing dream, to mingle with the rapturing certainties and full discovered blessedness of *heaven*—for—“there shall be no night there.”

Night is the time of watchings. By land and by sea, and in the city, faithful guardians keep their watch by night to preserve the sleeping from danger and the living from death.

And the christian ever keeps up a vigilant circumspection and guards with jealous caution every avenue to his heart. He is in a land of strangers—he is in the midst of foes—he is opposed by the treacherous friendship and in the insinuating artfulness of the world—he is exposed to the wiles and the deceits of the wicked one—and the cry must ever be going forth to the sentinels of his heart, “Watchmen what of the night?” He is in a state of constant insecurity. There are fears without, there is perturbation within. He feels helpless against the attack of death, who comes to him clothed in the terrors of darkness. He knows not that he is safe. Soon, however, the weariness shall be over and the christian shall lie down in the tranquility of calm repose, and shall fold his arms to rest, and in the security that no danger is near, that no storm is at hand,

he shall sink into the arms of heavenly joy. For there shall be no night there.

During night there is the absence of the sun. The earth looks cheerless and deserted. Its beauties lie concealed, and all its rich variety of landscape has vanished. And so it is with the christian. He is now absent from that God who is his Sun and shield. While present in the body he is absent from that Redeemer who is his Lord and Life. There are times, too, when this Sun of the christian is eclipsed, when the earth and earthly engrossments pass between him and his God and conceal HIM from HIS glory. An obscuration is thrown around his path. A gloom and a heaviness take possession of his soul. The damp and chilly dews of a perturbing disquietude fall heavily upon him. The night winds blow upon him in cold and sterilizing frostiness. His sky is starless. He wanders on a rayless, starless path, seeking, like the spouse for his well beloved, and crying out, oh, that I could find HIM whom my soul loveth! Oh, that it were with me as in days that are past when the comforts of the Lord refreshed my soul! He looks up like David out of the depth. He goes mourning all the day long and in the fruitlessness of his efforts to recover his tranquility—he wishes for the wings of a dove that he might flee away and be at rest.

Christian, these wings shall be given you, and you shall wing your upward flight to your own bright region in the skies. There shall be no night there to hide from you your SUN, no dews to damp, no frost to chill, no clouds to darken, no hiding of a Saviour's love, no flickering of the dying lamp light of your peace and joy, no alterations of hope and despair, of faith and doubting unbelief, of love and fear. For "there shall be no night there."

Night is the season of inactivity, when the weary sink into the arms of nature's kind restorer, balmy sleep.

It will not be so in heaven. There will in this respect certainly be no night there for the beasts and the four and twenty elders representatives of the host of heaven, cease not night nor day in praising Him who sitteth upon the throne and the Lamb for ever. Our transformation shall then be completed. Our souls shall burst the shells that cover them. These latent



energies of thought, and this high soaring imagination, and this loftiness of conception and all the noble faculties of the soul now manifested in their confinement and in their feebleness—shall then expand into immortal vigor, and we shall plume ourselves for the unwearying activities of heaven. We shall rest indeed from all fatigue and labouring disquietude that we may go forward in an unceasing exercise of our holy principles and faculties in the service of Him to whose image it will be our ever increasing desire to be assimilated. Sleep is a necessity resulting from the body, and from all such necessities we shall there be freed, and freed not certainly to sink down into the dreaming contemplations which form the heaven of the Mussulman, but to wake up to an endless progression in all the activities of holiness.

Night is the season of solitude. And there is nothing so oppressive, so productive of a morbid melancholy, so consumptive of every thing like enjoyment as loneliness. We are essentially social in our natures. But we are ever defeated in our attempted entrance into the hearts of those we love, there is a boundary of stern limitation which we can not pass, there is a wall of separating materiality erected between us, there is a veil of flesh behind which there may be lurking the dark suspicion and the secrecy of a reserved confidence and an unyielding unbosoming of the soul, and we find ourselves thrown back upon our own loneliness to con over the bitterness of our own souls. We burn with the desire for a society of spirits but after heaping up one mountain upon another in the hope of gaining an ascent to this region of untrammelled and intelligent communion, do we find ourselves still grovelling among the elements of a mere external and sensible interchange. In heaven it will not be so. There every wall of separation will be broken down, every veil of obscurity shall be removed, and we shall expatiate in all the freedom of a full and an entire sympathy. And when faith and hope are gone, then shall charity remain and fill the bosom of every worshipper in that wide and general assembly and form a deep ocean of love in which all the family of God shall commingle in their joyous harmony.

There is in sleep a near similitude to death. In this mysterious state man seems to approach the verge of existence and to

look out upon the dark of annihilation. There is a shadowy nonentity overspreading this midnight time of calm and serenity when all the bustle and activity and moving forms of day have sunk beneath the unmoving surface of Repose. And there are human beings (by me pitied and compassionated they are) who make a voluntary descent into the cave of Pluto and who will violently assert of all these animated intelligences who constitute their brethren of mankind, that they are but the dull shadows of a material reflection and that like shadows they vanish into annihilation. That their appearance here is transient we willingly allow, but it is the brief transit of a comet which passes by into its far journeyings into the heavens beyond. There is no such night beyond the grave. Beloved we *shall* all sleep, the sleep of death. But in the twinkling of an eye when the last trump shall sound we shall rise on the resurrection morn with this corruption changed into incorruption, and this mortal into immortality, to the enjoyment of heaven's eternal day and there shall be no night there.

Night is the season when the gay votaries of pleasure, and the fond devotees of fashion, and the thoughtless and sportive seekers after gaiety, and the throng of revellers, all join to throw around the scene those fascinating attractions which like the false lights of the desert lure only to destruction.

But there shall be no such night in heaven—*nor will there be any night revellers there.* The peals of merry jocularities, and the loud and frequent burst of an unintelligible laughter and all the festivities of gaiety shall there be for ever hushed. Their voice shall not be heard. Their discordant sounds shall not break in upon the angel melody which shall rise from harps and cornets as they praise the Almighty's name. Their uproar and confusion and all their attendant and disquieting concomitants, and their sad and harrassing consequences shall not disturb the sweet and peaceful harmony, which shall fill all hearts in heaven—FOR, "there shall be no night there."

Night is strongly symbolical of adversity and affliction of want and famine. Thus it is said in Job 30:3: "For want and famine they were solitary," and the same afflicted Patriarch from amidst the darkness of his grief could exclaim: "Wearisome nights are appointed unto me." All the night did



the mourning and distressed Psalmist make his bed to swim with tears, and in the night season did he cry. It was at night our blessed Saviour was retired from His disciples and endured the agony of that bloody sweat, and walked to and fro in the bitterness of His anguish and sunk in prostrated misery on the ground. And the night of their sojournings here is to His followers a night of sorrowing. Like HIM who as the Captain of their salvation was made perfect through suffering that He might bring many sons to glory—are they now for a season in heaviness through manifold tribulations. Temptations abound, their sinfulness abounds, and a Father's love visits them, with its kind chastenings and its cup of sanctifying bitterness. We must pass through the valley of affliction to reach the heights of glory. We must travel through the wilderness to arrive at the land of promise. We must pass over Jordan and through the surging embankments of the sea to land in the heavenly Canaan and gain a refuge from the pursuing enemies of our souls. But blessed be our God that though weeping may endure for a night joy cometh in the morning. Yes, weeping christian, yes disconsolate believer, yes, afflicted saint, the night christian, yes, disconsolate believer, yes, afflicted saint, the night ushers in the morn, and then shall all your sorrowing melt away and merge into the unclouded blessedness of unsullied joy.

Oh, weep not for the joys that fade  
 Like evening lights away—  
 For hopes, that like the stars decayed  
 Have left thy mortal day;  
 For clouds of sorrow will depart,  
 And brilliant skies be given,  
 And tho' on earth the tear may start—  
 Yet bliss awaits the holy heart  
 Amid the towers of heaven.

Night is also emblematic of death. And it is in this view that we are exhorted to work while it is called day, seeing that the night cometh, when no man can work, for there is neither wisdom, knowledge, nor device in the grave to which we are all hastening.

And is not this life a time of death, and this world a world of death? And when we reflect upon the countless multitude who now people the land of death, and compare with them the few who are existing we may well exclaim, 'This—this is solitude.

Oh who is there that has not been reminded of this solitude? Who mourns not for departed friends, who sits not at the entrance of the tomb and wishfully remembers those, whom its unrelenting portals have for ever separated from his earthly view? We have more relatives in the grave than ever we shall have in the world. And when we, too, mingle with the dust we shall find ourselves not passing from the endearments of an affectionate acquaintanceship to the coldness of an uninterested and unknowing assembly, but we shall return from a land of exile, where we ever felt the stranger's heart, to the welcoming gratulations of friends ready to receive us into mansions of glory.

And to conclude we may remark, that night is representative of the whole term of our continuance here below. That term is a term of probation. It is a time for preparation. It decides our eternal destinies. Our allotment in futurity depends upon our choice in time. Believe me, dear hearers, there is no night of long suffering, patience and forbearance there, for those who will abuse to licentiousness instead of improving to repentance that long suffering GOODNESS here. There is no treasure of happiness there for those who lay up for themselves a treasure of wrath here. There is no salvation then for those who neglect it here. This night of probation is almost gone—the dawn of an unalterable eternity is almost begun. Oh, be wise. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Heaven will be begun below and you will finish your course in heaven. And may the God of all comfort comfort you in Christ Jesus.



# ARTICLES ON BAPTISM.

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BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church,  
Charleston, S. C.



## ARTICLE I.

### A FORM FOR THE SERVICE OF BAPTISM—BAPTISM A TESTIMONY TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN UNITY.

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN: As I am now about to administer the sacramental rite of baptism, to *this child*; acting in the name and by the authority of that Divine Master, of whom I am an ordained minister, I will first call your attention to the institution of this ordinance as you will find it recorded in Math 28:19.

“Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.”

Let me now call your attention to some remarks in explanation of the nature of this holy ordinance:

Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ and His benefits; and to confirm our interest in Him; as also to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church, and the rest of the world, and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to His word.

There are but two sacraments ordained by Christ our Lord, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, that His church may be delivered from that yoke of ceremonies and that burden of ritual observances, which was found necessary in that dispensation which was designed to show forth the guilt of sin and the necessity of a Redeemer. It is thus also by the simplicity of its external rites and its unincumbered forms fitted for that universality to which it is destined.

There are, however, two typical ceremonies admitted into the service of the christian Temples, in order to hold forth in the most striking and impressive manner the great features—the vital and essential and most important doctrines of this divine and ever blessed Gospel. The doctrines of Regeneration by the Holy Ghost and of atonement by the death and sacrifice of Jesus Christ followed by His spiritual indwelling in us—these form the epitomes, the first principles of christianity. These,



therefore, have been extracted from the full record of the Gospel, translated as it were unto the languages of symbol and types and so engrafted in the christian service that they may stand forth to view so plainly, forcibly and constantly as that a wayfaring man though a fool may clearly perceive and fully understand them. A symbolical representation is unvariable and universal, while language is ambiguous, mutable and limited. On the other hand such outward and speaking modes of representation, adapted to all minds, are more impressive, more intelligible and more attractive.

Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto Him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of His ingrafting into Christ of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his being given up unto God through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life, and this sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in His church unto the end of the world.

Baptism is, therefore, the first sacrament, the sacrament of initiation and as it were the threshold of grace. This sacrament shews first the necessity that regeneration should be wrought by the power of God on every child of the human family; the provisions made for its bestowment and that Divine Saviour who is its author, and its finisher, the way, the truth and the life. It is, therefore, called the laver or fountain of regeneration while the Lord's Supper is the sacrament of nutrition and of growth in grace.

Therefore does our church teach that while the efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such whether of age or infants as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will in His appointed time.

The ordinance of Baptism is, therefore, eminently a christian ordinance, deriving all its value, interest, and importance from the fact that Christ instituted and has commanded its perpetual observance. That Christ was the Redeemer of lost and ruined men and the giver of that Holy Spirit which is necessary to

renew, sanctify, and glorify the soul is here manifestly set forth; as also the solemn fact that all who in this ordinance are sprinkled, or otherwise washed with water are dedicated to Christ, offered to Him and forever delivered over to be His in life, in death and in eternity, as one of the persons in that Triune Jehovah who, while in the substance and essence of His God-head He is one, is, in the manner of His existence three, the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost. Baptism is thus the covenant of the three persons of the God-head for the forgiveness of sins and the bestowment of the divine spirit.

Therefore has Christ required that in all the world to the end of time all should be baptized into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

Now, this form teaches us several things: for while the minister baptizes in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, he declares that the water with which he sprinkles the child, is the sign of his admission into God's covenant, and into the church. That the Father receives him as His child, the Son as a member of His body, the Holy Ghost as a temple in which He is pleased to dwell: and on the part of the baptized, it is a sign of his engagement with its Triune Jehovah, to worship and obey the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and consecrate himself forever to them.

On this account the ancient Church, as Testullian informs us, sprinkled or dipped the child three times in the separate names of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

It is the intention and design of baptism to be a devotional consecration to Christ as God; and thus to manifest in connection with God the Father and God the Holy Ghost His holy name and display His glorious perfections.

There is in this ordinance an express and required act expressive of religious dedication for the attainment of a special benefit. We are, therefore, said "to be baptized unto Christ," "unto the death of Christ" and "unto repentance and the forgiveness of sins" as given and procured by Christ. Christ, therefore, must be capable of receiving the person herein dedicated. He must be able to protect and have a right and power to confer these contemplated blessings. And while there is an engagement on the part or in the case of infants on

behalf of the individual baptized that he will believe upon, love, serve, and obey the Lord Jesus Christ as God, there is manifestly implied the presence of this divine Saviour together with His acquiescence in what is done, and His acceptance of the child, that is, it is here taught that Christ is omnipresent and omnipotent and therefore God.

Baptism into the name of the Son and into the name of the Holy Ghost cannot mean into the doctrine of the one or into the influence of the other, but into these, as equally and personally subsisting with the Father, or as equally in rank and entitled to equality of homage. Since in the doctrine of Baptism, as a Father of a very early age remarks, the one name has been unitedly delivered to us of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. What reasoning can set aside the existence of the Son and the Spirit in the divine and blessed essence as the object of our worship and confession." Prescription and universal use; the concurrent doctrine of Fathers, Martyrs and of the Church universal, with but few exceptions; the plain meaning and force of the language of the divine institution;—all therefore combine to enforce upon us as an all-important verity in the christian creed, that the Holy Spirit is not a created being, but as God is able and willing to renew, sanctify and glorify—that the Lord Jesus Christ is not a created being but is God and therefore able and willing to save, defend and bless us; and that these both are entitled to the same degree of dignity and religious honour and upon the same ground of certain evidence as the Father and yet that these three are one God.

To this truly wise, only true, only living God, it is your duty and privilege, christian parents, to dedicate *this child*, looking to God the Father for His pitiful compassion and divine clemency:—to God the Son for His grace and mercy:—to God the Spirit for His presence, influence and blessing; training him up in their nurture and admonition of the Lord—teaching him the relation in which he stands to each of these glorious Persons as a sinner and as exposed to everlasting death;—and leading *him* by a pious and holy example and influence early to remember, love, serve and obey his God as his God for ever and ever.

The minister will then implore the Divine presence and blessing, after which he will proceed to baptize the child:

Child of the covenant, (or calling the name of the child), I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

## NOTES.

1. "In the name of the Father, etc., which order hath been perpetuated in all Confessions of Faith and is forever inviolably to be observed."

See Pearson on the Creed, p. 55, and note.

2. According, therefore, to the Son's prescription, the Father's injunction, and the Sacramental institution, as we are baptized, so do we believe in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Do., p. 104.

## ARTICLE II.

### INFANT BAPTISM PROVED FROM THE IDENTITY OF THE CHRISTIAN AND JEWISH CHURCHES.

ROM. 11:24.

For if thou were cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature, and were grafted contrary to nature, into a good olive tree; how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

One great and powerful objection to the truth of the gospel in the apostle's days, was the rejection of its claims by the Jewish nation. For this rejection, therefore, the apostle accounts. He traces it to that pride, carnality and self-righteous spirit which led them to oppose its humble, pure, and gracious character. He proves, further, that this rejection of the Jews was agreeable to the predictions of the prophets by whom it had been foretold, and that however melancholy in itself considered—it was an undeniable evidence that the gospel derived its origin from Him who maketh all things in heaven and on earth to work together for the accomplishment of His purposes. The apostle further remarks in order to make manifest the goodness as well as the severity of God and thus to irradiate the darkness of this dispensation with some brightening beams of mercy—that this rejection of the Jews was not total—that on the contrary there was a remnant and that much longer than might be at first apparent it was foreordained who should be made partakers of the blessings of salvation.

But this is not all. The apostle establishes the position that as this rejection of the Jewish nation was not *total*, so, neither was it *final*—but that on the contrary their restoration to the privileges of the Church of Christ was an event in itself altogether desirable and one which God had fully determined in His own good time to bring to pass. They are fallen but not so as to be utterly prostrated, cast down but not destroyed—for a time separated from their ancient privilege and glory as the peculiar and chosen inheritance of God, but again to be restored to this perfected inheritance.

Now, inasmuch as this rejection of the Jews was a punishment inflicted on them for their unbelief and was not the expression of God's ultimate purpose respecting them, their



rejection from church privileges is made an argument whereby the Gentile church is admonished to be humble and watchful.

In order to convey His instructions the more clearly, the apostle adopts a very striking and beautiful illustration, in which the Church of God is compared to an olive tree—the Jewish church to its natural branches—and the Gentile church to the branches of a wild olive tree grafted into the original stock from which the natural branches because of their unfruitfulness had been broken off. Thus does he depict the church as a wide-spread, an undecaying and perennial tree firmly rooted in the divine purposes; sustained by the divine promises; growing up under the divine protection and blessing; watered by the river of life which flows forth from the unfailing fountain of God's Sovereign mercy;—whose leaves shall never fade, and which no rude blasts shall ever be able to uproot.

Of all the fruits which grow luxuriantly upon this tree of life whose very leaves are for the healing of the nations—the Jews were early made the favoured partakers, in exclusion of those who had abused and thus forfeited their enjoyment. The Jews in their turn having become helplessly corrupt were cut off from their long possessed advantages over their Gentile brethren; and these long forsaken Gentiles are, in the mercy of God, introduced into their former blessings.

That the beauty, propriety and force of this illustration may be more perfectly comprehended I may be permitted briefly to illustrate the passage.

Palestine was the very garden of olives, some of which, you will remember, covered the summits of that hill which looks down upon Jerusalem and which was hence termed Mount Olivet. There are found at this moment trees which sprouted from those very olives under whose spreading branches the blessed Saviour meditated 1800 years ago.

There are different kinds of olives—some wild and natural, others under care and culture. This tree is a favorite illustration in the Scriptures of the character of the believer not so much for any remarkable beauty in its foliage or shape, as for the value attached to its fruit and the healing efficacy of its oil, in mitigating pain. From the period of the deluge, when the branches of olive brought back by the wearied dove to the



more wearied tenants of the lonely ark, revived the sinking hope of earth's future ancestors, the olive or some green branch has in all portions of the world been made the emblem and pledge of peace, as it shadows forth the goodness and placability of God through Him who came to deliver our ruined race from the deluge of the wrath of God. Such, then, is the figure by which the apostle here represents the Church of God—"it is a good olive tree."

This leads me further to remark, as already stated, that there are wild and unfruitful olives which are valueless, and good or fruit-bearing trees which are most highly esteemed. Now, by the science of grafting, man has discovered a way by which the graft of an unfruitful tree may become fruitful by being united to one which is fruitful, and an unfruitful tree made fruit-bearing by engrafting upon it the branch of a fruitful tree. Thus it is that olives which bear no fruit are yet in some places cultivated for the express purpose of sustaining fruit-bearing grafts (see John's Arch., Sect. 71). The graft, being inserted in a slit made in the tree and carefully bound round with clay, becomes perfectly united to the parent stock from which it derives its nutriment while it retains its fruitfulness. This practice being the discovery of man's artful ingenuity, and not the result of nature's own working, though accomplished by the help of nature's laws, is here said to be "contrary to nature." These words are meant to hold forth the greatness of God's mercy to the Gentiles, who were like an unfruitful branch grafted into a fruitful stock, which is not the usual or customary practice, but "contrary to nature." The Gentiles are thus inheritors of all the privileges of the Church of God.

You will now, I trust, be able perfectly to understand the argument of the apostle.

Quote v. 23, 24:

"For, if," says the apostle, that we may paraphrase the 24th verse, "if thou wert, as I may properly enough express it, cut off from an olive tree which was by nature wild and worthless, and if thou wert, contrary to the course of nature and to the custom of men, grafted on the good olive tree, which is the Church of the living God, and if thou wert thus admitted into covenant with God, though descended from parents that

were strangers and enemies, how much more shall they, who are the natural branches to whom and to whom alone this covenant and these promises do originally belong, be grafted again into their own olive tree from which they have been for a season separated?

When a writer in arguing upon any point takes for granted some other matter not necessary to the point in hand, but which he supposes will be mutually allowed by both parties—it is always regarded as a more satisfactory proof of the unquestionable truth of that fact or opinion whatever it be—than even a distinct and laboured proof of it. For in these circumstances we can imagine no possible reason why the writer should introduce for the sake of illustration what was in itself a matter of dispute or doubt. Such incidental allusions to received opinions or existing customs is, therefore, the most conclusive proof that could be given, not that such opinions are correct or such customs wise, but of the fact that they were at the time believed opinions and received customs—that could possibly be given.

When, therefore, we find the apostle in his argument with the Gentile converts and as a motive by which he would urge them to the maintenance of watchfulness and humility in view of the obstinate unbelief of the Jews; when we find him, I say, assuming as an incontrovertible and an uncontroverted fact, the perpetuity of the ancient church and the identity of that church with the Church of Christ—the Jewish and the christian churches being both grafted INTO THE SAME TREE—we have indubitable assurance given us of the fact of that identity, and since the apostle wrote “as he was moved by the Holy Ghost,” we are equally certified of the truth of this asserted identity. There is, therefore, there has ever been, there ever will be—but one Church of the Living God, of which all true and particular churches are branches.

Now this, brethren, is the important truth which it is my purpose at this time to gather up from those many truths which fall in such rich profusion as it is shaken by the knowing hands of this divine apostle—from this goodly tree of life.

The Church of God like the moon, to which she may well be resembled, since both derive their lustre from a central Sun of glory—amid all her different phases, changes and vicissitudes

and however she may *seem* to vanish, become obscured or essentially alter her nature—is still one and the same, indestructible and identical. God may conduct her through various dispensations; but amid them, she is still the one object of His loving kindness and tender mercy—still within the covenant of life; still under the encircling bow of promise;—still fed by the bread of heaven and watered by the dews of heavenly grace.

If, therefore, we are fully established in this truth, the doctrine of the right to a membership in the Church of God now—as under all previous dispensations—of the infant seed of God's people follows as an immediate and a necessary consequence—unless, indeed, it can be shown by some express declaration of the Law-giver that such a privilege has been positively withdrawn.

Allow me, therefore, to present this point a little more fully before your mind.

I assert the identity of the christian and the ancient church as the same, perpetual and indestructible Church of God. But when I assert their identity I do not deny their distinctness and difference as Antedeluvian, Post-deluvian, Patriarchal, Jewish and christian. Identity only implies sameness in that which is substantially essential while there may be endless diversity of state. Water is water whether in the form of vapour, rain, steam, or fluid. Man is man amid all that succession of endless changes through which he is ceaselessly passing, both as it regards the matter of the body and the state of the mind, and in this identity we are compelled to believe by universal, immediate and irresistible law. And it is equally true of all things around us that they may remain the same in their own absolute nature while existing in states the most opposite and infinitely various. In assuming, therefore, the perpetual identity of the Church of God there is no forgetfulness of those various dispensations, laws and regulations through which it has pleased God to bring her in her onward march to immortality. As the Ark of divine mercy she is still the same over whatever seas she may pass, by whatever winds she may be tossed, or in whatever port she may ride on peaceful anchorage. She is still the Church of the living God—the pillar and ground of the truth—the Oracle of God—the throne of grace—the birthplace

of souls—the celestial ladder—the token of God's covenant—the dwelling place of the Most High God.

Now, of this identity the apostle assures us:

I. The Jews are not here alluded to as individuals, but are spoken of in their collective capacity, as a body, the nation and people of "Israel." They are thus contrasted with the Gentiles in their collective unity, who while these are as "the Gentiles" represented as now occupying the position previously filled by Israel. To them it is now given to dwell in God's house—to enter His Courts—to enjoy His promises—to preserve His oracles—and to hold forth His covenant. In the rejection of the Jews—and their exclusion from the vineyard we behold the severity of God toward them who have thus fallen—and in the admission of these we behold God's goodness and mercy towards them. As the Jews, therefore, were God's "people" "of the seed of Abraham," so are the Gentiles "blessed in Him." The christian church, therefore, inherits the covenants—the promises—and all the blessings of the ancient church.

II. But it might be said that the ancient church had now served its purpose and had become extinct and that another church was formed out of the Gentiles. This idea is plainly contradictory to the mind of the apostle. The rejection of the Jews is represented not as a necessary result of the dissolution of the Church of God—but as a cutting off from that church—a punishment inflicted on them for their "unbelief"—"a casting them away"—"a breaking them off because of unbelief," from that church into which "God is able" to restore them—and as a temporary separation "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." The establishment of the Gentile church was not, therefore the occasion of the fall of the Jews, but their fall was contrariwise the very occasion of the establishment of the Gentile church—"as concerning the Gospel they are enemies for your sakes." But had Israel received the Saviour and embraced His Gospel then would they have retained their standing in the Church of God, while the Gentiles would have been incorporated with them, and the middle wall of partition being broken down—there would have been but one temple—one court—and one worship.



III. That the Church of God was not changed or destroyed, by the change of dispensation whereby it became christian instead of Jewish in its polity and order and worship, is most manifest from the fact that the Jews are to be again restored to that very church from which they were cast away and of which the Gentiles were made the privileged possessors. "These natural branches" shall be "grafted in again"—"shall be grafted into their own olive tree" from which "some—(not all) the branches were broken off" that the "wild olive tree might be grafted in among them and with them partake of the root and fatness of THE OLIVE TREE." That tree, therefore, remains, for into it the Gentiles are grafted. That tree remains, for to it the Jews are to be again restored. The christian church is, therefore, identical with the ancient church—by virtue of whose covenant and promises, in their accomplished blessings, it lives.

IV. The same truth is established by the declaration of the apostle in the 16th verse. "For if the first fruit be holy the lump is also holy, and if the root be holy so are the branches." What is here termed "the lump" and "the branches" means the descendants of Abraham—to whom God gave in perpetuity the covenant—promise—and blessing—which He first granted to Abraham. And since "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" the apostle argues that however for a season they may be cast away "the reconciling of them shall be as life from the dead" to the christian church.

V. Equally strong in proof of this identity of the christian and the ancient church is the declaration of John the Baptist, recorded in Math. 3:9. The Jews thought that in consequence of their relation to Abraham it was impossible for them to lose the favour of God, or be cast away from their boasted privileges. But, says this divine prophet, "Think not to say within yourselves we have Abraham for our father," relying on your descent from that holy patriarch and your being that seed of his with whom a peculiar and an everlasting covenant was made, "for since God is able of these" Gentiles whom you regard as "stones," by His sanctifying grace, "to raise up" those who shall be adopted into His family, made heirs of the prom-

ises, and partakers of the Covenant, and thus "children of Abraham."

These arguments are sufficient—though they might be endlessly multiplied—to demonstrate the identity of the christian and the ancient church as equally the Church of God. "Boast not thyself," says the apostle, "against the branches—thou bearest not the root"—the Abrahamic covenant—"but the root" this covenant "bears thee." The very existence, therefore, and much more, every privilege and blessing of the Gentile church depends on the fulfillment towards them of God's promises of mercy in the ancient covenant. The ancient church is the root of the christian church.

Now, I have already on former occasions presented to your minds the proof of the identity of the Abrahamic and the christian covenant—and of circumcision which was the seal of that covenant with baptism, which is the seal of the christian covenant. Since, therefore, that covenant embraced in its merciful provisions the infant offspring of Abraham, who were constituted members of the church visible and heirs of the church triumphant—and since circumcision was a seal of the righteousness which by faith was the appointed ordinance by which children were initiated into these heavenly privileges—it follows as a most plain and necessary consequence that baptism, which has displaced circumcision in accordance with the milder and more equal spirit of the christian dispensation, of right belongs to the children of such as are of the seed of Abraham and upon whom the blessing of faithful Abraham has come.

This conclusion is powerfully enforced by the reasoning of the apostle.

His argument is about church membership and church privileges, and it is his purpose to shew why these were taken away from the Jews and transferred to the Gentiles. Now, he applies to both the same general terms (as Gentiles, nations, world, Israel), which necessarily include children as well as adults.

In connexion with this he places in contrast with each other the excluded Jews and the newly introduced Gentiles—the latter being put into complete possession of all the privileges and blessings enjoyed by the former, as far as they were compatible with the genius of the christian dispensation. Now, the church



membership of infants was one of the most marked and boasted privileges of the ancient church—and it seems to be demanded by and is not consistent merely with the spirit of christianity, and must, therefore, be included in its gifts and calling.

This would appear to be the inevitable inference from the apostle's illustration which would otherwise teach the very opposite of what the apostle designed and be most perfectly absurd.

What was the pre-existing character and state the visible condition of these two nations or people? The one, in their public relation to God were "the branches of" "a good olive tree," the visible Church of God "organized under the covenant with Abraham." The other stood to God in the contrasted relation of "a wild olive tree," who were strangers to this covenant of promise, and "aliens from this Commonwealth of Israel." Such was their previous condition.

What was their condition as represented by the apostle? Except that the change as it regards the Jews was partial and not entire—and temporary and not perpetual—their position was exactly reversed. The church remained unchanged though altered—identically the same, "the good olive tree." This tree remains living and in full vigour, for the Gentile church is represented as "partaking of the ROOT and FATNESS of THE OLIVE TREE." The root was good—the trunk also was good—the sap, the life, was still in vigorous circulation through that trunk—"the good olive tree"—not identically the same under whose heavenly shadow Abraham "rested in peace" of whose fruit he ate to the saving of his soul—and on whose green spreading bough, he delighted to look in heartfelt admiration as he directed the eyes of his faith forward through the vista of coming centuries, where its leaves would be for the healing "of ALL nations"—that tree still flourished in the region of immortal youth. By the inheritance of its covenant—in its promises—in its privileges—the Church of God remained the same with the only difference that these were now all fulfilled and perfected.

What, then, was now the condition of the Jews, "the natural branches of this good olive tree?" They were now, many of them, broken off because of unbelief. And what was the con-

dition of the Gentiles, the wild branches of the wild olive tree? They were grafted into the good olive tree"—nay, into the very place of these "cast away" natural branches, for "the branches were broken off that these might be grafted in?"

The Church of God remains unchanged and identical—but from that church the Jews are excommunicated and into that church the Gentiles were admitted—"well, because of unbelief they were broken off and thus standest."

To what are the Gentiles admitted? To the Church of God—to its covenant—to its promises—to its privileges. In these they "stand." They "bear not the root" as if they had sprung up as a new and different church, "but the root beareth thee," who art only grafted into it. But the membership of infants was secured by this covenant—was pledged by these promises—was one of these privileges—and flowed out necessarily from this goodly root, and of necessity it must still flow into the branches that have been grafted in as it had done into the natural branches. There is no evading this conclusion.

But again some of the natural branches remained upon the good olive tree as converts of the apostle himself. Of course, the root still sent forth to these their natural and accustomed nutriment. They drank still at the same sustaining fountain of life. And was it ever heard that any converted Jew, amid all the discussions of the apostolic times, complained of being deprived of this proud and boasted privilege? Did they contend for the mere outward rite and long continue to observe it—and would they have uttered not a sentence when that which the rite itself signified and taught was abrogated? Who can believe such a palpable absurdity? No, this privilege remained and these natural branches continued to enjoy it.

But, once more, the cast away branches are to be "AGAIN grafted in." So says God and His inspired apostle—into what? into another tree—into a new church? No—but into "THEIR OWN OLIVE TREE." The church remains the same and will remain the same to the end of time, and when the Jews are converted and brought into the Church of Christ they will be again grafted into their own olive tree, of which it was a most esteemed and blessed fruit that it imparted membership to their infant seed. Right to that membership must remain, says the

apostle, unless "the truth of God is a lie, which God forbid." "Let God be true," whosoever are thereby proved to be deceivers.

This privilege, christians, is ours. No man taketh it from us. And I challenge them who impugn our claim and who desecrate it by their profane ridicule to produce that passage in the Old Testament where this privilege which was not a part of the Jewish dispensation, but which "was before Moses, before Abraham, more ancient than the flood, coeval with the first family of man"—where God has now annulled and revoked it—or otherwise give answer for their rejection before His tribunal who will require answer at their hands.

And, brethren, this is not a charge of small import—but an issue of dread and fearful consequence—over which we have allowed these brethren too long to slumber in indifference.

Dr. Mason's Wks., Vol. 4, p. 44-46 and 118-120.  
Williams on Baptism, Vol. 1, p. 357-362.

### ARTICLE III.

#### THE LAW OF INFANT MEMBERSHIP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD, NOT ABROGATED BY THE GOSPEL.

1 COR. 7:14.

For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, *but now* they are holy.

It is our desire, christian brethren, again to address you on the subject of infant baptism in connexion with the administration of this heaven appointed ordinance. The ordinance itself, apart from its present outward sign, as you all know, was originated by the express appointment of God not as a part of the ceremonial dispensation and with it to perish and decay, but hundreds of years previous to that dispensation, and therefore not necessarily in any way affected by its removal. All controversy, therefore, on the reasonableness and propriety of such an institution must be settled between those who presumptuously deny such propriety and that wise God who has affirmed it by his own positive ordinance, which He has positively sustained for thousands of years in succession. We have, I trust, satisfactorily proven that the same covenant of grace which was entered into with the elect of fallen man by the promised Redeemer, and which was renewed with Abraham—is the same covenant under which we enjoy all the blessings of the gospel dispensation—that which was given in promise being now enjoyed in its complete fulfillment. And since this institution of infant dedication by a positive form or ceremony was expressly connected with that covenant and associated with it until it received its completion in Christ—the covenant itself remaining in force, some seal of it must also necessarily remain. But as our Lord altered the form of its application in accordance with the genius of the gospel dispensation—while He did not abrogate the institution itself—that institution must of necessity abide under the form of baptism instead of the ancient form of circumcision.

This reasoning is strengthened by the fact which has been also indisputably established that the Church of God now is identically, though not in every respect, the same as the Church

of God in all past time. And therefore since in all ages of it children have been admitted to its privileges by covenant dedication, this privilege must still be theirs unless it can be shown that it has been plainly and positively withdrawn.

But so far is there from being any such abrogation in the word of God it is our purpose on this occasion to show that the relation of children to this church—or in other words, the law of infant membership—has not been abrogated by the gospel. For this purpose I will invite your attention to the consideration of one passage out of many which we believe is sufficient of itself to satisfy all impartial minds. It is contained in 1 Cor. 7:14.

Now, in order to understand this declaration, it will be necessary to determine first the question upon which the apostle here gives his decision and secondly the decision itself.

This epistle was written to the Corinthians in consequence of certain important practical questions upon which they desired the apostle's judgment. Now, one of these questions was this, "Is a converted heathen, being the husband or the wife of a person who is still an avowed idolater, required by the laws and institutions of the gospel to separate from that heathen partner?" In other words, "Is it sinful for such an individual to remain in such a connexion and ought those who were determined to continue in such a matrimonial union, to be debarred from the privileges of the Church of Christ?"

That this was the question submitted to the apostle will be manifest from these considerations. It was not a question about the way in which christians should be married on which the apostle was requested to decide. Marriage, although ordained by God, is not an institution of religion, but of nature, and left, therefore, by Scripture to the arrangements of civil society, the Scriptures only laying down as a rule for christians that they should marry "in the Lord." But no where does it prescribe any form or define the minister of marriage; so that marriage is everywhere valid, it being otherwise proper when entered into according to the laws of the land. Where those laws permit it—it is assuredly proper and most becoming that the ministers of religion should officiate and thus throw around an event of such importance all the due solemnity; but



were this not permitted by the laws then would not a union by their ministry, however in itself proper, be held valid in law—nor do the Scriptures any where authorize or require christians to oppose in this matter the constitution and prescriptions of that state in which they live. The apostle, therefore, was not consulted as to the proper mode in which marriage might be contracted, but as to the necessity in certain cases of dissolving that relation where already formed. He evidently assumes the legality of the marriage in question and the legitimacy of its issue, the children, being as he plainly takes for a thing undoubted holy and not unclean, words which whatever more they teach must necessarily imply this much on the very lowest possible interpretation. The persons here spoken of were already married and had families around them and one of the parents was already an admitted member of the church—for the apostle speaks of “a brother or sister” (see v. 12 and v. 15), as contrast with unbelievers (v. 14), and the inquiry was relative to the continuance in such a relationship under these circumstances.\*

In those countries and in the times of the apostles the laws both of the Jews as they were interpreted by the Jewish Rabbis; and of other nations also gave to the husband and the wife the power of divorcing each other on the very slightest grounds. It is plain from Josephus that this was done among the Jews, for he was divorced by his own wife and the shameful extent to which this practice was carried among the Romans is known to all the readers of the Satires of Juvenal.† Such being the state of things it became a question at Corinth whether in the case submitted, the church should require the exercise of this power and the formal separation of the unbelieving partner from the professing christian.

It is thus manifest that the question was altogether a religious one and had reference to religious ends. It was also propounded by the Corinthian church and not by any private individuals and must have been designed to guide the church in her treatment of the individuals whose case was submitted for apostolic judgment. The apostle was, therefore, to decide whether the laws of Christ required, in order to the enjoyment

\*Read. v. 12-15.

†See Sat. 6, l. 222-230.



of all the privileges of the church, that a believing husband or wife, should be divorced from a heathen wife or husband. Here was a case of conscience, a religious scruple, a practical difficulty which had come up before the Corinthian church and upon which they wished to ascertain the mind and will of the Lord from His inspired and in so far His infallible apostle.

That such was the true and only point before the apostle's view, will be further apparent from his answer in which he makes no allusion to the civil laws or to the mode and minister of the marriage, nor to any interference with this matter by the church—but only to the spiritual interests of the parties and those of their children. In looking at this decision we may consider the apostle as a casuist and as a reasoner.

I. As a casuist, doctor, dubitantuine or spiritual counsellor, the apostle determines that in the case presented the parties were not required by any law of Christ, nor in order to the full enjoyment of any and all the ordinances of the gospel to dissolve their matrimonial connexion. The fact that one of the parents in any family was yet an idolater, did not, in his judgment, form a barrier to the full participation by the believing wife and their common offspring of all the benefits of christianity. The unbelief of that husband or wife could not intercept the flow of these heavenly blessings in Christ Jesus, to his believing partner and to their beloved children. And if, therefore, such an unbeliever was willing to abide with the believing partner as such no separation was to be sought, since by virtue of such belief the full privileges of the christian church were open both to the parent and to the children also.

As a casuist then the apostle's judgment commends itself to reason, charity, and to the word of God. Nor is there a christian church in the world which would otherwise determine this point except the church of Rome, which in her arrogant presumption that she alone is THE CHURCH would sacrilegiously put asunder whom God hath joined together; and the church of the Immercionists (Baptists), who would deny to infants the benefits which, as we believe, are theirs by covenant right and the purchase of the blood of Christ, and the promises of God.

But, suppose the apostle—as some teach us that he does—to have determined here that where parents have been legally

united in the bonds of matrimony according to those forms which by the constitution under which they lived were deemed most proper and becoming; to be still truly married and their children legitimate, even although one of them become a christian—and how can we sustain this casuistry as either Scriptural or reasonable? Did it require an inspired apostle to decide that the conversion of one parent to God does not *ipso factor* render the other parent an adulterer and their children illegitimate? Was this the subject upon which the Corinthians solicited an opinion? Or would it have conferred any advantage or increased knowledge upon them to have ascertained that their marriages were not annulled and their families not condemned to hopeless degradation by their adoption of the christian faith? Away with such an interpretation. It is foreign to the question in hand. It leaves the Corinthian church unassisted in its pressing difficulty. It reduces the apostle to the ineffably absurd position of announcing with solemnity, the astounding truth that the marriage of such parents was not illegitimate and to be deplored—because their children were legitimate. “Else,” says the apostle, “according to this interpretation your marriage were illegitimate, your children would be also illegitimate; but now you well know that your children are legitimate, and therefore must your marriage also be necessarily legitimate.” And thus in order to prevent children from receiving the benefit of a fair interpretation of this passage the apostle is made to relieve the anxious minds of these Corinthians by telling them that they knew as well as he did that their children were legitimate—that they did not and could not believe otherwise—and therefore they might safely dismiss all doubts as to the legality of their prior marriage, for how was it possible for their marriage to be unlawful seeing that its issue was as certainly lawful. No, my hearers, this is not, this cannot be what the apostle tells them. nor can such a judgment be attributed to the Apostle Paul. What he tells them is this—that having been properly married they were not to separate. They being in God’s sight the common parent of these children, God in His abundant mercy through Christ Jesus, did not reckon the condition of the children by that of the unbelieving parent, but by that of the believing parent; and, therefore, they

were to be esteemed by the church not as unclean but as holy and to be received by it into the covenant of mercy. Neither the believing parent, therefore, nor the children were to be debarred from any christian privilege because of the unbelief of the husband or of the wife. In this plain interpretation of the passage we have a decision—but in the other none. Here there is a solution of the proposed difficulty and a plain directory for the guidance of the church. The apostle acquits himself like himself and as becometh that glorious gospel which proclaims peace on earth and good will to men.

Let us proceed, then, to contemplate the apostle as a reasoner, and in this character the Apostle Paul is justly held pre-eminent among all the sacred writers. How, then, does the apostle sustain or prove his position that in the case supposed the parents were not to divorce themselves from each other and from their family?

He proves it by shewing that such a separation was not demanded by the laws of Christ and His church, either as it regards the believing parent or the infant offspring. For, says he (vii. 14), the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband. Christianity, therefore, does not require their separation. By the mystery of the holy bands of wedlock, they that were twain are made one flesh. When either parent, therefore, is led to devote himself or herself to Christ, in an everlasting covenant, he or she does at the same time, in heart, in spirit, in desire and in prayer, devote also to Him that other individual who is bound up with them in the unity of an undivided affection. That individual is thus set apart, consecrated and dedicated to God. Over him are shed the tears of anxious solicitude. For him are offered up the prayers of importunity and earnest supplication. To him are addressed the words of kind entreaty and persuasion. Before him is presented the example of a meek, quiet and loving spirit to win and woo him to God and to repentance. And on his behalf a claim is also registered in the throne of God. He is brought nigh to the overtures of divine mercy, and it is only necessary that he should put forth the hand of believing faith to receive a full and perfect admission into all the privileges and blessings of the christian

inheritance. God is covenanted or pledged to bestow it on him in Christ Jesus, not only for the sake of His atoning blood and meritorious righteousness; but also in the supereminency of gospel mercy in consequence of his oneness with the adopted heir of these heavenly privileges.

To such an one there is in the very fact that God has chosen his partner in life as an heir of faith and a partaker of the grace which is unto salvation—a pledge additional to all others and one of peculiar impressiveness to his mind—that if he also will turn unto God and lay hold on the Lord Jesus Christ he shall most assuredly be saved. And because it has been thus graciously determined by the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; so that while His grace is sufficient to guide and sustain the believer if only found to be faithful, it is also adequate to the conversion of the unbeliever and overflows with mercy to their children—therefore, argues the apostle.\*

Will it be said that in such a decision there is nothing expressive of any peculiar benevolence or mildness in the gospel nor peculiarly worthy of the apostle? We answer that contrariwise there is in this very decision a striking proof of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free and of that deliverance from his former Pharisaic prejudices by which this apostle was so remarkably distinguished. For if you will turn to Deut. 7:3, 4, you will find that under the Jewish dispensation, for wise and obvious reasons, such inter-marriages were forbidden under the severest penalty. And if you will again turn to the book of Ezra x: 3 and of Nehemiah (Ch. xiii: 25) you will there learn that when such marriages had actually been contracted by a large portion of the people they were required to put away from them their "strange wives and such as were born of them," and to make penitent confession of their trespass before the Lord.

Such, then, having been the law of God under the Jewish dispensation, and there being in almost every place a number of Jews among the first christian converts, and the apostle himself having been fully indoctrinated in all the precepts and traditions of the Jewish law—this decision is very remarkable and striking—the privilege it confers upon christians is a very

\*Quote 1 Cor. vii: 12 and 13.



special and important grant—its spirit harmonizes with that love and mercy which is the genius of the gospel dispensation—while it was a full answer to the inquiry of the Corinthian church and amply sufficient to meet the scrupulous anxieties of both the presbytery and their converts.

But the apostle further deprecates such separations, because as the christian law did not require them, in order to extend all its privileges to the believing parent, so neither did it make them necessary for the enjoyment of such privileges by their children. Did the christians, like the Jewish dispensation, pronounce such marriages unclean and a disqualification for the enjoyment of all its benefits and blessings, then would the children equally with their parents be involved in such a censure and be also excluded from the pale of the christian church and from the enjoyment of christian ordinances. Otherwise, says the apostle (v. 14), your children also in such cases of mixed marriages, were unclean and unfit to be admitted to those peculiar ordinances by which the seed of God's people are distinguished; but now he adds they are on the contrary as you grant confessedly holy and are as readily received into the church by baptism as if both parents were members of the church. Since, then, Christ has so ordered it that the ancient law on this subject being no longer necessary should be no longer in force, and has also practically determined that the offspring of such marriages, shall be considered as fit subjects for introduction to all the blessings of the New Covenant, why should such parents if the unbelieving party is willing to remain, be dissevered from each other and from their family?

The terms unclean and holy are here used as expressive of opposite ideas, so that by understanding either the other becomes necessarily plain and obvious. Now, it is related in the book of Acts\* that Peter, being still under the impression derived from his Jewish prejudices, that the Gentiles were unclean and that the gospel was to be proclaimed only to the Jews, was to be employed by God in making that gospel known to Cornelius, a Gentile convert. And in order to prepare his mind for this duty a vision was granted unto him whereby he was assuredly taught he was no longer to regard the Gentiles

\*See Ch. x: 14, 15, 28.

as common or unclean—that to them also was the gospel addressed and all its privileges granted. Peter, therefore, from that time forward laboured as earnestly for the salvation of the Gentiles as of the Jews, and justified his conduct by this express revelation of the will of God. By the term unclean, therefore, is to be understood that they to whom it is applied are “Gentiles in the flesh—strangers from the covenant of promise”†—that covenant of which the Apostle Peter declared to the assembled multitude on the day of Pentecost, “for the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”‡

By unclean, therefore, in the passage before us we must understand that the children who are such, are considered as beyond the pale of the christian commonwealth—as still aliens from its covenant and promise—and as thus debarred from the enjoyment of its ordinances and privileges. And thus, also, the term holy must be understood to mean that the children of parents, one or both of whom are within the pale of the christian church, are “a holy seed” that is separated to God—and entitled to all the privileges of the household of faith. In this sense, says Baxter, the term holy is used in Scripture nearly six hundred times, and in the sense of legitimate no where. For our interpretation of the word as implying separation to God there are 600 authorities in the word of God and for that interpretation which is designed to exclude infants from the kingdom of God on earth there is not a single authority in the whole word of God. These terms unclean and holy occur, says Dr. Guyse, almost numberless times in the Septuagint or Greek version of the Bible and in the New Testament, “but I don’t find that they are ever ONCE used to signify illegitimate and legitimate.” “He doth not say,” says the learned Whitby, in his Commentary on these words, in Williams, pp. 374-376: “He doth not say, Else were your children *bastards*, but now they are *legitimate*; but, else were they *unclean*, *i. e.*, heathen children; not to be owned as an holy seed.” That this is the true import of the words will be apparent from the Scriptures, in which the Heathens are styled the *unclean* in opposition to

†Eph. ii: 12-21.

‡Acts ii: 39.



the Jews in covenant with God, and therefore styled an holy people. So† the *unclean* shall not pass over it. Ch. lii: 1. There shall no more come unto thee the unclean. So (Acts 10:28) God hath shewed me that I should call no man common, or unclean. Whence it is evident that the Jews looked upon themselves as the clean servants of God and upon all heathens and their offspring, as unclean by reason of their want of circumcision, the sign of the covenant. Hence, whereas it is said that Joshua *circumcised* the people (Josh. v: 4) the Septuagint says he *cleansed* them. Moreover, of heathen children, and such as are not circumcised, they say, They are not born in holiness; but they on the contrary, are styled an holy seed (Is. 6:13; Ezra 9:2), and the offspring from them, and from those proselytes which had embraced their religion, are said to be born *in holiness*, and so thought fit to be admitted to circumcision, or baptism, or whatsoever might initiate them into the Jewish church. And, therefore, to this sense of the words *holy* and *unclean*, the apostle may be here *most rationally* supposed to allude, declaring that the seed of holy persons, the offspring born *of saints*, as christians are still called in the New Testament, are also *holy*. And though one of the parents be still an heathen, yet is the denomination to be taken from the *better*, and also their offspring are to be esteemed not as heathens, *i. e.*, *unclean*, but *holy*; as all christians by denomination are. So Clemens Alexandrius (Strom L. 3, p. 445, D.) infers, saying: "I suppose the seed of those that are holy is holy, according to that saying of the Apostle Paul, The unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband, &c. The word used for a *bastard* by this apostle\* is the proper word for a *legitimate* offspring, had the apostle *intended* such a sense, (as our opponents plead for) he should have used the words, which in the Greek writers are generally used in that sense, and not such words as in the Septuagint, and in the Jewish language, *always* have a relation to federal (or relative) holiness, or the want of it; but none at all to the legitimacy or spuriousness of the birth"

We are, therefore, taught that in the christian church the children of parents one or both of whom are connected with

†Is. 35, 8.

\*Heb. 12, 8.

the visible church, sustain to it the same relation which they did to the Jewish church. They are holy and not unclean. They are born within and not without the church. They are natural born citizens in this spiritual republic, with a right and title to all its immunities and privileges inalienably theirs. And as "God," to use the words of Mr. Baxter, "never had a church on earth of which infants were not infant members since there were infants in the world."\* So is it here assumed as an undeniable principle, that this law of infant membership in the Church of God remains unchanged. Its mode of application is indeed altered, but the law itself never has been abrogated or annulled. The children of such parents are still holy to the Lord—separated to Him and within the covenant of His mercy. Such is the relation in which the children of the members of the church stand to that church. They are admitted to privileges peculiar to them as such—privileges which flow to them from the grace of God in covenant through Jesus Christ the Mediator. They are thus distinguished from the children of other parents and which are in contrast denominated unclean.

This passage, therefore, though it says nothing directly of baptism and has immediate reference indeed to a different subject altogether is yet on that very account the more plain and forcible as a testimony to the truth of our position. It assumes as an indisputable fact that the children of believing parents are holy. There seems to have been no question on the subject where both parents were such—the only question being in reference to the case of one parent only being such. "On the maturest and most impartial consideration of the text," says Dr. Doddridge, quoted from Williams, "I must judge it to refer to *infant baptism*. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy* signifies persons, who *might be admitted* to partake of the distinguishing rites of God's people. Compare Exod. 19:6; Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:19; 33:3; Ezra 9:2, with Is. 35:8; 52:1; Acts 10:28, &c. And as for the interpretation, which so many of our brethren, the Baptists, have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and *unclean* *illegitimate*; (not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word) nothing can

\*Comment. on Math., 28, 19.

be more evident, than that the argument will by no means bear it."

That this passage, then, cannot refer to the question of legitimacy and must refer to the question of church privilege—has, I trust, been made apparent. But if this is the meaning of the passage then is the inference irresistible that the children of parents, one or both of whom are within the covenant of the visible church, are by nature of their relation to such parents holy and are thereby invested with the right to a covenanted enjoyment of all the privileges and blessings of the kingdom of Christ. In other words, the Church of God is essentially the same under the Christian and the Jewish economy—being under the same covenant of grace and in its matured and perfected external developments. Those privileges which were essentially connected with that covenant are, of course, perpetuated, however modified in their outward forms or signs. And as the holiness of children by virtue of their relation to the parents who were visibly within the covenant, was one of the most remarkable and esteemed privileges of this covenant during all the former dispensation of the church, that privilege must remain unless it can be shewn by positive enactment that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has abrogated and annulled it. But this we defy any reader of the New Testament to make manifest. On the contrary, there is an acknowledged silence on this subject. It is not treated of as one which could come into any doubt. The relation of children remained the same and their privileges are everywhere tacitly implied. The whole language of the New Testament is moulded as on this supposition we should have expected it to be. Children are—as in our text—declared to be holy where one or both parents are by covenant or outward membership in the church holy. The command is to disciple all nations, baptizing them. The Jews are told that the promise of the gospel is to them and to their children. "Of such," that is of little children, our Saviour assures us, "is the kingdom of heaven." And while it is true that we generally read of the baptism of adult believers for the simple reason that the gospel was at first necessarily preached to such, yet do we read also of the baptism of entire households upon the faith of their head. While in the whole New Testa-

ment there is not to be found one solitary case of an adult being baptized where one or both the parents had been baptized before him; not one isolated example; and, therefore, were there the record of the baptism of 10,000 adult converts whose parents had been either heathen, or Jews this would only corroborate the more our position, for we restrain with the apostle the privilege of infant dedication by baptism to those children, one or both of whose parents had been already introduced within the visible church by baptism. But as it is our purpose to consider these and other topics more fully and in detail I will, therefore, not enlarge upon these at present.

Neither will I now consider the bearing of this important passage upon the question of the extent of this privilege of infant baptism and whether in order to be validly administered one or both parents must be in actual connexion with any particular church. This subject also I hope to bring fully before you at some future time. At present I will only remark that while this passage does certainly decide that one or both parents must have been connected with the visible church as members by their own baptism—it certainly does not decide that where one or both parents had been baptized, and have thus been introduced as members within the visible church, and where both these parents fail to embrace their rightful privilege by actually associating with some particular church, that through this their fault and heinous guilt, their children became unclean whereas they are by birth holy. My present judgment clearly is that as by baptism we are made members of Christ's visible, though not necessarily of His invisible church, that the children of such parents as have been one or both baptized are born a holy seed, so far as regards the privileges of the church visible, and are, therefore, to receive baptism, which is the outward seal of those privileges and of that membership whereby they are secured. But of this again.

Let us at present be fully established in our faith in the holiness of our children as being entitled to a membership in the visible church. Let us be assured that this privilege appertains to the church no less in its christian than in its patriarchal, Abrahamic and Jewish forms. Let us more highly value and esteem it in such a spirit of prayer and faith as shall secure for

our offspring not merely an outward but also a spiritual engrafting into the good olive tree, the church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven.

Consult: Williams' Anti-Pædo Baptism Examined, Vol. I, p. —.  
Addington on Infant Baptism, p. —.  
Hall's Law of Infant Baptism.



## ARTICLE IV.

### THE INFANT'S RIGHT TO BAPTISM PLEADED AGAINST UNBELIEVING PARENTS.

ROM. 3: 1-3.

What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there in circumcision?

Much every way: chiefly that because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.

For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

The apostle, in this chapter, in order to establish more fully his great doctrine of justification by faith, continues his proofs of the guilty condition of both the Jews and the Gentiles. He shows, therefore, that whatever prerogatives the Jews possessed, by virtue of their union to the one, Holy and Catholic Church of God, and their enjoyment of all its ordinances, and its blessed privileges; that, because of their personal unbelief these privileges would avail them nothing. They were found guilty before God. Their participation of the external rites and sacraments of the church would by no means save them or deliver them from the wrath that is to come. And that in order to their salvation they must have that faith in Christ, by which alone, in its principle or its act, any soul can be justified in the sight of God.

To this conclusion the Jew is here introduced, as offering very powerful objections. The apostle would not, and could not, deny, that they were the true Church of God and that theirs were all its heavenly gifts. But on this principle, argues the Jew, you destroy all distinction between the Jew and the Gentile, so as to make it a matter of no importance to be a Jew, and therefore to be within the bound of the true church. "What advantage then hath the Jew? Where are his privileges and superiority, for, on your reasoning, they are annihilated, and the whole virtue and efficacy of God's own appointed ordinances destroyed?" These Jewish churchmen reposed precisely the same confidence upon their sacramental rites, circumcision and the passover, which modern churchmen do upon theirs, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They regarded them with the same superstitious reverence, as the



infallible sources of all spiritual and heavenly grace—the fountains of divine mercy—the sources of real and actual blessings—and the means of an assured introduction to the favour of God and to a state of justified acceptance in His sight. On these rites, and their valid participation in them, as duly administered by priestly hands, they confidently based their claims to the divine clemency. To deny, therefore, their necessary efficacy, and to rank their participants on a par with unbelieving heathen, was, in their estimation, a most horrible impiety and a flat denial of all the promises of heaven. If, therefore, asks the indignant churchman, if circumcision is not itself conversion, or does not necessarily ensure it to its recipient; and if the circumcised cannot be saved, on any other conditions than the uncircumcised,—of what possible advantage is the Church of God?

One thing is most certainly taught us here, and by all the reasoning of the apostle, and that is, that circumcision, though one of the sacramental ordinances of the ancient church, was not necessarily a saving ordinance. It was not regeneration, neither did it certainly secure it. It was not justification, neither did it secure to its partaker the assured favour of God. Another regeneration was necessary in order to an entrance into the kingdom of heaven, even that which cometh from above. Another justification was imperatively required as a preliminary to any entrance there, even that which cometh by faith of the Son of God. For he was not a Jew who was one outwardly.

And yet, while the apostle thus plainly overthrows their fond conceit, of a sacramental regeneration through the efficacy of this initiating ordinance; he as plainly declares that in their enjoyment of these church privileges the Jew possessed many advantages (2: 2). These are all included, as being summarily comprehended in this one, namely, that by this initiating sacrament they were introduced into a church state. They were constituted members of God's visible church and were introduced to all its privileges and to all its opportunities for receiving and for doing good. This is what is meant by the oracles of God, in this connexion, the term having reference to any divine response or communication.

We are also here taught that the unbelief of any individual parents does not affect the covenant of God, which He had entered into with this people; or the extension of its blessings, according to the gracious provisions of its divine authority to the children of such unfaithful and unworthy members of the church, of which this covenant was the charter. "If," says the apostle, "some were unfaithful," that is, if some of the Jews have apostatized, and are, therefore, personally in no better condition than the heathen,—“will their unfaithfulness render void the faithfulness of God”—that is, how will this consist with the faithfulness of God, as to His promises made to the Jewish nation?\*

Now for our purpose, it matters not whether this language is to be regarded as that of the apostle or of the Jewish object—or, since the supposition that such individual apostasy would, in any way, affect the privileges attached to God's covenant, is most positively denied by the apostle. These privileges, Paul asserts, remain unaltered and unalterable, to whomsoever they properly belong, though their view of their real character was entirely perverted and unwarranted by God. This covenant secured to all within it certain advantages; and to all who truly embraced its offers real and effectual grace. But it did not, as these Jewish churchmen supposed, entail upon every one to whom it was externally sealed, the unconditional and necessary enjoyment of saving grace. These men argued that because they were the church and thus in covenant with God, that so long as they preserved this character, by the observance of the appointed sacraments, and other ceremonies, they must necessarily retain the divine favour and blessing. Thus would they be heard boasting of their uninterrupted succession, saying—“we have Abraham for our Father”—“we be Abraham's seed.”

Now the futility of all such claims, as a ground of hope for personal salvation, the apostle exposes. He shows that this foundation on which modern Jews also rely, is most perilous and unsafe. Personal holiness alone could secure personal salvation, and this could be obtained only through faith in the justifying righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is, thus argues the apostle, no breach of the promises of God, or

\*See Stuart.

of His covenant with His church, or of His instituted sacraments, in the condemnation of wicked Jews, or the introduction into the same privileges with them of the Gentiles, since these promises of God were made, not to the natural but to the spiritual seed of Abraham; not to all who are, by outward participation of the sacraments, called Israel, but to them only who are of Israel; and that, therefore, they will be all fully accomplished, though millions who trust in these external privileges are everlastingly abandoned.

Now these principles, thus established by the apostle, are of equal importance to us now, and in their application to the church and ordinances of Christ. It has been already established in a former discourse that baptism in the christian church takes the place of circumcision in the same church under its ancient form. So that circumcision is the Jewish baptism, and baptism the christian circumcision.\* They are both seals, of the same covenant of grace, under different administrations. They are both sacraments of initiation, or admittance into the one church of God. They are both used by God, as instruments to convey (not by any inherent virtue, but at his pleasure) the same grace. Col. 2: 11, 12. And the subjects of both are the same, that is, professed members of the church visible, and their children. There are, therefore, the same covenant, the same promises, the same privileges attached to the church christian as to the church Jewish, only enlarged and extended.

It is, therefore, also as true of the christian ordinance of baptism, as of the Jewish ordinance of circumcision, that it is not necessarily a saving ordinance.†

It is, therefore, just as delusive to expect salvation from the mere administration of baptism, as from circumcision. Baptism is no more a regenerating ordinance than circumcision was, nor is regeneration, as it implies, a renewal of the heart, or justification any more baptism, or necessarily associated with baptism, than they were with circumcision. And as many, like Abraham, were justified when as yet uncircumcised, and multitudes were unrenewed and unjustified,

\*Rom. 6, 4; Col. 2, 11; Jer. 9, 26, and 4, 4; 1 Pet. 3, 21, 22.

†Conf. of F. ch. xxviii, § v. and vi.

although circumcised; so also are many, like Paul, converted while unbaptized, and many unrenewed and unjustified, like Simon Magers, while they had been the subjects of baptism.

But still it is far from being true that baptism, although not necessarily and in every case a saving ordinance, is not a source of many blessings and to be esteemed, a privilege of great importance. Though baptism is neither regeneration nor justification, it is a sign and seal of both; it is as one church teaches,‡ “a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ.”

If, therefore, initiation into the christian commonwealth,—and a recognition of citizenship in this heavenly kingdom, if a birth-right to all its privileges, immunities and blessings, if an adoption into the family and to a common participation in all the blessings of the christian household, if to be brought under the special promises of God and the special care and nurture of the Church of God, if these are privileges, and who that believes in christianity will deny that they are great and eminent benefits? then is christian baptism of much advantage every way, although we repudiate the delusive and most dangerous error of baptismal regeneration.

But in respect to baptism it is also true, as in reference to circumcision, that inasmuch as it is the seal of God's covenant, whose promise is that all its blessed privileges are to us and to our children; therefore, the failure of any individual parents to avail themselves of their high privileges, and their criminality in not fulfilling the ends of their “high calling,” cannot prevent the extension, to their children, of those benefits and blessings which they unbelievingly reject. The charter—the covenant—the promise—is the Lord's. Its entire validity, security and certainty, depend on His word who cannot lie, and His promise who will not deny Himself. The blessings entailed and guaranteed by this divine gift, do not accrue to any individual through any merit or deserving in his parent. They are not transmitted by the parent, nor communicable by him. They remain in the divine treasury. They are administered according to the divine good pleasure and

‡Conf. of F. ch. 28, § 1, p. 144.

unerring wisdom. They proceed from the Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.

The question, therefore, to whom are these privileges extended, and to whom, therefore, baptism, which is the seal of this heavenly charter, ought to be applied, can only be determined by a reference to that covenant as containing the will of its heavenly author. Baptism, let it be observed, is not an introduction to any particular church, so as to constitute its recipient a member of that particular church, but it is an initiation into the church Catholic, and a right and title by which its possessor, on presenting the credentials of his proper qualifications, may claim admission to any particular church as a component part of that universal church. Baptism, therefore, as a seal, has reference to the past and not to the future—to the covenant of grace which is already made sure, and the fulfillment of whose ratified pledges it thus immutably secures to all to whom they, of right, belong. To whom then do these privileges, externally, in their offers properly extend—this is the one inquiry to be settled in order to a determination of this question.

Now, as there were three ways in which individuals became entitled to the sacrament of circumcision, so are there three ways in which persons may become the proper recipients of the sacrament of baptism. The first is personal—by a personal profession of the true faith and covenant with God, and in this way must all adults not baptized be admitted to this ordinance. The second is parental—where one or both parents have been received into covenant by the application of this its instituted seal. The children of such parents are federally holy, or consecrated to God, and are therefore entitled to baptism, by which that fact or right is openly acknowledged and confirmed. The third is adoptive—where the children of any who are not in covenant with God, are adopted by such as are, as their children, and are in right of their covenant relation entitled to this its pledge and seal.\*

The tenor of that ancient covenant was: "I will be thy God and the God of thy seed."† "I will establish my covenant

\*See *Vindicie Vindiciarum*. Lond. 1651, 410, p. 208-210, in *Tracts on the Church*.

†Gen. 17, 7.



between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." "Know, therefore," says God, "that the Lord thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.‡ And thus a score of centuries after Jehovah's promise to be thus the God of Abraham and his seed, they are declared to be "as touching the election beloved, FOR THE FATHER'S SAKE."

Now the blessings of this covenant, it was made known, should extend to the Gentiles. Abraham was to be the "father of many nations" and the promise "sure to all the seed, not only to that which is of the law, but to that which is of faith." Thus Isaiah describes the covenant under its new dispensation (65, 17). "For behold I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. \* \* \* They shall not labour in vain nor bring forth for trouble, for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them."

This covenant was made with Abraham as the father of the faithful, but primarily with Jesus Christ.§ So that to His seed, which is the church, these promises and privileges extend. For "if you be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."\*\*

And thus the Apostle Peter declares: "The promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord and God shall call."††

If then this covenant is ours, and its promises and blessings ours, its benefits must be as extensive in their application as those promises warrant. They are, therefore, applicable to all, and to the seed of all, who are within the covenant. And since the benefits, and privileges of the church visible, are granted upon a credible profession of the faith, while they are only efficacious to those who are truly in the faith, they are also to be extended, as far as applicable, to the children of such as have been thus introduced within the covenant, however unworthy their parents may be. For the promise of the

‡Deut. 7.

§Gal. 3, 16.

\*\*Gal. 3, 28, 29.

††Acts 2, 39.



covenant is to their children also, and therefore its rejection or abuse by the parents cannot debar their children from its enjoyment.‡‡ As the children of such as were externally in covenant were entitled to circumcision, so are the children of such as are now in the same relation to be baptized.§§ But it is very plain, and allowed by all, that individuals become members of the visible church by baptism, which is its initiating ordinance and the seal of its covenant. And hence it follows that the children of all who have been thus baptized, and by baptism brought within the covenant, are entitled also to baptism which is the external seal of that promise which is made to the children. "If the root be holy," or consecrated to God, "so also are the branches." Rom. 11: 16. This holiness cannot refer to that which is personal, in which sense the declaration is not true. It must, therefore, be that relative or federal holiness, which is secured by their being within the covenant and being thus devoted to God. Hence it follows that since God hath chosen the Gentiles, their branches are holy when the root is thus federally holy, and are therefore proper subjects for baptism.

Such, my brethren, is a brief outline of the argument by which it may be shewed that baptism is not to be limited to the children of such as are in actual communion with any particular church; but is to be extended also to the children of such as have been themselves received into covenant with the Lord, by baptism. To them belongs the promise, of which baptism is the pledge; and having the right and title, who can deny them the seal? Such is the view taken by the fathers, as Augustine; by the Reformers, as Bucan, Calvin, Wallens, the Professors of Leyden;\* and by the early fathers of our own church. In his "Government of the Church of Scotland Proved by Scripture," written in A. D. 1642, Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in St. Andrew's, thus describes the practice at that time: "The presenter of the child is the father, or some friend, if he be dead or absent, because the child is received

‡‡See Esek. 20, 18, 19, 22, 36, 37, 42, 43; Ps. 106, 40, 45, 46; Rom. 3, 3; Lev. 26, 44, 45; and Rutherford's Plea, p. 166.

§§Gen. 17, 10, and 8, 3; Josh. 5, 2, 3, 7, 13, 15, 18; and do. do. 165, 171, 173.

\*See quoted in Rutherford's Plea, p. 171, 172.

in the covenant because the fathers are within the covenant, and so sealed with the same seal of the covenant.”† Indeed, the only question then was how far this privilege should be considered as extending and not the privilege itself.‡

To this conclusion it may be objected that such parents, though baptized, are not members of any particular church; and that, therefore, their children are not entitled to baptism. But to this it may be replied, that neither were the Eunuch or the Philippian jailer members of any particular church, when they received baptism. Nor is baptism, as has been stated, an initiation to any particular church, but to the church Catholic; and the parents being members, externally, of this Catholic church, so are their children fit subjects for that ordinance which is the rightful privilege of all children who are thus descended.

It may be further objected that such parents may not have made any profession of their faith, and that on this ground their children ought not to be baptized. But if they have either of them been baptized, they are of necessity members of the Catholic church; and the baptism of their children is their privilege as such. And since they have not openly renounced that profession of faith in God and in the provisions of His covenant, which was made for them in infancy, they must still be regarded, however unworthily or inconsistently, as implicitly making that profession. Besides they have never been excommunicated from the church, in which, therefore, they must still be considered as retaining their standing, however they may be unworthy and would not be allowed to partake, in their present condition, without a credible profession on their own part, of the ordinances in any particular church. Even if they had been excommunicated, unless they had been forever cut off by the greater excommunication, they are only

†Acts 2, 37, 38; Rom. 11, 14; Gen. 17, 7, 8, 9, 10, in Pleading, p. 316. See also Carhet's Remains, p. 156. Vindicice Vindiciarum, p. 183, 208, 209, etc. Firmin's Separation Examined, Lond. 1652, 410, p. 44 and 45. where their practice is shown.

‡See Vind. Vind., p. 187, 188, 189, 191, 193, 210. Rutherford's Plea, 168, 169, 172, 184.

§Even the Puritans of New England, against whom the Presb. argued on this subject allowed baptism to the infants of one or both baptized parents, although not communicants, where the parent had died or was otherwise necessarily prevented from uniting with the church. Neal's New Eng., Vol. I, p. 354.

suspended from ordinances, during impenitence, and their forfeiture of their own personal rights does not involve their unoffending offspring in the same loss. Such individuals, it must also be observed, are guilty of aggravated sin in not making such a profession in truth and in sincerity of heart. They are bound to do so by every motive; and their sin, which will be visited upon their own souls, does not free them from the obligation of giving to their children the advantages they have so wickedly neglected. Their guilt cannot disinherit their children, who are therefore to be baptized.

It will be again said, that such an extension of the ordinance is an open profanation of it by giving it to such unworthy persons. But this objection assumes that the view taken of this ordinance by the objector is correct and that it is given on account of the personal holiness of the parents, and is a covenant between them and God. But it has been shown that this sacrament is given, not necessarily on account of the personal, but only in view of the federal holiness of the parents; while it is the seal of God's covenant, which He has chosen to extend to the children of all, an external covenant with Him; and which does not in the case of children imply an explicit ratification of the covenant on their part, but imposes this as a duty imperatively binding on them when capable of fulfilling it, with the promise of every needful help in its discharge. To administer, therefore, this ordinance to the children of parents, not themselves members of any particular church, though members of the Catholic church, is, in this view, no profanation of it, nor unworthy of that munificent mercy, which extends even to a thousand generations. And it will never do to frame our own conceptions of the divine institutes, and then to enforce them as divine, and to denounce all others as profane. Circumcision, which was the seal of the same righteousness by faith, of which baptism is the seal, was certainly administered by positive divine requirements to all such children; and who will say that the application of this seal of the divine mercy to the same subjects now is profanation?\*

What infants are really within the covenant of grace,

\*See Rutherford's Plea, p. 177, 171, 168, 167, 179, 180, 181. Rutherford's Due Right of Presb. Ch. iv, p. 262.

and what are not, we cannot tell. God chooses some who are the offspring of wicked parents and rejects some sprung from believing parents, in whose case the ordinance was profaned on this reasoning of this objection; and our only inquiry, therefore, is as to the purpose and will of God in this His own institution.

Finally, it may be said that such persons may not be within the church at all or under its supervision. Now, in this case, where the parents are not connected with any congregation, not resident within it, or known to it, it appears plain that the officer of such a church cannot administer this ordinance to their children. Because while such children may be entitled to the ordinance, they may not be so, and they may not be so at the hands of this particular church, which can take no oversight whatever of them or in any way discharge the duties which as a church she is under obligation to render.

Our conclusion then is that baptism may be lawfully administered to, and that it is the privilege of, the children of such as have been baptized, or who are adopted by such as have been baptized; but that it cannot, in the present state of christendom, be given by any particular church, to any such children where the parents are not in connexion with that congregation, or known to it, and willing to allow the church every opportunity of discharging her obligations to them, in the way of catechetical and other instruction.

## ARTICLE V.

### INFANT BAPTISM PLEADED FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES AND PROMISES.

ISAIAH 52: 15.

So shall He sprinkle many nations.

We are again invited my hearers, by the return of this occasion, to consider the grounds upon which our church has decided that "infants descending from parents, either both or but one of them, professing faith in Christ and obedience to Him, are in that respect within the covenant and are to be baptized." To this subject your attention has been already, on several occasions, particularly directed. You were made acquainted with the undisputed fact that God did Himself institute in His church the membership of infants and did, during the lengthened period of some two thousand years, admit them into it by an outward religious ordinance. It was further established that the Church of God under the old and the new dispensations is one and the same, unchanged and unchangeable in its essential character, in its foundation, in its principles, in its benefits, privileges and blessings; and differing only in the manner in which these blessings have been dispensed and in the degree of that light and glory with which it has been illumined. In consistency with this view it was also proved that what circumcision was to the Jewish church baptism is to the christian church—that the latter has been substituted for the former as a seal of the same gracious covenant and of that righteousness which is by faith; and that just as circumcision, as an outward rite or symbol, was adapted to the severity of the law and subserved other valuable ends, just so is baptism accordant with the mild and gentler spirit of the gospel. It was in this way made apparent that the church membership of infants was never set aside by God or man—that the change of that external rite by which this privilege was signified, made no abrogation of the privilege itself or of that covenant interest in God's favor of which it was a sign, and that therefore the membership of infants in the Church of God must continue in full force to the present day.



As infants are still within God's covenant—as they are thus the subjects of its promises and its gracious provisions—and within the bosom of the visible church, they should therefore be received into that membership which God has Himself constituted. But inasmuch as circumcision as a seal of this membership has been removed and baptism has taken its place, children must be received into church membership either with baptism or without it. Not without it, as all are agreed, and therefore with it, as all must of necessity admit.

The foundation for the doctrine of infant baptism is thus deep laid in the very counsels of eternity. It is part and parcel of that charter on which the church relies. It is consolidated in that rock of ages on which this glorious fabric rests and from which she rises to the skies—the temple of God not made with hands, eternal as the heavens. This doctrine is the result of no inferential reasoning drawn from a few isolated texts. It depends upon no human authority or the doctrines, canons, decisions and interpretations of men. It runs parallel with the history of the church. It is found entering into the first and earliest constitution. It is emblazoned in the forefront from the days of Abraham through every subsequent dispensation. It passes down with her as a precious inheritance in these last days of her final dispensation, and will only cease to operate when all the sons and daughters of Adam shall have been gathered home to glory.

In the truth of this doctrine therefore we wish you to be well established, that you may be led duly to appreciate the solemn responsibilities and the high privileges with which it is associated. As, therefore, there are many considerations which give strength and cogency to the conclusion to which we have been led, we shall continue from time to time to present them to your minds. Before coming to the separate examination of the New Testament there is still one source of information to which we would on this occasion advert. It might be expected that had God designed the abrogation under the New Testament economy of this right of infants to a membership in the church, seeing that it had existed and been so highly prized for thousands of years, there would be in the prophecies which relate to this coming period a distinct



enunciation of such a purpose on the part of God with such views as might prepare the minds of His people for the coming change. It is therefore a subject of very legitimate inquiry—do the prophecies of the Old Testament, delivered as they were by various persons at sundry times and in divers manners, do they contain any such declarations, and if not what is their general tone and manner as bearing upon this important subject? Now, in reply to such an inquiry, we must contend that no such prospective abrogation of this right exists. It is not, so far as we know, even pretended that any such exists. On the other hand, were it intended by God that the privilege and duty should remain under the new as under the old dispensation, it is manifest that no distinct and formal utterance of such a purpose would be looked for by any reasonable mind. We should rather expect these prophecies and promises so worded as to imply the present existence and the uninterrupted continuance of the membership of infants in the Church of God. Now this is found to be actually the case. We do find just such allusions and declarations of promises as would have been anticipated in the supposition that no change was contemplated in the law of infant church membership, and we hence conclude that no such change was ever contemplated in the divine counsels, and of course never came out in the divine plans. That you may be able fully to appreciate the weight of this argument, which is altogether *ex abundanti*, and therefore the more convincing, let me bring to your view some of the prophecies relating to the kingdom of Christ—that is, to the church under the christian dispensation:

I. And first we would refer to those which describe this kingdom as national, and therefore as including, by fair presumption, infants which constitute a larger proportion of nations. Thus, in Genesis 12: 3, it is written as among the promises made to Abraham and his seed: "In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Again, in chapter 26: 4, this promise is renewed to Isaac in these words: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." In like manner it was repeated to Jacob, the next successor in this patriarchal line of true believers: "And in thee and thy seed shall all the

families of the earth be blessed." (28:14.) Now we know that a part of this blessing was the membership of their seed in that visible church of which they were constituted the representatives and heads, and that of this membership circumcision was the sign and seal. And since these promises run on with undiminished fulness to the very end of time and to all the nations of the earth, they certainly do seem to imply the continuance of this privilege and blessing, and of course of some external ordinance as its sacramental sign. If Abraham and his seed were required to be subjected to this outward rite as a seal of the righteousness which is by faith; and if we are still taught to cling to this righteousness as our only hope and ground of salvation, most assuredly do we look earnestly for some sign, seal and pledge by which it may be brought home to us and to our seed, and this we will rejoice to find in baptism until we can see that testament of our fathers by which our children disinherited from this ancient possession.

Turn again to Ps. 72: 11, and in this glowing prophecy of the nature of Christ's Church read: "Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him;" "all nations shall call Him blessed." It is here revealed that in its extending glories this church should be found encircling in its arms kings and their subject empires—and that in that period of millennial blessedness this should be universally the case. In His other prophecies (as in Is. 19: 23, 25) that in the consummation of this glorious day of grace whole nations should be born unto God and together with Israel be joined unto the Lord. As nations they should rally round the christian standard—assume the badge of christian discipleship—and be known and distinguished in the world. They would be thus set apart and consecrated to God by His proselyting ordinance. The Lord would become their God and they His people. And the anointing oil of divine grace, flowing out in copious showers, would descend from the Head to the members—from the fathers to the children—and unite them in a holy generation sacred to the Lord.

This national view of the gospel, involving as it does the continued recognition of the covenant privilege of infant church membership, is implied in many prophecies. "Behold,"

says Isaiah (55: 5), "thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God." "The nations," says Jeremiah (4 ult.), "shall bless themselves in Him and in Him shall they glory." "And there was given him," says Daniel, "dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him." "And many nations," says Micah, "shall come to say, come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord." "And many nations," says Zechariah, "shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people." (2: 11.)

In full conformity with these views we find our Saviour declaring to the Jews: "Therefore say I unto you the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." (Matt. 21: 43.) And in like manner is the millennial glory depicted in the Book of Revelation by the representation that "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." (Rev. 11: 15.) The kingdoms of this world shall then be professedly christian. They are now and ever have been the Lord's, being under His dominion and control, but they shall then become His in a spiritual sense, having become subject to the influences of the gospel and being characterized by its spirit. Our Lord speaks of the transference of the privileges of the church from one nation to another nation. Of course all its essential privileges and blessings must be given with it, of which the covenant membership and privilege of infants was one. Neither is it possible for these prophecies to be fulfilled on the principles of those who deny the existence of this privilege. For infants comprise one-half of the population of any nation, and if we will make the additional subtraction of all the ungodly, then it never has been true that many nations have joined themselves to the Lord—neither, indeed, could they possibly do so. On the whole, therefore, we are led to conclude that inasmuch as this right of infants was uniformly regarded as one distinguishing feature of the Old Testament dispensation and the language of prophecy when speaking of the New is exactly so framed as we should expect it to be,

supposing the privilege to be perpetuated, that therefore it is so continued until this day.

II. But there is another class of prophetic enunciations in which there is not merely a general and implied reference to infants, but a more specific and distinct recognition of their interest in the church and kingdom of the Messiah. Of this character is that remarkable declaration contained in Ps. 102: 28: "The children of thy servants shall continue and their seed shall be established before thee."

On hearing these words the first inquiry of course is—do they really apply to the gospel dispensation, and consequently to the Church of Christ? And that they do is put beyond controversy with those with whom we have now to do by the express application of the immediate context, and of course of the psalm itself, to our Lord Jesus Christ.\* The servants here spoken of are the servants of Christ. "Thou shalt arise," says the Psalmist, "and have mercy upon Zion; for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come; for thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof." He goes on to say: "When the people are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve the Lord" \* \* \* and then follows the passage applied by the apostle to Christ, in which it is declared: "But thou art the same and thy years shall have no end." It is then immediately added: "The children of thy servants shall continue and their seed shall be established before thee." Manifestly, therefore, the language applies to Christ's real or professing people. And of such it is affirmed that their children shall continue. Shall continue how? In what other sense can we understand the words than as referring to those covenant blessings inherited by all the children of God's covenanted people? By the covenant of grace as entered into with Abraham a membership in the Church of God and an outward recognition thereof by a sacramental dedication was secured to all his seed and to all the families of the earth. This covenanted right had been recognized thus far, and the Psalmist declares that even under the christian dispensation the children of God's servants should continue in the enjoyment of this everlasting covenant which was

\*Heb. 1, 11, 12.

ordered in all things and sure. Nay, the divine penman reiterates the assertion, saying: "And their seed," or offspring, "shall be established before thee;" that is, Christ the Infant seed of God's covenanted people shall be confirmed in their covenant relation in their church standing and membership "before Christ;" that is, in His kingdom or visible church. The church is thus one and the same under every dispensation and change of outward forms. And it is one of the essential laws by which as a visible and organized body she is perpetuated in the world that the infant seed of all who have been received into covenant with God shall be in like manner regarded as members, and as such entitled to its initiatory ordinance and to all the benefits and blessings associated with the watch and care and oversight of the church.

A similar passage occurs in Isaiah 65: 23, where it is written: "They shall not labour in vain nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord and their offspring with them." That this passage also refers to the church under the gospel dispensation is incontrovertible. Whether it refers to the converted Gentiles, or as Baptists think to the Jews when they shall be brought in is immaterial to the present argument. In either case it teaches the same glorious truth as applicable to the christian church, that it was to be founded upon the everlasting and unchangeable covenant and that therefore the privileges appertaining to the children of covenanted parents under the patriarchal and subsequently under the Mosaic dispensations should be unalterably perpetuated. So that whatever benefits and blessings accrued to the parents from being within this covenant should attach to their offspring also. These should be blessed with them and heirs together of the same promises, hopes and heavenly overtures. Whatever economic and federal advantages are associated with a membership in the christian church to which is committed the oracles, the promises and the ordinances of God, these belong by divine and inalienable grant not only to parents, but to the offspring also of all parents who are themselves within the covenant by a previous dedication to God.

III. But in the third place we may point to further prophetic declarations in which there seems to be a manifest reference



not only to the fact and certainty of infant church membership under the christian economy, but a further allusion also to baptism in its true and only scriptural mode, by sprinkling. We refer you to Isaiah 52: 15, the words of our text. So clearly does this refer to Christ that many Jews have been led by it to embrace Jesus as the true Messiah. The reference is therefore manifestly to the christian dispensation. The term sprinkle seems evidently to refer to those Jewish ceremonial purifications which were performed by sprinkling the persons or things so purified. And it is here declared that as these ceremonial sprinklings purified the Jewish offenders, so should Christ sprinkle or purify many nations. This cannot mean that He will bestow a saving and sanctifying influence upon many nations as such, and yet it must refer to some holiness by which such christian nations shall be distinguished. It must therefore refer to that external relative or federal holiness by which such nations may be set apart and consecrated to God through that initiatory ordinance by which they become His visible and He their covenant-keeping God. And as this ordinance is baptism, there being no other, it is plain that this is the christian purification, and that as it must necessarily be extended to infants as well as adults, so it ought to be administered in a form analogous to its design by sprinkling or in the form of rain, and thus by the application of water to the person and not by immersion or dipping, which is the application of the person to the water, and for which there is no authority whatever in the Word of God.

Of the same import is that remarkable passage in Zechariah (2: 11): "And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day and shall be my people." Now let any impartial reader take up this prophecy in view of the circumstances under which it was given and put an interpretation upon it. The prophet, who was himself a Jew, made this annunciation to the Jewish nation. This nation constituted the visible church and kingdom of God. They were in covenant with God and they looked forward by faith to the coming glory of the Messiah's kingdom, when this covenant should be illustriously fulfilled by the manifestation of the great Redeemer. Into this covenant it was their solemn duty to make an



entrance by means of that sign, seal and pledge which God had sacramentally instituted. Nor was this obligation resting upon them as adults merely. It extended to the children also whose privilege it was to "be joined to the Lord" and thus to become "His people."

What then would a member of this Jewish church in announcing to his fellow members the nature of the Messiah's kingdom and of the church under Him—what would he understand by the words before us? What could either he or his readers possibly imagine as its meaning, but that this feature in the constitution of the church should continue and be gloriously displayed in its extension to many nations who should be there joined to the Lord and be His people? That children should be then excluded from God's covenant and from all the rights they had hitherto enjoyed most assuredly they never could infer from this declaration. Nor is it within the limits of possibility that this prophecy ever could be fulfilled on their principle who exclude infants from the Church of God, and they make it certain that no nation, or the bulk of it, ever could be joined to the Lord. The abandonment of this principle or of possible fulfillment of the divine word is therefore imperatively demanded. And for ourselves we say let God be true though every human system should be found baseless as a vision.

This passage therefore evidently teaches that by virtue of His mediation, atonement and sufferings Christ should, as Mr. Scott remarks, "sprinkle many nations with His atoning blood and by the pouring out of His spirit as purifying water of which baptism would be the outward and visible sign." "He shall sprinkle many nations," says Matthew Henry, "by the blood of sprinkling applied to their consciences—and by his heavenly doctrine." "He shall do it by baptism, which is the washing of the body with pure water. So that this promise had its accomplishment when Christ sent His apostles to disciple all nations by baptizing or sprinkling them."

This view of the passage is not a little confirmed by the recorded fact that it was on this very portion of scripture the Ethiopian Eunuch was meditating when Philip was sent to him in the desert, and most probably he was led by it to solicit

baptism, which was administered we have no manner of doubt in the form of pouring or sprinkling.

It is apparent from these passages that our expectation is not disappointed. We don't find any intimations that God's covenant with His people and their infant offspring upon which the church had hitherto been founded should be abrogated under gospel dispensation. Such a declaration it is not pretended can be found. On the other hand, we do find the language of prophecy every where moulded in perfect conformity with this existing covenant—on the supposition that it should continue as the everlasting basis of the Church of God—and with an almost explicit enunciation of the fact that while it should continue it should be outwardly attested and confirmed by the outward application of water in the form of sprinkling.

Now when we turn to the New Testament we will find a wonderful harmony between its language and the prophetic annunciations. Listen to the words of Christ Himself: "And Jesus took a little child and set him by Him, and said unto them—Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth me, and whosoever receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." (Luke 9: 47, 48.) Christ here identifies children with Himself as His—as one with Him. But such an union can only exist in their relation to His mystical body, the church; and as baptism is the ordinance by which entrance to the church is given little children therefore are here declared to be worthy partakers of this rite. On another occasion He more explicitly teaches the same truth. (Mark 10: 14, 16.) "But when Jesus saw it He was much displeased and said unto them: Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God—and He took them up in His arms and blessed them." "Therefore I say unto you, says Christ to the Jews (Math. 21: 43), "the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." And thus when He had laid the deep foundations of the church in His death, and when He proclaimed that charter by which the church is upheld he said: "Go ye therefore and teach—that is disciple—all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Ghost." He spoke as by the flesh a Jew, and to Jews, and commands them to disciple all nations and to bring them into covenant with Him. And as up to this moment in every period of the church when any parents were proselyted their children also were regarded as disciples and received into the church. So does he unequivocally and without reservation command them to go and disciple all nations.

Hear also the Apostle Peter, very shortly after receiving this divine commission, when he addressed the assembled multitude as at Jerusalem: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins \* \* \* for the promise is unto you and your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2: 38, 39.) Now what is this but the renewal of God's promise to Abraham: "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee?" Into this covenant the apostle had been admitted as an infant and he assures us that this covenant right continues. Into this covenant his hearers had in like manner been received and they were now informed that under the christian economy the same promise alluded sure to them and to their children.

Hear also the Apostle Paul:\* "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife" (not the believing wife, as many read the passage, but the wife who is in covenant with God), "and the unbelieving wife is," in like manner, "sanctified by the husband; else were children unclean," or beyond the covenant, "but now they are holy," or in a covenant relation to God. The visible church exists now under the same covenant as before. That covenant extends precisely to the same objects, and therefore whenever any parent has been received within it by the application to him of the initiating ordinance the promise is to him and to his children also, who being within the covenant ought of right to receive its seal.

Follow these apostles into their practice and we are confirmed in the same conclusion. In no less than five instances is the fact recorded that their families were included with the parents as in virtue of their faith holy unto the Lord. Thus the nobleman at Capernaum is said to have believed and all

\*1 Cor. 7, 14.

his house.\* Cornelius is described as "one that feared God with all his house."† They "were baptized in the name of the Lord." Thus also did Paul baptize "the household of Stephanas." (1 Cor. 1: 16.) Thus was "Lydia and her household baptized." (Acts 16: 15.) And thus also when the Philippian jailer was converted, "he was baptized—he and all his straightway."

The conclusion therefore is, we think, inevitable that unless the opponents of infant church membership can shew some positive enactment by which this characteristic principle in the constitution of the Church of God in all ages and under both the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations has been abrogated—it must be regarded as unquestionably abiding sure to us and to our children and to as many as the Lord our God shall call. And as no such enactment is pleaded, we may well stand fast and rejoice as the seed of Abraham according to the gospel in this birthright and inheritance. The argument now presented is not much known or often adverted to, but to our minds it carries no inconsiderable weight. We rest our faith upon God's everlasting covenant and immutable purposes and unchangeable promises. We draw our inferences from the original and perpetuated constitution of the church for 2,000 years. We build our hopes upon the whole framework of divine prophecy as descriptive of the gospel church, and upon the fulfillment of these prophecies in the conduct of our Lord and of His apostles and of the universal church in all ages.

We say then to those who would rob our children of their inheritance and defame God's dealings with His church—"Stand back. Touch not the ark and covenant of God. Profane not God's sanctuary by requiring what God has not required or excluding whom God has not excluded. Tell not christian parents that God has forgotten to make provision for their children or expunge their title to an inheritance in Zion. Hinder them not as they would crowd His temple and press around His altar and bring their little ones in their arms, but suffer little children to come unto Him and forbid them not for, as the Lord Himself has assuredly declared, that "of such is the kingdom of heaven."

\*John 4, 53.

†Acts 10, 2.

## ARTICLE VI.

### THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMAL REGENERATION EXAMINED.

JOHN 3:5.

Jesus answered, verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Nothing can be clearer from the repeated declaration of the sentiments contained in this passage, than that regeneration, whatever it really implies, is absolutely and universally essential to salvation. Without it no man can be a worthy member of the kingdom of God on earth, or as it shall be consummated in heaven. Without controversy, therefore, this is the most important matter which can possibly engage the attention of a rational, intelligent and immortal mind. Without it we are without God and without hope in the world, under condemnation and exposed to everlasting misery. With it we are adopted into God's family, are made His children, partake of His great salvation, and are constituted heirs with Christ to an inheritance of glory. What, then, is regeneration, and how is it wrought within the soul—who are the regenerate, and by what marks or evidence may they be distinguished?—these are questions involving interests as precious as the soul, and destined as lasting as eternity.

On this subject there are various opinions, and errors of the most opposite kind. It is our present object, however, to call your attention to one form of this error which has become extensively prevalent, and for whose propagation the most strenuous efforts are now made. It is taught by the Romish church, by all High-church Episcopalians, by many Baptists, and perhaps by others, that baptism is not only the sacrament or sign and seal of regeneration, but that it is regeneration itself—that all, therefore, who are baptized must be and are regenerated;—that no other regeneration besides this or subsequent to it is to be either expected or believed in;—and that the language of our Saviour and the necessity here enjoined has no possible reference to any individuals who have been outwardly baptized. That I may not be regarded as misrepresenting the



views of those who hold this doctrine, I will state it in the words of Dr. Pusey:

"The church has ever taught that as the Israelites, by being baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, were made partakers of the blessings and privileges of the Mosaic dispensation, and consequently of its responsibilities, so the blessings, privileges, and responsibilities of the gospel are conferred by God's holy baptism, and, of course, that justification by faith has its only proper place in baptism. The baptism unto Moses being the shadow, or type; the baptism into the holy and ever-blessed Trinity being the reality; the first was the schoolmaster, to train and teach; the second Christ Himself, to be possessed and enjoyed. By God's baptism, (I am speaking of the church's teaching), we are ingrafted into Christ; united to Him as the branch is united to the vine; made a member of Christ; created anew; re-born from above, of water which is the womb; of the Spirit, as to the nature of the birth, as well as the agent, for that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The Scriptures speak of this new creation in the following and similar terms:—an existence *in* Christ; alive unto God *in* Christ Jesus our Lord; a new creature *in* Christ; having been created *in* Christ, we are *in* Him that is true, *in* His Son Jesus Christ, chosen *in* Christ, sealed *in* Christ, sanctified *in* Christ; as in Adam all die, so *in* Christ shall all be made alive. And in relation to our being, or existence *in* Christ, expressions such as the following are of frequent occurrence:—crucified with Christ, buried with Christ, quickened together with Christ, risen with Christ, sitting in heavenly places *in* Christ. Now the church maintains that there is no figure in all this, but a great, an awful, and glorious reality, that as in fact we are made sons of man by physical birth, so are we as truly and actually made sons of God by spiritual birth, and that this birth takes place at baptism."—(Pp. 26, 27.)\*

How far this doctrine is embraced in the Episcopal church in this country I cannot undertake to say, though recent events would lead us to fear that it has been very extensively received.

The importance of this question cannot be over-estimated. Is this doctrine true? then it follows, that before baptism chil-

\*On "The Present Crisis."

dren and adults are destitute of any claim to the character of God's children, or of any title to an inheritance in the kingdom of heaven. It follows, therefore, that the myriads of infants and adults also who die unbaptized, die without having any right to inherit the kingdom of God, and that inasmuch as they are not the children of God they must of necessity be children of wrath and this, not from any fault of their own. If this doctrine be true it is further evident that all who are members of any other christian denominations than the Romish or the Prelatical, not having received an authorized or valid baptism have not received that regeneration which such an administration conveys, and are, in like manner, excluded from the kingdom of God. And while this doctrine involves the eternal destruction not only of the millions of the heathen young and old, but also the millions who constitute the reformed churches, it most clearly overthrows the gospel of the grace of God and teaches for doctrines of God the blasphemies and the commandments of men. It leads to the utter denial of original sin. It ascribes to man the full power of saving himself. It clearly overthrows all grace. It robs Christ of the merit of His death and passion. It leads to the denial of any internal regeneration, and to a reliance for salvation upon priests and sacraments. It makes baptism more essential than faith, repentance, and holiness, since without it even those who possess all these, are children of wrath. It subjects the Holy Spirit to the will of men, and makes salvation depend on that which man may or may not choose to impart. It makes regeneration itself a perfect nullity since it teaches us to believe in a new birth which may never bring forth any fruits of renewal. It destroys, therefore, any certainty of salvation since it teaches that a person may be regenerated, justified and converted, and yet be still in danger of everlasting destruction. According to this doctrine a man may be justified, *i. e.*, pardoned and accepted of God, and yet be condemned and rejected by Him. It overthrows the purpose of God in election and places the whole business of salvation in the hands of men. It is confessedly incompatible with indefectible grace and the perseverance of the saints. It annihilates all distinction between christians and sinners, since it makes millions regenerated justified and holy

whose lives are wicked, and abominable, whose morals are corrupt and whose opinions may be even atheistical or anti-christian. It confounds the means and the end, the sign and the thing signified. And it leads to priestcraft, superstition and spiritual despotism. Such are the consequences which must inevitably follow if this doctrine be received as true.

It was declared by the Council of Trent that "if any man deny that the guilt of sin is remitted by the grace of Christ conferred in baptism, or shall even assert that the total of sin is not removed but only shorn (*radi*) or not imparted, let him be accursed." (Session V.)

On the other hand, is it, as we believe, untrue, then it is what the Scriptures call "a damnable heresy," because it leads men to put their trust in what is false, and thus exposes them to that destruction from which it is ineffectual to deliver. It turns away the attention of men from their hearts to their baptism, and encourages them to believe that however conscious they are of the want of any scriptural feelings, they are redeemed, regenerate, and heirs of the kingdom of glory. It is, therefore, anti-christian and subversive of the gospel of Christ. It must be openly gainsaid and resisted. We are called upon to contend earnestly against it and to proclaim to all who will hear our warning, its dangerous and destructive character.

I know that this doctrine is based upon the very passage I have selected, but the apostle has himself taught us that even upon the foundation of God's truth men may build wood, hay and stubble which shall be destroyed. I will, therefore, offer some arguments to prove that such an interpretation of this verse must be wrong, and then offer our interpretation of the passage:

I. This doctrine of baptismal regeneration is false, first, because Christ Himself never baptized, while He regenerated many. That Christ never baptized is expressly declared in John iv. 2, where it is said that "Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples." Christian baptism in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, was not instituted until after Christ's death. The baptism administered by the disciples was, like that of John the Baptist, *preparatory* to the establishment of the christian church. Christian baptism was not, therefore,

administered during our Lord's ministry, at all events not by Christ Himself. But it is certain that many were regenerated during that period, and made to experience the power of God to the salvation of their souls. This none will deny. The woman of Samaria, the Canaanitish woman, Mary Magdalene, Mary the sister of Lazarus, Lazarus himself, the palsied man whose sins were forgiven, the thief on the cross, the apostles, and many others, will arise and testify to the power and efficacy of the Saviour's teachings. Christ, therefore, while on earth regenerated without baptism. Christ did not once during all the period of His ministry administer the ordinance. He carefully abstained from doing so. He communicated all spiritual blessings without, and independently of, baptism. The inference, then, is unavoidable. Baptism is neither regeneration nor is it essential to regeneration. And the discourse which our Saviour held with Nicodemus having been delivered before the establishment of christian baptism, and while our Lord was in the habitual neglect of the observance of this ordinance, could not possibly teach that Christ considered baptism to be regeneration and salvation.

II. Secondly, this doctrine is disposed of by the fact that the apostles never baptized in order to regenerate, but required evidence of regeneration in order to baptize. When Peter addressed the assembled multitude on the day of Pentecost he said repent and (then) be baptized every one of you. But true repentance is a fruit and evidence of regeneration, and hence only they who were enabled by the Holy Spirit gladly to receive this word were baptized. To the urgent request of the Ethiopian Eunuch to be baptized Philip replied, "if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." Now, since genuine and living faith is the fruit and evidence of regeneration, since "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God:" "As many as received Him to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed in His name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man; but of God." So, also, in the case of Lydia, it was when the Lord had opened her heart to attend to the preaching of the gospel, she was baptized. The Philippean jailer manifested deep conviction for sin and expressed his confident faith in



Christ before he was baptized. Cornelius and his household were baptized on the avowed ground that they had received the Holy Ghost. "Can any man," says the apostle, "forbid water that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Such, also, was the case with the Apostle Paul.\* Now these compose all the cases of baptism, as administered by the apostles, of which any particular record is made. And from these facts the general inference is fairly deducible, that in the case of adults baptism is only to be administered to those who give creditable evidence of having been regenerated and who are able to exercise faith upon the Son of God. Baptism, therefore, cannot be itself regeneration, nor the means of imparting it, since it requires this in order to its proper and valid administration. It is to the generate the sign and seal of these blessings, and of that covenant of grace by which all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus are secured to them. It imposes upon them a sacred and unchangeable obligation to cleave with purpose of heart to that Saviour whose grace and power they have already experienced; to guard against the guilt of sin, seeing their hearts have been sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus; "to guard against all pollution, seeing they have been cleansed with the washing of regeneration; to cleave in love to the people of Christ; and to hold fast the profession of their faith to the end." And in like manner baptism is to be administered to the infant seed of those who are within the covenant of God, that they may be led to reflect with reverence and gratitude on the act by which their parents accepted of Christ in their name, and dedicated them to His service; to renew in their own souls the acceptance and dedication; to humble themselves for their violation of their baptismal engagements; and to implore the influence of that Holy Spirit which was then promised, they may for the time to come, walk consistently with the privileges and character of christians.

III. Thirdly, this doctrine of baptismal regeneration is unscriptural because the Scriptures teach that the word of God, *and not baptism*, is the means employed by God in accomplishing the work of regeneration. "Ye have purified your souls

\*Acts 9th.



in obeying the truth through the Spirit ; being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. 1:22, 23.) "I have begotten you," says Paul, addressing those very Corinthians whom he had purposely abstained from baptizing, "through the gospel." (1 Cor. 4:15.) The Apostle James, passing by baptism and all other secondary causes, declares that "of HIS OWN will BEGAT HE us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creation." The Sovereignty of God, therefore, is the only cause of regeneration, and His word the only instrument. This truth is also very strongly confirmed by the Apostle Paul, who say: "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin. But God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in our sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by grace are ye saved." Here, also, the source of regeneration is declared to be the grace of God, while throughout the entire passage, of which we have only given a part, there is no allusion whatever to baptism. The same thing might be shown in those ancient predictions in which the production of this change is promised as the glorious distinction of the gospel dispensation.† These texts need no comment. They assert the truth that regeneration is effected by God without, and independently of, baptism in the most explicit manner. The apostle thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians except Crispus and Gaius, and yet declares that many of the Corinthians had been regenerated through the instrumentality of his preaching. In addressing the same church, brethren, the apostle declares that "Christ sent him not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." But will any one be bold enough to say that the apostle was not sent by Christ to regenerate and convert lost and polluted souls? Does not Christ Himself say, "I send thee to the Gentiles, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them who are sanctified by faith that is in me." On the ground of the doctrine we are opposing these passages as openly and palpably contradictory, the one declaring that Paul

†Esek. 11, 19 ; Jer. 31, 33, 32, 39, 40.

was expressly sent to baptize, that is, to regenerate, and the other teaching that Paul was not sent to baptize, and, therefore, to regenerate. This doctrine, then, must be untrue. Baptism is not regeneration nor essential to it. Paul was commissioned to preach the gospel for the regeneration of men and not to be baptized. The gospel, therefore, and not baptism, is the necessary means of regeneration.

IV. Fourthly, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is unscriptural, because the Scriptures teach that where regeneration has taken place it will manifest itself in a holy life and conversation, and secure for all its partakers a crown of glory. "Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world." "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." For "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called them He also justified; and whom He justified them He also glorified." He that is born of God desires the sincere milk of the word that he may grow thereby. His faith works by love and impels him to add to his faith every christian grace. He will thus give evidence that he is a new creature by walking, not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. And however he may halt and stumble by the way, he will not be left utterly and finally to fall. The seed that is in him is incorruptible and it liveth and abideth for ever. He who is the author will also be the finisher of his faith, so that having been justified he shall also be glorified.

But can the hardest advocate of the doctrine we oppose pretend that baptism leads to such results as these? In Roman Catholic countries the whole population are baptized and yet we have evidence to prove that a great proportion of them are impenitent, unconverted, unsanctified, unholy, irreligious, and even infidel. The same thing is true of the population included within the limits of the church of England. How many, or rather, how few of them can, in the judgment of *charity*, be regarded as truly pious persons. Let Dr. Pusey himself answer: "The instances," he says, "are EXCEEDINGLY RARE in

the present day, of persons who have been faithful to baptismal grace; but we have not to look far to find a cause. In this fearful and ALL BUT UNIVERSAL DEFECTION."\* It thus appears that out of the millions baptized in the English church, the instances of those who manifest the certain and necessary evidences of regeneration, are exceedingly rare; nay, that the defection is almost universal, the number of such persons being an infinitesimal part of the whole. Appealing, therefore, to the facts in the case, and to these facts as attested by our opponents themselves, we must conclude that baptism is not regeneration, since in almost every case it fails to bring forth the fruits and manifestations of regeneration. It is found almost universally that the recipients of baptism in prelatic churches have been and are, just as depraved, unholy, unsanctified and unregenerate as those who have been baptized at all; while on the other hand, millions, who have only received that baptism which these exclusive inheritors of divine grace, profess to regard as not only worthless but sinful, are ready to give a reason of the hope that is in them, and a proof of their regeneration by the Spirit of God, to every man that asketh it. And will any sane or reasonable mind admit that baptism which almost universally fails to result in holy lives is regeneration, and that those who commit sin wilfully, knowingly, daily, and with the most unblushing effrontery, are regenerate; while on the other hand, they who have never received prelatical baptism but who do live holily, righteously and unblamably in the world are unregenerate? It is impossible, and hence we are brought by another argument to the conclusion that baptism is not regeneration. Otherwise a cause may exist without an effect at any time resulting from it; a principle may imbue the mind which never influenced it; a character may be enstamped upon the heart which is only evidenced by the most contradictory lineaments; and multitudes of regenerated persons may live in sin and die as they live, and from first to last pursue one undeviating course of open ungodliness.

V. Fifthly, this doctrine of baptismal regeneration is untrue because the Scriptures teach that many are regenerated without baptism. It was an old error among the Jews that sacraments

\*Present Causes, p. 14.

did justify and save. Hence were the prophets commanded to instruct them that it was a vain confidence and a false opinion that these things do render us acceptable unto God; that God did not institute these sacraments to give grace or justify, but that they might be witnesses of the grace of God and testimonies that God doth sanctify and justify, by and through that sacrifice which was appointed before all worlds.† In like manner do we find the apostles labouring to prove,—in opposition to this Judaizing tendency to put confidence in sacraments and forms,—that without any observation of the ceremonial laws, without works of any kind, *including, therefore, the observance of sacraments*, a man is justified, sanctified, purified and saved, only by the mere and free grace of God in Christ Jesus, “purifying our hearts by faith.” “We believe,” says Peter, “that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they.” “Whosoever,” says John, “believeth that Jesus is Christ is born of God.” “Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God.” “If,” says Paul, “thou shalt acknowledge with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shall believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved.” Salvation, therefore, cometh not by, in, or through, the sacraments. By grace are we saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves or of any sacraments depending upon ourselves; it is the gift of God. Sacraments are added as testimonies to the truth, as seals of the righteousness that comes by faith, and as pledges of the increase and continuance of God’s heavenly gifts. They are seals and assurances unto all who receive them of the grace of God. Our fathers, the patriarchs, the prophets, and other holy men of God were all regenerated. “To Isreal pertaineth the adoption;” and of them God says, “Ye are the children of the Lord your God.” Deut. 14:1. Abraham was justified by faith, and David knew how to pray for this divine blessing when he said, “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.” The thief upon the cross was doubtless also regenerated and yet was he not baptized, nor do we know that Stephen was

† See Is. 1, 11-14; Jer. 6, 20; Amos 5, 21, 22; Ps. 1, 23; Ps. 51, 16, 17; Mic. 6, 8.



ever baptized though admitted to the vision of glory of his beautified Redeemer. To say, then, that baptism is regeneration is to contradict the testimony of God; to malign and abuse God's ancient church and people; to subvert the foundation of our faith and to lay in Zion another foundation than that is laid.

VI. Sixthly, the Scriptures also teach us that many of those who received the sacrament of baptism and the corresponding sacrament of circumcision, even at the hands of those who were divinely authorized to administer them, were not regenerated.

The apostle testifies "that all our fathers were baptized; and did all eat of one spiritual meat; and did all drink the same spiritual drink; but with many of them God was not well pleased for they were overthrown in the wilderness." Now: "The church," says Dr. Pusey, "has ever taught that the deliverance of the Israelites from Egyptian bondage, by means of the Red Sea, is a type and figure of God's holy baptism." But these Israelites were in number six hundred thousand men. And yet of this vast number only two were permitted to reach the promised land. With the remainder God "was grieved forty years; and their carcasses fell in the wilderness because He had sworn in His wrath that they should not enter into His rest." Their baptism, therefore, did not prevent the fall of 598,998 out of 600,000 and the baptism of the church of England, we have seen, according to Dr. Pusey himself, is found to be but very little more efficacious. Throughout the Old Testament those who had been consecrated to God by circumcision which, like baptism, was a seal of the righteousness which is by faith, are addressed as unconverted, unregenerated persons. "Hear," says Isaiah, "and your soul shall live" (55:3). "Wash you make you clean, put away the evil of your doings" (1:16). "O Jerusalem," says Jeremiah, "wash thine heart from wickedness that thou mayest be saved" (4:14). Make you a new heart and a new spirit, for why will you die, O, house of Israel," exclaims Ezek. (18-31). (See Zech. 13, 1; Is. 52, 15.) It is in the same language these Jews were addressed by Peter, Stephen, and the other apostles of our Lord, when pricked in their hearts they cried out, "men and brethren, what shall we do to be saved?" In this spirit the apostle calls the



Judaizing teachers "the concision," adding, "we are the circumcision who worship God in Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh." "If ye were Abraham's children," said Christ, "ye would do the works of Abraham,—ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

In like manner do we find that numbers who received christian baptism are spoken of as still unregenerate. The Apostle Peter explicitly says after the baptism of Simon Magus, "thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter for thy heart is not right with God." The Apostle John says of others who had been received into the church by baptism, "they went out from us but they were not of us; for if they had been of us they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." The apostle speak of others, "of whom," say he, "I tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ. The same apostle supposes that a baptized woman may be living in pleasure and so be dead while she lives." Addressing the baptized member of the church the same apostle says, "awake thou that sleepest and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light." "My little children of whom I travail in birth again till Christ be found in you; I desire to be present with you now and to change my voice, for I stand in doubt of you."

It is thus manifest that, according to Scripture, baptism is no certain evidence of regeneration; that on the contrary, baptized persons may be, and often are, unregenerated, and that the language of your Saviour applies, in all its force to them, "marvel not that I said unto you ye must be born again." By making baptism, therefore, regeneration we lose the substance in the sign, and the end in the means; we deceive our own souls and go down to the grave with a lie in our right hands, and without that regeneration of the Spirit and in the heart without which we cannot see the kingdom of heaven.

VII. We are thus led to the last proof we shall offer of the unscripturality of the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, which is this. that the Scriptures teach us that baptism is only the sign and seal of regeneration and not regeneration itself. It is the sign to proclaim its necessity and reality; a seal to assure us

that by faith in Christ it may be obtained; and a pledge that if the recipient of baptism asks the gracious boon, God will bestow upon him the Holy Spirit. Such is the view given of circumcision—"it shall be a token of the covenant." And "Abraham," says the apostle, "received the *sign* of circumcision, a *seal* of the righteousness of the faith which *he had* yet being uncircumcised." Therefore, does the apostle argue that "he is not a Jew who is one outwardly," by having received the sacrament of circumcision which is only the sign and seal of inward regeneration and righteousness, "but he is a Jew," a true Israelite, born again of the Spirit, "who is one inwardly, and circumcision," (that is what it signs and seals,) "is that of the heart, in the Spirit and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God."

But we are further taught that baptism is now what circumcision was formerly having taken its place as the sign and seal of the same spiritual blessings. "In Christ also," says the Apostle Paul, "ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God."

In further proof of this I might adduce various other passages. Thus, for instance, Peter says, "the like *figure* whereunto even baptism doth now save us; not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." Now, here the apostle explicitly declares that the putting away the filth of the flesh, *i. e.*, baptism by water does not save us, that baptism is only a token or *figure* of that salvation which is the result of faith and the work of God. In like manner it is said, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." It may, we think, be shown that the expression "washing" here used is symbolical, not referring to baptism at all, but merely illustrative of the operations of regenerating grace, according to its constant use in the word of God.\* But even supposing that it does refer to bap-

\*See Ezek. 36, 25-27; Ps. 51, 2.

tism, the passage clearly teaches that baptism alone is not regeneration but only "*the washing of regeneration*," that is, the sacramental sign, seal, and symbol of regeneration; and that in order to obtain it the receiving of the Holy Ghost is necessary *in addition* to baptism. It teaches us, therefore, that we are saved by the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit, working in the heart that regeneration of which baptism is the outward sign. The two things are connected as the figure and the thing figured, but not as the cause and the effect.

This leads us to the true meaning and intent of the passage from which we have discoursed. Here, also, water is employed in connexion with being born again, but they are neither identified, nor is the one said to be the means, or efficient cause of the other. Here, also, the term water may be regarded as symbolical and not as relating to baptism, since the terms water, sprinkling, washing, are employed throughout the prophecies to denote the purifying influences of the Holy Spirit. Both the terms water and wind (*πνευμαχ*), translated in our version Spirit, may be thus figurative, our Lord referring to water and wind as descriptive of the influences of the Holy Ghost in the spiritual regeneration of the heart. Christ Himself immediately explained to Nicodemus what He meant by comparing these blessings to wind; and in the following chapter He explains the figure of water, saying, "whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." But suppose that the term water does refer in this passage to baptism, it is not said to be regeneration, nor is it connected with it as either a cause or a necessary means. On the contrary, it is declared not to be in itself sufficient to regeneration without the influence of the Holy Spirit. In the third verse the water is not alluded to at all, "Jesus said unto him, verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."\* Water, therefore, in the fifth verse, even if it refers to baptism, refers to it, not as regeneration or the means of regeneration, but only as the figure, emblem, sign, seal and sacrament by which this blessing is held forth to view.

\*John iii.

Enough, therefore, has, we trust, been said to show that the doctrine of baptismal regeneration is heaven-wide from the teaching of Scripture. We have also shown that it is as dangerous and destructive as it is unscriptural.

Such, then, are some of the arguments furnished by the Scripture in opposition to the notion that baptism is the specially-appointed, and certain means of regeneration; and on the ground of which, we venture positively to deny, that it is so. The power of conferring regeneration, even instrumentally, is not made over certainly to any creature. No man, no minister, no church is invested with this. It is the exclusive prerogative of God to determine when, and by what means, a soul shall be born again; and the exercise of that prerogative He retains exclusively in His own hand. Regeneration, therefore, is *absolutely* connected with the use of no external ordinance, or means, whatever. There is no external ordinance or means whatever, by the use of which we can certainly ensure it. The Word of God is the appointed, and only appointed, instrument for effecting it,—and, God be praised, frequently by means of this it is effected; but there is no other instrument in the use of which we are even warranted at all to expect it. Baptism may possibly be an *occasion* when (as I have shown) it may be vouchsafed, but is not the appointed instrument, much less the certain, and all-effectual means whereby it is conveyed. Regeneration is the pre-requisite for baptism, not baptism the instrumental cause of regeneration; and to be baptized without the pre-requisite is mere delusion and utter folly. Baptism, under such circumstances, may satisfy men; but in God's sight is of no import. The probability is, it leaves men as it found them. "in the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." The great question is not, whether we have been baptized or not; but, whether we are really regenerate, as well as baptized, or not? Let a man ask himself this solemn question: Am I really, as well as professedly, a child of God? Born of water I certainly have been, but am I as certainly born of the Spirit? Does the Spirit experimentally dwell in me? Am I governed, led, controlled by its sacred, sanctifying, influence? Are its fruits experienced, and apparent, in my life, character, conversation? This, I say, is the question, the vital, all-determined question.

Let a man be enabled to answer this satisfactorily, and he may *then*, if he will, rejoice, and congratulate himself on his baptismal profession;—it is sound, scriptural, saving; but independently of this, consciously devoid of such witness in his favour of the Spirit's operations, let him be silent about his baptism, and discard the notion of baptismal privileges; he is, despite his baptism and all it involves, “without part or lot in the matter” of salvation; his baptism will not avert the wrath of God, neither has it attached to him a particle of the merits of Christ's finished redemption, or of that “holiness without which no man shall see the Lord;” he is yet, in the fullest and most awful sense of the term, *unregenerate!* and, dying thus, will, without doubt, everlastingly perish.



## ARTICLE VII.

### THE OBLIGATIONS AND BENEFITS OF BAPTISM.

EXOD. 12:26.

What mean ye by this service?

A thing may be at first sight very unintelligible and yet when properly understood may be clear and comprehensible. So are all types, emblems, parables, allegories, similitudes and ceremonies. By their novelty and mystery they fix the attention so as to gather their intended meaning, and then indelibly impress this meaning, when properly understood, upon the memory and the heart. And this was evidently God's design in their original appointment. So it was with respect to the Old Testament economy, which was a system of types and shadows, in themselves, inefficacious, but which as prophecies foretold what should be certainly accomplished;—as signs, directed the understanding and the faith to the true and only ground of propitiation and redemption;—and thus served us as a schoolmaster to lead God's people to Christ.

And so it is also now. Two typical ceremonies have been admitted into the service of the christian temple—Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord. Their dissimilarity in this respect, from the rest of the christian service, deserves an attentive consideration. It plainly indicates, that there is in the events typified by them some distinguishing feature, which has rendered this form of expression suitable or needful for those events especially. Now one difference between such a mode of expression and that by words, is, that it is invariable and universal. It addresses itself alike to the apprehension of all ages, and of all people. Record an incident, or register a precept, in terms ever so definite, still the change of language necessary for conveying it from one people to another,—nay, the change which time produces even in the original language in which it is deposited, (supposing no corruption of the document to take place.)—renders such a record more or less liable to misrepresentation although it doubtless possesses, in other points of view, great advantages over a symbolical representation. To uncultivated minds, moreover, a symbolical rite is more impres-

sive and attractive and often more intelligible ; and it should be recollected, that although the Gospel is adapted and addressed to a more enlightened state of society than was the Law, it recognizes, and has provided for, those portions of an enlightened society, which fall short in most if not in all christian countries of the preparatory capacity for the whole sum of Gospel truth. Whilst, therefore, to the christian volume was committed the whole of the Gospel revelation, it was doubtless a wise and merciful provision to select the two most important features for the record of type and symbol, as well as of language. The doctrines of Regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and of Atonement by the death of Christ, followed by His spiritual indwelling in us—these form the epitome of christianity. Extracted from the full record of Revelation, translated, as it were, into symbol and type, and so, engrafted on the christian service, their eminent importance was thereby signified, and a preservative furnished against our overlooking either the meaning or the importance designed to be attached to the corresponding passages of the sacred volume.

Permit me, then, my friends, to ask you, have you ever considered why you bring your children to be baptized? What are the reasons and designs of baptism? What are the professions it implies? What are the obligations it imposes both upon the parent and the child? And what are the benefits to be looked for and expected by both parents and children? Let me call your attention very briefly to each of these points :

And first as to the reason why we do bring our children to be baptized—this is to be found only in the authority and word of God. It is not enough that it is the custom of the country, or the rule and practice of all christian churches except one, thus to consecrate them to God ; much less because it is respectable, or because it is made the occasion of first publicly announcing their names. None of these reasons would excuse *the form* of this ceremony from the charge of an idle and profane ceremony, and a most unwarrantable mockery of God. Oh, no, baptism is an ordinance of a much more solemn nature, and of a much higher obligation than any such views would imply. It is a service which we perform in obedience to the command of heaven. It was appointed by God—as it regards its essential

principle and character,—probably at the very beginning of the world, since we find on *every* occasion, that their seed or offspring are included with the parents in His covenants of mercy, and His provisions of grace and salvation. To Abraham as the head of the Gentile church and the father of all the faithful, the law of infant dedication was given under a form adapted to the condition and prospects of the church at that time, which form was administered to infants “as a seal of the righteousness which is by faith.” And thus it is now. The form of circumcision having accomplished its purposes, baptism, which is the christian circumcision, is still to be administered for the same purpose, and in order to secure the same benefits to God’s professing people and to their infant offspring in the christian church, since the kingdom of Christ is as certainly composed of children as was the church under its previous dispensations. Christ, therefore, instituted baptism, among other purposes, to be the sign and means of our admission into His visible church and our professing to receive His religion, to become His disciples, and to live in the observance of His ordinances. You find that after His resurrection and just before He ascended into heaven, Christ gave this commission unto His disciples, “go ye and teach (or as the word means, make disciples of) all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” It is, therefore, by the authority of Christ that baptism takes the place of circumcision as the initiatory ordinance of the Church of God. And since He requires that all nations should be discipled to Him, only substituting the gospel for the law, and His own ordinances for the former ceremonies, we must conclude that baptism is to be administered under the same rule of infant dedication, with circumcision. And with this conclusion the declarations and practice of the apostles and of the early and pure church unquestionably agree. There is no curtailment of the privileges of parents and of children under the christian dispensation. The promise of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious influence is typified by the waters of baptism, is not only unto us but to our children, to the very end of time, and beyond the power of man to reach, abrogate or to annul it.

This, then, is the reason of infant baptism—the authority and command of Christ and of God, as made known through His church in all ages.

What, then, did Christ mean to represent by baptism? The only element employed in this ordinance is water. Now, as this is the great means of cleansing and the great source of purification so is it, when employed in this ordinance, designed to represent the washing of regeneration and the renewing influences of the Holy Ghost, by which alone any man can be born again and without which no man can enter the kingdom of heaven. Now, this washing from sin is twofold. First, there is the washing from the *guilt* of sin by the blood of Jesus Christ “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” Secondly, there is washing from the pollution and depravity of sin, from the love and practice of it, from evil dispositions and habits, and from all uncleanness and inordinate affections. This is effected by the sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit of God, who is, therefore, said to “change our hearts,” to regenerate us,” “to renew us in the spirit of our minds,” and “to make us new creatures.” Now, both these kinds of washing are absolutely necessary to the salvation of our souls; and both are represented by the figure of baptism. But more especially is baptism intended to hold forth, proclaim, and impress upon our minds the absolute necessity, the infinite importance, the practicability, and the source of this purification of our hearts and lives by the grace of the Holy Spirit;—while the Lord’s Supper is designed pre-eminently to teach the value and efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ. “Baptism,” therefore says our Confession of Faith, “is a sacrament of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church, but also to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, or regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God. through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life; which sacrament is, by Christ’s own appointment, to be continued in His church until the end of the world.”

What, then, we proceed to ask, is the nature of that profession which is made in baptism, made on the part of the parent as the expression of his own view and also on behalf and in the



name of his child? That such a profession is implied in baptism is most evident, since the words are sometimes used interchangeably; since a willingness to confess Christ before men is made in Scripture the condition of bestowing baptism; and since a *personal* profession on the part of adults, and such a *relative* profession on the part of their representative in the case of infants, have always been associated with baptism in every age of the church. And one reason why baptism as a personal rule is only properly administered publicly in the church, is that thereby not only the individuals immediately concerned, but all others who may be present, may be put in remembrance of their own profession made for them to God in infancy. On every such occasion we are all called upon to acknowledge, ratify and in effect renew our baptismal engagement. This is a very solemn consideration of which many are altogether thoughtless, and on which I entreat you to reflect. This throws around the transaction a solemnity, a dignity and an importance, worthy of the subject of it; of the place, of the time, of the assembly, and of that great and glorious God who, while the heaven of heavens cannot contain His glory, condescends to witness and to co-operate in such scenes. Yea! while many, like the disciples, can see nothing but confusion and formality in the whole transaction, God crowns it with glory and honor, while angels hovering round, gaze upon it with delight as one part of the mystery of godliness. The young immortal is here made a spectacle to God, to angels and to men; stamped with the impress of heaven, enrobed in the garments of salvation; enrolled among the citizens of the heavenly commonwealth; clothed as it were in the panoply of God; and thus equipped, prepared for doing battle against principalities and powers against the world, the flesh, and the Devil. The very weakness, therefore, and helplessness of the children who are presented in baptism, their terror and alarms, and their utter inability to appreciate or reciprocate the divine mercy, only reflect all the more brightly the lustre of His divine compassion whose tender mercies are over all His other works and who is not willing that one of the little ones should perish.

First, then, profession is here made of faith in Christ. We are here made to declare that we heartily embrace His religion



and receive HIM as our Saviour; that we sincerely repent of our sins and seek salvation by Christ as "the one thing needful;" and that it is our full determination by the grace of God, to seek the same for our beloved offspring, and as far as is in our power to induce them to do so for themselves. On these grounds they are publicly entered as members of the Church of Christ, and while presented to receive at the minister's hands the outward and visible sign of washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, all present unite in imploring of Christ HIMSELF the inward and spiritual grace, that of His bounteous mercy He will grant to our children that thing which by nature they cannot have; and that they may, therefore, be baptized not only with water, but also with the Holy Ghost.

But, secondly, in baptism a profession is made of belief in all the great leading and peculiar doctrines of the christian religion,—those, I mean especially, respecting the fallen and depraved state of man, redemption by God the Son, and sanctification by God the Holy Ghost. For why is baptism appointed at all? Why is it that not merely persons who have grown up in a heathen or false religion, or have committed many actual sins, but that infant children, and even those of christian parents, should be baptized and thus significantly washed with water? For what other reason can it be than to show that *we* all possess, and that our offspring derive from us, a corrupt and evil nature; and that they need to be cleansed from this depravity, and from the guilt that inseparably accompanies it, by spiritual generation, by "sanctification of the Spirit," and by "the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus."

Finally, in baptism you consecrate and devote your children to God—the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, their Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, that they may live to His honor and glory in the world. This is signified by the child being baptized in the name of each of the divine persons in the glorious Godhead. And thus has God made the full, explicit, and most open belief of the doctrine of the Trinity the very gate of Zion, the first principle of the oracles of truth, the very sign and badge of initiation into His heavenly commonwealth, and the most solemn and bounden profession to be made by every one

who would become partaker of the merits of Christ's death and passion, and of that inheritance which He has purchased with His own blood.

When, therefore, you present your children to God in baptism, you voluntarily recognize the truth of these doctrines, and the necessity and reasonableness of those obligations which arise out of them, and are enforced by them. You are again brought under a solemn engagement to comply with these obligations yourselves, and you are solemnly bound in the presence of God, to train up your children to lead a godly and a christian life, that they shall not grow up uninstructed in the faith of Christ, and unadmonished of their duty, but that by precept, by example, by solemn prayers *for* them and *with* them, by admonition, by good and scriptural discipline, not sparing the rod, when necessary, lest you destroy their souls;—and by every other means in your power, you will endeavor that they may know and fear God, may believe and love the Lord Jesus; and may lead a sober, and righteous and godly life. These duties, be it remembered, do not arise out of baptism nor are they created by it. They arise out of our condition as fallen and guilty creatures;—out of God's plan of Sovereign mercy devised for our redemption; and out of our relative position as parents. But *in baptism you are made to attest their existence*; to acknowledge them; and to confess your obligation to discharge them. It is, therefore, no light or trifling thing for a parent to bring his child that he may dedicate him to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is one of the most solemn and awful scenes on this side of the grave, and involves everlasting destinies beyond it. And for our parents to do so, and then think no more or but lightly of the whole matter, forgetting the inborn tendency of their child to folly, sin, and self-willed impenitence, and using no means to lead them to early and experimental piety, is an impiety for which God most assuredly will not hold them guiltless on the day of judgment. But if so, what, then, is the guilt of those parents who live in open and manifest neglect of those truths, and of those duties, to which they have been mercifully committed by God in their own baptism, and voluntarily recommitted by the presentation of their own children to God? And what is the guilt of those, too, who

live in open defiance of God's just and merciful claims upon themselves, and of His most gracious provision for their children, and neither make a profession for themselves or for their children? Surely they cannot escape who thus not only neglect, but openly despise and condemn the great salvation, tread under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing, and thus do despite to the Spirit of grace? God Himself means of such persons that "he who thus defiles the temple of God him will God destroy." Be admonished, then, ye that look on as if you had nothing to do with this holy and sacred ordinance. You have to do with it every one of you, and as surely as you live and die as you are now living and very likely will die, you will find that "it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

What, then, let us inquire in the last place, are the benefits to be sought and expected in baptism? By baptism your children are introduced into and brought up within the visible Church of Christ, "the holy, Catholic Church;"—are accustomed to hear the gospel preached to them *as the members* of that church;—are habituated to consider themselves as those to whom the oracles of God are committed and addressed, on whom all the duties of christian are binding, and to whom all the privileges of true christians are offered;—and these are advantages of no small consequence but of inestimable worth, since all others are regarded as the heathen and as lying in the open field beyond the enclosure of the Heavenly vineyard, though not beyond the exercise of the divine mercy. But it is not only for these benefits that bring the kingdom of God nigh unto them, rather than directly confer it on them, that application is made on their behalf in this ordinance, but for all those things which inseparably accompany salvation, yea, and for salvation itself with all its blessings. We seek for them all the blessings that belong to true believers—that they may be washed from sin, and endued with the Holy Spirit, admitted to the favor and into the family of God, and become entitled to everlasting life. So it is distinctly declared in our Confession of Faith, which also teaches that "by the right use of this ordinance the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhib-

ited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infant) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, in His appointed time."

Of all these blessings baptism is a sign, but it is more. It is also as the very nature of a sacrament implies, a seal or pledge to assure us of them, and a means whereby, as we have just heard, we receive the same in God's own manner, measure, and season. The promises of forgiveness of sin, and of adoption among the Sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed; and grace increased. Such blessings are conveyed to all of mature years who receive this ordinance rightly, and in their principles and virtue, by such infants in whom God in His Sovereign mercy and in answer to prayer is pleased to bestow them. He who filled John the Baptist and many of his prophets "with the Holy Ghost from their mother's womb" is also able when and where He will, to confer the inward and spiritual grace signified and sealed by baptism, to as many infants as are brought unto Him in the exercise of a true faith in His willingness and His ability.

Baptism, then, being an outward sign of inward grace—if we have the outward sign only, we have the shadow without the substance. "Of old the Apostle says of the Jews, 'all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea:' but all believed not, and therefore they were overthrown in the wilderness. They all used the form and were equal partakers of 'the outward sign:;' but those only who had faith received the spiritual benefit and blessing, for by faith the just shall live."

Such, then, are the nature and design, the professions, obligations and benefits of christian and of infant baptism in particular. And that these benefits do ordinarily flow in the channel of the baptized children of the church is a fact which the whole history of the church attests and which has been remarkably demonstrated in modern revivals.

How serious and awfully momentous a transaction, then, is it, my dear hearers. Often have I been shocked and grieved to see how ignorantly, how negligently, how thoughtlessly it has



been entered upon, and how many there are who have lived to grow up to be men and women who have sold their precious birthright for a mess of worldly gratification, who have turned their back on the God of their fathers, apostatized from the faith, become self-excommunicate from the commonwealth of promise, and are living without God and without hope in the world.

Reflect, I beseech you, my dear hearers. Are you a parent? Remember your child has a soul and is to live for ever in another world and not merely for a few uncertain years in this. He has a sinful nature, which if not thoroughly changed will lead him into a course of life that will and must end in everlasting misery. How, then, should you watch over, and pray for, him. How careful should you be to train him and to "bring him up in, and, oh! how horrible the thought of having the blood of *your* child's soul required at *your* hands and his damnation charged to your neglect of duty. And then, you, too, have yourselves immortal souls, placed in the same situation. How, then, let me ask, are you providing for the salvation of *your own* souls? Have you been baptized not into a sect or denomination of christians, not into the visible church merely, but into Christ Himself? Do you prove that you are thus baptized by having "put on Christ," by wearing Him as your covering, by looking to Him as your life, walking after Him as your guide, and living to Him as your King and Master? Hath a real change passed upon you? Are your evil tempers and dispositions in subjection? Do you love the Lord's ways, the Lord's people, the Lord's Sabbaths, His sanctuary, and all the assemblies of His people, and do you find that you can freely spend for Him your money and your time, and be willing to communicate and ready to distribute and zealous in every good work? Is it your grief to offend Him, and are you in faith and patience looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of your great God and Saviour Jesus Christ? If so, be assured that when He who is your life shall appear, then SHALL you also appear with Him in glory. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised



up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection: knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. vi. 3:11.

But if all this sounds like an unintelligible jargon in your ears, if you are conscious of no such change of heart as baptism is designed to typify, then let me beseech you, as you regard your own souls and those of your dear children, be no longer triflers with God. He invites you by His beloved Son, to receive pardon for the past and grace for the future. "Seek Him while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near." "To-day if you will hear His voice, harden not your heart, lest He swear in His wrath, that ye shall never enter into His rest."

The worldly and the impenitent around you are saying to you, "cast in your lot with us," and hitherto you have heard their voice. But here in God's house, in God's name, by God's authority, and in the name of the church, I would say, "cast in thy lot among us. Come with us; we are engaged in a benevolent enterprise, our object is to glorify God, to do good to men, to remove the evil that exists in the world, to relieve the wants of men, both temporal and spiritual; we would instruct the ignorant, reclaim the vicious, and save the lost. Come with us to the prayer-meeting, the Sabbath school, the weekly lecture, the sanctuary of God. We can give good reasons. Religion is true; the Bible is an inspired book; christians are the excellent of the earth; your conscience is on the side of truth; the service of God is reasonable; godliness is profitable for all things; its blessings are experienced in this life and reach to the life to come. If you cast in your lot with us, you will be saved from innumerable evils; you will be spared much suffer-

ing and many tears. Trials await you, sickness and sorrow, disappointments and reverses, if you cast in your lot with the people of God; but grace will be given you to bear the ills of life, and all things will work together for your good.

And now in the name of the Redeemer who died for you, in the name of the ransomed above who wait the issue of your decision, in the name of the church who prays for you, of your parents, guardians and friends who love you, cast in your lot among us. I have no power to turn your minds, but I can express His feelings. I would take every clerk, apprentice, and young man of every pursuit, by the hand, and say, come with us, and we will do you good.

## ARTICLE VIII.

### AN INVITATION TO FULFIL BAPTISMAL ENGAGEMENTS.

MATH. 11: 29, 30.

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

It is a very common, but a very great, mistake, to suppose that the service of Christ only becomes obligatory if we ourselves enter upon it. Such is not the case. Our duty to Christ arises out of the necessary relation in which we stand to God as moral, accountable, guilty and polluted creatures, who have forfeited God's favor, incurred His wrath, and who can only be restored to His enjoyment and His love by that plan of redeeming mercy which has been accomplished by Jesus Christ. God the Father having originated this scheme of mercy, God the Son having wrought it out, and God the Spirit having undertaken to apply and perfect it,—we are under a natural, necessary and unalterable obligation to act in accordance with these facts—to love and submit our hearts to God, to consecrate ourselves to Christ and rest upon His finished work and righteousness as the ground of our acceptance with God; and to trust in, and earnestly pray for, the influence of the Holy Spirit to renew, sanctify and sustain our souls, and to make us victorious over all the evils of our infirm and sinful natures. God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, having in that infinite mercy which constitutes the mystery of godliness, entered into and consummated this covenant of grace, have laid us under infinite obligations to accept of its provisions of mercy and to enter upon the discharge of its imposed obligations. No man therefore is excusable for not loving God, for refusing to take Christ's yoke upon him, and for living without the guiding, saving and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. God therefore "has revealed His wrath from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truths in unrighteousness" and "unto them that do not obey the truth" He has appointed "tribulation and anguish, indignation and wrath." "How then," asks the apostles, "can those escape who neglect the

great salvation?" "He only who believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Seeing that "Christ is the TRUTH, the WAY and the LIFE, and there is no other NAME under heaven by which we can be saved, but the name of Jesus."

This natural and necessary obligation to love, serve and confide in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, God has enforced upon us in the ordinance of baptism. By His own infinite right to our hearts and lives, He here binds us over to His service and glory in our infant years. This He has done, by some solemnity, from the very beginning of time. He thus says to us: "Ye are not your own. Your soul, your faculties, your powers of body and mind, are all given you by Me, that, with them, you may glorify and enjoy Me. And in view of your proneness to wander from Me, to forget Me, and to live independently of Me, I thus solemnly consecrate you to My service." Thus did God meet you and me, my friends, at the very entrance of life and make His demand to our hearts, our service, and our lives. "No man therefore liveth unto himself." No man can do so without involving himself in the guilt of open rebellion against God, an open renunciation of His authority, an avowed rejection of His covenant, and a just forfeiture of His love and mercy. It is not true therefore that you are not bound to be a christian, and to devote yourself to the cause of Christ, unless you choose to do so. You are bound by every claim of infinite right to do this. You can have no proper regard to God, either as Father, Son, or Spirit, unless you do so. The relation in which you stand to them, as your Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier, demands it. The routine obligation imposed upon you by baptism makes this cause still more imperative. And when you consider the nature of that covenant into which God then entered with you, and how it involved a pledge on His part as well as an obligation on yours, how it secured to you, upon acceptance, all the blessings of redemption, how it made plain and palpable to you that there is a Trinity in the divine essence, and that it is upon this fact the plan of salvation is based, and that each of these divine persons are concerned for your everlasting welfare and as willing as they are able to impart, and

to preserve to your spiritual and eternal life;—when you consider that it was pure, free, sovereign and unmerited love which devised this plan, and revealed “the great mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh” as the foundation of your hopes;—oh, when you think of these, and then consider how you have lived and acted, how you have forgotten God, how you have lived without Him, how even your morality has been the result of self-interested and worldly motives and not from regard to God or His authority, and when you consider how you have treated Christ and done utter despite to the Spirit of grace, do you not see that your “heart is deceitful and desperately wicked,” and that your whole life has been one continued act of impiety, ungodliness and practical atheism?

Is it not then high time that you should acquaint yourself with God and be at peace with Him before the day of your merciful visitation has forever terminated? Is it not time that the great purpose for which you were created and sent into the world—the paramount obligation under which you be to God—should be fulfilled, by an acceptance of the covenant of life, an entire surrender of the heart to Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and a heartfelt devotion to His service?

Are you not then called upon to do this freely and voluntarily, by a sense of gratitude to God? Is He not your CREATOR, who has called you into existence and watched over you with the tenderest care from the hour of your birth up to the present? Have you a blessing of any kind that you have not received from Him? Are you not indebted to Him for all the comforts you enjoy in affectionate parents, kind friends, a fond family and a happy home? And is it not this same gracious God who so loved you that He gave His own Son, His only Son, and who was in the beginning with God and who was God, that He might become an all-sufficient sacrifice for your sins, who has promised to give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him to be their TEACHER, GUIDE, SANCTIFIER and COMFORTER, and who has prepared for all that love Him such good and glorious things in heaven as pass men’s understanding? Are you not bound by gratitude, my hearer, to give yourself up entirely to Him? Ought you not to surrender



yourself—heart, soul and body, all without reserve,—to Him whose you are by creation and preservation, but above all by the endearing obligations of redeeming love? Has not He—that compassionate Saviour who poured out His heart's blood for you—a right to urge on you the demand “give me thine heart,” and to be enthroned in your soul as the supreme object of your love? And should not the love of Christ constrain you to devote your life to Him who gave up His life for you?

Can you reflect on all you profess to believe this Son of God endured in Gethsemane's garden and on Calvary's cross, to purchase pardon for your sins, and everlasting happiness in heaven as your inheritance, and not feel that gratitude calls loudly on you to love Him with your whole heart, and at the foot of the cross to surrender up yourself, and all you have and are, to Him and His service forever and ever? What sin or worldly vanity would you not cheerfully sacrifice for Him, who sacrificed Himself for you? What soul-destroying lust would you prefer to His life-giving smile? Did He leave the bosom of His Father, the throne of His glory and stoop to humiliation, sorrow, suffering and death, for your sake, and oh, can you hesitate to leave, at His call, whatever He commands you to forsake; and to bear in His service whatever He commands you to endure? In a word, did He die for you, and will you refuse to live for Him? And if you *can*, must you not loathe yourself as a monster of ingratitude, and feel that sentence is no less just than terrible, which declares that “if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be *anathema maranatha*”—that is, cursed when the Lord comes to judge the world in righteousness?

I beseech you, therefore, by all the love Christ has shown and all the sufferings He has endured for you—by His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, come forward and in His strength resting all your hopes on His finished work and righteousness, in humble reliance on His Spirit, with a broken and a contrite heart deeply penitent for all your past sins, and overflowing with gratitude for all His love, come and surrender yourself up to Him for life, for death, for eternity, and take Him as your PROPHET, JURIST and KING, your ATONEMENT, INTERCESSOR and EXAMPLE, your STRENGTH and

RIGHTEOUSNESS, your JOY and GLORY, your all in all. Give yourself up to Him in the bonds of a covenant that shall remain firm when the heaven and the earth shall be dissolved—have your sins washed in His blood, your heart filled with His love, your character conformed to His image, your soul sanctified by His grace, and your life consecrated to His service.

But this fulfillment of your baptismal obligations is urged upon you also by a regard to your present and everlasting happiness. Are you not, without Christ, without reconciliation with God, without true, inward and satisfying happiness, without hope for death, judgment and eternity, under the power of your own evil heart, and led captive by Satan at his will? And as it regards worldly pleasure, pomp, and vanity, are these things deserving of your affection? Can they confer solid happiness? Has any human being ever found them better than Solomon did, or than Buckingham, Chesterfield and others have found them in modern times? Do they not steal away the heart from God, rob the soul of that peace and joy which God alone can give—"the peace which passeth all understanding and the joy unspeakable and full of glory?" And can you not, without a sigh, renounce them all, "remembering that if any man love the world, or the things of the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And as it regards the lusts of the flesh, these are manifestly irreconcilable with inward peace. There can be no peace to the wicked. "They who sow to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." The poisoned cup, which for a time gives delirious joy, will ere long prove wormwood and gall to the awakened conscience and fill the soul with the fearful agonies of terror and remorse. And can you then hesitate as you look at the light of the cross to resolve by the grace of God to crucify all the sinful lusts of the flesh, whose indulgence must deprive you of the light of God's countenance, the happiness that flows from His favor, and all the blessings for time and for eternity, which an Almighty Saviour has purchased for all His faithful followers by His own infinitely precious blood?

But still further, you are bound by your baptism to believe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded. And does not a regard to your own welfare imperatively call upon you to do so? Is it not essential to your true happiness that you should cordially believe whatever God in His infinite condescension and kindness has been pleased to reveal in His holy word; that you should sit at the Saviour's feet like Mary, with the teachable spirit of a little child to receive with humble faith the gracious words that proceed out of His mouth; and that you should submit with thankful acquiescence to God's holy will, and render a cheerful obedience to all God's commandments, seeing they are all framed in unspeakable love, and are embodied expressions of His desire to promote your happiness?

Believe me—to use at some length the words of the Rev. Hugh White of Dublin—if ever Satan, the father of lies, has propagated a falsehood, which bears branded on it all the malignity of his own diabolical nature, it is that most monstrous libel on the religion of the gospel, by which he seeks, alas! often too successfully, to deter the young from coming to the Lord Jesus Christ—even the blasphemous libel, that His service is incompatible with real happiness of heart, and, if cordially engaged in, will cloud the countenance with sadness, and the spirit with gloom! What! the service of a Saviour-God a gloomy service! What! the smile of a covenant-God, of Him in whose presence is the fulness of joy, make the soul miserable! The hope of heaven, of eternal happiness, throw a gloom over the path of life! What blasphemous absurdity! Why! is not the gospel, in its very essence, “glad tidings of great joy?” Is not the kingdom of God “righteousness, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghost?” Is not the child of God commanded to “rejoice in the Lord always,” yea, even when “sorrowful,” to be “always rejoicing” in Him, with joy unspeakable and full of glory? Who, who has a right to be happy, but the real christian? Who, but he, that “being justified by faith, has peace with God, and rejoices in hope of the glory of God,” even the glory to be revealed, when Christ shall appear, and all His saints shall appear with Him in glory!

What, I would affectionately ask you, my dear young friend, what *can* make you truly happy, if it be not the consciousness of possessing, in the ever-blessed God, an all-satisfying portion, for time and for eternity? To feel that God is your own God, for ever and ever—to feel that God the Father is *your* Father—that He loves you, for His dear Son's sake, with an everlasting love—that He is continually watching over you for good—and showering down His most precious blessings on you—that here He will guide you by His counsel, and hereafter receive you to His glory! To feel that God the Son, is your all-sufficient Saviour, and unchangeable Friend—that He died for *your* sins—rose again for *your* justification, and now ever liveth to make intercession for *you*, as your Advocate with the Father, and thus to procure for you all the blessings of the everlasting covenant—that your sins are blotted out in His blood—that your soul is clothed in the spotless robe of His righteousness—that He is now constantly looking down on you from His mediatorial throne, with the ever-watchful eye of a Redeemer's love—and that He will come again (perhaps ere long, for we know not the day, nor the hour, wherein the Son of Man cometh) to make you a partaker of His own glory, in the day of His appearing, and for ever and ever! To feel that God the Holy Ghost is your Sanctifier, Comforter, Teacher, Guardian, and Guide; that He will lead you into all-saving truth, supply you with all needful strength, and refresh you with the most reviving cordials, when you are ready to faint, in running the race set before you—give you the victory over all your spiritual enemies—renew your soul in the divine image—help all your infirmities, in your supplications to the throne of grace, teaching you both what to pray for, and how to pray—enable you to study the Scripture with profit and delight—make every divine ordinance a fountain of spiritual comfort and support—and that having begun a good work in you, He will carry it on triumphantly, till He has sanctified you wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and presented you, unblamable in holiness, even in the sight of the holy God! To feel that you are a member of God's holy, happy family—that you are linked in a bond of brotherhood with all that is good, and pure, and glorious, throughout the universe—that angels and



archangels, cherubim and seraphim, are now ministering spirits, performing towards you tender offices of holy love, and will, ere long, with patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, and all the redeemed of the Lord, be your companions in heaven, the sharers and brighteners of all your celestial bliss! To feel that heaven is your destined and everlasting home—that every day is bringing you nearer the enjoyment, and that no period of ages, however incalculable, will bring you to the termination of its inconceivable felicity! Such are the feelings, and such the hopes, which the religion of the gospel warrants its sincere votaries to cherish. And is *this* the religion, which will sadden the spirit with a chilling gloom? and which, if you embrace, you must bid farewell to gladness of heart for ever? Are *these* the prospects that will darken the path of life? Oh, may not I rather ask you, what *can* confer true happiness, if *such* feelings and *such* hopes as these cannot? What can the world offer you, to be compared for a moment with such happiness as *this*? May I not appeal to your own judgment, would it not be desperate madness to fling away *such* happiness, even for a time, and get nothing worth wishing for in exchange—for the world or Satan really has nothing of solid, satisfying enjoyment, to offer as a bribe, to induce you to give up the happiness, which the smile and service of God, and the hope and foretaste of heaven, can bestow!

But I must not neglect to remind you, that you have only, at most, a few years, to spend here below—perhaps only a few days—or hours—for you are but a pilgrim on earth, passing through it to an eternal world; that you *must* choose between God and Satan, as your master—between everlasting happiness and everlasting misery, as your portion—between heaven and hell as your dwelling-place—for *ever* and *ever*. You *may* reject God, but *then*, you *must* choose Satan, as your master, for ever. You may fling away everlasting happiness in heaven for the trifles, the vanities, the baubles, of earth—but, *if you do!* you cannot escape from eternal misery in hell! Heaven, I would again and again impress it on your most solemn consideration—*Heaven cannot be lost, without hell being secured, as your abode for ever!*



And believe me, if you are thus enabled, by the Almighty power of this blessed Spirit, to choose that good part, which shall never be taken from you, even to choose Christ as your Saviour, Master, Example, and Portion for ever—you will never, *never* repent of your choice.

You will not repent of having chosen Christ, when your pathway through life is brightened with the sunshine of earthly happiness; for His smile will then pour into your soul the very essence of heaven's happiness, while it will gild, with increased gladness, every scene of purified enjoyment, through which you pass! And oh! how sweet will you find the reflection, that you are giving your heart and life, in all their freshness, to Him, who has showered His blessings so plenteously upon you—to Him, who has bought you with His own most precious blood, and are spending, in His blessed service, those years, which so many thousands, at your age, are wasting in the service of the world and sin! Should you die soon, or suddenly, how delightful to depart, and be with Christ for ever! But should length of years be allotted for you, how delightful to look back on a *long life*, spent, from its earliest dawn, in grateful devotedness to His service, and affectionate endeavours to promote His glory!

Nor will you repent of your choice, when affliction comes, and the clouds of sorrow gather round you, for His smile will break through and brighten the gloom, and His voice whisper peace to your soul, saying, "Fear not! it is I, who in love appoint all your trials; for as many as I love, I rebuke and chasten, to make them partakers of my holiness, and thus of my happiness, even for ever and ever."

You will not repent of having chosen Christ, at that awful hour, when His smile shall brighten to your view the dark valley of the shadow of death, and you will be enabled to go down into the valley with cheerful courage, leaning on His Almighty arm, and gladdened by the glorious prospect, that, when you have crossed the dark valley, you shall be admitted into His immediate presence, to rejoice there with joy unspeakable and full of glory, for ever and ever.

Nor will you repent of having chosen Christ, in that day of His second coming, when He shall appear in awful majesty,

revealed from heaven, in flaming fire, attended by all His holy angels; and when all, that have despised His love, shall be destroyed with an everlasting destruction—for then shall your glorification be indeed complete! Then shall your body be made incorruptible and immortal—a glorified body, like the Redeemer's; and He will then place you at His right hand, as He sitteth upon the throne of His glory, and will say unto you, "Come thou blessed of my Father! inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world!" Oh! think you, that you will *then* repent of having surrendered up yourself to the Lord Jesus Christ, to be His for life and death, for time and for eternity? And will there come that period, throughout the countless ages of that eternity, when you will ever repent of such a surrender? Or rather will you not, as its successive ages are rolling on, and your glory is continually brightening, and your happiness continually deepening—Oh! will you not rejoice in the retrospect of this surrender, with continually increasing gratitude and joy? And will you not, with yet a loftier and sweeter strain, as age after age of inconceivable blessedness passes over, and still an undiminished eternity of bliss lies before you, lift up your voice before His throne, to join with all His ransomed people in that new song of gratitude and praise, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, even the Father—unto Him, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit, three Persons and one God, be equal and everlasting adoration and thanksgiving, and blessing! for ever and ever! Amen! and Amen!"

## ARTICLE IX.

### BAPTISM NOT A REPRESENTATION OF CHRIST'S BURIAL AND DEATH; BUT ONLY AN EMBLEM OF THE BLESSINGS PROCURED BY CHRIST'S DEATH AND OUR CONSEQUENT OBLIGATIONS.

Rom. 6: 3, 4: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?

Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Col. 2: 12. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.

These two passages of Scripture are regarded as strongholds by our Baptist brethren in the controversy respecting the mode of Christian baptism. According to them they both refer to the mode and form of baptism, and teach that the instruction and import of the ordinance depend on their mode of administration, that is, immersion. "When the apostle so calls it," says Dr. Gill, "he manifestly refers to the ancient and *only* way, of administering this ordinance, by immersion; when a person is covered, and as it were buried in water, as a corpse is when laid in the earth, and covered with it; and it is a burial *with Christ*; 'tis a representation of the burial of Christ, and of our burial with Him as our Head and Representative, and that *into death*; meaning either the death of Christ as before, that is, so as to partake of the benefits of His death; or the death of sin, of which baptism is also a token; for believers, whilst under water, are as persons buried, and so dead."

And on the passage in Colossians, among other matter to the same purpose, he observes, "baptism being performed by immersion when the person baptized is covered with water and as it were buried in it, is a very significant emblem of all this; 'tis a representation of the burial of Christ, and very fitly holds Him forth to the view of faith in the state of the dead, in the grave, and points out the place where the Lord lay; and it is also a representation of our burial with Him as being dead to sin, to the law, and to the world by Him. This shows now that baptism was performed by dipping, or covering the whole

body in water, for no other form of administration of baptism, as sprinkling, or pouring water on the face, can represent a burial or be called one."

Now, it will be our present object to show: 1. That this can not be the meaning of these passages and that the argument founded on them by our Baptist brethren is altogether illusory and imaginative and without any foundation in the facts or in the reason of the case; and 2. To show what is their true and real meaning.

"That these words," says my former professor, Dr. Halley, in his elaborate work on the Sacraments (whose words I will employ as they will convey my own views), "That these words are figurative, allusive, no one will deny. But the design of baptism, if to represent the death of Christ be its design, as is affirmed would then be no where *ostensibly* and plainly taught, but only obliquely noticed in figurative language, in order to illustrate another subject. Of course, this interpretation of the figure can be found in the inspired writings, we readily acquiesce; but we are not disposed to allow a fallible interpreter of figures to give law to the christian church, especially when his unauthorized interpretation appears to us incongruous and inconsistent. If I am asked for the meaning of the apostle's language, I reply, do we not satisfy all the legitimate requirements of the figure in maintaining that all who have the spiritual blessings proposed in the emblem of baptism, have obtained them through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ? Those who have been baptized not only in the letter, but also in the spirit, are virtually and legally considered as having become united to Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings, and the power of His resurrection; they have *figuratively* died unto sin and become alive unto righteousness. But if the expressions are figurative and represent spiritual things, no man who has not the reality of the baptismal emblem, has been baptized into the death of Christ, or has been buried with Him in baptism; while every man who has that reality has been spiritually baptized into the death of Christ, and been buried with Him in the baptism of the Spirit. If I am dead with Christ, I have been buried with Him in my baptism, not into water, but by His Spirit into His death. Is not this the sense, *and all the*

*sense*, of the figurative language of the apostle? We object, then to the interpretation of the symbols given by the Baptists in the first place, because it is unauthorized, except by figurative language, which will admit of another and, as we think, better interpretation. That baptism is the funeral solemnity of a believer, or his interment in the tomb of Christ, is a doctrine which has no sure warranty of Holy Scripture."

In the next place we remark that the symbols, as Baptists interpret them, appears to us incongruous and inappropriate. It may be said, we have no right to pronounce upon the propriety of an authorized symbol; but in this instance the supposed resemblance between immersion and burial is the foundation of the whole argument. It is said by the Baptists, sprinkling does not represent a burial; and our reply is, neither does immersion. The *momentary* and *hasty* dipping is so little like the solemn act of committing the body to the earth; the water is so little like a tomb; the service so little like a funeral solemnity; the words, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost so inappropriate to the burial of the dead, and the active and voluntary entrance into the font so little like the involuntary deposit of a dead body, which after all is only partial and effected as much by the person baptized as by the person baptizing.

Besides the burial is with Christ in His tomb, and therefore the burial of Christ is the model of the service, and hence we object, in the third place, that the Baptist interpretation is not true to fact. For was Christ let down into the earth? Was there in His burial any circumstance which cannot be fitly represented by immersing in water? To lay a person in a tomb cut in a rock, and to complete the sepulchre by rolling a stone to the opening, bears no resemblance to any mode of baptism whatever. Our Baptist friends, we think, gain some adventitious aid in representing immersion as the sign of a burial, because the baptistery as usually made in their chapels, in size and form, most fortunately for their argument, resembles a modern grave much more than it does a Jewish sepulchre. Were the image of the sepulchre in the garden to be exhibited in front of the baptistery, the charm of the representation, and



with it the force of the argument would, we imagine, be very speedily dissolved.

Or is the scene to be changed? Instead of the tomb of Jesus, are we to think of the usual sepulchre of that age? As the burial is with Christ, we have no right to be allured from the garden of Joseph. But seek where we may for a burial in connexion with the passage, we shall find no resemblance to immersion—not even the poor analogy of a modern funeral. Deposited in the Jewish tomb, embalmed in the spicery of the dead, and wrapped in clean linen our Lord was interred as “the manner of the Jews is to bury.” From His tomb, although “bound hand and foot in grave clothes,” Lazarus could come forth. To a Jewish burial I see, therefore, no resemblance in immersion, but every thing dissimilar, since there were tombs in which demoniacs found shelter and robbers a refuge.

But as the first passage was actually addressed to the Romans, does the representation accord with the funeral solemnities of the imperial city? The Jews buried their dead, according to the manner of their own nation; and the Romans of that age placed the corpse upon a pyre and deposited its ashes in an urn. We have in baptism no sign of cremation. Immersion in Rome would remind no one of a burial. The shadow of the watery tomb would become invisible near the blaze of the funeral pile. If water to the Romans or to the Jews suggested any recollections of the dead, they would more probably be associated with the universal custom of washing the corpse, and suggest, therefore, much more readily sprinkling and pouring than immersion or dipping.

A burial in water must have appeared to the ancients the most incongruous of symbols, estranged from all their associations and sympathies. The shade of Archytas, represented by Virgil as lying unburied on the seashore, would have been content if, for the burial of his body, only a few grains of sand had been sprinkled over it, while it must have remained unburied, had all the waters of the ocean rolled over it. The Fathers, it is true, early adopted this opinion of a burial by immersion, but if their authority be adduced, it is in favour of the triune immersion, as signifying the three days of Christ's burial. Besides, what conceivable thing, which by any

remote analogy—any faint or fanciful resemblance—any ingenious metaphor, could be associated with baptism, did not the Fathers include in this great sacrament of most varied and inscrutable mystery?

Again, we object, in the fourth place, that the representation of a burial is inconsistent with the symbol of the sanctification of the Spirit, which all parties acknowledge to be represented in baptism. The ritual use of water is every where in Scripture noticed as the symbol of sanctification—the washing away of sin. All the ablutions of the Mosaic law spake to the Jew of an internal sanctity, represented by the external cleansing. “Wash you, make you clean,” was the language of their prophets; and their exposition was, “Put away the evil of your doings.” In the synagogues of the ancient church was read the prophetic description of the purification of the coming age; and the well known symbol of water was employed, “I will sprinkle clean water upon them, and they shall be clean.” In the New Testament, the church is cleansed “by the washing of water,” and its members are to draw nigh to God, “having their bodies washed with pure water.” This, I may say, is the natural and universal language in which the symbol speaks to all mankind. Water among all nations who have used it in their religious rites, (and what nation, having a ritual has not used it?) has ever been regarded as the proper emblem of purification. What else was the meaning of the diurnal and nocturnal ablutions of the Egyptian priests, the baptisms of the Persians, the Indians, and other barbaric tribes, the bathing and sprinklings of the Greeks in all their mysteries, the lustrations of the Romans, whose olive branch as the instrument of sprinkling, corresponded with the hyssop of the Hebrews? Vile pagan oracles, all of them! some one may exclaim. They are just as pagan as that awful voice heard at their sanguinary altars, which declares that the blood of the victim is a deprecation of the punishment of sin. In both instances, those oracles utter their response in harmony with holy Scripture.

But I need not pursue these remarks any further, for our Baptist friends, although they assert that baptism is the representation of a burial, also acknowledge that it is the emblem of purification—of the washing away of sin. We maintain, how-

ever, in the fifth place, that the two emblems are inconsistent, and cannot be associated without confusion—cannot be blended in one service without destroying each other, and that the former, therefore, must be abandoned. To attempt the symbolizing of both by the same act, is, on account of the contrariety between them, to symbolize neither. If at the baptizing I am told the water represents the grave of Christ, and also the purification of a christian, I am unable in one sign to realize both significations. If the shadow of the tomb of my Saviour, or that of the bath of my regeneration fall upon the water I can discern the outline; but if both fall upon it together, the lines are confused, and the image of neither can be distinctly traced. Or if we attempt to unite them, we have before us the ludicrous image of a man washing in a grave, or dying in a bath. I would not depreciate the powers of my Baptist friends, least of all at this moment would I ascribe to them any poverty of imagination; but I do not believe they so far transcend us in this particular as to be able to combine the two emblems without confusion, and to make the same service, with sobriety and edification, represent a cleansing and a burial. The laws of figurative language are the laws of emblematical representation. Because Christ is in Scripture represented as a vine, and a door, who would plead Scripture in justification of saying in one sentence, Christ is a grape-bearing door, or denounce the rhetorician as a profane scoffer, who should expose the absurdity of such a figure? Although such a denunciation, I think, has been uttered against those who venture to smile at the washing in a grave, yet with the utmost respect for the religious feelings of my brethren which ought to impose seriousness upon a spectator I must be permitted to plead my own religious feelings, which are assuredly shocked by such an incongruous and ludicrous analogy.

But, in the sixth place, (to adduce the objection to which I have already adverted,) the burial of a believer with Christ being only a figurative expression, cannot possibly be represented in baptism. The christian sacraments are signs of evangelical truth, and not of tropes and metaphors—shadows of realities, and not the shadows of a shade. There is, in reality, no more a burial with Christ, than there is a crucifixion

with Him. Had a believer been actually enclosed in the tomb of Christ, would it have been to him of the slightest advantage? If the body of Judas Iscariot had been interred in the garden of Joseph, instead of lying exposed in the field of blood, would he, like the man cast into the sepulchre of Elisha, have felt the vivifying influence of contact with the body of a prophet? If it be said, that not the burial of the believer, but the truth implied in the figure is represented, the inquiry properly arises, what resemblance does that implied truth bear to immersion? How is the simple truth itself, divested of the embroidery of figure, symbolized by the act of immersion? Be it that by the figure the expiation of sin is intended, or be it the sanctification of the sinner, or be it any other spiritual blessing, (for I concede any latitude here, provided we have a blessing and not a mere figure of speech,) and that spiritual blessing has no more resemblance to immersion than it has to sprinkling. On the analysis of the figure, the shadow of the tomb over the baptismery vanishes like the mirage on the water when the object itself comes into direct view. If the spiritual blessing intended bears no resemblance to immersion, the attempt to represent the figure which clothes it is to degrade the ordinance of baptism from its proper position in theology, to the subordinate office of being ancillary to the imaginative paintings of rhetoric. Baptism is, in our estimation, not a sacrament dedicated to the service of rhetoric, but a symbol of the Divine immortal truth which, in passing before our feeble sight, invests itself for the moment with the fading figures and fugitive colours of terrestrial imagery. On account of all these reasons I maintain that in baptism there is no representation of the burial of a believer with Christ.

To find a reality for the shadow, some Baptists declare that immersion is the sign of the death and burial of Christ Himself. I am unwilling to ascribe this representation to any who do not themselves assert their faith in it, as I believe some of our Baptist brethren would disavow this opinion, if it were ascribed to them, or if their attention were seriously directed to its implications. As, however, their influential writers do deliberately assert that they represent by immersion the burial and resurrection of Christ, they are, I suppose, prepared to



defend this assertion against all opponents. But to this we object, in the seventh place, if the immersion of a person in water represent the burial of Christ, the person so immersed is proposed as the representative or emblem of the blessed Redeemer. Unless the man or woman so immersed, so far as that service is concerned, represent Christ, there can be no emblematic representation of the burial of Christ. But is the baptized person to be considered as representing Christ to the spectators? or is he to consider himself in the service as an emblem of Christ? If he be, this controversy on immersion assumes an awful importance. A man of like passions with ourselves, being put into the water, is proposed as a representation of Christ being laid in His tomb! I will recognize no man in that character. I will not so profane the immaculate person of the Saviour! No christian, without doing violence to his best feelings, can look upon his fallen brother as performing a mystic representation of Christ dying for the sins of men. I do not stay to inquire how it can be said to a man, who in the service is an emblem of Christ, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" because, instead of reasoning upon this supposition, I will protest for the honour of Christ against any one who pretends to act the part of the blessed Redeemer in the most solemn engagement of His death, burial, and resurrection. Elevate a crucifix before the baptistery—carve the figure of the dead Redeemer in wood or stone, rather than propose to sinful man as the representation of the death and resurrection of Christ, because I cannot persuade myself that our Baptist friends universally hold this opinion. Happy shall I be if any of our brethren, still retaining their sentiments, would be induced to desist from this objectionable language; but let them speak as they will, we must maintain that baptism is nothing else than the use of water as the sign of the sanctification of the soul, because we believe that to represent it in any other view leads to lamentable perversion or gross caricature of evangelical truth.

In these passages, therefore, there is no warrant whatever for the opinion that baptism is intended to represent in its modes, the mode and form of Christ's burial; while it is as



evident that if this was its design that burial could never be represented by immersion.

Neither do these passages give any sanction to the opinion that only believers, and, therefore, only adult persons, can be baptized. For whatever these passages mean they can apply only to adults, of whom the apostle is speaking. "As many of you as have been baptized into Jesus Christ have put on Christ," that is, as many of you as by baptism have made a public profession of your heartfelt and genuine faith have put on Christ. The words, therefore, are either to be restricted to true believers and not to all that have been baptized, or otherwise the words must refer only to that external relation to Christ and His Church into which baptism brings all to whom it is applied, whether infants or adults. And as similar language is applied to circumcision (in the same epistle, Gal. 5:3), of which infants were undoubtedly partakers, it cannot in any proper or possible interpretation limit the application of this seal of the righteousness that is by faith to adults.

It remains, therefore, briefly to shew what is to be understood by these passages. They refer not to the burial, but to the death of Christ. The burial of Christ, in itself considered, establishes and secures no doctrine. It is only important as it affords a strong confirmatory proof of the death and resurrection of Christ and of the true Messiahship of Christ by the fulfillment it afforded of "the prophecies that went before concerning Him."

In these verses the apostle answers an objection "by showing that the sanctification of believers rests on the same foundation, and springs from the same source as their justification, namely, their union with Jesus Christ, and, therefore, so far from being contrary to each other they are not merely in perfect harmony, but absolutely irresponsible; and not only so, but that the one cannot exist without the other." Christians, therefore, as the apostle teaches, are dead to sin because they died with Christ. The rite of baptism exhibits christians not only as dying, but also as buried and as risen with Christ. "*Know ye not,*" He says, a thing so well and generally understood that "as many as are baptized are baptized into Jesus Christ." Believers by faith are made one with Christ and become mem-

bers of His body, and this oneness is represented emblematically by the "one baptism." "Know ye not that as many as are baptized into Christ are baptized into His death." The rite of baptism, as applied to believers, proceeds on the fact that they have died with Him who bore their sins. The satisfaction rendered to the justice of God by Christ is a satisfaction rendered to the justice of God by Him, for them, and is a satisfaction from them as they are constituent parts of His body. The believer is one with Christ as truly as he was one with Adam. He dies with Christ as truly as he died with Adam. And Christ's righteousness is his as truly as Adam's sin was his. In baptism, therefore, believers are represented as dying with Christ. And as "the death of Christ was the means by which sin was destroyed and His burial was the proof of the reality of Christ's death, christians are, therefore, represented as buried with Christ by baptism into His death, in token that they really died with Him. "Therefore, continues the apostle, we are buried with Christ by baptism into His death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." If, then, we are partakers of all the benefits of Christ's death we should also seek to participate in all the benefits of His resurrection. Our baptism, therefore, is first, the figure of our complete deliverance from the guilt of sin, signifying that God places to our account the death of Christ as our own death; and it is also a figure of that purification and resurrection to the service of God," to secure which Christ both died and rose and revived again that He might be the Lord not of the dead but of the living.

The very object and design of the gospel, therefore, was to deliver men from sin, and all who are baptized are baptized in order that they may be united to Christ, become the recipients of His doctrines, and expectants of the blessing He has to bestow. Of these all who truly believe are made actual participants, and of these all who are baptized, whether infants or adults, receive the offer, pledge and promise if they truly believe and embrace the gospel.

Such, brethren, is the unspeakable value and comfort of these passages which many would pervert to the purposes of

sectarian bigotry and exclusiveness, but in which all who truly receive Christ can rejoice believing that the promise is not only to them but also to their children. Let us, then, give all diligence that we and our children having such glorious promises left us, may not even seem to come short, and thus will God be glorified by our baptism and our faith and our own hearts sanctified and saved.

## ARTICLE X.

### THE ARGUMENTS FOR IMMERSION ANSWERED.

ROM. 14: 5.

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

This is a general rule laid down by the apostle for the universal guidance of men in reference to all possible questions of duty.

The precept therefore implies:

1. The right of private judgment.

Judgment is a characteristic of man's intellectual nature. It is that faculty by which man is enabled to compare ideas and ascertain the relations of terms and propositions so as to find their argument or disargument and thus attain to truth. It is given to supply the place of *certain* knowledge and to enable us to ascertain and discover it. The judgment is a power or faculty, but no more. It is therefore naturally ignorant and uninformed and must—so long and so far as it remains in this condition—as certainly lead a man to erroneous conclusions as the eye would lead him astray when enveloped in darkness or in mist. Judgment also may be prejudiced as well as blind, when its decisions are biased by partial considerations. Judgment therefore is the capacity for determining what is truth—but it is not the informing faculty nor the standard of truth and duty.

This faculty of judgment being given to every man, it becomes the duty of every man to use it for the purpose of ascertaining in every case in which it is necessary for him to act, or judge, what is truth. Thus to employ his judgment is the right of every man because it is what God has made it the privilege and the duty of every man to do by implanting this faculty within him. No other man therefore can ascertain for his neighbour what is his duty or determine what it is right for him to believe.

Inasmuch, therefore, as the judgment is naturally ignorant, it is our duty to weigh and compare all the facts connected with the subject matter of our opinions. And as the judgment is liable to persuasion, prejudice and error, we must

endeavour to exercise all patience, candour and impartiality in such investigations.

An opinion framed without such examination is not a *judgment*, but a *delusion*, and can never lead to a full and thorough conviction of truth and duty.

But if, my hearers, this is the case in regard to all matters of opinion and practice, how much more is it the case as it regards the "all things whatsoever Christ has commanded" to be believed and performed.

Now among these things which are positively enjoined by Christ one is that we should become open disciples of His by baptism into His name. The reception of this ordinance of baptism is made necessary to an introduction to Christ's Church and an open profession of Christ's cause.

Such, however, is the natural ignorance of our judgment and its liability through partiality, prejudice, inattention, or some other cause, to come to *different* conclusions about the *same* subjects—that between those who are honest, conscientious and solicitous to know and discharge what is duty—there are very different, and indeed opposite, conclusions in reference to baptism.

This difference respects, in the first place, the subjects of baptism—one party affirming that only adults ought to receive baptism, and the other that infants as well as adults are proper subjects of the ordinance.

On this point I have on several occasions presented grounds on which the latter opinion is maintained and acted upon by ninety-nine one-hundredth of the nominally christian world.

But this difference affects also, in the second place, the *mode* of baptism—one party affirming that it ought to be, and can only *rightly* be, performed by immersion; and the other—including nearly the same majority of the christian world in all ages—affirming that a proper mode, if not *the* only proper mode of baptism, is by affusion, sprinkling or pouring.

On this point I have never formally addressed you. But as it is my duty to present evidence before you on all the things Christ has positively and plainly commanded, so that in the exercise of your own judgment you may be "fully persuaded in your own mind," I will avail myself of this occasion to offer



some observations on this point, especially as none are more diligent in diffusing their peculiar means, or more frequent in preaching upon them, than those who adopt the mode of immersion in baptism.

I will therefore, at this time, consider the weight of the arguments employed in defense of this opinion.

And as a fair beginning, I would state that if one clear case of immersion can be produced from the records of Scripture, I am prepared to admit that immersion is at least one proper mode of administering the ordinance; and if such a case of undoubted immersion can be sustained by one clear and unequivocal precept enjoining that form, I will admit that immersion is *the only* proper mode of baptism. No such fact, however, is adduced and no such precept found. That certain facts and declarations are, however, to be so interpreted, we are urged by our Baptist brethren to admit by eight arguments under one or other of which all that is pleaded on the part of our Baptist brethren may, I think, be placed.\*

I. And first it is alleged that this question can be decided by the English version of the Bible, and by those who only understand the English language, and that from this alone it is manifest that immersion is the true and only proper mode of baptism. To make this appear a reference is made to such phrases as going *down into the water*—coming up *out of the water*, baptizing *in the river*, and being buried with Christ in baptism, all which it is said clearly sustain the above position.

But to this we reply: 1. That as the terms which describe this ordinance of baptism are not translated in the English version, but are retained in their Greek form, as are the words baptize, baptism, and it is evident that no one can have a correct understanding of them except by inquiring what these words really imply. 2. But, secondly, it is also true that in many cases the *apparent* sense of the words used in the English version is not the true one (e. g., this is my body). 3. But, thirdly, we remark this rule, were it a proper one, would from other passages of the English Bible lead ordinary readers to conclude that immersion could not have been the

\*I adopt in this argument the arguments of Mr. Thorn, and use also his order and words when necessary.

original mode of baptism. Thus we read of baptizing *with* water—of multitudes being baptized in the place *where John abode*—or in a *city*, crowded with persecutors—of baptizing a family in a *prison*, at midnight—and other individuals in *private dwelling houses*—of *divers* baptisms—of the Hebrews being baptized on the *dry bed* of the Red Sea—and of the baptism of the *Holy Ghost*. 4. But, fourthly, we reply to this argument that if it is a sacred one, it proves that immersion cannot be the proper mode of baptism because, as has been seen, almost all those in every age of the church who are best able to judge on this matter from the perusal of their vernacular versions, many of them speaking and writing in Greek, have decided against immersion and in favor of sprinkling, and their practice and belief can be pronounced ignorant, prejudiced, or hypocritical, on no grounds which will not apply as truly to the conduct and opinion of those who adopt the plan of immersion.

II. A second argument on which the practice of immersion is confidently based is the alleged admissions of pædobaptist writers in favour of that mode of performing the ordinance.

Now, I admit that it is true that some men of great learning and authority, who were members of pædobaptist churches, have given it as their opinion that the mode of immersion is favoured by the meaning of the original word *baptizo* and by the practice of the ancient church. Is then the judgment of such men authoritative as to such matters? If it is, then it is also true that these divines, almost to a man, as confidently believed that infants were baptized by the apostles and by the primitive christians as that the original mode, or one of the original modes, was probably dipping. And if, therefore, the opinion of these writers are authoritative, it substantiates the apostolic origin of infant baptism, their capacity for judging in the one case being as great as in the other.

But further, in reply to this argument, we remark that too much is attributed to those authors. To be of any value to the cause of immersion it must be shown that these writers were forced to the conclusion that the *only* proper meaning of the term baptize is to immerse, and that the *only* mode of baptism practiced by the apostles was that of immersion. But

this was not the opinion of the writers alluded to. Mr. Barth himself candidly admits that they held "that *baptizo* means to pour or sprinkle as well as to dip;—that the apostles baptized by sprinkling as well as by immersion;—and that even if dipping had been *the exclusive mode originally practiced* the design of the institution of baptism is *as effectually*, and *more satisfactorily*, accomplished by aspersion," or sprinkling.

And still further, let it be borne in mind that this argument from the admissions of writers is a two-edged sword that will cut both ways, since similar admissions can be shown on the part of Baptist writers. Thus, for instance, the late and justly celebrated John Foster, though he lived and died a Baptist minister, "never administered nor even witnessed, in mature life, the ordinance of baptism, and was known to entertain doubts respecting its perpetuity;"\* while the invincible champion of free and open communion with all evangelical christians, in opposition to the principle of making immersion a term of communion was the still more celebrated Baptist writer, the Rev. Robert Hall.

III. The third argument for immersion is the alleged authority in its favor of the history of the church.

But there is no proof, I would reply, of dipping, in a single instance, for a great number of years after the death of the latest apostle, nor until this institution had confessedly been corrupted by superstitious attributes, modifications, and appendages, nearly as much so as at present in the Romish Hierarchy. Neither does it appear that dipping was deemed essential to christian baptism, by any person during the first four centuries, or, indeed, at any subsequent period, by the general body of christians. A citation or two will prove this. About the year 130 *Justin Martyr* distinctly compares the *sprinkling* of the Gentiles with christian baptism—making not the slightest allusion to dipping as a part of the ordinance. In 265, CYPRIAN says that "*sprinkling* is sufficient instead of immersion." About 300, LACTANTIUS writes, "that he might save the Gentiles by baptism, that is, by "the *perfusion* of purifying water." And about 380, AUGUSTINE says, "the person to be baptized is either *sprinkled* with water or dipped

\*Life and Correspondence, Vol. I, p. 61.

in it." Therefore, as far as church history is concerned, the earliest evidence is in favour of sprinkling only; while our opponents have no more authority for dipping, from this source, than Romanists and Episcopalians have for employing sponsors, making the sign of the cross, using spittle, oil, exorcism, and inculcating baptismal regeneration—for all these are coeval with the first notice of baptismal immersion.

Dipping, I admit, was introduced early; but then it should seem as only a *part* of this rite—to indicate more distinctly, in the judgment of half-evangelized professors, the putting off, or washing away, the filth of the flesh, and was, in the case of adults, *generally, if not invariably*, done by themselves alone; while pouring or sprinkling was always added by another, to represent putting on the new man or the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. The usual mode, from the second century downwards, as evinced by ancient carved and painted representations—the best possible evidence in such a case—was this: The candidate stood in the water up to his ankles, knees, or middle, and the minister, from his hand or a vessel, poured the element on his head. So that, upon the whole, history is far more against the mode of our opponents than for it. Even the Greek and other eastern churches (on the traditionary knowledge and practice of which the Baptists talk so eloquently) never administer this ceremony without pouring or sprinkling, as the last or most important part of it, and, in the case of adults, as the whole of the rite. In some oriental communions it is still customary to take their children to a river and to pour or sprinkle the running water upon them—as the entire act of baptizing.

The history of the church, however, is far more explicit and decided in favour of the early and uninterrupted baptism of infants than it is of a *partial* immersion—in fact on this point there can hardly be a second opinion. So that from this argument we conclude the certainty of infant baptism and the equal certainty that while dipping was early introduced as a *part* of the ceremony of baptism, sprinkling or pouring was its most essential part.

IV. In the fourth place the advocates for immersion assure us that the Greek verb, *baptize*, means always and only to *dip*.

proving, beyond all doubt, that the apostles really *dipped* their converts under water in baptism.

1. This assumption is deemed the stronghold of our Baptist brethren, who consequently labour to defend it with their utmost skill and perseverance. But that it is utterly untenable will be rendered apparent by the subsequent remarks, which I give you in the words of Mr. Thorn. I shall give you, in the first place, an alphabetical list of the translations or adopted renderings of this word *baptizo*, by four or five of their own leading writers; who, you may naturally suppose, have not selected passages nor given versions more to the damage of their cause, than they were absolutely compelled by controversial necessity:—

Bathe	Dyed	Overwhelmed	Sprinkled
Besmeared	Fill	Plunged	Stained
Caused	Given up to	Pour	Sink
Coloured	Imbue	Purify	Steep
Covered	Immersed	Put	Swallowed up
Crushed	Infected	Put into	Thrust
Daubed	Involved	Quenched	Tinged
Dip	Laid under	Redden	Washed
Drawing water	Let down	Run through	Wetted:
Drank much	Oppressed	Smeared	
Drowned	Overhead & ears	Soaked	(in all 42.)

2. Observe, secondly, that in seven Greek lexicons and Montanus' version of the scriptures, no less than twenty-three Latin words are employed to express the import of the term baptize in its various connexions.

AELUO, wash away	HAURIO, draw up	MADEFACIO, wet	PURGO, purge
COLO, colour	IMBUO, imbue	MACULO, pollute	RUBESCO, redden
DEMERGO, dive	IMMERGO, plunge	MERGO, dip	SUBMERGO, put under
DUCO, lead	IMPLEO, fill	MUNDO, cleanse	TERREO, affright
FICO, pierce	INTINGO, dye	OVERUO, overwhelm	TINGO, stain
FUCO, paint	LAVO, wash	PEREO, perish	

3. Again, in the third place, the Baptists say, "that *Tingo* and *Baptizo* signify the same thing"—and say, in four Latin Dictionaries, *Tingo* is explained by no less than fourteen different English verbs:—

Bathe	Imbue	Sprinkle	Tinge
Colour	Immerse	Stain	Wash
Dip	Moisten	Tincture	Wet
Dye	Paint		

4. And Baptist friends also tell us, that "The Hebrew *Tabal* is of the same signification as *baptizo*"—and in five Hebrew lexicons this word is defined by no less than ten distinct terms:—



Baptize  
DipDive  
DyeImmerse  
InfectMerge  
IntingePlunge  
Tinge

And these definitions of the Greek, Latin and Hebrew verbs, are, you perceive, not only various, but the majority of them is greatly in favour of applying the element to the object. Now, it is clear that if the word baptizo have so many applications, and represent actions so opposite to that of putting a person under water, and instantly raising him out of it, or if it be synonymous with *Tabal* and *Tingo*; with what propriety can our opponents assert that it means always and *only* to dip or immerse? As to its literal and primary import, I have no hesitation in asserting, that it is not to dip. It will be found that the most *ancient* Greek writers never employ it for the act of immersion, or, at least, for one man dipping another. The sense they attach to it is that of staining, colouring, dyeing with different colours, painting, anointing, and the like; clearly excluding the idea of dipping, which is evidently a later and secondary application.

V. The fifth argument in favor of immersion is an appeal to the meaning of the prepositions—IN, INTO, and OUT OF, the water—in proof of apostolical *dipping*; asserting that if the baptized went INTO the water—were IN the water—and came up OUT OF the water—they must have been *dipped* UNDER water.

This argument, says Mr. Thorn, founded on the supposed sense of these words, is equally fallacious with the preceding; and though constantly preached up, is candidly abandoned by our ablest opponents (at least, in books and debates with intelligent pædobaptists,) as not of the slightest authority in this question. And with good reason. For take the words as they stand in our English version of the New Testament, and they afford no plausible evidence that the baptized were put under water, or that they were more than six inches deep in it. A horse goes down into the river to drink, stands in the water while performing his potations, and then ascends up out of the water—and all without a total dipping! Being IN the water, and UNDER IT, are very different positions!

The prepositions in question are translations of four Greek words:—APO, rendered *out of*, in Matt. iii. 16; EN, rendered

*in*, Matt. iii. 6; Εἰς and Εκ, rendered *into* and *out of*, Acts viii. 38, 39. Perhaps you will be surprised to learn that in *Schleusner's* celebrated Lexicon of the Greek Testament, the first is said to have 20 different senses; the second 36; the third 26; and the last 24. Again, the translators of the English Testament have rendered the first by 24 different words; the second by 32; the third by 36; and the last by 32. Finally, the word Απο is translated by *from* 374 times; Εν, by *at*, *on*, or *with*, 313 times; Εἰς, by *to* or *unto*, 538 times; and Εκ, by *from*, 186 times. And it may be added that learned men deem such to be the current senses of these respective prepositions, especially of the first three of them.

With such incontrovertible facts before him, what person of common sense and candour will contend that these words prove the baptized to have been in the water at all? The sum of the inspired language is, that they went *to* the water, were baptized *with* the water, and then returned *from* the water. It is true, descending to the water, and ascending from it, were requisite when persons were baptized out of doors with running water, which is always found in channels lower than the adjoining land—and this is all the language before us expresses. That these terms are occasionally (though not generally) used in other senses, is evident from other inspired passages. But unless our opponents could prove that they have only *one* meaning each, and that the same as conveyed in our English version, in conjunction with this ceremony, they can establish nothing, even apparently, in their favour, from the employment of them. It may be added, as a significant circumstance, that people baptized in cities, houses, and villages, where running streams are not found, are never said to go down even to the water, or to come up from it; which would have been the case had they really been dipped but ankle deep.

VI. The sixth argument, founded on the places selected by John for baptizing, and which it is thought prove that his mode must have been *dipping*; since, had pouring or sprinkling been his method, water sufficient for such a purpose might have been obtained any where.

It may be stated, in reply, that water about three feet deep, pure and quiet, is best adapted for immersing grown-up people—and that were it much deeper or shallower, or foul, or much agitated, it would be unfit for such a purpose—rendering immersion exceedingly troublesome, if not impossible. This specification we gather from the writings and practice of our opponents; and by keeping it fully in view, we shall at once perceive how unsuited the river Jordan must have been for dipping the multitude by John the Baptist.

The baptizing spot has been visited and minutely examined by many intelligent and credible travellers, who tell us that here “the river Jordan is of considerable width—the water turbulent—the bottom rocky—the edges of the bank abrupt—and the depth about six or seven feet close to the shore.” *Volney* says, “Its breadth between the two principal lakes, in few places, exceeds sixty or eighty feet, but its *depth is about ten or twelve.*” *Monro* says, “The river here, at the baptizing spot, forms an angle, etc.; the width of it might be thirty-five yards, and the stream was running with the precipitous fury of a rapid; the bank was steep, shelving off abruptly into deep water.” *Thompson* says, “It is exceeding deep, even at the edge of the inner bank.” *Dr. Shaw* computes it, “About thirty yards broad, and three yards in depth.” *Chateaubriand* found the Jordan to be “six or seven feet deep close to the shore.”

Judging, then, from the places chosen, and the fonts constructed for immersion, by our opponents, and, indeed, from the nature of the case—unless men and women in John’s time were twice as tall as at the present day!—I contend that dipping persons in the Jordan was altogether impracticable; and unhesitatingly conclude that they were only affused or sprinkled with the water of it.

But if the waters of the Jordan were too great for immersion, those of Enon were equally unsuitable in other respects. Enon, as the word imports, was nothing more than a *well*, or, as described by a Baptist writer, “a cavernous spring, called the Dove’s Eye; and such were of great account in Judea, especially in some seasons.” *Robinson*.—“It is remarkable that no such place, distinguished by an abundance of water, can be discovered at this day.” *Calmet*.—“It is most likely that

Enon was to Salim what Jacob's well was to the inhabitants of Samaria—a place of drawing water. At all events, it is clear that John could not have quitted the Jordan for Enon on account of the *quantity* of water it contained; for surely he had enough in the river, and more than in this insignificant well—which, at best, must have been a most inconvenient place for immersing many people.”

The original terms, rendered much water, are literally “many waters.” They do not designate merely *quantity* of water, simply considered as *deep* and *abounding*, but numerous waves, fountains, or streams, however small the amount of water in each. Had a large body of water been meant, other terms would have been employed to express it. Those used, no more indicate that the water was adapted for dipping than for sprinkling.

VII. The seventh argument for immersion is founded upon the allusions made to baptism, especially those in which it is compared to a burial.

To this argument, however, I have replied in a special discourse, in which I have endeavoured to show that these passages, instead of *favouring*, are most decidedly *opposed* to the mode of immersion, since if there is in them any reference to the *mode* of baptism at all the original idea of burying is not the lowering of the corpse into the grave, but casting earth upon it and thereby raising a heap over it, while the persons to whom the apostles wrote were accustomed to burn and not to bury their dead, and Christ our Saviour was deposited in a room hewn out of the rock and laid upon a side-bench, a stone being rolled not *upon*, but *against* the door which was low and small.

VIII. The last argument for immersion, and on which great stress is laid, is that as baptism is confessedly a positive institution, we can on no account depart from the practice and precept of the apostles.

But, in the first place, is it clearly shewn that the practice and precept of the apostles is in favour of immersion? Most assuredly not. How, then, are we to follow that which has not been set before us or commanded? And can it be imagined that the apostles would have left that which was *essential*

to the very administration of baptism so obscure that even those who can agree about every other doctrine and ordinance of the gospel cannot come to the same conclusion on this point? May the apostles not then have left the mode of baptism uncertain and indefinite that it might be adapted to circumstances? Certain it is that the argument is not universally true that what the apostles did and approved we must, and may not therefore be true in this case, or else the advocates of immersion are themselves involved in common condemnation. For do they, I ask, manifest a rigid consistency themselves, and devoutly observe all the positive institutions and clear examples of the New Testament: "Giving each other the kiss of charity—holding feasts of love—washing one another's feet—and anointing the sick with oil?" No, alas! these are all omitted. Can they tell us exactly how dipping was done in the primitive churches—whether it was entire or partial—triune or single—backward or forward—in the name of the Trinity or of Jesus only? Whether the candidates were clothed or naked, in their ordinary apparel, or in dresses, long, loose, and with leads at the bottom, made for the occasion? Whether there were double vestries, furnished with fires, tubs, attendants, and wine to accommodate and revive the men and women on coming up out of the water? Not they, any more than an infant eight days old! With what propriety then can they lecture us on the assumed offence of departing from apostolical practice, when they themselves are confessedly at sea respecting it? But enough on a point which is of no material importance in this discussion—and of no value to our opponents.

Such then are the arguments in favour of immersion as the mode of christian baptism, and such, as we must think, is their manifest insufficiency and inconclusiveness.

From the discussion we may learn:

1. The weakness and imperfection of man's reason.
2. The necessity and duty of christian charity, forbearance and candour.
3. The injury done to christian union and love and to christian influence by making anything essential as a term of



christian communion besides the great fundamental truths which lie at the basis of a sinner's hopes.

4. As our practice and belief are unshaken by the very strongest arguments by which they are assailed, we may remain thoroughly persuaded in our own minds.

5. Let us finally, therefore, look to baptism not in its letter, but in its spirit and endeavour to improve it for ourselves and our children to the production of all its designed advantages.



The  
Commercial Benefit of Christianity

IN PRODUCING

Integrity, Diligence and  
Moderation

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.

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*August, 1847.*



## THE COMMERCIAL BENEFIT OF CHRISTIANITY.

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ROM. 12: 11.

Not slothful in business, fervent in spirit—serving the Lord.

The advantages of commerce are manifold and obvious. It promotes the intercourse of nations. It enlarges the boundaries of knowledge. It contributes to the welfare of mankind by the interchange of commodities, supplying the wants of one country by the excess of another. It calls into action the energies of the bold, the skilful, and the enterprising. And what, in the estimate of the christian philanthropist, constitutes its highest excellence, it opens facilities for the introduction of the gospel and the extension of its blessings from civil and religious freedom into all lands and nations.

And yet, while this is true, is it not a remarkable proof of the heavenly character of the gospel that while at the period of its introduction commerce was almost unknown and purposely avoided by those to whom it was primarily addressed, it has nevertheless pushed on the present commercial era of the world and laid the foundations for that character by which commerce is at once originated and sustained. To the success of men in the pursuits of commerce, integrity, diligence and moderation are indispensably requisite, and whatsoever other qualities as adjuncts or modifications of these may be included in our principles of action. Now these virtues are all inculcated in the Sacred Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments as essential to moral excellence and to success in life, while in other passages the cultivation of these qualities is shewn to be essential as an evidence and fruit of genuine piety.

Let us dwell briefly on these principles of conduct.

And first *integrity*. This fundamental principle—comprehending in its wide extent fidelity to engagements, punctuality in the discharge of obligations, fairness in dealing—"a just weight and full measure"—accuracy in report, and universal equity in all its modes and ramifications—this principle, I say, is enjoined in the word of God in a great variety of forms both prescriptive and exemplary. The *essence* of them all is found



in the divine aphorism of our "Great Teacher," "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them for this is the law." Were this most admirable rule universally acted on, it would banish for ever that crooked policy which vitiates the purity of commercial intercourse and introduces interminable jealousies, suspicions and discord among men, even in the ordinary transactions of life. Of the man who acts by this rule it may be said with the utmost truth and emphasis that his word is his bond. How different from him whose word can never be relied on, whose representations are received with distrust, whose promises are never confided in, and who, by a series of petty shifts and evasions or of fraudulent transactions on a more extended scale acquires for himself the disgraceful notoriety of an unfair trader and a dishonest man. The one is a blessing to society, the other a curse;—the one inspires confidence, the other destroys it; the one diffuses a beneficial, the other a baneful influence all around him; the one is honest and open as the day, the other dark and suspicious as the night; by the one the true honor and dignity of the mercantile character is sustained while by the other it is brought into discredit and contempt.

Upon you, my younger hearers, especially, I want to urge with all the earnestness, of which I am capable, an immediate attention to the importance of unbending integrity as an essential ingredient in the formation of your characters. Adopt it at once and for ever, as the foundation principle of all your doings. Cherish it as a precious germ which shall evolve and expand itself in virtuous action. Let it become an element in all your thoughts and feelings until you acquire such a *habit* of doing justly that it shall be painful and unnatural for you to act in a contrary manner. Thus shall you lay a secure basis for that measure of prosperity which, with a due regard to your own best interests, authorizes you to expect and strive for; and what you thus acquire you will enjoy without the stings of an upbraiding conscience.

Diligence—is the second quality which is essential to the commercial character. This is also emphatically recommended in the Sacred Dictionary both by precept and example. "The desire of the slothful killeth him. The hand of the diligent

maketh rich. Be diligent in business"—such are some of its many declarations and by which it teaches that according to the established laws, of social life, industry in our proper calling is the most effectual way of attaining to success and respectability in our secular pursuits. We are thus enjoined to secure perseverance as well as activity—the HABIT of attention and labour. No extensive purpose can be accomplished, and no great object can be attained by fitful and transient efforts however intense; but only by continued and patient application. And because this is so rare success is also rare. In proportion as men are ardent and energetic they are exposed to failure in this point. They seize upon an object with avidity, amuse or interest themselves with it for a while, and then are urged by desire of change or love of novelty to relinquish it in favor of some new pursuit. They enter upon an employment which strikes their fancy with delight and fills their hearts with promise; but it soon becomes irksome to them by its sameness; or they are discouraged by little difficulties in the way—real or imaginary,—and then retire from it in despair. Having heard the history of one and another who have risen to opulence by successful engagements in trade they are naturally desirous of proceeding in the same course, or at least of reaping the same reward. But here they deceive themselves. They are dazzled and attracted by the *result*, but overlook the *means* which lead to it;—or after a brief trial take umbrage at the pains and labours which are the indispensable conditions of success.

Now, this state of mind *must* be overcome, or all expectations of success from the pursuits of business will end in disappointment. Close and unremitted attention must be given during all the time, which in consistency with higher duties is properly allotted to business, and to the energy which excites to action there must be added the diligence necessary to render it effective and the unconquerable perseverance which shall carry it onward to its desired consummation.

The third qualification essential to the commercial character is what Scripture denominates moderation. This quality is urged in numerous passages of Scripture, not only by the authority of the universal Sovereign, but by assigning reasons for the injunction; and reasons, too, so clear and powerful that

those who refuse obedience are chargeable with not only opposing *prerogative*, but calling in question the *wisdom*, of the Most High. "Let your moderation," says this inspired guide, "be known unto all men," for "he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent, but will fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction, and pierce them through with many sorrows." These declarations are not in unison with the too prevalent spirit of the present age. Like some of the instructions of our Lord they will be deemed hard sayings, but they are nevertheless founded on the nature of things and enforced by the authority of divine inspiration. A too eager desire of acquisition blinds the understanding to the distinction between right and wrong, and betrays the heart into an indifference as to the measures to be pursued or into an adoption, without scruple, of such as are evil, and thus leads to an utter disregard of the precepts of morality, the claims of benevolence, and the fear of God. A selfish concern for his own personal safety may have led the unhappy subject of this passion to be cautious not to offend against the letter of *human* laws; but no other semblance of regard to honor or to virtue can be expected from him, or is to be discovered in his practice.

The rapacious spirit of modern commerce, having thrown off all moral restraint, is prepared for every species of dishonorable artifice and therefore adopts without reluctance or hesitation, measures of the most unjustifiable character, regardless alike of the lives or the property of others. It is as cruel as it is indiscriminating. The only question is whether the gain which is sought, be it just or unjust, is likely to be obtained. All other considerations are thrown to the winds. Shame is absent and conscience is asleep. We need not travel far for examples of this unprincipled rapacity. They are found wherever there is ignorance to betray, credulity to deceive, vanity to cajole and flatter, appetite and passion to be pandered to, necessity to be coerced to over work and Sabbath desecration,—in short, wherever there is money to be extracted, allured and seized.

The eager desire to amass wealth and the determination to do so without regard to means has been productive of another evil

which requires to be mentioned—the careless exposure of borrowed capital. When a zealous notary of Mammon after exhausting his own resources, is either compelled by difficulty or tempted by hope to avail himself of the aid of borrowed money it not unfrequently happens that he engages in more hazardous speculations, and with greater temerity, than before. Instead of being more cautious he is less so because he has greater means at his command; and being eager to redeem himself or rapidly to acquire a fortune he fails perhaps in both objects and loses all. This is “a sore evil” and a most guilty and censurable practice. Whatever right a man may claim to have to do what he will with his own, he has none to involve another in his ruin or to risk the property he obtained on loan except upon the most clear and rational prospect of success. But this recklessness of consequences, this dereliction of prudence and honor, though in these days too common to excite wonder, will admit of no justification in the court of conscience. “He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.”

But this is not all. When the object is more cautiously and steadily pursued it is often permitted so completely to absorb the whole soul, and keep the faculties upon the stretch, that there is neither time, nor desire, nor energy left from mental improvement or attention to the claims of religion and the soul. If the plain and humble christian who has no time to read any thing but his Bible may be denominated in a good sense of the words *a man of one book*, he who is thus confined to earthly pursuits may as justly be termed in a bad sense, *a man of one idea*. He thinks of nothing but accumulation; and however magnificent the idea may be in his own conception, he cannot, by all his efforts, expand it beyond the magnitude of a bubble which rolls upon the earth and bursts at his feet, or floats on the lower stratum of the atmosphere till it is lost in air. Engaged in one unceasing round of worldly occupation, the wretched slave of avarice has but little reason to congratulate himself on any superiority to those who labour at the oar or in the mine in the misery of constrained servitude and in the degradation of mental darkness. Constantly panting after gain and exclaiming—“give! give!”—he never says, “*it is enough*,” and never enjoys what he thus laboriously acquires.



What greater calamity can befall a rational being than to be fast bound on the chain of a never-satisfied cupidity!

It is to a violation of this rule of moderately pursuing our secular concerns that we are to ascribe these disasters which so frequently convulse the commercial world from its centre to its extremities involving thousands in ruin and shaking the confidence of nations. To this we may ascribe the passion for over-trading, and adventurous speculation beyond the bounds of prudence and probability; the production of factitious capital which resting on spurious credit is liable to be dissipated with that which supports it; the disregard of all the rules and calculations of better times; the scornful rejection of those slower but more certain methods which made our forefathers respectable and happy; and the consequent adoption of wild, chimerical, and unlawful measures equally at variance with discretion and morality.

Never will nations, communities and individuals be secure from the danger of such disasters until the principles of those moral laws which *should* regulate their operations are generally adopted. So long as such plain and settled laws of action are set at naught all hope of success will be endangered and the design frustrated by the very effort to secure it.

"In opposition," says Dr. Chalmers, "to the maxim, that the spirit of enterprise is the soul of commercial prosperity, do we hold that it is the excess of this spirit beyond the moderation of the New Testament, which, pressing on the natural boundaries of trade, is sure at length to visit every country, where it operates, with the recoil of all those calamities, which in the shape of beggared capitalists, and unemployed operatives, and dreary intervals of bankruptcy and alarm, are observed to follow a season of overdone speculation."

What, then, would be the conduct which a character formed on the principles and according to the model distinctly laid down by divine authority, may be expected to exhibit. The person possessing it would maintain a strict integrity in all his concerns, making his engagements with caution and fulfilling them with scrupulous fidelity. He would take no mean advantage of any favourable circumstances in which he might be placed; but while he would call his skill into exercise



to take every *honest* advantage of their occurrence, he would remember the claims of *equity* and *honour*. His wishes for himself would regulate his treatment of others. The duties of his vocation he would discharge with unremitting assiduity, and its objects he would pursue with diligent activity, and yet with calm perseverance,—so moderating his attention to them as to *possess his soul in patience*. He would be careful not so to entangle himself with a multiplicity and diversity of concerns as to perplex and fetter his mind; but reserve himself for such other occupations as duty or inclination call for. Against that feverish anxiety which results from rash and hazardous speculations he would be especially on his guard. Remembering that a man's life and happiness consist not in the abundance of the things he possesses, he would seek to *use* as well as to appropriate, to *enjoy* as well as to obtain. The cultivation of the noble faculties of his nature, the improvement of his mind, the enlargement of his knowledge, the pleasure of social intercourse and benevolent exertion, and the duties of religion would receive a competent portion of his regard; and jealously would he resist any abridgment of the hours devoted to these engagements. Holding thus the balance even,—wisely dividing his attention, repelling extravagant desires,—seeking only the practicable and the safe,—studying whatsoever things are honest, true and good report—he would most effectually secure his own interest and peace of mind, while he exhibits an example which, if generally imitated, would equally advance the general good, and for ever repress wild speculation, reckless adventure, and unprincipled rapacity.

Would you, then, cherish and secure these solid virtues and this invaluable character, and success and reputation in life?—then adhere to the maxims of Holy Scripture and you will find in your own experience and prove to the good of others that godliness,—by the principles it inculcates and the practice it enjoins,—is eminently favourable to the temporal interests of mankind at large.

Let me, however, admonish you that while an adoption of the *moral* code of the Bible *merely*, may secure present and temporal advantages, that unless you believe and obey from the

heart the plan of righteousness revealed in the gospel for the salvation of sinners, it will avail you nothing towards eternal life.

“You may have gathered around you,” to use the language of another, “many comforts, but none that will comfort your spirit when it is departing into eternity. You may have acquired a respectable standing in society, but how do you stand in the sight of God? Slander may not have breathed upon your reputation, nor suspicion even cast a glance upon your honour; but you have loved the world, and sought not the honour that cometh from above. You may have been faithful in your engagements, you may have exercised the courtesies of life, you may have not betrayed your friend, you may not have oppressed the poor—but you have loved the world. The miserable you may have often pitied and relieved, from the promptings of natural sympathy; the welfare of your country you may have advanced, on the dictates of enlightened patriotism; but you have loved the world; and love it still; it is your chosen portion, and you desire no better. Now *if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*. You have failed, then, in the very first principle of duty towards your Maker and Judge. *The first and great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength*. This commandment you have broken. To you may be addressed the awful words of our Lord to the unbelieving Jews, *I know you, that you have not the love of God in you*. And He knows you, too, as thoroughly and as intimately as He knew them; and He knows that the solemn charge is as applicable to you as it was to them. The love of the world has so completely filled your heart, that there is no room in it for *the habitation of God through the spirit*. Nor do you desire that He should dwell there. The Law of God is unchangeable, and cannot be revoked. It will not admit of the least deviation from its requirements, because it is *perfect*, like its Divine Author. But this law you have broken; and you have no means, in yourself, of repairing it, or of satisfying its demands. The sentence of condemnation is gone forth against you; and the sword of eternal justice is drawn to execute it upon you. If you die in this state, you

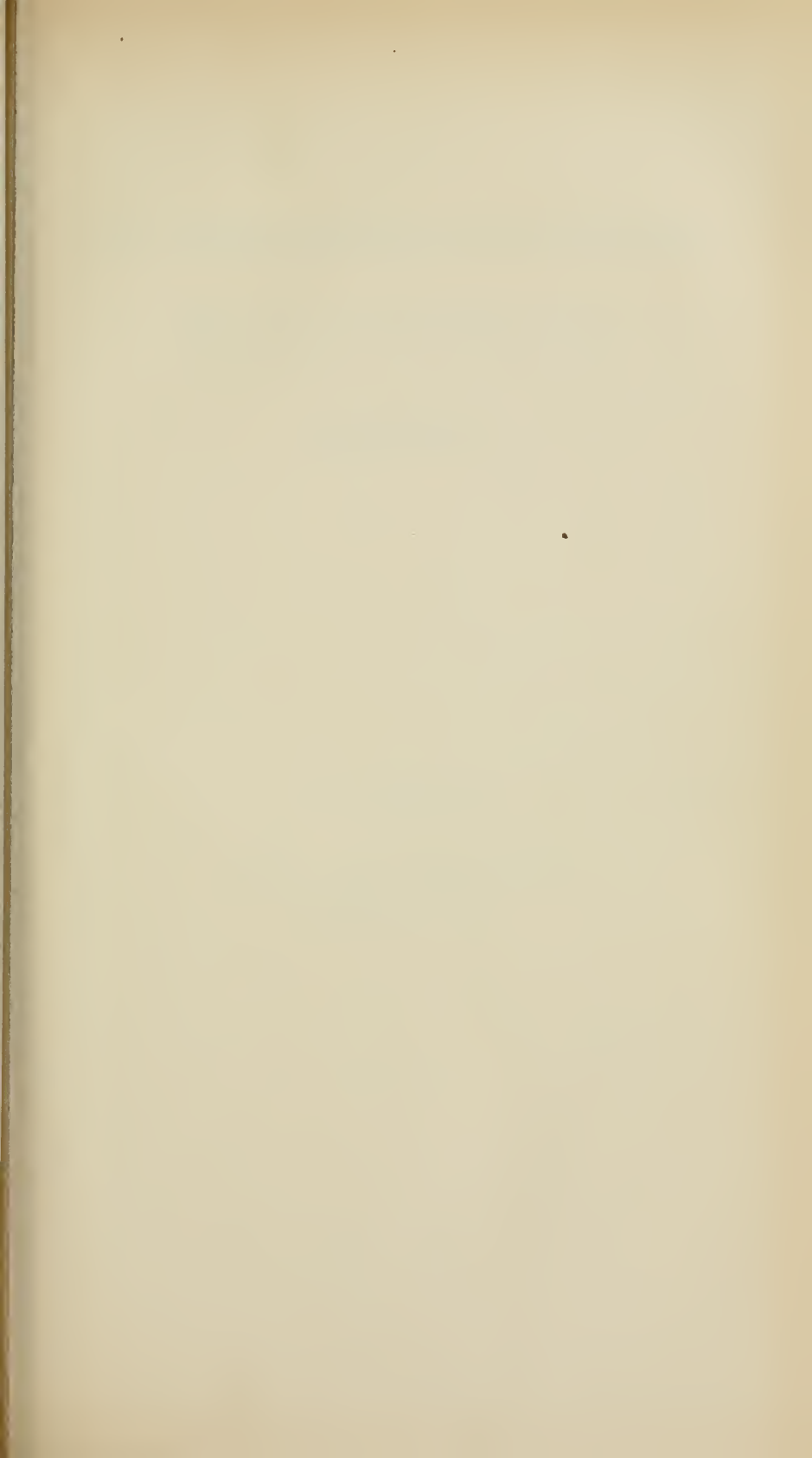
will *lie down in darkness*, and perish under the frown of the Almighty."

Beware, then, my hearers, of the seducing influence of the love of this present evil world. In its present and most necessary engagements it is deceitful and dangerous.

And, finally, mistake not the way of worldly honor, reputation and comfort for the way of salvation.

"Some of you may have been more correct and moral in your deportment than others, and on that account may deem yourselves in a fair way for heaven. But trust not to your own virtues, which are very imperfect at the best, and very deficient at the utmost. If they spring from any other motive than the love of God, they are not virtues in His sight, whatever they may appear in yours. If *weighed in the balance*, they will all *be found wanting*. The very best of them will *not stand in the judgment*, much less atone for the sins you have committed. Your own hearts will condemn you. *By the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified*; and if not justified before God, you cannot be saved. The blood of Christ alone will avail you here. It was shed for the guilty, and every one that believeth in Him shall receive the benefit of His death, the pardon of sin, and everlasting life. Those who do not receive Christ by faith—a faith which works by love, and shews its reality by the fruits of holiness which it bears—remain under the law, exposed to its penalties, and awaiting its curse. *There is no other name given under heaven by which we can be saved*; but *that name* is all-sufficient. His redemption is complete, and presents to the eye of faith all that a guilty sinner needs to set him free from the condemnation of the law, to purify his heart by the influence of the Spirit; and thus, while it gives a *title* to eternal life, renders him who believes in Jesus, *meet* for the possession and enjoyment of its unutterable blessedness. To renounce His own fancied righteousness is humbling to the pride of man; but he must be humble in order to be exalted. Happy those who, like the great Apostle of the Gentiles, desire to appear before the throne, *not having on their own righteousness which is of the law, but the righteousness which is of God by faith*. In no other way can heaven be attained. Man cannot earn a right to it—man cannot work a fitness for it. By

Christ alone the way is opened—through faith alone we are enabled to walk in that *living way*. *Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift*. If you look into yourselves, you will find nothing but matter for despondency; but if you *look to Jesus*, you behold a foundation strong enough to sustain your hopes to all eternity.”







The Design and Motive of Worldly  
Business as Exhibited in  
the Bible

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TWO SERMONS  
BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.

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*October, 1847.*



# THE DESIGN AND MOTIVE OF WORLDLY BUSINESS.

## SERMON ONE.

Titus 3: 14: And let us also learn to maintain good works (or as it is in the margin, to profess honest trades).

Eph. 4: 28: Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good, etc.

The Bible (as we have seen in a previous discourse on the relation of christianity to the commercial character) is adapted to man's present condition and duties, as well as to his spiritual and everlasting interests, and inculcates, as has been seen, those qualities which are essential to the dignity and success of the commercial character. But it does more: It teaches us what purposes christians ought to have in view in following their worldly avocations, as well as by what principles they ought to be animated and governed. Piety, it is true, is *essentially* a hidden life of spiritual communion with God; but it is not, as some would represent it, a mere matter of spiritual feeling that shrinks from contact with human affairs. It is a robust and masculine sentiment that guides and regulates our secular everyday occupations by sound Bible principles—principles which lead us to perform with diligence the labours of the present life, under the influence of such views as harmonize with the purposes of God in appointing us to this present state of being.

I. And, first, we remark the Bible not only maintains the true dignity, necessity and value of labour, but holds it forth to us as a divine appointment. Labour is generally regarded as the consequence and penalty of the fall of man. But that man in his best and highest estate, as he came from the plastic hand of his Creator, was formed to work—that is, actively to employ all his powers both of body and mind—is evident from the fact that after God Himself had exhibited to His new creature a sublime example of working six days—in the creation of the world—He still further illustrated the law of activity by planting a garden eastward in Eden, where man was placed to dress and to keep it.

And when the Lord God sent forth disobedient and sinful man from the garden of Eden the curse pronounced upon him did not *originate* the necessity of toil and labour, but only perpetuated this necessity under circumstances of difficulty and trial. There is a kind of sorrow, vexation and fatigue attending the labours of men now, which would not have been known had man continued in his loyalty to heaven. The heavens would not have frowned upon him, nor blighted the earth, had man not rebelled against that God who rules therein. But while the anxieties, the fatigues, the pains, the oppressive labours and the sorrows to which men are now subjected are to be traced to this cause—labour is not in itself considered a part of that curse.

And hence it is, that throughout the book of God industry, diligence, exertion, are not only spoken of with favour, but in terms of strong commendation. The law of labour is therefore to be regarded as a divine law; so that in working with our hands, or in any other way, the thing that is good, we are fulfilling the appointment of the Creator. This appears also from an investigation into the structure of the universe and the constitution of man's nature, mental and corporeal. There is not only scope in the construction of the visible system around us and in the organization of human affairs, for bringing into activity all the powers of body and mind with which man is endowed, but there are innumerable things which go to shew that there is such a harmony between the one and the other as can be explained only upon the principle that it was designed that man's powers were to be brought into exercise and furnished with employment through the instrumentality both of the works of creation and providence. So far then from any one fretting and repining under the necessity laid upon him of working in some honourable and useful occupation, however humble that employment may be, he should rather cheerfully submit to it as one of the wise appointments of Deity, by which God accomplishes His purposes both in the formation of the world and in the formation of man. And while there are many sorrows, vexations and fatigues resulting from labour in consequence of man's present fallen condition, these are nothing in comparison with the evils which invariably



spring from indolence. In fact this necessity of toil seems to be a kind of check or counteracting law rolling back the tide of corruption with which our natures are swelling and keeping it, as it otherwise certainly would, from entirely overwhelming us. Labour therefore, in itself considered, is a blessing and not a curse, and hence *one end* to be sought in choosing some worldly employment, even were there not others necessary, is the advantage to be derived from constant occupation.

II. But, second, another purpose that ought to influence us in following some honest occupation is that of providing for ourselves, our families and helpless friends.

That we are to provide for ourselves by our own exertion is taught with delightful explicitness in the word of God. Towards the conclusion of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, we have the following paragraph: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; for even when we were with you this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." In so important a light, it appears, did Paul look upon the principle of every man eating his own bread—that is, bread he had himself laboured for—that he voluntarily resigned the power which he had as an apostle of Christ, of being supported by those christians of Thessalonica who had been begotten of him into the hope of the gospel. In the present instance he voluntarily refused to use this power, that he might exemplify a principle which lies at the very foundation of personal and social comfort.—"*Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us.*"

Let us all then fill our hands and our time, etc., and let us all estimate as we ought the values.

"The worker," says Mr. Boynton, "is the true noble." By working men he "means not simply those who are engaged in manual labour. The man is a workman who performs or causes to be performed something, anything which will help to beautify and adorn the earth, rescue it from waste and wilderness, multiply our comforts, or exalt the character and condition of the human family."

"We have the authority of the Scriptures for applying the term work" to employment, even of the infinite mind. "On the seventh day God ended His work which He had made and rested on the seventh day from all His work."

"Though we are not to connect the idea of toil and difficulty with the work of God, yet we are taught by the Bible to think of God as a being of sleepless energies, put forth without intermission in designing and creating, or in governing the universe which He has made."

The dignity of labour rests upon the great truth, that the Omnipotent is Himself ever engaged in work of some kind—that He is the Architect that designed and built the world we inhabit, and the starry heavens which are above and around us.

"Whenever we open our eyes we behold a collection of wonders; and on each of these God has been employed. He began them and finished, and spread them out for the inspection and admiration of man. Here is this universe about us, which the Lord has been making, been working upon—and let us open our eyes upon this vast cabinet of curiosities, this boundless museum of God; where this is the label upon every object: 'Made by the hand of God.'"

But a man is not only to provide for himself, but also for his house; for, says the apostle: "If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel." Now the reference here is not merely to a man's wife and family, though they of course have a primary claim, but likewise to his relatives generally and to the poor of the church, as is evident not only from the original word, which takes on the general idea of kindred, but from the connection in which the statement

occurs. Only those are to be recognized as widows indeed who have no christian relatives by whom they might be assisted, since it is the duty of such to provide for their own and not to cast them upon the support of the church. "If any widow have children, or grandchildren, let them learn to requite their parents (whether immediate or remote), for that is good and acceptable before God." That is, if any such child, or grandchild, fail to provide—as far as means and opportunity will admit—for such near and helpless relatives, he has practically denied the faith and is worse than an infidel, since many even of them treat such kindred with kindness and supply their wants.

And yet how often, even in this christian land, do we behold the spectacle referred to by the prophet when he speaks of "hiding ourselves from our own flesh." In this country where every one is at liberty to choose the occupation for which he is best adapted, and in which he may exert all his ingenuity and skill in turning his labour to the most profitable account,—here, I say, it frequently happens that children rise to higher, more influential and more lucrative situations than any that their parents ever filled. And is it not a melancholy truth that in some cases these children are ashamed of the poverty of their parents or friends, blush at their humble circumstances, turn away from their own flesh, and while *they* enjoy comfort and abundance, suffer their parents and friends to be in great poverty and dependent on the charity even of strangers. Now of all such persons, whatever they may profess, the apostle declares that they are not christians. They are a dishonor and a scandal to the christian name. They are worse than heathen.

All such needy friends christianity takes under its divine protection and considers the treatment given to them as rendered to Christ Himself. It disposes and requires its disciples to respect, to relieve, to requite, and that in a generous manner, such indigent parents, and friends and christian brethren, and it holds forth as one motive—and that not the least strong—that ought to prompt the most vigorous efforts to rise in the scale of worldly influence and wealth to meet—without injury

to ourselves or our households—this venerable law of christian charity.

III. But, in the *third* place, another purpose that as christians we ought to have in view in practicing such diligence, is that we may thereby be enabled to live in honesty, independence and comfort.

Paul, when commending the Thessalonians for their brotherly love, is led to add: "And that ye study to be quiet and to do your own business and to work with your own hands as we commanded you—that ye may walk honestly towards them that are without and that ye may have lack of nothing." The words "to walk honestly" do not simply mean to practice that upright feeling to which we usually give the name of honesty. It includes this and more. Honesty, in the ordinary sense, is violated in two ways. First, when we lay our hands on the property of others and take what does not belong to us—what is not our own—what we have not laboured for or in any other lawful way acquired—and therefore what we have no right to. This is an open violation of the law of God, which definitely says: "Thou shalt *not*"—*i. e.*, on no account, at no time, and to no extent, etc.—"steal;" and the person who is guilty of such an act we characterize as dishonest—as a thief. It is not then by theft that our wants are to be supplied. And accordingly to those who may have been addicted to habits of this kind before embracing the faith of Christ Paul says: "Let him that stole steal no more," but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing that is good." But honesty is also violated when a person is guilty of deception, although he may not actually have held out his hand to steal or to pilfer the property of others. Any sort of deception may be ranked under the head of dishonesty, although the term is most generally applied to the deception that is practiced in regard to worldly matters. A man who is strict and regular in paying his lawful debts—who acts on the principle of owing no man anything—who accustoms himself to clear off his debts at the proper time—whose word can be depended on in commercial matters and on all the lesser transactions of life—is an honest man. On the contrary, a person who tries to cheat and deceive his fellows—who does not care about pay-



ing what he borrows or settling the accounts he has contracted—who tries to postpone—for the purpose of evading altogether—the payment of what he owes, we denominate a dishonest man. Persons may often be found who, though not intentionally or with dishonest design, yet, nevertheless, through indolence, or a spirit of speculation, or other causes, do in *fact* incapacitate themselves for paying debts which may not have been dishonestly incurred. But no such reasons can justify the inability to which they have brought themselves by their own conduct, and to all such persons the apostle says: “Work with your own hands, as we commanded you, that you may walk honestly toward them that are without,” since without industry and honorable labour no man can live honestly.

But while these words unquestionably enforce these plain and paramount obligations, the words do not exclusively denote the feeling of honesty in its application to the business of life, but are also expressive according to their well known usage, of decency, reputation and honour, and these we believe to be included in the motive by which the apostle enforces the duty here enjoined. It is the same word which the apostle uses when he says: “Let all things be done decently and in order.” The same word is used in describing Joseph of Airmathea “an *honorable* counsellor” and “certain devout and honorable women.”\* It indicates the natural and proper result of true piety wherever it takes full effect. The gospel fills the mind with honorable feelings, and engenders a desire not only to live upon our own earnings, but to live a decent, decorous, respectable, honorable life—such a life as will be creditable to the profession we make and harmonize with the position and circumstances in which we are placed. This desire is at the farthest distance possible from that vain-glorious ambition after the pomps of this world which dwells in bosoms that, however vigorous, are unsanctified and destitute of the knowledge and fear of God.

Nor is this the whole of the apostle’s motive for industry and energy in our worldly callings. He sanctifies us proper and worthy—the desire which is felt by every honorable

\*Acts 13, 50, and 17, 12.



mind—to be independent. Do this, says he, “that ye may have lack of nothing,” or rather that ye may have need of assistance from no man—that ye may not be a burden upon others—and that ye may not be eating the fruit of another man’s labour rather than of your own. This of course does not mean that we ought to desire to be entirely and in every respect independent of our fellow men around us. The pride that originates and feeds such a desire is not more wicked than it is vain and foolish. We are all dependent on one another in ways quite innumerable; and this mutual dependence lays the foundation for many of those offices of kindness that constitute the principal sources of earthly felicity. From this dependence spring many of the most salutary and healthful feelings we can cherish. This law of mutual dependence therefore must and ought to be preserved and honored. To revolt against it is to revolt against God’s constitution of things—a constitution of things not only wise, but good and benignant to those who live under it. There ought to be unquestionably what is called coming and going—a giving and receiving kindness—a bestowing and accepting of favors; and there ought to be a frankness and generosity both on the one side and the other, both on the part of the receiver and the giver—in short, a heartfelt reciprocation of all the charities, amenities and mutual good offices which flow from the law of mutual dependence and mutual necessity.

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### SERMON TWO.

Titus 3: 14: And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful.

Eph. 4: 28: Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

In a previous discourse we have endeavored to direct your attention to the views and motives that ought to influence christians in diligently prosecuting their worldly callings. This ought to be done, we first remarked, under a deep sense of the dignity and value of labor as a divine appointment. We are also, in the second place, encouraged in industrious zeal by the hope of providing for ourselves, our families, and our helpless

friends. And a third motive which ought to actuate to such industry is that we may thereby be enabled to live in honesty, independence and comfort.

We proceed to remark that another, and in some respects a more disinterested, motive than any yet mentioned that ought to operate in exciting us to diligence in our worldly callings is that of having something wherewith to assist the poor and the destitute. That this ought to be a motive and a very leading one, in stimulating the christian to develop all his energies both of body and mind, and to endeavour to turn them to a pecuniary account, is evident from the exposition in our text, "Let him labour working with his hands the things which is good that he may have to give to him that needeth." And of this duty the apostle had himself given an illustrious example. "I have," says he, "shewed you all things how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus how He said—it is more blessed to give than to receive."

Benevolence, disinterestedness, generosity is the very genius of christianity. This is the air it breathes,—its native element. When it was young—and youthful feeling predominated over the prudence and wisdom of riper years, none of the multitude of believers, said that aught of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. "Neither was there any among them that lacked; for as many as were possessors of houses and lands sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them at the apostle's feet; and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." And although this was an arrangement which had never been enjoined, and for obvious reasons could not be permanent, yet such an annihilation of all the feelings and workings of selfishness, and such an opening of the fountains of charity as appeared in the boundless benevolence that flamed spontaneously from the bosoms of these new-born sons of immortality, present as with a vivid picture of the genius of christianity, and illustrate the warm generosity that always works more or less in the hearts of those that live through the faith of Him, "who though He was rich for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might become rich." While,

however, the necessity of having all things in common was never inculcated by the apostles—while, on the contrary, they, in many cases inculcate principles certainly subversive of such an arrangement—yet the sacred annals of apostolic labours, and the epistles written to the churches that were planted by them, are irradiated, as we have just seen, both with precepts and examples, in which the lofty spirit of a wise and holy philanthropy burns with the intensest ardour. The exuberance of juvenile generosity passed away; but it did not give place to that cold-hearted indifference to the interests of others, that sometimes goes by the name of prudence, or of doing justice to ourselves. No, the poor and the needy were still attended to. And the apostle was only an example of the brethren generally when he speaks of being “*forward*” to remember the poor and to support and aid the needy. Yes, christianity in whatever light we look upon it—whether we look at it as it is found in the Scriptures, or as it has been exhibited by Jesus Christ Himself, by His apostles, or by those churches, primitive or modern, that have most largely imbibed and exemplified its spirit—will appear to be eminently and essentially a religion of benevolence. It commands its disciples to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, and to assist the sick and the afflicted. Its language is: “look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.” “As ye have therefore opportunity do good unto all, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”\*

No man, therefore, can pursue his daily business in a *christian* spirit who does not work diligently in order that he may have what he can distribute to the destitute. Many professing christians, however, regard demands of this kind as grievances—as a species of annoyance from which they would gladly be rid—or as claims which they are at perfect liberty to receive or reject. They give, therefore, in narrow and stinted measure only what they cannot well avoid. Instead of regretting that it is not in their power to give *more* they are pained that they cannot decently give less. But every sound believer will feel giving to the needy according to his ability to be his privilege,—one way that he has of showing that God who has given him all

\*Read 1 Tim. 6:17.

things richly to enjoy—one way of lending to the Lord what will be returned with interest a thousand-fold when He makes *His* appearance—one way of sowing what will by and by yield him an abundant harvest;—in a word, one way of laying up “treasures in heaven where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt.” He will labour, therefore, for the very purpose of having something over and above all his other claims to give to him that needeth.

Another and even a weightier motive which ought to animate the christian to industry in his calling is that he may be able to bear an honorable part in the maintenance and extension of the gospel.

That this is a duty which the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, has devolved upon His followers is as plain as His own words can make it, and as He is our Lawgiver and King—and can only prove a Saviour and Priest where He is received in both these relations, no law contained in the Scriptures which are His statute book can be evaded or opposed by us, without either secret or open rebellion against our Sovereign Lord. This duty He *might* have left to be ascertained from general principles and honest inferences. Even in that case, however, it would have been easier, in our opinion, to have demonstrated the obligation of this duty upon those who enjoy the gospel than it is to prove many other things respecting which the church entertains no doubt. But while this duty is thus plainly imparted even upon grounds of common humanity and benevolence and justice Christ has enforced it as all-important by the most plain and explicit legislation.

Turn first to the first Epistle to the Corinthians, and in the ninth chapter, the following, among other similar declarations, will be found: “Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know that they who minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they who wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? *Even so hath the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel.*” Hear again the



Spirit speaking on this point "to the churches of Galatia,"—"Let him that is taught in the word communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things."—Gal. vi. 6. See also 1 Tim. v. 17, 18.

From these quotations nothing can be clearer than that the maintenance of the christian ministry is not optionally but morally obligatory on the part of the disciples of Christ; inso-much that they cannot neglect this duty without breaking one of His most explicitly delivered laws. And they who venture to turn a deaf ear to this commandment, and act as if Jesus had been silent on the subject, would do well to bring to mind the principle stated by the Apostle James "for whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of all," because he contemns the authority and law of Him whom he acknowledges as Lord.

To discharge this duty, therefore, is and ought to be one prime and influential motive with every christian in urging him to a diligent pursuit of his worldly calling. And is it not, my hearer, a most worthy and noble object for which to labour? Have you not a spiritual as well as a natural man, and do you not need spiritual food for the nourishment of your immortal souls as well as natural food for the sustenance of your natural body? Is there not a spiritual, unseen and eternal world as well as the natural, visible and transitory world that now is? And will it not dignify the proceeds of worldly labour to apportion a part of them to the maintenance of that ministry through the instrumentality of which you are fed with something higher than angel's food and have the things of the Spirit constantly displayed to your view? Shall they who keep and dress the vineyard of God not be supported by its fruit? Shall those who feed the flock of Christ and lead them under the direction of the Great Shepherd to the green pastures and still waters of ordinances, not be supplied with milk from that flock? You think it *just*—and not mere generosity—to pay your butcher, your baker, your grocer, your tailor, your teachers, your merchants, and your lawyers, your magistrates, your legislators, your judges, and all who serve you in your temporal interests. But why is it less just and honorable to recompense with proportionate liberality those who spend and are spent in render-



ing you spiritual service? Do they not labour and toil, as constantly as others? Are they not wearied and outdone by the very excess of mental toil? Do they not in feeding you exhaust the last dregs of feeling and capacity? Or is there a more expensive outlay necessary for any one business of life than in securing in the education, the books and all the other prerequisites of a truly earnest and devoted minister, and are not all these purchased, read and digested, and secured solely for your edification and comfort?

We cannot but think that that man, or woman, will feel himself, or herself, rising in the scale of nobility, who makes it a specific object in cultivating habits of industry and exertion, to be able honourably to maintain and spread abroad that ministry, which is eminently the representative of Jesus Christ on the earth, and the appointed channel through which heaven's blessings flow into and fertilize the wilderness of our heart, and the wildernesses of the world at large. On the other hand, we do not doubt that that individual must have about him a sense of degradation and shame, who tries to evade a command, either wholly or in part, the universal evasion of which would leave our world without any spiritual cultivation; and, of course, not only barren in the fruits of righteousness and true holiness, but covered over with the briers and thorns of sin and iniquity. How can such a fugitive from duty look Him in the face to whom we owe our all, both as regards time and eternity? We would beseech professing christians to act towards Jesus Christ, in matters that so nearly affect His authority and His kingdom, with uprightness and honour, if they would enjoy that kind of prosperity on which the blessing of heaven rests, and if they would be accepted of the Lord in that day.

And when we look abroad over the field of the world now whitening to the harvest, and hear the demand for labourers as it comes up from every region—and then turn to the last commission of our Saviour—how still more emphatically are christians urged to be diligent in business that they may be able with greater liberality and efficiency to come up to the help of the Lord.

But there is another motive in directing christians to their choice of business and to diligence in its pursuit which we will

mention although it is one which is liable to great abuse and, therefore, to great misapprehension, and that is the prospect of thereby becoming rich. It is true the Bible is very full and emphatic in its warnings against the love of money to the love of which it does not hesitate to trace all evil. It even brands such covetous love of money as idolatry. Undoubtedly the Scriptures lift their voice against all love of money, and of the things of the world as would shut out the love of God and the spirit of earnest, inactive piety from the soul. They *absolutely* condemn that spirit which would lead to dissatisfaction and discontent under poverty and which would foster a money-loving feeling.

ALL this is absolutely and awfully true; and fearful and general is the condemnation under which it brings a great portion of this community. But on the other hand, there is a spirit attainable through the gospel and by which a man may properly aim at such an accumulation of property as may secure his independence. There is, we know, an opposite opinion prevalent among some circles of piety according to which it is unscriptural and wrong for any man to be an holder of any considerable monies. But we regard it as one of the altruisms of the day—one of those things in which man would be wiser and better than God. The opinion, however, to which we allude is one which very few who have the opportunity of increasing their means are willing to reduce to practice. There is about it also a sort of extravagance that excites one's suspicions of its soundness. We must acknowledge that it is unquestionably the safest side on which to err and that where one man is excessive in his christian liberality, thousands are meagre and defective, many simply pernicious in their christian doings and in their christian givings. We would rather, therefore, see the sentiment adopted and acted out, that it is at variance with the divine law to be possessed of more than is necessary for our *immediate* wants than any sentiment that would make the amassing of money, or the accumulation of wealth in any shape, the grand object of life. Still we cannot shut our eyes to the extravagance of the idea that the mere circumstance of being rich is sinful; nor to the extravagant consequences to which it would lead. It conducts to the conclusion that among chris-

tians there should be none poor, none rich—a sort of equality in regard to wealth that does not exist in regard to any thing else. Among christians there are differences in regard to the structures of their bodies—differences in regard to their physical, intellectual and spiritual energies;—and why, then, should we not expect differences in regard to their outward, worldly condition. Differences, indeed, in regard to temporal circumstances are in many ways, made indispensably necessary by the present constitution of things. Thus great occasions or emergencies now and then arise in the history both of individuals, of families, of cities, of kingdoms and especially of churches that call for a more than ordinary supply of pecuniary means,—occasions when the advantage of their being some who have accumulated wealth becomes very apparent. But the principle against which we contend makes no provision for such emergencies.

But, further, while the Bible does so emphatically warn us against the danger of riches and the damning nature of covetousness, yet on the other hand, riches and wealth are spoken of in the Bible as if their bestowal were one of the ways in which God prospers and blesses His people. In the 112th Psalm it is said of the man that feareth the Lord and delightest greatly in His commandments that wealth and riches shall be in his house. Abram is characterized as a wealthy man not long after his calling and evidently as indicating the favour of God being with him, “and Abram was very rich in cattle and silver and gold.” Similar was the case with Job both in his early and in his latter condition, and it is promised as the reward of diligence and exertion “he becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent maketh rich.”

Some, however, may imagine that the force of these passages is greatly if not altogether weakened by their being found in the Old Testament and belonging to the old economy. It may be supposed that the promises of God made to His people under the ancient earthly dispensation were chiefly if not wholly of a temporal character, whereas under the present heavenly economy, whereby life and immortality have been brought to light, the promises are of a more spiritual character. and that soul-

prosperity is that alone which Christ and His apostles hold out as betokening the divine favour. There is confessedly some force in this—but not by any means so much as many who make the objection suppose. The sound scriptural principle on this subject appears to be something like the following—that God of old, during the childhood of His people, dealt with His people and accomplished His gracious purposes in and towards them, mainly through temporal promises and hopes, whereas during these last days and the manhood of the world He deals with them principally through promises that are spiritual and eternal. But as considerations connected with life and immortality were by no means excluded of old, so neither are temporal considerations excluded now. The difference between the two dispensations in this respect regard principally the *prominence* given to the two kinds of blessings. There were spiritual promises and prospects then, and there are temporal promises and prospects now. Paul still quotes the fifth commandment with the temporal promise annexed.\* He also teaches the New Testament believers to make use of the Old Testament promises on this general subject.† Yea, the apostle directly unfolds the doctrine that still under the existing economy—"godliness is profitable for all things having the promise of the life that now is as well as of that which is to come." We think, then, it is manifest that those Old Testament passages which represent the bestowment of riches and wealth as one of the ways in which God prospers and blesses His people when He sees it best, are not to be looked upon as abrogated in the New Testament, though to some extent they are modified by the genius of the new dispensation, and consequently that so far from looking upon it as a scandal for a christian to be rich, riches honourably acquired and in the exercise of a proper liberality are to be regarded by him on whom they are bestowed, as a blessing, and the acquisition of such riches, therefore, together with the position and influence and power to do good which they give, ought to be one motive in prompting him to diligence and energy in his worldly calling.

It is, indeed, a shame and a scandal for any one to be rich who professes to be under the power of those principles of

\*Read Eph. 6: 2, 3.

†Read Heb. 13: 5, 6.



philanthropy and self-denying charity which christianity kindles in the soul if his riches have been obtained in any low, mean, undignified, disreputable and illiberal manner, or by refusing to patronize and adequately support the many benevolent enterprises which the gospel has originated around him. But, if, with the discoveries of the Bible before him, he cannot accuse himself of narrowness and parsimony—if he is conscious of having acted a kind and generous part towards friends and relations who have needed his assistance—that he has not shut up his bowels of compassion against the importunities of the destitute—that he has liberally—that is, in full proportion to his means—contributed to the support of the gospel at home and the spread of that gospel abroad—if he has a good conscience in regard to all these matters,—and if after having done all, God has so blessed his labours that he has a surplus—some thing over and above for which he has no immediate need and the cause of Christ no imperative demand according to the rule and measure of its required charity—let him not scruple to lay it past—let him not feel as if he were half-stealing in storing it up—let him look upon it as a token of God's favor towards him and as an indication that himself, his children or his friends, or the church will stand in need of it at some future time. The increase of the man who has all along been scattering with a bountiful hand has about it a sacredness and a sort of consecration blessing—and is that increase which may emphatically be called “the blessing of the Lord.” There is not, perhaps, a more beautiful sight on earth or one which attracts towards it greater homage, admiration and regard—than when the ability and the will to do good are found conjoined;—when wealth is regarded as a talent given by God and its use a Stewardship of God's appointments; and when the heart and the hand are opened in liberality in proportion as God has filled them with His blessing.\*

\*See Job xxix : 12-24.





# The Relations of Christianity to Civil Polity

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.

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*October, 1848.*



## THE RELATIONS OF CHRISTIANITY TO CIVIL POLITY.

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Rom. 13:1-7: Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the powers, resisteth the ordained of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear: honour to whom honour.

The anniversary of our National Independence has again come round and we are called upon to meditate upon one of the most wonderful events that has ever transpired in the history of man—wonderful whether we consider the events that preceded it—the circumstances by which it was developed—or the marvellous and daily effects in the convulsions of Europe which are still flowing from it.

Such an event therefore must be regarded as ordered by Him who is King of kings and Lord of lords—who ruleth amongst the inhabitants of the earth as well as among the armies of heaven—whose is the kingdom and governorship of the nations, and whose dominion is from generation to generation. "The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will and setteth up over it the basest of men."

In this event then we plainly see God's hand and God's working. In vain did the kings of the earth set themselves against it and the princes take counsel together. He that sitteth in the heavens laughed. The Lord had them in derision. The Lord of Hosts had purposed and who could disannul, and His hand was stretched out and who could turn it back?

Religion, therefore, should take up the theme of this anniversary and hallow it by associating it with the glory of Him who is High above all nations—and with the grandeur of those

principles which are mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of human despotism.

That our Revolution—our Declaration of Independence and our form of government are clearly traceable—as their fountain spring—to religious principles and religious men I have on former occasions endeavoured to establish. On this occasion I could call your special attention to the relation in which, generally speaking, christianity stands to civil polity—or to what may be termed the political principles of the Bible.

The importance of this subject none can question. The Bible is now the book of the world, and the principles of the Bible are, or soon will be, the principles of the world. The word of God is now covering the earth as with a flood. Its voice is going forth into all the earth and its sound unto the end of it. It is saying unto the nations that sit in darkness, "Let there be light;" and light is scattering before it the shades of error, neither is there any dark policy of man that can lie hid from its all-penetrating and all-transforming energy. It is of vital importance, therefore, to know what is the teaching of this oracle upon the subject of human government, lest haply we be found resisting the ordinance of God, and withstanding the free course of that righteousness which alone exalteth any nation.

On this subject, too, as on most, or indeed upon all others, there are opposite opinions. Some maintain that religion has no concern whatever with human politics—that the entire domain of civil polity, in all its bearings, lies beyond the possible reach of christianity and can in no way be directly influenced by it, and that all the affairs of society are therefore to be directed solely by the principles of common sense and political expediency.

Some again hold views directly antagonistic to these and maintain with equal assurance that religion must necessarily interfere with all political concerns, all things being subject to its direction and control.

Between these two extremes the human mind has continually veered. The State has either governed the religious community or been governed by it. Nations have either been in subjection to a hierarchy, or both hierarchy and people have



been under the supreme control of civil despotism. Egypt was probably an example of the former, and ancient Greece and Rome illustrations of the latter. In more modern times we find the civil power enslaved to the ecclesiastical wherever the church of Rome has been permitted to exercise unlimited dominion, while in England the church has been made the creature of the State. And such is the condition to which most European nations are now rapidly tending, or to which, as in Prussia and elsewhere, they have long attained.

In this country the current of popular sentiment runs in the opposite direction and excludes all recognition of divine authority, divine instruction and divine institutions from its government and legislation.

Now the truth on this subject lies in neither of these extremes. They are both erroneous, both dangerous, and both productive of detriment both to civil government and to the christian church. The interests of society and of religion are alike endangered by the adoption of either of these theories. They will inevitably lead, as they ever have done, to collision, strife, jealousy, persecution and intolerance, or, on the other hand, they will foster and promote a spirit of atheistic and ungodly infidelity.

On the authority of Scripture we reject and condemn both, and look for the correct theory in a middle course, which recognizes the truth inherent in both these views and rejects the extremes to which both are led by carrying this truth beyond its legitimate bounds. The one extreme lands us in the doctrine of Erastianism, which denies the independent and divine authority of the ecclesiastical government or of the church and confounds and amalgamates the State and the church; and the other extreme forces upon us the theory of the self-styled Liberalists, who exclude God and His word from any bearing upon civil polity.

What then, we ask, are the teachings of the Bible on this subject? To this question we will endeavour to give a brief and comprehensive answer. In the first place christianity teaches us that there is a civil government and an ecclesiastical government—both instituted and appointed by God; that these are committed to certain officers, with rights, power and

authority to conduct the same; that they are independent and distinct in their whole field of operations; and yet that they are co-ordinate and conducive to the common good of the whole community; so that while they can never commingle, they can never be safely disjoined. The rights, power and authority of the church are therefore to be recognized by the State and upheld, protected and secured in their free and untrammelled exercise. The rights, power and authority of the State are in like manner to be recognized by the church, and are to be upheld, protected and secured in their free and untrammelled exercise. Both the church and the State are under obligation to recognize as their foundation and authority the institution and authority of God; to inquire into His will and the just ends and limits of their authority; to confess His supreme dominion; to seek His blessing, and to avert His anger by avoiding what is contrary to His known requirements; and by giving free course to the diffusion of His truth and the maintenance of His instituted means for the promotion of civil and ecclesiastical prosperity. But of the mutual relations of the civil and the spiritual powers we will treat at another time. Our present subject is the teaching of the Bible in reference to civil government and the politics of earth.

Human government and authority may be considered in their primary or in their secondary origin—in their ultimate or in their immediate source of power.

Now in their primary origin human government and authority are divine. Their source is the bosom of God and their obligation the power of God. "There is," says Scripture, "no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God." Every government therefore, as it regards the foundation and obligations of its authority, is a theocracy, derived immediately from God, and enforced and adjudged by God. The Bible utterly condemns the principle now so applauded in senates, toasted by Bacchanals, sung by poets, and sustained by philosophers and political economists—that men's rights in respect to one another are to be defined by themselves—that utility is the standard of right, and that the people are the sovereign source of all power. This theory of Hobbes, Machiaval, and others, is essentially infidel.

Societies, as well as individuals, are under law bound to God—all power belongeth unto Him—and by it the authority of rulers and the liberty of the citizen are prescribed. Such is the clear and unequivocal doctrine of the Bible, and such also is the consenting voice of the primitive and original sentiment of mankind. "With one consent we find all the wise among the ancients basing their authority on religion. Zaleucus, Plato, Cicero, founded the laws which they recommended on its sanction. They saw the impossibility of the passions of men being controlled without the acknowledgment of a future state with its rewards and punishments. Therefore, Zaleucus, in his preface to his laws, says, 'Let every inhabitant, whether of town or country, first be persuaded of the being and existence of the gods.' Cicero's introduction to his laws is as follows: 'Let our citizen, then, be firmly persuaded of the government and dominion of the gods; that they are the lords and masters of the universe; that all things are directed by their powerful disposal and providence.'" Society coheres and exists by virtue of this sense of responsibility and obligation, cherished alike by the ruler and the ruled. This is the basis of law and order, of peaceful and orderly submission, and hence of all the blessings of society. But this can be found only in religion. The reason of men never concurred in any one form of government, and could never therefore enforce it. Mere reason can only declare and persuade—it cannot enforce or command. Even, therefore, if men could *originate*, they could not preserve or perpetuate civil polity, since without the constraint of some superior authority men would never be restrained and governed by laws which they themselves enacted and whose whole force depended on their own will and not upon the authority of one who had a right to command and enforce them.

In their primary source, therefore, the force and authority of civil government are from God. But in their secondary or immediate source the power and authority of civil government are from men, to whose reason, to whose innate tendencies towards society, and to the fundamental principles of rights and duties implanted in whose moral nature, God has committed the particular form and exercise of civil power,

subject, however, to the general rules and regulations of His word. All questions relating to the particular form of government, and to the particular laws and regulations of every particular society, are left to the reason and judgment of men. All these—except so far as they involve principles of unchangeable morality—are matters with which the Bible never once interferes and over which religion, therefore, has no direct control. Founding society upon a divine institution, clothing its authority with divine obligation, and accompanying its laws with a divine sanction, christianity leaves civil government unfettered in carrying out such measures as are found in every particular community conducive to the common good.

To further this end christianity carefully distinguishes the respective provinces of the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities—the one being founded on the law of God, as manifested in the constitution of our minds, and the other being based upon God's positive and written word;—the one being occupied with the outward man and the temporal affairs and interests of society, and the other with the inward man and with man's spiritual welfare;—the one having authority to frame and enforce compulsory laws, and the other having a ministerial authority to administer the laws of the spiritual kingdom, and to enforce them by instruction and moral influence, but having no power to compel or to inflict any civil penalties;—the one being left to adapt itself to the varying circumstances of society, while the other in its general principles is immutably the same;—the one having authority over every soul within its limits, while the latter has direct control only over its voluntary membership, the neglect of others being left to the judgment of God, whose kingdom it is and to whom vengeance belongeth.

Christianity interferes not, therefore, with the management of merely secular affairs. She keeps aloof from all worldly parties formed for worldly and political purposes. She knows no man and no set of men according to the flesh. From all political partizanship she keeps aloof, leaving the dead to bury their dead. She is no busy body in other men's matters. One is her master, even Christ; one her object, the salvation of



men; and one her instrumentality, the preaching of the truth. The members of the church are of course citizens of the commonwealth, and as such they will act for the best interests of the community, but woe unto those churches, those ministers or those christians who are found allying themselves with worldly parties, originated by worldly men, guided by worldly principles, and aiming at worldly ends. "My kingdom," says Christ, "is not of this world."

Christianity—while she thus keeps aloof from political parties—is equally opposed to political chicanery. She knows nothing of a time-serving variable morality, which sanctions any means deemed necessary to accomplish any ends. Expediency is no standard of truth; nor the fancied good of a party any warrant for a course of doubtful propriety. The trick and cunning of short-sighted policy christianity abhors. Nothing can be right in politics which is wrong in morals. No course can be adopted from expediency which is condemned by principle. The pliant wisdom of the world finds no tolerance at the bar of unalterable rectitude. The immutable requirements of the eternal law of God can never adapt themselves to the changing and uncertain currents of public opinion. To such a tribunal christianity allows no appeal and to its decisions no submission. Where principle is in question christianity tolerates no trick and cunning of apparent concession or real evasion, and the actual sacrifice of principle to expediency she brands as treason to the Majesty of heaven, and condemns as the prostitution of virtue. "Her principles are fixed and cannot be moved. Her hands are clean and cannot be defiled. Her allegiance is registered and cannot be broken. Her leader is chosen and cannot be deserted. When she is required to interfere she does so with the voice of a stern and uncompromising moralist, condemning the base truckling of principle to expediency, utterly interdicting the employment of worldly chicanery and requiring politicians not to direct their ear to the voice of public opinion, but to direct public opinion to the voice of God."

Christianity further defines and limits the true ends of civil government—its scope and design. "The punishment of evil-doers and the praise of them that do well"—these are the ends



and purposes of civil government as "the ordinance of God." "The minister of God for good"—this is the limit by which all just authority is bounded and all obedience "not for wrath, but for conscience sake" is bounded. By going to either extreme of this prescribed line, a government must degenerate into oppression or sink into contempt. Christianity authorizes neither irresponsible and unrestrained authority, nor implicit passive and unqualified obedience. Those in authority are required to seek the true good of those they serve, and therefore to prevent and punish the wrong and encourage the right. And in the exercise of such just authority citizens are required—"every soul to be subject to the higher powers," "to be subject to principalities and powers," and "to obey magistrates not only for wrath, but for conscience sake." A government, therefore, is good in proportion as it secures an effective administration of wise laws and the conscientious obedience of a law-abiding people. This is the true merit of a representative government.

The great problem of political philosophy, is to devise a constitution which shall give the amplest security for individual rights—the amplest scope for the development of man's nature in all its important relations, and which shall thus approximate most nearly in all its purposes and plans to the true, the just, the good. In other words, a constitution which should provide in every case that only *reason* should prevail would, as Milton intimates, be absolutely perfect. It is a great mistake to suppose that the end of government is to accomplish the will of the people. The State is a divine ordinance, a social institute, founded on the principle of justice, and it has great moral purposes to subserve, in relation to which the constitution of its government may be pronounced good or bad. The will of the people should be done only when the people will what is right. The representative principle is a check upon their power—an expedient to restrain what would otherwise be an intolerable despotism within the limits of an authority which they are bound to respect—the authority of right.\* There is no misapprehension more dangerous than

\*See Lieber's Political Ethics, vol. I, Book II, secs. 113, 114. We make the following extract: "Here then we find the great principle of a repre-

that which confounds representative government with the essential principle of pure democracy. It is not a contrivance to adapt the exercise of supreme power on the part of the people to extensive territory or abundant population—to meet the physical impediments which in large States must obviously exist to the collection of their citizens in one vast assembly. It is not because the people *cannot* meet, but because they *ought* not to meet, that the representative council, in modern times, is preferred to the ancient convocations in the forum or the market place.† Power has a natural tendency to settle into despotism; and the legitimate ends of the State may be as completely defeated by the absolute power of the people, in the absence of proper checks and restraints, as by the absolute power of a single ruler. Absolute power is tyranny, whether in the hands of large masses, of privileged orders, or of single individuals; and a government which aspires to be free has made but slender advances when it has only changed the seat of authority. The representative principle is accordingly to be prized, not as an approximation to a pure democracy, but as an independent institution, having its own peculiar advantages, not the least of which is to guard against the evils incident to popular masses.‡ The hinderances which, in the one case, exist to the discovery of truth are, in the other, removed. It is an expedient to secure the ends of government without the inconveniences to which every other institution is subject. Its assemblies are essentially deliberative, and its processes are correspondingly cautious.

sentative government, even in a democratic republic. It is not because the people are too numerous, and cannot any longer assemble in the market, as in the ancient republics, that representative governments are advisable, or have become necessary, merely by way of expediting business, but it is on the very same principle that a monarch, who interferes himself and does not leave matters to their proper authorities, even in absolute monarchies, is considered to act despotically; that the people, if they hold the supreme power, must not act themselves, but ought to act through agents. He who has power, absolute and direct, abuses it; man's frailty is too great; man is not made for absolute power."

†"We, the people," says Dr. Lieber, "are not absent from the legislative halls, because, for local reasons, we cannot be there, but because we ought not to be there as people, as mass, for the same reason, that in monarchies the king is not allowed to be present in the halls of justice, or as the legislators cannot debate in the presence of the monarch."—Political Ethics, vol. II, Book VI, sec. 8.

‡For a masterly exhibition of the real nature and advantage of Representative Government, see Lieber's Political Ethics, vol. II, Book VI, from sec. 6 to the close of the first chapter. Compare also Brougham's Political Philosophy, vol. III, chap. 8.

That a government may secure, in the largest degree, the prosperity and happiness of the people, two conditions seem to be essential: An accurate knowledge of their circumstances and wants, and a fixed purpose to aim at the collective interests of the whole. The representative plan fulfills both conditions—the first by entrusting the election of representatives to small communities, so that each portion of the country may possess an organ to express its own wishes and desires—the second by making each representative, while he is the organ of a narrow section, the representative, at the same time, of the whole State. The wants of all are made known, and by wise and free discussion the measures which ought to be adopted to promote the interests of the whole are likely to be elicited.

But christianity still further provides for the welfare of society. Requiring a government founded in right, conducted with a single desire to secure the greatest good of the greatest number, and *deserving*, as it *demand*s, the obedience of principle and conscience, she makes it incumbent upon all to pay tribute also. Economy and retrenchment are not therefore to be sought for their own sake, but are only to be aimed at and expected in consistency with a liberal provision for the best interests of society. In levying tribute and incurring liabilities rulers are to remember, on the one hand, that they are God's accountable stewards; and in meeting *their* requirements citizens are to remember that, on the other hand, they are God's accountable debtors, and that in rendering unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's they are rendering unto God the things that are God's.

But, further, christianity brings civil government into still closer relations to God's immediate oversight and control. It carries it into the very sanctuary and sanctifies it by the word of God and of prayer. It commands that "supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving of thanks be made for all men." (1 Tim. 2: 1, 2.)

Christianity, therefore, regards the affairs of society as conducted not merely between man and man, but also between man and his God, and places patriotism among the virtues that come from above and not among the selfish carnalities that

have their spring and origin in the earth. Prayer, therefore, which is "a constant reference of all things to God," is made the sacred guardian of the public weal.

All forms of human government, "whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers," are thus represented by christianity as under the immediate providence and control of Christ, who is "the head of all principality and power," "far above all principality and power and every name that is named, both in this world and in that which is to come." "the Lord of lords and King of kings" and "head over all things to His church." (Col. 1, 16, and 2, 10; Eph. 1, 21, 22; Rev. 17, 14, and 19, 16.) The sovereignty and dominion of Christ, as the source of power and authority, and of the prosperity and true exaltation of a nation, is,—according to christianity,—the fundamental principle of all true government—the only infallible standard of the duty of rulers and of the rights of citizens; and the only efficient source of true liberty, national wealth, peace, morality and security. On this subject the Bible is full and explicit,\* representing Christ as giving to nations their existence, watching over them, demanding obedience, overruling rebellion, executing judgments and changing their constitution. And the true regeneration and perfection of society will be found, therefore, in protecting the christian religion, in professing it, in honouring the Sabbath, and in thus giving free course to all its heavenly influences.

We might still further dwell upon the influence of christianity in favouring equal and impartial liberty, in protecting the rights of the weak and the powerless, in embodying the principles of representation in its doctrines and its polity, in fostering intelligence and promoting education in all its forms, and in requiring principle and a sacred regard to truth, honor, justice and the common good, in the exercise of every civil right. But we forbear. We have said enough to show that christianity, while it is in its own visible and ecclesiastical organizations essentially distinct, has, nevertheless, the most vitally important relations to civil polity; and while it brings

\*Ps. 10, 10; 47, 2-9; 72, 10-17. Is. 49, 22, and 60, 10-16. Dan. 7, 13-14. Rev. 11, 15.

home to our bosoms life and immortality, "has the promise of the life that now is as well as that which is to come."

While we rejoice in christianity, therefore, as the fountain of life and hope for eternity, let us not less glory in it as the true foundation upon which to build the fame and greatness of a nation; and while we choose her as our guide and companion to "glory, honor and immortality," let us also make her our guide and companion in all the duties and events of life.

She consecrates our homes, our cities and our municipalities. Our States and our confederation are under her benign protection and blessing. She clothes our legislators with wisdom, our judges with righteousness, our magistrates with integrity, and our citizens with honesty, frugality, industry and peace. She bids God-speed to our schools and seminaries, to our colleges and universities. She gives peace at home and prosperity abroad. She defeats the machinations of hell and the strife of men.

Nor does she turn away from our civic and domestic joys. She frowns on no rational and profitable amusement and discourages no reasonable outburst of national enthusiasm. She welcomes, therefore, this national anniversary, with its loud anthem of national praise and dusty cheer, and only says to us as we go forth to its celebration: Remember that to me and the principles I have created you owe that civil and religious freedom and all those private, social and national blessings in which you so justly rejoice. Therefore, while enjoying the gift, forget not to love, serve and honor the great and glorious Giver.







# The Christian's Principle and Motive in Voting

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.



## THE CHRISTIAN'S PRINCIPLE AND MOTIVE IN VOTING.

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1 Cor. 10:31: Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

It is one of the many remarkable facts in this year that the Sabbath falls upon the fourth of July.

The occasion demands, therefore, and makes proper, the consideration of topics which would be irrelevant on most ordinary occasions.

We are powerfully reminded, my brethren, on this occasion that we are citizens of a republic in which by the very constitution of the land, every man is entrusted with an ultimate and powerful influence in shaping its counsels and thus of controlling its destinies. The ballot box is the primary and the most potential source of authority where it is made accessible to every citizen without regard to rank, character or official station. Universal suffrage, in combination with representative offices given and withdrawn at the will of the people, is the nearest conceivable approach to universal and unlimited freedom. Whether even in this country the entire mass of the people are prepared to hold the reins and guide aright the chariot of State, is a question about which I have the most anxious solicitude. Certain it is that knowledge, intelligence and moral principle are essential to the safe and successful discharge of such a responsible duty and that *our only hope* even for the perpetuation of our civil and religious liberties lies in diffusing through the greater portion of the people principles of pure and undefiled religion which are the only principles of pure and disinterested patriotism.

Christianity is the conservative element of human society and the vital principle of a republic. This is the light which alone can direct. This is the leaven which alone can purify. This is the salt which can alone preserve. This is the spirit and the life which alone can exalt the nation. Christianity is not politics nor the church the state, and yet it is essential to the perfection, the purity and the true glory of both,—having the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to



come, and being profitable to all things whether they pertain to life or godliness. By imbuing the minds of men with holy principles and securing God's favor which is able to compass as with a shield, righteousness will exalt a nation, while its absence will lead to the increase of that sin which is the reproach and corruption of any people and thus incur the fury of that divine vengeance which will be poured out on the nations that forget God.

*True religion* is based upon faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which works by love,—which constantly operates on the heart and life,—which influences a man's feelings, purposes, principles and practices. Thus faith works in him—in public and in private, day after day, and hour after hour,—making him watchful, prayerful and humble,—careful to fulfil his duties in every relation and circumstance of life, and prompting him to be perfect as his father in heaven is perfect and whatsoever he does to do all to the glory of God.

And if, my brethren, as has been seen, the ballot box is the essential and fundamental principle of republican security, it follows that in the exercise of this prerogative every christian is bound to act deliberately, disinterestedly in the fear of God, and with a single eye to the best interests of the commonwealth. This consideration I will now press upon you. And when we consider all the abominations attendant upon our frequent and numerous elections,—the bribery, corruption and drunkenness,—the perjury, dishonesty and falsehood,—the ignorance, indifference and frivolity,—the meanness, malignity and servility—and all the other evils attendant upon them,—we will be constrained to regard this as a subject of primary importance and regard.

Allow me, then, to urge it upon the conscience of each one of you who is entitled by law to vote on the election of any public officers that in exercising this right you are called upon to discharge an important duty. It is no light and trifling matter to be considered and settled in a tavern or in the street caucus, but a most weighty and serious duty. You have to make choice among the candidates for your vote of one who will *represent you*. Represent, I say, *you*, that is, take his place in *your* stead and act in whatever sphere he is appointed to fill as

you yourself would wish to act, were it possible and expedient that every man should act in the premises personally and for himself. Now, just consider how important it is to have as your representative an intelligent, conscientious man; a man capable of filling the station with which he is entrusted with dignity, propriety and efficiency; a man able to examine and comprehend subjects of a wide and far-reaching nature; and a man of whom you have some security that he will act on principles of integrity, impartiality and disinterested regard for the public welfare. Consider what manifold and mighty influences are subjected to their control, even where they fill local and civic offices. Consider how this influence for *good* or *ill* is increased as the office held becomes more extended in its relations. Reflect upon the all-important matters on which our legislators and national representatives are called upon to deliberate and decide—whatever, in short, affects the peace, prosperity and happiness of the community. Take, for example, the single question whether or not supplies shall be granted for prosecuting or commencing a war with some foreign nation. Reflect on the guilt and misery involved in determining in favor of such a measure upon insufficient or improper grounds. Think of the wounded,—the maimed,—the slain,—the widows,—the orphans,—the desolate homes,—the agonized hearts—together with other evils, private, social, and public, affecting the revenue, the tariff and the morals of the community,—evils which are nameless and numberless. The effects of every such war are countless and intricate as the branches of a forest.

Consider, again, the effects which must ultimately ensue from direct or indirect encouragement on the part of public men of the neglect, profanation, and overthrow of the inviolable character of the Sabbath as a moral institution founded upon our physical, mental and moral constitution and absolutely essential, therefore, to national prosperity. What mighty consequences, also, are involved in the nature, extent, and general character of that education which is provided for the mass of the people, and in what numberless ways *your* interests and those of your *family*, your *children* and posterity, are committed to the unavoidable discretion of the men to whom you entrust your representative authority.

Our government is not,—it is true,— a christian government, because Christ's kingdom is not of this world,—but it is a government created by christian men,—framed in accordance with christian principles,—founded upon and presupposing christian institutions as existing in the land—and looking to the influence and power of christian principles for its growth, stability and permanency. Our government never would have been conceived—devised—determined — instituted — and triumphantly established but for christianity, and it cannot outlast the subversion or practical neglect of christianity and its institutions a single day. The wisdom to devise good laws, the allegiance that will support, uphold and obey them—and the power necessary to administer and enforce them—can only flow from that religion which founds government upon the ordinance of God and demands obedience on the ground of conscientious obligation.

The exercise of your prerogative, therefore, in voting at elections is an important duty.

I remark, secondly, that it is an arduous and self-denying duty ; that is, when truly and properly discharged, for nothing could be easier than to attend at the polls and give your vote as pride, passion, interest or indifference may dictate. The political partisan, like a poor senseless sheep, follows his flock though it may be over a precipice of corruption, while the honest, thoughtful and independent citizen weighs well and wisely the reasons of his cause. To him the exercise of his authority and power is a duty undertaken with caution and performed with solicitude. Among the candidates for his vote he is often at a loss which to prefer. The very sincerity of his intentions to do right is the occasion of much anxious thought. One candidate he may like in some respects, another candidate he may like in others, and possibly there may be more whom he likes altogether. If he is a christian and a true disciple of the Saviour the last is too likely to be the case. As such he would wish that the man selected as his representative should be also under the influence and guidance of christian principle and motive—one who will always bear in mind that he has to make laws for immortal beings and that while righteousness exalteth a nation and sin is the reproach of any people, he should

endeavour by his example and influence to promote pure and undefiled religion and to bring the wickedness of the wicked to a perpetual end.

How serious—how difficult—how all-important, then, is the right exercise of the privilege of voting. The offices of the State must be filled and filled with such as are willing to occupy them. To every citizen is entrusted the duty of inviting and selecting those who are capable of promoting the common welfare. This, brethren, is your privilege and right as an American citizen; but, as every right involves a duty, so is the obligation of properly using this right proportionate to the magnitude of the interests at stake.

Startle not, then, when I solemnly aver that civil government is an ordinance of God and is to be supported by a conscientious discharge of all the duties it involves. You will, therefore, be called to give an account before the judgment seat of Christ for the manner in which you have fulfilled your obligations as a citizen of this republic. "God shall bring every work into judgment with every secret thing whether it be good or whether it be bad." And "every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment." Surely, then, you will have to account for the manner of fulfilling the duty in question. The pains you take to form a right decision and the motives by which that decision is influenced are elements which will enter into the judgment pronounced upon your conduct as a member of society. God the Judge will take cognizance of the duties required by the second as well as by the first table of the laws—the duties you owe to your fellow-men as well as to Himself. Indeed, what we owe as duty to our fellow-men we owe to God Himself, and are responsible to Him for its neglect. Now, although no particular form nor the designation of the persons governing be immediately from God or of His appointment, yet the institution itself is the dictate of His will and the constitution of His providence as made known by the invariable dictates of our own nature and the positive enactments of His own divine law. And, hence, it is that we are accountable to God for the faithful discharge of our duty to society.



If, then, my hearers, the duty of voting at elections is a serious and an important one; one that is difficult and for the wise discharge of which you must give account to God how should it be fulfilled?

In the first place, I reply, the nature and importance of this right and duty must be realized.

One of the most discouraging signs of the times, says the *New York Times*, is the indifference with which the elective franchise is viewed by the more favored and intelligent portion of our population. They do not seem to have a just appreciation of their invaluable inheritance; but, like the "profane person" spoken of in Scripture, appear to despise their "birth-right." This remark is intended, of course, to be understood in a general sense, for there are numerous honorable exceptions. But, though these delinquents may disregard the *privilege*, can they, without guilt, rid themselves of the *duty* of an American citizen? We think not. If they were themselves to be the only sufferers by their neglect, there might be some excuse for them. But in our political system, the neglect of a *few* may, by the exaltation of incompetent or unprincipled men to public stations, cause oppressive legislation, or a corrupt administration of the government, which brings injury to the *many*; and thus the omission of a duty may be as productive of mischievous consequences, as the commission of a wrong act. We are not, therefore, to leave "undone those things which we ought to do," any more than to do "those things which" ought not to be done.

In a certain district in the city of Brooklyn, nearly or quite two-thirds of the votes taken at the late election, were given by persons of foreign birth, most of them having no property stake in the community, and not knowing or caring probably a fig, about the persons they voted for, and yet as tenacious of their right, and as eager to exercise it, as if each had thousands depending upon the result. In this same district, there were hundreds of *American* voters who did not come to the polls at all, although (for the most part) owners of real estate, and although, besides the judicial officers, delegates to revise the charter of the city were to be chosen—a most important duty—



in which it might be reasonably supposed they would take great interest.

And yet these very *stay-a-ways*—these “*no-meddlers* with politics and elections”—are the loudest and most industrious grumblers when any thing goes wrong, and utter all sorts of imprecations against radical demagogues, official corruption, and political knavery.

The sober truth is, if these men, and such as these are every where in our land—if all classes and parties of *American* citizens—would duly consider their *duty* in the premises, and unite in its performance, there might even yet be a comparative political Millenium; we might be brought back again to the golden age of the Republic.

But another essential step to be taken, and I may add, the first step, is to pray to Almighty God to give you both the disposition and the power to act according to His will. Do you, my hearer, smile at this? Does it appear to you strange or preposterous to recommend a man to pray concerning his vote at an election? Then you have a most imperfect and unworthy view of religion. The man who excludes any sphere of action and of duty from the influence of religion and limits religion to a particular field of human agency denies and destroys religion. Religion is with him only a form,—a pageant,—a Sabbath dress,—a sanctimonious mask worn over the natural and real character. It is not his life,—his light,—his guide—the principle of all his actions, and the soul of all his duties.

You, however, my hearers, are not so depraved as to jibe at the thought of praying for guidance in discharging your duty as a voter. You receive in their whole truth those Scriptures which say to every man “in all thy ways acknowledge God and He shall direct thy paths.” “In every thing prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God; and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus.”

But, in the third place, having thus sought wisdom from above, then seriously and deliberately exercise your own judgment. Give to the subject that consideration which its undeniable importance demands. Ask yourself “which of these

candidates for my vote have I solid reason to believe is most likely to promote the real interests of the community by a faithful discharge of all the duties to be imposed upon him and by a life, conduct and conversation pure and exemplary. This question determines your duty as a conscientious christian man, and this question you cannot evade as a true servant of God, as an honest member of the community, and as an independent, intelligent and patriotic citizen. If, indeed, you are regardless of duty, if you seek not that which is right and proper, but that which may gratify or profit yourself or your family, if you are prepared to set aside principle and rectitude and substitute prejudice or mere party-spirit—you will vote accordingly; but if you have within your breast the upright heart of a man of God, the question which you will endeavour to determine will be exactly that which has been stated.

But, further, whilst you determine for yourself, suffer others to enjoy the same privilege. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?—to his own master he standeth or falleth." You cannot look into his heart and even if you could you would be much better employed in carefully searching and examining your own. That you will find work enough even for a long life. And yet how little are men engaged in such close self-inspection. They work the weeds in another man's field and their own meanwhile becomes covered with thorns. They judge others but themselves they do not judge. Hence, the violence at elections,—hence the bitter party spirit—hence the delicacy and the difficulty of the task of giving men faithful, godly counsel even as a peaceful minister of the gospel without enkindling in their hearts the fiercest of their hateful passions. My brethren, do not ye thus err. "Judge not and ye shall not be judged."

Were every man to vote according to the convictions of his own matured judgment and leave others to exercise the same right of private judgment (and is not this as cardinal a principle in republican politics as it is in theology?) our elections would be at once free from that plague spot on our body politic, the system of bribery.

The ballot box is the basis of that pyramid to which our system may be likened—the great spring that sets the wheels of

government in motion ; the first mover in the political sphere. If this, therefore, be not rightly adjusted and regulated what can we expect but that all the movements of the system will be eccentric, irregular and discordant ?



# On the Necessity of Literature and Men of Letters to the Stability and Happiness of a Republic

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Prepared for the Course of Public Lectures  
Delivered Before the Literary and Philo-  
sophical Society of Charleston in  
June and July, A. D. 1840.

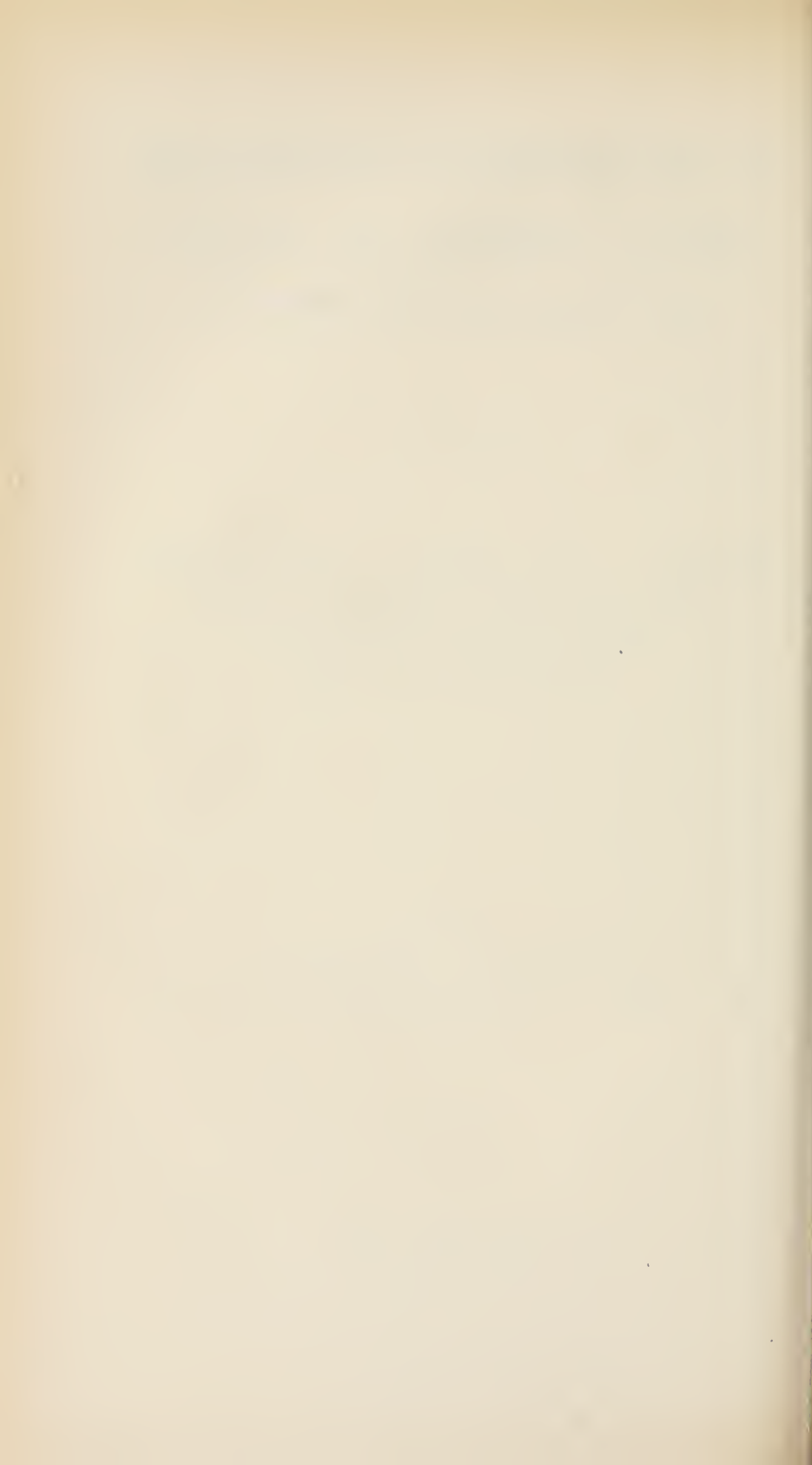
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BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church,  
Charleston, S. C.

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*Read in March, 1840.*





## THE NECESSITY OF LITERATURE AND MEN OF LETTERS TO THE STABILITY AND HAPPINESS OF A REPUBLIC.

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GENTLEMEN: The subject to which your attention is this evening to be directed, is the necessity of Literature and by consequence of men of letters, to the stability and happiness of a Republic.

When we are called upon to separate from the society of one in whose companionship we have found delight, and with whom we have taken sweet counsel, it is our happy privilege to bring him again to remembrance—to retrace all his virtues—and thus confirm and to renew our attachment and regard. And thus after you have been in the sweet society of literature, partaking of her choicest fruits served up to your varying humours in all the variety of taste, and luxuriating in the happy influence of those “thoughts that breathe and words that burn,” it may not be disagreeable ere you take a present farewell, to examine the claims which she possesses to all the admiration you may have bestowed upon her.

The discussion of this subject I am willing to attempt because it is a pleasing one—because it is always grateful to be permitted to express the thanks we feel for any communicated benefit—and because the very nature of the service will secure for me that acceptance which, personally, I dare not expect.

And I may be permitted to say that I am not the less willing to discharge this duty to my respected fellow members of this society inasmuch as it affords me an opportunity of exemplifying, at least in spirit and desire, the friendly alliance which exists between religion and whatever is praiseworthy or of good report among men—the identity of *her* aim and whatever would enable and enlarge the human mind—and the approbation with which she cheers forward whatever will really advance the happiness and well-being of society. Apart from the motive of doing the will of God and securing the eternal interests of our fellow-men the highest incentive to ministerial effort may well be found in the belief that true religion is linked

in with the best interests of society—that it lies at the foundation of all civil and social happiness—that it fosters genius, elicits intellect and awakens the dormant energies of the slumbering mind—that it is the mother of arts and sciences, the patron of learning and the friend of all literary studies—and that thus the labours of its ministry is a sacrifice upon the altar of the common good of our common country, a service of patriotism by which they too, as well as those who mingle more prominently in her public affairs may show forth their love and devotion to a land in which they glory.

What is literature? What are its advantages and claims? and why is it essential to the happiness and stability of a republic? To these questions let us seek a reply.

Literature or letters embraces all that knowledge which is obtained through the medium of books in contradistinction to learning which is confined to knowledge as it is communicated by instruction. The terms “men of letters” and republic of letters include, therefore, all who are devoted to the cultivation of their minds whatever department of knowledge they pursue. And when these or any part of these are associated together in any distinct literary society, as in the present instance, it is their design to diffuse general information through the community and to cultivate, enlighten and gratify it through the instrumentality of their combined influence and power. The field of literature we may, therefore, say is the world of knowledge. Its harvests are plentiful. Its reapers may be indefinitely multiplied and still find abundant occupation. Every taste may be met—every lingering and thirsting after intellectual ailment may be gratified, while all may contribute to the extension of her territory and the increase of her fruits. “Under this name,” says Schlegel, “I comprehend all those arts and sciences and all those mental exertions which have human life and man himself for their object, but which, manifesting themselves in no external effect energize only in thought and speech and without requiring any corporeal matter on which to operate and display intellect as embodied in written language.”\* Literature, therefore, will include science in all her comprehensive survey of the wide extent of nature—history by which the past may

\*Lectures on Lit., vol. 1, p. 10.

become present and pour out her treasures for the benefit of the future—eloquence and wit with all their spirit-stirring themes—and sacred poetry which

Midst this worldly strife  
Refines the fountain springs,  
The nobler passion of the soul;

whatever, in short, regards man in the entireness of his being and looks benignantly upon his comfort or his refinement. Accordingly, the objects to which this society directs the attention of its members have been distributed into the following classes: 1. Mathematics and mechanical philosophy; 2. Chemistry, including Electricity, Galvanism and Mineralogy; 3. Zoology and Botany; 4. Anatomy, Surgery, Physiology and Medicine; 5. Agriculture and Rural Economy; 6. Commerce, Manufacture and Internal Navigation; 7. History, Geography, Topography and Antiquities; 8. Belles Letters, the Languages, Ancient and Modern, and Education, public and private; 9. The Fine Arts.\*

Having thus answered the inquiry what is Literature, let us further ask what then are the claims which Literature presents to our attention and regard?

Man, let it be remembered, is not a simple but a compound being. Like other animals he is possessed of a physical organization. This, however, is but the temple in which resides the intellectual and moral nature. Man, therefore, may be regarded in two aspects—as allied to earth—and as destined to immortality. He is interested in both worlds, and his happiness is linked in with both. Man perfected is man having all that is requisite to the full development of his physical, intellectual and moral nature. And man completely happy is a man in the full and destined exercise of all these powers. When the physical energies are alone employed man merges into a mere animal. When the intellectual are exclusively exercised he becomes shrivelled and impoverished in his bodily frame. And when his moral feelings are made ends instead of means toward a higher end,—even the happiness and ultimate perfection of his being,—man becomes alienated from man and sinks into a gloomy and morbid misanthropy. When mere sensual

\*See Elliott's Address before the Society.

gratification is his rule of action man lives the brute—when mere intellectual pursuits are followed he is so far forth a spirit and unfitted for his present sphere of action—and when spiritual things are exclusively sought to the abandonment or neglect of other obligations he becomes an ascetic dwelling apart from all human sympathies in the gloom of his own selfish heart. Man, therefore, to be happy, to be useful, to be exalted, to be what in this present world he is designed to be, ought to cultivate in an equal and proportionate degree his physical, intellectual and moral nature. In order to act aright he ought to think aright, and in order to think aright he ought to feel aright. He is under the government of physical, intellectual and moral laws, and his happiness lies in obedience to them all, his misery is proportioned to his infraction of any.

Now, what man is individually, he is socially and in communities. He is, as a member of society no less than, as an isolated individual physical and having physical interests; intellectual and having intellectual interests; and moral having moral interests. In considering man, therefore, it is necessary to consider him in his whole nature, in his entire character. His true dignity consists in the just exaltation of all his faculties and his true enjoyment in the proper gratification of all. And that either or both may be secured to any society provision must be made for the physical, intellectual and moral capacities and wants of all its members.

Thus equipped for his earthly voyage man, like a ship of ocean, is subject to a thousand influences which shape his course and contribute to its prosperity or adversity. Thus he is powerfully affected through his physical nature by the influence of climate—through his social nature by his own and the disposition of those around him—through his moral nature by the motives which are addressed to it—and through his intellectual nature by whatever is directed to the understanding. Everything which comes in contact with man in any point is instrumental to his good or ill. Thus knowledge is power—truth is power—virtue is power—intellect is power—money is power—and pleasure, too, is power. How much is the character, habits and happiness of an individual dependent on his parents—his family—his companionship—and even his locality



as it is given him in the bosom of an agricultural or commercial people. Among these influences by which man is moulded literature is eminent. It addresses the understanding, the passions and the heart. It breathes its inspirations over the imagination and by thus swelling the sails, controls the helm. It is the companion of man when alone—when there is no one to contradict—when he is willing to be delighted—when he is free from prejudice and suspicion—and when he is consequently most susceptible of impression. Like Briareus it may be said to have a hundred hands with which it helps every one according to his taste. Descending like the dew in silence and without observation it gently instils its influence into the heart.

Literature, as we have explained it, is necessary to man even when considered in his physical nature. It teaches him how to select what is beneficial and to avoid what is injurious. It arms him against many dangers and discovers many sources of distemper and death. It caters for his enjoyment—affords him occupation—adorns his habitation and sends him forth to nature with eyes to see her beauties, ears to hear her melodies and taste to luxuriate in her proffered bounties. As it was well said by Mr. Elliott in addressing you, "In the wide range of literature and science there is no human civilized being, whatever may be his condition, his profession, his associations, his pursuits, who has not some interest in literature. Science would give new skill and value to the labours of the mechanic, new resources to the enterprise of the man of business, new dignity to the leisure of the man of wealth, new enjoyments to the man of pleasure, new powers to the man of exertion." "Some branches of knowledge, from the sublimity of their views, from the certainty of their results, or from their extensive application to all the occupations of life may have higher claims to our notice, but those which only serve to polish or decorate, merit also attention. We should no more wish to deface the Corinthian Capital of Science than to sap its deep foundation.\* The connexion subsisting between the most abstract and refined speculations of intellect and the partial realities of life is most intimate."

\*Essay, pp. 16 and 17.

Thus did Newton in his study demonstrate the oblate spheroidal figure of our globe and the laws and figures of the worlds above us. "Almost all the great combinations of modern mechanism and many of its refinements and nicer improvements, are, says Herschel, creations of pure intellect, grounding its exertion upon a very moderate number of elementary propositions in theoretical mechanics and geometry." The discovery of the principle of the achromatic telescope is a "memorable case in science where a speculator geometer in his chamber, apart from the world and existing among abstractions has originated views of the noblest practical application."\*

Literature is the very element of man's intellectual nature, and when true to itself it addresses his moral faculties and builds only upon their foundation. By it evil passions should be restrained and virtuous emotions cherished. It should frown upon selfishness, and elevate the standard of character. It should lead man away from the seductions of mere sensual or animal delights to her more exalted pursuits. By habituating him to the contemplation of other objects than himself it would open his mind to the solicitations of kindness. By withdrawing him from scenes of angry contention it would cultivate a mild and generous spirit. By placing sensible things in their just proportions it would enable him to feel affected towards them with equanimity of mind, equally prepared to enjoy or to lose them. It takes away, says Bacon, the barbarism of men's minds, levity, temerity and insolency, and vain admiration. It takes away or mitigates vain fear while it disposes the mind not to be fixed or settled in its defects, but to be susceptible of growth and reformation.† It would give value and dignity to life, and thus makes man solicitous to preserve it. In this way it would check cruelty and whatever would encourage a spirit of revenge, hostility and murder, while it would cover with its greenest verdure and crown with its freshest garlands, the virtues of domestic life. When the soul would sink under the contemplation of prevailing vices and the gloomy anticipations of future ills, in these moments of desolate disquietude she can

\*Quoted Chalmers' Works, vol. 2, p. 176: And thus did the penetrating view of Christopher Columbus point the way to that very land whose soil we now tread beneath us.

†See Wks., vol. 6, p. cxxx.

have recourse to books and they hold up to her the undisfigured monuments of those refined and noble sentiments that have exalted every age. "If," says De Staul, "liberty be dear to him, if the name of Republic associates in his reflections with the images of all the virtues, some of Plutarch's lines, a letter from Brutus to Cato—a few sentences of Cato himself in the language of Addison—are sufficient to raise the soul anew after it has shrunk and sickened at the aspect of contemporary events."\* And when crushed under misfortune and suffering under the pitiless peltings of the storm we may alleviate our sorrows by sympathizing with the griefs of the departed dead, by hearing from their lips the words of consolation and receiving from the example of their fortitude confidence in our own.

And what are the pleasures of literature? Although on this subject, in reference especially to my own department of it, I may be permitted to say non inexpectis loquor, yet what tongue can do justice to the theme? What those enjoyments which are felt amid "the quiet and still air of delightful studies!" According to the beautiful inscription over the Egyptian library of Osymandyas, "Books are the treasury of remedies for the soul." Do we require guidance and direction? Optimi consilarii mortui books will speak plain when counsellors blanch. Do we stand in need of caution and restraint? Here free from all partiality and prejudice we may receive the most faithful admonitions. There is an inspiring aid in these silent relics of the great and good—these armouries of intellect—which out of weakness make strong and nerve the feeblest understanding. Are we poor in earthly riches?

Books are ours—  
Within whose silent chambers treasure lies,  
Reserved from age to age; more precious far  
Than that accumulated store of gold  
And orient gems, which for a day of need  
The sultan hides within ancestral tombs.

Are we rich? Here we may learn the virtues of moderation and humility and be prepared with Roscoe when all other riches fail to live upon those intellectual treasures over which the wave of outward trouble rolls harmless. And after all what treasures are comparable to those which have been collected together by the commerce of mind during all past ages.

\*On Literat., vol. 1, p. 48.

With the love of study (which will always follow the capacity and habit) our time need never hang heavily and why should we complain of solitude? From the noisy tumult of the world we can take refuge in books and retirement. There we can select our companions and hold communion with those who in every department of knowledge have shone forth as bright and burning lights. "How many busy tongues," says Bishop Hall, "chase away good hours in pleasant chat; and complain of the haste of night? What ingenuous mind can be sooner weary of talking with learned authors, the most harmless and sweetest of companions? What a heaven lives a scholar in, that at once in one close room, can daily converse with all the glorious martyrs and fathers! that can single out at pleasure either sententious Tertullian, or grave Cyprian, or resolute Jerome, or flowing Chrysostom, or divine Ambrose, or devout Bernard, or who alone is all these—and talk with them and hear their wise and holy counsels, verdicts, resolutions."\* "Now," says D'Agessan, "when the mind is weary of other labours it begins to undertake her own; sometimes it meditates and winds up for future use; sometimes it lays forth her conceits into present discourse; sometimes for itself often for others. Thus could I all day (as singers use) make myself music with changes and complain sooner of the day for shortness than of the business for toil."†

But it is when measured in its influence upon society the full power and value of literature is seen. "Here, it appears," says Schlegel, "as the epitome of all the intellectual capabilities and improvements of mankind." Its power over society for good or evil is, indeed, illimitable. Without a literature there can be nothing worthy of the name of a civilized community. The destiny of nations has been controuled by it; and the existence, character and permanence of liberty may be measured by the character of its associated literature. Without it liberty cannot exist and much less can it be preserved. On the other hand, liberty is necessary to an elevated literature, they are

\*Bp. Hall Wks., vol. 7, p. 204.

†Quoted by Montague, Bacon's Wks., vol. 16, p. cccclvii: "I am perfectly happy," says Fox in declaration during his retirement, "in the country. I have resources enough to employ my mind and the great resource of literature I am fonder of every day."—See Life of in Nat'l Gallery of Ports., No. 5, p. 109.



correllatives. Like twin sisters they are born together and cannot exist apart. Separated they both become sickly, droop and die. The corruption of literature and morals are evidence of the putrescent state of liberty. When England lay prostrated under the effects of civil warfare, her literary character was lost and when she again rose from the ashes to the enjoyment of peace her literature revived. The Egyptians first exhibited a government of laws and a community civilized and elevated; and here first shone the light of science.\* Athens became the emporium of letters when Solon gave her her laws, and her generals secured her victory and independence. When the destruction of Carthage gave independence to Rome and filled her with peace and plenty, learning and the arts acknowledged her as their patrons. When the dark ages had involved the nations in the night of barbarism books were scarcely to be found even in the papal library at Rome.† The Athenians, it is said, were never so dissolute as in the age of Demetrius Phalereus from whom the corruption of literature took its rise; nor the Romans as when Seneca and Lucan depraved the public taste in the reigns of Caligula and Nero. It was after the victories of England over the Scotch and French had increased her greatness that Chaucer and Gower appeared.

The decline and fall of Greece was certainly preceded by the decline of its literature when for eloquence it had mere declamation and for philosophy sophistry. Equally true is this in regard to Rome for the destruction of the history of Livy and the poems of Virgil was one of Caligula's favorite designs. And after their fall liberty lay entombed with literature until both were resuscitated under Charlemagne. The reformation of religion, literature and civil government and the consequent introduction of purity, knowledge and liberty were contemporaneous and they were coextensive.

Literature is thus influential upon liberty and kindred to it because it excites to great actions—it fills the mind with noble recollections, pure precepts and bright examples—it disinclines to every thing mean, vulgar and sensual. The literature of christianity, imbued with its spirit teaches man to soar upward,

\*Denina on the Revol. of Literat., p. 9.

†Denina on the Revol. of Literat., p. 72.



to aspire to perfection, to cherish the full spirit of universal charity, to forget himself in the good of others, and the present in the glorious recompense of the future. "Liberty, virtue, glory, knowledge, those kindred and closely allied ideas which form the proud retinue that attend on the natural dignity of man cannot possibly be insulated into a separate existence. The completion of each of them results from the reunion of them all."\* Literature is that lyre of Orpheus which, to use the beautiful illustration of Bacon, maintains peace and harmony among the various members of society. "In Orpheus' theatre all hearts and birds assembled, and forgetting their several appetites, some of prey, some of game, some of quarrel, stood all socially together listening to the airs and accords of the harp; the sound whereof no sooner ceased or was drowned by some louder noise but every beast returned to his own nature; wherein is aptly described the nature and condition of men, who are full of savage and unreclaimed desires of profit, of lust, of revenge; which as long as they give ear to precepts, to laws, to religion sweetly touched with eloquence and persuasion of books, of sermons, of harangues, so long is society and peace maintained; but if these instruments be silent, or sedition and turmoil make them not audible all things dissolve into anarchy and confusion."†

Literature taken in this wide sense may be regarded as the instructor of a nature by which she is guided to all the natural advantages and resources of her situation. It is the handmaid of every profession—the comforter of every order of society—and the source of those nameless ties and associations by which the partners in a community are linked together in a holy fraternity and bound to their country by a charm which no distance or time can break.

Let it also be remembered that the character of a nation depends essentially on her literary man. Greece lives in the exalted character of her Homer, her Plato, her Socrates, her Demosthenes, Aschines, Lysias and Isocrates. What were Rome without her Cicero, her Livy, her Horace or her Virgil? The shades of these mighty dead still hover over the ruins of

\*De St., vol. 1, p. 30.

†Vol. 16, p. cxxxi.

these fallen empires and mantle them with a solemn dignity and awful reverence. Britain would sooner lose all title to the glorious achievements of her Nelson, or her Marlborough than to the universal fame of her Bacon, Milton, Locke or Newton. Louis XIV is still the glory of France because he fostered those men of genius through whom the splendour of his reign is still perpetuated. "The influence which the works and genius of Homer have of themselves produced on after ages (it has been said), has alone been far more durable and far more extensive than the combined effects of all the institutions of the Athenian, and all the heroic deeds and transcendent victories of the Macedonian."§

The greatness of a state does not depend upon its extent of territory for this may weaken and enervate it—nor on its riches for these may palsy and debauch it, but upon its spirit, its character and its morals, and these depend vitally on its literary taste. Its literature is the only abiding part of any age or nation. This is that

Monumentum are perennius  
Regalique situ pyramidum altius  
Quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impoteus  
Possit diruere, aut innumerabilis  
Annorum series et fuga temporum.\*

"Have not the verses of Homer continued 2,500 years or more without the loss of a syllable or letter, during which time infinite palaces, temples, castles, cities, have been decayed and destroyed? It is not possible to have the true picture or statues of Cyrus, Alexander, Cæsar; no, nor of the kings and great personages of much later years; for the originals cannot last and the copies cannot but lose of the life and truth; but the images of men's wits and knowledges remain in book, exempted from the wrong of time and capable of perpetual renovation."‡ When Alexander destroyed Thebes he spared nothing but the house and descendants of Pindar, whose odes were admired in Greece. Of this I cannot refuse to give you two illustrations afforded by our own illustrious literary countryman.†

§Schlegel, vol. 1, p. 18.

See beautiful description of the benefits flowing through a philosopher to his country and posterity.—Irving's Wks., vol. 5, pp. 228-9.

\*Hor. Carm., B. 3, vol. 30.

‡Bacon Wks., vol. 16, p. cxxxii.

†Irving's Wks., vol. 1, pp. 225, 149.

Such is an imperfect view of the more general claims of literature upon individuals and societies of men. And they all rest with an increased and not a diminished power upon us. For there are in addition to all these, peculiar obligations making the proper cultivation of literature and the cultivation of a proper literature binding upon all who would promote the happiness and stability of this republic. The streams of knowledge flow in unnumbered channels through every portion of our country and carry with them the salubrity or the poison of their source. For knowledge is power, whether that power is wielded by virtue or vice, by patriotism or treason. The universal distribution of the privileges of learning is attended with the universal diffusion of the dangers of learning. Our literature, therefore, must be the literature of the people and not of a few of the people. It must be a literature adapted to the interest of the mass and not of a select portion or class. If it is evil, then is the mass corrupt—if good then will the mass be purified and ennobled. Our prosperity and happiness as a nation depends upon the character and not on the extension of our knowledge and literature. We are a reading people. The pipes of knowledge, if I may be allowed the illustration, are conveyed into every family and if they carry with them impure or corrupt materials they destroy, not a few, but the country itself. The fate of Thebes, Tyre and Palmyra tells us what must be the instability of all governments where the people are not elevated by virtue.\* In the time of Pericles Greece was unhappy because, *though enlightened*, she was not virtuously instructed. Rome became dissolute and weak when she received from Greece her manners with her literature. Vice was universal in the time of Julius and Augustus. And the diffusion of immorality and unbelief preceded the overthrow of the Jewish commonwealth. How imperative, then, is the duty of cultivating the spirit of a wholesome literature upon every one who loves his country. Let her not learn too late that all true glory rest, all praise, all safety and all happiness upon the moral law. Egyptian, Thebes, Tyre by the margin of the sounding waves, Palmyra, central in the desert, fell; and the arts died by which they had been raised.

\*See Montesquien's Judgment on Ryan on Religion, pp. 19-20.

Call Archimedes from his buried tomb  
 Upon the plain of vanished Syracuse,  
 And feelingly the sage will make report  
 How insecure, how baseless in itself  
 Is the philosophy whose sway depends  
 On mere material instruments—how weak  
 Those arts and high inventions, if unpropped  
 By virtue. He, with sighs of pensive grief,  
 Amid his calm abstractions, would admit  
 That not the slender privilege is theirs  
 To save themselves from blank forgetfulness.

Here every citizen has an influence on the government—that influence will depend upon their character, and that character will be materially affected by their literature. Every man has imposed on him the task of resisting political usurpation, but if unenlightened or misguided he may patronize instead of resisting it. A republic resting upon the basis of general intelligence and virtue in her citizens demands a higher and more excellent literature than a despotism or monarchy.\* Without a controulling and characterizing religious and moral influence mere education will give to a nation a giant's strength with an atheist's hand to use it. This will be a counteractive to vice by turning the attention from amusement and sensuality which enervate and destroy to the nobler pursuits of mind, by providing food for the hungry and occupation for the hours of idleness and recreation. Our growing wealth and prosperity expose us to the evil consequences of wide-spread luxury. If our citizens are taught to luxuriate in polite literature and in all the elegance of art, and to become patrons of science and learning, founders of colleges and seminaries,—then may there spring from this very magnificent intellectual heroes. Demosthenes and Plato, Xenophon and Sophocles flourished in the palmy time of Greece; and Cicero, Cæsar, Livy, Virgil and Horace marked the era of Rome's greatest prosperity. But if this luxury terminates on sensual indulgences how will it undermine the pillars of liberty!

Another evil incident to our popular form of government and to the extension of the elective franchise is the violence of party spirit. In the heat of a contested election—and what

\*Wordsworth Excursion, vol. 4, p. 286: Education—It is the knowledge, intellectual, moral and religious, that constitutes the man. Without its powers wealth would be a curse instead of a blessing. Besides the stability and prominence of our republican institutions have their only guarantee in an intelligent, moral and religious population.—Message of Gov. Noble in Nov., 1839.



election will not be contested where all are admitted to the strife?—the community and oftentimes the whole country heaves under the fury of the storm; the stillness of domestic quiet is alarmed; all is movement and commotion; virtue trembles as she blushing retires from the scene; while discord sows the seeds of future and unterminating feuds and warfare. "The freest government is the one which is exposed to the greatest perils—if it does not work well it must work worse than others." What is to protect us from licentiousness, anarchy or the despotism of party; in fact, from "liberty without law or public order?" We answer unhesitatingly that all other checks will prove like the hands of Sampson when the strong man arises in his might unless they are covered by the protecting Aegis of Religion and Letters. The intellectual character of the people must be exalted and purified until what is the theory of our government shall become experience and the capacity to govern is coextensive with the right—until there shall be formed within the republic a republic of letters which shall give it tone and impulse—which shall assuage the animosities of political contention and bind together differing minds in bonds stronger than the ligaments of a temporary partizanship.

Man, we have seen, is possessed of an intellectual and moral as well as a physical nature. Now, when undue preponderance and attention is given to the latter the former are dwarfed and sink into comparative insignificance. Two dangers arising from this source may or do threaten us. One is the preponderating influence of a military spirit and the other is the undue power of wealth. Military power is arrogant, exclusive and overbearing. Its practical doctrine is that might makes right and that the prowess of the arm is superior to strength of understanding. Moral attributes and great civil abilities are subordinated to the glory of arms. Ignorance and cunning are alone encouraged and in the tumult of some agitating question the foundation for a despotism is laid. To the other danger we are, however, more exposed. Our national character is already distinguished and disfigured by its money-loving spirit. We now measure a man's wealth not by his general happiness and prosperity, but by his riches, and we estimate his worth not by his character, but his purse. The only way left to



become great is to become—not greatly good or wise or virtuous, but greatly rich. This is the summumbonum however, after which all are hasting with insatiate desires. The value of produce has become the value of every thing and of any proposition which can be made it is necessary first to show how much money it will bring. The standard of utility is applied with the calculating caution of the merchant to every pursuit, employment and profession and all the high and ennobling sentiments of our nature are graduated by the scale of their productiveness in dollars and cents. This is the highway to barbarism by which we make first haste in a returning progress towards that condition of natural society where “like brutes men live like brutes they die.”

Now, literature, I mean a christian literature, is the balance-wheel in society, maintaining our equilibrium between man's physical and moral nature—holding up to view his higher destiny—making provision for his intellectual appetites—and preserving in its due supremacy his mental dignity. Talent and virtue, therefore, should be distinguished—for where there is perfect political equality there can be no other foundation for the support of authority, influence or power. What else can secure the confidence, the submission, the reverence of the people? What else can enthrone justice and law upon the hearts of men who are the repositories of all power and guided by their own free will? If power is always regarded with jealousy and borne as a heavy weight how can it be recommended to the hearts of republicans if not clothed in the garments of intelligence and moral greatness? \* Queen Elizabeth once said to Bacon in reference to weak and inefficient magistrates, “Bacon, how can the magistrate maintain his authority when the man is despised?” †

When aristocratic distinctions are obliterated, when men cannot hide their weakness behind the pomp of rank or hereditary greatness, when every man stands or falls by himself and is measured by his own claims to respectability there is no other way for the preservation of personal dignity and due respect than by eminence in intellectual and moral attainments. But these qualities men will and must respect. These attributes

\* See De St., vol. 2, p. 112.

† Works, vol. 1, p. 412.

will and must impart to their possessor proportionable influence whether they are in themselves and for their own sakes valued or not. Mind alone contains within itself the secret fountain of authority and power. And unless men could be reduced to that intellectual equality which characterized the worthy citizens of Communipaw the destruction of all existing distinctions or of society itself today would be followed by other elevations and consequent depressions on the morrow. As the wave borne aloft by the winds of heaven rises above the surrounding waste of waters so will the mind swelled by the heavenly instincts of genius and talent rise superior to the ordinary elements of society.

A jealousy or a disregard of intellectual and literary attainments, of learning and the learned professions were a most unnatural spirit to be indulged in the bosom of this young republic. By these is she what she is. By these alone can she become what she is yet, we trust, destined to be. By these alone can her true glory be won—by these alone perpetuated. The love of country and the love of its honor and dignity “is constituted by recollections and these are laid up in the treasury of her literature.” By this, too, may it not seldom be in the power of even one man to save his country. Cicero delivered his country by his sagacity and his eloquence. Cæsar perpetuated the glory he had achieved in his commentaries.

Were there time we might show that the services of professional and literary men are of more importance to a state, as Bacon testifies, than are those of statesmen or heroes—“the glory of a great man is the patrimony of his country.” Scholars are the guardians of those stores from which men in active courses are finished and literature is happier in its influence on the heart of society than is science herself. Let it not be said that men of letters are the drones of that society in which they live. They are when characterized by a due regard to religion and morality its most productive, its most useful, its most beneficial class. Their work is most valuable, though their wages oftentimes are but poor. To them are we indebted for the inventions which have now modelled society; those discoveries which guide the hand of industry, lighten the toils and multiply the comforts of life. What were the gods of the ancients but

their deified benefactors and illustrious men? Who reared the very foundations of all society by establishing the principles of property and law? Who first directed the keel of commerce and the plough of agriculture and the tools of every civic art? Did not the Georgics of Virgil revive the almost extinguished spirit of husbandry? Did not their Sages civilize and enlighten Egypt, Phœnicia, Chaldea and India? And who but the ministers of religion brought the wilderness of Europe into cultivation and preserved from utter forgetfulness the long forgotten and far banished spirits of the illustrious dead? The science and taste of Greece and the universal diffusion of her knowledge may be traced to the genius of Homer. If Philip could thank the gods not for having given him a son, but for having given him to live during the life of Alexander ill does it become modern society to speak lightly of the services rendered to her by those who spread abroad the healthful streams of universal knowledge. "Our commonwealth possesses no richer treasure than the fair fame of her children. In the revolutions of empires, the present institutions of our land may perish and new ones, perhaps, more perfect may arise; but the glory of our national existence cannot pass away so long as the names of those, who, in it, enlarged the boundaries of knowledge, gave tone to its morals, framed its laws or fought its battles are remembered with gratitude."\*

And in addressing the Literary and Philosophical Society of Charleston why may I not, in conclusion, express the hope that in that crown of glory which shall wreath the brow of this young but distinguished country there shall be found some gems which here emitted their first rays of genius and showed in their native lustre? Why in that band of worthies with whose names posterity shall become familiar may not some be traced to the Charleston Society? Let me call to your remembrance and hold up for your encouragement the honoured name of Roscoe. Are you thrown upon your own efforts? So was Roscoe. Are you engaged in the distracting pursuit of mercantile business? So was Roscoe. Are you occupied with the pressing labours of the legal profession—so was Roscoe. Are you deprived of any extraordinary occasions for the manifesta-

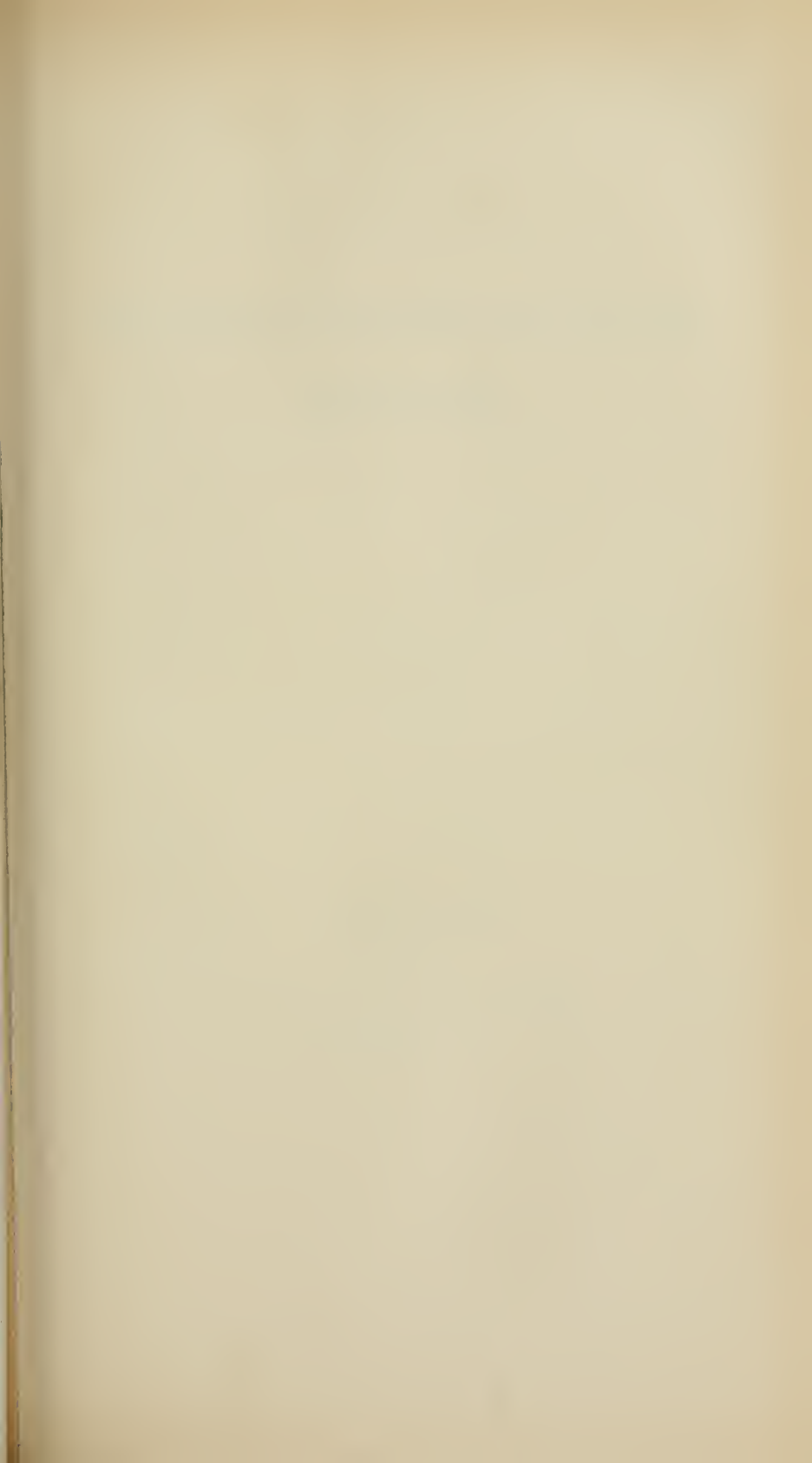
\*National Portraits, Life of George Washington.

tion of character, or are you without any singular endowments of mind and only characterized by such are more common to strong and elevated spirits? So was it with Roscoe. For it has been said that "to the legitimate culture and exercise of the natural emotions and best impulses of the soul all that is good and beautiful in his character must be ascribed."\*

And yet in opposition to vulgar though popular prejudice; by patient and industrious perseverance, Roscoe succeeded in "writing literature and business and general philanthropy with domestic duty without detriment to either." While pursuing the business of his profession he was busily employed in his profound literary researches—and in furthering the great public movements of his time. And at the very period when fame was bearing his name through many lands, he, with another gentleman, was engaged in draining and cultivating an extensive tract of peat-moss in the neighborhood of Manchester. With these studies and pursuits he united that of botany, his favorite science, and was instrumental in instituting the admirable Athenaeum of Liverpool and the establishment of a botanical garden near that city.

Could I hope that the attempt I have now made to illustrate the inseparable connexion between the literature and the prosperity of any country and especially of a republic—would encourage you to prosecute with energy and devotion—such a course as marked the career of Roscoe—and thus stamp the value of your life upon the enduring prosperity and improvement of this community—in this hope I should feel abundantly repaid for any labour I have spent upon it.

\*N. A. Rev., 1835, p. 106.







# The Sphere, Character and Destiny of Woman

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A DISCOURSE

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.



## THE SPHERE, CHARACTER AND DESTINY OF WOMAN.

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JUDGES v: 7.

A Mother in Israel.

MY CHRISTIAN BRETHREN: I am led by a double call to direct my own attention and yours to the sphere, character and destiny of woman.

One of the most prominent and useful branches of christian effort and philanthropy to which, as a church, we are called, that is to say, the education of poor and pious young men for the ministry—has been for many years entrusted to the zeal, industry and self-denying effort of the ladies of the congregation. To this distinction they have attained, nor yet by any formal arrangement, but simply from the fact that they have undertaken what must otherwise have been left unattempted, and carried forward with growing efficiency what must otherwise have been left undone or very feebly accomplished.

To this great cause, the appointment of our General Assembly, in unison with the annual appeal for help, made by our Female Education Society, invites our attention on this occasion.

The recent death of Mrs. Simonton during my brief absence,—so unexpected,—so unforeseen—so appalling to us all—gives double emphasis to the call which is made upon our consideration. When the most unlooked-for tidings of this event reached me in Columbia, I was led to exclaim in the language of our text, “A mother in Israel.” But while Deborah and her company celebrated the glory of a victorious leader, I was led to contemplate a mother in Israel as fallen, fallen in the very midst of her toil and labour for the fulfilment of her destiny in the discharge of her relative material christian duties.

My object now is not to eulogize the dead, but to benefit the living and improve the present occasion. And this I do because there was much in this case to impress our hearts—because having been absent I could not sooner express my feelings towards one so universally esteemed, and because it affords fitting season for dwelling upon an important theme.

I will, therefore, endeavour briefly to point out the sphere, character and destiny of woman, and then make some practical remarks bearing upon the occasion and the character and death of our beloved friend.

As to the sphere of woman there have been manifold opinions; from that which claims for her pre-eminence in all points, to that which degrades her to a level with the beasts that perish.

On this subject, however, as on every other, Scripture takes that ground which commends it to us as the wisdom of God, and which all experience commends to the wisdom of men. It neither flatters nor frowns upon woman. It neither ensnares nor enslaves her. It pays no court to her pride, her vanity, her love of ease, her desire for power, victory or pre-eminence; nor does it give any countenance to the false glare thrown around the tinsel ornaments of mere external appearance and fashionable amusements.

Woman, in the eye of Scripture, is not "a pretty plaything,"—a mere source of pleasure or amusement. She is presented to us as the creature of God, endowed by Him with a spiritual nature, and made amenable to all the responsibilities of life, death, judgment and eternity.

Woman is a component part of humanity. The man is not complete or perfect humanity without the woman nor the woman without the man. Both together constitute manhood, or *man* considered as *the human race*—the whole species of rational, intelligent beings, and both together harmonize to make "sweet music of humanity." It was, therefore, of both God said "let us make man in our own image, after our likeness. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him, male and female created He them." Humanity, therefore, was at first one, and subsequently divided. The two sexes, like two lenses, reflected the character of God, and combined in one image those several qualities of the Creator which either alone would have represented in a defective state.

A full orb'd Deity,  
In his full round of attributes complete.

Here, in the twofold sex of human nature, as in the person of the Incarnate One,—who was a type of perfect and undivided



humanity,—mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other. Of these two sexes the ideal characters were sublimity and beauty, justice and mercy, severity and tenderness, authority and persuasion, reason and affection, protection and love;—and in these qualities combined we have a full resemblance of Him in whom dwelleth all possible excellency. Woman, therefore, was made “the co-equal representative with man,” of that divine image whose moral beauty and uprightness was reflected by the joint manifestation of both natures.

This division of humanity was founded upon the demand of that social nature which God had planted within us, and which required for our happiness, and the welfare of the species, a division of duties, cares, pleasures and responsibilities, with capacities and tastes adapted to them. Happiness depends on society and reciprocated sympathy. All the analogies of earth point to the necessity of such an arrangement and there is no reason to think it is wanting in other worlds, or among angelic beings. Corporeal form is of the earth, earthly, but its variety of conformation is an index and shadow of that spiritual diversity which existed previously and to which it was adopted. The soul, therefore, was not created for the body, but the body for the soul by which is displayed the soul's translucence through her crystal cell.\*

The distinctions found in the character of souls, therefore, are original, necessary and indestructible, and must exist throughout eternity in accordance with the diversified ministrations to which they may be called. Thus we find different orders of angelic beings and different purposes which they are employed to fulfil in accordance with their several attributes,—cherubim and seraphim,—those characterized by power and these by love.

Now, as man was created “but a little lower than the angels,” and held converse and companionship with them, he would look to them, and not to lower animals, for his exemplars; and when, therefore, he felt the need of a spirit like unto himself

\*Sir Thomas Brown says of the soul: “It was before the elements and owes no homage to the sun.”

Thou—thou art not a child of time,  
But daughter of the eternal prime.

whose contrasted qualities should "provoke love and inspire interest," and "free the hollow heart from paining,"—he most probably drew his analogy from the kindred diversity he perceived in angelic natures adapting them to their diversity of occupation and office.

Difference of sex, therefore, does not imply difference of rank, or dignity, or worth, but only a difference of order, purpose and office.

In some respects, on the contrary, woman is equal with man—equal in partaking of the divine nature;—in reflecting the divine image;—in bearing sway and sovereignty over all lower animals;—in standing in covenant relation to God, and in being capable of obedience, recompense and reward, and liable to all the pains and penalties of disobedience. In short, both sexes are human, reasonable, immortal, and co-eternal.

In other respect, however, woman is not equal to man, and this just because her sphere of duty is not the same as man's.

For contemplation he, and valour formed;  
For softness she, and sweet attractive grace.

Society in all its forms is founded upon the principle of compromise, diversity of station, and consequent diversity of employment. So is it in the family.

The world was sad! the garden was a wild,  
And man the hermit sigh'd—till woman smil'd.

Man was first made and constituted the head and governor of the world. And then woman was created of and "for the man,\* that she might be a helpmeet for him"—like unto him—adapted to *his* wants while finding in him the supply of *hers*, and capable, with him, of serving and glorifying God. "For the man was not made" after or out "of the woman, but the woman of the man." "The rib which the Lord God had taken from man made He a woman and brought her to the man." In this way it pleased God to teach the dignity and nobleness of woman;—the subordination of the woman to her "head," to whom she is subject in the Lord, and of whom she is "the glory;"—and the intimate and endearing union and relation that exists between the woman and the man "whom he is bound to love even as himself."

\*1 Cor. 11, 8, 9.

As there must, therefore, in every family and in every society, be a ruler, to whom is committed its charge, and the responsibilities, cares, and duties connected with it—this rule is given to man who is adapted, by strength, vigor and mental endowment, for its discharge. To woman God has assigned the not less honourable, and equally necessary sphere of domestic duty and given her a mental constitution and a physical frame adapted to it.

As humanity, therefore, is divided between the sexes so are its duties and its cares. Man rules by authority, while woman reigns and rules over man's affections, by influence, which as it has its source in human sympathy and desires, is boundless in its operation.

To say, then, that woman is "the weaker vessel" is not to say, that she is inferior. It is by her weakness she becomes strong. Gentleness, persuasion, love,—these are "the cords of a man" which can bind that strength of will which would snap in sunder the chains of usurped authority and dictatorial rule though they were adamant. It is not the torrent which fractifies the earth, but the gentle shower and the silent dew, and such is influence compared with authority. Like that dew the influence of woman extends over our whole lives by means of maternal piety, social converse, conjugal affection, and domestic joys. She bears in her bosom future generations. To her tenderness is left the management of early childhood, and in her is treasured the destiny of the world, for as is the mother such will be the child, such the citizen, and such the future husband, father, and friend. It is woman's to modify disposition, implant sentiment, and mould, and fashion character, prejudice, and virtue. Her influence exerted upon the heart, directs the mind, shapes the manners, and gives tone and character to the political and moral condition of a people.

To woman is committed the greatest of all sciences, that of morality and virtue! Others may furnish knowledge, but she forms and develops the soul. Others may make scholars, mechanics or soldiers, but she alone makes men. The child presents itself to the mother as a divine creature whose intellectual powers it is not merely necessary to cultivate, but whose soul must also be developed; and this soul the mother is

acquainted with. She knows where to carry the light, where to address her lessons. Others will provide the vessels with sails and rigging; she alone must take her place at the helm with the pilot, furnishing him with the compass, and before launching him out upon the ocean of the world, show him in the heavens the star which should guide him. And as a nation is but the aggregate of families, the thoughts and feelings and character of woman will become those of the nation itself, and her character become—as it *often*, indeed, *always* has done,—the national character.

Women, therefore, educate us as children, govern us as youth, and inspire us as men. And hence, their influence, humanly speaking, is omnipotent for good or for evil. They either ruin or regenerate,—ennoble or degrade,—purify or corrupt,—gladden or sadden—the heart of society. A mother's power incites to good or evil, and regulating—as woman does—the details of domestic life, all that most nearly concerns the human race; comes home to their bosoms; and conspires to constitute their happiness which is entrusted to her care.

We have thus seen that in some respects, woman is equal to man, and in some respects unequal, only however, that out of weakness she might be made strong. But we remark, further, that if mental qualities are more exalted than either physical or intellectual, and the virtues of humanity, patience, forbearance, long-suffering, generosity, self-sacrifice, and loving-kindness are superior to the sterner, though not less necessary, virtues of justice, courage and endurance, (and are we not told that “God is love,” and that His tender mercies are over all His works,\*\*) then is woman, whose qualities these are and should be, endowed with attributes more exalted than those which characterize man's more stern and rugged soul.

O fairest of creation, last and best  
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd,  
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,  
Holy, divine, good, amiable or sweet!  
Hers is that love sublime,  
And hers that strength of feeling great  
Above all human estimate.

\*Ps. 145-9.

†See some very judicious remarks on the wisdom of this inequality in Mrs. Elliss's “Wives of England,” Ch. iii, p. 72, Eng. ed., and p. 45, Ch. ii.



Goodness, therefore, and not greatness is woman's sphere. And to cultivate and cherish goodness is the design of God in the sphere allotted to woman and which as it saves her from many temptations gives her the opportunity of adorning herself with many virtues.\* Religion, therefore, elevates woman by elevating the qualities with which she is endowed; by defining her duties, and by sanctifying her influence. Home is her throne, influence her sceptre, kindness her law, prudence, discretion and compliance her handmaids, and the hearts of men her empire.

How noble, then, is woman's mission How exalted her high calling. Hers is the only universal power, the only enduring kingdom, the only undying glory, and the only unchanging happiness. The entire circle of life rolls round beneath her influence. She is weak that she may regulate strength—tender, that she may controul the mighty, and full of love that she may endure all things, hope all things, bear all things, accomplish all things and be found when necessary, stronger in purpose, fortitude and reserve than death itself.

Oh! say not woman's lot is hard,  
Her path a path of sorrow;  
To-day, perchance, some joy debarred  
May *yield* more joy to-morrow;

It is not hard—it cannot be,  
To speak in tones of gladness,  
To hush the sight of misery,  
And soothe the brow of sadness.

It is not hard sweet flowers to spread,  
To strew the path with roses,  
To smoothe the couch, and rest the head,  
Where some loved friend reposes.

It is not hard to trim the hearth  
For brothers home returning;  
To wake the songs of harmless mirth,  
When winter fires are burning.

It is not hard a sister's love  
To pay with love as tender;  
When cares perplex, and trials prove,  
A sister's help to render.

It is not hard when troubles come,  
And doubts and fears distressing,  
To shelter in a father's home,  
And feel a mother's blessing.

\*The views here given will be found very well developed in Miss Coxes' very interesting and valuable volumes on "The Claims of the Country on American Families," and very beautifully by Mrs. Huntington in her Diary. See her Memoirs, p. 56.



It is not hard when storms arise  
'Mid darkness and dejection,  
To look to heaven with trusting eyes,  
And ask its kind protection.

Then say not woman's lot is hard,  
Her path the path of sorrow;  
To-day, perchance, some joy debarred  
May yield sweet peace to-morrow.

How all-important, then, the character and education of women, since to them is committed the moral education of the world—the sowing of the seeds of “virtue in the soul and vigor in the mind!”

How invaluable that divine revelation which has taught woman her sphere, and man her dignity, worth and power!

How surely, also, do all schemes which would favour polygamy or promiscuous marriage, or which would drag woman into the arena of public life, and the contests of fame, literature and ambition, or which, on the other hand, would withdraw her from the family circle, where she sits as the presiding genius; which she establishes in order; and from which as a seminary she sends forth well disposed, well disciplined, and well accoutred citizens—how surely, I say, do all such theories, whether sanctioned by infidelity, superstition or false religion, degrade, enervate and destroy the influence of woman and the character of man!

As is woman so has been every age and nation. Man can not degrade woman without degrading himself. He cannot keep her ignorant without obscuring his own sunshine. He cannot belittle and fritter her mind by vanity, flattery, and vain superficial accomplishments without injuring to a corresponding extent the character of society. If he sensualize her he debilitates and destroys himself. If he immures and cloisters her, he withdraws from society, its light, its leaven, and its life. If she is corrupt, the very soul of society is infected with a contagious leprosy. Do you ask for proof? We appeal to all history, and to all ages—we appeal to Pagan and Mahommedan lands—we appeal to France, to Spain, to England at her various epochs and to our own country.

Woman's true sphere, then, is the heart—the home—the family, and all the correspondent offices of kindness, and

charity, which conspire to elevate, refine and ennoble these, and to unite man to God and man to man.

Seek to be good, but aim not to be great;  
A woman's noblest station is retreat;  
Her fairest virtues fly from public sight;  
Domestic worth,—that shuns the strong a light.

Amid the deep degradation and misery in which Rousseau found France when, as Aime-Martin, says, "bound down beneath the weight of their long servitude the people were barbarous in the midst of civilization, and ignorant in the midst of riches," the genius of Rousseau was devoted to the subject of regenerating the nation by regenerating its families. He aimed, therefore, at fitting each woman to be a mother, and by securing each mother to be a wife, he expected that each child would become a worthy citizen. Rousseau pointed out the lever that could elevate society, but he knew not, alas, that gospel which is the only power able to wield that lever—"the power of God unto salvation."

Similar was the plan of another great genius for the regulation of society, the English Sheridan. "Women govern us," said he, "let us try to render them perfect, the more they are enlightened, so much the more so shall we be. On the cultivation of the mind of women depends the wisdom of men. It is by women that nature writes on the heart of man."

Such is the voice of genius, and such is the voice of humanity. And to this voice all history is an echo, for there is, perhaps, no exception to the rule that all great men have had good mothers who fanned the flame of genius and nursed—their virtues, their valour, their patriotism or their love of learning—into life.\* The proofs of this truth abound on every side whether we turn to ancient or modern history, to France, to England, to Germany or to America.

Such, then, is the sphere of woman, the sphere which God gave her, for which God endowed her, to which religion consecrates her and whose cultivation as a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, a friend and a christian it requires from her.

This sphere can appear limited or low only to those who think happiness inferior to parade and pomp, or who are absurd enough to imagine that this happiness depends on the compara-

\*See Aime-Martin, pp. 5, 9, 63, and "The Mothers of England."

tively few events which are great and glorious rather than upon the small but perpetually recurring incidents of good or evil which form the staple of human life.

And now as it regards the *character* of woman this may be inferred from her sphere and her duties. Nature has assigned her a capacity for "industry, neatness and economy to engage her in the tranquil occupations of her appropriate sphere."

Self-denial, self-renunciation, self-sacrifice, patience, endurance, discretion, prudence, modesty and grace—these are the meek and quiet ornaments of woman.

It is accordingly manifest, that, in sprightliness and vivacity, in quickness of perception, in fertility of invention, in powers adapted to unbend the brow of her learned, to refresh the overlaboured faculties of the wise, and to diffuse throughout the family circle the enlivening and endearing smile of cheerfulness, the superiority of her female mind is unrivalled.

Were we called upon to produce examples of the most amiable tendencies and affections implanted in human nature,—of modesty, of delicacy, of sympathizing sensibility, of prompt and active benevolence, of warmth and tenderness of attachment?—whither should we at once turn our eyes? To the sister, to the daughter, to the wife?

The testimony of Ledyard, one of the most extensive travellers, is very striking: "I have always remarked that women in all countries are civil, obliging, tender, and humane; that they are ever inclined to be gay and cheerful, timorous and modest; and that they do not hesitate, like men, to perform a generous action. Not haughty, not arrogant, not supercilious, they are full of courtesy, and fond of society; more liable in general, to err than man; but in general, also, more virtuous, and performing more good actions than he. To a woman, whether civilized or savage, I never addressed myself in the language of decency and friendship without receiving a decent and friendly answer. With man it has often been otherwise. In wandering over the barren plains of inhospitable Denmark, through honest Sweden and frozen Lapland, rude and churlish Finland, unprincipled Russia, and the wide-spread regions of the wandering Tartar; if hungry, dry, cold, wet or sick the women have ever been friendly to me, and uniformly so. And to add to this virtue,

so worthy the appellation of benevolence; these actions have been performed in so free and so kind a manner; that if I was dry, I drank the sweetest draught, and, if hungry, I ate the coarse morsel with double relish."

Now, all these qualities of woman's nature the Bible recognizes and the gospel renovates and refines.

"Her price," says Solomon, in describing a virtuous and accomplished woman, "is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ship, she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field and buyeth it; with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good, her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. He is not afraid of the snow for her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry, her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it, and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."\*

From this part of our subject, then, we may learn, in the first place, the supreme importance of female education, since if the influence of women is so universal and so vital, all that is

\*Proverbs 31, 10-31. 1 Tim. 2, 12-14. Titus 2, 4-5. 1 Pet. 3, 3-4.



dear to humanity, depends on the character which that influence assumes, and the objects towards which it is directed. If it is allowed to foster the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes, and the pride of life, then such will be the aim, object, and end of life and the depraved character of man. But if, on the other hand, it is sanctified and pure, and directed to the promotion of virtue, goodness and piety, then we may hope to see the millennial age of our world's blessedness hastened on.

That from the distribution God has made both of the qualities and the duties of humanity, there is and can be no proper ground for jealousy or contention between the sexes as to superiority. Each occupies a separate sphere and fulfils a separate economy, while both are alike interesting, important and necessary to the species. "Nevertheless," says the apostle, after affirming the priority of man as it regards the order of creation and the possession of authority, let not man abuse this order by tyranny or haughty pride since it is evident that "the man is not without the woman nor the woman without the man."

We learn also the unspeakable value of that divine philosophy contained in the "glorious gospel of the blessed God," which so fully promises and provides for the elevation, happiness, and lustre of the present life as well as of that which is to come, by prescribing to each sex their respective duties and inspiring them with motives actuating to their discharge. And here let us gratefully rejoice that we are protestants, that we live in a protestant country and age, and that our institutions, our system of education, and our social order and habits are directed and controlled by the free, liberal, and refining influence of an untrammelled and uncorrupted christianity. For, while any form of christianity, the least glimmering of its light is immeasurably to be preferred to paganism, yet it is also true that in countries where christianity is corrupted and its free spirit enchained woman has been, and is degraded. "All that tends to enlarge the ideas, enlighten the conscience, and elevate the soul are not to be thought of by the women of such lands;" and a people are consequently produced, characterized, as Aime-Martin forcibly says, by "an ignorance that believes all, by a superstition that does not reason, and by a



fanaticism that prostrates itself, and then rising says, Whom shall I strike?"

The object in such countries, as he further remarks, is to make woman "a penitent, and a coquette; the delight of a saloon, or the angel of a convent," entirely forgetting that the perfect woman is she who at the same time leads a social and religious life, the life of home, moral life, and who discharges well the duties of sister, daughter, mother and wife. "In such countries," he adds, "religion instructs women from the pulpit; but by concentrating its morality in penitential practices, it presents more inducements for repentance than for the practice of virtue. The Massillons, the Bourdalons, the Boussets labour to stifle the passions—when they should have learned how to direct them. Far from sustaining humanity, they crushed it beneath the yoke of a violent unnatural and unchristian doctrine, while their greatest aim was not to make its victims live honestly in the world, but to tear them from it altogether."

Christianity, pure, free, protestant christianity alone teaches us the duty of strengthening "women because they are weak; of enlightening them, because they are powerful," and of seeking in them fit companions in all the paths of wisdom here, and in all the recompense of reward hereafter. Man being essentially born for society, he must have a companion, a friend, a second self, who associates herself with his existence, who shares his joys and his griefs.

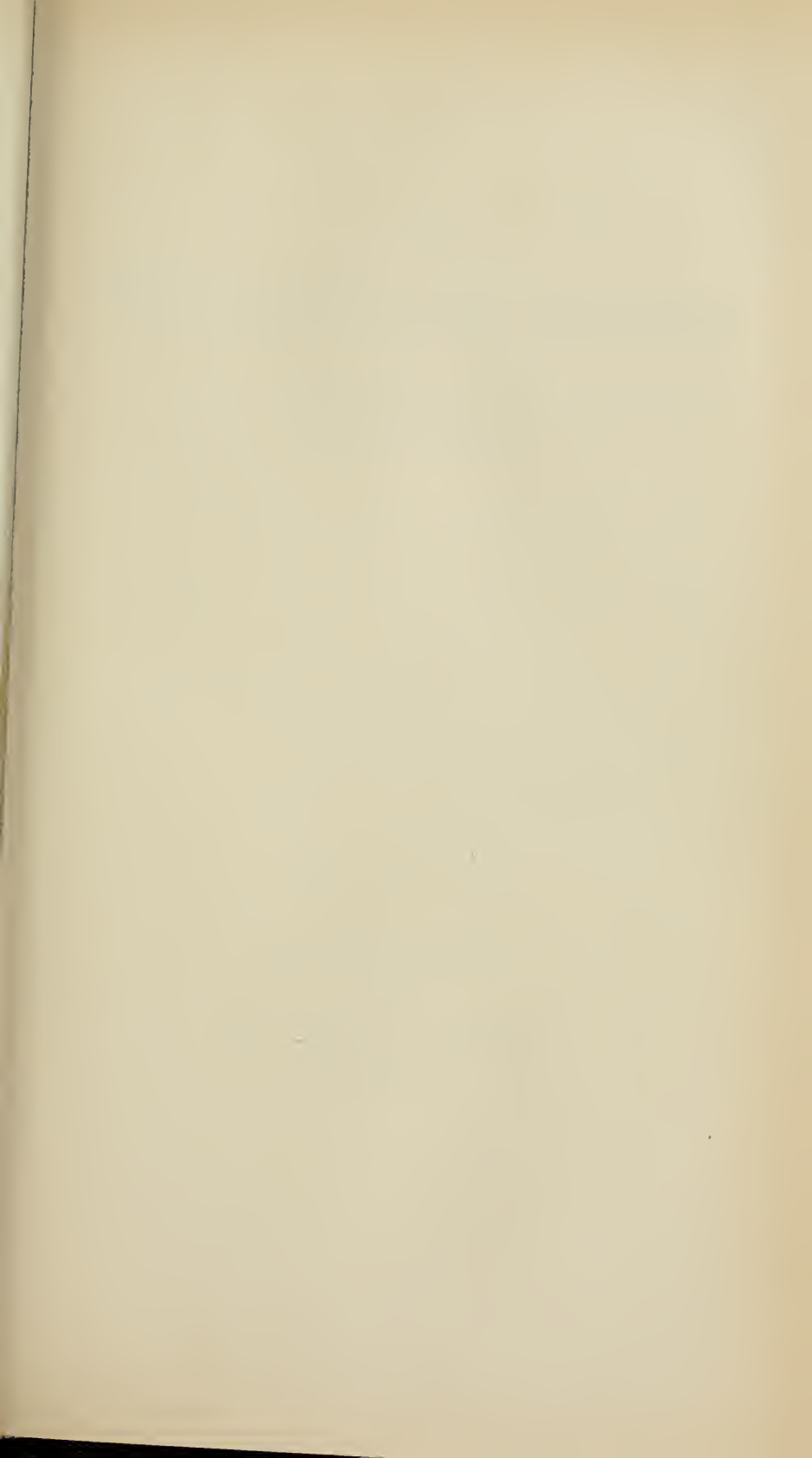
We learn, thirdly, the defects to which the female character is most exposed. The gay vivacity and the quickness of imagination, so conspicuous among the qualities in which the superiority of women is acknowledged, have a tendency to lead to unsteadiness of mind, to fondness of novelty, to habits of frivolousness and trifling employment; to dislike of sober application, to repugnance to graver studies, and to a low estimation of their worth; to an unreasonable regard for wit and shining accomplishments; to a thirst for admiration and applause; to vanity and affection. They contribute likewise to endanger the composure and mildness of the temper, and to render the disposition fickle through caprice and uncertain through irritability.

Such, then, my brethren, is the sphere, character and destiny of woman, and it would be an easy and delightful task to show from the history of all ages that to female and especially material, influence,—where enlightened and judicious—literature is indebted for much of its progress and polish;—science for its most eminent philosophers and patrons;—the state for its wisest legislators, and its purest patriots;—and religion for its most successful agents, its most efficient missionaries and its most numerous, most devoted, and most self-denying votaries. But we must forbear, and only further remark that this benign and happy influence of woman depends not upon her greatness and power of intellect, but upon her goodness of disposition and of heart. It is, therefore, within the reach of all, and to be sought after and emulated by all. It requires neither fortune, publicity, nor station. For even as the fairest flowers are produced in the shade and retirement of the garden, so have the greatest and wisest men sprang up amid the obscurity and retirement of material guardianship, in many cases without any advantage from the sunshine of favour, or of power, and even without the help of a father's care.

Her whose death we deplore, Mrs. Simonton, was in every sense an exemplar of what a woman should be to fulfil her destiny in the world. She sought to please and not to captivate; to benefit and not to receive vain and fulsome gratulation; not *to be* a wife or a mother but to discharge well the duties which those eventful relations entail. Mrs. Simonton was truly “a mother in Israel.”

Death came but found her waiting and working. Death came, but without his sting. The grave opened, but without its gloom. Her work was done, her travail and her toil accomplished, her pilgrimage complete and now she is forever with the Lord, with Him, her Consort.

Grieve not for her. Onward!





# First and Second Advents of Christ

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TWO DISCOURSES

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.





# FIRST AND SECOND ADVENTS OF CHRIST.

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## DISCOURSE ONE.

HEBREWS IX: 27, 28.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

In this passage, the two great cardinal events in the history of redemption are stated in connexion with one another—the first and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the two great cardinal points of christian doctrine involved in them—the justification of believers by His atoning sacrifice at His first coming, and their completed salvation and exaltation at His second coming.

In all ages, the faith of the church has been exercised, partly in looking back upon past events, and partly in looking forward to the future fulfilment of promises; the past events being the foundation of the faith, and the promises the superstructure resting upon it. During the Old Testament dispensation both of the comings of Christ were among the promises, both being then future; and the foundation on which the confident expectation of them was made to rest was the previous manifestations which God had given of His existence and His character—a foundation which was becoming deeper, and fiercer, and wider, as every succeeding age brought along with it new evidences of His power, and grace, and faithfulness, in His dealings with His people.

As both of the comings of the Messiah were, under the Old Testament dispensation, among the promises they were not so clearly distinguished from one another that the saints of that age could discriminate between them, or even be certain that there were to be a first and second coming. Scenes of humiliation and of glory were so intermingled, that although they were firmly persuaded that a Messiah—and anointed Prophet and King—was to come, they could scarcely, even if they had sat down to the inquiry with an unbiased mind, have arrived at any result beyond conjecture that there might be implied a

first and second coming of that Great Personage. But in truth, as was very natural, they seem generally to have passed by the predictions of suffering as incomprehensible, and to have fixed their attention exclusively on "the glory that was to follow;" and perhaps very few of them ever advanced further than the Ethiopian eunuch, who on reading the description of our Lord's sufferings, said to Philip, "of whom speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?"

But, when our Lord came to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and, when, after having died, He rose from the dead, and ascended to heaven, the first advent came to be clearly distinguished from the second advent; and not only so, but the first advent was immediately transferred from its former place among the promises to a place in the foundation on which the promises are made to rest. And it became not merely one of the foundations, but "the chief corner stone" of the foundation, nay, in a certain sense, the only foundation. That Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God—is that rock on which the church, with all its hopes is built. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

This first coming of Christ is the great foundation of the faith of His people in various points of view. The offering up Himself is the ground of our acceptance with God—the satisfying of the law in our stead—the price of our ransom from bondage—the actual purchase of the promised inheritance which is now laid up in Christ's possession on behalf of those who believe on Him. His resurrection from the dead is the pledge of our resurrection; and the visible ascension of Christ to heaven was instantly applied by the angels who appeared to the apostles who were yet gazing upwards after Him, as the pledge and illustration of His again coming in the clouds of heaven.

And when the foundation was thus deepened and consolidated, a corresponding enlargement and importance was given to the promises which were to rest upon it. Under the Old Testament dispensation, the direct promises were chiefly of a temporal kind. Abraham was to have a numerous posterity, and the land of Canaan for their inheritance; He was also to

have a great name, and in His seed were all nations of the earth to be blessed. When the temporal part of these promises (for they included spiritual things) was fulfilled in the days of Solomon, a great accession was made to the foundation of the faith, and a corresponding extension was given to the promises. Solomon was directed by the Spirit of the Lord to declare the insufficiency and vanity of that very temporal prosperity, which he had enjoyed by promise; and, as the nation sank under the influence of corruption, succeeding prophets were guided by the same spirit to direct the attention of the people of God to scenes of future glory—to the coming of the anointed one of God, and to the rise of a glorious kingdom under Him, the chief excellency of which was to be the holiness of the people—and these predictions became every day more spiritual till the close of the Old Testament prophecy.

When the Lord Jesus Christ came, and laid an adequate foundation by His death and resurrection, and ascension to heaven, then the promises were made to stretch forward into eternity. His disciples were taught explicitly that they must abandon every hope of a portion upon the earth—of an inheritance during their sojourn here;—that in the world they were to expect nothing but tribulation;—and that they must postpone their hope of happiness till after they had closed their eyes on everything carnal and temporal, and had opened them on the unseen wonders of eternity,—especially till the Lord Jesus should have come in His glory. The church was, from that time, to know nothing, not even Jesus Himself, “after the flesh.” It was to be forever weaned from external exhibitions of dazzling light, of imposing sights and sounds, and of outward state and splendour—all of which had been necessary in its infancy and childhood. Jesus had now appeared in His true glory—“the glory as of the only begotten of the Father”—“the likeness of the Father’s glory and the express image of His person;” He had appeared in the glory of His power, wisdom, justice, mercy, love, and unbounded generosity, all blended and harmonized in the great work of redemption; and the Church is thenceforth to rise above the “beggary elements” of the world, and to appreciate the surpassing excellency of that true spiritual glory, the glory of holiness, which she had

witnessed, and to fix her hope on being called to participate in it.

The second coming of Christ has been held forth, from the beginning as the great object of the faith and hope of the church. It is included in the first promise after the fall, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent." It was more distinctly announced by Enoch, the seventh from Adam, as the Apostle Jude informs us: "And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of His saints." It was repeated in Ps. 1-6: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth that He may judge His people. Gather my saints together unto me; those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice and the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is Judge Himself." It is anticipated in those Psalms in which all nature is called on to "rejoice before the Lord, because He cometh to judge the world in righteousness." It is implied and alluded to in many passages of the prophetic Books. But both the advents and their consequents, being then future, those predication which refer to the first advent and its consequents previous to the second advent, and those which refer to the second advent and its consequents, are so interwoven, that they cannot, I apprehend, with any degree of certainty, be disentangled. We shall, therefore, pass on to the New Testament, where we shall find it presented in a great variety of aspects.

Our Lord's second coming is taught and illustrated in several of His own parables; as the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, when "those that were ready went in with the bridegroom at his coming, and the door was shut;" the parable of the man taking a far journey, giving a charge to his servants, and, on his return, calling them to account; of the nobleman who was heir to a kingdom, going to a great distance to receive the kingdom and to return, giving also a charge to his servants, and on his return rewarding those that were faithful, punishing the unfaithful servant, and, at the same time, punishing his enemies that would not have him to reign over them. It is



alluded to also in the parable with which He concludes His sermon on the mount—the building on a rock, and building on the sand, and the tempest of wind and rain and flood that was effectually to test the soundness and strength of the house; also in the parables of the tares and the wheat, and of the net cast into the sea. It is directly announced by our Lord in several of His discourses: “For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to His works.” “Hereafter shall ye see the son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” “Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. Marvel not at this for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of Life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation,” and it is thus graphically described: “When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand but the goats on the left.”

Again, the very first announcement that was made to the disciples, after our Lord’s ascension, was, that in like manner He should come again: “And when He had spoken these things, while they beheld He was taken up, and a cloud received Him, out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.” The great revolution that is to be affected by the second advent is strongly marked by the Apostle Peter: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God

hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began." "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." "But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." And this passage leads us to the more detailed account of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15), where the apostle says: "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first priest; afterwards they that are Christ's at His coming;" and after some further reasoning and explanation he sums up the whole by a description of the resurrection similar to that which he had given to the Thessolonian Church: "Now, this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." The judgment, so frequently spoken of in the epistle, must be referred to the same glorious advent: "But why dost thou judge thy brethren? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." The Apostle Peter connects the day of judgment with "the perdition of ungodly men." And this mention of the perdition of the wicked leads us to that terrific description of the same awful catastrophe in 2 Thess. 1, 6-10: "Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense

tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power; when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." The flaming fire here mentioned again connects this passage with the passage already cited from Ps. 1 and also with 2 Pet. 3. "But the heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in holy conversation and godliness looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, whereas the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness."

All these passages of the New Testament are so interwoven as evidently to refer to the same event—the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is called the "day of the Lord," the great day of the Lord "the day of Jesus Christ," "the day of God," the "great day of judgment," and sometimes simply, "that day," all of which expressions are proved beyond dispute to refer to the same event by one or other of the same transactions or characteristics being connected with them.

From all this then it appears that Christ shall come suddenly, and by the world unexpectedly, but visibly in the clouds of heaven with all His saints and holy angels, accompanied with flaming fire, and the great sound of a trumpet—that men shall be raised from the dead. The righteous shall then be welcomed to the kingdom and to the mansions prepared for them;

and the wicked "driven away in their wickedness," with the devil and his angels into the everlasting fire prepared for them.

That—the heavens and the earth that now are shall be dissolved by fire, and their elements melted with fervent heat.

That—a new heaven and a new earth shall arise wherein shall dwell righteousness.

That—Christ shall in the body in which He rose from the dead, reign on that new earth over all His redeemed people, and they shall see His face, not then as through a glass darkly, but face to face; they shall see even as they are seen, and shall be perfectly like to Him, when they shall see Him as He is. They shall be equal unto the angels, nay, shall judge angels, and shall be kings and priests unto God for ever.

This is the salvation of Christ's people, the prize of their high calling of God in Jesus Christ towards which they are to press, if by any means they may attain unto the blessed and glorious resurrection of the dead. (Phil. 3.) And it is for this that they are to look, to watch, to wait, to pray; it is towards this they are to hasten; and it is this they are to rejoice in, and to love, for "Blessed are all they that love His appearing."

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## DISCOURSE TWO.

### HEBREWS IX: 27, 28.

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

In the preceding discourse from this passage I said nothing of certain prophecies conveyed in visions accompanied with hints for the interpretation of them, which are to be found in various parts of Scripture, but chiefly in the Book of Daniel, and in the Book of Revelation. I have not by omitting all reference to these books intended to throw any disrespect on the study of the prophecies contained in them; for a blessing is pronounced upon those who read or hear them, and keep those things that are written in them. But to understand them aright, we must understand their place in the system of revealed truth, and learn to keep them in their proper place. To ascertain what that place is I offer the following observations:



1. The events symbolized in the prophetical visions are to take place on this earth, before the second coming of the Lord; and, consequently, in the present imperfect state of man. Daniel commences his prophecies with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, and the state of the church in his own day, and carries them down to what is manifestly the day of judgment. "I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake. I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame. As concerning the rest of the beasts, they had their dominion taken away: yet their lives were prolonged for a season and time. I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom that all people, nations and languages, should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."—(Dan. 7: 9, 14.) John begins his historical visions with the going forth of a personage on a white horse, conquering and to conquer; which, from a subsequent repetition of the same symbol, evidently signifies the going forth of the Lord Jesus, by His word and spirit, to bring the last great empire, the Roman empire, into subjection to His law—and he also concludes with the day of judgment, and the final and eternal blessedness of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and the final exclusion of all others from the holy city, the New Jerusalem, and their everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. All other events, therefore, that are symbolized in the prophecies, precede the day of judgment, and belong to our present imperfect state.



2. From this it follows that none of these events can be proposed to us as objects of faith or hope, because, ever since the first coming of Christ, the church has been explicitly taught that, in this preparatory state, she has no inheritance; that she is to look for nothing here, but tribulation; that she has no continuing city, but that she is to look for a city, whose builder and maker is God; that God's people are here as dead, their life being hid with Christ in God, and that when He appears (not till then) they shall appear with Him in glory.

Now, the experience of the church, in all ages, has proved that these prophecies cannot be applied to particular events till the events themselves come to explain them. In no age have the most intelligent and learned, of the disciples of Christ, formed, from the prophecies, any conception even approaching to truth, of events to them yet future; nay, the application of them to events past, is, till the present day, involved in much dispute and uncertainty, even among genuine disciples of Christ.

It may be asked, then, why should we study these prophecies and what is the use of them, if we cannot hope to discern with certainty the events which they symbolize?

I answer, this is not the intended use of them, and they would occupy an important place in the Bible, although we should never be able, by means of them, to foresee any future event, or even to apply them to past events. For the character of the events is clearly expressed in the symbols, although there is difficulty in applying each symbol to its proper event. The symbols clearly distinguish calamity from peace and prosperity, wickedness from holiness, the displeasure of God from His favor. The great essentials of the events of the world's history are, therefore, clearly indicated in the character of the successive symbolical visions. And, taken together, they present a dim, shadowy, hazy scene, as looming through vapor and smoke, of a world in confusion—the sun and moon obscured, stars falling from heaven, mountains torn from their roots and cast into the sea; floods and furious tempests roaring and devastating; fire, blood and smoke, huge spectral forms of monstrous beasts and unclean spirits rising up in the gloom, ravaging and destroying, and deceiving the wretched men that

appear in these scenes; all the powers of evil, led on by Satan, the great dragon, deluding and tormenting and destroying the inhabitants of the earth; God contending with them from heaven by thunders, and lightnings, and hail; hideous countenances distorted with agony, gnawing their tongues with pain, and blaspheming the God of heaven, looking out from the gloom and shrieks of horror and despair rising up from the midst of the wild uproar,—but these terrific scenes occasionally interrupted by scenes of surpassing beauty and loveliness; gleams of sunshine falling upon gentle flocks and sheep feeding and reposing on luxuriant meadows, beside still waters; companies of the saints of God assembled on His holy mount; glorious vistas into heaven; innumerable multitudes of holy angels and redeemed spirits of the just, clothed in white robes and palms in their hands; sounds of sweetest melody wafted to ear, and mingled harmony of ten thousand harps, and ten thousand times ten thousand ecstatic voices singing the high praises of God and of the Lamb, rising and swelling and filling the whole vault of heaven.

And just such has been the world's history—a continued scene of confusion; one wave of conquest and rapine and devastation following another; bloody tyrannical empires rising one after another, each upon the destruction of its predecessor—massacres, conflagrations, treacheries, dark idolatries, mystical abominations, persecutions of the people of God—but these mingled with occasional peace and joy—God's people living under His protection, going forth in His service, extending His kingdom, singing His praises, and rejoicing in His presence and favor. And the lifting of the veil from futurity, so far as to enable us to form some conception of the character of the events, dim as might be, that were to constitute the world's history—was calculated to effect many important purposes—to sustain the faith of the church in the most calamitous times, to keep alive the hope of the people of God in the midst of outward ruin and destruction—to satisfy them that God was working in and through all events, and conducting all to a great and glorious consummation—to forewarn them of the devices and stratagems of the enemy—especially, it was claiming the whole history of the world as a revelation

of the power, and wisdom, and holiness, and justice, and mercy of God, by showing that all was foreknown to Him and appointed by Him, and that all would be made subservient to His glory, and to the final, eternal happiness of His redeemed people.

It is doubtless, therefore, our duty and our privilege to study these prophecies, that we may be prepared for whatever agitations and revelations we may be called to witness, or be involved in, and that we may be able to look forward with confidence to the end of the world's eventful history in the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ to effect the restitution of all things. But we ought carefully to keep the results of such studies in their own place—as certainties, indeed, in regard to the general character of the events, good or evil, of which the world's history is to consist, till the time of the end, but merely as possible or probable conjectures in regard to times and places, and even in regard to the precise nature of the good or evil indicated by them; and especially we should take heed never to permit such conjectures to interfere with the great fundamental truths of christianity—the first and second advents of the Redeemer.

A view of the future history of the world has of late years been much pressed upon the christian church by some estimable men, which is formed by an admixture of the plain promises of the Word of God with certain interpretations of the symbolical prophecies, which, I confess, seems to me to endanger the whole fabric of christianity. This view is, that, previous to Christ's coming to judgment, there is to be a millennium, or thousand years, at the commencement of which Christ will come, and during which He will dwell personally—that is, bodily on the earth—when His saints that have died shall be raised from the dead, and reign with Him, while other men shall be living in their natural bodies upon the earth along with them; that there will be an apostasy after this millennium and then the day of judgment; and some who hold this view place the conflagration of the heavens and the earth previous to the millennium; while others, I believe, postpone it to the day of judgment.

The only passage in Scripture on which the expectation of a millennium, or thousand years of spiritual prosperity, is founded, is in Rev. 20: 1-10:

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand, and he laid hold of the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed for a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded, for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, nor in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. And when the thousand years are expired Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go forth to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

It is very extraordinary that round this solitary symbolical announcement of a thousand years, during which Satan is to be bound in the bottomless pit, have been congregated almost every promise of external glory contained either in the Old or New Testament, and a period of blessedness has thus been held up, during the present transitory, imperfect, sinful state of man, which has to a fearful extent been made to obscure

the great promise to which the faith of the church has been directed in all ages, and on which the hope of every individual member of the church rests; namely, the eternal separation of the righteous from the wicked, the destruction of Satan, the abolition of death, and the everlasting peace and joy of all God's people in the presence of God, and the restitution of all things—all to be affected by the second coming of Christ to judgment.

On this passage I would observe:

1. That the events predicted in it, whatever they may be, are previous to the coming of Christ for judgment, because the account of the day of judgment immediately follows as part of the same vision. The events then symbolized in this prophecy, belong to our present imperfect condition, and, therefore, cannot be propounded as promises—that is, as objects of faith; nor ought they ever to be confounded with that event which, throughout the whole of Scripture, is held out as the great object of the faith and hope of the church—the second coming of Christ, and the literal resurrection of all the dead.

2. It is to be remembered, that this passage is a symbolical vision, and that, before we can decipher it, we must ascertain what the symbols import. The essential characters of the events pointed at in these symbols, their being good or evil, are sufficiently distinct; but when an attempt is made, by means of the symbols, to ascertain more exactly what, and where, and when, and how the events will be, then the symbols must be interpreted; and the interpretation of every one of them requires research, and is involved in doubt and uncertainty. And it appears to me to be rash and hazardous in the extreme, to involve the very essentials of christianity, the very cardinal points of its doctrine, in the obscurity and uncertainty of such inquiries. Keep the symbolical prophecies apart from the plain declarations of Scripture presented to our faith, and the revelation of God's purposes is clear as light—a child may understand and believe it; intermingle these prophecies with the plain declarations of Scripture, and the whole instantly becomes vague, indistinct and dubious.



In short, my brethren, we know that the coming of Christ, in His power and majesty, the renovation of the earth, the resurrection of the saints in glory, the judging of the quick and the dead, and the final destruction of the wicked, are promises plainly announced in the direct declarations of Scripture, and, therefore, certainties; but the events previous to these being indicated only by symbolical visions of difficult interpretation, can assume no higher a place than conjecture.

I cannot participate in the dark and gloomy apprehensions, which the course of events and the stream of prophecy suggest to the minds of many holy and spiritual men. I see the Word of God rising in influence and authority, dispersed among all nations. I see the gospel of the Lord going forth to every land, and thousands bowing down before it—the isles of the heathen beginning to worship Him, Ethiopia stretching out her hands to Him. I see the idolatry of India reeling under the power of God's word, and tottering to its foundation. I see the three hundred and sixty millions of the Chinese empire, who had been, for century after century, shut up from all intercourse with christians, thrown open to the zeal and enterprise of the servants of the Lord. I see the props of the man of sin giving way, and a spirit in vigorous operation, which threatens to bring down his artfully conducted system to the dust—not indeed the spirit of God, but a spirit inciting men to hate the mother of harlots, and make her desolate and naked, and burn her flesh with fire. I see, it is true, powerful efforts made to sustain the antiquated and haggard abomination. I do hope, therefore, that He whose name is the Word of God, who hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, "King of kings and Lord of lords," has already begun to go forth on His white horse to smite the nations with the sword that goeth out of his mouth, and to rule them with a rod of iron. We may also hope soon to see the effects of the binding up of Satan and the commencement of a thousand years of extension, and peace, and joy to the church, and of life "from the dead" to the world, such as it has never experienced from the beginning till the present day.

Let God's faithful servants be found at their post, waiting for their Lord, more than they that watch for the morning—I

say more than they that watch for the morning. Let them not permit their hearts to be benumbed in Christ's service by any apprehension that nothing effectual is to be done till Christ Himself shall appear in the flesh. Had such an apprehension taken possession of the church at the first going forth of the gospel, or before the Reformation, those great revivals would never have shone upon the world. There is power in the ordinary means of conversion, the ministration of the truth of God by His people, accompanied by the outpouring of the spirit of God, to effect greater things than the world has yet witnessed. And all that is implied in a millennial prosperity may be accomplished by them, and yet the honor be reserved to Christ Himself at His coming to destroy Satan, and all evil, to restore all things, and to introduce His people not to a temporary, but to an eternal state of glory and felicity in His presence.





# Christ's Sufferings a Proof of Atonement

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A DISCOURSE  
BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.





## CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS A PROOF OF ATONEMENT.

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2 COR. 5:21.

For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

1. There is in this declaration of the apostle, which is given as the all-sufficient reason why sinners should be reconciled to God, a plain and evident antithesis. Christ is made sin—we are made righteousness. Christ is made sin for us—we are made righteousness in Him. Christ knew no sin and yet was made sin—we who are also sinful and defiled are made righteousness itself. God made Christ sin for us;—we are made the righteousness of God in Him. For He (*i. e.*, God) hath made *Him* sin.

By understanding, therefore, the first part of the sentence we will also understand the last, so that if it can be determined in what way Christ was made sin it may also be understood how we also are made righteous. Let us, therefore, inquire how, or in what way, Christ was made sin for us.

2. That in some clear and determinate sense Christ was made sin for sinners is a fact here and elsewhere very explicitly declared. Christ was made sin not by a mere fictitious supposition, but really and truly. "For God hath made Him to be sin for us." "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." "He was numbered with the transgressors and He bare the sin of many." "Christ was made a curse for us, being once offered to bear the sins of many."

3. Now Christ could not be made sin for us by having our sins, the sins of the human race, personally transferred to Him, so as that personally and in His own moral character He was constituted a sinner. Such a supposition is repelled by the apostle who affirms that "He knew no sin," a phrase denoting "the perfectly holy and righteous," or, as Meophylact explains it, "righteousness itself." He was not only in His original nature without sin, but He was as man born without sin—and He continued without sin being holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Besides such a transference of the

moral character of one man is in the very nature of things impossible and absurd. And could we imagine Christ to have really assumed the inherent personal sinfulness of those for whom He suffered, then, of course, what He endured at the hands of the law would have been endured in consequence of His personal guilt; and what He did in obedience to the law could procure a character of righteousness only for Himself. But He was not made sin so as to be Himself sinful, for, says the apostle, "He knew no sin."

4. Christ was made sin in whatever way, not for Himself, not for His own benefit or advantage, nor yet for, or on account of His own personal guilt—but "for us,"—that is, for us sinners—for the lost—the ungodly—the rebellious outcasts of this evil and wicked world. He was the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Not that He was thus made sin for every man individually since all are not thus universally made the righteousness of God in Him. But He was made sin for us, that is, "the many," of whom the apostle speaks in his Epistle to the Romans (Ch. 5th)—the "every one that believeth" and for whom He is declared to be the "end of the law" (Rom. 10:4); the "us" to whom He is also said to be made of God wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification and complete redemption. In short, by the "us" here is to be understood the church which Christ loved and for which He gave Himself, "that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27.) He was made sin for all those of whom as His body He became the head—of whom as His soldiers He became the captain of salvation—for whom as debtors He was an accepted surety—for whom as guilty and condemned He was a received substitute, and for whom as lost He was exalted to be a Prince of Salvation.

5. For these, as many and whosoever they be, whether already redeemed, or now wending their way through great tribulation, or yet to enter upon this pilgrimage of woe, for all those who are included under the term "us" Christ made "sin." For them He assumed the office of Mediator. For them in the fulness of time He was manifest in the flesh. For

them He magnified and fulfilled the law, by a perfect and unfaltering obedience to every tittle of its requisitions. For them He endured the penalty which that law inflicted on the guilty violator of its holy, just and true enactments. As under the law the sin offering was reckoned or accounted to have the sins of the people put upon it, as if it stood chargeable for all the guilt of the whole congregation; so Christ was made sin for us. The Redeemer assumed our guilt, He became answerable at the bar of God for all demands against His chosen people, the whole family in heaven and on earth who constitute the true Israel. He was, therefore, under obligation to render all this obedience and to endure all this suffering, not on His own account, but for us. The sin with which He was chargeable was not His but ours, not ours in its personal character, but in our legal obligation to endure the penal inflictions of a violated law. He was not made sin in His own nature or person or character, but only legally, in law and as our Surety. When God laid on Him the iniquities of us all, He did not infuse into Him the pollution wherewith those iniquities have defiled us. God held Him answerable to His holy law for all the claims that law advanced against these guilty rebels; but in thus becoming liable to their punishment Christ was in no way contaminated by their inherent turpitude and vileness. A man may very plainly offer himself as a substitute for another, either to the law as demanding his punishment, or to a creditor as requiring payment—without being at all chargeable with either disobedience or dishonesty. In the one case the punishment and in the other case the debt, are accounted his—so that he, while in himself innocent of the crime and free from the debt is yet required to endure the punishment and meet the demand. And in like manner Christ, though He knew no sin, yet by becoming a Mediator for those who were sinners, was on their account chargeable with sin; and was on their account required to obey, and to suffer to the very uttermost what infinite justice required.

6. This arrangement whereby Christ became the substitute for sinners and God accepted Him as such, originated altogether with the Sovereign mercy of God. "He made Him (that is Christ) to be sin for us."

We who through this plan of salvation are redeemed from the guilt and misery of sin, could never by any possibility have done any thing whatever towards the accomplishment of this great salvation. For when man felt the Son of God was not incarnate, neither could it have entered into the heart of man to conceive the possibility of that which even as it has been manifested—is a mystery beyond the full comprehension of men or angels. Neither could it have been ever determined by futile reason whether it was suitable to the glory of God as ruler of the universe to spare a guilty race on any terms whatever, while such is the working of sin as to indispose the mind to any thoughts of reconciliation or forgiveness, although they are urged upon its attention.

And as it was thus utterly impossible that this plan of saving mercy could ever have originated with the wisdom or goodness of man it is not less plain that it could never have been carried into effect without the mutual willingness of God the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. God as the Supreme law-giver of the universe could alone decide whether the execution of the sentence of the law upon the persons of the offenders could be dispensed with—for the purpose of receiving satisfaction on their account from another substitute in their place. Christ alone as God and as being thus able to dispose of Himself by right of infinite power, could offer Himself as a Surety for such, be competent to treat with God on their behalf, possess such exaltation and dignity as to give to His humiliation, sufferings and death, a meritorious value sufficient to make atonement for the sins of the whole world; while God the Holy Ghost alone could freely consent to co-operate in the furtherance of this great design by applying its benefits to the hearts of men. It was, therefore, in the counsels of eternity and in foreknowledge of man's apostasy and fall that this covenant of grace was entered into by the persons in the ever glorious Trinity. And it was when Christ had voluntarily offered to assume this office of Mediator—He was made sin for us—our sins were imputed to Him—reckoned as His in their guilt and ill desert. So that He was amenable for them to the bar of God's righteous and holy law.



7. This whole scheme of man's redemption is the offspring of God's unmoved and Sovereign mercy—the continuance of His infinite wisdom and the determination of His Sovereign pleasure. He willed not to impute unto us our iniquities, but to impute them unto Christ who was most graciously pleased to have them laid upon Him by His own free and full consent. (Heb. 10:5-10.) While, therefore, God was absolutely Sovereign in willing that a substitute should take the place of sinners yet when Christ had offered Himself to do the will of God, it was just and righteous in God and in no way injurious to Christ to lay our iniquities upon the Saviour that through Him the glory of the divine perfections might be manifested in the remission of our sins.

As sin involves the sinner in guilt that is a just liability to threatened punishment—the word is therefore used to express guilt or liability to punishment as well as the offence itself. In this sense God made Christ to be sin for us while He knew no sin. He was not made sin inherently so as to be a sinner personally, but He was made sin in its guilt, He having become responsible to the law of God for the sins of men, and He was made sin by enduring that amount of suffering which was received by God as a full equivalent to the demands which justice had against them. The guilt of *sin* is one thing and this Christ did not and could not bear nor can it ever be done away or removed. The sins of God's people will ever remain sins, and, in themselves considered, worthy of endless punishment. But the guilt of *sinner*s or their personal liability to all the consequences of their sins is another thing and this can be transferred and was transferred to Christ when He was made sin for us. He suffered and died "for our sins" and "for our offences," "the just for the unjust." (1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:4; 1 Pet. 3:18.) He died a ransom to procure deliverance for sinners as perishing captives (Math. 20:28; 1 Tim. 2:6). He offered up Himself as a sin expiating sacrifice that He might "purge our sins by Himself" and "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." (Eph. 5:2; Rom. 3:26 and 5:11.) He thus "bore the sins of many." "His ownself has our sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24).

The foundation of this imputation to Christ of the sins of His people, lies in that relation to them which he voluntarily sustained—being politically or forensically or in the eye of the law the head and representative of all for whom He died. By virtue of this moral or federal connexion, between Christ and His seed and which He most freely assumed God as the Sovereign Lawgiver ascribed to Him their iniquities and determined to deal with Him as amenable for all the guilty thereby incurred.

8. Such, then, is the doctrine of imputation as it is here laid down in reference to Christ as the substitute for sinners. And to those who understand in what way God made Christ to be sin for us while He knew no sin, there will be no difficulty in comprehending also how it is that we while altogether defiled with sin are made the righteousness of God in Him. For just as by imputation Christ had transferred to Him, not the moral pollution, but the legal liabilities of His people, so is there reckoned to the account of His people when they are united to Him by faith not the inherent glory of Christ's righteousness, but its meritoriousness and all-sufficiency to satisfy the claims of God's holy and righteous law. As by the act of imputation no one ever thought that Christ became internally sinful and polluted, but only guilty or liable to the punishment due to sinners; neither does any orthodox believer nor any sane mind imagine that by that act of imputation believers become inherently possessed with the righteousness of Christ, but only this that being regarded by God and His law as one of those for whom Christ rendered that pure and spotless righteousness they are freed from that punishment which they must otherwise have borne—their sins are pardoned—their persons are accepted—and they are made partakers of all the benefits of Christ's death. By imputation alone there can be wrought within the heart no change whatever. It can affect only the external and legal relations of the party concerned, and thus Christ became guilty while holy, and the sinner, as far as this act alone is concerned, becomes justified or righteous in law while unholy in his own person. Imputation alone neither pollutes nor does it sanctify.

9. Just in the same manner, therefore, as Christ by the imputation of our sins to His account was made in the eyes of

the law sin for us—so, also, by having the merit of Christ's whole work of mediation accounted ours, by Christ's interposition on our behalf and by His own act of princely favour, we also are made or constituted righteous. That righteousness which is in this way reckoned to ours, is called the righteousness of God. It is so as it regards God the Father inasmuch as the whole plan by which it has been wrought out is of His contrivance and according to the good pleasure of His will, and also because it has been accepted by Him as all-sufficient and is bestowed by Him as His own free gift on every soul which He adopts into His heavenly family.

But it is further the righteousness of God because Christ as truly and properly God, in the amazing condescension of His infinite mercy as our Emmanuel, perfected it for us. As man Christ was the *subject* of this righteousness, being thus made under the law that He might render unto it in the very nature that had secured a holy and unspotted obedience. But it was as that nature subsisted in union with His divinity this righteousness became the righteousness of God and Christ "Jehovah our righteousness." The value and merit which are attributed to this righteousness, arise altogether from the fact of the infinite dignity and glory of the person by whom it was rendered.

It is also demonstrated the righteousness of God because the benefits purchased by it are applied to the heart of the believer by the divine agency of God the Holy Ghost.

We are not, therefore, to understand by these words any attribute of Deity—nor any quality imparted by the Deity to the renewed mind—nor yet Christ Himself as some of the fathers supposed—but that righteousness of Christ as the Surety or Substitute for sinners by which alone any son or daughter of the ruined family of man ever can be regarded as righteous before God. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom. 10:4) being made unto them of God wisdom and righteousness.

10. Now, as Christ for us or as our legal representative and head was made or constituted or regarded as guilty on account of our sins which were imputed to Him; so are we made, constituted or esteemed righteous in God's sight, the righteousness of Christ being imputed to us. As our sins became legally the

sins of Christ, being laid upon Him as our responsible head; so is His righteousness made legally ours being regarded as extending by His express stipulation and desire to us. Just as our sins were not the sins of Christ subjectively, but only imputatively, so is His righteousness so made ours, not inherently, but by an act of mercy. We are rendered holy by the conveyance of grace into our souls by the working of the Holy Spirit; but we are made just, or are justified before God, by the imputation of Christ's righteousness to our persons. This righteousness never becomes ours so as to be within us, for it must everlastingly remain in and with Christ, even as our sins never were Christ's so as to be in Him, but must abide eternally as our own. God, therefore, does not judge falsely in this matter, as it is slanderously reported that we affirm, but He judges righteous judgment, attributing this righteousness meritoriously only to Christ its author, and attributing it to us, only by His own gracious imputation, and the free gift of His infinite mercy.

11. For it is further to be observed that we are thus made the righteousness of God as it is here distinctly stated not in ourselves, nor by ourselves nor through any power, ability or willingness of ours, but only as we are regarded by God "in Him." We are accepted by God as righteous persons—accounted and pronounced guiltless—and have that righteousness of Christ which is without works imputed to us, only when God regards us in Christ. These words may be translated either in Him, by Him or through Him and they are in each of these senses equally instructive and important.

They who are justified are made or accounted righteous "in the beloved" (Eph. 1:16). Surely shall one say, "In Jehovah have I righteousness and strength." (Is. 45, 17, 24, 25.) It is by virtue of our relation to Christ and our mystical oneness with Him as our covenant representative and head, that our sins could be justly imputed to Him while without iniquity or His righteousness be imputed to us while without works. God in that most gracious decree by which He determined not to inflict upon our entire fallen race the merited sentence of eternal death, chose the willing and freely offered Redeemer to be the head or representative, the substitute and ransom for



the church, the church comprising all who shall be finally saved to be His body. The everlasting covenant was thus made with Christ as Head and with the elect in Him, as His seed. The blessings which flow from that covenant are therefore bestowed only upon such as are in Him (Eph. 1:3). And this union which in covenant or decree existed from eternity, is the fountain spring from which issue all the streams of salvation. By this mystical union Christ and His people are one in this whole matter of salvation. As mediator He represented them and acted for them and on their behalf. Thus as in the first Adam as our head all died and have imputed to them the guilt of his first act of disobedience, so they who are in Christ the second Adam as their head have the merit of His obedience—which is infinite—imputed to them. As in Adam we are all condemned so in Christ are we justified.

But it is also true that they who are justified or made righteous are justified by Christ, or as it is more fully expressed “by the faith of Christ” (Gal. 2:17), “by His blood” (Rom. 5:9), “by His obedience” (Rom. 5:1-8) and “by His stripes.” (1 Pet. 2:24.) We are thus taught that a sinner is justified by receiving Christ as offered in the gospel and resting upon Him solely for acceptance with God as having rendered all that satisfaction and rendered all that penalty which law and justice demanded from Him as the substitute for sinners.

Christ as the suffering, dying Saviour, and as having by His obedience unto death, made reconciliation and atonement, between God and them for whom He thus interposed—this is the object of justifying faith—“the faith of Jesus” or “the faith of the Son of God as of one who loved us and gave Himself for us.” (Rom. 3:22; Gal. 2:16 and 3:22, &c.)

Nor is it less important or true that this condition of justification or righteousness, becomes ours *through* Christ. It is for His sake, as the meritorious Author of it, and as its gracious procurer, this great blessing is bestowed upon us. The blood of Christ or His obedience unto death is not only the meritorious ground of our justification, but His actual, present action of that righteousness before God and His most gracious intercession on our behalf,—constitute the procuring cause through which the purchased blessing is actually made over to



us and becomes ours in possession as it had previously been ours by right as being in Him and one with Him. "In whom we have redemption through His blood," (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14), "being justified freely, by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3:24.)

The legal ground, therefore, of a sinner's justification is his union to Christ. The meritorious ground of a sinner's justification, by which it is actually procured in the intercession of Christ, and the instrumental ground or cause of justification is the actual reception of Christ, as His righteousness, by the sinner. To him who thus believes on Christ—who thus comes unto God through Christ—and who is thus found to be in Christ—Christ is made to be sin for Him who knew no sin that He may be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Had Calvin himself worded this passage he could not have possibly expressed in the same compass, or in a more emphatic manner those peculiar doctrines of the gospel, which have been falsely called Calvinism by those who would pervert the gospel of the grace of God and accommodate it to the wisdom and corruption of man. Here is the doctrine of absolute and divine Sovereignty, "For He, God, hath made Him." Here is the doctrine of election, "For He made Him to be sin for us." Here is the doctrine of imputation, "For He made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin." Here is the doctrine of a free, gratuitous and forensic justification, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Here also is the doctrine of human inability in all its comprehension, He was made sin *for us* and we are made righteous in Him. Here is the doctrine of a special in opposition to a general atonement and of a particular in contrast to a general redemption, *For us that we*—in Him—are made righteous. Here is the doctrine of effectual calling, For we are *made* righteous—and *in* and *through* and *by Him*. As well might you attempt to blot the sun from heaven and yet retain its light, as to expel what is most falsely denominated Calvinism or Presbyterianism from the Bible. and yet preserve the light of that glory with which it shines in the face of Jesus Christ. These doctrines radiate from every part of it. They shine through it. They are inseparable from any part of it. They gild the sacred page—

they speak forth the glory of God their author and of Christ their subject and their theme, and they constitute the only true and sufficient ground of hope towards God and confident assurance in the prospect of death, hell, judgment and eternity.

Many of you, perhaps, have listened to those tirades which ignorant presumption and self-righteous conceit, pour forth from the profaned sacred desk against the doctrine of imputation and especially as it regards the free justification of the sinner through the imputed righteousness of Christ. There is no conceivable or horrible consequence which has not by such persons been most slanderously charged upon this doctrine of the grace of God as equally unholy, ungodly, unrighteous and licentious.

My brethren, you have now before you a calm, deliberate, full and candid exhibition of that doctrine. And is there not every thing in it to proclaim the glory, the wisdom, the purity, the Sovereignty, and the grace of God? And while it thus speaks forth the glory of God in the very highest does it not afford to the guilty sinner a most solid ground of believing hope and strong consolation? Or can you conceive any motive by which the human heart can be swayed so powerful to constrain it to a holy obedience, as the thought that it is united to Christ and that to secure righteousness Christ was even made sin, that "he who hath this hope in him might purify himself even as Christ was pure?"

It is said, indeed, that this doctrine charges God with injustice and cruelty—that it makes the sinner as righteous as God Himself—and that it is altogether absurd. But you will perceive by the very statement of the doctrine that these consequences are inferred not from our doctrine which is the doctrine of the Bible, but from a gross and wilful or most ignorant caricature. We do not say as these affirm that God arbitrarily required Christ to become our Mediator, for the nature of Christ's substitution consists in its spontaneity and God only accepted His gracious offer. We do not say that God punished Christ while innocent—but as voluntarily a Surety in the place of guilty and rebellious men. We do not say God executed on Christ the penalty of that awful curse which He was made for us through a spirit of vindictive wrath—but through a spirit of

mercy to mankind, as the only way in which that mercy could be executed consistently with His holiness and His justice, and while He at the very time rejoiced over His well beloved Son with infinite and Godlike complacency. We do not say that Christ was made a sinner in any sense which implies internal pollution or crime—but that He undertook to bear the punishment which was due to the guilt of men. We do not say that we receive personally the personal righteousness of Christ, rather that we are justified by virtue of that righteousness, as still in Christ and inseparably His, but imputed to us as represented in Him and united to Him by faith. We do not say that this imputation of Christ's righteousness constitutes the whole of a sinner's salvation, but that it is the alone ground of a sinner's justification. We assert, on the contrary, that wherever and whenever a sinner is justified he is at the same time regenerated. Where this righteousness is imputed, the Holy Spirit is imparted. Where a man is made righteous in Christ he is also made righteous by Christ. He that is declared righteous forensically receives a righteousness inherently. For just as certainly as Christ is made unto us of God righteousness He is also made unto us wisdom. "Whom God justifies them He also glorified.\*

Before concluding let me add a few words:

It has been said that there is no difference in our doctrinal views between the Old School and the New School. Now, while I believe there are those who do not reject the most essential doctrines, yet this is far from being the case with the large body of those called New School or Constitutional Presbyterians.

That this is so I would illustrate by a reference to the doctrine of *imputation* which we have been discussing, and which is the same whether we regard Adam and his sin or Christ and His righteousness—the one being the counterpart of the other.

Now, in a series of papers by Dr. Cox, he speaks of this doctrine which is expressly contained in our confession of faith in the following terms.

In No. XXV he speaks of it as "this technical monster." Again as "a monstrous obstruction to the prevalence of chris-

\*Rom. 8:30.

tianity, and a maker of infidel alienation, we know that it is not all that they and their allies can do, that will keep up the tottering and ignoble fabric. It must fall, it must die, it must be intelligently scorned and exploded by the American people. *It has helped to murder souls quite enough already.* It revolts the conscience of the universe. It is incapable of being cordially approved in heaven, even if this were practicable to genuine piety on earth. Its doom is predicted and written in Matt. xv. 13, and the signs of the times indicate the speedy execution."

Again, let us then hold this doctrine up to the light of heaven, and let men look at it, and see if any ingenuity, or any refutation of ours, is necessary, to insure for it the scorn of conscience, and the abhorrence of piety, every where! We pronounce it in its own ugliness a monster in the Church of God. "The infliction" of the curse of the law, which "is of all evils the essence and the sum," on every one of the thousands of millions of our species, before they have committed sins of any kind, and "antecedent to them all!" Oh! the supersensuous and transcendental glories of Princetonian orthodoxy!

We doubt if more base unrighteousness was ever expressed in human language! And such an infinitude of a quantity of it! And all this is the piety and the orthodoxy of Princeton!

In reference to Adam, says Dr. Hodge, "his act was, in virtue of this relation, [as federal head,] regarded as our act." *That is, the act or the sin of Adam, was, by some hocus pocus of eternal iniquity, set absolutely to the account of each one of his posterity, "antecedent," to any sin of theirs.* So that, in the order of nature, of judgment, and of fact, this is the established system of the King of righteousness.

So, also, in No. XXVI, he says:

"Federal headship on this theory is a most arbitrary thing. It is a kind of wholesale gambling with the destinies of the universe. It is the toss of a copper—the wrong side up—and a lost world!"

Again, in XXV:

"The method of reasoning, called *reductio ad absurdum*, by which we show the falsity of any principle by exposing the false or absurd results to which it legitimately leads us, is surely as



sound in itself as it is plainly applicable here. And the man, who can look at only a few of the radiations, which, spreading in rectilinears from such a centre, fill with lurid horrors the vast circumference of its depending circle, and calmly continue to hold the doctrine, the *principium et fons* 'of all evils the essence and the sum,' is, we seriously fear, hardened in a miserable insensibility to the difference between truth and its counterfeits. Such a bosom, as its owner seems to possess, is necessarily obtuse, as the angles of the hexagon, where his ratiocinations

Are prison'd in a dark six-corner'd box,  
Sealed from the sun and labeled—ORTHODOX."

But it has also been said that this difference of theological views is confined to our own church which has been held up on this account as quarrelling about uncorrupt truth.

But the truth is there is just as wide a difference between all that portion of the Episcopal Church called High Church and those who favor the Oxford Tract System, and that portion which is called Low Church or Evangelical.







# Christ Our Righteousness

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A SERMON

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.



## CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.

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1 COR. 1:30.

Who of God is made unto us righteousness.

This passage of God's glorious Gospel holds forth to man that perfect chain of salvation, which was completed by Christ, and by holding on to which the most needy and perishing sinner may be rescued from the yawning gulf of perdition. There is here a most striking epitome of the Gospel—a summary of that good news which it proclaims from heaven—an exhibition of the plan by which peace is to be restored to the outlawed and rebellious race of man, while the glory of God is maintained in its highest possible perfection.

The merciful adaptation of the provisions of the gospel to the present condition of man as he lies hopelessly buried under the ruins of the apostasy is here most explicitly unfolded. By that direful apostasy from God man is now blinded by sin,—being darkened in his understanding so that the natural man cannot understand either the reality of this his miserable degradation—or appreciate that infinite and amazing love which has interposed for his deliverance. Christ, therefore, is made unto them to whom it is given to believe upon His name—*wisdom*.

But, when thus enlightened to discern the holiness of God and the unholiness of his own heart, the sinner is made conscious of his utter unfitness to stand in judgment at the tribunal of God's holy and righteous law—Christ, therefore, is made unto him *righteousness*.

And when the eyes of his mind are opened so that the guilty sinner perceives his spiritual nakedness and defilement, and feels within him the hateful power of vile corruption; then too is Christ of God made unto that polluted sinner—*sanctification*.

While in this world of sin—in this body of death—and exposed to the snares of the devil—the sinner even when thus enlightened, justified and sanctified, even while he waits for the adoption of sons and stands fast in hope of the glory of God—groans, being hindered by the oppressive weight of sin;—carries



about with him a body of death and feels within him the struggling efforts of the old man. Christ, therefore, is made to every believer at the hour of his departure complete *redemption*. By virtue of the ransom He has given He then procures for them a full salvation from all sin, perfect maturity in all holiness, and an abundant entrance into all blessedness.

Now, since it is revealed to us that all the steps of this wondrous plan are subjects of adoring contemplation even to the angelic host;—since throughout an endless eternity it will afford happiness to the redeemed to search deeper into this mystery of godliness—it may well be an occupation of interest and delight to the people of God in this twilight hour of anticipated rest, to spend the time of their brief sojourn in endeavoring to comprehend more of the length and breadth, the height and the depth of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

Let us, therefore, who are now assembled for the purpose of worshipping Almighty God, and of stirring up each other's minds to worthier thoughts of Him and of His merciful dealings with the children of men, take up one of the links of this golden chain, beaten out by hands divine, radiant with mercy; that we may be stirred up to magnify and to bless His holy name for the unspeakable gift.

Christ is of God—made unto us *righteousness*—let this be the subject of our present meditation.

Christ is here declared to be actually made what God by the mouth of His holy prophets foretold He should become. When this Prince of Peace stood revealed before the prophetic vision of the predestined Seer of Anathoth, it was given him in that hour to announce that “this is the name whereby He shall be called—‘THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.’” He who is our Righteousness is The Lord, that is Jehovah, God over all and blessed for ever. This Jehovah is made God—constituted and appointed by Him—our Righteousness. This righteousness is by the gift of God made ours. And in view of the inconceivable importance of this provision on our behalf Christ is named “The Lord our Righteousness.”

I. That you may be led to a true understanding of that glorious doctrine which is here asserted I will, as a foundation upon which to build the argument of the apostle, establish the abso-

lute necessity to the salvation of the sinner, of some righteousness without and beyond himself.

This necessity arises from the fact that man has no *inherent righteousness* of his own, and no power or ability to create or fashion it within him. Now, verily, there is a God who judgeth in the earth. He is not a God who hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with Him. The foolish shall not stand in His sight. He hateth all the workers of iniquity. Justice and judgment are the very habitation of His throne.

Such, then, is that God with whom we have to do, before whom we must all stand in judgment, who will render to every man according to his deeds, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

Let us inquire—what must ere long be reality—that you stand impleaded at His bar, that you there confront His dread majesty as He sits upon His throne with the book of His law opened before Him. Let us imagine that God addressed you as He once did Job: “Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee and answer thou me.” “I created thee with powers and capacities fitting thee to glorify and enjoy me for ever; wherefore hast thou loved and served the creature and dishonoured Me who art thy Creator? I sent my only begotten Son into the world that by believing upon Him and obeying His voice thou mightest have everlasting life; wherefore hast thou neglected this great salvation, trampled under foot the offers of mercy, and done despite to my Holy and ever blessed Spirit? What canst thou answer for all this ungodliness which thou hast so ungodlily committed in living without God and as an Atheist in that world where I gave thee an opportunity of seeking everlasting life.”

If innocent as you sometimes think you are, if strong as you imagine in the confidence of mercy—why, my fellow sinners, at the voice of this dread challenge does your heart tremble and shrink within you? Why that “certain fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation?” Why afraid at the voice of God calling, “Adam, where art thou? What is this that thou hast done?” “Will not the Judge of all the earth do rightly?”

Oh, my fellow sinners, all confident as thou now art—yet wert thou ever pure and righteous as Job was, yet like him when confronted with the holy righteous and omniscient Jehovah, and when thy most secret sins shall be made bare by the light of His countenance, like Job thou wilt exclaim, “Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee—wherefore I abhor myself.” Or like the guilty and conscience-stricken Adam thou wilt exclaim, “I hear thy voice and am afraid, oh, that I could hide myself from thy presence and fly from thy judgments.”

But such thoughts, thou sinful man, are vain. Escape is impossible, for repentance “there is now no place given.” You are now before the bar of God. He to whom you here submitted as your vile deceiver will there present himself as your “accuser” (Rev. 12:10). When the proclamation shall be made, “who can lay anything to this culprit’s charge?” there shall appear a host of witnesses by whose testimony you will be clearly condemned. “Your own heart will condemn you” and unbear all its treasured secrets. Conscience will utter its voice “bearing witness against you.” Evil companions will “rise up and bear true witness against you.” “These words of Christ which are written in this blessed Book, these are they which will testify against you and condemn you.” That gospel you have neglected, those Sabbaths you have profaned, those warnings you have slighted, that evidence you have gainsaid and resisted, those entreaties, warnings and commands you have set at naught—these and other “innumerable witnesses”—shall rise up in that day and in that hour and shall condemn you. Yea “by thy own words thou shalt be condemned,” and all “thy hard thoughts and thy hard speeches” shall bear “swift witness and cover thee with confusion.”

Nor will any plea of what you have been and what you have done as it regards man avail thee there. The indictment which shall then be preferred against you is in words like these: “Cursed be he that continueth not in all things written in the words of God’s holy law to do them. He that breaketh one is guilty of all.”

Your conviction is, therefore, certain, and you must be "found guilty before God" on every count with which you are charged; and sentence—even the irreversible sentence of eternal death—must be pronounced upon you.

Since, therefore, man has no inherent righteousness wherein he may stand before God and be accepted before Him, "man can be justified before God" only by a righteousness external to him. Having no personal worthiness or ground of justification he must have a reputed righteousness or otherwise suffer the inflicted penalty. Since "all are gone out of the way and there is none righteous, no not one,"—if any are delivered it must be by a righteousness imputed to them on account of which the law yields its demands, being satisfied; and God pronounces sentence of acquittal, His justice and His holiness being fully magnified.

In this conclusion—in its righteousness and truth—every saint from Enoch unto the last ransomed sinner—will most heartily concur. Bring them all before us and they will with one united voice exclaim with David, "I will make mention of thy righteousness alone for in thy sight no living being" (whether angels or men), "can be justified." Not unto us, but unto thy name, the Lord our Righteousness, be all the praise who wert made unto us of God Righteousness as well as Wisdom. "Neither is there any other name given under heaven or among men by which either angels or men may be justified by thy name, oh, Christ our Lord and our Redeemer."

II. Seeing, therefore, it is thus plain that by any righteousness inherent in them no flesh living can be justified in God's sight we are now prepared for the further declaration embodied in the truth presented by the apostle, namely, that the righteousness by which a sinner can be justified at the bar of God can be found only in "the Lord our Righteousness."

The righteousness that can avail to the acquittal of one who "is already condemned" by God's holy and righteous law must be a righteousness which is acceptable to God and a righteousness which is wrought out by God.

It must be acceptable to God because "it is against Him and Him only we have sinned and done evil in His sight." His law we have broken, His glory we have tarnished, His honour



we have insulted, His justice we have armed against us, and He must fulfil all His threatenings. God cannot exert His power to rescue those who are held by that very power amenable to His justice. Mercy cannot interpose, for although she delights to succour the miserable she cannot help them who are already convicted of sin against the majesty of her high and Sovereign Lord. The justice of God must, therefore, be satisfied before mercy can spread her wings and go forth mighty to save. The scheme of man's salvation could only have originated with God. How guilty men could be just with God no finite mind could possibly determine. Christ, therefore, is made unto us OF GOD—Righteousness. Christ is the gift of God,—the expression of His everlasting free and Sovereign mercy,—the forthcoming of that gracious decree by which Christ was given to be the Saviour of the world being subjected to the covenant of works as our Head and Representative, that by His mediation and atonement, the covenant of grace might be perfected. Nor was it until His work had been finished and God had accepted it as well-pleasing in His sight that "God could be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly."

This righteousness in order to be available to the salvation of the lost and to clear the guilty from the condemnation of God's righteous law could only be wrought out—and meritoriously offered by Him who is the Lord Jehovah, the mighty God, and who being in the form of God thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Therefore, was Christ made unto us of God Righteousness because His name is the Lord Jehovah. "He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Where else could this righteousness by which a ruined world might be redeemed be found? Among the bright and glorious intelligences of heaven? No, God "chargeth His angels with folly and the heavens are not clean in His sight." Among His saints on earth could we imagine them to exist, or among any other of His created ones? No, for "behold God putteth no trust in His servants; He putteth no trust in His saints, and shall man be more pure than his Maker?" Shall we seek this righteousness, then, which shall be acceptable to God, in the prayers, devotions, penances or in any works which man can



do? No, for if there could have been a law by which we might be saved then would it have been given;—therefore, “we conclude that a man is not,” and cannot be “justified by the works of the law.”

No, my hearers, whosoever of you are seeking to be justified by the law or by any obedience to the law “ye are fallen from grace”—“Christ is of no effect to you.” “Ye are yet in your sins”—for we “are justified freely by God’s grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”

Surely shall one say, “In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.” “Our righteousness is the Lord Jehovah,” He who was “God’s fellow.” As God He imparts infinite dignity and merit to His incarnation, obedience and death. As God He was able to bear the burden of a world’s iniquities and prove Himself “mighty to save.” As God He was with God in the very beginning of eternity when God planned the wondrous scheme of mercy. As “God’s fellow” He was then worthy to enter into covenant with Him—to become Surety to God for His redeemed people,—to be made head over all things to His Church, to have all power given to Him in heaven and in earth, and by His blood to confirm and establish all the promises of the covenant and the purposes of God’s grace.

It is wholly impossible for us to form any conception of the true nature and extent of those sufferings which Christ endured as the Surety of sinners. But there is enough made known to us to demonstrate the truth that they were of such a character and intensity as to be unbearable if even conceivable by a creature Holy as Christ was, free as He was from all ground of fear or remorse on any personal account—and dear, therefore, as He was personally to His Father in heaven. Yet even He, as man, found it impossible to bear up under the weighty burden of a world’s iniquities. Christ’s human nature manifestly shrunk from the trial and sunk under its unutterable terrors. “I have a baptism to be baptized with and how am I straitened till it be accomplished.” In the garden of Gethsemane, being in agony, and while the bloody sweat of death poured out of His tortured body—He cried out: “Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be

done." Oh, had not Christ been succoured and upheld in His humanity by that divinity which stirred within Him and by which the angelic host were sent to minister unto Him,—the hopes of man's salvation would have been buried under the ruins of man's frail and finite nature. It was in virtue of that divine power by which "He could lay down His life," and take it up again—that "He poured out His soul unto death," and the agonies of crucifixion, prayed for His murderers, pardoned the dying thief, spake words of comfort to His despairing mother—and then, with a voice which shook earth to its centre and was echoed back from heaven, cried: "It is finished! and gave up the Ghost." As man He died and thus completed His obedience and perfected righteousness. As God that righteousness received the merit of an infinite dignity and was made sufficient before the universe; and when strictest judgment scrutinized the law, and upheld its sanctions, to make atonement for the sins of the whole world. Mercy triumphed over justice,—mercy and truth met together—righteousness and peace kissed each other and the proclamation again sounded from the herald angels, "Glory to God in the highest. On earth peace and good will to men."

For this hour was Christ born and to accomplish this did He become man. Could any created being or any mortal man have accomplished the work never would the Son of God have vacated His throne of glory, become a little lower than the angels left the bosom of the Father, and veiled His glory in the vile form of degraded humanity. No, it was in the councils of eternity when looking forward to the event of man's apostasy, "He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor," that "therefore His own arm" which is "mighty to save" "brought salvation;" and He said "Lo, I come, and in the volume of thy book it is written of me to do thy will, O God."

This righteousness which consisted in the immaculate purity of Christ's nature, His unflinching obedience to every tittle of the law's requirements—and His perfect endurance of that penalty which the law had affixed to transgressions inhered necessarily in the human nature of Christ as its immediate subject, for it was in order to fit Himself for such endurance and for such

obedience, the Son of God took upon Him the nature of humanity. But as this nature was assumed into a subsistence with the divine nature so as to be mysteriously yet certainly united with it—therefore does this righteousness become “the righteousness of God in Him,” and He becomes “the Lord, or Jehovah, our Righteousness.” It was this union of the Divinity with the humanity in the person of our Saviour by which He was constituted Emmanuel God with us which gave dignity and value to His voluntary humiliation, obedience, and death. It is thus that His Godhead throws the lustre of its infinite and unspeakable glory around all that He did as our Deliverer. His incarnation is on this view “the manifestation of God in the flesh.” His life of holy devotion to the glory of God is the amazing condescension of this Adorable Person, that by this voluntary obeisance to the divine law in the nature of the sinner, and in the very province where rebellion had been perpetrated, He might “declare God’s righteousness that He might be just,” “the Lord being well pleased for His righteousness sake by which He magnified the law and made it honourable.” His blood which He shed upon the cross is thus “the blood of the Son of God,” and is, therefore, “able to cleanse from all sin.” Strip Christ of His Godhead and you destroy the value and the efficacy of His “propitiation for the sins of the whole world;” you blot out the Sun of Righteousness from the heavenly firmament and send us for our guidance over the frowning ocean of the wrath of God to some lonely star, itself depending for its feeble light upon that very luminary which has been extinguished. Such a created being might proclaim or exemplify the righteousness of God,—but in so doing he would only render that service which was due from himself to his glorious Author and Benefactor. But the law of God demanded perfect holiness and sinless obedience in that covenant which man had broken and whose consequent penalty man was now under obligation to endure—and He who offered to take the sinner’s place and meet in His own person all the claims of this immutable and holy law must have a dignity which will give infinite value to His interposition, power to make a voluntary offer of His substituted services, ability to enter upon this work in this character with no other claims upon His obedience

than what He thus freely choose to assume; and He must be able also to pay the uttermost farthing of these righteous demands and to bear the last pang of its most cursed and bitter penalty. And because Christ, as God, was in a capacity to meet all these requirements as "the Lord Jehovah our Righteousness," therefore, is He "made unto us of God," "by the glory of whose power He was raised from the dead." As it regards the Father this completed obedience, when applied to the sinner, is "the gift of righteousness." As it regards the Son it is "a righteousness" which becomes ours "by faith" upon Him. As it regards the Holy Ghost it is a righteousness which He "brings near" (Is. 46:3), "convincing us of" its need and applying it to our hearts by the inward testimony that "there is no longer any condemnation to us who are in Christ Jesus."

III. But when a demonstration has been given of the absolute inability of any sinner to justify himself by any righteousness within him before God's holy law, and of the equally certain fact that under a moral government, which is a government of laws, such as is the administration of the Sovereign of the universe, it was impossible that satisfaction could be given on behalf of a sinner by any one who was not equal with God and therefore able to treat with God and able to treat for man. Even when it has been shown that the Son of God has in His infinite mercy thus stretched forth His hand to save, given satisfaction to the law, as a violated covenant, and to the requirements of the law, as an immutable standard,—still man is left personally, and as to his individual interest in this great salvation, as far off from the friendship and favour of God as before. There may be a way of escape prepared, but he is not set forward upon it. There may be a ransom paid, but he is still in captivity to sin and Satan. There may be a perfect righteousness by which God can now be just and yet justify the ungodly, but he is not a partaker of it. God may now occupy a throne of grace—and hold out the sceptre of mercy—and declare His willingness to justify freely all who appear before Him clothed in this robe of Christ's righteousness, this wedding garment; but He, alas, is poor and miserable, and blind and naked; wherewithal can he lay claim to a gift so priceless and to an honour so divine? Is he the King's son that he



should be clad in His royal robes and be called by His name and appropriate His honours? By what way, therefore, may the sinner come into possession of this finished righteousness, seeing it is the righteousness of God,—the personal and inseparable righteousness of Him who achieved it by His obedience unto death? Certain it is this righteousness can never cease to be *His* whose it is, and to whom alone it can ever be personally attributed as an inherent right. There is no possible way in which this righteousness of Christ can be transfused into the sinner so as to be His and not Christ's. And yet certain it is that it is only through this righteousness any guilty sinner can ever be acquitted before the tribunal of heaven.

IV. But if this righteousness cannot become ours personally so as to be *transferred* to us, may it not become ours legally so as to become ours in law? May there not be such a relation constituted between us and Him whose righteousness it is that the merit and virtue and sufficiency of this righteousness to meet all the demands of the law against us may be reckoned to our credit and we treated accordingly as free from the law of sin and death? May not Christ voluntarily undertake to plead our hopeless case at heaven's bar—and there to answer every claim against us by the presentation of His own all-sufficient merit; and there to pay down out of that fund which is to His credit in the courts of heaven the ransom needed for our deliverance; and there throw over our polluted nature the coming of His all perfect righteousness; and there intercede for us as those for whom He died and who are therefore the purchase of His blood? And may not God the Father in virtue of the covenant between Him and Christ and in the fulness of His infinite compassion toward us and His infinite satisfaction with the mediation of His Son—reckon Christ's righteousness as before the law ours and treat us as righteous in Him?

Now, this is just the way in which Christ is "the Lord our Righteousness," "He is made unto us of God Righteousness," not by losing aught of His glorious identity or by our being amalgamated in some pantheistic assimilation with Him, but simply by virtue of His being our Representative in the working out of that righteousness, our Covenant Head,—our Advocate and Intercessor—and in consequence of the legal union



thus formed between Him and us—and the imputation to us—as in law ours—and satisfactory on our behalf—of His glorious righteousness. Thus it is that Christ becomes our righteousness and we can understand how “blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputed righteousness without works.” By the imputation of Christ’s righteousness there is no change effected in our hearts subjectively, but there is a change wrought in our character and standing legally. We are not thereby sanctified, but we are thereby justified. We are not transformed so as to become holy, but we are so as to be acquitted and pardoned. Imputation is a legal act, and not a work. It is the act of a Judge not of a regenerator. By the imputation of this righteousness to us God regards us as free from the claims of law, as having all its former demands against us cancelled, as those, therefore, whom while Himself strictly just, He can fully justify. God has accepted Christ as our Substitute. The righteousness of Christ God has pronounced to be a propitiation adequate to the sins of the whole world. By the decree of election we who are saved were chosen in Christ and were given to Him. As our Surety He, as the head of His mystical body, represented that body before the law and justice of God, bore their sins and endured for them the bitter curse of death. And when called by God’s grace we are enabled to believe upon this Saviour, and God by virtue of this union, treats us as thus represented by Christ, and therefore as righteous in His righteousness. And while it is true that the redeemed sinner will remain to eternity in his personal character just as guilty as he ever was, it is equally true he will remain eternally justified by consequence of his everlasting union with Christ.

Here we have marked out to us the four stages in the journey of life. By entering upon this narrow way, through the straight gate of repentance we are first led to the school of wisdom where we are taught by the Spirit of God and convinced of sin. We are then brought on our way, until by the interposition of the Advocate on high we are justified and set free from the condemnation which was against us—in the handwriting of heaven’s chancery. We are then led by the Spirit of God, as His adopted children, in the path of sanctification

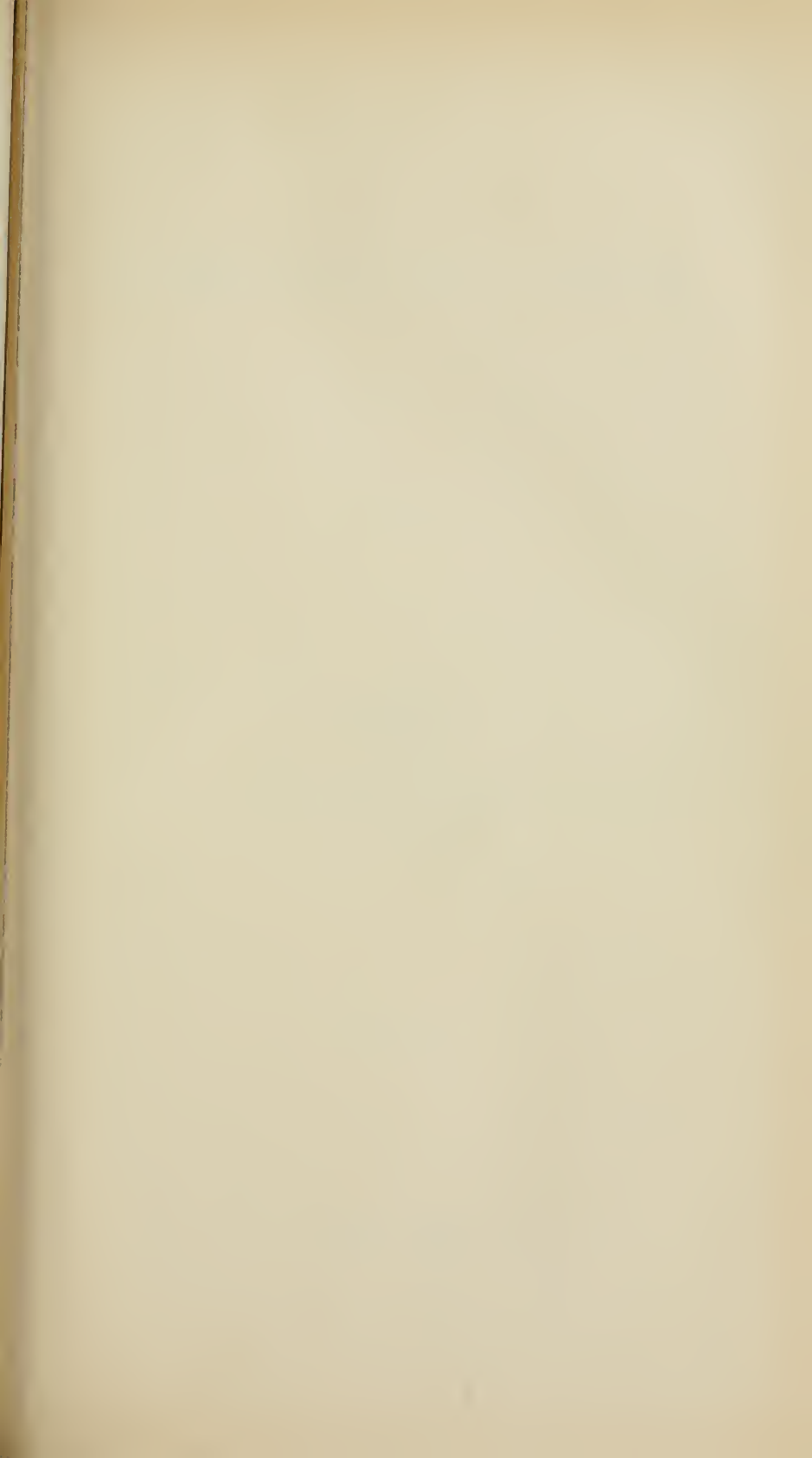
until being prepared for glory, our abundant entrance is administered unto us into His heavenly Kingdom.

It is, therefore, at once apparent how fundamentally important, how practically vital—to the salvation of the soul—are correct views of this great doctrine of the apostle. How a sinner can be justified before God the infinitely just and holy, this is the one great problem to the solution of which even angels are incompetent and upon whose solution hangs the destiny of our fallen world. "Christ is made unto us of God Righteousness." This is that hidden mystery of godliness which no man had ever been able to discover neither can now naturally comprehend and into which the angels of heaven desire to look.

But all-important as a correct knowledge of the doctrine of justification is, let me again remind you that this explains but one of the great leading steps by which you must strive to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Were it possible that Christ could be made unto you Righteousness, without at the same time being made unto you Sanctification, then would you still remain in your pollution and depravity altogether unfit for an inheritance among the saints in light. As the natural man understandeth not the things that be of God, Christ must, as the Great Teacher, be made unto you Wisdom. As no man living can by any works of righteousness be justified in God's sight Christ must be made unto you Righteousness. As all the imaginations of the thoughts of your heart are evil and only evil, and that continually, so must Christ be made unto you by the gift of His Holy Spirit, Sanctification. And as you still bear about with you while in the body the remnant fibres of this old man of sin and death, so is it needful in order to your fit preparation for an entrance into life eternal that Christ should be made unto you complete Redemption. Your understanding must be savingly enlightened—your persons fully justified—your hearts gradually and growingly sanctified—and your bodies, souls and spirits completely glorified. Humility, faith, devotion, hope, these are the elements of christian character and the way-marks of the christian's progress. The helpless inability of the sinner, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, the renewing of the Holy Ghost—these are the corner

stone of that temple of grace of which Jesus Christ Himself is the great and only foundation, the Sovereign mercy of God the origin and the infinite wisdom of God the only builder and maker.

Into this temple you are this day invited to enter that you may hold communion and fellowship with God the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost.







# IMPUTATION

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A SERMON  
BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SAYTE, D. D.  
Of Charleston, S. C.

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October, 1840.



## IMPUTATION.

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1 PET. 3:18.

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins the just for the unjust that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the spirit.

The language of the apostle, as found in the passage selected for our present meditation, and in the context, is doctrinal and also ethical. It presents to our view the character and meditation of Christ both as a pattern to be imitated by us and also as a ground of salvation whereby we may be redeemed. We are here exhorted to a patient continuance in well doing, and in suffering affliction, by a reference to Christ who was in this respect our exemplar to be followed as He was also our Mediator in whom we are implicitly to rest our hopes of salvation.

There is set forth in this passage the all-important truth that human redemption was effected by a suffering Redeemer; that this Redeemer was incarnate Deity; that this Redeemer became incarnate and underwent all His sufferings as the Substitute for sinners; and that the whole design of these sufferings was to make atonement for the sins of men. We may summarily comprehend the doctrine of our text, as far as it is possible to grasp it in a single discourse, under the nature and design of the sufferings of Christ.

I. And, first, let us inquire into the nature of the sufferings of Christ.

That Christ was actually a suffering Messiah is a fact which His entire history abundantly attests. He was conceived under circumstances which exposed His virgin mother to contumely and scorn. Born in destitution, cradled in poverty, driven by persecution into infantile exile,—disesteemed by His own brethren, despised and rejected by His fellow countrymen, He drifted about homeless and friendless. Christ was indeed “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Every element which more sadly embitters the cup of human woe, poverty, reproach, hatred, scorn, were all mingled in that cup which was given Him to drink. He was persecuted by men, tempted by devils and forsaken by God. The dark cloud of sorrow and

misfortune which settled upon His birth, gathered around His manhood, until it enshrouded His grave in awful terrors. His path was tracked by tears and terminated in blood and death. There were but two periods, as far as is recorded, during His thirty-three years of earthly ministration when the light of joy broke, like a sunburst through that fierce storm by which He was encompassed. Maligned and misrepresented through life, He was at length offered up a victim of cruelty, on the altar of despotism, by the hands of perjury, and the connivance of an unrighteous and self-convicted judge.

The sufferings of Christ, therefore, extended from His cradle to His grave, and through the whole period of His life until they consummated in His ignominious and accursed death upon the cross. He was "obedient unto death." It was when He drew near to this last hour of agony that the elements of wrath, which had been gathering in denser mass during the whole period of His life, burst in all their fury upon Him. "This," said He to the Jews when they laid violent hands upon Him, "this is your hour and the power of darkness." Whether we trace these sufferings as depicted in the language of prophecy (Ps. 22: 1-15, &c.; Is. 53, &c.,)—or in the language of the evangelical record,—or in the actual history of the facts of the case, they were of such a nature as to exceed the comprehension or the endurance of a merely mortal man. We see the Saviour at the Pascal Supper calm, collected, conversible and full of tender assiduity toward His mourning disciples, and in a little while after, in the solitude of dark Gethsemane, before any danger was yet apprehended by His disciples, we behold Him covered with amazement, in the most unutterable agony, and importunately beseeching God to let His cup of misery pass from Him. Before any human hand had touched Him He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death."

These sufferings affected both His body and His soul. As to His body we are informed that "being in an agony He prayed more earnestly and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the sufferings of Christ were unquestionably seated in His mind as their source and origin. It was, as has been stated, while as yet unknown

by any external violence "He began to be sore amazed," when "His soul was exceeding sorrowful and the pains of hell gat hold upon Him." When He hung upon the cross, bleeding and dying, His complaint was,—not that He endured excruciating torments in His body, but it was, as expressed in that mysterious cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was filled with dejection, sorrow, constipation, and shame, with an overwhelming sense of the divine displeasure and the frown of an angry God. It was this eternal conflict which shattered His earthly tabernacle and burst His mighty heart. It was by the sorrow and bitterness of His soul, it was poured out unto death, and not by any physical exhaustion, for at the very moment He expired He cried with "a loud voice" and "gave up the ghost."

This leads us to remark that the sufferings of Christ must have been vicarious. They were not inflicted on Him for any personal ill-desert, but as a substitute and as standing in the place of sinners. All suffering is an expression of the divine anger. It never did have and it never can have existence where there has been no previous sin. Suffering, too, is that very penalty with which God in His righteousness threatens the wicked. "Woe unto the wicked it shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Nay, the very sufferings which were endured by Christ are represented as having been inflicted upon Him by God and were a manifestation of the divine indignation. It was God who deserted Him. It was God who put into His hands the cup which He so earnestly entreated might pass from Him. It was God who, in the language of an ancient prophecy, applied by our Saviour to this very event, exclaimed, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts, smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered" (Math. 26:31 and Zech. 13:7).

But it is nevertheless true that Christ personally was in all respects holy, harmless and undefiled—personally He "knew no sin"—for even when He suffered He was, as our text affirms, "the just." Personally He was the beloved of the Father, His only begotten Son in whom He was well pleased and in whom His soul delighted. The conclusion, therefore, is irresistible



that the sufferings of Christ, being in themselves expressive of divine anger, while no such anger could be possibly cherished towards Christ personally must have been inflicted upon Him vicariously or as He occupied the room, and stood forth as the representative of sinners, and by whom these sufferings were justly merited.

That God did thus really and truly in the exercise of His rectorial justice and as moral governor of the universe execute upon Christ as the penalty of a broken and a violated law, the sore agonies He endured, is as certain as the truth of God can make it. For it is unquestionably said that "Jehovah laid on Him the iniquities of us all—and that "Christ was made a curse for us," "being accursed of God." (See Gal. 3:13 and Deut. 21:23.)

But it is no less plain and manifest, to view this subject in another light, than it is essential to the character of God to treat every one according to his own character and deserts. The glory to God and the rectitude of His government, therefore, demand that He should recompense evil to the evil and good to the righteous. And yet the man Christ Jesus who was "made sin"—who "endured the curse," even the curse of God, and against whom the sword of divine vengeance was drawn forth in terrible severity—this same Jesus, who was "bruised and smitten," was the well beloved Son of God (Math. 3:17 and 17:5 and 12:18), and always did those things that are pleasing unto the Father (John 8:29).

These sufferings, therefore, and this curse—and that wrathful vengeance—and all this mysterious and incomprehensible agony—were not inflicted upon the Saviour, as He was viewed by God personally, or as He was personally deserving of them—but they were laid upon Him as the sin offering of a guilty race, voluntarily presented by Himself in virtue of His power and right to lay down that life which He had Himself chosen to assume that in it He might suffer the just for the unjust to bring us to God. For God made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin.

II. We are, therefore, brought to our second proposition, as embodying the doctrine of our text, which is that the sufferings of Christ were designed to make atonement for the sins of men.

In that holy and happy estate in which men were created, there was an intimate and endearing union and communion between them and God. They walked with God and God walked with them, face to face in some manifested form of visible glory. There was nothing to interrupt the flow of the divine benignity toward man or of the love of man toward his all-merciful Creator. Sin had not then arisen to eclipse the glory of this divine radiance and involve the soul in worse than Cimmerian darkness.

This union and communion between man and God was destroyed by the apostasy, and is now impossible. God as righteous and holy was bound to treat man in consequence of his guilt as an offender, and to withdraw from him all those favours which were the pledges and tokens of divine complacency and approbation. By the treason of Adam, our head and representative, death has passed upon all men for that, by his one act of disobedience all have sinned. As thus guilty we are all condemned by heaven's righteous law and must be regarded as culprits, and offenders by heaven's righteous Judge; whilst we are altogether impotent to render any satisfaction by which this penalty may be averted and God's favour and kindness restored.

Such was our condition as foreseen by God in the counsels of His own eternity. We were "unjust." Judged by the law of perfect and sinless purity, we could not be justified—but must be condemned. And since this law was holy, just and good it could not possibly be altered, cancelled, or annulled. And, my brethren, the fact that in such a situation the brighter intelligences of heaven found no redemption from the wrath revealed against all ungodliness, is of itself sufficient to demonstrate that it was altogether beyond the reach of any finite wisdom to determine whether in the case of man any provision could possibly be made whereby a sinful race, or any part of it, might be delivered from impending misery. This question could be solved only by Him to whose all-seeing wisdom the whole interests of His entire dominion in all its parts and in all its duration, were present. He alone to whom belonged the supreme authority and from whom the laws of heaven emanated, could exercise a dispensing power or give validity to any

scheme by which a commutation of punishment should be introduced. And when God had determined that such a substitution on behalf of the guilty race of man should be admitted it was further necessary, in order to effectuate such a plan, that He who should thus vicariously suffer should do so by His own voluntary choice,—that He should be Himself free from that guilt whose penalty He was to bear—that He should stand in some relation to those in whose place He was substituted—that in order to render His interference subservient to the interests of God's moral government He should fully justify and uphold the righteousness of that law by which He should be condemned—that He should be possessed of such a personal dignity as to be of equal consideration to the party on whose behalf He interposed—and that He should endure in His own person such an amount of suffering as should appear to the righteous Judge a full equivalent for that penalty which was due to all for whom He thus interposed. Now, these conditions were all gloriously filled in the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. “He gave Himself for our sins, to redeem us from the present evil world, according to the will of God even our Father.” In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that “God sent His only begotten Son into the world to be the propitiation for our sins.” And “I came forth from the Father,” said the Saviour, “and come into the world. I have power to lay down my life and I have power to take it up again.” “For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood He also Himself took part of the same.” “He was made like unto us in all points yet without sin.” And as Christ was in Himself “holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners as a lamb without spot,” and was thus “such an one as became us,” so did He ever magnify and exalt the holy law of God. (See Math. 5:18, &c.) Thus while Christ, by the assumption of our human nature, was capacitated for suffering in our room and stead, He was also able by the glorious and ineffable dignity of His divine character to give sufficiency and efficacy to His mediatory sufferings. “How shall” not “the blood of Christ who through the eternal Spirit” that is, His divine nature, “offered Himself without spot to God, purge your consciences from dead works” and “cleanse from all sin,”

seeing He was "the only begotten of the Father, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person?" Therefore is it here said that Christ "hath once suffered," wherein is very forcibly expressed the mighty and prevailing virtue of the sufferer of whom such was the pre-eminent dignity and merit that although He represented the entire guilt of elect sinners of mankind, His individual sufferings *once* rendered, were adequate to annihilate the whole power of our offences and to give perfect satisfaction to the law and justice of God. (See Rom. 6:10; Heb. 7:27 and 9:7, &c.)

The whole nature of Christ's mediation, it is thus apparent, depends on the combination, in His mysterious person, of the divinity and humanity that so, while in the latter He "once suffered being put to death in the flesh," by the former He should have potency to sustain the otherwise impotent and frail manhood—dignity to countervail the evil involved in all the iniquities of that entire mass whose transgressions He bore upon His accursed head—and ability also to render up the life of His assumed body and to raise it up again triumphant from the grave, being "quickened by the" divine and everlasting "Spirit." The regard of God as the Supreme governor of the universe, for the good of that community over which He presides, could not be maintained inviolate without such a measure as this whereby to convince His creatures of His infinite hatred of sin, and of His wisdom and sincerity in the promulgation of that law which denounced the severest vengeance against all violators of it. For this law must be regarded as expressive of the character and will of God and therefore must its penalty and its precepts be in all respects adequately upheld and enforced. In no other way than such as preserves the honor of the divine law and the glory of every attribute of the divine character could our offences against the divine majesty be forgiven, expiated or propitiated.

It remains, therefore, since God in His own sovereign pleasure and goodness was disposed to commute the punishment of our guilty race that the justly-merited penalties of His broken law should be averted by the interposition of a substitute in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. And this end, even reconciliation between God our offended Judge and guilty



and rebellious man, is asserted by the word of God to have been the object and the result of the sufferings of Christ. "For Christ hath once suffered"—"for sins"—"the just for the unjust"—"that He might bring us to God." We are here designated sinners by a term which expresses our relation to the divine law (*Χδινων*) and our want of right or justice when brought to a judicial process. Christ, on the other hand, is declared to have suffered for (*πεζι*) sins, the just for the unjust, that is, as a righteous person, who was perfectly just before the law, for the unrighteous and that on account of their sins. And He was thus put to death in the flesh, as the substituted sin offering in the stead of sinners, "that He might bring us to God."

Sin had placed God and man apart—separated between them—and disrupted all the ties of harmony and concord. But the atoning death and mediatory sufferings of Christ, have effected a reconciliation. God is at-oned, and brought to be at one with those for whose sins Christ has thus made all required satisfaction. The sufferings of Christ are thus an at-one-ment, since by them He has procured the liberty and the power of leading us to God. Christ has, by His mediation, not merely prepared the way by which sinners may find access to God, He has not only disposed the Almighty Ruler and Judge to receive these returning penitents. This were not an at-one-ment at all, for it would still leave the parties in their separation and distance and give no certainty whatever that the opening for actual reconciliation would be ever embraced by a single sinner of the whole ruined race. And besides God required no mediation to render Him reconcilable since the very purpose of salvation took its rise in the bosom of His infinite and everlasting love. There never was any hindrance or difficulty on the part of God to the full adjustment of man's apostasy, the entire difficulty is and ever was on the part of man. He was now guilty and he was impotent and therefore as Moral Governor and judge God could not otherwise regard or treat him. But God in His own nature and disposition was not the less full of tenderness and love and therefore did His eye pity and His arm bring salvation. It was only because "God so loved the world" as to exceed in measure our comprehension, even as much "as



are the heavens above the earth," that "He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

Christ, therefore, once suffered the "just for the unjust," not as some affirm—not, (as Arminians and Pelagians and our new theologians teach), that He might render it proper for God to treat with and to pardon returning sinners should they come unto Him; but that He might actually bring us near to God by virtue of that power which as Mediator He had thus secured. Christ as the head of His Church and people, as a Prince and a Saviour actually draws all those for whom He died unto Himself. "This," says Bullinger, "is the fruit of our Lord's passion that He brings back the fugitives to His Father and the lost to the abodes of blessedness." Having Himself returned to the Father, and the glory of the skies, through the merits of these His sufferings on their account, He brings them also who had been alienated and unjust, to the same exaltation and glory. "He is thus made of God unto them for whom He intercedes and to whom He applies the merits of His suffering and death," "wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and complete redemption." "In whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." And thus are "we" who are called by His Spirit enabled and disposed to believe in this glorious gospel of the blessed God. Thus do "we joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have received the at-one-ment."

By the sufferings and death of Christ, therefore, as the just for the unjust, there is a full provision made for the certain and infallible salvation of all His chosen people. A perfect satisfaction is made to the law and justice of God, so that there is no longer any condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. A full purchase has been made of all the blessing which God covenanted to bestow upon them for whom Christ thus interposed, including the bestowment of God's holy Spirit to renew and sanctify their hearts, so that "as many as are the sons of God they are led by the Spirit of God, as a Spirit of Adoption whereby they cry Abba Father." "Therefore, being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Such is the simple, plain and scriptural view we are led by this and innumerable other passages in the word of God, to take of the sufferings of Christ, as a full, perfect and sufficient oblation and atonement for the sins of men. Neither is there any other explanation which can be reasonably given of these sufferings.

It cannot with any truth be said that in these sufferings Jesus Christ endured the penalties inflicted, since, as has been shown, He was personally free from any sin by which any such penalty might be incurred. Equally impossible is it to imagine that these sufferings were corrective chastisements, designed to promote the moral benefit of the sufferer, since in the man Christ Jesus there was no moral obliquity to correct. Neither can these sufferings be accounted for on the principle that they were needful to confirm the truth of the christian doctrine and that they were sent and endured for this single purpose. For if those doctrines are not in themselves true no amount of suffering could make them what they were not. Besides these doctrines are every where in the word of God made to spring from these very sufferings and to rest upon them not as their confirmation but as their foundation. And, further, it cannot be reconciled with the principles of justice that God should visit such severities upon an innocent and holy being merely for the confirmation of truths to which in so many other ways He might bear abundant testimony. Oh, no! We cannot obliterate from Scripture the great central doctrine of a suffering Messiah that we may thus free the character of God from an unjust charge of severity by making that very charge against God by such an unnecessary infliction of such aggravated misery.

Neither is it any more satisfactory to assign as a reason for the sufferings of Christ the establishment of the all-important doctrine of resurrection of the dead. For by the same reasoning it is made apparent that God could in other ways sufficiently exemplify and authenticate this fact, as by raising up to life those who were already in their graves, without subjecting a holy and innocent person to suffering and death for the mere purpose of rising again from the dead in attestation of the future resurrection of the bodies of mankind.

But it has also been alleged that in all the sufferings of the blessed Redeemer and in the endurance of death itself, nothing more was intended than a bright example of christian patience, fortitude and endurance. But in this view of the aggravated mercy endured by the lamb of God, the example most prominently set forth is that of an arbitrary subjection of the innocent to undeserved, cruel and excruciating sufferings, and since, on this theory, their design must be to elevate the character of God and not of Christ. The very opposite result must take place in every ingenious mind. We instinctively revolt from the very contemplation of perfect virtue and holiness crushed, persecuted and cast out as evil and that by both God and man, for the mere purpose of setting forth in the conduct of the unhappy victim an example of noble endurance. Our sympathy in such a supposed case with the miserable sufferer must boil over in indignation against such an arbitrary exercise of infinite power. And yet this is the very refuge to which they betake themselves who ignorantly charge our doctrine with vindictiveness and cruelty. And let it also be remembered that limiting our consideration of Christ as a sufferer to the single view of an exemplar of patient fortitude in the endurance of martyrdom, we must pronounce the example defective and below others of which we read in the history of man. God has doubtless so ordered it that we have preserved the history of such manifestations of infinity and weakness under the overwhelming pressure of His sufferings as forever to destroy this refuge of lies and to force upon us the truth of that mystery of godliness which is the only pillar and ground of the truth.

It is when we survey the doctrine of the cross in its true aspect—and look upon Christ in His true character as uniting in His mysterious person the divine and the human nature that we can truly understand the character of His mediatory work and perceive the glory of God as it is revealed in Christ Jesus. When we look out upon the blessed Saviour as Emmanuel—God manifest in the flesh—and as made of a woman, made under the law, that by suffering for sins, the just for the unjust, He might bring us to God—then it is we can enter into the feelings of the inspired writers who with every mention of this subject seem to be filled with amazement,

admiration, and holy joy. When we thus behold the deserted humanity of our all-glorious Redeemer, who in His own free and infinite compassion assumed our guilty and condemned position—borne down, crushed and sorrowful even unto death; and when we thus behold the Son of God stooping to such a depth of inconceivable humiliation, and victoriously accomplishing the work of our salvation and recompensing that very humanity with ever enduring blessedness, we can exultingly exclaim: “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world.”







# The Eternal Sonship of Christ

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A DISCOURSE

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.



# THE ETERNAL SONSHIP OF CHRIST.

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## PART I.

### JOHN XX: 31.

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

It has been said that the Gospel of St. John originated in the prevalence of certain errors, which, even during the lifetime of the Evangelist, perverted "the truth, as it is in Jesus," and impeded its progress and reception. The elders of Ephesus, and other parts of Asia, it is said, requested the aged apostle to give them a remedy for the pernicious tenets that were spreading, and this he provided in the Gospel he bequeathed to the Church, in which, to meet the opposing tenets of contending sects, he establishes equally the humanity and the divinity of the Redeemer—as on the certainty of the former is based the reality of His sacrifice; and by showing the truth of the other, the evangelist sets forth the infinite value of that sacrifice in the economy of redemption.

Whatever confidence may be placed in this statement, the purpose for which, the gospel was penned, is declared explicitly in my text. It was to prove that the man Jesus, the reputed son of Joseph, "He" whom they had seen, and heard, and looked upon, and their hands had handled; that He was the Christ—the Messiah who had been promised. I am aware that there are some divines who would lower this last application to a title of office, who, though they contend for the divinity of the Lord Jesus, yet deny that His filiation has any reference to His divine nature and assert that the title of Son properly belongs to the humanity of the Redeemer, and is bestowed upon Him in consequence of His miraculous conception, of His resurrection from the dead, or of His exaltation to the right hand of glory. It might be enough to say in reply to this, that the emphatic manner in which this application is introduced, and its frequent repetition in the same clause with the name of Christ, might suffice to prove that they cannot have any identity of meaning; while its frequent recurrence in association not

with the circumstances of the Messiahship adverted to, but with the antecedent state of glory possessed by the Lord shows that it must bear a meaning, not derived from the adjuncts of His office, but one independent and connected with His nature.

In proposing to discuss this subject, the Sonship or filiation of the Redeemer—I would at present merely examine the scriptural evidence for that view which our church has adopted: reserving for another opportunity the consideration of the objections to that evidence, and of the essential importance of the subject itself.

As our argument here is not with those who reject the divinity of the Redeemer, and the doctrine of the Trinity, but with those, who avowing these truths, deny that the relation between the first and second persons of the Trinity, of paternity and filiation, is essential to the Godhead, and existed from eternity; we may appeal to the Scripture of the Old Testament, as conveying intimations to us of a plurality of persons in the Godhead, which, seen distinctly in the light reflected from the New, evince the unity of the faith in all the varied dispensations of the truth. However obscure these intimations may have been to those who received them, that obscurity served for a trial and discipline of their faith, and while the imperfect knowledge of the ancient church renders it a more unexceptionable witness of the truth which they unknowingly preserved.

The Scriptures which contain intimations, of the distinction existing in the Godhead, point out to us the relation of the persons, one bearing the mysterious character of Son, and another that of Father. "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," is language addressed in the name of Jehovah to one who claims the attributes and honors of divinity demanding universal worship, and receiving the promise of universal dominion. When the inspired sage asks of him, who would profess to know the nature of Jehovah, "what is His name, and what is His Son's name, if thou canst tell?" it is surely not an obscure intimation, that God has a Son whose name is as mysterious and inscrutable as His own. In another passage of the Old Testament, the eternal generation of the Son forms the subject of prophetic declaration. The Prophet Micah in predicting that the Messiah should be born in Bethlehem, adds,



that "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." One other passage of the Old Testament may be added, which, though clothed in the sublime obscurity of poetic diction, yet seems to be an obvious description of a person, and if of a person, of a divine one co-eternal with the Supreme and related to Him as a Son. The passage to which I allude declares in the character of personified wisdom—"the Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways, before His works of old: I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was; where there were no depths I was brought forth: where there were no fountains abounding in water, before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth." It would be difficult to explain this passage and its context of a mere personified attribute: but when referred to a person already familiar to the Israelitish church under the name of the Son of God, it acquires an energy and a force suitable to the entire passage.

We cannot be surprised that from passages like these, and intimations so obvious, the distinction and relation of the persons of the Godhead should be not obscurely perceived by the ancient Jewish church; and that as all of these declarations too were referred to the Messiah, it should be supposed that He would be possessed of a divine nature and attributes. There is evidence that such was the Jewish faith, antecedent to the incarnation; but, gradually, temporal hopes and desires perverting the language of prophecy, obliterated its spiritual meaning from their minds; they looked for a temporal Messiah and a temporal empire; while yet the phrase of the "Son of God," was familiar to their minds, and seems to have been invariably connected with the notion of divinity. This you will perceive, if you consider the passages of the New Testament, in which this title occurs, and the indications they give of the feelings and opinions of the Jews. Such are the remarkable incidents mentioned by St. John, when on two different occasions the Jews attempted to offer violence to Christ, because of His implicit assumption of the Sonship, "making Himself," as they expressed it, "equal to God." What had He done to merit such a charge? He had claimed God as His own peculiar Father—He had identified His works with the works of God: and while

He declared as a Son, that all things He had were communicated from the Father, He yet claimed equal honors with Him, and professed to equal works. Again, on a subsequent occasion, when He declared Himself and the Father, to be one, and they for the supposed blasphemy prepared to stone Him, while He points out their inconsistency in accusing Him of such a crime—although their Scriptures gave the title of God, even to those who held civil offices among them—He yet repeats His former assertion, declaring Himself to have been sent into the world by the Father, affirming again His claim to the title of Son, and identifying His works with those of the Father, who was “in Him, and He in Him”—words which as they implied His pre-existence, His antecedent filiation, and His divine nature, again called forth the wrath of the Jews:—“therefore, they sought again to take Him.” Now, if we consider that these same Jews were in earnest expectation of the Messiah, that they had anxiously enquired of the Baptist if He were that prophet, that they had repeatedly requested of the Lord to satisfy their doubts, “tell us if thou be the Christ,” and this without insinuating a charge of blasphemy against the assumption of Messiahship,—it must from these facts appear plainly, that the Jews separated the official title of Messiah from the personal one of Son of God, that they deemed the latter title to be equivalent to an assumption of divinity, and that in this opinion they were not corrected by the Saviour. Our inferences are confirmed by the narrative of our Lord’s examination before the Jewish Sanhedrim. He was accused of blasphemy, and on His own confession was condemned; and for the justice of it, they appealed to their law, “We have a law, and by that law He ought to die.” What was then the blasphemy? They tell us “He made Himself the Son of God”—this is an assumption of divinity, and laying claim to divine honors, they deemed blasphemy; but in any lower sense, such as is included in Messiahship, is constituted no crime, and subjected the claimant to no penalty. We then have in this solemnly recorded act of the Jewish Council, the interpretation of the title in question; and in our Lord’s answer to the adjuration of the High Priest is as solemn an assent upon His part to the justice of that interpretation.

Nor is this conclusion inconsistent with the other passages in which the title is given to, or assumed by, the Saviour in the Gospel history. All those passages in which the love of the Father is magnified, is consequence of giving up His Son to suffer death, the sinless for the sinful, would imply this generation,—for the tendency of such passages is to lead the mind to contemplate a Father's agonies in the sacrifice of His Son, and thence to estimate the exceeding love of God towards His sinful creatures. If Christ be a Son only as to His human nature, great as is that love which would accept the sacrifice of Him who was conceived and generated for that very purpose; yet assuredly, it is infinitely more conspicuous if we consider the eternal Son, the only begotten, the well beloved of the eternal Father, thus subjected by Him to the temporary divestment of His glory, the voluntary union with the flesh, and all the awful mysterious consequences that ensued.

Another class of texts, bearing directly on the same subject, are those in which our Lord is termed "only begotten," or "the only begotten of the Father." How can Christ be the only begotten except as to His divine nature? As to His human, it was, indeed, formed by the immediate creative power of God, but in this respect, it did not stand solitary among existences; for the first Adam too, was the result of immediate creation, and hence, by the Evangelist is called the Son of God. Is Christ a Son in no higher sense than Adam? because He is heir of all things, for therefore He is heir because He is Son, and not Son because He is heir—"He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He hath appointed heir of all things." There remains but one other sense to be affixed to this epistle, "only begotten," in His divine nature—sole in His pre-existent and divine essence wherein He was "the Son of the living God."

Another class of texts strongly confirmatory of our view, is that of those in which the Father is said to have sent His Son, in which the relation of Him who is sent, and of Him who commissions, is stated as existing antecedent to the mission. It is, the Son who is sent, not the second person of the Trinity who is constituted a Son by being sent;—it is the Father who sends, not who becomes a Father by the ministry He confers. The Word is sent, not to be a Son, but to become flesh, to

become a propitiation to take upon Him the form of a servant; nor is there any intimation, that the character of a Son, though esseential to the fulfilment of the mission, formed a part of it. One of the most remarkable instances of this occurs in a passage before referred to, where the Jews accusing Jesus of blasphemy for calling Himself God, He replies, "is it not written in your law, ye are gods? If he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scriptures cannot be broken, say ye of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, thou blasphemest because I said, I am the Son of God?" Now, Jesus, though He had claimed in His previous discourse, identity with the Father, had not distinctly called Himself the Son of God, which therefore must be regarded as implied in that assumption; and again, that He does not say sanctified and sent by God, but by the Father, to show that the relation of Father had existed antecedent to the mission, as He said on another occasion, "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father."

In connection with this numerous class of texts, are those in which creation and other divine acts are ascribed to the Son, "by whom He made the worlds," "by Him were all things created." It is true, that this argument is weakened by considering that since the divine and human nature of the Redeemer are united in one person, an interchange of epithets takes place, and acts belonging properly to the divine nature, are asserted as being performed by the human; and again, what is strictly true of the Man, is predicted of the Deity;—thus "God" is said to have "purchased His Church with His own blood," and "the Son of man," even during our Lord's ministry, was said "to be in heaven." This consideration is just: and if the Sonship of Christ were proved applicable only to His human nature, it would explain such passages as I have referred to; but taken in connection with the many reasons we have for deeming the filiation to be divine, these passages must be acknowledged to possess some weight, particularly, as has been justly remarked, if the Son be not a personal designation, none such occurs in Scripture—all other names of Christ being official or indistinctive. He is God, and Jehovah in common



with the Father and the Spirit—He is Lord, and Christ, and King, and Prophet, in His ministerial character—and even the name of Word, though it marks His pre-existent state, has yet direct reference to the manifestation and development of the divine councils, and is therefore an official designation. Hence, if the Son be not a personal appellation, and connected with His divine nature, Christ has none such, and therefore, the very objection we are discussing is overthrown, as there can then be no interchange of designations.

I shall call your attention only to another passage of the word of God, but to one that seems to me decisive of the point at issue. In Romans 1 the apostle says of Jesus Christ, that He “was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead.” It is obvious that in this text, the apostle is speaking of Christ, not officially, but personally; and it is equally obvious that His human nature is stated in the former clause, “the seed of David according to the flesh,” and that except we convict the apostle of a cold and frigid repetition altogether alien from his style, the remaining clause must express His divine nature, the Son of God according to the “Spirit of holiness.” Of His descent from David, no proof was necessary, but of His claim to be the Son of God, His resurrection was the powerful and effective evidence. This claim was the ground of His condemnation; and He had Himself appealed to His resurrection as the pledge and evidence of His mission. The phrase “the Spirit of holiness” indicates holiness; and thus, that the words according to the unexceptionable authority of Schleusner implies “the glorious Spirit and divine majesty” of the Messiah, a phrase sufficiently indicative of the divinity of His nature.

Additional and cogent considerations might be presented from the baptismal invocation, where the distinctive appellations of the sacred three persons exhibit the first eminently as a Father, and the second as a Son: and from such a text as this in Hebrews in which Christ is said “although a Son to have learned obedience by suffering;” a statement that presents no meaning worthy of the apostle, except we understand a Sonship higher than mere humanity, which as humanity can claim



no exemption from suffering. But enough has been said upon the scriptural argument to show how the doctrine of the divine filiation of the Messiah pervades the word of God; and that, making every deduction that can be rightfully claimed for ambiguous or obscure texts—it must, I think, be admitted, that whatever other meanings may be found in Scripture for the title of “Son of God”—passages occur inexplicable but on the view that christian antiquity and our church have taken of the subject, enshrined by the former in those creeds, that are adopted and maintained by the other.

On a future occasion, I would seek to consider the subject in its other bearings—to examine the objections against the doctrine, whether metaphysical or scriptural, and to show its intimate and close connection with the truths that lie at the very foundation of our faith.

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## PART II.

### JOHN XX: 31.

But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.

When last I made this text the subject of an address, it was my object to impress on my brethren the scriptural character of a doctrine, which, though maintained by the early churches, and stated in the creed equally of primitive and Protestant christianity, has been in too many instances, denied as unfounded, or neglected as unimportant—I mean the revealed revelation of the second person of the ever Blessed Trinity to the first as His Son, His only begotten Son, “begotten by His Father, before all worlds.” This relation dimly shadows out to us the communication from the Father of the entireness of the divine essence, property, and nature, a communication which dates from the eternity co-existent with that relation, and which is employed in sacred writ to increase our adoring wonder at the love of God which “spared not His own Son, but gave Him up to die for sinners.”

It cannot be denied that the title of Son of God, standing as it does in contrast with His other title of Son of Man, presents a problem that demands solution. If to be Son of Man would

seem to imply the full participation of human nature, which as descended from a human being constituted Him a Son: so, Son of God would seem to imply an equal participation of the divine nature, and in the same relation as a Son; and this distinction is strengthened by observing the various and contradictory views to which those who deny the eternal generation have in turn been found to have recourse, in order to account for the application of this remarkable title.

Thus one class of divines assert that the human nature of Christ alone is entitled to the name of Son. Others assign the claim to that title to the resurrection: while others limit it to the exaltation of the Saviour in the flesh to the throne of glory. A late antagonist of this truth—denying that either the human or the divine nature separately could be called a Son—assigns the union of the two into one person as the cause of the appellation.

It might be sufficient to reply to all these—that they are severally inadequate to explain the facts clearly stated in Scripture; that Christ is acknowledged as Son of God by those to whom His incarnation, His resurrection, His consequent glory, were unknown; that the title was one acknowledged by the Jews from the Old Testament Scriptures, to imply by the very force of the appellation—that the possessor had the fulness of the divine essence; and that the language distinctly intimates a peculiarity of nature, and not a mere official designation. We acknowledge that the formation of the human nature of Christ may confer a species of Sonship similar to that which creation bestowed on Adam; but, who does not perceive an immeasurable distance between the way in which his filiation is spoken of, as compared with that of the Lord from heaven?

We can perceive a figurative propriety in calling Him a Son, who was “the first begotten of the dead” from the womb of the earth; but the title is claimed, and given as one intimating peculiar excellence of nature; and while we glory that as a Son all the angels of God worship the Lord Jesus—that worship is derived from “the excellent name” which by inheritance is His, through which even His human nature is rewarded with supremacy of glory.

While, then, we acknowledge that the title of Son is given to the Lord in connection with His incarnation, His resurrection, His exaltation to the right hand of glory, we yet assert an antecedent filiation of the Saviour, one of nature, not of character or office;—one eternal, and not dated in time;—one which, if we may venture so to say, confers peculiar propriety on His designation to these His several offices.

It must be unnecessary to argue, that neither the resurrection or the ascension glory could be the cause of this title. He was repeatedly declared to be the Son of God antecedent to His resurrection, and this designation is one not of office or dignity, but significant of a peculiar excellency of nature; essential and personal, not accidental or by appointment;—"to which of the angels," asks St. Paul, "said He at any time, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?"—a passage quoted by the apostle from a Psalm eminently descriptive of the divine nature of Christ, and which intimated by the word "begotten," the emphatic difference between the Redeemer and all angelic natures. He was the Son, not by adoption or appointment, but by the ineffable communication of the one divine essence.

We have now noticed the different theories that have been advanced, to account for the frequent ascription of the title of Son of God to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is time that we should briefly consider objections, objections I mean independent of the interpretation of Scripture, and the arguments thence derived. In truth, all the difficulties professed to be entertained, are based upon the analogies derived from human relations, and from the assumption that such are strictly to be applied to the divine nature. If such an application be conceded, then, indeed, the doctrine must be allowed to present an aspect scarcely to be reconciled to reason; and, we are moreover, driven to assert that the legitimate deductions from the language of Scripture are opposed to the obvious principles of common sense. But, such surely is not the case; and while we admit, nay, maintain, that the analogy is clearly intimated in the words of holy writ, and even made the foundation of important and instructive teaching, we deny that in its application to the essential character of the most High, it can be made to run altogether parallel to the circumstances of humanity.

Son, it has been said, implies a Father, and Father implies in reference to Son, priority in time. Sonship, too, implies derivation of essence; and hence, if Christ be a Son in His divine nature, He cannot be eternal in His duration, nor all perfect in His existence—He cannot be God.

To this it may be sufficient to reply, that although among men the relation intimated by the word Son, supposes the priority of a father as a man, it does not imply his priority as a father; that before a man can be capable of the relation of a father, he must have been born, and come to maturity; but that this cannot possibly apply to Him who is "from everlasting to everlasting God," whose existence is necessary, whose essential modes and relations are necessary, and therefore eternal. If the doctrine of the Trinity be true, then must the distinct personality of the Godhead be admitted as an eternal truth; but if the person be co-existent, and the modes of relation necessary, then there can be no priority of existence in the Father, as a father, since this is a mode co-eternal with the infinite duration of the Godhead. God is revealed to us as operating *ad extra*, in creation providence, and redemption; as invested with certain perfections, such as wisdom, goodness, mercy, power; and also as possessing certain internal personal distinctions by which, though united in one Godhead, the Father, and the Son and the Spirit, are distinguished. These three persons cannot be three distinct and independent Beings; for this would be to make three gods: nor can their ground of distinction be the works *ad extra*; for no one person acts exclusively of the other: nor yet is it the possession of any divine perfection; for each possess them alike and in an infinite degree. Are we then presumptuous in saying that Father, Son and Spirit, are the real and personal modes of subsistence in the one infinite God that they have essential distinctive characters, corresponding in some degree with the terms, begetting, begotten, and proceeding?

Nor do we admit that this scriptural truth is overturned by the assertion that Christ, if not absolutely and originally God, must be inferior to the Father from whom He receives the divine essence, that He cannot be self-existent, or independent, and therefore cannot be God. That the doctrine we would



defend, includes in it the communication of the divine essence we acknowledge, for this is the very generation for which we plead; but admitting this, we deny the consequence that our adversaries would deduce, or that there is any inferiority of nature, or essence, or attributes in the Son. In the communication of nature among men, we see no inferiority, nor is the Son, in anything essential to manhood, below the father; and the very idea of the generation of the son marks the communication of the fullness of the Godhead, without difference, inequality, or division. Hence, is the Son declared to be "the image of God," "the effulgence of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person," hence is it said, that "as the Father has life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself;" hence does our blessed Lord say, "all things that the Father hath are mine." If to exist by the necessity of His own nature be self-existence, then is the Son of God self-existent; for this relation to the Father is necessary and essential, and it includes too, all the independence that is included in, or connected with infinite perfection.

There are others who object not to the truth of the filiation of Christ, but to its importance, and who insist that provided the doctrine of His essential divinity be maintained, that of His eternal Sonship is a matter of comparative indifference: nay, that as diminishing the difficulties connected with the doctrine of the Trinity, it would be wiser to relinquish its inculcation. But to disregard as unimportant a doctrine that has scriptural foundation, must be considered as rather irreverent treatment of the word of God, and as setting up human reason as the judge of what a revelation should contain that savours rather of the school of Socinus than of Paul. Such views, too, must necessarily lead to a lax interpretation of the passages of Scriptures connected with the subject, that must tend to imminent danger if applied to the rest of the sacred volume. But that doctrine cannot be unimportant which involves the relation between the persons of the Trinity which, if admitted, establishes most perfectly the unity of the essence of the Godhead, with the distinctive personality. "The Father," says Bishop Bull, in his immortal work, "is the principle of the Son and Spirit, and both are propagated from Him by an interior pro-



duction, not an external one—hence it is that they are not only of the Father, but in Him, and the Father in them, and that one person cannot be separate from another in the Holy Trinity, as three human powers, or three subjects of the same species are separate; and whatever opinion we may form of such statements, which speak the language of christian antiquity, they, at all events, prove both the catholicity, and the importance of the doctrine.”

This doctrine, too, throws light upon the truths of atonement, while it immeasurably exalts the love of God in its economy. By the equality, and yet the subordination of the Son, we can perceive the propriety of the work of redemption being committed to Him, who as Son could be sent, and as God conferred infinite value on the sacrifice: while, as Episcopius, no very willing witness, remarks, “the splendour and glory of the divine love towards the human race, shines with far greater intensity if we consider God as not sparing His own Son, His Son in the divine nature, than if, limiting the expression to the humanity of Christ, we lower the unspeakable gift of God to that of a man only.” The Trinity stands firmly based on scriptural evidence; it is essentially connected with all the doctrines of grace—its difficulties are great only to the pride of unrestrained human nature, or the indolence of contented ignorance, or the corruption that loves darkness rather than light, from moral not intellectual incapacity; nor is it likely that we shall serve the cause of one all-important truth, by the sacrifice of another as scriptural though not so important, or procure even an apparent reception for one unpalatable doctrine by the surrender of another. All truth is good—all *scriptural* truth is eminently so; nor can we with our limited faculties, and our ignorance of the nature of mind, venture to assign bounds to the influence of any one doctrine, its relation to others which appear to us more important, or the power it may exercise over the intellect and conscience of those to whom it may be presented. If the Sonship of the divine Redeemer be a revealed truth; if the clear intimation of Scripture, the consent of Jewish tradition, the statements of the Saviour—all lead us to the adoption of this truth; if the various modes of interpretation suggested to get rid of the doctrine, appear vain and unsup-

ported, and the difficulties supposed to clog its reception, have been proved to arise from mistaken analogies, and obscure and misty metaphysics;—if, finally, this doctrine has been proved to be important, as connected with other parts of the Gospel revelation, and important in itself, that its reception harmonizes apparently—conflicting statements, and its truth presents a barrier against opposed, but equally pernicious errors:—let not, my brethren, the bold and unguarded assertions of a careless and speculating age, lead you to surrender one shred of that truth, which you are exhorted “to buy and sell not;” looking in the spirit of your church, with reverence upon the dictates of antiquity, still search the Scriptures for yourselves, and bring all other teaching to the test of the word of God—search with humility, with diligence, with prayer; and “if you incline your ear to consider, and apply your heart to understanding—if you cry after knowledge, and lift up your voice for understanding—if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hid treasure,” the promise of the most High is registered—“then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.” May the Lord the Father grant you grace, by the enlightening influence of the Lord the Spirit, to know and to “hold fast the faith committed to the saints,” that ye may receive the all-important truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God; so through the justifying “righteousness of one God and Saviour Jesus Christ,” you may be made “perfect, established, strengthened.” “To Him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen!”





The  
Theory of a General Atonement  
Examined.

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BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.

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*May, 1848.*





## THE THEORY OF A GENERAL ATONEMENT EXAMINED.

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EPH. 1:4-7.

According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will:

To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved:

In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

There are two theories of atonement among those who receive this doctrine as the great cardinal doctrine of the gospel. The essence of that doctrine is that Christ came into the world for the purpose of making by the sacrifice of Himself an atonement for sin, according to the Scripture which says, "but now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself." The putting away sin means the expiation of its guilt and the consequent prevention of its penal effects. The effect of Christ's atonement, therefore, is redemption of those who had become enslaved to the bondage of sin and amenable to all its dreadful consequences. Redemption is synonymous with salvation—it is redemption to God from bondage, from death, from the curse of the law, from all iniquity.

Redemption, therefore, is the benefit or blessing only of those who are actually and finally saved—that is, of those who are denominated elect. (Tt. 2:10.) It would follow that atonement and redemption must be coextensive, since they are correlative, redemption being the benefits of which atonement is the price or meritorious ground. And thus Christ the Good Shepherd is represented as having laid down His life for the sheep, and to have purchased the church with His own blood.

Such is the doctrine taught in our standards and adopted by all the reformed churches, at least in their early history. To this doctrine, however, there are two modern opposing theories, one of which is called the Arminian from Arminius, by whom it was introduced. According to this theory the atonement is represented as indefinite or universal, having reference to God

and not to man. It is, on God's part, a mode of indicating His character and government and of opening up the way for the offer and the gift of salvation to mankind universally. The atonement, however, on this theory secures the salvation of no one, having no reference to a covenant of grace and purpose of election on the one hand nor to individual sinners on the other. Personal salvation is secured by the personal application of the Holy Spirit working in the soul faith and holiness.

The more recent theory is that commonly known by the term "general atonement." According to this theory the atonement is in its own nature, efficacy and design, universal, governmental, and without any necessary or natural connection with the salvation of individual men. It becomes efficacious, however, according to the sovereign elective purpose of God, and the consequent application made of it to the soul by the Holy Spirit.

According to both theories the atonement is an appropriate revelation of that displeasure against sin which it both deserved and demanded at the hands of God, and without which God could not pardon or pass it by.

Now to both these theories there are inseparable objections.

1. In the first place they are not scriptural. All the passages in which a general reference is made to the salvation of all can easily be reconciled with those that teach the special bearing of Christ's atonement upon the certain salvation of those for whom it was designed.

2. They are entirely derogatory to the character of God. It may be assumed as an uncontrovertible axiom that under the righteous and perfect government of God there can be no suffering where there is no sin. God, therefore, could not, and would not, inflict suffering upon His own Son for the mere purpose of making an appropriate revelation of His displeasure against the sins of men. God could not be unjust and cruel to the Saviour in order to show how He hated the crimes of the sinner. God is just and He could not inflict suffering where it was not due. On the supposition that Christ stood by His own voluntary choice in the place of His redeemed, and that Christ's guilt was assumed by Him so that He became a curse and sin for them—then, and not otherwise,

could the sword of divine justice awake against the man who was God's fellow.

3. These theories leave the whole difficulty unmoved. The separation between God and man was made by sin, and by sin only. Now, a demonstration of God's hatred of sin does not remove or take it away. It only makes it more necessary that God will not allow it to go unpunished and more certain that He will punish it.

4. These theories destroy the very doctrine they are designed to explain. For if the whole object of the atonement be to teach or reveal the truth that God hates sin, surely this could be taught in some other way than by the exhibition of God's Son dying on the cross, while at the very moment He was neither sinful personally nor representatively. The atonement, if it is not regarded as the infliction of suffering in Christ as the representative and substitute of His people, does not teach God's abhorrence of sin, but His willingness, by an arbitrary decree and contrary to justice, to inflict suffering upon one who was holy, harmless and undefiled.

5. These theories, therefore, destroy the justice of God. For if justice demands the punishment of sin, they represent God as not punishing the guilty, but as punishing the guiltless.

6. These theories are equally destructive to the veracity of God, since God declared that He would inflict the penalty of sin upon the sinner. The sinner, therefore, or one who was able, willing and allowed to assume the sinner's guilt, must be punished, or otherwise God is made a liar. But by these theories God does not punish the sinner, nor one who represents sinners and has assumed their actual guilt, and thus does God deny Himself.

7. These theories destroy all connection between the atonement and the human race. It is made to belong as much to angels, to devils, to the universe, as to mankind, since it equally and as powerfully teaches God's abhorrence of sin to the one as to the other—and to all alike. But as the Scriptures everywhere represent the atonement as having special reference to mankind these theories must be false.

8. These theories cannot be allowed to define an atonement at all—which implies an agreement, a ransom paid and

accepted, according to that agreement, and yet no redemption, a price and yet no purchase, an expiation and yet no deliverance. Christ died in pursuance of a covenant, for the special purpose of saving sinners, and if, therefore, He accomplished His object, He secured the salvation of all for whom He died.

9. The Scriptures everywhere represent Christ as the only and the efficient Saviour of sinners, but according to these theories God the Father saves the sinner, or God the Holy Ghost saves him, or the sinner saves himself, since the actual salvation comes not from Christ's atonement, but from God's sovereign grace, from the Spirit's renewed power, and from the sinner's own ability and inclination.

10. According to these theories we are no more certain of salvation than if Christ had never died, since salvation is made to depend solely upon the free grace and mercy of God, which grace and mercy were as infinite before as they can be since the atonement.

Universal redemption, therefore, frees us from nothing—leaves us just where it found us—makes no satisfaction and secures no salvation.

But if such insuperable difficulties stand in the way of these theories of the atonement why, you will ask, have they been introduced and so largely adopted? To this reasonable question we will endeavor to give you a plain answer.

The reasons which lead men to adopt these theories of a general atonement are two: One is a desire to explain and indicate the ways of God, so as to make it appear that He is not only merciful and gracious in providing salvation, but that He has made the same provision in every respect for all men universally, and now makes to all the same overtures and provides all with the same means of salvation and eternal life. The other reason is a desire not only to leave all men without excuse for unbelief and neglect of salvation, but also to facilitate their compliance with the offer of the gospel.

Now, the nature and design by which these theorists are actuated is undoubtedly good. But still we are not to do evil that good—however great that good may seem to be—may result from it. Now, it is an evil and a forbidden thing to pry into the secret things which belong unto the Lord our



God, "who doeth great things and unsearchable without number." "God is greater than man, why dost thou strive with Him for He giveth not account of any of His matters?" "He leadeth counsellors away spoiled and maketh the judges fools." "There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord." "I know that whatsoever the Lord doeth it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything added or taken from it; and God doth it that men should fear before Him." Such is the tenor of much of the Word of God. He is not only unsearchable in His own nature, but also in His works, His word and His ways. "Great things doeth He which we cannot comprehend."\*

Nor is this all. The Scriptures not only admit that there is much in God's dealings which transcends all possible comprehension—they connect this mystery and this sovereignty with the introduction and permission of evil, and with the whole plan of salvation by which it has pleased Him to redeem the lost. Neither is there anywhere in Scripture any attempt made to explain away to man these heights and depths of inscrutable sovereignty. The very contrary is the truth. These difficulties are openly stated and boldly presented. Their contrariety to human wisdom and philosophy is admitted. They cannot, we are told, be understood by the natural mind because they are spiritually received. They are utter foolishness to the wisdom of men, so that without controversy the whole scheme of salvation is a great mystery and stumbling block to the natural understanding.

The attempt to clear up this system to man's understanding and to reconcile it to all men is as absurd as it is dangerous, and has been the painful source of error, rationalism and infidelity.

These theories of the atonement only darken counsel and deceive men with a show of wisdom. The real difficulty of the case they do not touch. That difficulty lies like clouds and darkness round about God's whole moral firmament. The permission of sin among the angels and among men, and the destruction of the rebel angels and of a portion of the human family—who shall as the advocates of both these theories admit be finally lost—these are the real difficulties—against which we

\*See Rom. 11: 33-35.

cannot reply without blasphemous presumption—which we can admit only in view of the infinite wisdom and infinite goodness of the Righteous Ruler of heaven and earth.

If, as these theories teach, the atonement in its own nature, intention and efficacy, is equally sufficient for all men, so that God could now be just in saving all men, then why are not all saved? Why did God by His sovereign election limit any influences in any measure necessary to secure salvation to any number of mankind? Why does God limit the application of an atonement which was designed and made effectual equally for all men to a portion of the human race? If the Holy Spirit alone can apply the benefits of this statement to any, if He alone can work in any heart to will and to do of God's good pleasure,—then why does not the Holy Spirit thus work in the hearts of all men willing in the day of His power? And even if we rush into the doctrine that all men can be, and therefore will be, saved, then why did Christ die at all—why the terrors of the Lord with which Scripture everywhere abound, and why are not all regenerated sanctified and thus made fit for heaven?

It is evident that no theory is free from difficulties beyond our capacity to reconcile to man's wisdom and philosophy, and that every effort to bring down the plan of salvation to man's comprehension and acceptance only leads us to flatter man's pride, to constitute man a judge in the case, to make God amenable to man's decision—and thus finally to overthrow the whole counsel of God. Christ is robbed of His glory, the Spirit of His prerogative and office, and God of His sovereignty and justice and of His right and power to do what He will with His own.\*

You are ever accountable, being soon to appear before the judgment seat of God and to be judged by what He has revealed to you in His Word. What is your duty is in His Word made so clear that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err. And that what is required at your hands is a reasonable service, so that it commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God as what God had a right to demand and man was under obligation to render, is equally

\*See Rom. 9 : 14-23.

certain. You are under infinite obligation, as you value your own infinite destiny, to know what God would have you to do and to do it.

The work of Christ in dying for sinners is a demonstration which you cannot gainsay that God is gracious and merciful—and it proves with equal certainty that the atonement thus made is infinitely meritorious and sufficient for the salvation of all to whom God may please to apply it. The offer that God makes on the gospel to every sinner of Jesus Christ as a Saviour and of His atonement as an all-sufficient salvation and which He enforces by His commands, His promises, His persuasions, His ministers, His providence, and His Spirit—is a most uncontrovertible and all-sufficient ground and warrant for every sinner to believe and obey the gospel in the assurance that in so doing he shall infallibly be saved. If then you believe and obey you shall be saved, and if you do not believe and obey be damned. And it is by no means certain or necessary that you shall be saved. You may be lost. Many shall perish and go away into everlasting destruction, and the opportunity of being saved at all will soon be passed away forever.

You cannot of yourself believe and obey the gospel and it is a fatal error to imagine that you can. In order to do this you must be born again by the renewing of the Holy Ghost. "Verily, verily, I say unto you," says that divine Redeemer who is to be your future judge, "except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

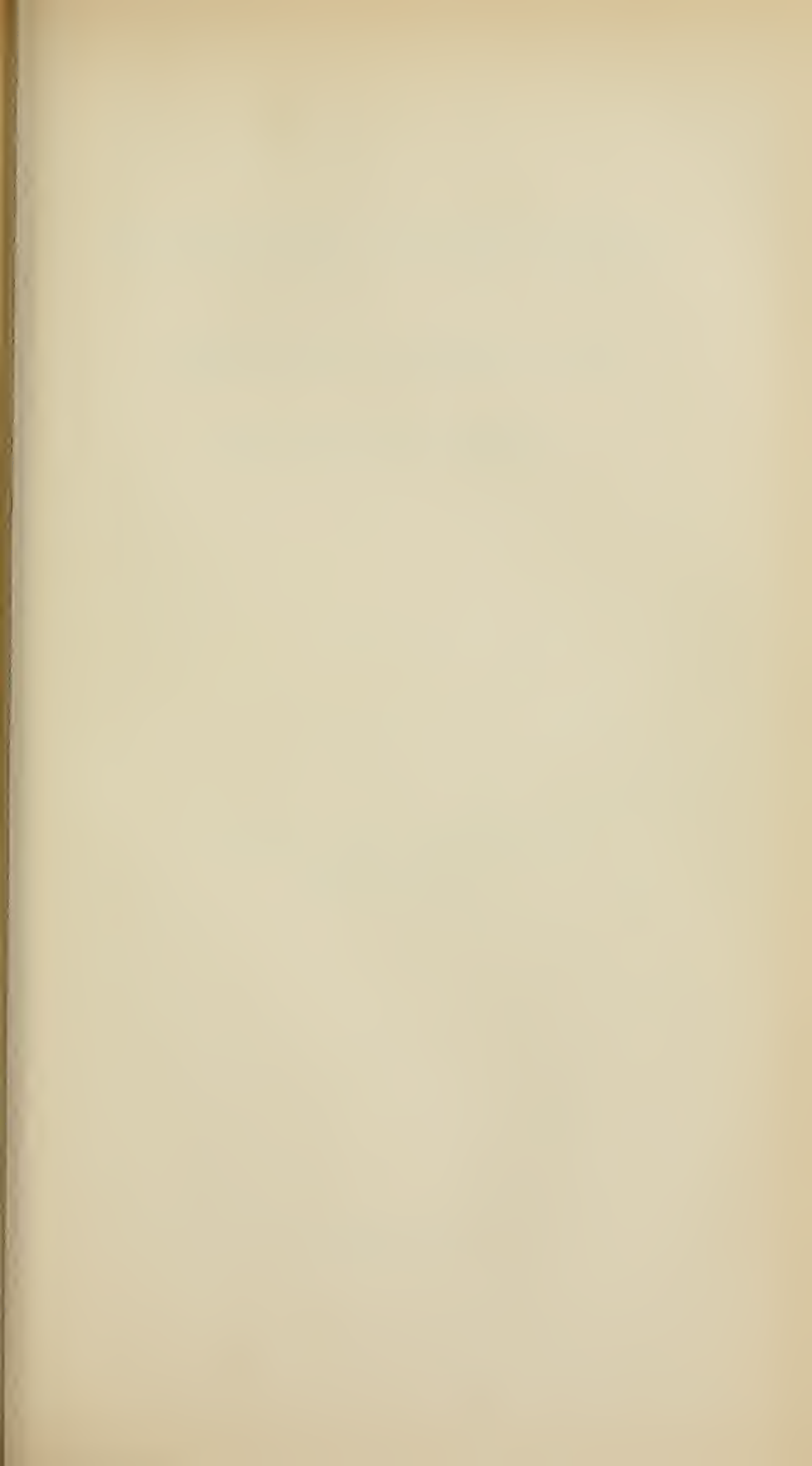
Be admonished also, fellow sinner, that all will not finally be saved. "He that dies filthy and unredeemed and without holiness, shall remain filthy still." "He shall die in his sins." And on that day when Christ shall judge the world in righteousness "many shall say unto Him, Lord, Lord, have we not" hoped and trusted in Thy mercy and trusted that through Thee all men should be saved, "to whom He will say, depart from me, I never knew you."

There is no other road to heaven than holiness, for as those who are saved were "chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world," so were they chosen "that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love," and to them the gospel

comes not in word only but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost.

Whether you were elected or not neither you nor I, nor any mortal knows, or can know. Whether you were individually and specially designated in the purpose and provision of the atonement neither you, nor I, nor any mortal knows, or can know. But this you and I do know, an atonement has been made. That atonement secures to every one who truly believes and obeys the gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ as a complete Saviour, the Holy Spirit as a complete Sanctifier, and God as a reconciled God and Father. Of all this God in virtue of the covenant of redemption makes a sincere and hearty offer to every sinner, and to you in particular, an offer, not as the theories I have been discussing would teach you of the possibility of salvation, but of Jesus Christ and in Him of a certain salvation. An actual, an all-mighty and an all-sufficient Saviour with an actual and all-sufficient atonement are offered to you truly and sincerely by a God willing to be gracious, a Saviour willing to redeem, and a Spirit willing to renew.\*

\*See 2 Cor. 5.







The Doctrine of Predestination  
Beneficial to Many and  
Injurious to None.

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BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.

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*July, 1842.*



# THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION BENEFICIAL TO MANY AND INJURIOUS TO NONE.

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## SERMON ONE.

ROM. 9:14-20.

What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.

So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth.

Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.

Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?

Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?

We are led by this passage of Holy Scripture to discourse upon the doctrine of predestination. By predestination is to be understood God's unchangeable purpose or decree, concerning the last end and eternal state of angels and men. Of this the following is a summary deduced from our Confession of Faith: "Men having by wilful and deliberate transgression sinned against God, justly fell under His wrath and curse. All men, regularly descended from Adam, became children of wrath, and are utterly destitute of original righteousness. The consequence was that sentence of condemnation passed upon all men. Unless we are prepared to question the stainless justice of God we must admit that this sentence, thus solemnly passed upon the race, was a righteous sentence. Out of this race of guilty and polluted sinners, thus justly condemned, God graciously and eternally elected some to life and happiness and glory; while He left the rest in their state of wretchedness and ruin, and determined to inflict upon them the punishment of which they should be finally deserving. And the reason why He thus elected some and passed by others, when all were equally undeserving, is to be referred wholly to Himself and to the counsel of His own will."

Such is our doctrine. Now you will observe\* firstly that this doctrine presupposes the existence of sin as the ground work of predestination. It does not say that God predestinated men to sin, and then choose some and left the rest, but that foreseeing the certain entrance of sin, He was thus induced to act. God, therefore, is not by this doctrine made the author of sin. He does not will the sins of man, or effect them by any operation of His powers, but arranges His plan with a view to them, and overrules them to His own glory. The doctrine declares two things, first that God preordained all things, and secondly that He is not the author of sin.

Secondly. Observe also that this doctrine does not produce, or aggravate the misery of man. It states facts as they are. It does not influence the actual condition of a single soul. It merely accounts for that condition, and shows that it was foreknown and provided for in the purpose of God. It is allowed by all evangelical christians that a certain number will be finally saved and the rest lost. Now all that is done by this doctrine is to show that all this was foreknown by God—those who are saved having been chosen by Him to salvation and those who are lost having been left by Him to choose their evil course.

Thirdly. In this doctrine God is here represented as making His choice, without any personal consideration or bias. All were equally guilty and condemned, and equally unworthy of His regard. In choosing therefore the elect, God was moved by His own sovereign will and pleasure and cannot in any reason be called a respecter of persons.

Fourthly, you will observe that this doctrine by no means implies that God obliges the reprobates to sin, or that He made them for the purpose of condemning them, or that they are necessarily excluded from all hope of salvation, and the possibility of embracing it, or that do what they will to avoid it they must be lost. As far as they are concerned, they hear and receive the offers of mercy as much as the elect. No hindrance is thrown in their way of embracing the gospel. Nor does God refuse to receive any returning sinner. But for His own purposes and glory He leaves them to their own

\*Thornwell on Election, p. 617.



choice and withholds from them that grace which He is under no obligations to communicate and to which none are entitled.

Fifthly, be it observed that in passing upon the reprobates the sentence of condemnation God does not inflict it because He had determined to do so in this decree. They will be thus condemned "for their sin," they having "hardened themselves even under those means which God useth for the softening of others."

Sixthly, it is to be noted that by this doctrine it is not taught that while the elect were chosen without foresight of their faith or good works, they are to be finally saved without either. On the contrary, they were elected that they might be pardoned, regenerated, justified, sanctified and finally glorified. The constant means of grace and the persevering effort for the attainment of holiness were as much a part of God's decree as salvation itself.

We make these remarks to obviate misconception, not to lessen the difficulty of the subject. That difficulty is confessedly great. It is acknowledged by our standards. "The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination," says our Confession, "is to be handled with special prudence and care." It is a deep sea which none can fathom, which few can navigate with skill, and where thousands make shipwreck of the faith, are overwhelmed by the waves of heresy, or perish by their own undoing. This doubtless is one of those doctrines in the epistles of Paul of which St. Peter speaks, and which the unleavened and unstable wrest, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction. We have no hope of making this subject simple and much less agreeable. We cannot undertake to resolve all its difficulties, to answer all objections, to silence all gainsaying, or to dissipate all prejudice. We have, therefore, stated the doctrine in all its length and breadth and in all its repulsiveness to mere natural reason. With its supposed tendencies we have nothing to do. Nor are there any grounds of evidence for or against its truth. There is no fallacy more common than to argue for any doctrine from its supposed influence and the good it may accomplish and the prejudices it may disarm. That every doctrine is in the opinion of the objector, derogatory to the Deity, harsh, cruel or

absurd, is quite a sufficient ground for its unqualified reprobation. Now were it a mere question of choice that was submitted to the mind, such a course might be justifiable and even reasonable. But not so when the question is one of truth—and of divine truth. In such a case the inquiry presented to any reasonable mind is not, “is this in accordance with my notions respecting the divine character?” but “is it the doctrine of that divine law-giver, whose will is law, and whose laws are true and righteous altogether?” Either the doctrine was given by Him and is therefore true, or it was not thus given and is consequently false. But if true it must, beyond controversy, be holy and salutary in its tendencies, however liable to abuse, perversion and evil, and to say of any doctrine that it is true and yet that it is injurious in its tendency, or impossible to be believed, is to fly in the face of the Eternal, to set up our puny reason against His infinite and unerring wisdom. With such an one it is impossible to reason, and there is no alternative but to leave him to the righteous judgment of God.

Now that this doctrine of predestination is the doctrine of the Bible and therefore true, cannot be denied by any who will allow the Bible to be understood in its own manifest declarations. In no other way could it be understood by the greatest divines in all ages of the Church. This doctrine was deduced from the Word of God by every reformed church in christendom. It is imbedded in all their standards. It was introduced into the thirty-nine articles of the Episcopal church and was the undeniable doctrine of the church of England for a long time after the Reformation, as appears authoritatively from the Lambeth articles and the articles of the Irish church, in which they are embraced. It forms a part of the creed of the Presbyterian, the Congregationalist and the Baptist denomination, and is only rejected by the Romish, High Church and Methodist denominations. The doctrine is interwoven with the very texture of the Bible and forms the groundwork of all its precepts and promises touching salvation. Let any man read the eighth, ninth and eleventh chapters of Romans, with the first chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians, and he will find proof for this doctrine which no effort of sophistry can destroy.

But the proof is everywhere, and would of itself fill a volume and form a digest of the sacred writings.

On this part of the subject we shall therefore do little more than quote some passages of God's Word. In perusing the sacred volume we meet with the following declarations: "Except the Lord had shortened those days no flesh should be saved; but for the *elect's* sake, whom He hath *chosen*, He hath shortened the days." "And shall not God avenge *His own elect*, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." Luke 18:7, 8. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of *God's elect*? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. 8:33, 34. "*Elect* according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter 1:2. "Therefore I endure all things for *the elect's* sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory." 2 Tim. 2:10. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to *the election of grace*." Rom. 11:5. "Knowing, brethren beloved, *your election of God*." 1 Thess. 1:4. "According as He hath *chosen us* in Him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. "Ye have not chosen me, but *I have chosen you*." John 15:16. But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath *from the beginning chosen you* to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." 2 Thess. 2:13. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did *predestinate* to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, *whom He did predestinate*, them He also *called*; and whom He called, them He also *justified*; and whom he justified, them He also *glorified*." Rom. 8:29, 30. "As many as were *ordained* unto eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. "Ye are a *chosen generation*, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." 1 Peter 2:9. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but accord-

ing to His *own purpose* and grace, which was *given us* in Christ Jesus *before* the world began." 2 Tim. 1:9.

From these quotations it appears, that believers in Christ are an elect or chosen people; that their *election* was an act of sovereign grace or mercy; that it was according to the foreknowledge of God; that it was in Christ; that it was to salvation as the final end; that it was through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth; and that it was before the foundation of the world, or before the world began. These are not inferences drawn from the declaration of God's Word, they are the declarations themselves.

Should it be said, that God's foreknowledge preceded His decree, and that He chose His people because He foresaw that they would repent and believe the gospel; we reply, that, whether the foreknowledge of God preceded His decree, or His decree preceded His foreknowledge, it is clear, that repentance and faith could not have been *the cause* of election. Repentance and faith are said to be the gifts of God. Acts 5:31; Eph. 2:8. And, if so, they are included among the benefits of election. Now to make what God does or gives in time, the ground of His having decreed from eternity to do or give it, is to make the effect produce the cause which is contrary both to Scripture and reason. Besides, the Scriptures declare that He chose His people not because they were holy, but that they might be so, Eph. 1:4; and that we love Him because He first loved us. 1 John 4:19.

There are many who are willing to admit that such is the truth in the case, and that this doctrine is unquestionably found in God's Word. And yet they know not how to believe and receive it, so awful does it appear and so powerfully do their minds revolt from it. Our present business is with such. It is to these we now address ourselves. Assuming that this is the doctrine of the Bible we would present some considerations by which such minds may be better enabled to receive the truth in humility and child-like confidence; and by which they may be relieved of their present distressing conflict between feeling and duty—between the flesh and the Spirit—between sympathy for man and reverence for God.



And first let me remind such persons that a revelation from God—a doctrine of heaven and which has reference to eternity and to the whole universe, must of necessity be above our full comprehension and in many respects contrary to our natural feelings. If God is, as we believe, infinitely great and glorious, then He must be past our finding out. If His government extends equally to all worlds, and to all beings, then clouds and darkness must be round about it. And if God condescends to speak to us from heaven and to make known so much of His ways as is necessary for our welfare, it must be that we shall see such things through a glass darkly—that we shall see only in part and know only in part. These doctrines, touching upon the interests of this wide dominion, and having relation to the past, the present and the future, must be high as heaven so that we cannot attain to it, and deep as hell so that we cannot fathom it. Its full comprehension, and its perfect harmony with all other truths, can be known only to God. To pretend, therefore, to judge God and His words is to overthrow all the foundations of faith. “That a soul may receive life it must receive faith; that it may have faith it must believe God; that it may believe God it must begin by renouncing the prejudices of its own wisdom concerning sin, the future, judgment, grace, itself, the world, God, everything.” Has not God written that “the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned?” The Bible in many of its doctrines must shock our reason, our conscience, or our feelings, not by being in contrariety, but infinitely above them. But is it, therefore, to be rejected? Nay, it is on this account the rather to be received—having this manifest evidence that it is from above. Being written in that Book which proves itself to be divine, we are bound to believe such doctrines on the testimony of God alone. What is to us inscrutable, let us leave to be more fully explained when we shall see eye to eye and know even as we are known. It is enough to know that righteousness and judgment are the habitation of God’s throne, that His work is perfect and all His ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity; just and right is



He. Let this silence every doubt, rebuke every murmur, and assure our hearts that what we know not now we shall know hereafter when the heavens shall declare God's righteousness and all people see His glory.

We are not, however, to suppose that we are debarred from humble and modest inquiry into the doctrines of the Bible. Far from it. It is our privilege not only to search the Scriptures that we may know what doctrines are of God and be established in them, but also, as far as possible, to understand their design, and bearing upon the well-being of mankind. And it is unquestionably a source of exalted pleasure to be able to follow out to all its beneficent consequences some precept of the sacred Scriptures. Now such pleasure may be found in the contemplation of this doctrine of predestination, for although clouds and darkness must necessarily to some extent remain about it, we may be enabled to perceive that in justice and righteousness, it is established.

We think it may be shown that while injurious to none, it is beneficial to many, while it proclaims aloud the glory of God.

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## SERMON TWO.

The doctrine of election is injurious to none.

It is not injurious to those who believe the gospel, since by it they are assured that what God has done for their souls in time, He had designed to do from all eternity. There is everything in the doctrine to give them comfort, since there is no longer any condemnation to them that believe, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Being justified by faith, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. In every exercise of faith and love and hope and prayer they have an evidence that they have been called of God, and that they are personally interested in His electing love. They are also stimulated to a holy devotedness. Their faith works by love. They are jealous over themselves, fearing lest a promise being left them of entering into rest they should even seem to come short. As the means of grace were included in the decree of salvation, as the instrumentality by which it should be fulfilled,

they are thus induced to work out their salvation with fear and trembling, that they may make their calling and election sure. And are not christians also led by this doctrine to greater activity and devotedness? They labor not in vain. They fight not uncertainly. They go not to battle in their own strength. Their power is in God, who worketh in them to will and to do of His good pleasure. And in the power of His might though weak they are strong, though helpless they can do all things, though timid they are holy, though surrounded by enemies and difficulties they can say, "none of these things move me, for greater is He that is for me than all that are against me." Whether you look at individual christians, or at united denominations who hold this faith, do you not find them incited thus to live to God, and thus to spread abroad the glory of His name by the diffusion of His glorious gospel?

This doctrine is not injurious to those who die in infancy. These constitute about one-half, or as some think two-thirds, of the entire human family, and will thus form an aggregate of countless millions. Now, over their graves this doctrine erects the cross as the beacon of hope and the herald of mercy. It proclaims for them a Saviour, for "of such is the kingdom of heaven." It opens to them a refuge in that sure mercy which was from eternity provided for them. By nature children of wrath, and born in sin, they are washed and sanctified in the blood of the Lamb, and are, as we may hope, by virtue of this covenant, made meet for an inheritance among the saints in light. In no other way, by no other doctrine, on no other conceivable hypothesis, have we such a steadfast ground as this on which to build our hopes for the everlasting welfare of the myriad throng of dying infants.

This doctrine is not injurious to the heathen. On the contrary, as we have seen, it affords the only ground of certain hope for the salvation of that vast proportion who, under this dark system, pass from earth in immaturity. Nay, more—let it be supposed possible for God to apply salvation to any number of the heathen—let it be regarded as His purpose thus to exercise His mercy—then do we possess in this doctrine an infallible assurance that every such soul shall be gathered home to glory. Certain it is that the heathen are involved

in their guilt and misery not by any agency of this doctrine. Sin made them what they are, and the existence of sin is presupposed in purpose of election. We teach not as did the Romish missionary to India, that the heathen are predestined to hell. We plead no decree of heaven for withholding from them the knowledge of salvation, nor is there any limit set by God's Word to the universal diffusion of the knowledge of His name. Contrariwise christians are under imperative obligations to preach the gospel to every creature, and on them lies the guilt of neglected duty. And while millions of heathen are rushing into a dark eternity, they will never be judged by this doctrine—their fate will be decided by their own standard, and their destiny awarded on principles which would have remained the same had no decree of election ever been passed.

Neither is this doctrine injurious to those in christian lands who neglect or reject the great salvation. Have they ever been informed that for them there was no part in this redemption? On the contrary, to them, as well as unto us, have been proclaimed the glad tidings of great joy. God commandeth all such men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel, and to every one of them has been addressed our Saviour's words, "Whosoever believeth on me shall not perish but have everlasting life." Have they then been kept back by any influence of God from embracing eternal life? God forbid. Their own hearts condemn them. Their own consciences accuse them of wilful and persevering resistance to the strivings of the Spirit, the persuasions of friends and the entreaties of God's ministers. It is not because of anything in this doctrine sinners harden their hearts solely because of their own blindness and impenitency, which never resulted from this doctrine, but were presupposed in its origination. Neither will this doctrine affect their final doom. They will be condemned, not by this decree and purpose of God, but by that work they have slighted, that Saviour they have rejected, and that salvation they have scornfully repudiated. They who affirm that this doctrine implies more than this, or that it necessarily secures the damnation of the rebellious, slander their brethren, malign the Church of God, blaspheme God's holy name, and

frame out their own shame and ignominy and inexcusable ignorance.

But it will be alleged that this doctrine is an insurmountable barrier in the way of those who are interested in the subject of religion and anxious to become disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that many do make a stumbling block of this doctrine, over which they fall into many hurtful delusions and by which they are hindered in their cause we readily grant; but that there is anything in the doctrine to justify such conduct we deny. The grace of God is abused by many to licentiousness; the gospel itself is perverted to the worst ends, and every doctrine of the Bible made a pretext for some evil course. But God will not hold them guiltless who thus receive His grace in vain. And no more are they excusable who palliate their indifference by pleading the doctrine of election. Are they personally assured that their names are not in the Book of Life? Are they excluded from any overtures of reconciliation? Are they freed from the positive obligation of obeying the divine command? Or is it any discouragement to this duty to know that there is an assurance of grace, mercy and peace to all who are called and that if they seek they shall find, and if they ask they shall receive, and if they knock it shall be opened unto them? Are they disposed to seek the Lord and to embrace Christ Jesus as their Saviour—and do they not in this very disposition find an evidence of hope that they are objects of God's electing love and that He is drawing them to Himself? What more then can they require? What have they to do with God's secret purpose when they have His published will and His immutable promises? Away then with such a pretext. It were really absurd were it not so awful to hear sinners parleying with God about His eternal decrees, when He is commanding them now, today, to hear His voice and not to harden their hearts in unbelief.

Predestination, therefore, can injure, and does injure, no one. And does it not benefit many?

The apostle assures us that believers are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, *according as they were chosen* in Him before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:3, 4. Hence the benefits which they derive from elec-



tion are all spiritual blessings. But we shall endeavour to particularize these blessings. And amongst them we shall find, *The kingdom of heaven*: Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom *prepared for you from the foundation of the world*. Matt. xxv: 34.—*The salvation of the soul*: For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. v. 9.—*The belief of the truth*: And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. Acts xiii: 48.—*Conformity to the image of Christ*: Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Rom. viii: 29.—*Effectual calling*: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called *according to His purpose*. Rom. viii: 28.—*The sanctification of the Spirit*: God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. 2 Thess. ii: 13.—*Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit*. 1 Peter i: 2.—*Adoption into the family of God*: Having predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. Eph. i: 5.—*The practice of good works*: For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Eph. ii: 10.—*Nearness of access to God*: Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee. Ps. lxxv: 4.—*Fruitfulness in the cause of Christ*: Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain. John xv: 16.

Neither are those who are thus benefited a small portion of the human family. We have already seen that they include probably all among infants—that is, at least one-half of all who ever have lived or shall yet exist. Among them are found a large number of every age and clime, and of every denomination. As seen by the apostle, it was a countless throng whom no man could number. That multitude has been swelling by new and vast accessions during the last 1,800 years. Millions whose names are written in heaven, are now on their way to join the Church of the First Born. So finally it may



appear that, in accordance with this doctrine and as its glorious result, an overwhelming majority of the entire human family shall have been rescued from perdition.

But, after all, will not many be shut out from the kingdom of God? Undoubtedly such is the truth, as made known in God's Word. But what has this to do with our doctrine more than that of any other christian church? Do not all admit that such will be finally the case? These persons will be lost on any system founded on the Bible. The bitterest opponents of our doctrine admit this truth. Then why in conscience impute to our doctrine the loss of souls which will be lost as they allow that doctrine being supposed untrue? It was possible for God to have saved all—but He does not save all. Many perish. It is owing to electing love that any, that the great mass will be redeemed. Predestination benefits millions of millions. The doctrine that rejects it does not benefit a single additional soul. Every voice in heaven will be attuned to the praise of God's eternal purpose of mercy and to Christ's efficacious grace—not one will be found there whose name was not written from eternity in the Book of Life. Every voice in hell will be lifted up in self-condemnation and not one will be able to lay his damnation to God's charge, but will exclaim, "I have destroyed myself."

There is an overwhelming mystery in this subject, but it lies far aback of predestination. It is equally common to every view of christianity, nay, to Deism itself, and is in no degree mitigated by denying this doctrine or by embracing any form of error or infidelity. It is the one great and only difficulty in all theology, the origin of evil and its admission into the system of an almighty and infinitely wise and gracious God. Resolve this difficulty and all else is clear. And when you tell us why God saw best to permit the entrance of sin through the agency of a tempter, and how He will make it work to the everlasting welfare of the wide universe, then will we tell you why God elected only a part of the ruined race and left a part of this race to make an exhibition of the working of sin by obstinate rejection of the offers of His mercy. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid.

But while God, as He is manifested in this doctrine, is surrounded with clouds and darkness, He is at the same time gloriously exalted. Most puerile are the conceptions which many allow themselves to entertain of God. With them the creature is everything and the Creator nothing—and among the creatures man alone is to be regarded and all other worlds to be overlooked. God, therefore, is made a General Superintendent of the affairs of men and lives merely to promote their happiness and comfort. Men, therefore, must be left at liberty and God restrained. Men must be saved and God's law dishonored. Let the universe perish—this world must not suffer. "O, man, who art thou that repliest against God," the high and mighty Ruler of the universe? God does not live for the universe, but the universe for God. The universe does not exist for man, but man for the universe. God is a Sovereign. His will is law. His law is right; and from His sentence there is no appeal. God is not an agent—He is our Judge—the Governor among the nations—the moral Governor of the universe.

But while justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne, and we are here called to read and ponder upon His righteous severity—behold, also, His goodness and mercy. His was the purpose of redemption in the very counsels of eternity. Where all were lost—He it was whose eye pitied and whose arm brought salvation. Where all were worthy of hell—His mercy it was to prepare the kingdom of heaven and to fill it with that ransomed throng whose praises shall swell the anthem of eternity. When it was deemed necessary to leave a portion of this race to their own voluntary choice—it was His godlike clemency to bear with them, to make them partakers of every temporal favor, to open up to them every means of grace, and to exercise toward them long suffering and forbearance. And when the price of our redemption was the blood of Christ—He it was who so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son. Oh, the depth of the riches, both of the justice and mercy of God; how unsearchable are His judgments and His love past finding out!

And when we contemplate God as moral Governor of the universe—when we consider our world's apostacy in relation

to other portions of this universal empire, and the bearing which its history and example may have upon the destiny of millions of worlds; and when we consider how needful it may thus be to declare unto principalities and powers in heavenly places the true nature, working and consequences of sin, may we not perceive how this very law of predestination, and the consequent abandonment of the reprobate to the penalty of the law, may, throughout eternity, and in all worlds, constitute the great remedial provision against future rebellions, and thus ultimately secure the happiness and establish the holiness of this illimitable dominion? What a view of sin is hereby given to all who contemplate our history! All ruined by its first commission; all provisionally rescued from its immediate results; all put upon a probationary dispensation of mercy; all offered an amnesty—all, however sullenly rejecting these overtures of reconciliation. Not one redeemed from this dreadful curse but those “whom God did predestinate; whom He also called; whom He also justified; whom He also glorified.” The fires and the smoke of hell may thus constitute the great beacon of the universe proclaiming to every eye: Behold the goodness and severity of God—on them who fell severity—on them who are saved goodness. Continue thou in His goodness, otherwise thou also shall be cut off.



# THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

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A DISCOURSE

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.





## THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

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### ECCLESIASTES VII: 29.

Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.

The sacred historian, in his brief narrative, seems to have had two objects in view—and having satisfied these, to have neglected the questions which curiosity might have suggested. These objects seem to have been, the confutation of all systems of materialism and idolatry, and the replying, by anticipation, to the much agitated question, whence is evil? The former object he effects by proving, that in creation everything is the result of design—nothing of chance—by ascribing to the agency of mind the creation of matter, the production of motion, the existence and form of the visible world; by proving that the sun, and moon, and stars—which were the usual objects of idolatry—with all the host of heaven, were but called into being, and made receptacles or vehicles of light, by Him who likewise created man in His own image, to be the lord and master of this globe—His last, most perfect work. To the latter question he has suggested the answer which is contained in the text; and as he knew that no solution of the difficulty could perfectly satisfy creatures so inquisitive, so ignorant as men, he declares the facts, without comment or explanation; “God made man upright, but he sought out many inventions.” Although created finitely perfect, man required probation; his faculties may have demanded exercise, as they were susceptible of improvement; and to the full development of his powers, discipline and employment may have been requisite; even through the eternity of bliss which the benevolence of God had provided, dispositions which naturally could be elicited and confirmed but by a state of probation successfully sustained, might be necessary; and it seemed more according to the wisdom of God that man should by a course of trial draw forth and perfect such dispositions, than that they should be impressed at once on his unresisting mind. We know not if a finite being, however excellent, can ever be rendered absolutely

independent of the danger of falling, but we can easily conceive that the habits of patience, and self-denial and obedience, enforced by a sense of duty, and chastised by a feeling of dependence, may be supremely useful in lessening that danger, nay, in removing its moral possibility. From these considerations it appears that there might exist a moral necessity for placing the protoplast in a state of probation, for connecting his future happiness and perfection with his unforced but not unassisted obedience; and such towards him was the dealing of the Supreme Being—his situation was such, that all the powers of his animal frame, and all the faculties of his intellect, and all the sensibilities of his nature were called into exercise with enforced and unwearied alternation; while to employ those powers and to direct those faculties and to chastise those feelings, he was submitted to the operation of a law, the peculiar nature of which should call into action those principles whose influence might be essential through eternity; a law which was suited to the singular situation in which man was placed—and which while by the frequent recurrence of the object of prohibition, it enforced constant attention to its precepts and a perpetual exercise of faith and self-denial and resignation—so, by its solemn and mysterious sanction, and by the symbolical nature of its sacramental tests of conformity, the mind was led to considerations beyond the mere prohibition, to a higher and more exalted view of the everlasting dealings of God.

The prohibition of the tree of knowledge, with its sanction, and the promise which is implicitly contained in it, though the only law which Moses has recorded as given to man, and though the only one on which, as a condition, man's favor with God primarily depended, we cannot necessarily conclude to have been the only one revealed. That intercourse with the Supreme, to which our first parent was admitted, could not have been enjoyed without his receiving manifold additions of knowledge and of wisdom; nor can we conceive Adam to have had but the single negative precept which Moses has recorded, but by circumscribing the duration of his paradisiacal state within a period too limited for the events which are allotted to it. Adam seems to have been considered by his

Maker, as the anticipated parent of the human race; the future founder of a social state—as such the laws and sanctions under which that society could subsist must have been in some degree communicated by its Author; the solemn blessing, “be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it,” while it intimates the spreading of the human race, and the gradual conquest and cultivation of the globe, must imply some precepts, for the direction of that society; some law, whether impressed on the mind, with its sanctions, or revealed orally, as was the prohibition, but in each case understood and acquiesced in. “Sin,” we are told by the apostle, is not to be counted sin, when there is no “law,” and yet we find that sin was counted to Adam’s posterity before the existence of any formal law; had there been no law, by the apostle’s reasoning, the blood of the pious Abel could not have cried unto its Maker from the earth; had there been no law, the Spirit of God could not have striven with man to recall him to the path of holiness, and obedience, nor could the wickedness of man’s heart, “whose thoughts were continually evil,” have called from divine vengeance the extinction of the human race. The existence, then, and judgment of evil, imply a law of whose existence and sanction we can scarcely suppose our first parents to have been ignorant; and the silence of the sacred writer can surely not be regarded as conclusive against it, when we recollect that he has passed over, in the same silence, the institution and nature of sacrifice, whose revelation from God Himself, immediately subsequent to the fall, few divines can now be found bold enough to deny.

Under such a dispensation do I conceive that we are authorized by Scripture to suppose that our first parents were placed—with a sacramental test of obedience proposed—a solemn and mysterious sanction connected with it—and, “in the threatening,” says the pious Bishop Beveridge, “a promise implied, that if he did not eat he should not die, but live;” but Adam disregarded the penalty—forgot the promise, and by deliberately violating the command proposed, threw off his allegiance to his Maker, and introduced into the world sin and death—it has been made a question in the christian world, whether the sin of our first parent attaches by

imputation to his posterity—whether they sinned in Adam, and by that sin are obnoxious to the punishment which divine justice ordained for Adam's disobedience. I know not if inquiry would do more than collect probabilities for either side of a question, perhaps beyond the limits of Scripture, perhaps inextricable; but of one important fact we have personal and independent proof, that the consequences of his disobedience are entailed on the offspring of the guilty Adam. We know equally from Scripture and experience, that manifold death, which, commencing with spiritual alienation, conducts through the gates of temporal death to the awful and unseen state of retribution; and we can scarcely suppose that we, Adam's posterity, should be obnoxious to a more tremendous penalty than he was—the author of our evil.

To us the sentence passed on our first parents must ever be a subject of deep, though painful interest, but it may be ever made a subject of dispute and conjecture; on another more important subject we are not left to conjecture, as to the effect which that sentence and its cause have produced on mankind; and however speculatists may differ as to the mode in which original sin has been communicated, one appalling truth must be confessed, that every man who is born into the world is subject to that corruption which naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby he is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the “flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit.” To Adam, we are told, was born a son, not in the image of God, but of his own degraded character, and this character has been communicated “naturally” to his latest posterity—hence, then, as sharing in that image which is the broken and mutilated impress of Divinity, man must be, in himself, alien from God; and while, in the words of the prophet, he bears his own sins, and not his father's, he, for those sins, must be liable to eternal death; the being who, created upright, sought out invention even in paradise, has never ceased insulting God and degrading man by similar attempts; his first invention was rebellion, his second deceit; with ungrateful facility he listened to the tempter, and with temerity the most shameless he attempted to cast on others, even on God Himself, the crime which he had committed! And how has he sought out gods for himself,

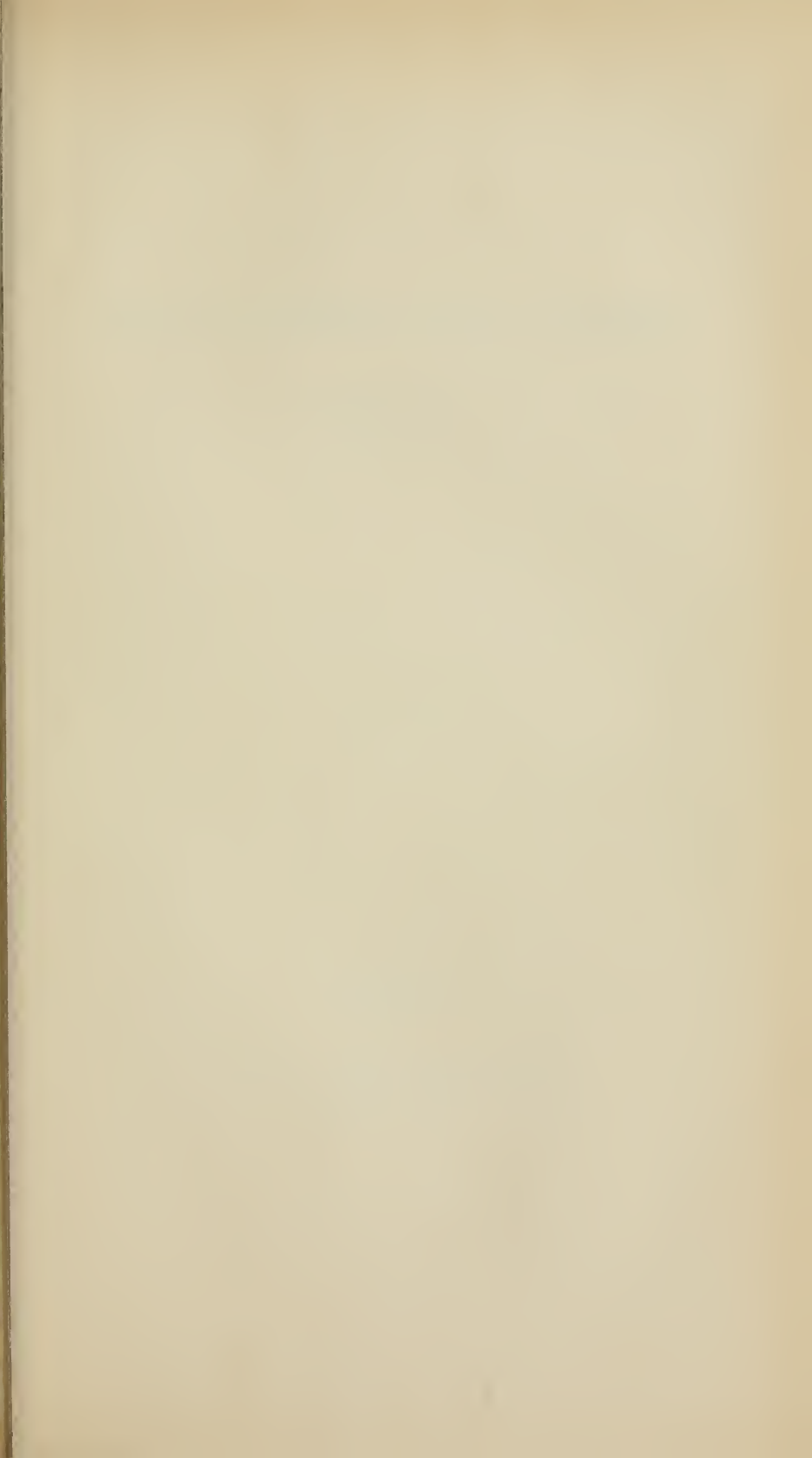


and from the absurdities of ancient idolatry to the bold impieties of modern infidelity, deserted God and given glory to his own inventions!—how often applying those inventions to the book of revelation, have men substituted a gospel of their own for that which was once delivered unto the saints, and sought to support an inadequate practice by a mutilated rule—and, oh! how often expelling God from all their thoughts, and adorning with the trappings of idolatry the world, the devil, or their own unruly passions, do they fall down and worship the very image which is the result of their inventions! While Scripture tells us, “God made man upright,” reason and experience convince us that “he has sought out many inventions.”

Who that had read the melancholy record of man’s apostasy to which my text refers, who had contrasted the once blessed state of our first parents with man’s present state of alienation and abasement, but must wish to have that state restored and man’s nature so renewed, that he could be again admitted to enjoy that intercourse, and dwell in the light of the countenance of his God? And this has been effected for us in Christ—Christ is able to save, for He was the Creator and will be the Judge of every penitent sinner; Christ is willing, for He was promised as a deliverer, while yet the guilty parents of mankind trembled before their God; and in the fulness of time He assumed the nature of man, and divested Himself of His own and His Father’s glory, that He might remedy those evils which sin had introduced. “Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound,” and man is by the incarnation, death and intercession of the Redeemer, more eminently gifted with the means of grace than even our first parents in paradise. We have in Christ our atonement, not only for original sin, but for actual sin—a fount not only to cleanse us from the pollution we have contracted by descent, but to purify us of our voluntary transgressions—an assurance not only that if we walk upright in His sight we shall be received, but that the broken and contrite spirit is a sacrifice well pleasing, that the supplication of repentance never returns void to the bosom of the penitent.

My beloved, you have heard the tidings of mercy, you have heard the penalty of death, you have heard that “death has

passed upon all men because all have sinned," but you have also heard that you may "joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the atonement." May the awful denunciation exhort you to flee that death! May the promises of reconciliation, peace, and joy, lead you to seek that atonement! Be assured that however remote may be the cause, or however mysterious the communication of sin, it lyeth at the door of each—however you may disregard the warning, or however you may speculate away its importance, that "sin will one day find you out." Strong as is the language of Scripture in depicting the evil of sin, it but states a fact obvious from its excess, and lamentable from its widespread influence—the depravity of mankind; but in the atonement of the Saviour it presents a remedy commensurable to the evil—the sanctifying influences of His grace, the renewing of our fallen nature, the assimilation of man to God! Eden was forfeited by our first parents, but He has provided for their believing posterity a new heaven, and a new earth; death was incurred by their guilt, and pain and sorrow and misery assured; but in His Father's house there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor pain; all these have passed away, the tree of knowledge shall no more bear the bitter fruit of anguish and remorse, and "the tree of life" shall "blossom" and put forth "those leaves which are for the healing of the nations," the "glory of the Lord God giveth light," and "who-soever will, may take of the water of life freely."





PAUL'S RESOURCE UNDER  
TRIAL.

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A SERMON

BY

THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

Charleston, S. C.





## PAUL'S RESOURCE UNDER TRIAL.

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### 2 CORINTHIANS XII: 8, 9.

For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Prayer has always been one of the most delightful occupations of the children of God in every age, and the constant resource of the afflicted believer in every time of anguish or distress. All the saints whose history is recorded in Scripture for our example and encouragement were men of prayer. Jesus Himself was a man of prayer, and illustrated the instructions which He has left to His people upon this point by a life of earnest and unceasing devotion.

The apostle informed us, that prayer was his resource when he was afflicted with the thorn in his flesh. "For this thing," says he, "I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me."

The prayer which he offered up was earnest and importunate. He "besought the Lord." There was no mere formality in the apostle's manner, as if he did not care whether his supplications were heard or not. So requisite is earnestness, as an inseparable characteristic of prayer, that Christ sometimes appeared at first unwilling to grant the petitions of those who came to Him for help, in order to increase the urgency and importunity of their requests. How many prayers are nothing more than cold and formal expressions of vague desire, which want this essential attribute of holy and deep felt earnestness! And why is this? Simply because we are not sufficiently impressed with a sense of our necessities. And how lamentable it is, that prayers for spiritual mercies, which are most of all required, are more generally destitute of this quality. Such is the moral blindness of our nature that we do not feel the want of spiritual blessings so much as of temporal. We manifest the greatest amount of earnestness in prayers when we are suffering beneath the pressure of some severe affliction, which causes pain to our natural feelings. And in this circumstance we see an important and valuable

object of such trials. They are part of that discipline which the Lord employs in order to teach us how to pray. Happy and blessed is that man, who is brought by his trials to a throne of grace! Let such a man commence his petitions by thanking his heavenly Father for the affliction which brought him there. But happier will he be, when his prayers shall be chiefly occupied with supplications for spiritual mercies, in obedience to the divine direction, to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and to trust to the faithfulness of God for the fulfillment of His promise, that all other things shall be added unto him.

But the apostle prayed *repeatedly*; for the word "*thrice*" may be used as a definite for an indefinite number. He continued to pray until he received an answer. And so should every believer return again and again to a throne of grace, "praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance." If it be asked, how often shall we pray to God for any blessing we require, or for any merciful interposition which we stand in need of, nature will scarcely answer, until seven times. But grace will reply, not merely until seventy times seven, but until we shall receive an answer to our prayers. And why is this? Because grace knows of no limitation to her confidence in the infinite loving-kindness and mercy of God. Faith tells the christian that God is wise, and powerful, and good; and grace reposes with unalterable confidence upon this great foundation. It was thus with the Apostle Paul: a sense of his weakness made him pray with earnestness; while faith, in the unlimited power and paternal love of God, made him pray with frequency.

But let us consider the matter of the apostle's prayer. "For this thing I besought the Lord thrice," says he, "that it might depart from me." And this will bring us to see what was wrong in this petition. Wrong! some one may exclaim: could the Apostle Paul have committed an error in his prayers? Could one who was so distinguished by the miraculous gifts of the Spirit of God have fallen into mistake in the character of his petition at a throne of grace? We answer, without hesitation, in the affirmative. It was not the object of the Spirit, in dispensing his extraordinary gifts, to teach men how

to pray. This belongs to his ordinary and sanctifying operations, of which every christian is more or less subject. For as there is no limitation in the assertion, that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought," so neither is there any in the gracious declaration, which immediately follows, "but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered." The experience of the most eminent of the apostles, in his individual capacity as a sinner, saved by grace, was in nothing different from that of any other member of the church. Wherein, then, did the error of Paul consist? We answer, he did not look sufficiently for the teaching of that Spirit who helpeth our infirmities. There was, consequently, a preface wanting to his prayer; he should have commenced by saying, "if it be possible." And there was also an appendix wanting, for he should have concluded with an expression of readiness to acquiesce in the disposing power of God, by saying, "nevertheless not my will, but thine be done." It was thus the man of sorrows prayed, under the pressure of an agony heavier far than ever mortal knew, or than ever an apostle endured! Instead of thus qualifying his petitions, Paul simply besought the Lord that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him. But in this he was assuming the office of the physician and prescribing for his own case, or rather was foolishly praying that the remedy might be withdrawn before the cure had been effected.

And if we examine the state of our own hearts in prayer, we shall too often find this tendency to dictate, instead of to submit. How frequently do we ask for what it is neither consistent with the will of God to grant, nor with our welfare to receive. With the will of God, did we say? With his mercy we should have said: for there is mercy in withholding as well as in bestowing. Whenever we do not receive an answer to our repeated supplications, we should suspect that there has been something in them which the Lord does not approve of. The believer, if left to the mere impulse of his natural feelings, would often give expression to petitions, at which devils might rejoice, but on account of which angels would pity us and weep. There is nothing, then, that we should more guard against in our devotional engagements, than the unqualified

manifestation of merely natural feelings. How often may we see the fond christian mother kneeling in mournful anxiety over the couch of her beloved child, who lies before her in all the pain and feebleness of some dangerous sickness, and praying, without reservation, that the Father of Mercies would restore the dear object of her tenderest love to the youthful gaiety and gracefulness of health. And no doubt such a petition is the suggestion of strong natural affection, yet it should never ascend to the throne of God, unless accompanied with a willing submission to the sovereign arrangements of heaven. In prayer, especially, our spiritual principles should control our feelings of natural affection and desire. Our souls should always bend in humble submission to the arrangements of Him who knoweth our necessities before we ask, and our ignorance in asking, and whose compassion will ever lead Him to grant us those blessings which for our unworthiness we dare not and for our blindness we cannot ask.

And let us not suppose that our petitions, though not granted, are not of any service to us. Prayer has chiefly for its object the benefit of him who engaged in it, and it is the exercise of prayer, and not the answer only, that confers benefit upon the soul. There is a principle of reaction in spiritual as well as in natural things, and this remark is applicable in a special manner to the subject of prayer. Our supplications are offered—they ascend to heaven—they strike the mercy seat and return again, bringing with them, if not an answer, at least an influence which displays itself in the more submissive resignation of the believer to his trials, and in a more settled conviction that in Christ is all his strength.

Let prayer then be the constant engagement of the christian. We should pray because it is our duty as dependent creatures, and because it is our privilege and enjoyment as the reconciled children of God. The attitude of prayer is that in which we shall best be able to meet and vanquish our spiritual enemies; and it is an engagement to which we are impelled by innumerable arguments, motives and examples, which occupy a prominent position in the Word of God.

We shall now proceed to consider the answer which the apostle received to his prayers. The Lord said unto him, "My



grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." It is not stated in what manner this answer was conveyed to the apostle, whether by the Lord's appearing to him in person, or in a vision. We need not, however, inquire into this point. It is *enough* for us to *know* that this reply was *really* received by Paul, and has been recorded for our instruction.

Let us examine the reply. Every expression it contains is full of comfort and love. We must consider them separately, in order to form some conception of the immensity of meaning which this merciful declaration of Christ conveys. Let us reflect upon the two first words of it—"My grace." It is of the grace which was in Himself, and not of that which the apostle may have formerly received, that the Lord speaks. It hath pleased the Father, that in Christ should all fulness dwell, and out of His fulness His people may always draw an abundant supply of strength and succor to meet their wants. But grace is not given all at once; if it were, we should soon forget God, and fancy ourselves to be independent of Him. This is forcibly illustrated in the parable of the prodigal son. His petition was this, "Father, give me the portion of goods, that falleth to me;" and his father complied with his request, but when the son had received his share, how did he act? "He gathered all together and took his journey into a farther country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." This young man's ruin was the effect of feeling himself independent of his father; and thus the greatest curse that could happen to man, is to fancy himself independent of God; whilst, on the other hand, his greatest blessing is to feel a continual sense of dependence on Him. Let us never, then, pray to God to give us, all at once, such an amount of grace as might lead us to forget that we are living upon His daily bounty. If we pray in reference to temporal blessings, "give us this day our daily bread," so should we pray in reference to spiritual blessings. The promise is this, "As thy days are so shall thy strength be." As the Israelites gathered the manna in the wilderness from day to day, according as they required it, so it is with the grace of Christ, which is given to His people in measured quantities, according to their necessities, for "out of His ful-

ness do they all receive, and grace for grace." And let us notice the appropriateness of the Saviour's promised mercy. It is not any mercy, of a temporal kind, which he alludes to, but to spiritual strength and support, which was precisely what the apostle needed. The Lord always adapts the remedies he employs to the circumstances of His people.

Let us consider the two next words in this reply—"My grace is sufficient for thee." But is not the Saviour's grace as infinite as His power, His wisdom, or His love? And does it not possess a height, and depth, and length, and breadth, which we can never realize or understand? Unquestionably it does; but as the thoughts and feelings of the apostle were chiefly dwelling upon his own particular case, the Saviour, in kindness, speaks more directly in reference to that which was foremost in the apostle's mind, as if he would not require him, at a time when his mind was in pain and distress, even to draw the inference from an announcement of the immensity of divine grace, that that grace was sufficient for him. The Saviour may have also intended to remind the apostle, that His grace did not require any addition, but that it was sufficient in itself to supply him with an unfailing resource in his heaviest trials. The grace which is in Jesus is, like His sacrifice, perfect and complete in itself. It would be as absurd to think of adding to it, as of adding to the brightness of the sun, or of increasing the mercy, the love, or the glory of God! It would be easier to drain the ocean dry, than to exhaust the grace that is in Christ! And let every christian know, that this merciful declaration of our great High Priest is intended for him, as well as for Paul. And, accordingly, it is expressed in language, which can administer a fulness of comfort whenever it is read. Jesus does not say, "my grace shall be sufficient," but "my grace is sufficient." If we read this declaration today, tomorrow, when walking in the path of trial, or lying on the bed of death, we shall always find it so framed, as to carry home an assurance of present succor, for it always reads thus: "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Saviour never mocks His people with the promise of nothing more than future help. His time for relieving His afflicted people is when they require His interpositions most, and when they

are calculated to effect for them the *greatest amount of good*. The motto, therefore, which should be inscribed upon the title page of the history of God's providence and care of His people is this: "He is a *very present* help in *every* time of *trouble*."

But the Saviour adds: "My grace is sufficient *for thee*." These words, "*for thee*," must have been especially welcome and consolatory to the apostle's mind. Coming, as they did, from Christ Himself, they richly rewarded him for all the anxiety and painful suspense which he had endured, as long as his prayers remained unanswered. They were intended to hold out a handle for his faith to grasp, so as to enable him to appropriate the promise at once to himself, and to lead him to feel, without delay, that he had a direct and personal interest in it. And, in this view, how sweet and encouraging are these words! They teach us that the Lord deals with his people, not in the aggregate, but in detail: that as the good shepherd knows every individual sheep in his flock, so the Lord knows every member of His church, adapting the expressions of His love to the peculiar wants and circumstances of each.

The answer of Christ contains this further cheering announcement, "My strength is made perfect in weakness." In the language of Scripture, any quality or attribute of God is said to be made perfect when it is so manifested and displayed, as to give a full exhibition and proof of its inherent excellence and glory. Thus it is, that the Saviour's grace is made perfect in weakness, just as His power may be said to have been made perfect in raising Lazarus from the dead, since that great miracle proved that His ability was unlimited and resistless, by a demonstration which could not have been afforded if He had only restored him from sickness to health. And thus, when the believer is reduced to the lowest state of weakness and distress, the strength of Christ is perfectly manifested, as able to afford him all needful succor and support. And whilst he is led to feel that he is nothing in himself, his experience tells him that Christ is *all in all*, and he cheerfully confides in Him, as all his salvation and all his desire.

Let us be careful whenever we repeat this passage of Scripture, to do so with accuracy. We frequently hear persons using a pronoun before the word "weakness," and saying, "*my*

weakness," "*your* weakness," or "*his* weakness." This is incorrect, for there is no pronoun in the original; and it reduces the force of the Saviour's language considerably, for it is of weakness in the abstract that He speaks—and what is the weakness of any individual believer in comparison to this? We could not, however, dispense with the pronoun "my," before the word "grace," for it is this that gives to the Saviour's language its greatest interest. To speak of "grace" abstractedly would impart but little comfort. We must be likewise informed where it is, and to whom to look for it, but this information we have in the Saviour's cheering announcement, "My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

The contrast which is observed in the Saviour's language, between the words "grace" and "strength," is deserving of observation. Everything which is in Christ, as Saviour, is grace. This is the common designation of every blessing which is deposited with him for the benefit of sinners, or is rather the name of an essential quality, which *characterizes* every gift which he has received for men, for every mercy is freely and gratuitously conferred through Him. Grace, combined with wisdom, is the remedy for our ignorance. Grace, combined with love, is the remedy for our guilt. Grace, combined with the Omnipotence of Jesus, is that strength which is made perfect in weakness. Thus, the Saviour's grace, like the Lamp of Prophecy, is a light which shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star of glory shall arise. It is remarkable, that Christ does not here say, "I will grant thee my grace," for His people should not require to be told this. They should know, that He who gave His life as a sacrifice for sinners, will, assuredly, give all needful grace to those who come to Him, in order to make that sacrifice available for their salvation. Let us, then, look to Him for such grace as we require, for the "Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."



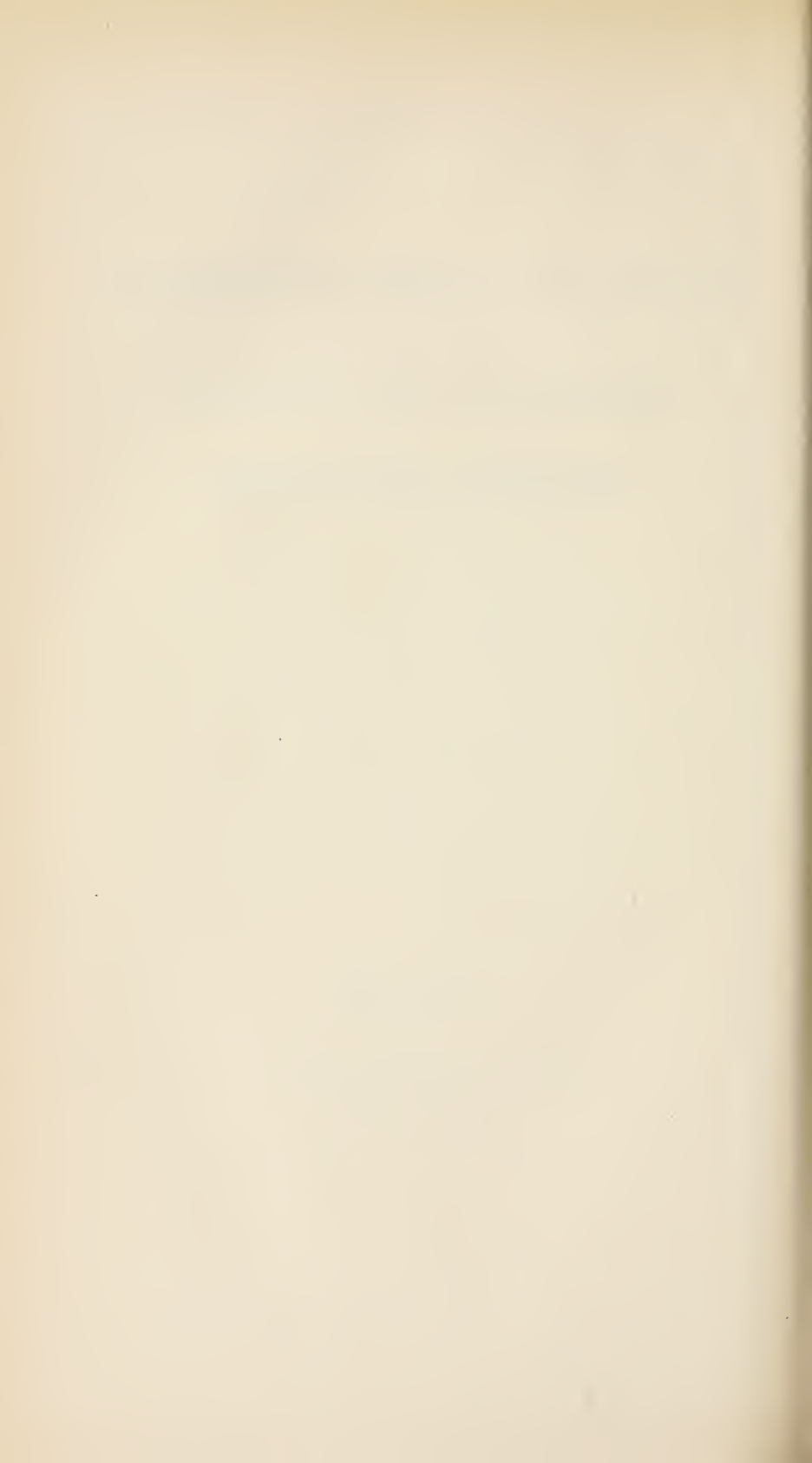




The Prayers and Efforts of Believers  
Essential to the Promised  
Triumph of the Church

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A DISCOURSE  
BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.  
Charleston, S. C.



## THE PRAYERS AND EFFORTS OF BELIEVERS ESSENTIAL TO THE PROMISED TRIUMPH OF THE CHURCH.

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### PSALM 2: 8.

Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.

That this psalm is prophetically descriptive of Christ and His kingdom cannot be doubted by any one who believes in the inspiration and infallible authority of the New Testament. It opens with an exhibition of the combined hostility by which the nations of the earth are confederated together against the kingdom of God. The divine being is then represented as looking down from His holy throne, and as holding all such efforts in derision, until the time of His forbearance is past, when He speaks unto them in His wrath. Jehovah Himself is next heard declaring the counsels of His own immutable and eternal purpose, "yet have I set *my* King upon the holy hill of Zion," who shall assuredly reign notwithstanding all the opposition which may be waged against Him, and continue to spread His triumphs until He shall reign King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and until all the various kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. The everlasting Son Himself is then heard saying: "I will declare the decree; the Lord (Jehovah) hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thy inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession, and thou shalt break them in pieces with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Now, as God's decrees must date from eternity, so must that Sonship which is here attributed to the Saviour be eternal. And as we are also taught that all power and judgment are committed unto the Son, we have here a declaration of the eternal power and Godhead of that second person in the triune, Jehovah, who was in the beginning with God and who is God from everlasting to everlasting. Our business, however, is not now with the

character and claims of the eternal Son of God, but with that infallible determination respecting His throne and kingdom which is here announced, and upon which the church and kingdom of Christ are still immovably based.

We are invited, therefore, to the consideration of the blessing here promised, the giver, and the medium through which, or the condition upon which, it is bestowed.

Let us then, in the first place, attend to the blessing here promised or rather made over by those two immutable things, the promise and the oath of Jehovah, which can never fail though heaven and earth should pass away: "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

This language includes the kingdom of Israel. This was now God's peculiar people, of which He was the acknowledged King. And it was over this chosen people the Son was constituted King, and upon the holy hill of Zion He was solemnly consecrated as the anointed of the Lord. In this capacity Christ had already acted, being that Jehovah who had appeared unto the patriarchs; the angel of the covenant, who was known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; that God who guided Israel out of Egypt and through the wilderness, for the rock that followed them, says the apostle, was Christ; that Lord who appeared on Mount Sinai amid thunderings, lightnings and tempest; and that God who dwelt between the cherubim, and from time to time manifested His presence in the glory of the Shekinah. The testimony it bears to Jesus was the new spirit of prophecy, since to Him gave all the prophets witness, and the reference they made to Him was the very sum and substance of all the sacrifices, since He was the Lamb of God slain from the very foundation of the world. David rejoiced to see afar off the day of this greater Son, according to the flesh, around whom the light of prophecy continued to shine amid the surrounding darkness until, in the full orb'd splendour of mid-day brightness, He was ushered into the world as "the King of the Jews." Thus when Herod consulted of the wise men when Christ should be born they at once gave voice to the believing expectation of the Jewish nation when "they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea," for thus it is written



by the prophet: "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judea, art not least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule my people."

To the Jewish people did Christ first address Himself. To them did He devote the labours of His incarnate ministry. To them did He send forth the twelve and the seventy that they might proclaim to all that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand." And when that kingdom had been founded in His "once offering up of Himself upon the cross," it was in Jerusalem His apostles were to begin their labours, and it was to the Jews the proclamation of the gospel was to be first announced. Although in righteous vengeance God has broken them with a rod of iron and scattered them over the earth as witnesses for the truth of prophecy and monuments of the severity of the divine wrath, yet has He not forgotten to be gracious, nor has He cast off Israel forever. "God forbid," says the apostle, "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in," and then not a few scattered converts shall be made from among them, as has been the case hitherto, but "all Israel shall be saved, as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the deliverer and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

But while this gift thus manifestly extends to the Jewish people, blinded and prejudiced though they still are against the claims of Christ as the true Messiah, yet it by no means confines itself to them. It applies as certainly to the Gentiles, for it embraces "the heathen and the uttermost parts of the earth." The former term is on the original "nations," a word by which the kingdom beyond the limits of Israel were specifically distinguished, so that these to the very uttermost parts of the earth and to the remotest ages of the world are included within the wide and universal dominion of that mighty God who shall "have dominion from sea to sea. And all the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all nations shall worship before Him. For the kingdom is the Lord's and He is the Governor among the nations." Such are the

glorious things spoken of the extent and prosperity of Zion by ancient prophets who were inspired by the Holy Ghost to declare what things should certainly come to pass, and such also are the practical views taken of the extent of the Redeemer's kingdom throughout the New Testament. Indeed, the commission given by the already ascended Saviour, when He was about to take His final departure from the earth in His incarnate form, and which at once constitutes the charter of the church, the code of its institutes and the warrant of its hopes, is nothing more nor less than the republication of this decree by Him who had now all power in heaven and on earth not only as "God over all," but also as the Mediator and Head of His church. The one is the counterpart of the other—the promise and its acceptance. And were there in this prophetic grant anything hard to be understood, which they that are unstable and unlearned might wrest to their own perverse opinions, it is made clear in the voice of the enthroned Redeemer when He empowers His people to go into all the world and assuring them that He should be with them even unto the end of the world.

Let us then turn to the consideration of our second topic, the giver and author of this Godlike endowment. For if it be the highest object of earthly ambition to reign over some one kingdom, what shall we say of His dominion which embraces all the ends of the earth? It is very true that this kingdom is not of this world, nor like the governments of the earth which are earthly, while it is of the heaven, heavenly, wholly spiritual in its nature. But nevertheless the hour cometh when in their separate spheres the kingdoms of this world shall all become the kingdoms of the Lord, being governed by a regard to His laws and His glory.

This gift includes, therefore, the overruling of all the powers and principalities of earth, so as to secure an open channel for the gospel through which its healing waters may freely flow. The whole history of God's providence towards nations, as well as individuals, will confirm and illustrate the truth which it is the avowed purpose of sacred history to bring to light, "that the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will,"

and that He reigneth and ruleth not only among the armies of heaven, but also among the inhabitants of the earth, none being able to stay His hand. The history of Joseph and his father's house in Egypt; of Israel during all the period of her national existence; and that of the great empires of Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome; the state of the Roman empire during the time of the first promulgation and spread of christianity; the revival of learning, the invention of printing and the entire state of European society preparatory to the reformation; the present progress of science and of truth; the bridging over deserts, and scaling impassable walls, and subjugating boundless empires and oceans, thus making a highway whereon the chariot of the gospel may have free course—all prove that as God *can*, so He will, make every event to work together at the time and in the manner which He has appointed, for the full accomplishment of this everlasting decree. "For He is faithful who has promised and cannot deny Himself."

And though, as in former days, God for wise purposes, promotive of His own glory and His people's good, may permit them that trouble His people to increase and many to rise up against His truth; yet shall He that sitteth in the heavens speak unto them in His wrath and vex them in His sore displeasure. Be wise now, therefore, and be instructed ye who are thus openly rebelling against the Lord or conniving at such traitorous indifference to His cause.

But this gift implies further the willing consecration of His own people to the cause of Christ, and this also God can "work in them both to will and to do." "Both riches and honor come of God and in His hand are power and might, and in His hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all." And the same mighty power which is able to new-create the soul can also work in the hearts of them that believe to realize that they are not their own, that their bodies, souls and spirits are the Lord's; that their silver and their gold are His also, and that they are called upon to employ all not for their own pleasure, but for the glory of Him who has called them by His grace. And this also God will bring to pass. The present standard of penurious charity will not endure. God's people shall be

willing in the day of His power. What He has done He will do again, and what His people were in primitive times they will be again. The time is at hand when christians will not be afraid to believe God's promises, to act upon His precepts, and to carry out their professions; and when, therefore, no man will reckon aught that he possesses as his own, but the Lord's, and labor that he may have to give liberally and cheerfully to every good work. Is it a time for you to dwell in your ceiled houses, to be clad in silks and fine linen, to eat, drink and be merry, "while the house of God lieth in waste?" Why have so many and so heavy losses fallen upon us, so many wise plans been brought to naught? Why, saith the Lord of Hosts, was all this? "Because," he answers, "of mine house which is waste, and my kingdom which is not promoted." If, my brethren, you would enjoy God's comforts in your own souls, and bring down His blessing upon all around you, then "go up to the mountain and bring wood," be willing and ready to distribute, and thus "build the Lord's house and I will take pleasure in it and I will be glorified saith the Lord."

But it is further implied in this grant that God will qualify and send forth laborers into His vineyard to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. This He hath done at every period when His cause demanded help.

Finally, this blessing implies conversion of the heathen unto God, and this too God can and will accomplish. "It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and that hath learned of the Father cometh unto Christ." And the hour cometh when He who has been lifted up upon the cross will draw all men unto Him.

Now you perceive how this view of the subject surrounds with impenetrable armour the cause of missions and renders it proof against all the objections with which its enemies assail it; and how, on the other hand, it covers with shame all the professed friends of Christ who either through fear, or covetousness, or unbelief, are found slow of heart to believe all that God has promised, and faint and feeble in their endeavors to co-operate with God for the full accomplishment of all His purposes. Is it said that the work is in its very conception



impossible? We reply, "with men it is impossible, but with God, whose work it is, all things are possible," and all that He has purposed certain; and that as by faith we believe that the worlds were first made, so by faith we can as assuredly believe in that new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Is it said that the enterprise is visionary? We reply, that when we remember that there are 600,000,000 of our fellow beings still without God, without hope; that in engaging in this glorious work we go forth to the warfare as soldiers under the Captain of our Salvation, there can be no zeal too impassioned and no sacrifices too great. And is it alleged that we have enough and more than enough to do at home? We reply, that God knows no home which is to exclude the claims of christian charity, and that while he who provides not for his own is worse than an infidel, he who passes by the claims of the poor and the perishing, however distant and estranged, has no pretensions to the charity of the gospel, or the spirit of Christ, which combine in requiring us to "do good unto all men as we have opportunity and to preach the gospel to all nations."

What, then, let us ask in conclusion, is the condition upon which this gift is bestowed? The grant, it is true, is given primarily and meritoriously to Christ, and to Him also must we look for that intercession by which its consummation is to be secured. But it is as obvious that, as the subject of such a grant and the instrument in such an agency, Christ must be regarded not in His character as God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father, but as the Mediator and Head of His church, which He purchased with His own blood; which He represents at the right-hand of God; for which he ever lives to make intercession. And as Christ and His church are one, and He now works out the purposes of His will through His members here below, the agency here given *efficiently* to Christ must belong *instrumentally* to His church and people. For even as He ever lives a King and Priest upon His throne, so does He constitute them kings and priests unto God, that through Him strengthening them they may do all things that He has commanded them, and that while He intercedes on high they may intercede on earth and offer up prayer for the advance-



ment of His cause continually. And, in like manner, as Christ is still the Prophet and Teacher of His church, and the only source of legislative wisdom, so are His people here below His representatives in this capacity also, and called upon to preach the gospel to all creatures, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded.

This then is one of the laws of Christ's kingdom—that while He is the source of all efficiency and power, and while God alone is the author and the perfecter of the glorious scheme of man's redemption, that nevertheless this divine efficiency is made to co-operate with the instrumentality of man. All laws are adaptations which God, the only true and efficient cause in the universe, has appointed between means and ends; and hence philosophy has taught us that all the connection we can trace between causes and effects is that of invariable antecedence and consequence. And hence, there is no more connection between natural causes and their effects than between spiritual causes and their results. Prayer is just as much a cause in the spiritual world as is diligence in the natural world, and the dependence of success upon diligence in the one case is no more a law in the world of providence than is the connection between success and prayer in the spiritual world. Both are the arrangements of that Almighty Being whose prerogative it is to bless in either case, and without whom it is just as certain that the hand of the diligent will not make rich, as that the wishes of the prayerless will not be granted. And the man who would attempt to set the laws by which all things in the kingdom of nature are governed at defiance would be no more certain to reap from all his efforts only disappointment and regret than the man who thinks to grow in piety, or to diffuse that piety around him without prayer and a diligent discharge of every christian obligation. Prayer and effort are as necessary for the procurement of spiritual good, as are eating and drinking and exercise causes by which we secure the beneficial effects of nourishment and strength. And just as prayer and zeal are essential to the spiritual welfare and progress of the individual believer, so are they also to the vitality of particular churches and of the church at large. As the promises will fail of their accomplishment in the case of

him who is prayerless, covetous, or neglectful of any means of grace, so will this and many other promises made to the church fail consummation unless the church put forth that fervent and united prayer, and that correspondent zeal, liberality and enterprise which their fulfillment necessarily demand. For whatever is made the subject of prayer will also be found to be the object of commanded duty. So that while it is our business to ask, and God's province to bless, it is also our solemn duty to give and to labor.

It follows that the salvation of the heathen, although beyond our ability to effect as causes, is within our power as instruments and that we are therefore accountable, to the full extent of this agency—that is, of our ability and our opportunity to go, or to give, or to labor, or to pray—for the ignorance, crimes and ultimate loss of any among the heathen; and that he who is indifferent to this cause here on earth gives evidence that he is a self-deceiver, and that when he stands before God in judgment he will be condemned as an unjust and unmerciful steward of the mercies of his God. And let every man feel that he is bound to give according to his resources, and that one-tenth of his income is the very smallest amount which any man can give, whether he takes for his standard the amount required of God's ancient people, the amount given by all nations and the people of all other religions, or the amount required and given by christians.

In conclusion let me remind you that of all we do or attain to in this world, only that which concerns the glory of God, shall go with us into eternity. When once we shall have entered into that world where we are to abide forever, we may then look around us, and yet of all the cares which were sown on earth, of all the labors which we took under the sun, nothing will be found, that only excepted, which has been built up in the temple of the living God. He who has added one stone to that temple has in it an enduring memorial. He whose prayers are among the mysterious assemblage of causes, leading to the fulfillment of the divine promises, has been a worker together with God, and it shall be given him in this to rejoice also with God. But he who has done little, even though his soul should be given him as a prey, will have com-

paratively little honour. But among all the works in which man is able to engage, and which go to the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom, there is, perhaps, none so fruitful, because none so humbling to the creature and glorifying to the Creator; because none so becoming, on the part of a redeemed soul, as prayer. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."







Forbidding to Marry a Sure Mark  
of Antichrist.

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A DISCOURSE  
BY THE  
REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.



## FORBIDDING TO MARRY A SURE MARK OF ANTICHRIST.

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1 TIM. 4:1, 2 AND 3.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter times same shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils speaking lies in hypocrisy having their consciences seared with a hot iron—FORBIDDING TO MARRY.

One great design of the Scriptures was to reveal future events so far as such disclosures were promotive of God's glory; or contributive to the welfare of the church and the strength of the evidences of inspiration. We are thus admonished that notwithstanding the full knowledge of salvation contained in the Bible and proclaimed by the christian teachers, there should arise many enemies or anti-Christ. This spirit of anti-Christ or of opposition to the gospel in its simplicity, purity and divine authority whereof we have heard that it should come "even now," says the Apostle John, "is it in the world."

To this subject are to be referred the words of our text. The Apostle Paul, writing at an advanced period in the first century after the establishment of the christian church (A. D. 65 or 68) here fortells what should come to pass in the latter times. And in so doing he carefully admonishes us that what he speaks he does so not merely in confident assurance of its truth—not merely upon the strength of his own inspiration—but in accordance with the express and indubitable testimony as given to other apostles and to christians also. He thus solemnly predicts that "some" even among those who profess to be churches of Christ and teachers of God's will, and believers in God's word "shall depart from the faith" as given by inspiration of God, in all those Scriptures which He caused to be written. And as our first parents were led astray from God by the artifices of the devil who induced them to believe that his declarations were to be received as true, also is it foreshown that these churches while professing to obey only the truth should nevertheless "by giving heed to seducing spirits," admit as doctrines that be of God "the doctrines of devils."

Who, you will inquire, are these professedly christian churches or individuals who with a declared belief in the truth of the Bible have yet departed from the faith, given heed to seducing spirits, introduced the worship of the spirits of dead men under the character of saints, and spoken lies in hypocrisy? This also the apostle here makes known specifying some of those doctrines and practices by which to the scrutinizing eye of well instructed piety the wolf may be at once discovered though covered with the skin of the lamb. One of these marks and the only one to which we shall call special attention is—"FORBIDDING TO MARRY."

Satan, who could not endure to look upon the innocent happiness and delight of our first parents in the garden of Eden and in the time of their holiest love, has ever manifested an especial enmity to marriage. Well knowing that by this means the number of God's elect should be filled up, and that through the assistance afforded by this endearing union the children of God should be enabled to resist his wiles, to escape those pollutions that are in the world through lust—to strengthen each other when weak—this great adversary has gone about seducing men into the belief that marriage is in itself sinful and to be eschewed. Full well he knew that could he succeed in establishing this opinion, and associate with the marriage union ideas of shame, or defilement, no matter from whatever variety of motives, while he should thus deceive the multitude by this apparent zeal for purity he should provide a veil of darkness underneath which might be perpetrated all manner of evil. For if there is any one provision whereby a standard may be lifted up against the violence of man's corrupt propensities; by which a measure of Eden's joy may be perpetuated and the sorrows of life sweetened; by which sympathy and kindness, parental solicitude and filial reverence may be promoted; by which all deadly passions may be overcome; by which individual and social elevation and refinement may be secured; and a way opened for the entrance of the gospel;—it is by marriage.

And too well has our adversary succeeded in this wily stratagem; for wherever he has gained possession and established his dominion there do we find marriage in its original form

(as constituting the unity in a duality of one human pair) unknown; and there do we see all that is polluted, perpetrated.

In christendom also has he too well succeeded. Here it was necessary for him to appear as an angel of light and while his fitting instruments spake lies, yet were the many gradually deluded by the motives of sanctity. How must these seducing spirits have triumphed in their fiendish mocking, when they saw christendom spotted with monasteries,—the prisons of their victims—and when hordes of saintly devotees were found roaming like savages and wild beasts the desert wastes; and when society despoiled of that salt wherewith it should have been salted, lay in its guilt and shame corrupted and corrupting.

Even now do we find this “doctrine of devils,” which wages war against the sanctity of the marriage union—which would profanely elevate to a superior holiness a constrained, and unnatural virginity—and impiously assert an opposition between the duties of a husband and a minister—even now do we find this doctrine, in one form or other, advocated by a varied host, who are united only in this that they have all departed from the faith. It is the universal creed and doctrine of all fanatical errorists. It is the doctrine of a party within the bosom of the Angelican Church, who while thus departing from the faith, are claiming for themselves, in opposition to their more evangelical brethren, the title and privileges of the Catholic Church. And it is the established creed of the Romish hierarchy, which clothes virginity with a robe of celestial purity and represents it as meriting a glorious recompense—which surrounds marriage with an atmosphere of carnality, and covers its unworthy followers with guilty shame,—and which altogether prohibits upon pain of anathema and excommunication any of its ministers to enter into this heaven-appointed relation. The council of Trent (which gave form and shape to the present corrupt church of Rome) decreed that “if any say that the clery \* \* \* may contract marriage \* \* \* and that all may contract marriage who do not find that they have the gift of chastity let him be accursed.”

Now this doctrine we hold, with the apostle, to be unreasonable, anti-christian and licentious. To those who maintain it, beyond the visible church, we may oppose reason and experi-



ence; while to those who are professedly within the visible church and yet hold this "doctrine of devils" as the apostle calls it, we may oppose not only reason and experience, but the express authority of God.

The opinion, then, that marriage is unlawful and to be avoided by all who would either escape from bondage, or rise to eminence in holiness, is unreasonable, in itself, and in its tendencies, and its results licentious and wicked. The marriage union is founded in reason. Man is by his very nature led to seek in such a partner that happiness which he cannot realize in isolated loneliness. Man turns to woman, in proportion as the nobler faculties of his nature triumph over his lower and debased propensities, as the sharer of his sorrows, the augments of his pleasure, the lessener of his pain, the partaker of his care and the refiner of his recreation, his nurse and consoler when ill; his compeer and coadjutor when well; his associate and helpmeet continually; the companion, the counsellor, the comfort of his life. Before there was any government among the nations by which men could be artificially divided into families,—before the earliest existing records of our race had form and being—the faithful husband enjoyed the love and confidence of his fond partner,—wedded love flourished in all its beauty,—spread forth its branches in all their luxuriance,—and scattered its sweet fragrance all around. And when we turn to the first histories of primeval generations, whether we look to the poems of Homer or to the books of Moses, we find them portraying the fond attachment of Jacob and Rachel, of Hector and Andromache,—a love which could endure no rival, which was strengthened by every rude storm that only infixed its roots more deeply,—which triumphed over death—and still lingered, in undying ardor, around the tomb of the departed. And in whatever land you follow the muse to her earliest and loftiest strains, will she not be heard celebrating the virtues of wedded love as the only remnant and remembrancer of that age of gold when men were angels and held converse with the Gods?

Indeed it were easy to show how to this principle society owes its being. In the marriage bond we have the first union; in the family the first society; in its laws the first government;

in its relations the first inequalities of rank, station, influence, and authority. And it needed but to multiply these homesteads, with all their concentric and attractive influences, and to subordinate them all to one patriarchal head, to have an organized society.

The testimony of universal man, wherever vice has not reduced him to the depths of bestiality, is in favor of the reasonableness of this institution. It will be found among the historical reminiscences of every tribe and people. Nor has nature failed to bear her testimony to the designed universality of this bond. Although this invariable conformity to what is the law of nature, existed ages before the proportion of the sexes was known, it has now been fully ascertained that there is a most extraordinary equality between the number of male and female children allowing indeed a small excess of males, by a most wise and merciful providence, since men are more exposed to the hazard of death. Thus does the God of nature stamp with reprobation the outrage upon His wisdom and goodness, that would debase or destroy this principle of conjugal union.

And while it has been alleged that marriage leads to the degeneracy of the species, it has been further ascertained, as an indubitable fact, that we who are said to be "emasculated by artificial marriage," are greater in physical powers. In like manner has it been made apparent, that the number of deaths has decreased as civilization has advanced and this relation established, and that the proportion of deaths among communities that are civilized varies with the encouragement or the discouragement of marriage and the consequent morality or immorality which prevails. The annual mortality in the Roman states is thus as 1 to 28, while in Britain it is as 1 to 58, marriage-hating Italy having thus a mortality doubly as great as marriage-loving Britain and America.

Thus plainly and unequivocally does reason,—as the voice of nature and of nature's God, proclaim the wisdom and the refining and humanizing character of the marriage union. Had we time and were it timely to bring before you, the mass of evidence which could be produced in demonstration of the licentious wickedness which have resulted from the opposite doc-

trine, whether in heathen countries; in civilized Rome where it bred corruption and decay; in infidel France during the triumph of these anti-matrimonial principles; or in the Papal hierarchy ancient and modern—there is not a heart present, alive to any sense of nature and of delicacy, that would not turn from such doctrines, under whatever mask of assumed purity they may appear—with loathing and disgust. Could we bring before you some of the wicked indulgences of the Popes—the impious principles and teaching of the Jesuits—and the licentious practices of Popes, Priests, and nuns, under the celibate vow—and the awful prevalence of vice wherever Romanism has had its unrestrained influence well might you conclude that enforced celibacy is a sure mark of the anti-Christ.\*

Is there any doubt as to the view taken of this subject by the holy Scriptures which were given by inspiration of God? We will briefly present some evidence and leave you to judge.

In opening this sacred volume we find that God so created man as to imply the necessity of the marriage union. For whereas an entire generation might have been brought into existence together, Adam was first made and that alone, Eve afterwards from a portion of himself, and also single. The Lord also “brought her unto the man.” Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh. Thus was man first constituted as “the man and the wife” (Gen. 2:25) a type and pattern for all time. Thus was marriage originated, and miraculously introduced by God Himself;—solemnized by His own divine presence;—made binding by His solemn precept;—hallowed by His gracious blessing;—sanctified by His holy approbation;—and enjoined, in perpetuity, as a standing law upon the entire human family. Thus was marriage instituted and entered upon by man, while as yet he was untainted by sin, in converse with angels, and in communion with God. Thus does God in the very first page of Revelation, and in the very first act in the drama of life erect a perpetual testimony against the blasphemous impiety of those, who would degrade this first gift of God to man. “And Adam said this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman because she

\*See White's Catholicism, pp. 132-138.

was taken out of man \* \* \* And God blessed them and said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth \* \* \* And they were not ashamed."

Neither was this institution altered, except as to its happiness, by the fall of its first exemplars. On the contrary, in the whole of his address to the guilty pair God expressly recognizes the permanence and continued purity of this union. Bitter as are the ingredients in their cup of woe, and peculiarly severe as are the trials imposed upon woman who was first in the transgression, yet does God say that she should be still subject to her husband, and her husband still bound to her. This continuance of the original institution of marriage in the union of one man and one woman we need not illustrate from the antediluvian, patriarchal or Jewish history, or as it is exemplified in the Jewish law. We would however remark, that under this whole dispensation, God so far from excepting the marriage of the clergy from this expression of His sanctified approval, did on the contrary most plainly encourage and provide for it, the prophets, priests and Levites and all in attendance upon Him being married persons. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Isaiah, David, and the priests generally were married. And whereas, Papists allege that during their courses of ministry the priests were separated from their homes, this is a mere assertion without any proof; and if true, were of no importance since this arrangement of courses, made as late as the time of David, was of a very short duration, a week,—in the year,—and since previous to that time no restriction was enforced.

And, now, if we turn to the New Testament dispensation, we shall find that as the glory of this excelleth the former as much as the light of the sun does that of the moon, so does the manifestation of divine favor to marriage as an institution all-important to God's plan of mercy and to the establishment of christianity throughout the earth, shine forth illustrious from every page. As in the first creation God miraculously formed woman and thus made marriage possible, so in this sacred and greater creation Christ performed His first miracle, to give greater honor to a marriage celebration. This divine Legislator restored it to its original platform—cancelled all the unjust



restrictions of the fathers—and for ever anathematized any assumed dispensing power by priests or popes, as to its immutable and holy bonds. But further, and most surely to put to silence the “lies spoken in hypocrisy” of anti-christian men, Christ selected His twelve favored companions, some of them certainly, from among married men.

Whereas the Papal Kirk would build itself on Peter to the rejection of the tried corner stone, Christ had so ordered it that Peter should be a married man (1 Cor. 9:5); and whereas Paul also had much to do with the first organization of the Roman (not the Papal church which was not in being for some hundreds of years afterwards) Paul also expressly claims the right “to lead about a sister—a wife—as well as other apostles and as the brethren (or other ministers) of the Lord and as Cephas or Peter.” Nor will any reasonable soul be beguiled by the papal plea that this wife was not a lawfully married wife, and that Peter only set a pattern which his successions have never refused to follow, namely, of leading or having about with them a sister even though not a married wife.

When the Holy Ghost comes to give directions to the church as to the qualifications of ministers in all ages one of them is, “if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children” (Tit. 1:6). Again, “A Bishop” or presbyter, for according to Scripture these officers are the same, “must be blameless, the husband of one wife—one that ruleth well his own house having his children (that are in his house) in subjection with all gravity, for if a man know not how to rule his own house (as of course they know not who are not allowed, however anxious, to have any house to rule over) how shall he take care of the Church of God?” And surely all history will reply that they have taken no care of it at all. “Even so,” continues the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Saul, “must their wives be grave, &c.,” and “Let the deacons” too “be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.”\*

And lest it should be imagined that any were excluded by precept from entering into this relation, however many may be by their own choice, or by the necessity of providential hindrances, and lest any impurity should be thought to attach itself

\*2 Tim. 3: 2-5 and 12.



to the marriage state, the Apostle Paul explicitly teaches that "marriage is honourable in all,—and the bed undefiled," except by any violation of matrimonial fidelity. (Heb. 13.) Nay, to sanctify still more this institution, it has been held forth as a most special similitude of Christ and His Church, in various places and with great solemnity (*e. g.*, Eph. 5); nor would our divine Redeemer be conceived or born of the Virgin Mary until she was espoused in marriage. He thus pronounced it to be His own ordinance, and covered it with the robe of celestial sacredness.

Neither is this all, for marriage is not only thus privileged to all men and to ministers especially, it is moreover to a great proportion of the human race as certainly commanded. For the Apostle Paul, when in view of persecutions and necessary flights, advised all who could abstain not to marry, yet does he as positively enjoin it as an universal rule, that in all cases where individuals found that they are not endowed with the gift of continency, and cannot purely and freely continue in their present state without mental strife "let every" such "man have his own wife, and let every" such "woman have her own husband." "I say, therefore, unto the unmarried and widows \* \* \* if they cannot contain let them marry for it is better," that is, it is better even for such as have purposed or vowed to live a single life, "to marry than to burn." And yet amid all the dispensations of the Court of Rome for all manner of crimes, there is no mercy found, in this proper and lawful way, for the innumerable priests, monks, and nuns, who as many of them have confessed, have been and are, destroyed by the very constraint in which they are unfitly bound.

When to all that has been adduced, we add the unsparing severity with which the Scriptures everywhere condemn those practices which must inevitably follow upon the repudiation of marriage; and how its most withering curse is uttered against those individuals or churches which tolerated such iniquities, how can we hesitate in pronouncing the creed which forbiddeth to marry as the doctrine of devils? If it is in violent opposition to the laws of nature and to the reason of the case,—if it is most contrary to the inspired word of God as

found both in the Old and New Testaments,—if it defames and brutalizes that which God pronounces “honourable IN ALL”—if it expressly forbids, on peril of sin and guilt, on pain of anathema, what God explicitly commands—if it thus forbids marriage that hereby it may merit the kingdom of heaven\*—if this doctrine was cruelly introduced and made universally binding by the Court of Rome in order, to enslave the clergy and to league them in one huge confederation, unconnected with the laity, having no interest in society, and with every honourable love of home, family, kindred and country seared as with a hot iron,—that thus they might go abroad as an army of masters to extort tribute from millions of enslaved subjects, and finally to attract into the coffers of the Papal Kirk whatever property individual priests or nuns may acquire—if all this is so, then is it by proof strong as of holy writ demonstrated to be “a doctrine of devils;” and the Romish church to be that anti-Christ who was to come, “the man of sin who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God showing himself that he is God.”

Time will not permit us to expose the weakness and absurdity of those pretexts on which this doctrine is based. This has been often done and may be easily done again for these pretexts are few and of feeble strength. Indeed, these were necessary to establish our conclusions nothing farther than a reference to the letters of Doctor Taylor, one of those eminently holy and learned men who was martyred in the reign of that Mary who was made bloody by the persecuting and relentless creed to which she was enslaved. When Doctor Taylor was brought before his Romish inquisitors he was charged with being a wretch because he had been married many years. “To which,” says he, “I answered, I am married indeed and I have had nine children in holy matrimony, I thank God. And this I am sure of, that your proceedings now at this present in this realm against priest’s marriages is the maintenance of the doctrine of devils, against natural law, against civil law, canon law, general councils, canons of the apostles, ancient doctors

\*See proof in the Southmark Lectures, vol. 2, p. 155.

and God's law."\* For his opposition to this custom, the devoted minister, like our Lord, was accused, degraded from his office, torn him from his wife and children,†—prevented at the place of execution from speaking to the people by having a tip-staff thrust into his mouth, placed in a pitch barrel, bound with chains to the stake. A fagot was cast at him, even after they had kindled the fire, and when he still repeated in English the *miserere* he was struck on the lips and told to speak in Latin. Like so many fiends, led on by their Satanic masters, these torturers exulted in his expiring agonies. Oh, who can doubt this is indeed the doctrine of devils?

But why, do you ask, discuss this subject at this time? Why? Because anti-Christ is now waxing strong among us, and is already boasting that by our silence, and the treacherous infidelity of some called protestants he has succeeded in gathering in his evil net many of our sons and daughters. Because many say and believe that Popery now is not what it ever has been and what by its own showing it ever must be, unchangeable in its corrupt, unscriptural and persecuting principles, and we would therefore show you that it is thus manifestly identified with the anti-Christ of Scripture. Why? Because the duty of thus forewarning you of your danger and of the real nature of this system has been imposed upon us by the voice of and highest ecclesiastical judicatory. Because we have been led to this subject by an inward impulse which we dare not resist. Why? Because every man had his parents and we are bound to cherish a reverence for them. Nor were we at first led to it with any view directly to controvert the Papal doctrine. We were rather desirous to lead your minds to proper views of the holy estate of matrimony. There is, as the indirect result of this doctrine of devils, a shrinking and effeminate shame as it regards the subject of marriage, which argues that it is inherently wrong or really that necessary evil which this doctrine of devils represents it to be—and by which these seducing spirits are enabled successfully to apply their delusive ensnare-

\*At the coming of the gates his servant lifted up his son, Thomas, to him and sat him on the horse. Dr. Taylor put off his hat and said to the people: "Good people, this is mine own son, begotten in lawful matrimony; and God be blessed for lawful matrimony." Then lifted he up his eyes and prayed for his son, laid his hand upon his head and blessed him.

†Letters of the Martyrs, p. 131.

ments. This unreasonable, unscriptural jealousy we would with all our might resist. It is unbecoming in us as men, it is apostasy in us as protestants, it is positively sinful in us as christians. Let us then be led to think more honourably, more purely, more christianly, of marriage. Let us regard it, as it is, where properly entered upon, as God's own institution, and therefore holy,—as dignified by Christ and therefore doubly sacred,—as apostolically enjoined and therefore “honourable in all,”—as in its uses spotlessly pure and only in its abuses to be deprecated,—and as one chief means by which God counteracts evil, furthers good, benefits society, and the world at large, and prepares for their heavenly blessedness the heirs of glory.

“Art thou bound unto a wife? Seek not to be loosed. Art thou,” by choice, by the necessity of circumstances, or the providence of God “loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But, and if thou marry thou hast not sinned, and if a virgin marry she hath not sinned. But this I say, brethren, that the time is short! it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as though they had none; and they that weep, as though they wept not; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoice not; and they that buy, as though they possessed not; and they that use this world as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.”\*

\*1 Cor. 27-31.







# The Resurrection of Christ.

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A SERMON

BY THE

REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.,

Charleston, S. C.,

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*August 8, 1836.*



## THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

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LUKE 24:41

And while they yet believed not but wondered, He said to them: Have ye here any food?

The resurrection of Christ is the center stone of that arch by which christianity affords a passage to the realms of bliss over the yawning gulf of eternal death. No part of the Gospel history has been more violently assailed than this, and wisely on the part of its adversaries,—for if this doctrine can be overthrown it brings confusion and disgrace upon the whole christian scheme.

We will consider as well as in our limits we can the certainty and the importance of this great doctrine. The Resurrection of Christ was not impossible to God since it implies no contradiction; and was not, therefore, beyond His power—nor is it to be thought at all unworthy of heaven since it led to the accomplishment of the most blessed consequences. What, then, is the evidence of the fact? Testimony drawn from prophecy, from history, from heaven and from earth.

The resurrection is attested by prophecy. By this it appears the Messiah was to rise. This truth was foreshown in types, in the sacrifice of Isaac, in the sheaf of the first fruits. It was foretold by prophets. As Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly so was the Son of Man to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Similar is the vision of Zechariah. Isaiah, who in reference to Christ is always more bold, saith: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they live. Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead." And elsewhere, that Christ should see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, shall we quote the famous language of David: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell; neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption, thou wilt show me the path of life," language which the Apostle Peter assures us was spoken of the resurrection of Christ. It was also predicted by Christ Himself. When pressed by the Jews to give them a sign He would give no

other than that of the Prophet Jonas. "Destroy," says he, "this temple," meaning His body, "and in three days I will raise it up. Tell the vision," says he to His disciples, "to no man till the Son of Man be risen from the dead." How truly, then, may the apostle say: "If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain and vain also is your faith."

What, then, is the historical evidence of this event? Does it depend upon the testimony of a single man? One who at the time of His resurrection and long after was one of His bitterest enemies, says, "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, later of above 500 brethren at once." These witnesses were well acquainted with Christ; they were eye or ear witnesses of what they testify; they were at first inclined to disbelieve in the whole matter—and yet they afterwards proclaimed this truth openly, although it entailed upon them bitter persecution, and even death. And what was the character of these witnesses? They constantly taught the most perfect morality and righteousness, their own conduct exemplified their doctrines. They had no opportunity to plot a scheme of deception, they had no power to carry it on, they had no conceivable motive of making the attempt. The story is one of great improbability in itself; and yet a belief in its truth was maintained, and diffused throughout the whole world.

We can appeal for further testimony to heaven. For the two angels who rolled away the stone of His sepulchre told those who came that Christ was not there, but was risen. We can appeal to the grave itself: "For many bodies of the saints who slept, arose and went into the holy city and appeared unto many!" We appeal to His disciples. (Look at the unbelieving Thomas, doubtful until he touched Christ's pierced hands and wounded side. From that moment he and all of them, weak and timorous as they had been before, went forward even to the death bearing this testimony to Jesus.) We can appeal to Christ. Can a man work miracles in the grave or a dead man fulfil his promises? And did not Christ meet the whole assembled church at the appointed time and place and fill them with the Holy Ghost and enable them to speak in every different tongue and work miracles? And how frequently also did He appear to those who had previously known Him, to Mary



Magdalene, to Peter, to James, to the 11, to 500, to Stephen, to Paul!

We can also appeal to God Himself. For God bore witness to them that preached this truth, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will.

Whether, then, we look to heaven and see the angels—or to earth and behold the great earthquake—to the disciples—to Christ—to God Himself—we are alike assured that Christ is He who liveth and was dead, and behold, He is alive for evermore. And thus, as by prophecy we were assured Christ would rise, by history we are made certain that Christ did rise. "If, therefore," says Bishop Horne, "the patriarchs, the law and the prophets; if heaven and earth; if angels from above and the dead beneath; if the appearance of Christ Himself on earth and from heaven; if the Spirit of Truth with all His gifts and graces; if the conversion of the world to the faith of the crucified Saviour; if the Christ with the antiquity and universality, of her institutions and services for above 17 centuries—that is to say, if all the evidence God can give or man receive be sufficient to prove a fact—then may we evermore rejoice—that the Lord is risen indeed." That Christ rose from the dead was a truth believed before it was received by the apostles, and of which we have still that evidence preserved to us which through every age as well as at the time itself has satisfied the minds of millions.

When we remember that this doctrine being certified the whole Bible is at once and necessarily established and the whole system cemented together, how shall we proceed to the consideration of its importance? The contemplation of a single object oftentimes makes a more powerful impression than when the mind is overpowered by a multitude. And yet that our conceptions may not be limited, it is sometimes well to look upon the whole field of observation. Although, therefore, the particular consideration of some one of the resulting benefits of the resurrection might more deeply affect our minds let us throw ourselves upon that constellated host of glories which radiate from this central orb that although lost in their

contemplation our hearts may be filled with reverence and becoming thankfulness.

Miracles, says Augustine, are for intelligent beings, the language of God, and of all miracles the greatest is, the resurrection of the dead. But of all resurrections is it not much the greatest to give oneself life and to raise oneself by one's own power? It was not, therefore, without reason that Jesus Christ insisted particularly on this sign to make it appear that He was God and the Son of God. This doctrine is, therefore, of the very highest importance. It is a corroboration of the truth of all God's revelation, in which this event was fore-shown, and its necessity declared. It was necessary to the fulfilment of the purposes of Christ's death. Since Christ as our ransom has arisen we have redemption through His blood. He was crucified for our offenses and raised again for our justification. By thus rising, through the efficacy of His death, He is able to justify us in the sight of God. It was essential as a confirmation of the faith of christians. The faith of His disciples was staggered, and the hopes of men abashed, but in His resurrection He was proclaimed the Son of God with power. All doubt is now forever silenced. And we may boldly assert that nothing was ever affirmed by Christ but what was true; nothing foretold but what hath or shall be fulfilled; nothing commanded but what is just and good; nothing threatened but what shall be executed upon impenitent and unbelieving sinners; nothing promised but what shall be certainly performed to all that repent and believe the gospel. Away, therefore, with all doubts.

It was especially necessary to establish the divinity of Christ, of which the resurrection is an incontestible proof; therefore it was the whole Sanhedrim used every effort to disprove this fact. And the hatred of the Pharisees and the incredulity of the apostles which secured certain obstacles to the acknowledgment of this great truth were the very means by which it was most firmly established that He was Lord of all. It also assures us that as our Saviour Christ is able to do all in us and for us which He engages to do. "Who," says the apostle, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is

risen again." Christ, by His resurrection, dissolved the tyranny of death and with Himself raised up the whole world. "God," says St. Paul, "hath quickened us together with Christ, and raised us together with Him."

The resurrection of Christ is thus a demonstration of the immortality of the soul which it brings to life and light, to palpable certainty;—of eternal life, which is treasured up in Him as our Head and Surety;—of the resurrection of the body, for He was the first-born from the dead—the first fruits of them who sleep—our forerunner—and the captain of life. God who raised the Lord shall also raise us by His power, for if we have been planted with Christ, in the likeness of His death, we shall also grow up in the likeness of His resurrection, for He is God both of the dead and the living. The resurrection is also a demonstration of the certainty of a future judgment. God hath appointed Him a day wherein 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 raised Him from the dead. All power is now given Him in heaven and on earth that He might exercise supreme authority over all. For as He died so He was also resurrected that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves but unto Him.



The  
Mutual Obligation of a Minister  
and His People.

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Delivered First in the Second Presbyterian Church,  
Charleston, S. C., on Assuming the Pastoral  
Charge of that Congregation.

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BY  
THE REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

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1834





## THE MUTUAL OBLIGATION OF A MINISTER AND HIS PEOPLE.

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HEB. 13: 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves.

This command is addressed by the apostle to those christian churches or communities for whom the epistle was designed.\* It is not, therefore, the language of a pastor to his people, but of God Himself to all christian churches, through His inspired Servant. And since we have now to become united, as a minister and his flock, the consideration of our reciprocal obligations as here inculcated will profitably occupy our attention.

Two questions of importance present themselves in determining the import of this solemn command of heaven:

1. What is implied in the terms, "have the rule over you?" and 2. What is involved in that obedience and submission which is to be rendered to such rulers?

Let us attend to the meaning of this important phraseology, the real import of which carries with it such momentous responsibility.

The words rendered, *obey* and *submit*, are of nearly equivalent force, their repetition being designed to strengthen the impression and enforce more strongly the requirement. The plain meaning of the words leads us necessarily to the conclusion that the obedience here demanded is not absolute or passive obedience. It is not the result of arbitrary command, but that which flows from the heart as the effect of moral suasion. It is a voluntary and intelligent obedience founded upon conviction, produced by argument and sustained by exhortation. It is the obedience of a disciple to his teacher—the submission to those duties the importance and necessity of which the word has been made certain. "Obey them that have the rule over you;" that is, yield to their admonitions, follow their precepts, "and submit yourselves;" that is, do this diligently, promptly,

\*See v. 24.

earnestly and without delay. Obey their precepts, embrace their doctrines, and follow their example.\*

The literal meaning of the words, translated, "have the rule over you," is, "who lead the way, who precede, who are set over and appointed to oversee, who guide, direct and instruct, to whom is delegated by God the power of regulating His church, and with whom rests the final earthly decision of the interests of His kingdom." There is unquestionably implied in this term, "*rule*," authority and power, but it is a power derived from the gospel, and limited by the gospel. It is, therefore, subordinate to the authority of Christ and is in no degree binding except as it is sanctioned by the word of His testimony. There is no power in man to alter or amend the constituted laws of heaven, to bind upon the conscience any burden God has not bound, or to enforce any requirement as an admission to the church and privileges of Christ not expressly revealed by the Saviour Himself. There is no legislative authority in the ministry of the Lord Jesus to alter or amend, to increase or diminish, the terms of His discipleship and the rules of His discipline and government. The Bible is the final—unalterable—and perfect standard of right and wrong, of duty and obedience, and beyond it there can be no dictation, no arbitrary or despotic determination of the mind or will of God.

According to the rules of the gospel ministers are empowered to *govern*. In union with others appointed they are entrusted with the executive authority of the church on earth—and all appointments made by them, all regulations enforced by them, and all duties inculcated by them, in accordance with Christ's will and word, and with the best interests of the people, are of certain obligation and are violated at the fearful risk of the offender.† Their word is, however, their only weapon, their force of argument all the constraint they apply, and discipline all the penalty they enforce.‡ But if these are

\*See on the meaning of the words *πείθεσθε* and *ὑπείκετε* Schlinsney Lex., Bretschneider, Leigh's Crit. Sac., Scapula Gr. Lex., Parkhurst Gr. Lex. and Bloomfield.

†Quote Pierce, pp. 89 and 95.

‡See Banow *in loco*.

according to the law of the testimony of heaven, then whatsoever obey Him on earth shall be bound in heaven.‡

For they watch for your souls, sedulously, sleeplessly, cautiously, and attentively following you in your wanderings as the shepherd tends his flock. As, therefore, the object of their whole lives and the great end of their office is the salvation of the soul, all power and authority entrusted to them must be that which is connected with the soul, and consequently not physical or bodily, but moral.

This obedience is enforced by the consideration that those who watch over you are responsible for the discharge of obligations which depend eventually on your co-operation, and which are as much connected with *your* interests as *theirs*.

By "RULERS," therefore, in this passage are meant the ministers of Christ and those associated with them, and who, in accordance with the will of Christ, are officially and voluntarily appointed over a particular church; by "RULING" is meant that responsibility, authority, and power delegated to them by Christ and by His people in the name of Christ;—and by "OBEDIENCE" is meant that reciprocal obligation to yield to their spiritual administration, under which those are laid who receive them as their spiritual guides.

It is of importance to remark that in this passage there is no shadow of foundation for the doctrine of that church which would deduce from it the supreme and unquestionable authority of a pope or council over the private members of the church. Neither is there in it any evidence to support the dogma which would assert the paramount authority of a bishop over what are called the inferior clergy, or the right of any bench of clergy to order and administer the affairs of Christ's church independently of and without the concurrence of the laity.

The great design of this portion of God's Word is to make a full exhibition of the work of the ministry in its relation to God and to His people. And the consideration of this subject

‡See on meaning of word ἡγουμένων Pierce's Texts of Scripture and the Lexicons.

is, therefore, of peculiar importance and propriety on this solemn and interesting occasion.

We have here then an inspired announcement of the great object and design of the christian ministry.

This christian ministry is not of the earth, earthly. The world is the sphere of its labours, and men the subjects upon whom it expends its efforts—but in its origin and its tendency is of the heaven, heavenly.

The christian ministry regards not the body, but the soul—for while the outward man perishes, the inward man may increase day by day. In the deep waters of tribulation there may be joy and rejoicing, and under the most wretched bondage there may be possessed the highest, noblest and purest freedom. In its view, therefore, as in that of heaven, the rich and the poor, the weak and the mighty, the bond and the free, are the same, seeing there is no respect of persons with God.

The christian ministry has no connection with the fashions of this world, which like it are passing away. It knows no country but a fallen, ruined world, no limits but the boundary of sin's desolating wretchedness, no ties but those of human-kind, and no claims but those of the poor, the miserable, the wretched, the blind and the naked. It recognizes no political distinctions, for these result from that very alienation from God which it is its chief design to subdue. Nation and kindred and tribe and people are terms merged by it into that common denomination by which all are characterized as sinners against heaven and rebels against the most High God. The field of the christian ministry is emphatically *the world*, since the authority by which it was instituted and is now supported has commissioned it to "go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

The honour, the dignity, the official station, and the titled power "which come from man," and which arise from our present relations as members of society, lie far beneath the celestial aspirations of those who are the ambassadors of Christ, sent by Him to command all men, everywhere, to repent and believe the gospel. For while it is true that this glorious gospel has the promise of the life that is to come—



though its ways are ways of pleasantness and all its paths are peace—though length of days is in her right hand and in her left wisdom and honour—though peace and prosperity, civilization and happiness follow in her train—yet these are but the scattered blessings which fall around her as she leads onward to glory, honour and a blessed immortality.

Neither is the cultivation and enlargement of the mind the design of the ministry of Christ. True, it addresses itself to man's understanding in order that it may awaken his passions and engage his heart to righteousness, holiness and truth as his most "reasonable service" and his most ennobling dignity; but while traversing the region of fancy, the garden of imagination, and the wide domain of reason, it is only that it may cull flowers and gather fruits which shall attract the wanderer home to God. While leading the listening mind through these delightful scenes, it is that some chord may be touched which shall vibrate to the voice of warning, or that some notes may be sounded which shall awaken in the long lost exile the fond remembrance and the anxious desire for his fatherland. The heart of the preacher burns, his mind labors, and his whole soul agonizes, until the eye of his hearer can be averted from earth and fixed in concentrated attention upon God, eternity, and eternal retributions.

It is true the minister must "find out acceptable words," and "give himself to reading," that he may "rightly divide the word of truth, giving to each man his portion in due season," and "that thus his profiting may appear unto all." Yet he is to "commend himself to every man's conscience," not by "the enticing words of man's wisdom," but "by manifestation of the truth in the sight of God." He must "seek a good report of those that are without," but it is by speaking the things "which become sound doctrine"—in all things "showing himself a pattern of good works;" and thus "holding fast the faithful word that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

Eloquence will *move*, but it cannot *change*, the heart. Learning will convince, but it cannot rectify, a disordered understanding. These form the weapons by which "the wisdom of the world" subdues to its purposes the reluctant mind.

But the preacher is not a philosopher, or a moralist,—he is a “minister of Christ.” “The weapons of his warfare are not carnal, but spiritual,” and though “foolishness” in the estimation of men, they are “the power of God unto the salvation of the soul.” “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe; for the Jews still require a sign and the Greeks still seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified unto such Jews a stumbling block, and unto such Greeks foolishness, but under them who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God—which Saviour we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Christ died not to enlighten, but to save the soul; and the gospel regards men not as intellectual amateurs, but as sinners before God. The salvation of the soul—its redemption from the curse of the law—its deliverance from the wrath of God—its exaltation to the blessedness of heaven—this is the first and this is the last end of the ministers of Christ, for “they watch for souls.”

And in what way are they thus to watch? They are to watch as shepherds, upon whom it is enjoined to “feed Christ’s sheep,” and to go out into the wilderness and “seek those that are lost,”—sleeplessly guarding them,—going before and leading them into the greenest pastures, warning them in all time of danger, and plucking them out of the hands of all who would hurt or destroy.

They are to watch as “stewards of the manifold gifts of God,” and must, therefore, be “willing to communicate,” “apt to teach,” “spending and being spent for Christ.”

They must watch as fathers, providing for the spiritual necessities of the children, comforting the poor in spirit, edifying the weak, instructing the ignorant, warning the thoughtless and reproving the disobedient.

They must watch as ambassadors, speaking in the name of Him who sent them, “with all authority,” “declaring the whole

counsel of God," and proclaiming the day of coming retribution.

They must watch well HOW they preach, and WHAT they preach—the words they speak, the doctrines they inculcate, the duties they enjoin, the ordinances they administer, the laws they enforce, and the censures they inflict.

To sum up all, they must watch, in humility, in the felt consciousness of their utter insufficiency, in prayer, in dependence upon God, in faith, in courage, and in zeal.

We now proceed to remark that in this work ministers act under the highest authority, "for they watch for souls as they who must give an account."

Accountability implies trust. The nature and extent of that trust, and the character of him by whom it is given, measure the accountability. By whom then is the minister entrusted with his office?

Not assuredly by *man*, and therefore is its honour not to be adjudged by man, nor its accountabilities felt towards man, nor its administration, influenced by the fear or the favor of man. No; the minister of Christ is commissioned BY CHRIST, with whom he is a co-worker,—to whom he is responsible,—by whom he shall be rewarded, and whose glory he partakes. By Christ, the King and Head of Zion, he is put in trust with nothing less precious and priceless than the glory of God, the cause of Christ, the triumph of the gospel, the overthrow of sin, and the salvation of souls.

The office, dignity and authority of a minister, as they are not created so neither can they be destroyed by man. They depend not on man's uncertain will; they live not on his favor, nor are they lost by his caprice. They cease not even with time itself. Death does not destroy their influence, and their results go with him into eternity and shall there characterize his destiny for glory or for shame, for "*he must give account.*"

The minister must give account of himself and of his hearers—of the manner in which *he* discharges his duties and in which *they* fulfill theirs. His own heart, his closet, his study, his life and conversation, his public ministrations, and the discipline of the church, must all come into review before an holy and impartial tribunal.

Your treatment of him as Christ's ambassador,—your reception of his message as sent by God,—your co-operation with his plans for the conversion of others and the edification or revival of your own heart,—the manner in which you attend upon the house of God, listen to the word of instruction, obey its precepts, and enter upon those duties necessary to the propriety of the church and the cause of Christ, must also appear in judgment before God that impartial justice may weigh the balance.

This solemn reckoning of your minister's labors and of your conduct must be made to Christ, and to God, in the presence of an assembled universe, and upon it will depend the decision of the awful question: "Shall he be saved and his people perish; shall their blood be upon his soul or upon their own; or shall they both rejoice together in continued and eternal fellowship?"

Such a review, as far as it now can be done, should be made daily in the retirement of the heart before Him who seeth in secret and who will openly decide, that guidance may be received and strength imparted for future efforts. Your relation, therefore, brethren, to the minister of the Gospel is not transient. It, too, outlives the world in which you now abide, and will be found lasting as immortality.

If by your neglect of his ministrations, your indifference to his entreaties, your scornful rejection of his warning, your proud resistance to his commands, your absence from the appointed assemblies of the church, your unwillingness to co-operate in the promotion of every good work—if in any such way you cause the minister of Christ to make this account with grief and not with joy—remember it will be unprofitable for you. The original word is here very expressive. According to Danaus it is best translated by the proverb "it will not quit the cost;"\* that is, you will gain nothing, literally you will lose the pension or reward, which, by obedience and devotedness, you might have secured.† Such conduct, therefore, though it may appear to promote your worldly interests, though it seem

\*See in Leigh's Crit. Sacr. and in Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon.

†See origin of *χλυσιτελής* in Scapula Gr. Lex.

to gain time and opportunity for increasing in wealth, advancing in honor, or enjoying the comforts and pleasures of life, will be found at last altogether profitless, highly dangerous and extremely wicked.

We have entered, therefore, upon a relation which has reference to eternity. Viewed in the light of the temporal interests and the outward prosperity of this church and congregation it is of the highest importance; but in its bearing upon the salvation of your souls, and the character of this congregation in the day of judgment, this interest becomes overwhelming. No connection could be entered into so solemn, so sacred as this. Other engagements regard the body, this the soul; others look out upon time, this upon time and that period when time shall be no more;—others cease with the circumstances which gave them birth, this shall remain unchanged when all such circumstances have for ever passed away; others may be terminated and the parties remain the same, the effects of this engagement can be determined only at the bar of God. We may continue together a long or a shorter time. Months, or years may characterize the duration of our bonds. We may be severed by death, or by the call of Providence summoning us to other and different locations; but we can never be delivered from the responsibilities of this hour. We must meet each other as Pastor and people when with all flesh we shall stand at the judgment seat of Christ. God grant that your pastor, then, may be your rejoicing and you his in the day of the Lord Jesus.

This union affects us mutually. By your call he becomes your pastor, and you have become my people. By calling me you have committed yourselves. Before God and man, and in dependence upon divine grace I have pledged to instruct, and you that you will hear instruction; I that I will warn, and you that you will receive the warning; I that I will study God's will, and you that you will obey all God's commandments. Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel! and how shall ye escape if ye neglect or reject the great salvation! If I break one of the least of Christ's ordained commandments and teach you so I shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but if I do and teach according to this law and testimony and ye obey not, "of



how much sorer punishment shall ye be thought worthy." It is an awful possibility that after preaching to you the Gospel I should be myself a castaway; but oh, it is also too possible that from the full enjoyment of that Gospel some of you shall be cast into the damnation of hell. "Who is sufficient for these things?" Shall we not in humility, in penitence, in faith, and in strong affection, bear one another's burdens, pray one for another, be fellow helpers of each other, and thus hand in hand go forward in every good work, rejoicing in hope of the glory of God?

From these sacred obligations into which we have thus entered, we can by no possibility be freed. If unsuitably united we may agree to part, but of this partnership in its interminating consequences there can be no dissolution. God alone in the judgment of the great day can make a distribution, and give to each his portion. Christians, you were already under obligation to live for God, to His glory and the advancement of His cause by virtue of your solemn profession and of many former engagements. But you have now called on God to witness the renewed acknowledgment that you are to live not for yourselves but for Him, who bought you by receiving me as your minister. In like manner, fellow sinners, it was already your duty as you valued your immortal interests, and the favor or the wrath of heaven, to come up to the house of God and obey what the Lord there said unto your souls. But by concurring in this arrangement you now make it my solemn duty to warn, reprove and rebuke you, and you now put to your seal that it is your equal obligation to attend and hear and do. For the manner in which you shall fulfil this avowed responsibility you must in eternity answer. There is resting upon you not merely the original obligation of creatureship; not merely the innate consciousness of untransferable accountability; not merely the positive authority of God's immutable declarations; not merely the obligation of that christian education by which you were trained for God; but there is added to them all this voluntary recognition of the claims of heaven.

This obligation respects the doctrine, the ordinances, the services and the discipline of this church. Nor reviling any

of these doctrines, by keeping away from any of these ordinances, by absenting yourself from any of these services, not proved unscriptural or unauthorized by the word of God, by opposing this discipline or encouraging its neglect, you bring judgment upon your own souls.

In coming to this church recollect you come on the business of your *souls*. The promotion of your everlasting welfare is the one great design of the instituted church of Christ. For this did God become man, for this as man did He die, for this did He ascend to the right hand of the Father that He might ever live as a Saviour and an Intercessor; for this has He given us the Sabbath, and the ministry and the house of prayer; for this has He erected the throne of grace and there promised to hear our prayers and listen to our praises and manifest Himself in the greatness of His power as an Almighty Redeemer. "This, then, is none other than the house of God and the gate of heaven." "The Lord is in this holy tabernacle and holiness becometh His house for ever." "Woe unto them who draw nigh unto God with their mouths, and honour Him with their lips, while their heart is far from Him." "Woe unto those who come up to the house of God to be seen of men!" "For thus saith the Lord God of hosts. For as much as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me but have removed their heart far from me and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Behold it is written before me, I will not keep silence but will recompense, even recompense to their bosom." Take heed, then, brethren, unto your own souls "that ye come not together for the worse," rather than the better, twining the mercy of God into a savour of death rather than a savour of life. What shall ye answer God when He taketh away your soul, when hypocrites shall perish and those who behave sinfully in Zion shall be made afraid? How can you then dwell with devouring flames; how can you lie down in everlasting burnings?

In attending upon the services of this sanctuary forget not also that you listen to one who *must* watch for your souls, who *must* give account of the faithfulness of his preaching and the manner of your hearing, who speaks by commandment from heaven, who is clothed with the delegated authority of Christ,

and whose words therefore are life or death to the believing or rejecting heart.

“Hear, then, the word of the Lord, ye rulers, give ear unto the law of your God, ye people, not that we are sufficient of ourselves, to think or speak any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God who also can make us able ministers of the New Testament. Let no man then despise us, for he that despiseth despiseth not man but God who also hath promised His Holy Spirit.”

The results of this day's connection must be soon settled. Whether I shall be to you the messenger of salvation or the means of hardening your heart into a final resistance of the Gospel, will be very speedily made manifest. Your character is undergoing a daily transformation. You cannot abide the same to day that you were yesterday. The appeals of the Gospel cannot be without effect, and if you will not obey its voice at once, as your last remaining hope, then are your eyes fast closing so that they shall not see, and your ears that they will not hear, and your heart hardening that it cannot feel. Obduracy of mind, enmity to the truth, blindness of soul, open infidelity, or death, must be the issue of that careless, trifling and hesitating course which too many of you are perhaps pursuing.

In the vision of a trembling imagination I fancy before me many who now listen with wakeful interest, who now know and feel their sinfulness, their need of Christ and their duty to embrace Him,—the open enemies of the truth, the avowed opponents of christianity, the abandoned blasphemies of their God, the crucifiers of the Lord that bought them, delivered over to Satan forsaken of God and urging on in bold effrontery to the challenged retributions of an awful eternity.

That final account must be soon rendered. Few are the days of the years that remain, brethren, to any of us. A little while and those who are now assembled within these walls shall have been gathered one by one around the Judge of the whole earth. This world shall have vanished, all earthly distinctions be forgotten, the honours, the riches and the pleasures of time unremembered, present occupations lost in their utter insignificance, and all that now engrosses our desires and inter-

ests the heart brought to view only as they affect our character in a world where it will be for ever unalterable.

*There* are many who were accustomed to worship in God's earthly sanctuary. *There* are those whose remains moulder in the dust of many a surrounding graveyard. There, too, are those who once stood forth as we now stand, the heralds of an Almighty Saviour—who were clothed with the robes of ministerial office,—who laboured among you in word and doctrine, and who are awaiting your appearance at the Bar of God that you may all together stand before Him. And *there*, too, ere long will be *he* who now addresses you,—he who is now to be placed over you in the Lord,—and you who are now addressed.

Brethren, the time is short—the hour approacheth, the bridegroom cometh, the veil of time is opening and that dread and awful scene is bursting upon our view. Are you ready? Are your loins girded about you? Are your lamps trimmed and burning? Are you clothed with the whole armour of God? Are you living to Christ? Are you consecrated to His service? Are you faithful to your vows, to your heart, to your closet, to your Bible, to your church, to the world? Are you living to die—and dying while you live so that when you die you may die in the Lord?

Very soon these will be the only questions which can interest your mind: Awake then! Awake thou that sleepeth! Prepare to meet thy God!





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IN MEMORIAM

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Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D.



[*"Charleston Daily News and Courier," November 4th, 1873.*]

A TRIBUTE  
IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF REV. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D.

I.

A noble mission is fulfilled,  
The dear, brave, faithful lips are stilled,  
The great heart's dumb;  
The busy hands find rest at last,  
The work is o'er, the conflict's past,  
And peace is come!

II.

Gazing down on that quiet face,  
Did not your loving instincts trace  
Chis'ling divine?—  
The scripture of a hidden gain?—  
The mystic aftermath of pain?—  
God's solemn sign.

III.

That we might see in some dim wise,  
How underneath this mortal guise  
The soul grew fair—  
The stronger virtues grandly blent,  
With child-like love and meek content,  
In concord rare!

IV.

Those white still lips beneath the sod  
Many a soul have won for God;  
And who may tell  
How many hearts that patient pen  
Has blessed, and soothed, and cheered again  
At Baca's "Well?"

V.

Loving seeds by the wayside sown,  
Many an erring one has borne  
To Jesus' feet.  
And in our homes his words of prayer  
Have made the sorrow seem less drear,  
The joys more sweet.

VI.

Then, when the Master's chast'ning hand  
Had smitten with the sore command,  
The brief—"Be still!"  
With steadfast faith and courage high,  
The cross was borne, the work laid by,  
At Jesus' will.

## VII

So day by day the faint feet trod  
The path that led him nearer God,  
And nearer "Home;"  
And then his footsteps touched the brim  
Of Jordan's waters chill and dim  
With dashing foam.

## VIII.

A solemn peace was on the face,  
The pale lips smiled with saintly grace,  
And then grew still;  
And sunset's parting glory shone  
On features white as graven stone,  
And deathly chill.

## IX.

The "faith" was "kept," the "course" was run,  
The final vict'ry grandly won;  
And now the King  
Doth grace that brow, all seamed with scars,  
With wondrous "crown" of *many stars*,  
While anthems ring!

CHARLESTON, October 20, 1873.

# The Christian Warrior Crowned.

## A DISCOURSE

Commemorative of the Life, Character and Labors  
of the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., Delivered  
in the Second Presbyterian Church, Charles-  
ton, S. C., December 14th, 1873,

BY THE  
REV. G. R. BRACKETT, PASTOR.

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*Printed at Request of the Congregation.*



[*New York Observer*, April 16, 1874.]

"The Christian Warrior Crowned," is the title of a Discourse commemorative of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Smyth, for many years well and widely known pastor of the Second Presbyterian church of Charleston, S. C., who died at his home in Charleston, August 20, 1873. He was born at Belfast, June 14, 1808, and educated in part at Belfast College, prosecuting his theological course at Highbury College, London, and completing it after coming to this country in 1830, at Princeton Seminary. For more than forty years he continued in his pastoral relations to the same people, and acquired a reputation for scholarship, ability and fidelity to the gospel which extended over the land. The author of the discourse, Dr. Smyth's successor, the Rev. G. R. Brackett, pays a fitting tribute to the character, worth and labors of one whose name fills a large place in the Presbyterian history of the Southern States.

## THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR CROWNED.

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2 Tim. 4:17: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

"I do not fear to affirm," says Cousin, "that the two pursuits which most promote the development of great individualities are war and philosophy. \* \* \* Nowhere do the masses identify themselves more visibly with great men than on the field of battle; but if the identification is more brilliant in the great captain, it is more intimate and profound in the great philosopher." We are assembled to-night, dear friends, to contemplate the character and life of a Christian warrior, and a Christian philosopher. Great in action and great in thought, he fought bravely and successfully the "good fight of faith," and, in the solitude of the closet, ceased not, day and night, to gather the precious seed, and sow the golden harvest of philosophic wisdom.

The name of Dr. Smyth belongs as much to history as to biography; as much to posterity as to the generation he so valiantly and faithfully served. He so identified himself with the age in which he lived, he sympathized so heartily and so profoundly with the cause of truth in every department, and the cause of humanity in every aspect, that justice to his memory would require us to ascend above the level plain of his daily life, above the lower summits of his ordinary ministry, to some historical height, overlooking the world-wide sphere of his influence. My brief and limited acquaintance with the private character, the protracted ministry, and published writings of your late greatly beloved and venerated pastor oppresses me with a profound sense of my inability to do ample justice to his character and labors, and present you with a worthy memorial. To produce the lineaments of youth, and the countenance and form of manhood from the wreck of disease and the infirmities of age, is a rare attainment of art. It is still a cherished hope that some master hand may be found to fill up this dim and defective outline, and present the world

with a complete and satisfactory portraiture of this remarkable man.

If, in sketching the more prominent features of his mental and moral character, the ardent love of the artist should seem to supply the lack of details by too great brilliancy of coloring, no apology will be required by those who enjoyed a personal acquaintance with the original, in his prime. We are disturbed by no fears that even the partialities of friendship will betray our pencil into an exaggerated representation of those virtues and deeds which the "finger of truth has already drawn upon your hearts." We may do more honor to the memory of a great and good man by glorifying the Master who so royally endowed him with the gifts of nature and of grace, than by burning idolatrous incense at the shrine of human merit.

The Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., was born in Belfast, Ireland, on the 14th of June, 1808, of English and Scotch parentage. He was reared upon Irish soil in an eventful period of her history. A philosophic mind might trace with interest and profit the influences of four nationalities in the formation of character, and show how the roots that drew their original life from the blood of two races, germinated and grew in the soil and climate of a third, and in the free, bracing atmosphere of a fourth, expanded into summer bloom, and autumnal ripeness. And how this interest would increase at every step, as the analyst discovered that he was tracing the history of a life that absorbed every element of nourishment from every soil and clime into its own intellectual and moral character.

His mother is described as a woman of superior intelligence and attainments, of deep and earnest piety, whose highest aspiration was to train her children in the fear and love of God. He ever cherished her memory with filial tenderness, and always mentioned her name with the utmost reverence. Alluding to her maternal kindness and care for him during the critical season of his youth, he wrote in his private journal as follows: "Most blessed mother, could my thanks now reach thee, in thy bright throne above, I should here, amid these falling tears, pour forth the grateful acknowledgements of thy long cherished son. I love to think of thee, my mother, of thy illimitable, inexhaustible love."

The youngest of six sons, he was of so frail a constitution that no one expected him to live beyond the period of childhood. But he was a "chosen vessel." Consecrated from his birth to the Gospel ministry, his pious mother committed her treasure to a covenant-keeping God. Her strong faith and earnest prayers were interwoven with that sovereign and gracious Providence that marvellously preserved him, notwithstanding the continuance of his delicate health, and girded him for his extraordinary mission.

His excessive fondness for books was early developed. When his youthful companions were enjoying the diverting sports of boyhood, he might have been found, in his favorite cloister, embosomed in the dense foliage of a tree, poring over the pages of a juvenile book, and often "shedding his sympathetic tears over DeFoe's inimitable story." Robinson Crusoe, he remarked, was to his credulous youth, a true history, and, in later life, he loved to speak of it as one of his classics. The influence of fairy tales and ghost stories upon his imagination was so "deep and ineffaceable, that neither philosophy nor religion could wholly eradicate it."

It is interesting and instructive to observe how those whom God elects to be leaders and champions in His cause are trained in the school of adversity, and called to bear the yoke of discipline in their youth. At the early age of seventeen, the young and enthusiastic student was interrupted in his studies by one of those great commercial disasters which sweep away the fortunes of the most wealthy in a day, and which reduced his father from the easy and independent circumstances of affluence to comparative poverty. Feeling that he was now thrown upon his own resources, and also called to aid his parents in bearing the burden of their misfortunes, he resolved to accept a profitable business offer, and exchange the academy for the counting house. But with a strength of will and firmness of purpose equal to her Christian faith and hope, his heroic mother determined that the fond expectations she had planted in so promising a soil should not be suddenly blighted by the untimely frosts of misfortune. She would labor with her own hands and her noble boy should pursue his studies.

He, accordingly, entered the Institute at Belfast, which was then connected with what is now the Queen's College, as a preparatory or high school. His academical career was bright with glowing prophecies of his future eminence. The love of books was the strongest passion of his nature, and the acquisition of knowledge his highest ambition. It is not surprising that, with a mind so early trained by habits of close and protracted application, and so richly nourished by various and extensive reading, he should have been prominent among his fellow-students, and borne off a prize at every examination.

In reviewing his early, youthful experience, he remarked: "This period of life is regarded generally happy. I am persuaded that it is only so comparatively; and, when viewed retrospectively, my experience testifies that it is a troubled dream, a mingled scene of joy and sorrow, of hopes and fears, of delights and disconsolations, of boisterous mirth and gloomy sadness. Youth, to me, was a wild and feverish romance. It was the poetry of life, only because it was full of the most tragic incidents, and convulsed by tempestuous and whirlwind passions."

So intense was his love of study at this period, that he looked forward to every academical term with sorrowful regret. Vacation was a dreary interval, during which he was to be deprived of his favorite pursuit, which constituted for him the chief charm and privilege of existence. Speaking of his vacation days, he said: "I lingered behind the racing throng hurrying homeward, as if fearful of losing a moment of the precious season. I have felt a most unaccountable sickness, of a most painful kind, and I have walked along, as in sadness, even when carrying an armful of prizes."

In 1827, at the age of nineteen, he became a student at Belfast College. Exhibiting here the same avarice of knowledge, and the same indefatigable industry in his preparations for the classroom, he maintained his relative position, as *primus inter pares*; and, winning prizes in every branch of study, his superior scholarship was acknowledged by his entire class of nearly a hundred students, who, by their unanimous suffrage, awarded to him the highest prize.



It was within these classic walls that, under the private instructions of the famous tragedian, Sheridan Knowles, he began to develop those powers of elocution, which afterward give him a place among the princes of pulpit oratory.

During his senior year, his religious impressions, which had been early developed and always lively, were, by the effectual grace of God, ripened into deep, settled convictions. Knowing his strong self-will and independent spirit, we are prepared for the statement that he did not find peace in believing until after a long and bitter struggle with his carnal nature.

The exercises which the soul undergoes in this great spiritual change undoubtedly exert a decided influence over the subsequent life. The conversion of young Smyth seemed to have been ordered with reference to the sphere of eminent usefulness for which the Providence of God was training him. Through darkness, doubt and conflict, he emerges into the serene light of the Gospel, with decided, unequivocal views of the truth, prepared, as a good soldier, to follow his leader with no hesitating or faltering step.

He was twenty-one years of age when he made a public profession of his faith in Christ. He became at once an active, zealous member of the church, and an earnest Sabbath school teacher.

It was in a Sabbath school that he made his first public prayer. His father was an elder for many years in the Presbyterian Church, of which Dr. Samuel Hanna (father of Dr. Wm. Hanna) was pastor. "The Presbyterian Church, at this time," he writes, "was sadly degenerated, both in doctrine and discipline, and the erection of an independent church on principles of Evangelical purity, was received with favor. In this church I was brought up."

He was now prepared and graciously inclined to fulfil the desire cherished from childhood and devote himself, with all his talents and acquisitions to the sacred calling to which his pious mother had consecrated him. He prosecuted his theological studies at Highbury College, in London. Here, to quote his own emphatic language, his "appetite for books became rapacious," to procure which he would undergo the most painful self-denials, sacrificing his comfort, in the severest incle-

mency of winter, bartering his very food and fuel for his coveted treasures.

In addition to his theological studies, he attended a course of scientific lectures in London, "read the higher classics, and roamed at will through the tomes of learned antiquity." But his feeble constitution began to relax under the constant, unremitting strain of exhausting study. He believed that he was sinking into a rapid decline. He afterwards wrote, however, that it was probably "no more than the exhaustion resulting to a feeble constitution from excessive habits of intense study, and an enthusiastic vehemence and endeavor, which sought to read everything, study everything, and accomplish at all hazards what I determined to undertake."

All the bright hopes he had cherished of entering the Gospel ministry seemed suddenly to wither, with all their summer bloom, in the wintry atmosphere of disappointment. At this painful crisis his parents were preparing to remove to America, where the most of their children were already settled. Compelled to relinquish his studies, he was the more readily persuaded to quit his native land, and follow the guiding hand of Providence across the seas to the shores of the New World. This was his second lesson of discipline in the school of adversity. The shadow of the cross fell darkly upon him as he bowed his lofty, ambitious spirit under this crushing trial and calmly submitted to the sovereign will of the Father.

He embarked with his parents for New York in August, 1830. Immediately upon his arrival he joined his eldest brother in Patterson, N. J.

He connected himself with the Presbyterian Church of which Dr. Fisher was pastor, and by whom he was introduced to the Newark Presbytery. Being taken under their care as a candidate for the ministry, he was sent by them to Princeton Seminary. He entered the senior class, and before graduating received an invitation to the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston, S. C. This church having applied to Princeton for a young man to supply their vacant pulpit, the letter was placed in the hands of Mr. Smyth, and with the advice of and earnest solicitation of his professors, Dr. Archibald Alexander and Dr. Samuel Miller, the invitation was accepted, and in November,

1831, he entered upon his ministerial labors in Charleston, S. C.

During his seminary year at Princeton he supplied, for about two months, the pulpit of Dr. Phillips, of New York, whose church building was then located on Wall Street, now a part of Jersey City. With this exception, we may say that the long and useful ministry of Dr. Smyth began and ended with the favored people of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charleston.

Preaching with great acceptance for six months, he received a formal call to become your pastor, which he gave the preference over several other calls from important fields. To use his own words: "I came here a perfect stranger, my only introduction being a letter from my professors to the president of the Church Corporation, certifying that I was the individual recommended by them." In one of his anniversary sermons he says: "It was in April, 1832, that we first became acquainted as minister and people. Very wonderful were the leadings of Providence, by which I was brought to this country, and to this part of it, and by which you were led to extend to me an invitation to supply your pulpit for a year. In August, 1832, you presented to me a permanent call to the pastoral charge of this church. This, in pursuance of a long-established conviction that to the happiness of such a connection, intimate acquaintance with each other is required. I long retained, and left open to any change in your views. Having rendered this building everything I could desire, and proportioned it to my feebleness of body, I cordially accepted your unanimous call, and was installed by the Charleston Union Presbytery, on Sabbath evening, December 29th, 1834."

In 1832 he was married to the eldest daughter of Mr. James Adger, of Charleston, S. C. By this union he had nine children, six of whom—three sons and three daughters—survive him. The bonds of this happy alliance were sundered after a lapse of forty years, by his decease; but not until after he had enjoyed the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing his whole family bound together by those higher and holier ties that can never be broken, of seeing all his children consecrating themselves to Christ, under his own ministry, and becoming active and useful members of his own church, two of the eldest sons

occupying official positions—the one, a ruling elder; the other, a deacon.

We interrupt our narrative at this point, as the thread of biography is so interwoven with his public life, that to consider each separately would do violence to both, and involve needless repetition.

As the ministry was his chosen vocation, to which his life and talents were supremely devoted, it will be proper, in analyzing his powers, and estimating his influence upon the generation he served, to contemplate him, in the first place, as an ambassador of Christ, in his *ministerial* and *pastoral* labors.

Dr. Smyth was in an eminent degree furnished by nature and mental training with those qualities which render the ministry brilliant and successful. His erect attitude, lofty carriage, and dignified bearing, imparted to his person a prepossessing appearance, which at once attracted and challenged attention, and made the impression upon his audience that they were in the presence of a princely orator, in whom intelligence, manliness, self-reliance and courage were already foreshadowing the surpassing eloquence that was about to flow from his lips. To borrow the elegant language of one who knew him thoroughly: "Nature designed him to be an orator, and endowed him splendidly for that office. But 'coveting earnestly' what appeared to him 'the best gift,' he always seemed to aspire to speak to future generations, rather than to the present; preferring to the triumphs of an almost matchless eloquence, the toils and pains of authorship." Though trained in the highest school of eloquence, his oratory was not of a professional or mechanical type. He had learned to modulate his tones to suit every variation of feeling, but without the stiffness and formality, which so often attend a carefully cultivated articulation. This dry precision was, indeed, impossible to one of such fervid imagination and genial sympathies.

Dr. Smyth was gifted with a vigorous and brilliant imagination, a quick, poetic sensibility. An ardent admirer, and a devoted lover of nature, he had a keen perception of the beautiful, the grand, the picturesque, in all her varying aspects. It has excited our wonder that he should have found so much in

our tame and monotonous scenery to feed and delight his imagination. But, like the Poet of Rydal Mount, he was

“A lover of the meadows and the woods,  
And mountains; and all that we behold  
From the green earth; of all the mighty world  
Of eye and ear, both what they half create  
And what perceive: well pleased to recognize  
In nature and the language of the sense  
The anchor of his purest thoughts, the nurse,  
The guide, the guardian of his heart, and soul  
Of all his moral being.”

During his vacations, which were usually spent amid the picturesque scenery of Virginia, he almost lived in communion with nature; finding companionship in every flower and tree, wind and wave, cloud and living creature, when cut off from the society of man.

He was accustomed, in his recreations from study, to spend some portion of every day in rural meditation, in the suburbs of Charleston; and, sometimes, for hours, at night, he sat beneath the quiet stars, looking out upon the moonlit sea and listening to its solemn roar. Thus, every object of nature became to him a bosom friend, “social and benevolent,” keeping him pleasant company in his solitary hours, and befriending him in his afflictions, when no human heart could enter the sanctuary of his grief; finding, too,

“Like him who Eden’s garden dressed,  
His maker there to teach his listening heart.”

His capacious memory thus became a gallery of natural imagery, drawn from the various climes he had visited, and from the poets of nature with whom he daily communed. From this inexhaustible storehouse he fed his exuberant imagination, and adorned his sermons with its riches and magnificence. His style could not be described as ornate or florid. Nothing was added for the sake of rhetorical embellishment, or to round a period. But such was his marvellous affluence of diction, his thesaurus of language, and overflowing fulness of ideas, that when the fountains of the great deep of his soul were broken up, and the windows of his mind, like the bursting cisterns of the skies, were opened, his thoughts poured forth like a deluge. The sequacious waves followed one another with a tumultuous rush and unabating flow that must have



oppressed and fatigued the hearer, but for the illuminating splendor of his ever-radiant imagination.

In 1845 he attended the Synod of Indiana, and was invited to preach. "His audience," says a journalist, "were so struck with his profound reasoning, his fervor and energy, his entire freedom from ostentation, and his evident sincerity, that their demonstration of respect and regard were enthusiastic. His co-laborers testified their high gratification by purchasing a large number of his works, and requesting him to publish his sermons." His discourse on the Lord's Supper "was pronounced, by the clergy present, to be the ablest exposition of the text, in point of argument and learning, as one of the most powerful efforts they had ever heard from the pulpit."

Dr. Smyth entered upon his work with a lofty ideal of ministerial excellence, laying down carefully prepared rules for his guidance, and frequently reviewing them with a searching self-examination. He considered it his "great business to be a good and faithful preacher, and his most necessary duty, to fit him for this work, to be a systematic, persevering student." He projected for himself, at the outset, a regular progressive course of reading; and that the cultivation of the imagination might keep pace with his intellectual development, he always had on his table some standard book of poetry, and endeavored to cultivate a taste for general literature. To keep himself from "solicitude and possible disappointment; to gain a self-command and independence equal to any emergency," he kept on hand a stock of prepared sermons and skeletons. Hence he was never embarrassed when called upon suddenly and unexpectedly. This habit explains, too, in part, the wonderful fertility of his ideas, the copiousness and fluency of his language, and his cool self-possession. It could hardly be said of him that he ever spoke without premeditation; for upon what subject did he not profoundly meditate, with the aid of the best authors, and with a marvellously retentive memory, that was a magazine of knowledge, always full, always fresh, and always at his command. His extemporaneous addresses often exhibited the fulness of matter and excellence of style which characterized his most careful preparations.

During the greater part of his ministry his sermons were elaborately composed, and preached from the written manuscript. This greatly interfered with his natural flow of eloquence, and robbed his pulpit of much of that efficiency which comes from the unction of extemporaneous delivery. But he regarded the sacrifice as essential to carry out his ideal of pulpit instruction. "It is easier," he said, "to talk and visit and hunt for popularity than to dig deep in the mine of a thorough and careful research, and thus bring 'beaten oil' into the sanctuary, by which our profiting may, ultimately, if not immediately, appear to all."

It was one of his rules, that he would aim to indoctrinate his people by regular courses of sermons, expounding the whole evangelical system, and "confirming them in their attachment to the faith and order of their own church."

Dr. Smyth was a thorough-going preacher of the old school. The gospel trumpet in his mouth uttered no uncertain sound. The cup of salvation in his hands was not corrupted by the "wine of Sodom," and the "grapes of Gomorrah." The basis of all his preaching was a sound theology of a thoroughly Calvinistic type. He was a deep student of divinity, and drank to the bottom of the original fountains. Augustine, Turretine, Calvin, Howe, Owen, Chamock and Edwards were the giants in whose company he "wrestled against the principalities and power" of error, until he grew muscular in the strife. He bravely resisted the clamor for popular effusions, and sensational preaching. He dared to "declare the whole counsel of God," in precise, categorical, dogmatic statement, in profound doctrinal discussion, and in the systematic elucidation of every article of the Christian faith. Dr. Smyth was a standard-bearer. He was not ashamed of his confession of faith and church catechism, or of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. He labored earnestly to make his people familiar with those distinctive doctrines, which during the ages of theological controversy, and the fires of persecution, crystallized into the grand, clear, concise formulas which seemed to him to embody the whole "truth as it is in Jesus," so far as human generalization can grasp a supernatural revelation in its imperfect deductions, and which seemed to be settled for all time. No one

ever toiled more faithfully and untiringly to transmit this precious inheritance to coming generations.

He believed that the most rational and effective method of preserving sound doctrine was "by bringing himself and his people to relish the true and ancient scriptural and most profitable custom of *expository* preaching." His memoranda of texts and subjects shows how fully he carried out this method, in expounding all the parables and miracles; the life, person, and work of Christ; all the Psalms, and most of the Epistles, particularly the Epistle to the Romans. In commendation of this mode of preaching, he said: "From all that I have been able to learn, it would be the general testimony of my people, that there has been more interest, profit and satisfaction, in my expository discourses, which I delivered extemporaneously, from the use only of a skeleton, than in my written discourses, upon which I expended all my energies."

We should mention, in this connection, as one of Dr. Smyth's distinguishing characteristics, that he was a *controversial* preacher. He was a bold and skillful defender, as well as an able and successful expounder of the truth. While he "held fast the form of sound words," he "contended earnestly for the faith," which he believed had "once been delivered to the saints." He was born a soldier. Like Cyrus, he was girded from his birth, with a martial spirit, and through a discipline of suffering, that gave him a deep, experimental acquaintance with the truth, he was qualified to "endure hardness as a good soldier" of the cross. He would have been a terrible foe, had he espoused the cause of error, and brought all his talent, learning and courage into the field against, instead of for the Christian faith. But grace had laid her hand upon him at his birth, and caused him to be a leader and a champion in the cause of truth. He was armed by nature and by grace with the weapons of warfare, and providentially furnished with an inexhaustible armory, from which he could draw in any emergency. He was never caught without his arms and ammunition, or sleeping on his panoply. The first tocsin of war aroused him, and he was ready to attack or defend, to meet the enemy in the open field, or dislodge him from his secret ambush.

If, therefore, his earlier ministrations were pervaded by a controversial and polemical spirit, it was because he believed the age demanded Christian warriors to defend the evangelical system, especially in its Presbyterian form, from the bold assaults of infidelity, the perversions of its professed friends, and the arrogant assumptions of false pretenders. And if the times made it necessary to lift the voice of stern remonstrance and earnest protest against the invasions of falsehood and heresy, who should obey the summons, but they whom the Master has qualified to lead on the sacramental host to victory? Who, but our military heroes who have the strength to wield the "sword of the Spirit," courage to mount the batteries of the enemy, sagacity to interpret his most subtle manœuverings, and generalship to take command of the whole field. This intrepid and valiant defender of the faith felt that he was only following the cloudy pillar that went before him, and obeying the divine voice that articulately summoned him to "Go forward!" when the camp of Israel were generally faltering in the presence of the mountains and the sea, and the advancing hosts of the enemy. He certainly was instrumental in doing a work, which would not have been done by others; either, because constitutionally averse to warfare; or, too timid and self-distrustful to grapple with a dangerous and formidable foe; or, too indifferent to theological doctrine, to appreciate the importance and sublimity of the contest; or, too indolent in their temperament to contend for truth at all.

But the crowning excellence of this illustrious preacher, the chief inspiration of his eloquent discourses, which charmed away the weariness, that his extreme prolixity would otherwise have occasioned, was his absorbing *love to the Saviour*. The tongue of the preacher was kindled with a live coal from the altar of Calvary. His discourses abounded with doctrinal discussion. They were often controversial, as well as argumentative. They were sometimes scholastic, replete with erudition, laying a severe tax upon the understanding of the hearer; and yet his lecture room was crowded, overflowing, with interested and enthusiastic audiences, to listen to an hour's discussion of the principles of Presbyterianism. It was not the intellect that towered like a mountain, nor the imagination, that shone

like the sun, but the heart, that heaved like the ocean with the love of Jesus—that caught the sympathy of his hearers, and bore them away upon its rolling waves. Christ, and his cross, were all his theme. He presented the doctrine, as the mirror of Christ, and the creed as a breakwater, to roll back the tide of error, that would, if unchecked, sweep away the cross, and its sacrificial victim. He preached Presbyterianism, because he believed that no other polity preserved in its integrity, the Calvinistic system, and no other system does full honor to “Christ and Him crucified.” The cross, he viewed, primarily, as a manifestation of love, rather than justice—love, surmounting the obstacles of law and justice. We have heard him remark, in substance, that justice should form the dark background, and love, the bright foreground of Gospel preaching; that Sinai should stand behind Calvary, and, at least, so far away, that the thunders of the law shall not drown the accents of mercy. He never left the guilty, condemned sinner, at the bar of judgment, or on the brink of hell; but always at the foot of the cross, or at the household door, within the sound of the Saviour’s inviting voice, and the Father’s extended arms of love and mercy. He could not preach, without pleading with sinners. He could not reason and argue, without pouring out his heart in the most tender and melting expostulations. His great, generous, benevolent heart was strung with the chords of love, like an Æolian harp, that responds to the gentlest breath that passes over it; so that, whatever theme he touched, his heart could be seen vibrating with the love of Jesus, in the moistened eye, the trembling utterance, the tender manner, and in language, in which all the synonyms of love seemed to flow as naturally as waters gush from a fountain. “Our pulpits,” he said, “may glitter with the beauties of learning and eloquence and orthodoxy, but if these be not warmed with love, universal love, the brilliancy will prove like the glitter of that region, where all is chill and dead.”

Another element of the success of his preaching, was its remarkable *appropriateness*, its studied adaptation to the times in which he lived, and to the immediate wants of his people. No public event, from which he could draw a useful lesson, escaped his notice. The startling providences of God he used,



with great power, as interpreters of the divine word, and emphasizing its teachings. No spiritual want of any member of his congregation was overlooked. He would preach a series of discourses to relieve a single anxious soul of doubt or distress. He would lay aside his laborious preparations for the Sabbath, near the close of the week, to adapt his preaching to any sudden change of circumstances of a public, domestic, or personal character.

But we cannot leave the consideration of his labors as a preacher, without adverting to his zeal in the cause of *Missions*.\* If the love of Jesus was his crowning excellence, his missionary spirit was the crowning form of this excellence. If the former furnished the material, the latter determined the position and shape of the crown. No theme so absorbed his large, expansive heart, or developed and exalted the mighty forces of his intellect, as that of Missions. The most exalted title than can be applied to Christians, in his estimation, is "Christ's representatives and agents for the conversion of the world;" the most essential element of "Christian character and happiness, self-denying love and liberality." "The Gospel," he remarked, in his eloquent discourse upon the above theme, "is the expression of God's love, and the believer is a man, who, filled with Heaven's emanating kindness, becomes, in turn, a living Gospel." When a student of Highbury College, pursuing his theological studies, he was expecting to enter the missionary field, under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, but was disappointed by the failure of his health, and removal to this country. Resuming his studies at Princeton, N. J., he was on the point of making a missionary tour to Florida, in company with some fellow-student, when he received an invitation to supply your vacant pulpit. He seemed to have dedicated himself to this great work, and probably nothing but ill health would have deterred him from planting the standard of the cross on heathen shores. He was, for many years, chairman of the Committee on Foreign Missions, in the Synod of South Carolina, and, doubtless exerted a more direct and extensive influence in awakening and diffusing a missionary spirit than any other minister in our church. No one

\*See Appendix, p. 800, I.

preached so much, and wrote so much on the subject of missions. It was during his able and zealous discharge of the duties of this office, that he prepared those soul-stirring missionary discourses, entitled: "*The Conversion of the World;*" "*Faith, the Principle of Missions,*" and "*Obedience, the Life of Missions;*"† which were preached before the Synod, and published by their order. We know of no pastor who did so much to infuse his own burning enthusiasm into the hearts of his people. His missionary lectures were among his most elaborate preparations. Every means was exhausted to make the monthly concert for missions an interesting and profitable exercise.

He preached and published several earnest discourses on "*Juvenile Missionary Effort.*"‡ He regarded it "as one of the most hopeful signs of the time—the attention paid to children, and the increasing efforts made to educate them in a missionary spirit, and for missionary effort." He argued that, as a missionary spirit is the most essential characteristic of Christianity, and as baptized children are members of the visible Church, and ought to be educated as christians; therefore, they should be taught to pray, to give, and labor, in their humble way, for the cause of missions.

As early as 1832, he organized a Juvenile Missionary Society in connection with his church, which was held quarterly; and in the same year he commenced the publication of a Juvenile Missionary Paper. His missionary zeal burned on a brighter, warmer flame, as the smoking flax of life sunk into its socket. Always present, at the monthly concert, in the most inclement weather, his stammering tongue glowed with the eloquence of former years, when he poured out his heart in prayer or plead for a perishing world, and for the glory of the Redeemer. He was accustomed to say that the monthly "Missionary" possessed, for him, the interest of a novel or romance, and that he felt reluctant to lay it down until he had read the last page. We here discover the secret of this man's greatness, energy and self-sacrificing devotion in every department of christian labor—the reflex influence of his missionary spirit. His mind

†See Appendix, p. 800, II.

‡See Appendix, p. 800, III.

and heart were in living, active, unceasing sympathy with a lost world, with its teeming populations, and unborn millions; with the eternal purpose of God, that "all flesh shall see" the Great Salvation; with all the glowing predictions of the Hebrew Prophet; with the everlasting kingdom of Messiah; with the suffering Son of God in the travail of His soul; with the great cloud of witnesses, who, through faith and obedience have inherited the promises; with the sacrifice and self-denial of missionaries of the Cross, and all "Christ's martyred clan;" and with the dawning millenium, when the sun of Righteousness shall flood the hemispheres with his life-giving beams, and the whole world shall be given to Christ.

The soul that lives amid these grand and sublime realities, whose faith gives them a present subsistence, whose love expands until it circumscribes the globe—such a soul must grow great. It feeds upon the elements of greatness, and wherever its energies are expended, at home or abroad, in the lecture room, in the sanctuary, on the platform, or in the deliberative assembly, they will exhibit something of the grandeur and sublimity of the missionary theme. It was this spirit which gave Dr. Smyth the reputation he so generally and deservedly bore, of being a "working pastor of a working church."

Passing from the pulpit to his household ministrations, we follow him to the homes of his people, and we are as much impressed with the fidelity and tenderness of the *pastor*, as with the ability and power of the preacher. He regarded his church as a family, and watched over it with a paternal care and solicitude. This great and good shepherd knew all his flock, and could call them all by name; and he entered, by a personal and heartfelt sympathy, into all their temporal and spiritual trials. He was, as a pastor, no respecter of persons, and showed no partiality save that which is imperatively demanded by the poor, the lowly, and the ignorant of his flock. He wrote, in his diary, at the beginning of his ministry, that he "determined to discharge the duties of the pastoral office without fear or favor of any individual or family, excepting as capacity and character justly demanded special consideration."

He was a frequent visitor to the lowly dwellings of the poor, and many a desolate home was gladdened by his soothing and healing charities, to use their own language, "as by the visits of an angel." The touching and eloquent tribute of Dr. Chalmers to the pastoral fidelity of Andrew Thompson might be quoted here, and applied in all the fulness of its meaning to the subject of this memoir: "As at the base of some lofty precipice, a spot of verdure, or a peaceful cottage home seems to smile in more intense loveliness because of the towering strength and magnificence behind it; so the man of strength shows himself the man of tenderness, and, sturdy and impregnable in every righteous cause he makes his graceful descent to the ordinary companionships of life, and mingles, with kindred warmth, in all the cares and sympathies of his fellow-men."

It was in the family circle that he exhibited that rare gift of prayer, which was at once an opulent endowment of nature and of grace. Naturally of a devotional turn of mind, all the resources of his intellect and heart, all the affluent treasures of his knowledge, and all the precious riches of his religious experience, varied and amplified by peculiar sufferings and trials; all were baptized by the spirit of prayer, and poured out in the channels of supplication, both in the pulpit and in the household; and in both, alike, did he seem to identify himself with his people, and make their manifold experience his own. Everything with him seemed to crystallize into prayer. Every vicissitude of the weather, and every changing aspect of the times; the smallest as well as the greatest events, furnished him with material for devotion, and imparted an endless variety, an inexhaustible copiousness, and an exceeding richness to his prayers.

His extraordinary conversational powers and social qualities eminently fitted him for pastoral usefulness. With all his absorbing love of study, his sympathies took a deeper hold upon men than upon books, and nothing gave him more genuine delight and satisfaction than to communicate the treasures of his learning to the humblest listener. It was here, also, that his ready wit, and genial humor found an easy, and a happy vent, in interesting and instructive anecdotes, and personal

reminiscences, of which he had gathered a vast store, in his extensive reading and foreign travels.

His genial and exuberant nature overflowed on all occasions, even when greatly depressed, and tortured with pain. He was often most companionable and entertaining when his sufferings were greatest. Nor did he ever regard his bodily infirmities and weaknesses as an excuse for pastoral inactivity, but seemed to forget his own sorrow in bearing the burdens of others.

It was another of his rules that pastoral visitation should be performed as regularly and systematically as was consistent with his pulpit preparations, which he always considered as of the first importance. Nothing in his estimation could compensate for a poorly prepared sermon. "I have always considered preaching," he said, "and what is necessary to a right preparation for preaching, as prior in its claims upon my time and attention, to visiting, or any other duty." Later in life, however, he confessed that he had erred somewhat in regard to the comparative results of pulpit and pastoral labor, and that he had possibly unduly exalted the former. But, whatever may have been his views of pastoral duty, its apparent neglect, in the earlier part of his ministry, finds its vindication in the claims of authorship, which at that period, were urged upon his conscience with a force that he could not resist.

As a pastor, he embraced with avidity every opportunity to press the claims of Christ upon every individual of his congregation. If he erred here, it was an error of the judgment, not of the heart, which under the restraining influence of love of Jesus, and love to the souls of men, led him, like Paul, "to warn men day and night, and with tears." A burning zeal for the salvation of souls may betray a minister into injudicious and unreasonable appeals, but, in the day of judgment, God's faithful servants will have occasion to rejoice that they are free from the blood of all men, and that imprudent measures were better than lukewarm indifference, or cold-hearted neglect.

Both as a preacher, and as a pastor, Dr. Smyth ever felt and manifested a deep and affectionate interest in the *colored people*, who filled the gallery of his church, and largely composed his membership. He prepared his sermons with reference to



their instruction, held a special service for them during the week, and as a pastor, kindly ministered to their spiritual wants, and bore to their humble homes the cup of consolation in seasons of sickness and affliction. He was a warm supporter of the Zion Colored Church, in Calhoun street, Charleston, which at its inception was chiefly composed of members of his own church. He spoke of it as "a noble and glorious enterprise in which he heartily rejoiced." The crowd of colored people who attended his funeral attested their continued and unabated love for him. One aged woman, as his coffin was borne into the church, exclaimed, with streaming eyes and choked utterance: "Go to Jesus, faithful preacher!"

But our portraiture of the pastor would be incomplete, were we to omit his tender, passionate fondness for the *children* of his congregation, and his zealous interest in their welfare. He enjoyed, with a keen relish, the sports of childhood around his own fireside, and heartily participated in their juvenile merriment. He gathered the children around him, in his visits from house to house, and by his gentle and affable familiarity, won their hearts. Their names were all engraven on his heart, as well as his memory, and they knew it. No one was, to these little ones, a more welcome guest at the family fireside. They ran to meet him, at the open door, and followed him, regretfully, as he took his departure.

His frequent presence at the Sabbath school excited their eager and delighted attention. He always remembered the lambs of his flock in his study, and was constantly collecting materials from every source, that he might be ever prepared to interest them in the Sabbath school, and on anniversary occasions, with appropriate and pleasing addresses. The painful sacrifices which he made to attend the last annual festival, and the evident delight with which he entered into their youthful pleasures, will never be forgotten by the children. It will linger in their memories, as they advance in years, as one of the last affecting tokens of their aged and infirm pastor to the dear lambs of his fold.

The affection which he felt for the children of his own church was shared, in all its depth and tenderness, by the children of the Orphan House. He always delighted to officiate,

in his turn, in the chapel of that institution, and by his condescending manner, his affectionate earnestness, and his happy art of illustration, riveted their attention and gained their hearts. Numbers of them gathered around his casket, as it was about to be lowered in the grave, and covered it with wreaths of flowers.

As an *ecclesiastic*, Dr. Smyth was thoroughly qualified to be a leader in the courts and councils of the church. Dr. R. Breckenridge said of him that "no one was better versed in our church polity." Whatever has been written on the subject of church order he had read, and he, probably, had access to more numerous sources of information than any of his contemporaries in this country. He was perfectly familiar with the whole history of the ecclesiastical controversy, and had thoroughly studied the constitution of his own church. He had traced upon the principles of Presbyterianism through all the tangled wilderness of controversy, to their original source, in the Word of God, and followed the historic course of the mighty River, in its sublime and steady flow down the ages, sending out its tributaries in all directions—streams that "make glad," not only "the City of our God," but bless the whole social and political world with the principles of civil and religious freedom.

On the floor of our deliberative assemblies Dr. Smyth had but few equals, as a debater, and nowhere did his master-spirit so exhibit the fulness of its intellectual energy and overpowering eloquence. It was remarked by one who knew him intimately, and as a co-laborer, in his palmy days, "that he was not so great in the pulpit, where he generally read his sermons, as he was in the lecture room; nor was he so great in the lecture room as he was on the platform; nor was he so great upon the platform as he was on the floor of the deliberative assembly; nor was he so great on the floor of the deliberative assembly, when he was on the strong side, as when he was on the weak one. But, in reply, and for a lost cause as it seemed, and when there was no hope for his side apparently, then was Dr. Smyth strong, and then was he dangerous to his opponent."

This is substantially the testimony of all who encountered him in the halls of debate, and who attempted to resist the tide of his forensic eloquence.

As a churchman, Dr. Smyth might be described as intensely denominational, and intensely unsectarian. This distinction, so admirably drawn in his memorable discourse on "Denominational Education,"\* was so gratifying to Dr. Chalmers, who heard him deliver it, that he afterwards remarked that "he could never cease talking about it." A loyal son of the Presbyterian Church, he loved her denominational peculiarities with a patriotic fervor. But while he cherished her glorious history and precious traditions, with an almost idolatrous reverence, he was, at the same time, an utter stranger to the narrow-mindedness of party, or the exclusiveness of bigotry. The Apostolic benediction, "Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," was inscribed upon his Church Banner. "Let brotherly love continue," was his motto. In his chapter on the "Catholicity of Presbytery," he remarks: "Christ must be first, fellowship next, and then as much uniformity as will follow from the two." Of naturally a Catholic spirit, the liberalizing influence of a wide culture, and extensive travel led him to recoil from all extreme views of doctrine or church polity. He was never happier than when he united with brethren of other denominations in christian fellowship, and associated activity, and had he lived, he would have entered heart and soul into the Evangelical Alliance—a movement of which he spoke with great enthusiasm, and for the success of which he fervently prayed. One object he had in view, in visiting Europe in 1846, was to be present at the Evangelical Alliance, at its first great World meeting, "when the platform, creed and basis of union was discussed and adopted," he remarked, "I was truly delighted to find how patriotic feeling extinguished all sectional jealousies, and united various denominations in one compact, solid phalanx."

It was to him, one of the glorious features of Presbyterianism, as an ecclesiastical system, that it was "at once capable of extension to the widest circumference of humanity, and contains within itself the germinant principles of vitality, diffu-

\*See Appendix, p. 800, IV.

sion, unity, universality." Under the term Presbytery, he was wont to "include those generic principles which are common to Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Reformed Dutch, Lutherans, Baptists and Methodists," and rejoice that, while he differed from them in some points, "he would be found agreeing with the liberal-minded of them all." He would thus hope "to draw closer the bonds of Christian truth, harmony and affection, by which we are leagued together."

It was for this liberal, Catholic type of Presbyterianism that he contended, toiled, suffered, and consecrated all his talents and acquisitions. He strenuously opposed the "Revised Book of Discipline," because he honestly believed that it was susceptible of interpretation subversive of these grand principles. According to his view, "Presbyterianism is *jure divino* in this sense, that the *doctrines* of the church are given by Christ in inspired words; the *government*, in general rules and principles, in the actions and examples of the Apostles, and in the exercise of a wise, Christian expediency, based on natural and social law, as expressly declared in the confession of faith. The one is given to us as a system of doctrine taught in the scriptures; the other, as agreeable to Scripture, and yet both *de jure divino*." He believed that the "Revised Rules" virtually identified the form of government, discipline and worship, with doctrine, and claimed for them the same conscientious belief and conformity, which "tend to make Presbyterianism High Church intolerant and illiberal, robbing it of its crown-jewels, love, charity and brotherly kindness towards all Evangelical churches, who hold Christ in all His glorious divine offices, as Prophet, Priest and King of His blood-bought people." The Scriptures, and not Church standards, are the ultimate appeal in all matters of controversy.

The revision movement roused all his old martial spirit. The veteran warrior girded on his armor, and through many a long and weary night, in the midst of sufferings that would have unmanned a spirit of ordinary mold, he prepared a series of articles, in which the dying Hercules seemed to be gathering up all his remaining strength to strike one more effectual blow for the principles for which he had contended all his life. He would not have felt that he had "finished his course, and kept

the faith," had he remained silent during this controversy, even on the verge of the grave. The scarred and weather-beaten soldier fell on the field of battle, with his armor on and with his drawn sword in his hand.

On another occasion, pending a heated discussion upon this theme in Presbytery, when a motion was made to adjourn on account of his failing strength, he replied, with his panting breath, that he was willing to go on, he could not die in a better cause.

At the time of the great disruption, in 1843, Dr. Smyth urged, with a glowing zeal and eloquence, the claims of the Free Church of Scotland, to the sympathy of American Christians.\* It was for these very principles, so dear to his heart, that the Church of Scotland separated from the Establishment, viz.: "The utter renunciation of all the bigoted and exclusive views which prevented free intercourse among true-hearted Christians of every name." He saw in the foundation of that together in one body all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in church "the first link in the golden chain which is to bind sincerity and truth."

It is of such sound and Catholic principles as these, that the large-hearted *philanthropist*, and the sturdy *reformer* are made; and such was Dr. Smyth. He entered with a cordial, active sympathy, into every great, social and moral movement, looking to the elevation of mankind. He had a quick, sensitive ear to the "sad footsteps of humanity." Like his Master, he identified himself with the poor, the miserable, the unfortunate, the outcast everywhere. One prominent element of his missionary zeal was his hearty love of man; for the love of Christ develops a genuine philanthropy, a world-wide charity, a heart-felt desire to "do good to all men, as we have opportunity;" or, as he, himself, expressed it, a true Christian is "a holy beneficent presence in society; a sick world's healer; a sad world's comforter; a sympathizer and a worker with the Supreme Beneficence."

He was an active, efficient member of the Bible Society. He advocated the claims of the Young Men's Christian Association, with great earnestness, as promoting the "com-

\*See Appendix, p. 800, V.



munion of citizenship, the brotherhood of Christianity, and the cause of Christian philanthropy." He was deeply interested in the Orphan House, which he regarded as a noble, Christian charity, "as representing the benignity of heaven, in its parental care for the fatherless, and a bond of union between the rich and poor." The cause of education found in him a staunch and enthusiastic supporter, and an eloquent advocate.

It was in the spirit of a Christian philanthropist that he cordially favored and zealously defended the institution of slavery, for "however it may be denounced as imperfect and attended with evil," he held that "it had been employed by unerring wisdom and an overruling Providence, as an instrument for the preservation, elevation, and conversion of millions who would have lived and died in heathen ignorance, superstition and cruelty." He believed that in so far as masters rendered unto their slaves that which is "just and equal," in their condition and sphere of life, that involuntary servitude was for them that which is best fitted to promote their well-being and happiness. But while all his learning and ability were enlisted on the side of slavery, he was equally earnest and bold in denouncing the unnecessary evils, and reforming the abuses and perversions of that domestic institution: His celebrated work on the "Unity of the Human Races" was written in the interests of philanthropy, as well as science and religion.\* The denial of unity he regarded as uncharitable, as it is unphilosophical. To degrade the African below the standard of the human species, is to exclude him from the benefits of redemption, and justify his barbarous and cruel treatment. The critical reviewers of England, Scotland, and Ireland, gave him the credit of being "the first to come forward in this controversy, to assert, in behalf of the black man the unity of the race," and commended his "fearless vindication of this doctrine, in the midst of a slave population, which was calculated to render him unpopular and odious."

He exhibited the same bold, uncompromising spirit of the Reformer, in his public, out-spoken denunciation of the stage, the lottery, and every evil which he regarded as detrimental to the peace and order of society.

\*See Appendix, pp. 800-802, VI.

Dr. Smyth was too sound a Presbyterian, to be anything but a whole-souled *Patriot*, when patriotism involves the spirit of loyalty to the principles of true Republicanism, and a readiness to defend them at any sacrifice. It was because he believed the principles of our constitutional, representative, republican government, were derived from Presbyterianism, and are the only safeguards of civil and religious liberty, that he became, in this land of his adoption, an enthusiastic, patriotic, American citizen. He wrote a volume of several hundred pages, the result of weary months of laborious study and research, to demonstrate the identity of the origin of our ecclesiastical, and civil government. I use his own language: "The more decidedly a man is a Presbyterian, the more decidedly he is a republican." He espoused the cause of the South in the late war, because he believed she was contending for these very principles of civil liberty and free government.

A few months previous to the outbreak of the war, he lamented the prospect of disunion in language like this: "When I was a child upon my mother's knee, I heard thy praises, my adopted country. In my childhood's visions thine image rose proudly magnificent before me, towering aloft to heaven, and spreading thy branches over the seas. Boyhood's sports were jubilant of thee, and manhood brought with it eager expectations of becoming inseparably thine. Here, for thirty years, I have heard from every lip, on every festive occasion, thy praises. And must we take up the lamentation and say, from this glorious constitutional union all the beauty is departed? For these things I weep, and my soul is troubled." As he thus poured out his unavailing tears, he was ready to pour out the last drop of his blood, to preserve the inestimable blessings of republican liberty, which he felt were at stake. "He, who would choose life at such a sacrifice," said he, "is not worthy of life, or fit to die." Dr. Smyth was a true Christian patriot, believing that his country was a union of States, not a union of people. His whole heart was with the South, and he prayed, and preached, and wept for her, giving his three sons to her service and his worldly all to her cause.

Dr. Smyth was also a voluminous and learned *author*, and has left to the world, the "life-blood of his master-spirit," in many a page and many a volume which will be read with profit for many a generation.

It has doubtless been a matter of surprise with many, that one who was called to take the oversight of a large and laborious pastoral charge, could justify himself in consuming so much time and strength in the distracting cares, and exhausting toils of authorship.

In his unpublished writings, we find an "Apology for Authorship," which furnishes a complete vindication of his course from all suspicion of literary vanity or ambition. He entered upon this painful, laborious, and self-sacrificing work, as a faithful steward of the manifold gifts of God, who desired to make the most of his abilities and opportunities. But upon this point we will allow him to speak for himself: "I believe that capacity to do, brings with it the consciousness of its own impelling energy, determination, and will; and that when the heart is sanctified and set right, this consciousness brings with it a corresponding sense of responsibility to put his talents out to usury, and to the very best advantage. I believe, also, that with such conscious ability and responsibility to do, there is a proportionate sense of 'Woe is me, if I do not,' of humility in view of what is done, and of much that is not done. A man must know that he can do, and what he can do, and all he can do, and to have confidence in undertaking, boldness in execution, self-approval in having endeavored to do his duty, and self-condemnation, if he, through the fear or favor of men, fails to do."

The interval from 1836\* to 1838, he styles his period of controversy, "arising from agitations in the Church of New School doctrines and measures, which led to a division of presbytery and ecclesiastical isolation. This was followed by the next period, of hard study and frequent publication for the confirmation of his own faith, and the general edification of the church." Having been brought up in an Independent Church, he was early led to the study of church government, and was greatly stimulated in these investigations by the exclu-

\*See Appendix, p. 802, VII.

sive claims of prelacy, which were at that time proclaimed with great boldness and arrogance. About this time, also, appeared the "Oxford Tracts," which he styled "the Goliath of the host of the Philistines." He, accordingly, gave himself to the collection of standard works on these controversies, that by thorough study, he might become master of the whole subject, and afford his brethren the advantage of a convenient access to original authorities. It was under these trying and perilous circumstances, that he began to prepare his Lectures on Presbytery and Not Prelacy. His object was catholic and defensive, and he was warmly encouraged by leading men among the laity, as well as among his ministerial brethren. When the work on "Apostolical Succession" first appeared, its authorship was questioned by a prominent English publisher, who said that he had been accustomed to associate such extensive research and profound learning with mature age and experience. This work was "the first of the kind published in this country, and distinctively in any other, by a Presbyterian, and to any great extent by other writers. The subject was novel and the attempt hazardous." What he judged to be most needed was an elaborate compilation of arguments and authorities. Its publication was followed by other popular and able compends. But how far they were indebted to his voluminous work, he never knew. It was remarked, however, by a prominent minister, that it was evident they had been "milking his cow." This was what he expected and desired; that his scholastic labors and researches, should furnish material for more popular works. Thankful for the ability to write, and gratuitously circulate them, he was content that they should remain on the students' shelves of reference.

The works on "Apostolical Succession," "Presbytery and Not Prelacy," and "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," had a wide circulation among all denominations in this country and in Europe.† Both Dr. Alexander and Dr. Miller, of Princeton, commended them in the highest terms.‡ The former said, that when he looked around for a text-book, he settled on Dr. Smyth's "Presbytery and Not Prelacy" as the best, and deter-

†See Appendix, p. 802, VIII.

‡See Appendix, pp. 802-804, IX.

mined to introduce it at once. § Dr. Duff, of London, remarked to the author, that he was using the work on "Apostolical Succession," in his College, in Calcutta, and that when he was consulted on the claims of Prelacy and Romanism, he found it a complete armory. His work on the "Unity of the Races," was criticised in Great Britain, as a "masterly and valuable book." Principal Cunningham wrote: "It displays a thorough knowledge of the subject, and of all that has been wirtten upon it, down to the most recent productions. The argument is conducted with much ability, and brought to a triumphant conclusion." Dr. Duff said: "It may be characterized as scholarlike, without pedantry; elaborate, without tediousness; comprehensive, without diffuseness; argumentative, without dryness."

He published, in all, about thirty volumes, embracing almost every subject. The most popular works are, "The Well in the Valley," "Why Do I Live," and the volumes on Missions.\*\* These are works that will live. He received scores of letters from all parts of the world, thanking him for their publication, and expressing the pleasure and profit derived from their perusal. They are written in his most earnest and engaging style, and replete with solid doctrine, in the most practical and attractive form.

His method of writing and preparing his works for publication, though justified in his own case, he would not recommend to others. "After arranging and digesting my materials," he says, "I wrote in great haste, and in a fever of excitement, so as frequently to bathe me in perspiration, and perfectly benumb my fingers. My mind was so entirely abstracted, that I was, often, unable to recall the most familiar household words at the table. I never copied for printing, or rewrote any one work or pamphlet. They were printed from the original manuscript, or the manuscript copied, corrected, amended, altered, abridged or enlarged. Of course this is to my condemnation, and no excuse for their many imperfections. So it has been however; I never could bear rewriting, and the truth is I wrote everything in the expectation that I had but a short

§See Appendix, p. 805, X.

\*\*See Appendix, p. 805, XI.



time to live, and must do quickly whatever I did. I wrote each work, thinking it was my last, and I must be willing to do whatever service I could, and lose the possible fame of greater condensation, correctness of style, and perfection of arrangement. I have also detracted greatly from the originality of my works by numerous quotations and a parade of multiplied references."

But this he did advisedly. His object was not originality and fame, but the diffusion of useful knowledge. Hence, his larger works partake of the nature of magazines or encyclopedias. It would be far easier, and save immense labor, for writers to give as their own, the substance of other men's thoughts and investigations, than to trace out systematically the sources of their ideas, facts and arguments. Having the advantage of an extensive library, he determined to put the results of his researches in such a form, as to give his brethren, as well as himself, an opportunity for original investigation. His quotations and references, therefore, were, in most cases, subsequent additions, and the result of continued accession of books and knowledge.

These memoranda were recorded, he says, "simply as facts in my history, known only to myself, and so far a justification of my course, and a vindication of my own judgment, that I was, by opportunity and capacity, called upon to write and to publish; and that however temporary and limited their usefulness might be, they were approved by our Church and instrumental in promoting truth and charity." His publications were the result of long and very laborious study, and accumulated preparations for years, and were prepared chiefly at hours beyond pastoral claims and duties.

Dr. Smyth probably collected the largest library which has ever been gathered in this country, numbering at one time nearly *twenty thousand* volumes. In all his travels, in America and Europe, he was in quest of books, often spending whole days in stores and antiquarian stalls; and, for years, consuming the greater part of his salary in the purchase of books. He says, "I studied Bibliography, in order to collect a large, systematic, Presbyterian, Theological and Literary Library, as an armory for our ministers and churches in Charleston, similar

to that of Dr. Williams in London. As it increased, I labored to adapt it for a Theological Seminary, in which I hoped it ultimately would find a providential location." This desire was fully realized. About eleven thousand of his volumes are now in the Theological Seminary, at Columbia, S. C., and are known as the "Smyth Library."

It seems a little singular that he should caution young ministers "to beware of a passion for books, or a blind chase after a large library. It is, as a general thing, vain and useless. It is often impoverishing and infatuating. It becomes as insatiate as the grave, crying, 'Give! give!' I feel that I was an exception to the rule, a sacrifice, willingly offered up for the public good. I felt a special call to collect a large library, not for myself, but for my brethren's sake, and for posterity. This has been a part of my life work. But, except for research and reference, I have confined myself within my rule, having my select library, preceptors, and social companions and bosom friends, whom having early loved, I love unto the end, and hope to love in blissful eternity in a world of light, love and spiritual progress."

For the sake of general improvement, and to gratify a long cherished taste for the sciences,\* he attended the Medical Lectures in the College, at Charleston, for two seasons, and pursued the study privately. He also read Blackstone and other treatises on Law, together with a course of classical literature and general science. In the Literary Club, of which he was a member, he enjoyed a "delightful opportunity of widening his circle of study and resources of knowledge." He, also, commenced, at the same time, a course of reading, and the translation of the earliest Fathers, in which he made considerable progress. These items are mentioned to show the variety and extent of his studies. He was an omnivorous reader. His library was a microcosm—a little world of books. The wonder is not that he became a living encyclopædia of knowledge, but that his feeble frame endured the toil, and bore the burden.

"In consideration of his attainments in theological learning, and his labors in the cause of truth," he was honored by Prince-

\*See Appendix, p. 805, XII.

ton with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, the rule being suspended, which required six months' notice. Never, said Dr. Miller, had a degree been more deservedly conferred.† He was at that time about thirty-seven years of age, and had graduated from the seminary only about ten years.

Any account of this extraordinary life would be imperfect, which did not give great prominence to the element of *suffering*. The weakling of the flock, he describes himself as a complaining, croaking boy, of whom his father said, "There is no cure for him but a plaister of earth." His sad words proved only too true, for the life-long sufferer found no respite from pain until the kind earth folded him to her bosom, and covered him with the mantle of the grave. Both in Belfast and Princeton, his health failed him. He came to Charleston to receive an additional burden of suffering in the form of sick headaches, which were very frequent and prostrating. In 1848, he was attacked with partial paralysis, "which produced a stiff, abnormal condition of his left arm and fingers, causing a derangement between the nerves and muscles, from which he never recovered, and which often occasioned severe pain."

The second attack of undoubted, and confirmed paralysis, in 1853, left him long on crutches, and almost a helpless cripple. This attack, as he describes it, was "at the ganglionic centre, at the base of the spine, and never for a moment affected consciousness, memory or digestion."

"In my own estimation," he said, "I have lived from day to day, as a tenant at will, looking any moment for an ejection, and change of residence. I have searched curiously for the secret source of vitality, but sought in vain. I awake in the morning, asking myself: Is it possible I am alive? And when worn and exhausted by pain and wakefulness, and oppressive sinking of the soul, in her pleading voice, crying to the body,

'Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,  
And let me languish into life,'—

I have wondered with a great amazement, what invisible power held together a body and spirit so willing to dissolve partnership, and so ill-mated with one another. I have often thought I could write a natural history of pain. I have known her

†See Appendix, pp. 806-807, XIII.

from childhood. We have walked arm in arm, dwelt in the same house, occupants of the same bed. She is like the chameleon of every hue, and like Proetus, of every shape. She is sometimes as quick as light, and again, like an Alexandrian line, 'drags her slow length along.' Sometimes, she is as the forked lightning coursing in tortuous torture through every limb and fibre of the body, and dissolving the pent-up, and collected clouds of bitterness into flooding tears; and sometimes she is that lightning in its negative form, of quiet, dull monotony, or occasional playful flashes, just enough to rouse the attention and excite the fancy. Sometimes she languishes into the faint tones of an infant, talking in its sleep, or like the bubbling groan of some strong swimmer in his agony, or like a strong man in the whirlwind of his passion, she put on an angel's might, and mystery of power."

During the war he spent about two years and a half in Clarendon county, of this State, and, while he was suffering these Protean forms of pain, he followed the Methodist minister through his whole circuit, of four or five churches, preaching every Sabbath, in all the vicissitudes of weather, the oppressive heat of summer, and the raw and rainy rigors of winter. The heroic sufferer could find no excuse for idleness, and the only reward he claimed was the joy of laboring for his Master, and for the salvation of souls.

About four years before his tireless energies were released from the fetters of the flesh, his organs of speech were suddenly paralyzed in the midst of his midnight studies. He rose to call a servant and was surprised to find that he was incapable of articulating a word. Doubtless believing that his speech was hopelessly gone, or that he was near his end, he wrote on a slip of paper, to his wife, "Perfect peace." But finding that his general health was not seriously affected by this local paralysis, he immediately addressed himself to the task of regaining his lost speech, with a resolute will that was never paralyzed by discouragement or despair; and, never did he appear greater in all his grand career, than when reciting, hour after hour, and week after week, the letters of the alphabet, advancing from vowels, and consonants to syllables, and from monosyllables to words, and sentences, until, upon the

anvil of his iron will, he broke, link by link, the chains that bound his eloquent tongue, and, at length, shouting, like David of old, "Awake up my glory," his voice rang again with the praises of the sanctuary, and the "glad tidings of salvation." For many years, every one had spoken of him as "the *wonderful* man;" but when his mute tongue was unloosed, when this Samson had rent asunder his fetters with the sheer force of his giant will, his friends were themselves dumb with amazement. From this time, he continued his vocal exercises, repeating the scriptures and pages of sacred poetry, which his memory retained with astonishing accuracy.

After the lapse of a year or more, he felt it his duty, on account of growing weakness and an imperfect utterance, to resign his pastoral charge; but he did not resign his determination to work for his Master, as long as life lasted.\* Although in the estimation of all but himself, he was honorably discharged from warfare, he refused to lay down his arms and retire from the field of active service. Without the slightest abatement of his former energy and zeal, he continued to preach whenever called upon, either in his own church, or the churches of other denominations; and by his presence, prayers, counsel and active service, to help forward every good work; in the Bible Society, the Clerical Union, the weekly prayer-meeting (which he attended regularly in all kinds of weather), in the higher and lower judicatures of the church; until within a few weeks of his death, he was regularly present every Sabbath in his own pulpit, generally offering the closing prayer, the unction of which still lingers in our memory, like a sweet savor; and on communion occasions, he always made the sacramental address at the Lord's Table, when he often seemed to be literally looking within the veil, and holding visible communion with the Saviour.

Thus did he labor on with unflagging energy, working until his throbbing heart ceased to beat, and the "pulse of life stood still." When all his branches were bare, and the atmosphere bleak and wintry, his soul-life was budding with new desires and hopes, and new plans and enterprises were struggling into bloom and fruit.

\*See Appendix, pp. 807-813, XIV.



It was during these latter years of suffering, only two months after the last stroke of paralysis, that a disastrous fire swept away the choicest portion of his collection of books, which he called his "working library," together with valuable manuscripts upon which he had bestowed several years of laborious study. This melancholy loss he was never able to repair, partly from physical inability to bear the exhausting labor or research and investigations, and, partly, on account of the impossibility of replacing rare and costly works. It was a sore trial to him, and a serious loss to the world.

Such a life of suffering is replete with valuable lessons. As drawn out by himself, and expanded at considerable length, they would form an interesting and useful volume. We have space here only for the briefest summary. It teaches, first, "that great health is not necessary to great labor, and that a feeble and imperfect constitution is not inconsistent with a long life." The adage, that "a sound mind must have a sound body," and that the latter is essential to success, must be received with great qualification. The greatest thinkers and workers have, probably, been, on the whole, among the least healthy and vigorous, and often, among the most sickly, dwelling in tenements, shaken by every wind. There is, also, in such constitutions a resiliency and recuperative power, a buoyant elasticity and energy in its periods of restoration, as to give it great advantage.

Neither is perfect, uninterrupted health, necessary to enjoyment. "I am often as merry as the cricket which I have been endeavoring to attach to my room, that I may find a solace in its lively and soothing song, and a pleasing remembrance of childhood's scenes. I often soar with the lark in its jubilant flight toward heaven, and join in its carol and ecstatic rapture and joy. And when not in humor of positive joy and self-amusing laughter, I can often sympathize with the peaceful, playful contentment of the little kittens that perform their antics around my table, and partake of my simple fare."

Dr. Smyth was a *cheerful*, happy sufferer. His sufferings never made life dark, dismal or undesirable. He had cultivated a merry, joyous spirit. He had learned to smile on suffering, and extract pleasure from pain. The cares, anxieties,

disappointments, afflictions and sorrows, that swarmed around him like bees, armed with piercing stings, were all laden with honey for his hive of cheerfulness. He recommended the student to "cherish a lively, cheerful, joyous, laughing spirit," and suggests as auxiliaries to cheerfulness, "a growing acquaintance with natural scenery, a cultivation of the taste and the imagination. With such knowledge and taste, no one need ever be alone or unhappy, *i. e.*, when the eye of faith looks through nature up to nature's God."

"A knowledge and love of singing and instrumental music, will be a great help in reviving the drooping spirits and dissipating morbid feelings."

His own favorite resource was poetry. He wooed her tenderly and constantly, and found her as a well of living waters to his thirsty soul. He carried a large volume of well selected poems and hymns in his memory, which he was in the habit of repeating to himself in his solitary walks or drives, and in the loneliness of the sick chamber. His works abound with poetical quotations, without which no book would bear the impress of Dr. Smyth's mind and heart.

We should not omit to say that he regarded "the inward, happy communion of the soul with God," as the ultimate fountain of a cheerful disposition, whose living waters fill every channel of labor and suffering, nature and society, music and poetry.

He once remarked that it was "of great importance to a man, especially of sedentary habits, to be able to raise a laugh when he is growing moody and phlegmatic. For this purpose let him treasure up any scenes of particularly ludicrous and laughter-exciting merriment, that may have formed a comic interlude between the more solemn scenes of the tragedy of life. A good laugh is a great exhilarant. It puts body, soul and spirit in good humor, and in a ready disposition to work." Wit and humor was one branch of his study, and he kept comic pictures hanging behind his study door that he might, at any time, work off his moody feelings.

In reviewing his years of suffering, he gave it as his opinion that "a life of pain and a body of weakness, are perhaps the

best, and on the whole, the happiest, and, for the soul, always the most prosperous condition of its probationary state."

Dr. Smyth was as great in *humility*, as he was great in suffering. He was uttering the sincere language of humble submission to the Divine will, when he said, "I am sensible of my entire weakness, dependence, and unworthiness. I have desired to take my place and position as God assigns it, neither taking the direction nor refusing to follow; neither avoiding humiliation nor exaltation; having a profound sense of my own sinful nothingness, and of my ill-desert of any but the lowest seat among the great, wise and good; and yet believing I can be, and do all things God requires of me, through His wisdom guiding, and grace strengthening. I have endeavored to distrust myself without distrusting God, and have endured many rebuffs, many hard blows, many contemptuous remarks and actions. I have been scorched, peeled and annihilated; filled with shame and self-loathing, and would gladly, a thousand times, have sunk into the earth, or fallen as a star of night, into darkness and nothingness. I have prayed God to disappoint all my desires, blast all my schemes, and throw contempt on all my pride, so far as is necessary to my sanctification and usefulness. I have endeavored to walk humbly and softly, and to receive as well-deserved the chastisement of the Lord. If a course of discouraging circumstances, and adverse prospects be designed expressly for my chastisement, may I not hope that it was meant in mercy? Raise and fix, Almighty Spirit, my fainting, wavering heart, to a true resignation, the only atmosphere of peace. O, penetrate me with deeper, holier, happier views of things eternal, as imminent and near at hand, as swiftly approaching and inconceivably glorious. Then, O, my God, let earthly hopes be darkness, earthly joys expire, intervening sadness, as well as final sickness and death, with all their pains lie before me, I will adore thee with a grateful heart, and pray never more to complain, but chide my every regret, and suppress all my repinings."

But underneath all these various aspects of his life, lay a noble *Christian manhood*. In concluding this hasty and imperfect survey, let us glance at the entire man. Those of you who knew him in his prime, will readily recall his tall, erect,

commanding figure, crowned with raven locks of luxuriant growth, always arranged with care and taste; his bright, blue eyes, always wide open; wearing in repose a tender expression; sparkling with humor in social converse, and flashing with fire in animated debate, or pulpit discourse; his voice, naturally sweet and mellow as a flute in its conversational tones, and which imparted to his persuasive appeals an irresistible pathos, that moved and melted to tears the most hardened hearer; but when he rose to the height of his great argument and to an impassioned and eloquent declamation, it became as sonorous as the blast of a bugle, and filled his vast audience-room with its expansive volume. His brow was not massive, nor his features and face large, yet they bore the image and superscription of greatness, which the most ordinary beholder could read. During the last twenty years of his life, his bent form, crippled gait, and growing infirmities, reminded one of the wreck of a noble ship, which, with its rent sails and dismasted hulk, still rides proudly and grandly upon the billowy sea, and weathers its raging storms, when scores of staunch and seaworthy vessels are stranded and wrecked around her. The hobbling gait did not lose its dignity, nor the shattered form its manliness.

In his intellectual and moral character he presents a singular spectacle of opposite, antagonistic qualities. He was at home, in company with Calvin and Owen, and delighted as a school boy over Robinson Crusoe or a nursery rhyme. He wrestled with the giants of theology and philosophy, and roamed the woods with the poets, and communed with the cricket on his hearth, and gambolled with the children and kittens around his fireside. The stern, uncompromising advocate for truth, he was bubbling with Irish humor. The lion-like warrior was a gentle-hearted lamb. He was a bold, gallant spirit, fearless of an opponent, reckless of consequences, however disastrous to his own reputation or interest. Yet, he never "broke the bruised reed, nor quenched the smoking flax," but bore his wounded ones in his arms, and carried them in his bosom. His manner in the halls of debate was often stern, imperious, relentless; sometimes even harsh, cruel, unmerciful to those who opposed him. But they who were acquainted with the

man, knew how much to attribute to a strong, passionate nature, whose energies were all aroused, stimulated, and fired by the heat of discussion, and zeal for the cause of truth, until he burned like a volcano; and how much allowance to make for the deep spring of love, hidden beneath this flaming Vesuvius, which was ready to gush like a pent-up fountain, as soon as the lava of controversy had spent itself. Dr. Thornwell, who often encountered him in the deliberative assembly, said of him, that no one had a kinder heart and a more forgiving spirit, than Dr. Smyth. He never nursed a grudge. His capacious memory had no room for garnered wrongs, or treasured wrath. All injuries were forgiven and forgotten. We have the declaration in his own handwriting: "I cherish no ill-will, no envious dislike to any human being, as I never had any personal pride, or self-interest to gratify in any ministerial or church plans."

He had an unbounded ambition to make the most of his talents and opportunities, and to attain to all possible human excellence and usefulness. There was no limit to his aspiring soul, and every successful achievement only stimulated him to bolder and loftier endeavor. It deserves to be noticed that, with a natural desire to be prominently useful, it had been impressed upon him by pastors, teachers and friends, from the time that he "officiated as chaplain of the nursery, with the high easy chair for a pulpit," until he entered the Theological Seminary, that he had before him an extraordinary career. Yet he was as meek and humble as a child when disappointment and defeat were interpreted as expressions of the Divine will. When he was taken to the exceeding high mountain of carnal ambition, and offered a brilliant career and a world-wide fame, in the midst of this temptation of the devil, he prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and then laid upon the altar of sacrifice his ambition, his studies, his writings, his preaching, his success—all that he ever desired or designed to do—a whole burnt offering, and turning away from the burning pile, he prayed again: "I beseech thee, Lord, to forgive all my self-righteousness and self-seeking, and grant that I may be saved, as by fire, with the loss of all things, for which I have been commended, and that I may not be a cast-away, but



a trophy of all-conquering and all-sanctifying grace. Amen and Amen."

That he was ambitious, without vain-glory, is demonstrated by his whole ministerial life, during which, in every measure, to which he laid his hands, he adopted the very course that imperils reputation and the very last that vanity would have chosen; at the same time declining complimentary and enticing calls in every direction, most any one of which would have been advantageous to his reputation and fame. He was called to the South Carolina College; to the editorial chair of a Presbyterian newspaper in New York, at the urgent request of leading ministers; to the College at Danville, Kentucky; to Union Theological Seminary; to the Theological Seminary at Columbia; to a College in Indiana; to Magee College. Add to this that a professional life was always his choice, to which all his tastes and studies led him; and that the professorship most consonant to his studies was pressed upon him by Dr. Thornwell and many other brethren—and what a sacrifice of reputation was made on the altar of duty. He felt that Providence had not opened wide the door for him, and he would not climb up some other way, for the sake of reputation, and leave a post of duty and of danger, where he had been set for the defense of the gospel, and as a standard-bearer of the Church in a season of perilous strife. "My congregation," said he, "was isolated from others, and had to stand against much public opprobrium. Therefore I determined to live and die with my people, unless Providence opened a wide door, and forcibly and fairly ejected me."

As a minister, he was profoundly theological, yet thoroughly practical. As a churchman, he was as thoroughly denominational as he was catholic. He would go to the stake for Calvinism\* or Presbyterianism, and, on the way to martyrdom, he would gather faggots to burn bigots and sectaries. As a philanthropist, he would reform the evils of society, with an almost iconoclastic severity, while, like the tender and compassionate Saviour, he visited the widow and the fatherless with a sympathetic heart and tearful eye.

\*See Appendix, p. 813, XV.

As a public speaker, he was singularly cool and self-possessed; yet he said, "this has been only to a certain extent real, and to no extent natural or constant. I was originally very diffident, and was punished for my embarrassment at school. In my early attempts at prayer, I wrote and committed. In my efforts at speaking and debating, I have been so disconcerted as to lose all presence of mind." He never rose to speak, even at prayer-meeting, without solicitude and nervous trepidation, and never trusted himself, on any occasion, to speak without preparation when it could possibly be avoided.

As a student and author, he said of himself, "I am a living proof that tastes and inclination may be modified, and the mind made to give itself wholly and with delight to whatever course of study circumstances may render advisable or necessary. I became enthusiastic in antiquarian and historic lore; again, in physical science; again, in controversial discussion; again, in exegetical study and in practical and didactic discourse; and always, and most *con amore* in mental and moral philosophy; and always in poetical literature and belles-lettres. I feel that I could now engage in any one branch of study with interest and enjoyment. With God's help, therefore, a man can become what he ought to be, and what the demands of the age, of Providence and of the Church require."

Hence, he could turn with marvellous ease from scholastic studies and dry discussions, to finish a sacramental discourse, or memorize a page of poetry.

The most prominent trait of his character, that which most distinguished him from ordinary men—that, without which Dr. Smyth could not have been—was an *indomitable will*, that was never conquered save by the Omnipotent Being who made him. He never interpreted any apparently insurmountable obstacle, or appalling danger, as a providential call to lay down his arms and retire from the field. Difficulties never terrified him. Opposition only goaded his determination to more resolute and persevering endeavor; and the greater the odds against him, the higher would his courage rise to do all, and to dare all for the vindication of his principles. This giant will, that was never shorn of its locks, that laughed at impossibili-

ties, that mocked at disease and suffering, inspired him with untiring industry and unflagging energy. He often remarked that the will can conquer pain, and command the shattered nerves to hold their peace. On one occasion, when the night was dark and inclement, and his whole frame writhing with agony, he assumed a posture of defiance, and emphasizing his words with his crutch, while his chamber rung with the echo, he rose with determination, declaring that he would not "stand it any longer." Pushing out into the dismal darkness, against the earnest remonstrances of the members of his household, he returned, after several hours of gymnastic exercise, and exclaimed, with an air of triumph: "I told you so. Any man may subdue pain, if he only has the will to do it."

Few men would have so valued life, or regarded the obligation to prolong existence, as to have endured one-half the trouble and sacrifice it cost him to live on from day to day. Sometimes when looking upon his "poor impoverished limbs, and almost formless frame, he felt he ought to be in the grave, buried out of sight;" the struggle for life seemed utterly hopeless and equally undesirable. But the feeling of gloom was only momentary, like the shadow of a passing cloud, and applying again and more vigorously the spur and the whip of resolution, he roused his lagging spirit, and the old war-horse was again shaking the dusty plains with his crippled, but iron-shod energies.

Living as he did for so many years, a mechanical existence, artificially supported, his life exhibits the most remarkable instance which we have ever known, of the sublime triumph of mind over matter—of the indwelling spirit over the external body. Here is a problem for the materialist; a mysterious exception to the theory that mind is the result of organization, and depends for its vigor and energy upon bodily health and strength.

When he lost the use of his limbs, he still continued to take his daily rides, being lifted into and out of his carriage; and, propped up in his old study-chair, he was still surrounded with all the leading papers and magazines of the day, both of American and European publication. He kept fully abreast of the age, and up to the last hour of his life, he could have

traced out a complete map of modern thought, with all its broad currents and tributary streams.

On the Sabbath afternoon we accompanied him in his last daily ride, towards the setting sun, heaven seemed to be imaged in the still water, and green fields, and the dying believer in

"The western evening light,  
That melts in deepening gloom."

He seldom spoke; his soul seemed rapt in heavenly communion. It was evident that the great and good man was rapidly ripening for heaven. Having "brought forth fruit in old age," he was ready to be gathered as a "shock of corn fully ripe." The days of controversy were over. He had "fought the good fight" for himself, and for the Church he loved, against the world, the flesh, and the devil. He had "finished his course—the race that was set before him." He had "endured hardness as a good soldier." He had fought his last battle, and while waiting for his "crown of righteousness," he had nothing to do but lie passively in the hands of the Spirit, and let Him finish the "workmanship of His grace." How sweetly, fragrantly, and beautifully the passive virtues of humility, meekness, patience and submission, unfolded during these mellow, autumnal days!

Only once did he summon his wasting energies to urge upon his youthful successor, fidelity to the Church, which was his first and only love, and for which he had sacrificed all that he had to give. For forty years, he had planted and reaped in this field which the Lord had continually blessed, so that "seed time and harvest" had never failed. Frequently revived by copious and refreshing showers of grace, the Church was enlarged almost every communion season, with regular accessions. Since the beginning of his own ministry, in 1832, he had received more than five hundred additions, many of whom are now useful ministers of the gospel.

During the period from 1832 to 1846, there were added three hundred and fifty-four white, and one hundred colored members, of whom nine became ruling elders and seven entered the ministry.

Well might he say, on reviewing his long and laborious life: "I rejoice that I have lived and labored. The contest is the

same from the beginning to the end of time. One is the warfare, the issue, the combatants, the victory, the results, and the everlasting glory. I rejoice to have mingled in it, and have been a soldier in the army of Immanuel. I have fought under His banner and eye, and for His crown and covenant. My name is upon the roll-book of heaven's heraldry, and will not be forgotten in the great muster day when the roll shall be called, and every man shall spring forth from his gory bed, on some embattled field, in the distant ages, and in the uttermost parts of the earth. To have been a private in some regiment, to have fought and fallen in some battle for the truth, will insure an immortality of fame. But to have won the hearts of some brave and loyal company, to have drawn them to himself, to Christ, and to one another, to have united them with love to Christ, and inspired them with zeal and devotion to His cause, to have marshalled them among the sacramental host of God's elect, to have led them to the high places of the field, to have shared their dangers and privation, and been an example of suffering and patience, to have fallen at their head with the sword of the Spirit in his hand and his face to the foe, and words of victory and cheer upon his tongue—this is glory enough for any man. Surveying thus the whole history of this mysterious warfare, as I shall one day from heaven's Mount of Vision, I feel that the past, the present, and the future, are alike interesting to me, and that I am alike interested in each. It is one, and the glory, the grandeur of the whole, and the everlasting blessedness resulting from it are mine as much as they are another's. I shall soon die and my works too. But I shall not all die, nor all of them. They are among the links in the chain of consequences, and the procession of effects. The effects may abide when the causes are extinct. The harvest may multiply when the original has perished. As I look back upon the past, I rejoice that a place has been given me among the ranks of Messiah's friends. As I look forward to the future, I rejoice that His cause is onward and triumphant, His kingdom everlasting, and that I shall have a glorious part in His inheritance among the saints in light."



On the third day after he was prostrated by the fatal disease, his sorrowing family and friends were called to stand beside his dying bed. They had laid him upon the couch of suffering, expecting that the tide of life would gradually ebb away, as the disease of dropsy slowly rose from his lower limbs toward the vital organs. But he had retired only to compose himself for his final sleep. His hard, spasmodic breathing, plainly showed that the disease was pressing upon his lungs. His suffering was not acute, but of that peculiar, indescribable kind, which proceeds from gradual suffocation. No part of his wasted, tortured body seemed to escape the ravages of disease but the unclouded brain, from which the broad, bright disc of his intellect shone out, like the setting sun from a clear sky. He did not seem to realize that he was so near his end. He never spoke of death, save to remind his family and friends that he was "leaning on the arm of his Beloved," and that the dark valley had no terrors for him. His last effort to speak was to dictate a message to his beloved people. He fell asleep, bearing them upon his heart; and on the wings of his departing spirit, he bore them to the bosom of his God. No act of his life was more positive than that of obeying the order of his Great Captain to put off his armor, and go up to receive his crown. He never marched more soldierly to the field of battle, than he passed from the Church militant to the Church triumphant.

"The faith was kept, the course was run,  
The final victory grandly won,  
And now the King  
Doth grace that brow, all seamed with scars,  
With wondrous crown of many stars,  
While anthems ring."

His best epitaph is his favorite texts, which were quoted at his funeral:

"I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of life."

"Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Dr. Smyth had his faults and imperfections (and who has not?), but they were like spots on the sun. They who view

a great and good life through the smoky glass of prejudice, or the magnifying glass of envy, will discover in the holiest of saints, who at best are but partially sanctified, glaring defects and disfigurements. But they who look at men as they look at the sun, to enjoy its light and the objects of beauty it reveals, will find what we have feebly attempted to portray—the glorious image of Christ, and the precious fruits of His spirit. They will see that love to Jesus was the keynote of the life, character, and labors of this wonderful man.

Those who are acquainted with the science of music, are aware that the grandest, harmonic designs, are the result of the skillful combination of discordant sounds. This analogy may help us to understand how all the harsh and grating discords of the christian's militant life, may be justified to the ear of faith, as they are made to "work together" for the good of the believer, himself, and to the Church for which he labored and suffered. We estimate the merits of our great Church instrument, not by drawing out a few unmusical stops, and pressing a few noisy pedals, but by "putting on the full organ," and listening to the blended harmony.

There are some lives that are like a sweet psalm, breathing from a well-tuned harp. They have their mission, but not like that of Calvin and Luther. There are others whose lives, with all their varied and opposing aspects, resemble a full orchestra, or band of music, with its blast of trumpets, and roaring drums, and clashing cymbals, as they grandly harmonize with the softer, sweeter instruments. Such are the lives with which Jehovah leads on the sacramental host to battle and to victory. As we stand by the grave of this sleeping warrior, let our eyes take in the full-orbed character, and our ears be filled with the blended harmony of the entire life.

We cannot better close these remarks than by quoting his own conception of the true end and value of life:

"To feel that to live is Christ; to be so united to Christ that His work is our work; His will, our will; His sufferings, death, and sacrifice, ours: His self-denial, love, and charity, ours; His kingdom, triumph, and glory, ours; to feel that to spend and be spent in His service, to be instant in season and out of season, in winning souls to Christ—is our life; to feel

that pain is pleasure, weariness rest, tribulation glory, and death gain, when endured as good soldiers of Christ; this is to shine with a glory which death itself shall not eclipse, but, which rising in a higher dawn, in a better land, in a hemisphere encircled by the eternal hills, watered by the river of life, and luxuriant as the Paradise of God, shall shine more and more throughout the unending day of our ever brightening immortality."

## APPENDIX.

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I.—See Vol. VII, pp. 5-439, Smyth's Works. There will be found a comprehensive series of articles on Missions.

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II.—See Smyth's Works, Vol. VII, p. 371: "The Conversion of the World;" p. 13: "Faith the Principle of Missions;" p. 95: "Obedience the Life of Missions."

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III.—See Vol. VII, p. 329, Smyth's Works: "The Duty of Interesting Children in the Missionary Cause, in three chapters, with an appendix giving an account of juvenile effort for Missions, an appeal to the universities, and four poems."

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IV.—See Vol. V, p. 529, Smyth's Works. The address here given on: "Denominational Education, Its Necessity and Practicability, Especially as it Regards Colleges," was delivered by Dr. Smyth before the Thalian and Phi-Delta Societies of Oglethorpe University, November 12, 1845.

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V.—See Vol. V, p. 193, Smyth's Works.

A second edition of "The Claims of the Free Church of Scotland" was printed in New York and London. This was reprinted in Edinburgh, Scotland, with preface by Dr. John G. Lorimer.

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VI.—See Vol. VIII, p. 5, Smyth's Works.

The Edinburgh edition of "The Unity of the Human Races," as revised and enlarged by the author from the American edition, is there given with introductory letters and opinions of the press.

In regard to the publication of this work the following letter was received by Dr. Smyth from Dr. James McCosh:

BRECHIN, September, 1851.

MY DEAR SIR: I have often been wondering, during the past year, what was become of the proposed republication of

your excellent work on the human races. I applied to our mutual friend, Professor Gibson, in May last, for information, but he could give me nothing specific. I am glad to learn, from yourself, that it is now on the point of shewing its face before the British public.

If I thought that no other party was pre-engaged for the work, I would offer to the editor to write a notice of your work in the *Free Church Magazine*. I will also notice it in our local paper. I lent your work to the Free Church Professor of Divinity and to a minister in Aberdeen, both of whom were greatly delighted with it, and thought it very satisfactory.

I have not been gratified with anything in connection with my work so much as with the reception it has met with in America. I am under deep obligations to you for helping me to a favorable introduction to the United States.

I should like to be able to complete my work—by a treatise on the Divine Government, *Spiritual* and *Supernatural*. But I fear I may never be able to write more than fragments of it. The subject is not only vast, but very recondite. An article on Typical Forms, in the last number of the *North British Review*, may be regarded as one of the fragments.

In this country there is a strong current set in towards materialism or materialistic views of everything—opposed to this—we have only in the present day a metaphysics of high pretensions proceeding from many, which, while it exercises an amazing power over a few minds, sends back the majority of British Physicists to materialism. I long most earnestly to be able to help to set the British public right by a work on the Method of Induction Applied to the Human Mind. But—but—life is short, and the most of my life is necessarily taken up with pastoral work.

I shall be glad to hear from you when at any time you have a leisure half hour. Meanwhile, I am,

Yours truly,

Rev. Dr. Smyth:

JAMES MCCOSH.

Following the publication of this work on "The Unity of the Human Races" most complimentary letters were received



from: Drs. James McCosh, Alexander Duff, Wm. Cunningham, Robt. S. Candlish, H. Cooke, Robert Halley, Leonard Bacon, R. G. Latham, David Brown, J. H. Fowles, J. G. Lorimer, J. Pye Smith, and other well known men of letters of the day.

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VII.—In 1836 Dr. Smyth published his first work, which was followed in rapid succession by some thirty volumes, and seventy pamphlets, besides a large number of sermons, discourses and orations, which were delivered on special occasions.

Many of these works have been republished in Great Britain, and endorsed as of the highest value by eminent men on both sides of the Atlantic. Some of them are regarded as theological classics, without which no minister's library would be complete.

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VIII.—See work on "Apostolical Succession," Vol. I, p. 1, Smyth's Works; "Presbytery and Not Prelacy," Vol. II, p. 1, Smyth's Works; and "Ecclesiastical Republicanism," Vol. III, p. 1.

It was in consequence of these works that Dr. Smyth received a unanimous invitation, through Dr. Snodgrass, from Drs. Spring, McElroy, Carter and others to come to New York and establish a distinctive Presbyterian paper as the editor.

See, also, the character given to this work by Dr. King, of Glasgow, in his work on "Ruling Elders and Deacons," by Principal Campbell, of Aberdeen, in his work on "Ruling Elders;" by Dr. Dorg and others.

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IX.—The Rev. Saml. Miller, D. D., professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, expressed his sincere regard and admiration for the author and his works, as follows:

"I have read the volume entitled 'Presbytery and Not Prelacy the Scriptural and Primitive Polity,' etc., with unfeigned and high pleasure; and although not able to acquiesce in every opinion and statement which it contains, yet I consider it, in its great outline, as clear, learned, powerful, and altogether

conclusive in the refutation of Prelacy and establishment of Presbyterianism. It takes a more comprehensive and complete view of the whole controversy than is to be found in any other single volume with which I am acquainted, and appears to me to be eminently adapted to be useful, and well worthy of the thanks and patronage of every member of the Presbyterian Church. It is eminently a learned work. The author has not suffered himself to write, as too many of the ignorant and arrogant advocates of the sect which he opposes have done, without an acquaintance with more than his own side of the question. I doubt whether there is another individual in the United States who has read so extensively on this subject, and especially who has made himself so familiar with the works of the highest and best authorities of the Episcopal denomination. Mr. Smyth is undoubtedly entitled to the character of an able advocate and benefactor of the Presbyterian Church. With regard to every important Episcopal claim, he has not only shown that it has no support whatever in the word of God, but that it has been given up as untenable by the most learned and venerable authorities among Prelatists themselves.

"With regard to the second work, of smaller size, by the same author, entitled 'Ecclesiastical Republicanism,' it merits the same general character with its larger companion. It is learned and ample in its compass, forcible in its reasoning, and perfectly unanswerable in its statements and conclusions.

These works cannot fail of making a deep impression on all minds capable of estimating the weight of either authority or argument. Every Presbyterian minister in the United States ought to feel himself a debtor to the author."

PRINCETON, July 20, 1838.

REVEREND AND DEAR BROTHER: Yours of the 18th ult. reached me on the 25th.

I feel really indebted to you, my dear sir, for your suggestions respecting the supply of *manuals* for the use of our young people. Every one that you propose is much needed, and, if well executed, would be, I have no doubt, eminently useful.

That *I* should undertake *all*, or even the greater part of the four you have proposed, is out of the question. If my life and health be spared, I will think seriously of undertaking the *first* that you speak of—viz., a “Historical Catechism.” The *rest*, you ought, in my opinion, to undertake *yourself*. I know of nobody else likely, or disposed, or qualified to do the work. As you cannot do them all at once, I would propose, and respectfully *urge*, that, as soon as you receive this letter, you should immediately go to work in preparing the *second work* that you mention, viz., an “Ecclesiastical Catechism,” on the plan you suggest. I think such a work would be of incalculable use.

All of my associates here are such busy men, that I have no hope of any one of them undertaking any one of these works. I earnestly wish *you*, without delay, to set about the task I have assigned to you. I believe it will not be done, unless you undertake it. The Rev. Dr. McLeod, of New York, published an “Ecclesiastical Catechism,”\* which, if you wish for it, can be had at any time in the book stores of that city. It is a thin duodecimo, of 120 or 150 pages.

When you have finished No. II, which appears to me most urgently in demand, you can then go on to Nos. III and IV,† which I hope you will undertake and complete in two or three years. Compendis of this kind require to be executed slowly and with care.

I fully agree with you, my dear sir, in deprecating “*Orthodox dictators*,” as well as “*heretical radicals*.” May we be saved from both.

\*See Vol. IV, p. 437, Smyth's Works: “An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church for the Use of Families, Bible Classes and Private Members.”

Evidence of the cordial reception accorded Dr. Smyth's “Ecclesiastical Catechism,” prepared by request of Dr. Miller, is the fact that three editions of the work were published in this country. Regarding the fourth edition, printed in Belfast, the following notice is given:

“As an evidence of the justice of our commendation of this useful manual for the young, we would mention that the fourth edition is now issued for sale in this city. We also find the following notice in ‘The Banner of Ulster,’ published in Belfast, Ireland: Also in the press will shortly be published a new stereotype edition of ‘An Ecclesiastical Catechism of the Presbyterian Church,’ by Thomas Smyth, D. D., pastor of the Second Presbyterian church, Charleston, S. C. Revised and improved, with an introductory essay by W. D. Killian, D. D., Belfast, and recommended by Dr. Edgar Cooke and Rev. James Morgan, Belfast, 10 Church street. December 12, 1943.”

†III. An edition of the Confession of Faith, with Historical Introduction and Notes. IV. An Exposition of the Confession of Faith After the Manner of Bishop Bennet.

Hoping to hear from you when convenient, I am, Revd. and  
Dear Sir, affectionately your brother, SAML. MILLER.

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X.—To the testimony of Dr. Miller is to be added the remarkable opinion given by Dr. Archibald Alexander, when, in view of advancing years, he was by his own consent transferred to the professorship of Church Government and Pastoral Theology, Princeton, he decided to introduce Dr. Smyth's work as a textbook. He attached so much importance to the fact that on his death-bed he expressed a wish that his son, Dr. James Alexander, of New York, should communicate with Dr. Smyth. Dr. Smyth duly received the following letter:

NEW YORK, November 11, 1851.

REV. AND DEAR SIR: My sole purpose in writing is to communicate a remark made to me by my father on his dying bed.

"When I found Church Government on my hands," said he, "I looked around for a textbook, and, on examining the others, settled on Dr. Smyth's Presbytery and Not Prelacy as the best and determined to introduce it at once." I think he added: "I wish Dr. Smyth to know this."

I hope you are better; I have been much indisposed. Regards to Mrs. Smyth and the boys.

Yours fraternally,

J. W. ALEXANDER.

Dr. Addison Alexander also expressed to Dr. Smyth a similar opinion. "Dr. Smyth, let it be encouragement to you," he said, "to know that your works will be much more highly prized by posterity than at the present time." Dr. McGill, who succeeded Dr. Archibald Alexander in the professorship of Church Government at Princeton, told Dr. Smyth that he was prevented from making the work his textbook only by its high price and scarcity.

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XI.—See Smyth's Works, Vol. VIII, p. 395: "The Well in the Valley;" Vol. VIII, p. 669: "Why Do I Live?" and Vol. VII, pp. 5-439, on Missions.

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XII.—Dr. Smyth was one of the prominent members of the British and American Associations for the Advancement of Science.

XIII.—In 1847, when present as a member of the governing body of Princeton College, N. J., Dr. Saml. Miller made a speech setting forth the merits of Dr. Smyth's three first works: 1. On Apostolic Succession; 2. Presbytery and Not Prelacy; 3. Ecclesiastical Republicanism; and moved that they should confer on him the degree of D. D., and that they should also, in view of the high character and learning of these works, waive the rule requiring an interval between a motion for and the actual conferring of a degree, which they did and at once conferred the degree. Before leaving the room Dr. Miller wrote Dr. Smyth the following letter (a copy from the original in Dr. Smyth's Autobiography):

PRINCETON, September 26, 1843.

MY DEAR BROTHER: It gives me great pleasure to inform you, that the Board of Trustees of the College of New Jersey have this day conferred on you the degree of Doctor of Divinity. I write this hasty line sitting in the board, and am unfeignedly gratified in announcing it. In great haste,

Sincerely and affectionately yours,

SAML. MILLER.

Copies of letters received from Dr. James Carnahan and Joseph Smith are also given:

PRINCETON, N. J., September 28, 1843.

To the Reverend Thomas Smyth, D. D.

DEAR SIR: I have the pleasure to inform you that the Trustees of the College of New Jersey, by an unanimous vote, have conferred on you the degree of Doctor of Divinity in consideration of your attainments in theological learning and of your labors in the cause of truth and righteousness. With great respect,

Yours in christian bonds,

JAMES CARNAHAN,

President of the College of New Jersey.

(President of Princeton College from 1823 to 1843.)

PATTERSON, N. J., September 28, 1843.

DEAR BROTHER: Mr. Colt has just returned from Princeton and requests me to write that you were yesterday made a D. D.



It requires six months' notice before the honor can be conferred, according to the ordinary rules, but in the present instance these were suspended.

Mr. Colt made the motion, which was seconded by Dr. Miller, who took occasion to remark that no degree had been more honourably conferred for the past twenty years. It was then passed *Nem. Con.* (Signed) JOSEPH SMITH.

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XIV.—At a meeting of the Second Presbyterian Church, held on Sunday, 27th November, 1870, the following letter was presented:

CHARLESTON, S. C., November 18, 1870.

To the Session and Male Pewholders of the Second Presbyterian Church.

MY DEAR BRETHREN: About this time in November, 1831, I arrived in Charleston from Princeton Theological Seminary, in accordance with an invitation from you to preach in your then vacant church.

In April, of the following year, I received a unanimous call to remain with you and become your pastor. Since that time I have lived and labored among you as the spiritual bride of my youth, being then twenty-three years of age, in all mutual love and assiduity of devoted service to promote your prosperity and happiness. We have seen together many seasons of deep affliction and bereavement. Of the seven hundred and seventy-one members added to the church during my ministry, but a few abide in the flesh, or remain with us. Of a glorious company of them—fathers, mothers, and children—we can rejoice in believing that they are now members of the Church triumphant in heaven, with the four beloved pastors and all their flock who had preceded them.

We have had, too, our many times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when songs of rejoicing over new born souls have been heard in our assemblies and dwellings, and among the angels of God. We have had also the happiness of seeing our church spread her roots, and spring up in vigorous trees, and impart life to many other churches throughout the land. And our church is still showing the signs not only of leaves, but of buds and fruits, springing up after the howl-

ing wintry desolation of war, and various trials and losses, she has made steady growth, and has attained to a condition of unity, peace, concord, and energetic efficiency seldom exceeded in her most flourishing days. Seldom have we passed a communion season without some additions; and even during my recent silence and absence, a goodly number of the children of the church have been added to our christian family. Well officered by honoured brethren, both in the temporal and spiritual government of the church; full of love towards myself and each other, with loving hopes and prayers for my continuance with you; unsolicited by any intimation from you, I now, with many tears and prayers for self-sacrificing grace, send you my resignation of your call and of my pastoral office, and request you to join me in seeking, in the lawful order prescribed by Christ in His spiritual courts, a divorce of our marriage union; and to unite with me in opening the way for the formation of such another holy and happy union with your young and lovely church, as may bring to it the consecrated heart, life, and activities of a suitable pastor.

I had formed this conclusion while absent in Virginia, but thought it best to return and make an experiment among you of my vocal powers; and although in my efforts in public speaking during the last week, during the Sabbath communion services, and again in ordination of the Rev. Mr. Gowan on Sabbath evening, I felt more encouraged than I had previously done, yet on learning at the Court of Deacons last evening that your arrangement for the supply of the pulpit was closed, and another would become necessary, I have concluded that this is the best and proper occasion to present this my letter of resignation.

With heartfelt prayers to Christ, our Shepherd and Bishop, that He would look upon your flock with sympathy and kindness, and guide you to a pastor after his own heart; and with soul, heart and mind, as ever, ready to be offered a living sacrifice upon the service of your faith and love, were it the Lord's will to grant me continued ability,

I remain yours in the Lord,

THOMAS SMYTH.

The following preamble and resolutions were then unanimously adopted:

The letter of our pastor announcing that his bodily infirmity will prevent his further ministrations among us, and his desire consequent thereon to dissolve the *pastoral* relations, which have bound us together for so many years, fills us with no ordinary emotions.

Beyond the memory of the large majority of our congregation, he has borne the sacred office over this flock, and broken to us the bread of life—our parents, our brethren, our children under his ministry have been received into the fold of Christ. And under the strong influence of affection and of habit, we have looked up to him as our spiritual father. The blessing of the Spirit of God has been richly bestowed upon his ministry, and he has been made the instrument of gathering many into the Church of Christ.

We had fain hoped that he would, to the end, have continued the master-laborer in this vineyard of the Lord. Taking this as his first charge, for nearly forty years, of uninterrupted ministry, he has enjoyed our confidence, and has won and secured for himself our respect, our veneration and our love.

But the hand of God has been laid upon him, and whilst our hearts bleed under the stroke, we recognize the act of an all-wise and beneficent Father.

Even so, however, we are yet reluctant to sever the ties which have existed so long between our pastor and ourselves, and have bound us so happily together. But we feel that our pastor in suggesting himself, that they should be dissevered, has recognized an imperative and overwhelming necessity. And, in all affectionate tenderness, we yield to his conviction of duty, and with hearts big with emotion, we accept his resignation, but as some relief to the feelings that oppress us, we express the sense of our bereavement; be it, therefore,

*Resolved*, That in the resignation of our pastor, the Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., the Second Presbyterian church has met with a heavy bereavement and an irreparable loss.

*Resolved*, That no influence could induce us now to part from our loved and venerated pastor, save the desire expressed by himself, and in obedience to the counsel given by himself to the flock whom he has taught and loved so long.

*Resolved*, That in retiring from the active duties of this pastorate, he carries with him that devoted love and deep veneration which we have borne for him for so many years, many of us during the period of our lives; that he will have our constant prayers at the throne of grace that he may be restored to the full enjoyment of his health, strength and every faculty, so that he may yet again return to his place over his people.

*Resolved*, That he be unanimously elected our *pastor emeritus*, and that he be earnestly entreated to continue and to increase his pastoral visits among our congregation, so that at our homes and around our firesides we may still enjoy the ministrations, and be blessed with the teachings of this faithful servant of God.

*Resolved*, That a copy of this preamble and resolutions be furnished to the session of this church, with the request that they be laid before the Presbytery at its next session.

*Resolved*, That a copy of the same be furnished to the *Southern Presbyterian* for publication.

*Resolved*, That a copy of this preamble and resolutions be presented to our pastor.

CHARLES H. SIMONTON, President.

C. P. FRAZER, Secretary *pro tem*.

At a meeting of the session of the Second Presbyterian church, held on the evening of November 28th, 1870, a letter of resignation from the pastor, Rev. Dr. Smyth, and the action of the corporation thereon, was brought before the meeting. On motion the following minute was unanimously adopted:

This session cannot find words to express the deep disappointment with which they learn that Dr. Smyth has felt constrained, by his continued infirmities, to resign the charge he has so ably and devotedly filled for more than a third of a century. During the whole period of his absence, in the

efforts to recuperate his powers, they were sustained in the separation, by the thought, that in answer to the prayers daily ascending in his behalf, from their family altars and the sanctuary, he would be restored to them with his wonted health and ability.

And now, although these hopes are well-nigh blasted, they yet feel that the great Head of the church, if it be His will, can pronounce the word "Ephphatha," and enable him, for many years to come, to proclaim the gospel of Christ.

Until their pastor is summoned to his reward, they will to this end both hope and pray; and at the same time acknowledge, with gratitude, the mercy which spares to them his presence, his blessing, his counsel and his prayers; be it, therefore,

*Resolved*, That this session heartily sympathizes with the congregation in the resolutions they have so feelingly adopted, and gratefully avail themselves of the privilege afforded them of continuing their intimate and endearing relations with their "*pastor emeritus*."

*Resolved*, That Dr. Smyth be requested to meet with this session whenever convened, and, until some other pastor is elected by the congregation, to moderate their sessions.

*Resolved*, That Dr. Smyth be furnished with a copy of these resolutions, by the clerk.

Extract from the minutes of session.

J. ADGER SMYTH,  
Clerk of Session.

Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D.

DEAR BROTHER: At the recent session of the Synod of South Carolina, at Anderson C. H., S. C., the following minute was adopted, viz.:

"A communication from our venerable brother, Rev. Thomas Smyth, D. D., with reference to his feeble health, was read; and, on motion of Rev. Dr. J. L. Wilson, the stated clerk was directed to write a suitable letter to Dr. Smyth, expressive of the tender interest and sympathy of this Synod in the trials of our afflicted brother."

Previous to the meeting of Synod, we had heard, with profound sorrow, of the feeble health and sore trials with which it had pleased the Lord to afflict you; and now your letter



reminds us not only of your continued afflictions, but also that we are deprived of your presence and valuable counsels in our assembly. But we rejoice to learn that there are evidences of returning health, and restoration to those useful labors for which the Master has so well fitted you, and in the successful prosecution of which your whole ministerial life has been so eminently blessed. It is our earnest prayer that our Lord may long spare you for great usefulness in the church, and that He will continue to support and comfort you in all the trials through which you may be called to pass. Venerable and beloved brother, we need not remind you of the unfailing source of strength and consolation for all the weak and afflicted children of God. Your own happy experience testifies more fully than anything we can say to the abounding grace of God, the preciousness of Jesus Christ, and the comforting presence of the Holy Ghost. From the pulpit and the press, your eloquent words have often conveyed comfort to thousands of the afflicted people of God, as you portrayed the love, the sympathy and preciousness of Him who is almighty to save, and who sustains to all His suffering people a relation infinitely dearer than that of any earthly friends. Take, then, dear brother, that precious comfort from the promises of God, to which you have so often directed us.

Long will the Synod remember the delightful refreshment afforded by one of your last sermons delivered before us (at the Brick church in Sumter, shortly after the close of the late war), in which you spoke of the tender love of our Saviour, His presence and sympathy in all our personal trials, and His almighty power and constant care over His Church.

Nor can your brethren, especially those of us who have been long associated with you in the Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, and afterwards in the Synod of South Carolina, forget the deep interest you excited in our breasts, in behalf of the great work of Foreign Missions, and the prosperity of our Theological Seminary at Columbia, an institution which we trust will be perpetuated in our church in connection with your name.

It is, indeed, a dark Providence, by which our Synod, within five or six years past, has lost so many of its faithful and

active members. From the roll of our Synod, about one-fourth of our number has been lost by death and removal to other fields of labor, while comparatively few have come in to recruit our ranks. And soon, doubtless, others must cease from our ministry here. How much, then, dear brother, as a Synod, do we feel the affliction which deprives us of the presence and counsels of one whom we venerate and love so much. And if we should not be permitted to enjoy your presence, and be guided by your wisdom and experience in our annual Synodical meetings on earth, we trust that, by Divine grace, in due time, we shall meet you in "the General Assembly and the Church of the first born written in heaven."

Yours in the bonds of tender sympathy and christian affection.

By order of Synod.

WM. BANKS,  
Stated Clerk.

Anderson, S. C., November 18, 1870.

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XV.—See Vol. III, p. 319, Smyth's Works: "Calvin and His Enemies—A Memoir of the Life, Character and Principles of Calvin." (New edition, revised and enlarged.)